

JP's letter to NRM (undated):-

This is to make a fervent and prayerful request - will you not consider your decision? Can you conceive of a better opportunity to serve the people? You will say you are doing your bit. I agree. But, you can do much more than bits. There, you should agree.

I am not thinking of the Party alone in making this request. The Party of course needs you badly. Your clarity, your drive and your capacity for organisation would revolutionise the Party, would make it alive and _____. This is the finest possible opportunity of organising and developing the Party, for making headway among the masses, in the Congress and among the students. What is needed most is not policy - policy we have - but initiative and action. Here we entirely fizzle away as the backwash of the Congress.

But I am digressing. In requesting you to come back, I have in mind also the larger ~~political~~ politics of the country and even to the extent, international politics. You were always the Party's link with Europe, particularly with Great Britain. This link should be formed ~~new~~ anew. The voice of Indian Socialism should be heard abroad. Who else can ~~make~~ make it heard but you?

I do not know your present views regarding non-violence. I do not think that those who believe in it. Like Lohia have no place in the Party. But I think it is very wrong to pose the social question as violence vs. non-violence. To do that is contrary to Marxism and unscientific sociology. I am writing this because the evolution of your thought in the direction of non-violence from every ~~platform~~ platform and emphasising Gandhiji's way as the only way out, his utility to the socialist movement would approach the vanishing point. I am myself not a bloodthirsty monster.

But I regard the issue of violence and non-violence as a side issue. And I do this in spite of the murders in Russia and the colossal murders now going on. These murders would no more check the evolution of Socialism than the murders of the Thorwider and the Napoleonic wars checked the evolution of capitalism or the murders of the Inquisition checked Protestantism. Even the progress of Nazism paves the way to socialism - paradoxical though it may appear. The only issue today on the stage of history is Capital vs. Labour. Whether the issue is decided violently or non-violently, if Labour (conceived in its widest social significance) wins, a better world, a more peaceful and a more civilised world would be born. This is not determination. I am basing my optimism and view of the future in an estimation of the conscious efforts of men, being made now and to be made in the future. This estimation further assures me of the ~~sure~~ eventual victory of Labour.

The whole Party is ready to welcome you. Recent events have created deep faith in your political judgment and insight and comrades would receive you with open arms.

I have never known much about your personal affairs. I know there were certain difficulties, but I also knew that they were not the real reasons, why you left ~~the~~ active politics. I believe I would not be making a mistake in thinking that they would not be the real obstacle to your coming back. But there are no "real obstacles" left. The road is clear for you.

Most of the reactions to the Russian tragedy have not impressed me. As I wrote before they lose themselves in the sands of liberalism and Utopianism. I like however such a reaction ~~in~~ as Lucien Courat's Marxism and Democracy. It is constructive and it holds fast to Marxist Marxist moorings. The book is valuable - the only one of its kind in English. I doubt if there is any English knowing socialist who is so deeply read in Marxism - not ~~as~~ ^{as} propounded by the church, but as it is:

a living, developing social science and methodology. My enthusiasm for the book does not mean that I agree with all that it says. There are several questions which I should like to pursue further. Moreover, neither is Indian Capitalism well developed, nor is the working class mature. In that case Leninism in some form is inevitable for us. By the way, it appears from Lurat's exposition that there is a lot of similarity between Lenin's principles of organisation and yours.

I am _____ again. Let me return to my main purpose and appeal my request. Do come back. Apart from doing justice to yourself, you would render inestimable service. I am not discounting the possibility of your soon landing in Prison. That might appear ~~frank~~ fruitless. But even that would be service - more valuable, more effective than what you are rendering by your present activities. May you rise to the occasion

(J.P.)

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MRM: I happen to be chairman of the U.N. Sub-committee on Discrimination and Minorities and studied your racial problem here in this country in 1950-52. Let me say that as a student of this subject I find a remarkable amount of advance and change during these years. It may be much less than we would desire, but to feel that integration is not advancing is a mistake. Integration is advancing, even though slowly. There are less and less members of the pure African race in this country, and I can look forward to a day, maybe not in my lifetime, when the United States will catch up with the Brazilian pattern. I had the chance to be ambassador in Brazil and I admired the way in which this process of integration had been carried very much further forward than you have been able to do in this country.

In which part of the world do people have more power to share in determining their destiny than in the United States? I'd be glad to know of such a country. Or is it because the American people by and large do not follow the wishes of some of us that we think they are powerless? According to a Louis Harris poll yesterday in The New York Times, seventy percent of the American people are conservatives, while only seventeen percent are liberals. Would we think they were more powerful if seventy percent had voted liberal and only seventeen percent had voted for a conservative candidate? There's very much more of the organization man in Western Europe and in our countries than in the United States. This very seminar is a testimony to the live debate, the dissent, we find better expressed in American periodicals of a high order than anywhere else in the world.

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MRM: I must assure Mr. Peretz that in my country (India) there's no advertising campaign to make people appreciate the virtues of scooters or washing machines or other gadgets. Even the villager, given half a chance, grabs these because there is a real craving for them. But even putting aside the standard of life, I would like to suggest that the United States does not lag in regard to social justice, compassion and other nonmaterial values. Many years ago, Morgan Philips, the secretary of the British Labour Party, said he thought the United States was a better socialist society than Britain or Scandinavia, not to mention the Communist countries. The inequality between the most skilled and least skilled workers in factories is less in America than in my country or Western Europe or the Soviet Union.