

STALIN DEAD

Moscow heads the Communist world in mourning the passing of Joseph Stalin. From a saluting base on Lenin's tomb, he reviewed each year on Red Army Day, men of the Soviet Armed Forces. Army, Navy and Air Force - all had been fostered by Stalin himself until, now, they have become one of the greatest military powers in the world. His people regarded as a God this man who was born the son of a shoemaker, for, above all, he became a star to guide them to a more prosperous way of life. In return they gave him their undying devotion and accepted his every word as law. But one thing Stalin did not give them - their freedom: and that to countries outside the Iron Curtain means all.

Over the years Soviet propaganda built up a picture of Stalin as a kindly man who loved his people. Yet, when Lenin died, it was he who destroyed those same people (it is believed nearly seven millions of them) to make his position secure as Russia's dictator. And through the 30 years of his rule, he remained unchallenged even by members of the Supreme Council, the Soviet's Administrative machine. Of this body, Stalin was the chairman and held the reins so tightly that no decision could be taken without his approval. Thus none could contest the power he held over 200 million Russian people.

Then in the last war, Russia took arms against Nazi Germany and the grand Alliance was formed. At Yalta, following the collapse of the enemy, the Big Three met - Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin to plan for peace. But Stalin abused the privileges that victory won him and still world peace is threatened by his policy of Communist domination. Russia herself has known fear in post-war days. Nine Jewish doctors were accused of murdering Zhdanov, once believed to be Stalin's successor.

Nov Molotov, Chief of Secret Police Beria, and Stalin's right-hand man Malenkov are among those tipped as Russia's new ruler.

Malenkov (reports indicate) seems the most likely to follow in the steps of his master - probably by methods similar to those adopted by Stalin himself, who had all his rivals liquidated to establish his initial power. Anxiously the world waits for the name of the new Soviet dictator. Whoever shall occupy the Kremlin, follows a man of genius. Yet he was not wholly a great man, for he lacked humanity and the will for peace, the essentials for everlasting greatness.