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**TASS News Summary, 'A Denial of the Press
Department of the Soviet Embassy in London**

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Summary:

Reports of that Stalin is ill.

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[stamp: Secret Department of TASS]
Top Secret

A DENIAL OF THE PRESS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN LONDON

London, 23 October (TASS) On 23 October the press department of the Soviet Embassy in London published the following statement: "In connection with the report which appeared in the newspaper Daily Express on 23 October in which it cited a so-called statement of the press attaché of the Soviet Embassy in London the press department of the Soviet Embassy considers it necessary to declare that the press department has not made any statements for the press in recent weeks".

CONCERNING RUMORS ABOUT THE STATE OF HEALTH OF COMRADE STALIN

London, 24 October. In a 23 October report Hardcastle, the Washington correspondent of the Reuter agency, points out that, in spite of the lack of any confirmations from either American or Russian official sources, conjecture continues to be expressed in the US about the presumed death, illness, or retirement of Generalissimo Stalin.

The rumors (and they are no more than rumors) are evidently based on the following facts: first, Stalin has publicly stated that he is going on vacation. Part of the American press immediately read this report as "suspicious". Second, Stalin suffered a brief illness during the Potsdam Conference. Third, photographs made of him during the conference show that he had aged considerably during the war. However, it is admitted that, judging from these photographs he looks well for his 66 years, in spite of the busy life which he had led from the beginning as a revolutionary, and then as a great national and international leader. Fourth, Marshal Zhukov has declared that his own illness and pressing responsibilities make the planned trip to the US this year impossible for him. This was immediately assessed as evidence that Zhukov is being delayed in order to be ready to take the place of Stalin. Such, in general, are the facts on which these stories are being based.

Some importance is being attached to these stories here not because of their content, but because they reflect the alarm of the American people.

REPORTS OF THE SWEDISH NEWSPAPERS ABOUT THE STATE OF HEALTH OF COMRADE STALIN

STOCKHOLM, 23 October (TASS). The morning and evening newspapers are publishing a report of the Soviet press attaché of the Embassy in London about the state of health of Cde. Stalin in prominent places. In connection with this the newspapers are repeating all the rumors and fantasies of Anglo-American and other sources about the health of Cde. Stalin, his leaving active political work, the appointment of his successor, about discord which has supposedly occurring between the marshals of the Soviet Union about power, etc. Some newspapers are publishing a portrait of Cde. Zhdanov today, calling him Stalin's successor "in the civilian sphere".

Three copies printed

1st copy - to Cde. I. V. Stalin
2nd copy - to Cde. V. M. Molotov
3rd copy - to the S/O [Secret Department]'s file.
Nº 513ss 24 October 1945

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