

**Memorandum Regarding the  
Visit to UCU of a representative of the  
Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) (former KGB)  
(responsible for contacts with Churches)  
18 May 2010, office of the rector, 9:50-10:34**

At 9:27 in the morning Fr. Borys Gudziak received a call on his private mobile phone from a representative of the Security Service of Ukraine requesting a meeting. The meeting was scheduled for 20 minutes later at the rectorate of UCU. This official had had contacts with the UCU rectorate a year ago at the time of the visit to the university of the then President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko. He had made a visit to the rectorate in the late afternoon on May 11 with regard to a request of the Ecumenical and Church History Institutes to sign an agreement to use the SBU archives. At that time members of the rectorate were away from the office. He had, what Dr. Antoine Arjakovsky, director of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, called a "very good meeting."

Upon arrival on May 18 in a polite manner the agent related that certain political parties are planning protests and demonstrations regarding the controversial (and in some cases inflammatory) policies of the new Ukrainian authorities. Students are to be engaged in these protests. There is a danger that some of these manifestations may be marred by provocations. He stated that, of course, students are allowed to protest but that they should be warned by the university administration that those involved in any illegal activities will be prosecuted. Illegal activities include not only violent acts but also, for example, pickets blocking access to the work place of government officials (or any protests that are not sanctioned by authorities).

After his oral presentation the agent put on the table between us an unfolded one-page letter that was addressed to me. He asked me to read the letter and then acknowledge with a signature my familiarity with its contents. He stated that after I had read and signed the letter it would be necessary for him to take the letter back. Since I could see that the document was properly addressed to me as rector (I also noticed that it had two signatures giving it a particularly official character) I replied calmly that any letter addressed to me becomes my property and should stay with me -- at least in copy form. Only under these conditions could I agree to even read the letter (much less sign).

The agent was evidently taken back by my response. It seemed that the situation for him was without precedent because in my presence using his mobile phone he called his (local) superiors to ask for instructions on how to proceed. The superior refused permission to leave me either the original letter or a copy, saying that the SBU fears I "might publish it in the internet." I questioned this entire procedure and the need for secrecy and refused to look at the letter and read its contents. The young official was disappointed and somewhat confused but did not exert additional pressure and did not dispute my argumentation.

Our conversation also had a pastoral moment. I cautioned the agent of the fact that the SBU as the former KGB, with many employees remaining from the Soviet times, has a heavy legacy of breaking and crippling people physically and morally and that he as a young married person should be careful not to fall into any actions that would cause lasting damage to his own identity and shame his children and grandchildren. I sought to express this pastorally as a priest. To his credit he both acknowledged the past and

declared his desire to serve the needs of Ukrainian citizens. He also asked that I indicate to him if I feel that he is exercising improper pressure.

Finally, I expressed my and the general population's profound disappointment that the work of the SBU is so uneven, that security and police officers live lavishly on low salaries because they are involved in corrupt activities, and that the legal rights of citizens and equal application of the law are severely neglected. I gave the recent example of my cousin, Teodor Gudziak mayor of Vynnyky, who in February 2010 (three days after the election of the new president) was arrested in a fabricated case of bribery that was set up by a notoriously corrupt political rival and former policemen through the regional and city police. Despite the fact that two weeks before the fabricated affair the mayor, based on a vote of the town council, had given the SBU a video of plainclothes policemen breaking into his office and safe in city hall in the middle of the night and using town seals on various documents the SBU took no action. (The leadership of the Church, specifically Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, fears that by manipulated association this case may be used as a device to compromise the rector of UCU and the whole institution which has a unique reputation of being free from corruption.) I also related that I had reliable testimony and audible evidence that my phone is tapped and has been for many months.

The population of Ukraine continues to fear and distrust both state security and police personnel because of the woeful track record of law enforcement and because of the diffuse practice of police intimidation of honest politicians, journalist, common citizens and the wonton extortion practiced by security institutions and police with respect to middle and small business. I asked the young agent to convey these concerns to his superiors. I had the impression that personally he is open to moral argument but that he also was simply doing his job. It was clear to me that he was dutifully "following orders."

