

BNTU student locked in dean's office to be recruited

<http://www.charter97.org/en/news/2012/4/30/51532/>

KGB officers tried to recruit an activist of Food not Bombs campaign in the dean's office.

KGB agents visited the activist of Food not Bombs campaign, who was detained as he was serving free meals near the Uskhod metro station in Minsk on January 15, at the Belarusian National Technical University(BNTU) and offered collaboration, Viansa human rights centre does not reveal the name of the activist for safety reasons.

The conversation between the KGB agents and the activist was held in the dean's office on February 13. A deputy dean phoned the five year student to visit the dean's office to give explanations why he had been detained by police. The deputy dean said it was a “mere formality”.

The students saw two unknown men in suits in the dean's office. The deputy dean went out leaving the student to give explanations to them. The men asked the guy about his civil activity. They refused to introduce themselves and only said they worked for the KGB. They threatened the student with army and the so called compulsory employment (when a graduate has to work two years in a place chosen by university).

The young man refused to talk to unknown people and wanted to go out of the office, but found the door locked. After a number of questions, to which the activists refused to answer, the deputy dean opened to door from the outside.

The activists faced interest to him again after he had been detained at Food not Bomb concert in Yo-Moyo club on March 24. KGB officers tried to press on the activist through his father from March 26 to March 31, but the latter said his son would not collaborate even under threat of being expelled from university.

On March 29, the student gave a written explanation regarding the new detention. The deputy dean demanded the activist to sign a document promising “not to take part in political and public activity”, but said later it was not necessary.



FOOD NOT BOMBS

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Food not Bombs activists to stand trial after riot police`s raid on charity concert in Minsk

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Some 15 activists of Food Not Bombs Belarus have been placed in custody after riot police stormed on Saturday evening the House of Culture of the Minsk Tractor Works ahead of a charity concert in support of the international, grassroots organization known for feeding those in need.

Around 100 young men and women were grabbed during the raid and brought to three district police stations, said human rights defender Valyantsin Stefanovich.

Most of them were allowed to go home after being fingerprinted, photographed and videoed. Some 15 people were brought to the detention center on Akrestsina Street. They are expected to stand trial on March 26.

“The concert was due to take place at the House of Culture of the Minsk Tractor Works,” said Mr. Stefanovich. “It makes no sense to charge them with organizing an unsanctioned mass event. It is most likely that they were formally charged with ‘petty hooliganism’ for, as the tradition goes, allegedly uttering obscenities.”

The riot police raided the concert hall on the pretext that they suspected the youth of distributing and using drugs.

All young women were later freed but for Alena Dubovik. She was placed in the detention center pending trial.

According to Mr. Stefanovich, the police acted violently against those detained.

Food Not Bombs started in Cambridge, Massachussetts, in 1980 and is well known for passing out free vegetarian and vegan food to anyone who shows up to events, regardless of whether they are homeless, the working poor or just looking for some grub and company.

The group is also known for anti-war demonstrations and running seminars on poverty issues.

Its chapter in Belarus has to deal with pressure on the part of the authorities, according to local human rights defenders. Last year alone, police disrupted several events organized by the chapter to pass out food -- soup or porridge -- to those in need.



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