

October 28, 1945

TASS Digest Distributed to Cde. I.V. Stalin and Cde. C.M. Molotov, 'The London Correspondent of "The New York Times" About Comrade Stalin; etc.'

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Summary:

TASS reports on newspaper articles in the foreign press disputing rumors of Stalin's illness.

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Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

[stamp: Secret Department of TASS]
Top Secret

THE LONDON CORRESPONDENT OF "THE NEW YORK TIMES" ABOUT COMRADE STALIN

London, 28 October (radio intercept). The London correspondent of "The New York Times" reports that when the return of Generalissimo Stalin to his native Caucasus to spend his vacation there and rest was announced, in the capitals of Eastern Europe they started to fabricate and widely spread rumors that the health of the Soviet leader is worsening, that he plans to leave some of his posts, and that he is dying.

There are no grounds for believing such exaggerated rumors. There are no means to check their truthfulness or their origin. Intimate details of the life of Stalin are known to an extraordinarily limited circle of Soviet people and are completely unknown to foreigners. People close to the Generalissimo consider this a very sacrosanct topic. If some asks a Russian a question about the rumors about the health of Stalin he will probably not only refrain from any comment but will even take offense. If one asks who is Stalin's probable successor when he finally dies then such a question is again considered almost insulting. The position which he holds in the hearts and minds of good Soviet citizens surpasses the position which, for example, the late President Roosevelt held in the hearts of his supporters.

Agreeing with this and in no way intending to be insulting when touching on this delicate subject we will cite some facts. Iosif Stalin is an old man, he should be 66 years old. He has had a hard and busy life. In youth he drank irregularly. He often had to sit in prison for political reasons. He had to endure beatings and mental torture.

[Note in the original: "the end of the report was not received]"

Top Secret

REPORT OF THE NEWSPAPER DER TAGESSPIEGEL

Berlin, 26 October (TASS). "Der Tagesspiegel", a private newspaper published on an American license, placed the following information under the headline, "Stalin's Health is Excellent" on the first page in the section "Mirror of the World": "The Russian ambassador in London reports, 'Marshal Stalin feels completely healthy and will rest for several days'". This statement was made to refute rumors that Stalin had supposedly died, was lying at death's door, or was very seriously ill".

HARRIMAN HAS REJECTED RUMORS OF AN ILLNESS OF MARSHAL STALIN

London, 28 October. As the Moscow correspondent of the Reuter Agency reports, American Ambassador Harriman, who returned to Moscow from the Black Sea resort of Sochi where Stalin in vacationing, declared that Stalin is "completely healthy" and thus rejected rumors about an illness of Stalin.

Three copies printed

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[handwritten: PR]