

Coping with the enemy

1.2.03 Pak. F. Rel. Media News

India is our enemy and we are enemies of India. Both India and Pakistan have been actively opposing each other and hostile to one another for the better part of their independent existence. They



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They have fought two full-scale wars and have frequently clashed in Kashmir and Siachin. Their armies have stood eyeball-to-eyeball on more than one occasion. Last summer India almost attacked us when it amassed hundreds of thousands of troops at our borders. Since becoming nuclear powers, leaders of the two countries have been dangling their A-bomb threatening each other with extinction.

Kashmir is the issue that has bedevilled the relations between the two neighbours. Both countries have tried dialogues as well as wars but to no avail. The problem stands where it stood 50 years ago. Until 1965 Pakistan's political leadership grappled with this problem as best as it could. Pakistan would raise the Kashmir issue ritually at the United Nations, reminding the world body of its commitment to self-determination of the Kashmiris. India would respond to Pakistan's annual speech and thereafter the business would resume as usual. The relations between the two countries were not neighbourly but they were not hostile. They could best be described as near to normal.

Field Marshal Ayub Khan, Pakistan's first military dictator, had other ideas, however. He thought that he could raise the world conscience from slumber by stirring armed freedom struggle in the IJK (Indian Held Kashmir). His strategic experts assured him that India would not cross the international border and the conflict would remain confined to Kashmir. But India chose its own battlefield. It launched its attack on the Punjab border with the declared intention of winning and dining at the Lahore Gymkhana. However, our army and air force put up a spirited and valiant defence, completely blunting the Indian attack and thus redeemed the folly of a military dictatorship.

Then followed the Tashkent Declaration and a period of relative peace, but the fate of the subcontinent was sealed. The two countries were now destined to live in perpetual enmity. Their relations did not even recover to the pre-1965 level. It was down the hill all the way. The 1965 war also sowed the seeds of East Pakistan's cessation. It brought home two realisations to our Bengali brothers. One, India and Pakistan would remain at loggerheads, which may lead to yet another war as the Kashmir dispute was unresolved. Two, in an Indo-Pak conflict they will be the defenceless targets of the enemy. They did not believe, and rightly so, that they would be defended by West Pakistan. This realisation led to the birth of six-points and the subsequent cessation movement.

The next military dictator Gen Yahya Khan led Pakistan to a more disgraceful surrender. He gave Indira Gandhi the opportunity to boast that the two-nation theory lies buried in the Bay of Bengal and one thousand years of insult to Muslim domination in India has been avenged.

It is problematic for two neighbours to live amicably when they are each other's professed enemies. The problem is compounded when the border is long, almost a thousand miles, and one is seven-times more populous, two-times more obstinate and which has almost five-times bigger economy than the other. Pakistan, therefore, needs to adopt realism as a policy to cope with the enemy. As opposed to pragmatism, realism does not entail abandoning principles or the principled stand.

It simply means that one must regard things in their true na-

ture and deals with them as they are, and basing opinion and strategy on facts rather than ideals.

To start with, we ought to shake off our attitude of self-righteousness for there is no room for morals in politics and diplomacy. It is no use harping that we are right and others are wrong. Merely being right does not guarantee victory. In fact, the 'right' seldom prevails; the history abounds with incidents in which the evil has overcome the good.

It will do us good to move away from India-specific foreign policy. This policy restricts our choices by presupposing that whoever is a friend of India cannot be a friend of Pakistan. If we continued to follow this policy we will be left friendless and thrown into isolation. We oppose US plans of joint air exercises with Indian Air Force. We complain when Russia sells weapons to India. Saddam Hussein is in our bad books not because he is a ruthless dictator, has invaded Iran and then Kuwait, but because he has never supported us on Kashmir, which makes him a friend of India. If we continued applying this measure to quantify friendship, then our friendship with China may also be in jeopardy. The Indo-China trade now amounts to \$4 billion and is increasing. China, like India, buys weapons from Israel. France after having sold submarines worth over a billion dollars to Pakistan is now negotiating a \$2 billion deal with India for the sale of submarines and missiles. Should we take it as an unfriendly act? It will be useless to protest because no country would pay heed, as weapons export is a very lucrative source of revenue. That is how the capital of the Third World countries is being deceptively transferred to the already rich countries. The quest for expensive and deadly weapons in the name of security has raised the poverty line in some Third World countries to almost 50 percent.

Are we the target of Indian hostility because we are Muslims? Is India against Islam? The evidence does not support these premises. India has generally normal to cordial relations with the Muslim countries and Islam is the second biggest religion in India and thriving. India has close relations with Israel as well and yet no Muslim country objects. Even Iran under maulvis, at present the sharpest critics of Israel, has never expressed any resentment over Indo-Israel relations nor does it consider these relations a danger to its security. On the contrary it has signed a protocol with India for assistance and cooperation in the defence field.

Whether we like it or not, the other Muslim countries have quite a different perception of India. Our foreign policy has miserably failed to change that perception. Look at just one example of the different perception. President Muhammad Khatami of Iran, who has just concluded a state visit to India, told a gathering in New Delhi that Mahmood Ghaznavi was a marauder who plundered and destroyed Somnath. He added that Mahmood Ghaznavi did not represent Islamic values; he was a military invader and his 17 assaults on India have no relation with Islam or Islamic principles. In fact, the President of Iran said, rulers like Mahmood Ghaznavi have brought bad name to Islam.

Could a Pakistani ever consider Mahmood Ghaznavi a marauder? In their eyes he is a ghazi and hero who smashed the idols. In the eyes of Hindus he is a barbarian who destroyed and looted their temples. And President Khatami has agreed with the Hindus. Does it make him our enemy?