

<b>August Vikhnin</b>	<b>Duration: 14:00</b>	<b>Russian Vets, Interview date Mar11/2011</b>
-----------------------	------------------------	--

- 00 00 (anti-Semitism) **August:** Do you mean after my retirement from the army? (No, after the war was over). When the war was over I wasn't an officer, I was a sergeant major. (When did you become a colonel?) 00 35
- 00 35 Oh my God, I didn't become a colonel right after the war, but in '68. I became a colonel and retired from the army. Colonel or no colonel, I was an officer. I'd like to tell you something in connection with anti-Semitism 00 52
- 00 52 At that time, during the Brezhnev's era, when the Jews started leaving for Israel, leaving abroad, anti-Semitism was getting worse and worse. It was a demonstrative anti-Semitism. 01 14
- 01 14 For example, in Minsk where I lived, Jews were not hired, if they had resigned or had been laid off. It was difficult to get a job. Well, except for janitor and material handler positions. 01 32
- 01 32 Otherwise if you had a degree you wouldn't be able to get a decent job either in your line or administrative. I had several incidents. When I quit my job, which was in '74... I resigned for family reasons and wasn't employed for a year. 02 01
- 02 01 I was looking for a job. I don't exactly look like a Jew. When I contacted employers they would say "Please fill in an application form". I did. When they saw I'm a Jew, which was indicated in the fifth line, they would say "The position has already been filled". 02 25
- 02 25 I went through this experience more than once. I went to Minsk City Party Committee. "What's wrong? I've been a party member since '45. I joined the party during the war. I'm an officer, having served in the Army for 27 years. 02 44
- 02 44 What kind of anti-Semitism is that?" They started moralizing like "We're going to reprimand you as a party member for saying there is anti-Semitism". And there was no help at all. 02 57
- 02 57 Anti-Semitism is always there in Russia, it can't disappear, it can only be better or worse. It's different in different regions and republics. (do you know any stories about Jewish war heroes?) 03 26
- 03 26 For example, my cousin... my second cousin...he was Hero of the Soviet Union, a captain, killed in '43. His name was the same as mine: Vikhnin. Unfortunately, I had never met him. 03 47
- 03 47 (b/g conversation) My friends... (Please repeat) You mean Jews? (Yes). My second cousin whom I had never met, was killed in '43, the rank of captain. He was Hero of the Soviet Union. 04 14
- 04 14 The rest I don't... oh, and my boss, his name's Vainrub. (Tell us about your second cousin who was Hero of the Soviet Union). When in combat, being a lieutenant he took command of a battalion which was a big unit... could be

<b>August Vikhnin</b>	<b>Duration: 14:00</b>	<b>Russian Vets, Interview date Mar11/2011</b>
-----------------------	------------------------	--

- different numbers... during the war a battalion consisted of several hundred men. 04 51
- 04 51 In any case because during the war it's not in full body, some were killed... He carried out the battalion's mission, beat off an enemy's attack, a strong enemy. Besides, he captured, rather his battalion captured several dozens of Germans. 05 12
- 05 12 He was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for holding the settlement point and for destroying a German unit. My boss... a big boss, not my direct boss, general Vainrub, Hero of the Soviet Union. 05 31
- 05 31 By the way they were 2 brothers, both tankmen, one was a general and the other one was a colonel. Both were Heroes of the Soviet Union. Those were the Jews I know about. 05 46
- 05 46 The other brother, Vainrub's brother, Nikolay's... pardon Vladimir's – Mikhail... I met with him after the war in Minsk where he worked and lived... Tractor-building... automobile-building plant in Minsk. Mikhail Vainrub. 06 05
- 06 05 A former colonel. A colonel in reserve. We didn't meet except for that occasion. Heroes... generals... famous Jews...we all know army general twice Hero of the Soviet Union Dragunsky, a Jew; Hero of the Soviet Union army general...Kreitser. 06 37
- 06 37 Lieutenant general Hero of the Soviet Union (do you know Dragunsky's history, and why he received...) Pardon? (Repeats) He was a tankman, a tank brigade commander. He was a skilled and brave fighter. 06 59
- 06 59 As a tankman he received two stars of Hero of the Soviet Union, Dragunsky. At the end of the war he was a colonel, later on he was promoted to a general. After the war he rose to the rank of army general. 07 14
- 07 14 Almost a marshal. Marshal of the Soviet Union is the next rank after army general. Lieutenant general, Hero of the Soviet Union, a tankman Krivoshein. They were many, very many. 07 33
- 07 33 Twice Hero of the Soviet Union aviator Beda, a Jew. Marshal of the Soviet Union, Hero of the Soviet Union Rodion Yakovlevich Malinovsky, a Jew. The only marshal of the Soviet Union. 07 49
- 07 49 Army general, twice Hero of the Soviet Union Chernyakhovsky. (do you know their stories?) He was killed at the age of 36 in '44 during the war. (Tell us about the pilot.) Beda? Not a pilot, but an aviator) He was in combat, he shot down airplanes. 08 18
- 08 18 In the Soviet... during the war awards were given for a certain number of shot down airplanes. For 3 shot down....Order of the Red Star was given for 5 shot down airplanes, etc. etc. 08 32

<b>August Vikhnin</b>	<b>Duration: 14:00</b>	<b>Russian Vets, Interview date Mar11/2011</b>
08 32	There were stimuli and quotas. He shot down 27 or 28 airplanes for which he received the golden star of Hero of the Soviet Union. His last position was Commander of the Air Force. 08 47	
08 47	1643 persons were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union during the war. 1643! 115 of them were Jews... of the Soviet Union. (Interviewer). Jews hold the second if not first place as a national group awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, 09 25	
09 25	(Why so?) For heroism. What I would like to say is during the war on many occasions, I wouldn't say it was a mass phenomenon... I can't be a judge...I know from my co-workers that during the war many Jews weren't given well deserved medals, or were given reduced medals. 09 59	
09 59	...including the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. I can't say the exact number, but not less than 1.5 dozens of Jews didn't receive the title of Hero of the Soviet Union because of being Jewish. 10 14	
10 14	That's my assumption in terms of the numbers... and it's a real fact. (Your message to the next generation). I would be happy if all the generations... well at least 10 future generations would know... not just in general...not just in terms of general politics... but specifically...the heroism, the heroic deeds...specific accomplishments...the huge bloody WWII...this section of the history...the soviet people's Great Patriotic War was a special chapter in this historic phenomenon. 11 51	
11 51	Because while world's losses during the entire WWII were about 50 mln lives, the Soviet Union with 172 mln pre-war population lost 27 mln lives. That was not only at the front. That's including the rear, air raids, etc. 12 15	
12 15	...starvation and cold and diseases. Can you imagine: 27 mln against 50 mln. One country's losses were 27 mln while the rest of the world, mainly Europe, lost 50 mln. American losses were smaller. Canada's losses were 104 thousand lives. 12 37	
12 37	...rather 114 thousand soldiers during WWII. 114 thousand! I repeat: The USA: 400, Great Britain: 325 thousand – over the entire war.... Especially their own nation... knew the history of the formation of Israel... 13 01	
13 01	... history of Israeli people. The Noble prize... outstanding designers...academics... not just because they are outstanding... but because they develop, they work on their knowledge... that's where the Jewish people is different from other peoples. 13 28	
13 28	Other peoples also have outstanding individuals, prize winners and academics and inventors. That's Jewish national feature based on people's history. Thank you too. (medals close up). Thank you all. 13 59	
13 59	End of interview.	