MOSCOW FACING GREAT DILEMMA
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It Can Exploit West's Action in Egypt or Open War to Keep Hungary in Bloc

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

The Soviet Government appears to be faced with one of the greatest political dilemmas in its history.

The choice seems to be between keeping intact the empire Stalin bequeathed to the present Soviet rulers or exploiting the propaganda opportunity presented by the British-French-Israeli military action against Egypt.

Dispatches yesterday seemed to suggest a serious lack of coordination in Soviet foreign policy.

On the one hand Moscow yesterday issued an appeal for another conference of the nations that met in April, 1955, at Bandung, Indonesia, to demand a cease-fire in Egypt. It appeared to be taking an imaginative initiative to place itself at the head of the great wave of protest in Asia and Africa against the war on Egypt.

In this move the Soviet Government appeared to be trying to realize the fruits of its long years of denunciation of Western imperialism and colonialism. Rarely, if ever, had Moscow had such an opportunity to range on its side the more than one billion people who are or have been under Western colonial rule or influence.

Hungary's Escape Looms

But in Hungary the Soviet Union seemed faced with the gravest blow its prestige has yet suffered. Premier Imre Nagy's denunciation of the Warsaw Pact—the Soviet bloc counterpart of the Atlantic Alliance—his declaration of Hungarian neutrality, and his protest against reinforcement of Soviet troops in Hungary appeared to threaten the complete escape of Hungary from the Soviet bloc if strong action were not taken. There were indications last night a decision might have been taken to use force against the Hungarians.

But if the Soviet Union uses force to put down what appears now to have become the anti-Soviet rebellion of Hungary, its moral and political position in the Middle Eastern situation would seem to be destroyed. The Soviet Union would be in the position of the pot calling the kettle black, since it has denounced what Britain, France and Israel are doing in Egypt.

Polish Explosion Possible

Making the Hungarian problem even more difficult from the Soviet point of view is the situation in Poland, where widespread sympathy for Hungary has been evident. A Soviet war against the Hungarian Army and people would raise the danger of a new explosion in Poland, with the possibility that Soviet military action would be required in that country as well.

These complications further aggravate the Hungarian situation:

Soviet troops in Hungary, or many of them at least, have seen enough of the last week's developments to know that what has happened there is not a Fascist plot.

The possibility that Soviet troops might defect in a war against Hungary would seem to have to be weighed. Even in the last week there were reports that individual Soviet soldiers and tank units had refused to fight the Hungarians. One demand raised by the Hungarian rebels was for amnesty for Soviet soldiers who had refused to fire on them.

Moreover, any military action in Hungary would have adverse effects on Soviet-United States relations at a time when President Eisenhower—in his Tuesday night speech—seemed to open up new possibilities for a Soviet-United States rapprochement.

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