

THE WRONG ENEMY

National Affairs

I WONDER if the Prime Minister and some of his Cabinet colleagues are aware of the kind of impression they are creating by their persistent nibbling at the critics who questioned the earlier direction of the Government's policies towards China.

The critics on the whole stand vindicated. The Government has all but acknowledged in its later thinking on the problem that the critics were not only more on the mark in their estimate of Chinese intentions but also reflected the national mind more accurately.

To keep coming back at the critics now and to ascribe to them all manner of unworthy motives almost makes it look as if the Government's conversion to its new-found realism in dealing with China is an expedient towards which it has turned with some reluctance under pressure.

I who have had so much doubt about the Government's will and capacity to meet the Chinese challenge no longer fear for Mr. Nehru's resolution. However confused and hesitant his earlier approach to the threat Peking posed, I believe he is quite convinced that the Chinese menace is not a passing phase. In the circumstances, he will sound much more reassuring to forget, if he cannot forgive, his critics for being a little peevish in discovering that those two most amicable gentlemen, Messrs Mao and Chou, were closing in on us for possibly other reasons than to give more intimate expression to their fraternal feelings towards their brothers in Panch-sheel.

THE critics saw the Chinese aggression as a threat to national security. It is rather unfair to talk of the matter in terms of the rivalry between the private and the public sectors unless the argument is that the public sector must benefit as the unchallenged survivor in a success of the Chinese plan to "liberate" India from "bourgeois exploitation." It is even worse to complain about the situation being exploited to undermine the good name and prestige of the Congress. Granting that this is true, I cannot for the life of me understand why Congressmen should consider it particularly mean for their opponents to squeeze some political credit

from the discomfiture of the party in power.

It is the Congress inability to participate in the give-and-take of the democratic game that probably infuriates more than the party's failures and inadequacies. The habit of old Congressmen to identify the party interest with the national interest has a respectable paternity tracing back to the freedom struggle. But to be harking back to that paternity at this late day may suggest that a conscience which takes cover so readily in past glory must be sorely troubled about present performance.

For the present, all that the Congress seems to be achieving by its railing at its opponents is to draw upon itself a deal of suspicion about its eventual intentions in regard to resisting the Chinese designs on our territory. As I have said, I do not believe these suspicions are justified. But I do not have it in me to blame those who do not take the Government's change of heart at face value when its spokesmen go on maintaining in effect that the heart is only as sound today as when the evidence of clear Chinese aggression on our soil was concealed from the people for four long years. If there is anything worse for a Government than the adoption of its opponent's policies, it is to continue the pretence of infallibility.

AS things are now, Mr. Nehru's proposal of a no-man's land in Ladakh represents the only practical policy consistent with national integrity. It means vacation of aggression by the Chinese. It is true that we have renounced the claim to fill the vacuum with our forces. But I do not see how our forces could have moved up much further forward of their present positions had we not renounced the claim. The important thing is that Mr. Nehru's plan gives us an opportunity to test Chinese intentions finally without conceding anything of substance and, even more important, it gives us time to prepare while those intentions are being tested—time that is still valuable to us, let it be emphasized, given that China's intentions need no further testing.

But the Opposition fear is that

Mr. Nehru's plan is a step towards major territorial concessions. Mr. Nehru has not exactly discouraged such fears by announcing it as his belief that what will follow is a long exchange with the Chinese on the disengagement plan. A long exchange, they argue, can only be on the presumption that Mr. Nehru has offered the plan as a maximum bargaining position rather than as a minimum precondition for the start of negotiations.

Nor were matters helped by Mr. Nehru's aside that the use of the road through Aksai Chin joining western Tibet and Sinkiang for strictly civilian purposes may be considered. This has been interpreted to mean that Mr. Nehru would allow the Chinese to retain their positions inside our border up to the line represented by the road.

THE way his opponents divine the working of Mr. Nehru's mind, we will now have a period of lull and a lowering in the country's temper at the end of which the Prime Minister will return to appeasing the Chinese by meeting part of their claims in Ladakh.

My own impression is that Mr. Nehru will neither bargain nor appease. When he talks about a long exchange he is thinking more in terms of the modalities of Chinese withdrawal—inspection and so on—than of major concessions. As for the Aksai Chin road, it is not entirely correct to say that the Chinese built it. What they have done is to widen it and to reinforce for heavy traffic the old caravan route along which trade has passed for centuries without any attempt at regulation. It is by way of being something of an international highway and its use for strict purposes of commerce would not constitute a remarkable concession to the Chinese.

