

STALIN DIES

The most powerful man in the world is taken from the political field. The dictator of all the Russias is swept into the unknown, as a leaf or a crum ~~is~~ blown by the wind. Stalin knew he would never see great age when at the funeral of his friend Zhdanov he was a pall-bearer. Malankov was ~~already~~ ^{probably} named successor, although no dictator - Cromwell, ^{Napoleon} ~~Mussolini~~, Hitler, was ever able to bequeath his power. Nor can any Russian, Molotov, Malankov, Beria, Bulganin or any other, inherit the undisputed authority that was Joseph Stalin's.

At Teheran, in wartime, Winston Churchill presented to him the Sword of Stalingrad, tribute of Britain to the Red Army. Britain and America were at last Russia's friends, as well as allies. We all believed that when the war was over friendship would last and the 3 Powers ~~would~~ guarantee world-peace. President Roosevelt brought the goodwill of his country. The old hostility gave place to comradeship of war.

Again at the Yalta conference, mostly in harmony, the three great men planned victory. There was no sign, in Stalin's outward bearing, that the 14 men of the Kremlin desired no friendship after victory. When the war ended Field Marshal Montgomery was welcomed there. But as he shrewdly saw, behind lavish hospitality, Stalin would have no military co-operation. Russia had thrown away the immense goodwill she built up in the war. Ernest Bevin ^{tried} ~~tried~~ at the Moscow Foreign Ministers' Conference, to renew friendship, ^{but} The 10-million bayonets of the Red Army were Stalin's reply. ^{He} ~~That~~, and the cold war - soon to hot up in Korea. He will be known to posterity as the man who turned down the best chance of world-peace in all history. Fascinated by power, ~~boundlessly ambitious~~, he had the strength without scruple, to get his way. But the two qualities, without which no man is a great ruler, justice and human feeling, he completely lacked. Absolute power corrupted absolutely.