

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

27 August 1946

*WHP  
file  
Russia*

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. CLIFFORD:

I am enclosing a copy of a message from Elbridge Durbrow, our Charge d'Affaires at the American Embassy in Moscow. The implications and significance of this message are such that I believe you should see it in connection with our Russian study. This is a truly terrifying confirmation of some of the statements occurring in the first chapter of our report about the extent to which leaders of the Communist Party dominate every phase of the life and thinking of the Russian people.

Respectfully,

*GE*

GEORGE M. ELSEY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
INCOMING TELEGRAM

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Moscow

Dated August 23, 1946

Rec'd 1:30 p.m., 23rd

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)

Dept. of State letter, Aug. 14, 1972

BY ~~XXXXXX~~, NARS Date 12-7-73

~~SECRET~~

Control 7519

Paraphrase before communicating to anyone.

SECSTATE

3290, August 23, 5 p.m.

PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR SMITH

A source which we consider probably reliable informs us that ideological house cleaning which is turning Leningrad literary and party circles upside down, originated in Orgburo meeting called by Stalin August 18.

According to this source Stalin summoned not only Orgburo but leading authors, theater directors and motion picture producers to Kremlin. Stalin spent evening quizzing leaders of Soviet intellectual and cultural life on political content of their works and upbraided them for failure to assume vigorous ideological leadership. This star chamber session was conducted in tense, uncomfortable atmosphere.

As a result of this meeting 120 manuscripts of books, plays, and scenarios being produced or about to be produced have reportedly been banned. If true, this is staggering blow to Soviet fine arts for coming season.

This house cleaning obviously will extend well beyond Leningrad circles. For example, we hear that popular singer Vertinsky is in disfavor and his records banned.

These developments are far reaching in their significance. They represent most severe step yet taken in ideological cleansing and are symptomatic of Stalin's determination strengthen party vise on all forms of Soviet life.

DURBROW

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C O P Y