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375 Park Avenue

New York City 22

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April 27, 1953

Dear Allen:

Since I wrote you last, Simkhaeff^H came to see me on Saturday following his return visit to Mouravirov on Friday. The interesting points on his account of this visit are as follows:

1 - The regulation, in force since the last war, that Soviet officials, however high their position, cannot receive a foreigner alone, has evidently been abolished. Mouravirov came to see Simkhaeff alone, and received him alone in his office. While talking frankly with Simkhaeff he turned on a small radio, apparently in order to make it difficult for others in the surrounding rooms to overhear their conversation.

2 - When Simkhaeff entered Mouravirov's office he saw only a black-bordered picture of Stalin on the wall. He jokingly asked why there were no pictures of the new leaders. Mouravirov answered only that he will shortly take Stalin's picture off the wall. Such a statement, even as a joke, would have been completely unthinkable a few months ago. It indicates that a rapid decline of the Stalin myth is taking place. The tenor of the conversation seemed to point to the conclusion that Mouravirov did not know whose picture should hang on the wall, but was quite sure that he would soon be able to get rid of Stalin's.

At my request, during his next meeting with Mouravirov, Simkhaeff will try to find out what the party circles know about the position of Malenkov and the others. Mouravirov arrived from Moscow only about ten days ago and should be up to date on the situation there, since higher party circles are usually well-informed. I hope that because of their old friendship, Mouravirov will be frank with Simkhaeff. What we can learn in this way may show whether my theory on the subject is correct.

3 - Mouravirov told Simkhaeff that before leaving Moscow he had a long talk with Mikoyan, who is one of the "old guard" in the Politbureau and Minister for domestic and foreign trade. Mikoyan told him that things will change rapidly in Russia (referring to the general atmosphere and the peace offensive), and that he is confident that relations with the U.S. will greatly improve. He ordered Mouravirov to do his utmost to revive U.S.-Soviet trade relations. Mikoyan pointed out that Great Britain continues to carry on a very substantial trade with the Soviet Union, and expressed the hope that the solution

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of the Korean problem and other peaceful moves will bring about a change in the attitude of the U.S. government and of public opinion towards the Soviet Union. Mikoyan asked Mouraviov to concentrate all his efforts on the promotion of U.S.-Soviet trade.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

/s/ L Moore

L. MOORE

P. S. Unfortunately I again have some trouble with my throat. The cancerous area appears to be quite small and in its initial stage, but starting on Monday, I have to undergo a series of treatments with some new and powerful machine. I still hope to be in Washington on the 30th, however, and hope that you will be able to see me for a short time.

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