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President's Room

July 31, 2000

Academician Yuri Osipov  
President  
Russian Academy of Sciences  
Leninsky prospekt 14  
117901, Moscow, GSP-1

Dear Academician Osipov:

I am writing to you to draw your attention to a matter that I find very troubling because it threatens collaborative academic research between Russia and the United States. I have recently learned from a letter from Pavel Podvig, a researcher at the Center for Arms Control Studies in Moscow, that the Russian Federal Security Service (the FSB) has questioned the legitimacy of research that was carried out in Moscow by a Princeton University doctoral student during the fall of 1999. I am writing to you about this matter because the student in question, Joshua Handler, was in Moscow at the invitation of an Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of USA and Canada Studies.

As far as I know, Mr. Handler's research project became a subject of an FSB investigation in connection with the case of Dr. Sutyagin, who was arrested by the FSB in October 1999 on suspicion of treason and espionage. I have been provided with the transcript of a news story from "Vesti" TV (RTR, Russia's official governmental TV channel, 30 October 1999, 9:00 p.m.) which reported that the FSB had:

determined that among Sutyagin's contacts were intelligence officers from the United States and Great Britain. And recently the researcher met with Joshua Handler, who works at Princeton University. During a search of Handler's Moscow apartment the FSB found materials of an "intelligence" nature. The FSB have no doubts that Handler is also involved in gathering of secret information.

What alerted the operatives to the fact that Handler, in addition to everything else, works at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The FSB has data that this Center is involved in "double-purpose" research. Besides, since 1995, the Russia and CIS division of the Center is headed by Keith Bush, former US President's nephew and a known intelligence officer.