

N.R.

EASTERN EUROPE

4. The Hungarian situation: The complete failure of Soviet troops and Hungarian forces still loyal to the government to prevent the spread of the Hungarian rebellion has apparently forced the central regime of Imre Nagy to revise drastically its over-all policies and to abandon attempts to force the insurgents to surrender. Instead Nagy, calling for a cease-fire on the basis of the status quo, has ordered both Soviet and Hungarian forces not to fire unless fired upon by the rebels, and has been increasingly concessionary toward insurgent demands. The Nagy regime has also assured the insurgents that it is already

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negotiating with the USSR for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from the country. By so doing, Nagy has, in effect, shifted the basis for whatever authority he now possesses from reliance on Soviet support to hoped-for insurgent support.

The Soviet attitude toward this shift remains completely unclear. The USSR may now have only two choices: full-scale war against a Hungarian rebellion which would be supported by virtually all Hungarians, including Nagy, or withdrawal within the near future of all Soviet military forces in the country. The first alternative would necessitate massive reinforcement of the Soviet troops which are now in Hungary.

[REDACTED] three Soviet armies totaling 27 divisions are converging on Hungary from Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and the Ukraine. There is no confirmation of this or similar reports of Soviet and Czech forces moving toward the Czech-Hungarian border. It is believed that the two divisions of Soviet forces regularly based in Hungary have been reinforced by Soviet elements from the USSR and Rumania.

The rebel forces, acting independently with no central leadership, appear to be in control of most of Hungary outside of Budapest. The independent provisional committee of Miskolc on the evening of the 28th called for a unification of the activities of the numerous provisional committees which have been established throughout Hungary. Attacking the Nagy government appointed 27 October as one "relying on a foreign power," the Miskolc committee is demanding the immediate formation of a new provisional coalition government under Nagy which would exclude all ministers who served under Rakosi. This government would be pledged to establish "a truly democratic free and socialist Hungary," and to hold general elections within two months in which several parties would participate. The Miskolc committee stated the provisional government's first act must be the immediate removal of Soviet troops from Hungary.

A few hours earlier Premier Nagy, in a desperate effort to meet rebel demands, announced that Soviet forces were now observing a cease-fire in Budapest and that after a Hungarian militia was formed to maintain public order, the Soviet units would move out of the Budapest area. Nagy also acceded to basic economic demands of the workers' councils, but he made no reference to freedom of religion or elections. In a subsequent Budapest radio broadcast, results of a cabinet

meeting were announced in which the government body called for a revision of collectivization policies, a revision in the status of small craftsmen, changes in the system of produce collection, and basic changes in educational processes.

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5. East European reaction to Hungarian developments: The Satellite press generally has minimized developments in Hungary, while popular reaction has been sympathetic in Poland and Rumania.

The Czechs called public meetings at all levels which have publicized pledges of loyalty to the party and inseparable friendship with the Soviet Union, culminating in a similar politburo decree of 25 October. Two Rumanian Foreign Ministry officials commented on 25 October to Minister Thayer that "things were just as they should be" in Hungary and Poland--that it was up to the people to determine what is necessary in the process of democratization. A report of 23 October from Berlin states that the Polish central committee sent a congratulatory message to the Hungarian central committee praising the Hungarian moves toward de-Stalinization.

The Satellite press reaction has generally followed Moscow's lead in noting only briefly that disturbances have developed in Hungary, "where counterrevolutionary forces attempted to overthrow the regime." These forces were described as local and isolated groups of anti-socialists who are being stimulated by imperialist forces of the West. Only the Czechs and Poles have received fairly detailed descriptions of the actual events, and only the Czechs have been told of the anti-Soviet nature of the revolt and of the intervention of Soviet troops to quell it.

Public reaction has been sympathetic in the few instances thus far registered. Groups of Poles demonstrated on 24 October in front of the Hungarian embassy and then headed for the Soviet embassy but were stopped by tear gas. Two groups sent telegrams of support to Hungarian youth and writers' groups, according to the Polish press. The American minister in Rumania notes a reliable report that Hungarian students in Cluj, Rumania, have gone on strike as a reaction to Hungarian events, demanding cultural autonomy and better Hungarian minority representation in Rumania's affairs.

Yugoslav reaction has been one of satisfaction with the changes in the Hungarian regime. The Yugoslavs have decried

only the fact that liberalization measures were not taken early enough to avoid armed conflict. They say Hungary can solve its present problems only through continued recognition of the workers' demands and further democratization. They describe the armed revolt as the work of irresponsible individuals which has been seized upon by anti-socialists.

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