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Stalin and after, 1953.

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STALIN AND AFTER
March 15, 1953

Stalin is dead. Who will succeed him? That has been announced. What will succeed him? That still remains to be answered. Stalin died in bed. Hitler blew his brains out. Mussolini was kicked to death and strung up, head down on a rafter. Their empires crumbled with them, in blood, smoke and ashes.

Stalin died in bed and his empire survives. It survives and it expanded because fate forced him into an alliance with the Allied nations during the second world war, and together, they won the war. But Stalin died, not a friend of the Allied nations, but as their bitter foe and in the midst of a gathering and menacing cold war with them.

Much has been said and written of Stalin, and much will yet be said and written about him. This is not the time nor the place to recount his history or to give an estimate of his life. In fact, this generation will probably not write the final estimate of his life. Stalin died hated by millions, and by millions adored. He did much evil in his lifetime and wrought much tragedy and suffering, and spilled much innocent blood. History may yet show that he also wrought much good.

In the light of our conceptions of liberty and of the inalienable rights of man and of the intrinsic dignity of the individual man, freedom of conscience, Stalin's life and acts as a dictator appear brutal and destructive and tyrannical. Against the background of centuries of Czarist oppression and exploitation and the unrelieved misery of illiteracy and poverty of the masses of Russia, the progress which was achieved by the Russian people in the last 25 or 30 years under Stalin's leadership, appears as a colossal achievement.

No one, dear friends - no one becomes a dictator unless he is possessed of cunning, of cupidity, of ruthlessness, of egotism and the capacity for intrigue, and is prepared to wade through seas of blood to get to his throne. Stalin was possessed of all of these uncommendable qualities and he exercised them in the extreme. It would require to put through a policy of agricultural collectivization, which was resisted, and it was necessary to starve to death and liquidate hundreds of thousands or millions of

peasants - that was done. Not a qualm of conscience and without hesitation! If, in order to make himself secure, threatened on the occasion of the assassination of his close friend, it was necessary to carry out one of the most frightful and bloodiest purges in the annals of history - that was done. It was necessary to do away with the leaders of the Bolshevik revolution, the men who brought it ~~about~~ about and all the venerable leaders of the party - that, too, was done without compunction and without hesitation. No one becomes a dictator unless he can do these things.

But Stalin must have possessed much more to achieve what he achieved - gifts of leadership, rare political and organizational skill, firmness and strength of purpose, and a personality which must have inspired trust and confidence in a people whom he led through the vast tribulations of a terrible war and led them to victory.

On all such occasions it is well to bear in mind a wise saying of our Rabbis, that a man should pray not for the death of the sinner, but for the death of the sin. It is not so much with the man Stalin that we need to be concerned from here on, but with what he represented, what did not die with him, which was not interred with his bones, with Communism and Communist ideology and the Communist empire and the world-wide Communist organization and party and propaganda.

What effect will Stalin's death have upon these, upon the future of Communism in the world? Will it lead to a break-up of what might be called the Communist empire which now stretches over one-fourth of the globe and embraces more than 750 millions of people.? Will his death result in bitter internal rivalry and a struggle for power among the top leaders of the Communist or the Soviet hierarchy, leading to new purges and inner disruption, disintegration? Will it lead to unrest and revolution in the neighboring satellite countries? Will the Communist tide begin to recede in Asia? Will China assert its independence of the Kremlin?

You have read, I am sure, and listened to much serious discussion of these questions. And the speculations will go on for a long time to come. No one, not even the present rulers of Russia, know the answers to these questions. The suspense of uncertainty will last for a long time. The best informed minds caution against excessive optimism, if we may use the term - that is to say, against high expectations of an early decline or breakdown in Communist strength, and of early rifts and conflicts in the Communist hierarchy which will weaken the dictatorship.

