

Letter from Paris

The Summit Fiasco

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ON that fateful Tuesday when the ascent to the Summit was halted, each of the Big Four made weighty declarations. The underlying theme was that responsibility for the collapse of negotiations belonged to the Big Two, the United States and the Soviet Union. The Western Press was almost unanimous in its verdict that the wreckage in Paris was the work of Khrushchev. What puzzled the leader writers was the motive of his coming to the capital if his intentions were not honourable. To assemble the world press, to build up to a climax and then to take away the ladder from under the feet of the opponent was the type of diplomatic move they could not understand. The consequent fall in the prestige of the United States and the demand for public apology for an act of aggression focused the attention of the world on Eisenhower while the limelight of personal publicity was stolen by Khrushchev.

In the midst of those dramatic incidents which did not lead to the Summit, one fundamental fact was obscured. And this is important if a sensible approach towards solution of world problems is to be worked out. The fact is that the United States no longer calls the tune in international affairs. In the immediate post-War era, a decision taken across the Atlantic could decisively influence the political landscape of Europe and the world. But Sputnik and Lunik have considerably altered the realities of international life. Now the Soviet Union is technologically superior and, in the diplomatic field, it has made some interesting innovations. The earlier technique of telling a grand lie in an elegant manner does not appear to be effective any more. Today, if a State commits an aggressive act against another, it must make a clean breast of it in public. And if a State considers it desirable to be abusive, it must go ahead and exhaust its vocabulary, it is not undiplomatic to call a spade a spade.

SELF-RIGHTEOUS ATTITUDE

The tide of excitement has receded. It may be useful to recapitulate some of the basic facts which

led to the ultimate break-up. We must not pass a rash judgment of guilt on one or the other side. It may be that there is more than one centre of responsibility. It is contended both by the Soviet Union and the West that it is the other side that has been guilty of destroying the hopes of millions that the scuttling of the Summit was an unreasonable act. Each side has taken up a self-righteous and 'holier-than-thou' attitude. What are the basic assumptions on both sides? The most important are that the Summit Conference should have been held, that it is desirable to negotiate since international tension cannot be removed by force and, above all, that peace is a pre-condition for prosperity. What were the obstacles that prevented the meeting of the Heads of States? A fortnight before the Summit, someone somewhere decided to send a reconnaissance plane over the Soviet Union. On that day, the Russians were in a festive mood, celebrating May Day. Later, a series of statements and denials were issued by the U S Department of State. Each of these, getting more and more involved, contradicted the preceding one more blatantly. The obvious conclusion that emerged was that there was no co-ordination among the various departments of the American administration and certainly none between Herter and Eisenhower. The first reaction of Khrushchev was mild. Then he was assertive and still later he indicated that the President of the United States was not personally responsible for the act. With subtle and deadly humour, Khrushchev gave Eisenhower the opportunity to rectify a grave diplomatic error. Meanwhile, preparations for the Summit continued in Paris.

DEMONSTRATION OF 'BIGNESS'

On pre-Summit Sunday, when all the Big Four had been welcomed by De Gaulle in Paris, the Defence Secretary of the United States sounded an international alarm. The armed forces all over the world were to be ready and alert for an emer-

gency (what emergency?). Simultaneously, from Moscow came the news that a space-ship with a dummy had been launched by the Soviet Union. When Khrushchev was asked to comment on the event, he said that there was no connection between the space-ship and the Summit. When the United States was asked about the world-wide exercises, the Press Secretary denied them. And yet, both powers had demonstrated their 'bigness': one through military might, the other through technological achievement.

On Summit day, the intervening hours between the arrival of the Big Four at the Palais Elysee and the announcement of the Russian press conference were full of suspense and drama. Within four hours, news dispatches speeded to the capitals of the world. With the tact of a lawyer and the punch of a boxer, Khrushchev presented his case. The prosecuting counsel opened the case against the United States. The accused was convicted on the ground that he had committed an act of aggression. It was alleged that this act violated the sovereignty of the Soviet Union, it constituted a breach of obligation in international law. In these circumstances argued the prosecution, how could it proceed to hold negotiations? How could it sit at the same table with the culprit? The prosecution was ready to pardon the accused if he offered a public apology for his past acts and gave a guarantee of good behaviour for the future.

DEFENCE ARGUMENTS

The conditions were so harsh and the demand was so new that the accused was baffled — and unprepared for any worthwhile action. However, he had to defend his position. As the defence developed its case, the weakness of its basic argument became more and more apparent. The opening statement was that spying was not a grievous offence. Even if it was, it could not be considered aggressive. Furthermore, if such an act was committed, the benefit of it would accrue to the entire free world'. At this point.

some members of the 'free world' protested and refused to be accomplices. As an afterthought, the counsel for the defence added that acts like (his would not be repeated in future. Abruptly he remarked that the case of the prosecution was unreasonable and invalid.

