


Unrest Continues Among Soviet Artists

(b)(1)  
(b)(3)  
ED

~~SECRET~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

COPY NO. 71  
OCI NO. 3819/60  
18 August 1960

**CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY**



DOCUMENT ID: 10  
NO CHANGE TO STATUS  
DECLASSIFIED  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 01990  
AUTHORITY: 5842  
DATE: REVIEWER: 372044

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 13-Aug-2010

~~SECRET~~

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY  
18 August 1960  
PART III (continued)

CYPRUS BECOMES INDEPENDENT . . . . . Page 5

Cyprus, officially independent on 16 August, has better prospects for stability than many other recently independent colonial areas, but there remain many unresolved problems involving tension between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. There are still at least some extreme nationalists opposed to the 1959 settlement, although their numbers do not appear large and their leadership is of questionable ability. More dangerous for the longer term is the Communist-led political party AKEL, which has able leaders and considerable popular support.

UNREST CONTINUES AMONG SOVIET ARTISTS . . . . . Page 11

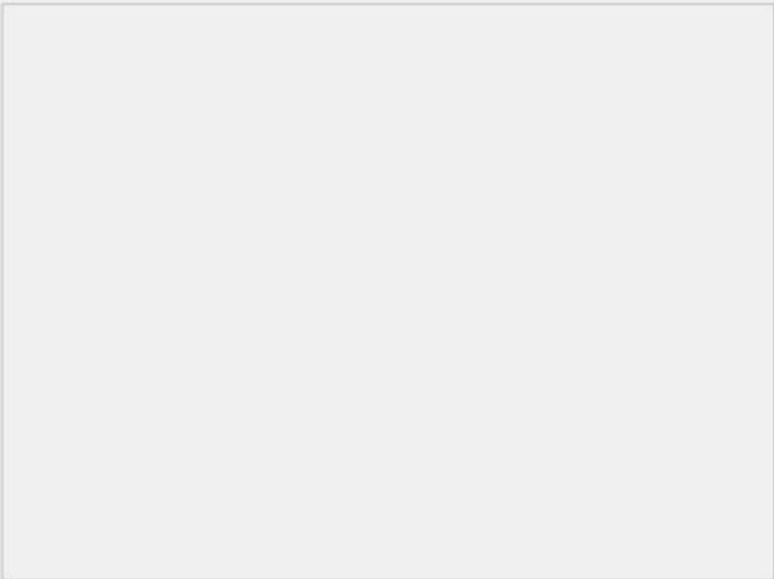
Although the Kremlin has succeeded in containing the rebellion among Soviet writers, which was at its height in 1956 and 1957, strong undercurrents of discontent with official dogma persist in other areas of Soviet creative work. The spirit of Western "modernism," in particular, has infected the Soviet pictorial arts, which flourish as an "underground" movement defiant of the officially imposed "socialist realism." The regime, while reluctant to impose repressive sanctions, fears the virus of non-conformity and is seeking ways to preserve the propagandistic function of Soviet art.

~~SECRET~~  
v1

~~SECRET~~

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

18 August 1960



\* \* \*

UNREST CONTINUES AMONG SOVIET ARTISTS

Although the revolt on the literary front in 1956 and 1957 has largely subsided, a spirit of unorthodoxy continues in Soviet art. In an atmosphere which, despite the stiffened attitude of the regime since the uprising in Hungary, is still considerably less repressive than in Stalin's last years, modern art has gained an enthusiastic following among the Soviet intelligentsia which increasingly threatens to undermine the sternly guarded principle of "socialist realism" in art.

The growing interest in experimentation, stimulated by

officially sanctioned displays of foreign art, is reflected in the existence of a thriving "underground" in such condemned styles as abstractionism and surrealism. One advocate of the party line has described the attitude of some artists as "a kind of diseased, mysterious 'internal spirit,' as if the person did not live in Moscow but somewhere in an underground kingdom." The regime has offered repeated reassurances against the reinstitution of a harsh policy, but it is seeking through a cautious broadening of the definition of "socialist realism" and through organizational

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

18 August 1960

means to neutralize the spirit of nonconformity and preserve the propagandistic function of Soviet art.

"Socialist Realism"

The extreme modern art schools which flourished in Russia in the early 1900s and for a time after 1917 were emphatically tabooed by the 1932 party central committee decree which called for the creation of national unions of artists, writers, and musicians and proclaimed "socialist realism" the only artistic method permissible. Modernist masterpieces were locked in storage vaults where, with few exceptions, they remain to this day.

Socialist realism insisted on the style of 19th century Russian realism but demanded that content show society not as it actually was but as it was seen to be developing through the rose-colored glasses of Communist dogma. The value of art was judged in terms of its propaganda effectiveness



rather than by esthetic criteria. Socialist realist art was to use a realistic style clearly understood by the masses, avoid unpleasant actualities, and dramatize heroic Communist exploits.



Serov, "Lenin Receives Peasant Delegates"

Formalism, or a concern for form at the expense of content, was made the cardinal sin for Soviet artists. The opposite extreme--mechanical copying of details--was condemned as naturalism. Modern Western art from the 1870s onward was denounced as "bourgeois" "reactionary," "decadent," or "subjective," because it rejected the primacy of social idea-content in favor of experimentation in form as a means of expressing the artist's subjective thought.

Post-Stalin Thaw

In the more permissive atmosphere

~~SECRET~~