A recent writer put it this way:

As to the possibilities of a Stalin-Trotsky type of struggle for power, it should be kept in mind that those who are at the helm of the Soviet power today fully realize, both from experience and history, the dangers with which such a struggle is fraught. And it is therefore only reasonable to assume that their awareness of the tense international situation, coupled with a desire to secure what they have gained - both in personal power and Communist strength - will force them to act with extreme caution. It is almost certain that Malenkov, Bulganin, Molotov and Beria will not risk their own necks or undo thirty-six years of sinister work by throwing themselves into a mad scramble for power.

Now, such a scramble for power may some day develop in Moscow. Last year, as you know, it developed in Prague between the Gottwald crowd of Communists and the Slansky crowd of Communists, leading to trials and purges which were reminiscent of the dreadful trials and purges in Moscow in the thirties, from which Stalin emerged the sole and undisputed autocrat of Russia and of the Community Party. It may develop again in Moscow, but probably not immediately or soon. And we should not plan on it or bank on it.

The prospect of a revolution within Russia itself, the rising of the people, as it were, can be definitely ruled out. Communism has been firmly established in Russia now for more than 30 years, and the new generation of Russia today is acquainted with no other form of life and with no other type of government, and the new generation has been thoroughly indoctrinated with the glory of their system and its superiority over all other systems in the world; in fact, they have been taught to pity and to commiserate with the unfortunate peoples who live in the West who eke out their miserable existences

under capitalist systems, and they look forward to the time when they can be the ultimate liberators of these unfortunate peoples. Of course, there are in Russia today millions upon millions of unhappy and embittered and disillusioned men and women, especially the older generation but they have been terrorized into silence and dumb submission. And even if this were not the case, even if there was not large-scale dissatisfaction among the masses of the Russian people against their government, there is simply no possibility under a modern police state - and certainly, the kind of a police state which has been established in Russia, universal surveillance and maximum monolithic control of the life of every citizen where every movement is known - there is no possibility of organized resistance, or even of significant underground resistance in the Communist state today of Russia. There must first come about a collapse of the regime at the top, a break-down of apparatus, political chaos, before the masses will begin to move.

There is, of course, a greater likelihood of unrest developing in the satellite states - Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria. These have not been Communist states for long, and Communism has not brought them the promised millenium; rather, it has brought them increased want and dwindling production and cold and hunger and the iron heel of oppression, and they are not reconciled to the domination of their national life by a foreign power. The passing of the Stalin symbol, of the Stalin myth, and all the glamor which it carried may well encourage what may be called Titoism among these satellite states, may lead to nationalist upsurgence movements and attempts at breaking away from the K~~re~~mlin, and one such successful effort in a single satellite state on the borders of the Soviet Union, may bring about the crumbling of the entire arch which Moscow has built in recent years.

It is also difficult to know how China will react. China is twice as large in population as Russia. And how long the tail will wag the dog, no one can say. The Chinese Communists greatly revered Stalin and looked upon him as the leader of the world

revolution, and his prestige was very high among them. Many of the Chinese Communist leaders, including their supreme leader, Mao-tse-tung, were trained in revolutionary ideology and techniques and disciplines in Moscow. And China at the moment is dependent upon Moscow for military and technical aid in prosecuting its war in Korea. Whether they will now transfer to Malenkov and to the new Party leaders in Moscow the same allegiance which they had for Stalin, and whether they will continue to recognize the revolutionary leadership of Moscow, remains to be seen. It is, however, not likely in my judgment that Mao-tse-tung will declare himself independent of a powerful ally, and sacrifice its substantial military assistance as long as the United States encourages Chiang-Kai-Shek to resume the civil war in China with American backing.

Were I to make a guess - and it is only a guess - I would venture the opinion that the last years of Stalin mark the peak of Communist strength in the world, and that with his passing, the tide will begin to recede. Malenkov's hard task will be to hold, to hang on to what Stalin had won for Communism. And much of it is destined to be lost. The Communist peoples on the periphery of Russia, as well as China, have too little in common with Russia to tolerate an indefinite subservience to Moscow once the revolutionary ardor is spent and the alien shackles begin to irk.