At this juncture, two important witnesses were summoned to the court. The most reliable ally of the

accused took the stand somberly. During cross-examination, it came out that the act in question, that is to say, espionage was very unpleasant. But the witness added philosophically: one has to live with many unpleasant realities in international life. Towards the close of the proceedings, the last witness came forward. His elegant manner and alert disposition evoked much admira-

tion among the spectators. The witness maintained the most effective diplomatic silence. He answered all the leading questions in, monosyllables. In the final stage of the case, a tremor of fear ran through the court room.

The judge may have summoned up the evidence. But the jury must carefully assess the facts before venturing to give the final verdict.

Letter from Moscow

The Sverdorsk Spirit

Samar Sen

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THE spy plane that wrecked the Summit was brought down near Sverdorsk in the Urals. In reply to the American adventure, the workers of the Sverdorsk region have decided to fulfil the Seven Year Plan in five years. This, they declare, will be a rebuff to the American militarists. It is after quite a long time that the Russians have again begun to speak of the rule of monopolists and war-mongers in the U.S.A. But there is no scare. On the contrary, after the Paris fiasco, the emphasis on peaceful construction is more urgent than ever. In fact, some people think that it was good in a way that the Summit never met. It was doomed to failure and the failure might have had incalculable consequences. An air of unreality had been created about the Summit, an air of great expectations.

Now people know where they stand and who's who. The German question will await a more auspicious atmosphere,

This does not mean that Khrushchev was not keen on the Summit. He had laboured long for it. But, being astute, he read the straws in the wind. He knew that the Camp David spirit had deserted President Eisenhower. He still thinks that Eisenhower himself seeks peace and favours a relaxation of tension. But he has played into the hands of the Pentagon. Khrushchev is bitter about the whole business, about the structure of the U.S. Administration, about personalities, about the rock 'n' roll between the Pentagon and the armament manufacturers. Russia, of course, will not do anything out of bitterness. She will be alert, that's all.

People may argue that Khrushchev overdid it in Paris, that he

should have attended the Summit. He was rather rattled when de Gaulle and Macmillan failed to bring any pressure on Eisenhower. Did he bank on a split in the Western Camp? Did he miscalculate? Time will tell. But one thing is clear—the Summit would not have achieved anything, thanks to the calculated, aggressive moves of the Americans. And in not attending the Summit when the atmosphere was charged with bitterness and anger, Khrushchev was right.

At the moment, the 'foremost people in the competition for the right to the title of Communist Labour Teams and Shock-workers of Communist Labour' are meeting in Moscow. They are inspired by what may be called the Sverdorsk spirit, i.e., by the desire to overfulfil the Plan. Among the participants are many Heroes of Socialist Labour, scientists and engineers. Khrushchev said, these people will prove to the world that the Seven Year Plan is not a myth, it is a living reality. Call upon these people to do anything, and they will do it: when the chiefs of staff were worried by the flights of U.S. planes at such heights that Soviet fighter planes could not track them, they appealed to scientists, engineers and workers for means to stop intruders. And they evolved suitable rockets. Now it is clear, says Khrushchev, that U.S. bombers, flying at a height of 12 to 14,000 metres will not be able to do much harm—the Sverdorsk rocket brought down the U-2 plane from 20,000 metres.

What steps the Russians will take against spy sputniks is not yet known.

In the meantime, the ferment in U.S. bastions is quite welcome. Events in Turkey and Japan are given detailed coverage. There is no comment yet on the Turkish *coup*. It is hoped the new Government will take a saner attitude towards Soviet Russia. The Russians will watch and wait.

Summer has at last come. School-children are going to Pioneer Camps, many families to country cottages, others to holiday resorts. A little later, many grown-up students will go out to till virgin land.

A festival of Moldavian art and literature' has opened in Moscow.

The Kuibyshev Ballet and Opera Theatre is presenting Tagore's 'Chitrangada' on May 19 in Kuibyshev.

In Moscow, there are plans for a 'Shakuntala' ballet. Indian talent here has been asked to advise on the production of 'Nala Damayanti'

Rourkela Pipe Plant

The pipe plant being set up for the production of steel pipes by the electric resistance welded process at Rourkela will produce 8,600 to 31,000 tons per month depending upon the size and specifications of pipes ---8-3/4" to 20".

The plant will meet the immediate requirements of oil pipelines of the country and cater to future demands for pipes.

Rourkela was selected for the location of the plant as strips required for pipe manufacture could be rolled at the strip mill of the steel plant. The plant, which is estimated to cost Rs 4 crores, is expected to be in commission by September 1960.