Telegram from the Chairman of the Council of the People's Commissars, I.V. Stalin, to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, V.M. Molotov, dated 19 September 1945

Top Secret

NOT IN ORDER

I am sending you Comrade Stalin’s telegram that is addressed to you.

"1. You have already received Vyshinsky’s message about how in Romania there are now seventeen American correspondents. That is several times more than the number of Soviet correspondents. From this, it is clear that the complaint of American correspondents being barred in Romania is totally unfounded.

With regard to regulations established for foreign correspondents, it would be ridiculous to consider the criterion of democratic disposition when foreign journalists can write what they want and use their activity to the detriment of the country they are visiting. It would be as if the government and the regime in Romania are there not for the people, who approve of its activities, but to satisfy the whims of foreign correspondents. This supposedly is the criterion of democracy. It is funny and it is necessary to ridicule.

2. When discussing the peace treaty with Italy, we need to link this issue to the issue of peace treaties with the other satellites. If decisions are taken with respect to our satellites that no peace treaties can be signed with them, or if Byrnes or Bevin make such an official declaration, as was mentioned to you by Byrnes, we will also have to make a declaration on the impossibility for us to sign a peace treaty with Italy at the present moment.

We will have to declare that, whereas Italy is the same kind of satellite as Romania, Bulgaria, Finland or Hungary, we shall not be willing to discriminate against any of these and shall not be able to agree to sign the peace treaty with Italy alone, and more so, as the regime in Italy is less democratic than in Romania, Bulgaria or Finland, and furthermore, Italy has caused more damage to the Soviet Union and the Allies, than all the other satellites have done together.

What may come out of this? The outcome may be that the Allies will conclude the peace treaty with Italy without us. So what? We will have the precedent. We will have the opportunity to sign, in our turn, peace treaties with our satellites without the Allies.

If such an outcome will lead to the session of the Council of Ministers having no joint decisions on the main issues, we should not be afraid of such result either.

 Stalin

Please confirm receipt.

VYSHINSKY

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