

PLANNING JOINT ACTION ON HUNGARY

24-NATION MOVE AFTER U.N. DENUNCIATION

SOVIET "BRUTALITY AND LYING"

From Our United Nations Correspondent

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Delegations at United Nations headquarters have reacted in the strongest possible fashion to the report, made public to-day, of the five-man special committee on Hungary, with its damning indictment of Soviet tyranny. The question being asked now is: what can the United Nations do to assert its moral authority when so flagrant a crime against human rights is so abundantly proved?

Already the initiative has been taken by the 24 countries responsible for setting up the committee of inquiry last January, and they are expected to meet early next week to discuss positive action. Among the 24 countries are Britain and the United States, both of whom have made their positions clear—Britain in a statement from the Foreign Office in London, and the United States through her representative here, Mr. Cabot Lodge.

SELF-PROTECTION

Mr. Lodge says that the report, with "its account of Soviet brutality and lying and cheating," is so detailed that it "must be carefully studied by all Governments, large and small, both as a matter of justice to Hungary and for their own self-protection against future Soviet attempts to overwhelm them. What the Soviets have done in one place they may try to do in another." Mr. Lodge goes on to express the hope that the 24-nation meeting will reach decisions on "the most effective future steps."

Already there are indications that American public opinion, exercised as it has been over events in Hungary, will be incensed by the grim facts revealed in the report, and will demand early action by the United Nations to put Russia in the dock again. This could be done by reconvening the General Assembly, which adjourned its eleventh session four months ago on the understanding that the Hungarian question remained on its agenda and could be raised again whenever necessary.

There are arguments both for and against a General Assembly meeting at this stage. In favour, is the fact that such a meeting would underline the urgency of Hungary's plight and the enormity of Russia's offence. It would show that the world conscience, far from being lulled by the recent Soviet "peace

offensive," is still deeply shocked by what happened in Hungary last autumn.

Were such a session to be held now, with its inevitable rancorous debate, it might have adverse repercussions on the disarmament talks in London just as they are reaching a crucial stage. This might or might not be justified by the prospect of something constructive being done about Hungary, and on this there is at present no consensus.

Most delegations here feel it would be difficult to recall the eleventh session of the General Assembly at short notice with the leading representatives, especially at this trying summer season in New York, and anything less than a full dress debate might be an anti-climax.

Alternative courses are therefore being canvassed. One suggestion is that the 24 nations who sponsored the inquiry committee should meet here without delay and decide on a strategy, which could then be propounded to the other members of the United Nations, so that the Soviet Union could be brought to book with maximum effect. Were this to be done, the General Assembly could reconvene its present session early in September, just before the 12th session is due to start, and with the Hungarian question as its sole pre-occupation.

INDIRECT PRESSURE

The drawback here is that, once the eleventh session ended, the case against Russia might also have to be dropped. For this reason there are those who hold that the General Assembly could put the Hungarian question at the head of its agenda for the next—the twelfth—session, and should continue to give it top priority for the whole of that session, so that Russia would be subjected to a constant barrage of publicity and pressure. Were this to be done, her claim to be a member of the United Nations in good standing would remain open to challenge until she was forced to mend her ways.

As to the present Kadar régime, there is no suggestion here at present of forcing its representatives out of the United Nations (their credentials have neither been accepted nor rejected), but rather of allowing them to continue to function, subject to the maximum amount of embarrassment. This might also be a form of indirect pressure on Russia.