Be that as it may, the democracies of the world have a greater opportunity now to push forward the cause of a free society in the world. They should now concentrate not on the next move of Moscow, but on their own next move - how to make friends in the world; how to strengthen the backward nations with such aid as bread and doctors and teachers and social workers - not with bayonets; how to inspire these nations with the conviction that we, the free nations of the world, bring them liberation and an end to exploitation and feudalism and the prospect of a brighter and happier way of life; and that with us lies hope and a brighter future for them. This is our task at the moment. This is our great opportunity at the moment. And this period of suspense

which may continue for a long time to come, this is the opportunity for a very aggressive and affirmative, democratic approach to all the peoples of the world, especially to those who have not yet fallen under the sway of Communism.

To be sure, the free nations of the world must strive for unity among themselves and for a common defense and for the building up of collective strength. And in this connection, it is profoundly disturbing to be told time and again by high military authorities in our own country that in spite of the vast outlay of the American people for Military needs, in spite of voting and granting the military every year all that they ask for in appropriations, seemingly there is never adequate military support for our fighting men in the world. And in the case of the Korean war, for example, there has been and there is a tragic shortage of ammunition. This is the testimony of General James A. Van Fleet, the retiring commander of the U.N. ground forces in Korea who declared before the committee of the Senate a few days ago: "There has been a serious shortage of ammunition ever since I have been in Korea; there has been a critical shortage at times. There is today a serious shortage a serious shortage of some items of ammunition.

Now, why? The American people has a right to ask why and to demand an answer. Is it not high time for those charged with preparing our nation for military defense to give us results instead of alibis? Is it not high time to drive the incompetents, the wastrels, the spendthrifts, the blunderers from office, if we intend to match in strength the most ruthless military dictatorship known to mankind, whose total life and whose vast resources are organized for one sole and exclusive purpose - military predominance in the world! And where no alibis are taken and where blunders are as costly as life!

But even the effort towards unity among the free peoples and for a strong collective defense, even that is not enough today. There must also be a clear and clean program on which the free world can be united and faithful allies can be won and held, a program of global proportions undiluted and untainted with vestigial imperialism, with

dilapidated colonialism which does not look for allies among reactionaries and fascists and neo-Nazis, a program which is as simple and as heroic and as eternal as our Declaration of Independence or our Bill of Rights, as the Gettysburg Address, that will kindle the imagination of the world; that will give us leadership among the peoples of Asia and Africa who are struggling for freedom, for independence, for sovereignty, for equality. Such a program backed by such an alliance will ultimately win out.

There is an opportunity for us now to seize the initiative, the diplomatic initiative. The Soviet Union does not want war now. The new regime wants time to consolidate its power. In his funeral oration on Stalin, Malenkov called for a policy of peace among all peoples and "prolonged coexistence and peaceful competition of the two different systems, capitalist and socialist." He wants "prolonged coexistence and peaceful competition" of the East and the West. This has been echoed by all the Soviet spokesmen since and by the Communist press throughout the world. This is the official line, dictated now as always, by tactical considerations and the needs of the hour. This new line does not abandon officially the ultimate goal of Sovietism, which is the overthrow of all capitalist society. It simply means that the Kremlin realizes that such an overthrow of capitalist society is not feasible at the moment, that it cannot be achieved except through war, and that war is not now desirable for the Soviet Union. For the time being it serves the best interest of Communism to delay war. Stalin himself stated, not long before his death, that the coexistence of the two systems, ~~the~~ ~~the~~ capitalist and socialist, in the same world, was possible, and that war between them was not inevitable. He meant, of course, inevitable momentarily. He realized that post-war Russia needed a long peace period for reconstruction to recover from the ravages and the devastations of the second world war, and he remembered, too, that the major communist expansions following the second world war were achieved peacefully, without recourse to war.

Malenkov and the new regime have experienced the added necessity for a prolonged period of peace in order to establish themselves firmly in the saddle, to build up their own prestige. It takes some time to manufacture a halo. It took Stalin more than 15 years to do that, to establish, as it were, their spiritual authority and to strengthen the Kremlin's control over the satellite countries whose allegiance to Moscow is of rather short duration and of considerable uncertainty.