But however much I think his opponents are wrong in their estimate of present policies, the genuineness of the distrust they bear is not to be questioned. I submit that the distrust is fed for the most part not so much by the Government's current policies as by its continuous questioning of the good faith of its critics. The Government is heading towards its greatest failure in that on an issue which should so easily compel solidarity it is incapable of an appeal that the nation will hearken to as the authentic call to united action.

—S.M.

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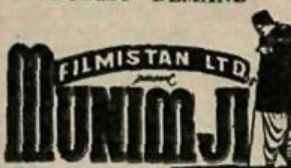


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Sharma, along with other members of the civil police, came there and they admonished the crowd which ran into the lanes on either side of the road.

CONSTABLE'S STORY

On Monday Head Constable R. C. Dube told the Commission that on August 28 two or three lathi-charges were made.

Earlier, Head Constable R. C. Dube, who was in charge of one of the two squads which fired at the crowd near Mansarovar Cinema, told the Commission that his squad fired 16 rounds.

About 3-30 p.m. Mr Agnihotri, Additional Superintendent of Police, asked witness to go to the crossing of Shivcharanial and Zero Roads. Witness then took his firing party to the crossing and made it fall-in facing the bus stand. Mr Agnihotri who stood by him asked the crowd to disperse otherwise firing would be resorted to.

The crowd must have been 40 to 50 paces away from the party, witness said. Instead of dispersing, it continued to throw brickbats, raise slogans and advanced. At this, Mr Agnihotri asked witness to have three rounds fired which was done in kneeling position. The crowd receded by 30 or 35 paces. Witness did not see anyone fall injured as a result of firing.

The party, witness continued, then, advanced 30 or 40 paces. Meanwhile, the crowd again started advancing and throwing brickbats with great intensity. Mr Agnihotri again warned the crowd that if they did not disperse there would be firing. When the crowd did not disperse Mr Agnihotri asked the lathi police to chase the crowd. As the lathi police advanced the crowd threw brickbats at them and the police ran back. Two or three constables were injured.

MORE ROUNDS

Mr Agnihotri then asked the firing party to fire three rounds. After the firing the crowd receded about 30 paces and the party advanced. When the crowd again attempted to advance and throw brickbats, two more rounds were fired at the order of Mr Agnihotri. On this occasion also he did not see anyone fall injured.

Witness said that after the third firing the crowd again receded by 40 or 50 paces and the party advanced. But soon after the crowd again collected and resumed throwing brickbats. Some lathi policemen were sent to chase the crowd but they came back when the crowd showered brickbats on them. On the instruction of Mr Agnihotri two more shots were fired but none was injured. The crowd receded still further. The firing party advanced and came up to the western gate of the bus

of Punjab and in East Punjab. Mainly dry weather will prevail over the rest of the country.

Night temperatures are likely rise over North-west India.

STATIONS	TEMP		RAINFALL
	Maximum	Minimum	
		During past 24 hrs.	Since Oct. 1
Abu	24	10	124
Agra	27	9	5
Ajmer	29	9	51
Aligarh	26	9	51
Allahabad	27	10	131
Ambala	26	10	99
Amritsar	24	9	77
Banaras	27	11	108
Banda	27	9	67
Bareilly	26	12	218
Barnes	33	14	11
Bikaner	31	9	3
Bombay	34	21	274
Calcutta	29	10	11
Chandigarh	26	12	99
Dalhousie	17	6	535
Dehra Dun	23	11	277
DELHI			
(S. Jung)	26	16	3
DELHI			
(Palam)	26	12	66
Dharamsala	18	9	11
Fatehpur	27	9	36
Ferozepore	26	9	45
Ganganagar	28	13	35
Goa	28	14	273
Hissar	27	9	98
Jaipur	29	10	49
Jhansi	28	10	68
Jhalawar	29	9	38
Jodhpur	32	14	5
Kanpur	26	9	15
Kotah	31	12	11
Lucknow	27	11	21
Ludhiana	26	6	23
Madras	29	22	436
Mainpuri	27	9	53
Meerut	25	8	51
Mussoorie	13	6	216
Nagpur	29	11	83
Naini Tal	12	3	137
Najibabad	26	10	60
Orai	27	10	78
Pathankot	23	9	11
Patiala	25	9	14
Roorkee	25	9	65
Simla	15	6	93
Srinagar	13	7	135
Udaipur	28	9	82

Agro-Industrial Bias For Third Plan

NAGPUR, Nov. 23.—Mr Shri Man Narayan, member, Planning Commission, said here today that the Third Plan the broad outline of which will be ready by the end of this year, will have "agro-industrial pattern."

He said: "We are now engaged in a very careful examination