

Re : A trip to the Ukraine made by a Canadian student of medicine, of Ukrainian descent, aged 22, residing in Toronto, Canada.
The trip took place in June/July 1966

Source: Dr K.

1) Subject applied at the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, Canada to visit his aunt in Ternopil, Ukraine and a grandmother living in a village near Ternopil. The stay was to be a lengthy one. As a result the embassy required a specific invitation from his aunt. Besides this the Subject had to fill out a lengthy questionnaire and give particulars about his trip. Later he learned from his aunt that her house was inspected by the police and that she was interrogated and compelled to sign a statement taking upon herself the responsibility for the Subject.

Permission from the embassy didn't arrive until after the Subject left for a tour of Europe. He applied once again in Vienna and with the aid of Austrian authorities obtained permission for the visit within ten days.

2) From Vienna his first stopover was Budapest, which he observed was still very much in ruins. In the city he stayed with a family to which he was introduced by an English student that he met on the train. Both husband and wife were lawyers, very hospitable, but did not seem to be especially well off.

3) From Budapest the Subject went to the Ukrainian border which he observed to be very strictly watched. While waiting at the border his baggage was thoroughly inspected. The officials spoke in Russian. On the train the Subject came across old Ukrainian ladies returning home from Hungary. He also happened to meet Russian girls returning to Siberia from their vacation. They were extremely surprised that he was an educated man and still a believer. The girls claimed to be atheists but wore little crosses. Similar encounters he experienced during the entire trip. The Subject, while on the train struck up a conversation with a soldier from Moscow. The soldier disclosed that many young men in the service are dissatisfied with their positions. Many commit suicide, others harm themselves in order to get a discharge. Most of these are Ukrainians. Those who are caught attempting such feats are shot. The young serviceman also mentioned that many of the Ukrainian soldiers serving in Russia return home with Russian wives.

4) In Chopra the Subject's papers were inspected again. From there he proceeded to Lviv. Traveling by night he arrived in Lviv 7 in the morning and was met by a guide from Intourist. While she was arranging transportation a man in his 40's approached and started a conversation. He was surprised to learn how well the Ukrainian emigrants were organized in the West. He claimed that some young people in the Ukraine preferred to talk Russian instead of Ukrainian and later on Subject discovered this to be true.

In Lviv the Subject stayed for 3 days. He was able to notice that much of the hard labor is performed by women and even young teenaged girls. Food markets are very shabby looking. Storehouses do not carry products in demand by the people. The people on the whole appear to be very low in spirit and not amicable.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

30 Sept 66

The Subject was told by the guide that there are 23 churches in Lviv but only 7 are open. The excuse was that many people don't go to church anymore. However, on the holyday of St. Peter and Paul he visited one of the churches and saw it to be packed to the brim. The Subject met a female attendant at St. George. She told him that many people are not afraid of being religious and even bring their children to be baptized. True, they are persecuted for this but they have no fear. The Subject also learned that there are three seminaries in the Soviet Union: Moscow, Odessa, but the third location was not known by him.

5) From Lviv the Subject went to a nearby village accompanied by a police officer. There he was present at a wedding ceremony and reception and talked freely with the people. Ukrainian was spoken. From the conversations it was evident that the people were fed falsified propaganda. Their livelihood seemed to be fairly good. The people claimed that under Breshnev conditions improved. The school building in the village was brand new and directed by a Russian who had married a Ukrainian girl.

6) From Lviv the Subject left for Kiev and there stayed at the Hotel Dnipro. In the city he asked about the much discussed fire in the Library of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. Replies varied. Some said that the works of Schevchenko perished, others unimportant documents, and still others the works of Hrushevsky. A librarian denied the latter. However, all agreed that phosphorus cones were involved in the fire. Most of the students he approached would not talk to him.

Later the Subject visited the Union of Journalists to inquire about the arrests of Dziuba and Svitlychny. Here he met a female Ukrainian tourist from Paris. The two secretaries in the building at that time would not reveal anything. Immediately after his departure one of them made a phone call.

7) From Kiev the Subject left for Odessa. He was not allowed to travel by train but had to fly. In Odessa hardly any Ukrainian is heard. Many of the people there are foreigners who have come to stay at one of the 60 sanatoriums. In Odessa the Subject went to the theater to see the performance of one of the Kievan dance groups. The people sitting around him spoke Russian and wondered why he spoke Ukrainian. After the concert he was approached by one of the performers who went out with him for a walk. The performer disclosed that he had many opportunities to escape but felt an obligation to remain and transmit to his fellow countrymen the Ukrainian culture. He also exclaimed displeasure at the rift in the Ukrainian emigration.

8) From Odessa the Subject proceeded through Moldavia to Bucharest, then Bulgaria and finally to Turkey. As for his stay at his grandmother's the Subject did not elaborate at all. Possibly this could have been in the village by Lviv. Many people he reported listen to Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, etc. Their programs, on the whole, are not interfered with unless they are reporting political news. The Subject commented on hearing that some Ukrainians are desirous of having their own communist nation, having its own army, ~~and its own~~ mail and foreign relations. He learned about it mainly from his relatives and their friends.