Now, if this reasoning is correct and Russia will not provoke war for some time to come, then the free world has time and opportunity to initiate strong diplomatic activity to bring about a peaceful settlement of many of the outstanding issues which now plague the relationship of the East with the West. And the free world should seize the initiative to take steps for peace and to abandon the psychology of the cold war with all its attendant paralysis of diplomatic action. The West has time not alone to consolidate not alone its own unity and its own strength, but to explore every possibility to find a "modus vivendi" with the East. And in my judgment - and I have stated it time and time again in this pulpit and elsewhere - there should be a meeting at the earliest opportune moment with the new rulers of Russia to explore such possibilities.

President Eisenhower has more than once declared that he is in favor of such a meeting. So did Churchill. So did Stalin. Certainly, Malenkov will be no less receptive to such a proposal than was Stalin.

Now, can the ice be finally broken? Is not this the opportune moment to try to break it? Or, will fear and suspicion and sinister forces, here and over there, permanently prevent a meeting which all men of good will everywhere are convinced can alone get the world out of this helpless and dangerous impasse in which it finds itself today.

This in my judgment is the major question which the death of Stalin has presented to the statesmen of the world. Can a new beginning be made, a new start, to get on the highway of international conference and relationship and diplomatic negotiations, and resume a measure of normal life in the world? Will President Eisenhower, who is today the most powerful man in the world, not by any dictatorial powers which he has arrogated unto himself, but ~~simply by the fact that he is the elected leader~~ by the fact that he is the elected leader of the most powerful nation in the world, dedicated to the eternal and therefore undefeated ideals of human life - freedom, the rights of man. Will President Eisenhower seize the opportunity, take the initiative, convoke such a meeting for stock-taking, for an attempted over-all settlement, if possible? There is no guarantee that such a meeting will succeed. I hope that he will, for otherwise, we are up against a stone wall and no one can move forward - no one. And when no one can move forward, when tensions become too strong, then desperate measures are resorted to, and history tells us what these desperate measures are. Perhaps, the passing of Stalin may usher in a new and more promising era for mankind.

1). Stalin is dead. Who will succeed him? That has been answered. What will succeed him? That remains to be answered.

Stalin died in bed. Hitler blew his brains out. Mussolini was killed to death and hung up, head down on a ~~tree~~ ^{tree}. Their empires crumbled with them, in blood, muck and ashes.

Nature's empire survived! It survived and expanded because Nature forced him into an alliance with the Allied nations during the 2nd world war - and together they won the war.

But he died - not a friend of the Allied nations who together with him stand in a common victory over Nazism and Fascism - but as their bitter foe - and in the midst of a memorable cold war with them.

2). Much has been said and written, Stalin and much will yet be said and written - and this is as the sum as close to recount his history or give an estimate of his life.

In fact, this generation will not write the final estimate of his life.

He died, hated by millions and by millions adored.

He did much evil in his life - time - and wrought much tragedy and suffering, and spilled much innocent blood; History might yet show that he also wrought much good.

①
What effect will Stalin's death have on the future, circumstances
in the world? Will it ~~result in~~ ^{result in} the break-up, & what might be called
the ~~present~~ ^{communist} empire which runs ~~throughout~~ ^{throughout}
~~the~~ across 1/4 of the earth's surface and embraces 750 M. people?
Will it result in a bitter internal rivalry - and struggle for
power among the top leaders in the Soviet hierarchy leading to
~~purges~~ ^{inner} disruption and disintegration? Will it lead to
unrest and revolution in the ~~satellite~~ ^{underlying} countries? Will the
communist tide recede in Asia? Will China assert
its independence & ~~the~~ the Koreans?

You have read, I am sure, and listened to much
serious discussion of these questions. The speculations will
go on for a long time. No one, not even, the present rulers
of Russia, know the answers. The surprise, uncertainty.
Will last a long time. The best informed minds ~~advise~~
caution against excessive optimism - that is to say
against high expectations of an early decline or break-
down in communist strength - and of early rifts and
conflicts which will weaken the ~~the~~ dictatorship.

