

HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY.

Rushed out of Budapest in the last hours before the Russians took control, these pictures make you an eyewitness of Hungary's brief but tragic civil war. This is how it all started - with a peaceful students' demonstration, 100,000 strong. They carried pro-Communist banners; no one spoke of rebellion; all they asked was greater democracy within the present regime - reforms on the Polish pattern.

There was no hint here of the bitter days to come. It looked more like a meeting in Hyde Park - a holiday atmosphere, with good temper taking the edge from strong opinions. Hungarians fraternized with Russian troops. But meanwhile, on the radio, Party Secretary Gero was describing the demonstrators as "rabble" - and the word was like a burning match in a powder-barrel.

The first clashes were between the demonstrators and the hated secret police. Budapest workers and students, armed by sympathetic soldiers, began rounding up any they could catch. Like wildfire the news spread through the city that police had been firing on the crowds in Stalin Square. Hungarian Army units rushed to the Square to restore order, and for a while nobody could tell who was fighting whom. But as the rising took shape, the Government called in Russian tanks - and battle was joined.

All the pent-up emotions of a decade - all the hatred of Russian interference - flared up at once. Budapest became a battleground. Too late, the Party sacked Gero; too late, the new Premier Imre Nagy tried to reverse the Government's mistakes and call off the Russian tanks. The rebels - Communist and anti-Communist, soldier, worker, and student - were united in their demands. No more Russians; no more secret police; freedom and independence for their native land.

Both men and women were caught up in the fighting, which raged from street to street and from square to square. By now the rising was better armed, for most of the Hungarian Army was on the people's side, and was supplying them with arms and ammunition.

After a grim battle, the headquarters of the A.V.G. - the secret police - was captured by the insurgents. The wounded were hurried away, and the dead A.V.G. men left where they had fallen. The victors made great bonfires of secret police dossiers, propaganda literature and red flags beside the bodies of the vanquished.

Red Cross supplies from Austria and farther afield were now pouring across Hungary's Western frontier - and the need was great, for the number of wounded ran into thousands.

At last the tide was turning. The rebels were gaining the upper hand. The Government were negotiating with the Kreamlin for the withdrawal of Russian troops. A wave of national pride ran through the capital. But the triumph was short-lived. While Budapest was still burying its dead, a shocked world learned that the Russians had denounced Nagy's Government, set up one of their own, and began to occupy Hungary in its name. Hungary's cup of bitterness has not yet been emptied; but her spirit cannot die.....