

S.T.A.L.K.E.R. Shadow of Chernobyl
Chernobyl Diary - the inspiration and the reality

October 21, 2002

We did not expect the effects of our trip to spill over into anything other than the game. Yet today we received a call from the National Security Service (in Ukraine the acronym is SBU but the common Western version is the KGB).

The caller had heard of our visit to Chernobyl and requested our presence at their headquarters. No reason was given. We were not given any reason to be anxious about the appointment but nor were we given any reassurances that this was a routine check.

Needless to say, we made the necessary travel arrangements.

October 23 2002

The date of our interview has come around and we turn up on time. The building is from the soviet era with intimidating lines and massive wooden door. If the object is to make us feel small next to the power of the authority then it works.

In contrast, the room to which we are shown is small, almost cell-like. Inside, a uniformed officer politely enquires about our visit. He wants to know where we went, what photographs we took and what we saw. He shows an interest in every aspect of our work - why did we make the trip, why did we want to go and so on. Then we were allowed to leave.

November 18, 2002

We have had no word back from the SBU and expect none. It all seems to be over. Perhaps they were satisfied with our responses and our intentions.

The travel company we booked through called us to say they had been questioned about the trip and reported that their treatment was less polite than ours.