(Note). Such a scramble for power ^{in Moscow} may develop -
~~but probably not in the~~ - it developed in Prague late
last year bet. the Gottwald crowd and the Havel crowd
leading to the trials and purges - which were reminiscent
of the Moscow dread trials of 1930 from which Stalin
emerged the victor and undisputed autocrat of Russia & the
Communist Party - It may develop again in Moscow

but ~~not~~ probably not immediately ² or soon. - We should not plan on it.

The prospect of a revolution inside Russia itself can be definitely ruled out. Communism has been firmly established there for more than thirty years. The new generations ~~have~~ ^{are} ~~no~~ ^{are} no other way of life and another form of government. They have been thoroughly indoctrinated with the theory of their system - and its superiority to all other systems in the world. In fact they have been taught to commiserate with the viper - parasites people who live miserable existences under the enfeebled capitalist systems in other countries - and to hate their ultimate liberators. ^{There are 7-8 million hulking & viciously armed and disciplined men open trained into strike and conquest in the army - they have}

Even if this were not the case, there is no possibility of organized resistance in the present state of the country. Universal surveillance which the communist regime has perfected. Then quest just came about a collapse of the regime - at break-down of apparatus, and before the masses will begin to move -

There is a greater likelihood of various developing in one or another of the satellite states - Poland - Hungary - Czechoslovakia - Rumania - Bulgaria. There have not been communist for long and communism has not kept them the promised well-being - rather increased want - cold - hunger - and the iron heel of oppression. They are not reverted to the less, they want national independence. And their compulsory subservience to Moscow distorts their pol. economic life - the peasants, the glaciers, the Stalin Myths - & the Stalin Legend - may encourage reaction

Titoism among them - and many had to nationalist upsurges
and attempts at breaking away from the Comintern - One
such successful effort may crumble the Soviet Arch, the
Moscow oriented Communist empire. -

It is difficult to know how China will react. ~~It~~
~~is said~~ China is twice as large in population as the ~~whole~~
~~of~~ Russia. How long will the tail wag the dog? ~~It~~
~~is said~~ that the Chinese command ~~greatly~~ ~~admired~~
renowned Stalin as the "leader, the world revolution" and suppl
that party among them. ~~the~~ Mao, their leader, including
their inferior leader Mao-Ts-tung, were trained in revolutionary
techniques and discipline in Russia - China is at the moment
dependent upon Russia for military, technical ~~and financial~~
and is presently the war in Korea. Whether they will now
transfer to Mao-Ts-tung & the new Party leader their loyalty
and entirety to the revolutionary leadership, Russia
remains to be seen. It is, however, not likely that
Mao-Ts-tung will declare himself independent & a powerful
ally, & offer the substantial military assistance, ~~at~~
as long as the U.S. encourages Chang Kai-Shek to
resume the Civil War in China with America's backing.

Were I, to make a guess and it is only a guess,
I would venture the guess that Stalin marked the peak
of Communist strength in the world - and that with his
passing the tide will begin ~~to~~ to recede.

"There has been a serious ^⑤ shortage of ammunition ever since I have been in Korea; there has been a critical shortage at times. There is to day a serious shortage of some kinds of ammunition!"

Is it not high time - for those charged with preparing our nation for military defense - ~~and our military~~ ^{to give as results} ~~charged with~~ instead of alibis - Is it not high time to drive the incompetents ^{out} the incompetents, the spend bums from office - if we intend to match in strength the most ruthless military dictatorships in the world ^{despite to what we are} ~~where there are~~ no alibis - and blunders are as costly as life.

But even the effort towards unity among the free peoples - and for a strong collective defense is not enough - There must be a clear, clear program as which the free world can be united and allied allies won and held. - A program undisputed, and untainted with ^{vestigial} imperialism, with diplomatic colonialism - ~~with~~ ^{which} ~~which~~ does not look for alibis among reactionaries and fascists and neo-fascists - which is as simple and heroic and eternal as our Declaration of Independence, or our Bill of Rights - or the Gettysburg address -

Such a program, backed ^⑥ by such an alliance, will
ultimately win out!



