

Letter from Moscow

# A New Approach

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June 11

THE scars of Paris are healing. The post mortem on the abortive Summit is almost over. The plan for disarmament with control now occupies newspaper columns. The refrain is: Soviet Russia has time and again proved her bonafides, it is for the West to act. Foreign reactions to the disarmament plan are featured on the front-page. There is no attempt to soft-pedal the difficulties ahead. A new approach to international affairs is evident in the Soviet press. Before May 16, Soviet newspapers seldom carried comments critical of, or lukewarm to, Russian policies. But the other day long extracts from the Indian press were published. Some of these did not go in for outright condemnation of the USA for the Summit breakdown, and one, referring to the announcement that the Russian Rocket Force has been asked to hit back if Soviet air space is violated, even described it as a 'threat to peace.' Another declared that, until the two armed giants met on equal terms and with anxious intentions to settle their disputes, the world would have no respite from tension. All these were published without comment.

The U S Senate inquiry into the U-2 and the Summit collapse was carried in detail. The Russian reader had no doubt that the State Department had engineered an atmosphere to sabotage the Summit. But at the same time, another aspect of the American scene became clear: In that land of monopoly and warmongers, an inquest can be held into governmental policies, masks can be torn off and the most important findings made public.

Debates on foreign policy are not unknown in the Soviet Union. But these take place in the Council of Ministers. Once the policy is laid down and announced, no criticism, I mean no public criticism, is ever heard. There is only a chorus of approval. To each people their own system. And the monolithic system pays.

A few days after his death, I came to know that Pasternak is no more. A Russian friend who attended his funeral said many friends and

admirers were present. And a large number of journalists. So many cameras clicked that people felt uncomfortable. *Pravda* or *Izvestia*, so far as I know, did not carry anything about Pasternak. A very short news-item appeared in the *Literary Gazette*. This lack of charity was painful.

One of the last things that Pasternak did was to translate a poem from 'Khanika'. Contrary to earlier reports, he had agreed to translate some five hundred lines from the earlier lyrics of Tagore. But time ran out. The play which he was writing and which would have been staged in Moscow remained unfinished. This play might have retrieved his position and secured him an obituary in the more important Soviet papers. But he will live in the memory of his close friends as a lonely, bitter eagle in his later days, as a brilliant translator and a poet who did not care to be understood by the people. Most of the front-rank intellectuals made peace with the Revolution; Pasternak made peace and then broke it. But he was loyal at least to his concept of the Russian people.

I am reminded of a Russian priest who, after twenty-five years of dedication to God and the Church, gave up his unworthy vocation a few days ago and published a longish statement explaining his decision. He is parallel to Pasternak in reverse. He had renounced the Revolution for Religion under the influence of his up-bringing. But as the years passed, he realised that he was not need-

ed by the workers and builders of a new way of life. Every man, at a certain moment in his life, he says, comes face to face with himself and asks himself what he is living for. He asked himself and there was no answer. The isolation from the swift current of Soviet life was unbearable and he decided to break with the Church. He says he has now come to the people.

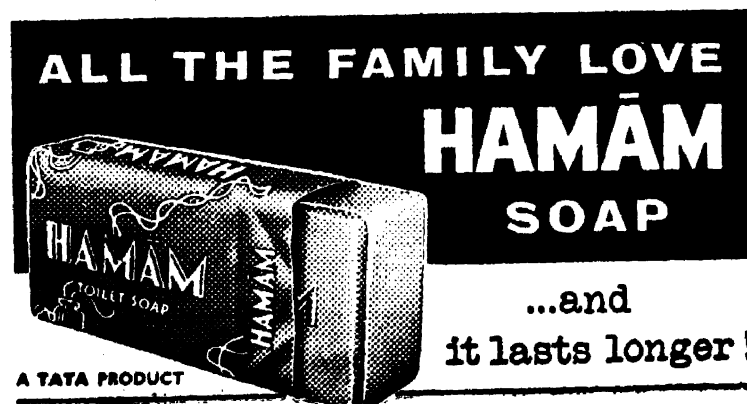
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From June 1 all foreign planes are landing at Sheremetyova. It's a pity. The road from Rnukova to Moscow — fields stretching to the horizon, forests and then, all of a sudden the spectacular sight of a great city building in earnest — gained the Russians a propaganda victory. The first impressions of a traveller count a great deal. The new airport building is smaller and congested; at least it used to be like that until the end of February. The approach to the city has little enchantment. But air traffic at Bnu-kova has increased so much that the Russians had to divert some of it.

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This year, as part of the drive for greater trade contacts with foreign countries, about 30 foreign exhibitions will be held in various towns of the U S S R. The Jpan Export Trade Research rganisation is arranging one — the first Japanese exhibition in the Soviet Union. There will also be a British Trade and Industrial Exhibition. A British Plastics Exhibition is already on.

The Russians hope there won't be another U-2 'exhibition'.



# Home for the hols

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*Our hostesses and crew take charge of our young passengers from the moment they arrive at Victoria Terminus (or London Airport, if you prefer) until the happy moment, when they rush into your waiting arms. And remember, there's a Children's Special on Monday, 12th September, 1960 to 'jet' them back when their happy holiday is over!*

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