

Khrushchev Denies Releasing Memoirs For U.S. Publication

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MOSCOW, Nov. 16 — Nikita S. Khrushchev, the former Soviet leader, issued a statement today dissociating himself from the coming publication in the West of what he called his "so-called memoirs or reminiscences."

"This is a fabrication and I am indignant at this," he said in a brief, signed statement distributed by Tass, the official Soviet press agency.

It was the first time that Tass had mentioned Mr. Khrushchev's name on its wires since his ouster six years and one month ago as First Secretary of the Communist party and Premier of the Government.

Ambiguous Language

The Tass report was read over Soviet radio this evening during regular news programs, the first time Mr. Khrushchev's once-familiar name was heard by the Soviet people in this same period of time. It was also the first time they had heard officially about the reported existence of his recollections abroad.

Fotokhronika, the official Soviet photo agency, distributed a facsimile of the Khrushchev statement to news agencies.

Mr. Khrushchev's statement was couched in ambiguous language and did not explicitly rule out that what would be published by Time Inc., and other Western houses would be his authentic words.

He said:

"It is seen from reports of the press in the United States and some other capitalist countries that the so-called memoirs or reminiscences of N. S.

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Khrushchev are now being prepared for publication.

"This is a fabrication and I am indignant at this. I have never passed on memoirs or materials of this nature either to Time or other foreign publishing houses.

"I did not turn over such materials to the Soviet publishing houses either. Therefore, I declare that this is a fabrication. The venal bourgeois press has many times been exposed with such lies. N. Khrushchev."

Mr. Khrushchev seemed to be denying that he had had any direct role in offering any material for publication. But his denial left open the possibility that someone else or others might have done so, with or without his permission. Western publishing sources have suggested that Time Inc. has put together its book from tape recordings and other material sent out of Russia at different times.

The Times of London, which is to publish excerpts, "there is reason to believe" that a 400,000-word Khrushchev manuscript is in possession of "the Soviet secret police which, for its own reasons, decided to sell excerpts in the West."

Life magazine, in its current issue, says "we do not know" if Mr. Khrushchev intended publication in the West, but asserts it has "taken every possible precaution to verify authenticity."

Time Inc. in its original statement on Nov. 6, said the book to be published by Little, Brown and excerpted by Life, would be called "Khrushchev Remembers" and "is made up of material emanating from various sources."

"Life and Little, Brown are convinced beyond any doubt, and have taken pains to confirm, that this is an authentic record of Nikita Khrushchev's words," it said.

The book is said to include material concerning Mr. Khrushchev's role as a leading party official, including an interview with Stalin, the struggle for power after Stalin's death, the execution of Lavrenti P. Beria, the secret police chief, and the rivalry for power within the top leadership.

It has been announced that the book goes up to the time Mr. Khrushchev left office in 1964 and does not include his fall from power or any comments on the current leaders.

Nevertheless, the fact that Tass was authorized to carry the Khrushchev statement and that one apparently was solicited from the 76-year old former leader, now living in enforced retirement and in poor health in a large villa outside Moscow, indicated that Soviet authorities were concerned about the impact the Khrushchev reminiscences might have inside and outside the country.

The current leaders have

sought to soften Mr. Khrushchev's harsh criticism of Stalin, by avoiding any public recollection of the terror methods employed by Stalin. Moreover, little is said about past inter-party feuds of the nineteen-fifties. Both these are subjects that Mr. Khrushchev is said to have described in his reported recollections.

There probably is displeasure at attention's being focused on Mr. Khrushchev, who, since his ouster, has been virtually a "nonperson." His name has been banned from the regular media and his 75th birthday was ignored last year.

Ever since Time's announcement 10 days ago, there has been intense speculation here on the subject of the memoirs. It is generally agreed that Mr. Khrushchev in fact did not write any. A very reliable source said that he knew only

a few months ago that Mr. Khrushchev was looking for a ghost writer.

It is not ruled out that some member of his family or a close friend had been taking notes of discussions with him or had tape recordings, and arranged to smuggle them out.

Linked to Soviet Police

The Times of London, which is to publish installments of "Khrushchev Remembers," is saying in today's editions in London that the manuscript emerged by way of the Soviet secret police.

The British newspaper's statement at one point said the "material for memoirs" was "apparently dictated" and at another said:

"It is believed that Mr. Khrushchev has written more than 400,000 words about his life, but the complete manu-

script has not been made available in the West.

"There is reason to believe that it is in the possession of the KGB, the Soviet secret police, which, for its own reasons, decided to sell excerpts in the West."

Time Inc., which announced Nov. 6 that it had obtained more than 275,000 words of Khrushchev reminiscences "emanating from various sources," has declined to specify its origin and initial form.

Narrative Put in Order

But The Times of London statement said the material had been "a rambling, repetitive, sometimes self-contradictory, sometimes inaccurate, usually tendentious narrative in no sort of order and full of gaps."

An American translator, Strobe Talbott, "has taken this fragmentary record and put it

fragmentary record and put it more or less chronological order," The Times of London added.

"It would appear that Mr. Khrushchev was bursting at the seams, that in his declining years he was trying to justify himself," the British newspaper said.

Life magazine, which over

the weekend quoted Mr. Khrushchev as saying he was telling stories for "the self-purification of our party," says in its current issue:

"Did Khrushchev intend this manuscript to be published in the West? We do not know. Having taken every possible precaution to verify authenticity, Life is certain that this

is what Khrushchev wanted to say—to somebody, somewhere—in the knowledge that his time had come and gone, and with the conviction that he had a legitimate place in history."

The publishing venture has become probably one of the biggest ever, with Time Inc. negotiations completed with newspapers or magazines alone

in 19 countries for more than \$1-million in sales thus far.

The outlets include the Suomen Kuvalehti picture magazine in Finland, Ydionth Aroth in Israel, Shukan Bunshun in Japan, Consolidated Newspapers of Australia, Argus Newspapers of South Africa and Rhodesia, and Western European publications.