During our conversation the agent asked me about the imminent (May 20-22) General Assembly of the Federation of European Catholic Universities (FUCE) that will be hosted by UCU in Lviv. He characterized it as an important event (it has received considerable publicity) and asked about the program and whether it is open to the public. It was clear that he would have been interested in participating in the proceedings. I said that the main theme, "Humanization of society through the work of Catholic universities," was announced in a press release as will be the outcome of the deliberations. The working sessions of the university rectors, however, are not open to the public. I explained that the 211 members of the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) and the 45 members of FUCE follow closely the development of the only Catholic university in the former Soviet Union. They will be monitoring the welfare of UCU, especially since in Japan in March at the annual meeting of the Board of Consultors of IFCU I had the opportunity to describe some of our socio-political concerns and the threats to the freedom of intellectual discourse (imposition of Soviet historical views, rehabilitation of Stalin and Stalinism, to whom a new monument was unveiled in Zaporizhzhia 5 May 2010) and new censorship of the press and television that are incompatible with normal university life.

Subsequently, as had been arranged at the beginning of the meeting, I called in the UCU Senior Vice Rector Dr. Taras Dobko to whom the official repeated the SBU's concerns.

Besides noting the SBU's solicitude for stability in Ukrainian society there are a few conclusions to be drawn from the encounter and the proposals that were expressed:

1. Signing a document such as the letter that was presented for signature to me is tantamount to agreeing to cooperate (collaborate) with the SBU. The person signing in effect agrees with the contents of the letter and their implication. **In KGB practice getting a signature on a document that was drafted and kept by the KGB was a primary method of recruiting secret collaborators.**
2. **Such methods have no known (to me) precedent in independent Ukraine** in the experience of UCU and of the Lviv National University whose longtime rector (and former Minister of Education, 2008–10) Ivan Vakarchuk I consulted immediately after the meeting. These methods were well known in the Soviet times.
3. The confiscation of the letter after signature makes the letter and signature instruments to be used at the complete discretion of the SBU
4. The possible scenarios for the exploitation of such a document include the following:
  - a.) In case of the arrest of a student the SBU could confront the rectorate and charge that the university was informed of the danger to students and did not take necessary measures to protect them from violence or legal harm. In this case the university administration could be charged with both moral and legal responsibility. A charge with legal ramifications could become an instrument to try to force the university to compromise on some important principle (freedom of expression, forms of social engagement and critique, even religious practice, all of which have precedent in recent history). Furthermore, the authorities could use such a pretext to exert a high degree of pressure on the university to curb any and all protest by students.
  - b.) After a hypothetical arrest of a student or students the students and their parents as well as other members of the university community could be shown the document with which the administration was warned and counseled to curb student activities. Since the administration did not stop the students from the activities that became the pretext for the arrest, parents or others could draw the conclusion that the university does not have adequate concern for the welfare of its students. This would be a most effective way of dividing the university community and undermining the university's reputation among its most important constituents—students.
5. The apparent genuine surprise of the agent at my refusal to do as requested could mean that he is not used to such a reaction. He had explained to me that he works with clergy on a regular basis. It could be assumed that other clergy (who work with youth, students, etc.) have been approached and that they have not refused to sign such documents.
6. **Measures of this nature create apprehension and unease.** They are meant to intimidate university administrations and students. They are part of a whole pattern of practice that is well known to the Ukrainian population. The revival of such practices is a conscious attempt to revive the methods of the Soviet totalitarian past and to re-instill fear in a society that was only beginning to feel its freedom.
7. Since only two of the approximately 170 universities of Ukraine have been voicing their protest regarding recent political and educational developments and many rectors have been marshaled/pressured to express their support regarding the turn of events, it is clear that in recent months fear and accommodation are returning to higher education at a rapid pace. It can be expected that **UCU will be**

**subject to particular attention and possible pressure** in the coming months. **The solidarity of the international community, especially the academic world, will be important in helping UCU maintain a position of principle regarding intellectual and social freedom.**

8. **Speaking and writing openly about these issues is the most peaceful and effective manner of counteracting efforts to secretly control and intimidate students and citizens.** As was apparent during this incident, state authorities are particularly sensitive about publicity regarding their activity. Information can have a preemptory, corrective and curing role when it comes to planned actions to circumscribe civic freedom, democracy, and the basic dignity of human beings.

It should be noted that on 11 May 2010, when Ukrainian students were organizing protest activity in Lviv as well as Kyiv, a representative of the office of Ihor Derzhko, the Deputy Head of the Lviv Regional Administration responsible for humanitarian affairs called the rectorate and asked for statistics on the number of students participating in the demonstrations. UCU's response was that the university does not know how to count in that way.

**Please keep UCU and all the students and citizens of Ukraine in your thoughts and prayers.**

Fr. Borys Gudziak  
Rector, Ukrainian Catholic University  
19 May 2010