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Jackie

14. 7. 75.

My dear Dada,

Homi and Jackie Bhabha will deliver this letter to you when they reach Bombay. The reason I have not written earlier is that there was nothing worth saying that I could put in the post. I hope, incidentally, that you are not among the thousands arrested, though it would be a compliment if you were. I'm enclosing copies of an article I published in the Observer, another which will be published next week, an interview with the Oxford Mail and a talk I gave at Chatham House. The last was a stormy affair where I clashed swords openly with an official from the High Commission and Prof. Rashidudin Khan, a pro-Congress M.P.. I suppose this means that I shall be persona non grata with the powers that be and that my book may be banned in India, especially as the last chapter predicts what has happened. I hope you received the copy I sent you.

I feel, however, and I'm sure you agree, that this is a time when all genuine Marxists and Liberals who oppose fascism must stand up and fight as best they can. The only thing that holds me back is my reluctance to embarrass Mummy. As you know, she is still an ardent supporter of Mrs. Gandhi and justifies everything that is happening. But I don't want to try and influence her. She has sacrificed enough to join Mrs. Gandhi and it would be cruel to disrupt her life all over again. This puts me in a very awkward position, as I fear that, despite the great difference in our views, she may be held responsible for what I say and do, and it would be so unfair if she had to pay the price for views she does not hold. So I have been showing much greater restraint than I otherwise would. For instance, I would have liked to write to the Sunday Times exposing all the lies in Mrs. Gandhi's interview with them yesterday, but have decided on balance that it isn't worth it, in view of the serious embarrassment it might cause to Mummy. It's a most unpleasant dilemma and I'd be grateful for your advice as to what I can do and how I can best be effective.

I realise, of course, that you won't agree with my analysis of the situation, given our ideological differences. But we can at least agree on the necessity of fighting for civil liberties - a new Popular Front against Fascism ?? If I were in India today, I'd be with the C.P.I.(M), and I'd be interested in any information you have about their strategy in the present crisis. Incidentally, I've written a rather long and generally complimentary obituary on J.P. for the Observer. They wanted it just in case, but I hope very much that it won't be required.

Ironically enough, recent events have given my book tremendous publicity - it was released, quite by chance, on the very day the court verdict was announced (12 June)! Since then the media have been pursuing me relentlessly. I've been on 2 T.V. programmes and about a dozen radio interviews.

I'm now busy bringing my last two chapters up to date for the American edition which is scheduled for the end of the year. I'm re-titling the last chapter 'The Tragic Flaw', which should give you an indication of its content!

Please write soon and let me know how you are. I'd also appreciate any information or material you can send me about the present situation. You can indicate whether you'd like it kept confidential or used publicly, and I'll act accordingly.

If you'd rather not use the post, Homi and Jackie will be return-towards the end of August and will carry a letter for me.

Much love,

*Zareer*