1

Certainly Soviet does not want war now!

New regime will want time to consolidate its power.

In his funeral oration on Stalin, Malenkov called for a policy of peace among all peoples and "prolonged coexistence and peaceful competition of the two different systems, Capitalist and socialist"

This has been echoed by all Soviet spokesmen and communist press all over the world.

It is the official line, dictated, now as always, by tactical considerations - and the needs of the Koms.

It does not abandon the ultimate goal of Socialism which is the overthrow of all capitalist society.

It simply means that the Komsomol realizes that such an overthrow of capitalist society is not feasible at the moment - that it cannot be achieved except thru war - and that war is not now desirable.

For the time being - it serves the best interest of Communism to delay war -

Stalin himself stated not long before his death that the coexistence of the two systems in the same world was possible - and that war between them was not inevitable. ~~He had for the moment~~ He meant of course momentarily inevitable. He realized that post-war Russia needed a long peace period for reconstruction.

to remove from the devastation, was and is.
He remembered, too, that the major communist expansion
following the II world war, was achieved peacefully, without
resort to war:

- Malenkov & the new regime have the added need for a
~~long~~ prolonged peace period in order to establish their
relatives firmly in the saddle. to build up their prestige
Hols and spiritual authority, ~~in the / Soviet Union~~ ^{at home} and to
strengthen the Kumbis' control over the Satellite countries
whose allegiance to Moscow is of short duration, and of
considerable uncertainty.

If this reasoning is correct, then the free world has time
and an opportunity ~~to~~ ^{to initiate} ~~strong~~ diplomatic activity to bring
about a peace settlement of many, the outstanding
issues, ~~which~~ ^{which} ~~play~~ ^{play} the relationship, the East & the West.

Then it should seize the initiative to press for peace
and abandon the psychology, the cold war, with all
its attendant paralysis of diplomatic actions.

The West has time not alone to consolidate its own
unity and its own strength - but to explore every
possibility to work out a "modus vivendi" with the
East.

There should be a meeting at the earliest opportunity
moment with the new rulers of Russia to explore
such possibilities.

Pres. Eisenhower more than ⁵ once that he is in favor of
such a meeting - So did Churchill. So did Stalin.
Certainly Malenkov ^{will be} ~~is~~ no less receptive to such a
proposal than Stalin.
- Can the ice be finally broken? ^{And is not this an opportunity} ^{to move forward to peace?} Will fear and suspicion
and sinister forces, here and there, permanently prevent
a meeting which all men of good-will everywhere are
convinced can alone get ~~the~~ the word out of the Russian
and ~~dangerous~~ ^{universe} in which it now finds itself.



Premier is a logical result of the Soviet hierarchical procedure. The early announcement of this move was designed primarily to offset Western speculations on Soviet internal weakness.

As to the possibilities of a Stalin-Trotsky type of struggle for power, it should be kept in mind that those who are at the helm of Soviet power today fully realize, both from experience and history, the dangers with which such a struggle is fraught. And it is therefore only reasonable to assume that their awareness of the tense international situation, coupled with a desire to secure what they have gained—both in personal power and Communist strength—will force them to act with extreme caution. It is almost certain that Malenkov, Bulganin, Molotov and Beria will not risk their own necks or undo thirty-six years of sinister work by throwing themselves into a mad scramble for power.

What will probably happen is that the U. S. S. R. will for some time be run by a sort of pre-Napoleonic Directoire—a council of four until an agreement among them has been reached. Such an agreement will turn out to be that the successor to Stalin will serve merely as a symbolic figurehead, while the real power will remain with the council of four. Whether this figurehead (designed primarily for propaganda purposes to champion the Communist cause throughout the world) will ultimately succeed in capturing power remains to be seen.

ZACHARY DE GASTER.

New York, March 6, 1953.

Obstacles to Inventive