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22nd March 1971

My dear Sri Prakasaji,

It is some measure of consolation for all the sad things that have been happening that I should have been favoured by a letter from you after having lost contact for nearly a decade. It is of course very sweet of you to write particularly in view of the fact that you have been so unwell. I do hope your health troubles will end before long. You have been singularly unlucky it appears.

I am so glad you liked what I said. I too was not very happy about Rajaji's reaction but, as you say, the result of the elections bodes ill for our country and marks a reversion to a phase that we thought had ended.

It is a time for an agonising reappraisal for those of us who are involved with organisations such as my Party. I have some ideas of my own but I do not know how far my colleagues will respond. Between ourselves I intend to tender my resignation as President of the Party to the National Executive when it meets in the middle of April. I believe anyone who is at the helm of affairs when things go wrong should take this course and let someone younger and fresher step in.

I did not know all this time that you were in Calcutta or I would have called on you during one of my brief and infrequent visits but I shall certainly do so when I am there next but at present I have no plans to visit Calcutta.

I am very touched that you should have written to me and as I said it lightens the gloom somewhat to hear from an old friend like you. I hope we shall meet before long. Meanwhile, my best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

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MRM/pav

(M. R. MASANI)