

October 21, 1945

**TASS Digest Distributed to Cde. I.V. Stalin and Cde.
C.M. Molotov, 'The Assertions of An Associated
Press Commentator; etc.'**

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Summary:

Articles on Stalin's alleged death, retirement or vacation and the implications of his possible retreat from politics.

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THE ASSERTIONS OF AN ASSOCIATED PRESS COMMENTATOR

NEW YORK, 21 October (TASS). Hightower, a diplomatic commentator of the Associated Press agency reports from Washington that diplomatic circles are increasingly confident that Stalin might leave some of the posts he holds. Hightower asserts that official circles in Washington are concerned since "Stalin has recently played a great role in Russia's cooperation with the United States in spite of the sharp tactics of Soviet diplomats. They view Stalin as a friendly-minded person with whom they are able to work. Often, the White House turned directly to Stalin when diplomats could not solve some problem, which led to favorable results. [Translator's note: Most of the last sentence was highlighted in the left margin]. Obviously, the events which are occurring at the present time have led to a collapse of the conference of the ministers of foreign affairs in London. Many diplomats are interested in what direction Russian policy will take if Stalin hands over the solution of such problems to other people like the occupation and control over Japan, Allied cooperation in Eastern and Central Europe, etc. In Washington they are deeply interested in reports from Eastern Europe that Stalin's current vacation presages still more important events in the near future".

As Hightower asserts, official circles are mystified that Zhukov is not coming to the United States and think that the reasons cited by Zhukov are vague and are only diplomatic pretexts.

A STATEMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ECUADOR

NEW YORK, 20 October (TASS). According to a report of an Associated Press agency correspondent from Guayaquil in connection with the editorials which have appeared in some newspapers which criticize the statement ascribed to Stalin with mention of Ecuador, the Communist Party of Ecuador has distributed leaflets which point out that an anti-Soviet campaign is being pursued the Falangist elements which "at the present time are discrediting the revolutionary forces of Ecuador, which oppose the sale of the Galapagos Islands to the United States".

Armed police are patrolling the streets in order to prevent the outbreak of incidents.

RUMORS BEING CIRCULATED BY THE AMERICAN PRESS

NEW YORK, 22 October (TASS). The International News Service agency has distributed a report which says that Stalin has died, according to rumors from Vienna. The newspaper "Daily Mirror" printed this report in a prominent place, although it indicated in parentheses that the Soviet Embassy in Paris had refuted this report. Later the newspaper "The New York Times" printed a brief report of the Associated Press agency from Washington that says that the Soviet Embassy in Paris has refuted this rumor, according to a report from Brazzaville Radio. "The New York Times" adds that radio commentators Pearson and Winchell have spread the rumor without certifying its truth.

As the United Press agency reports from Washington, the Soviet Embassy is declaring that it does not have information about the report that Stalin is seriously ill.

A SWEDISH NEWSPAPER ABOUT COMRADE STALIN

STOCKHOLM, 17 October (TASS). At one time all Swedish newspapers have published a report about Cde. Stalin going on vacation. Many of them have published the reports of French and Anglo-American newspapers about an illness of Cde. Stalin and their guesses "about the future leadership of the Soviet Union". On 15 October the newspaper "Norrlandska Socialdemokraten" published an article under the headline "Stalin's vacation". The author writes:

"Stalin has taken a vacation. They say that he is supposedly seriously ill, that he doesn't have long to live. If he dies, then it will be quite difficult to find a successor to him who could keep the entire mechanism well-coordinated and lead it in the future. As far as is known there is no one who could be considered a self-evident candidate as his successor. Up to now Stalin has dominated in everything so definitely that there was no place for any significant individual to display his importance.

The fact that no competitor is allowed to raise his head under it is also included in the many shortcomings of a dictatorship. Stalin, like Hitler, removed from [his] path everyone, both those who stood in his way as well as those who might think that they might be able to stand in his way. His Russian predecessors acted this way, beginning with Ivan the Terrible to Peter the Great.

Roosevelt is no more. Churchill has left the game. In spite of this there were no special concerns for them to search for suitable successors. But here is the difference between democracy and dictatorship. Both in Britain and in the US elected deputies are already in the wings by virtue of the democratic system. It is possible that a supposed change of people in the management of Russian policy would occur quietly and painlessly. Czarism fell because it lost its basis and was not in a condition to defend the country's interests either in wartime or peacetime. Stalinism withstood the test in time of war and in all probability it will hold out in peacetime and without Stalin, if he is no more".

DAILY EXPRESS CORRESPONDENT CONCERNING RUMORS ABOUT COMRADE STALIN

LONDON, 22 October (TASS). As the Reuter agency transmits, the Washington correspondent of the newspaper Daily Express reports that according to reports circulating in Washington Generalissimo Stalin "will soon abandon some of his wartime responsibilities in the Soviet government and hand over more power to Minister of Foreign Affairs Molotov". "They say", writes the correspondent, "that Stalin will become to a greater and greater degree the senior government figure of Russia who leaves the working out of details to his subordinates".

When publishing this telegram, the "Daily Express" mentions that before the war the only official post of Stalin was the post of General Secretary of the Communist Party. During the war he became Prime Minister, Generalissimo, and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of all the Soviet armed forces.

Three copies printed

- 1 - to Cde. I. V. Stalin
- 2 - to Cde. V. M. Molotov
- 3 - to file

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