

Zhukov Case Seen Stressing Role of Party in Soviet Union

By A. B. MAGIL

THE DOWNGRADING of Marshal Zhukov seems to have caused almost as much stir in the world as the upgrading—to be exact, the elevation of Sputnik. Here is one more oppressed, war-ravaged country took its firstbit of evidence that 40 years after a backward,

unsteady steps toward a new socialist society, the impact of the society on world events is such that every new development within it becomes a matter of vital interest to millions throughout the world.

As this is written (Wednesday) reasons for Zhukov's removal have not yet been disclosed. Clearly the "experts," who had been predicting that Zhukov was about to downgrade Soviet Communist Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, were caught with their tea-leaves down. Says Tito.

One of the saddest of the crystal ball gazers was the syndicated columnist, Joseph Alsop. On Friday, Oct. 25, the New York Herald-Tribune published on its front page an Alsop dispatch from Warsaw under the headline:

"Russia's Real Boss? Zhukov. Alsop gave his readers "a remarkable piece of information confidentially passed on by the Yugoslavs to the Poles" or so he said. The very next day the "real boss was removed."

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NEVERTHELESS, there are indications that those who attributed to Zhukov political ambitions beyond his post as Defense Minister may have been right. L'Unita, Italian Communist Party daily, in a dispatch from its Moscow correspondent, cited reports that Zhukov had "put a brake" on Communist political education in the army. The dispatch said this posed the danger of the army "losing its democratic character and becoming an autonomous and uncontrolled body which would detach itself from the country . . . and might even be tempted to place itself above the country."

Regardless of whether Zhukov had such ambitions, the phenomenon of an active military leader—the commander-in-chief of the armed forces—in a post of top political leadership was anomalous and unprecedented in Soviet history.

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THE commercial press depicts the Zhukov episode as a ruthless power struggle between two individuals, Zhukov and Khrushchev. Communists have often tended to minimize the conflict of personalities in such situations. However, the truth doesn't lie at the opposite

extreme: converting personal ambition into the main lever of history, dominating all social and political factors.

Regardless of the personal element that may be involved, what Zhukov's removal emphasizes is the primacy of the Communist Party as the leader of all aspects of Soviet life, including the military. This was clearly Lenin's view and is implicit in the concept "vanguard of the working class."

This vanguard, which is supposed to consist of the most advanced, most energetic, most dedicated workers, collective farmers and intellectuals, by its very nature and function cannot be subordinate to any other institution. On the contrary, it aims to guide all social institutions and the state in order to promote the welfare of the entire mass of workers, collective farmers and intellectuals from whom the vanguard springs.

If Zhukov represented a tendency toward converting the army into "an autonomous and uncontrolled body," the the charge regardless of the methods employed, means the strengthening of Soviet democracy. We need only recall what happened when Stalin and Beria placed the Soviet party

under the thumb of the secret police.

What's more: the subordination of the military to the civilian conforms with democratic practices in capitalist countries like the United States, Britain and France.

One thing is certain: no basic policy change is involved. The same is unfortunately true about the exit of Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson from our government: Dulles' brinkmanship remains.

In his comments to U. S. and British diplomatic representatives at the Turkish Embassy reception the other night Khrushchev issued a challenge which points up how beneficial to our own and other countries the downgrading of brinkmanship would be:

"We will join NATO if you will join the Warsaw Pact."

President Eisenhower has announced he will attend a NATO summit meeting in December.

But can the problems of European security, of Germany, of the Middle East—can any world problem be solved without a NATO-Warsaw Pact summit meeting?

MISSILE WARFARE

