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Personal and Confidential

40 C. Ridge Road
Bombay 6
13/7/76

Dear Reader:

This is to explain why there will be no more issues of Opinion. The Government of Maharashtra, apprehending from its further appearance danger to public safety, maintenance of public order and internal security (believe it if you can), with the prior approval of the Government of India, prohibits me from making and publishing Opinion and from using any press for these purposes.

Neither the Government of India nor the Government of Maharashtra can be so stupid as to harbour the apprehensions they profess to do. They know Opinion's reasoned columns offer no comfort to the rabble-rouser or the conspirator. They know the public Opinion serves. Such people do not riot in the streets. They read, they think, they argue, they consider, they come to their own conclusions. And it is these conclusions the Regime is so afraid of, the conclusions reached by the minute fraction of educated India constituting Opinion's readership! What a tribute, in their own peculiar way, these mighty, powerful Governments pay to Opinion's readership and to Opinion, when they decide they cannot allow this tiny organ of public information and public reasoning to live!

The real basis of the prohibition would seem to be different. The current Indira regime, founded on June 25, 1975, was born through lies, nurtured by lies, and flourishes on lies. The essential ingredient of its being is the lie. Consequently, to have a truth-loving, straight-thinking, plain-speaking journal examine it week after week and point out its falsehood, becomes intolerable to it. The feeling grows, this is too much, this just can't be endured, why it might even affect the dictatorship - sometimes disguised as the new democracy - Indiraji has so recently established, after such great pains, over this hitherto free land.

For true lovers of the country and of freedom, the present is a tragic time, and the future likely to be even more saddening. In such periods it is important to realise that the seat of freedom in man is the mind. Preserve its integrity and all is not lost. The pressures upon a man may be enormous, yet if he sees clearly and judges accordingly, there is still room for hope. People accustomed to freedom sometimes ask despairingly, "This terrible time, when will it end?" I know not when, but this is sure that if they and we lose courage, it may never. Whatever the duration, upon us all it is incumbent so to bear ourselves in it as if its end were certain, the dawn inevitable after this long-stretched-out dark night.

And so, farewell,

Yours sincerely

Shri Ram