

Swatantra Newsletter

ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE SWATANTRA PARTY, 143 MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY 1 . TELEPHONE NO: 252076

1078

No.4

February 1960.

CENTRAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE DECISIONS.

The Central Organising Committee of the Party met in Bangalore on February 5, 6 and 7. Sixteen out of twenty-two members were present.

The main business before the Committee was to consider drafts of the Party's Constitution and of the Statement of Policy to be presented to the National Convention, which is scheduled to meet in Patna on March 19 and 20. Detailed discussions lasting several hours in each case resulted in these drafts being settled.

Various matters concerned with the preparations for the National Convention were also decided, and the General Secretary's Letter No.4 indicating these and providing the necessary guidance has already been issued to the Parties in the various States and the members of the General Council.

Party Flag:

The Committee decided that the Party's Flag should be a five-pointed star visible on both sides against a sky-blue background. The proportions of the flag should be in the ratio of 5 : 3. In a flag which is horizontally 20" long and vertically 12" the distance from one point of the star to the next should be 5". It is hoped that the specimens of the flag which are being prepared by the Central Office would be made available to State Parties by the end of this month.

Students:

The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"The Central Organising Committee of the Swatantra Party takes note of the great interest shown by young persons in Colleges and Universities in the politics of the country and in particular in the Swatantra Party's programme. The Party is of the view that in free India while students even before graduation should acquire some knowledge of the various trends of political thought, they should, while engaged in College life, abstain from active participation in the furtherance of any political Party. Whatever other parties may be doing, the Swatantra Party is of the view that there should be no encouragement given to the division of students into groups related to the political parties of the country although they may be free to express and discuss their views in their own College Unions.

Students above the prescribed age are no doubt eligible for membership of the Party and are welcome if they seek it. The Party and its members will encourage students to form study circles for promoting the appreciation of political and economic problems but in the interest of discipline the Party is of the view that it should not encourage the formation of political groups inside Universities and Colleges."

Kerala:

The position in various States was reviewed and it was decided that, now that the mid-term elections had taken place, the time had come to explore the possibilities of establishing the Party's organisation in the State of Kerala.

Chinese Aggression:

Reports that there might be an early meeting between Prime Minister Nehru and Chou En-lai without the satisfaction of the pre-conditions to negotiations laid down by the Indian government were considered. While the Committee was not prepared to lend credence to such disturbing reports, it expressed the hope that the Indian government would stick to the pledges that had been given and that there would be no watering down in the conditions laid down for negotiations including a Nehru-Chou meeting.

Party members should follow the Resolution on National Defence adopted at an earlier meeting in Hyderabad. The point made in that Resolution about the desirability of countries of South and Southeast Asia coming together should be stressed, as it was felt that such a grouping would facilitate the acceptance of military aid from other parts of the world.

News from State Parties:

Andhra:

The Andhra unit of our Party has been concentrating on building up the Party organisation. During January, District Committees have been formed at Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, East Godavary, Nellore, Cuddapah, Anantapur and Nizamabad.

The Srikakulam District Committee elected Shri G. Latchanna, Vice-Chairman of the Andhra State Swatantra Party as its President. This Committee will have an Ad Hoc General Council of not more than 300 members. The idea is to give representation to as many members as possible right down to the constituency level. For instance, the Committee has decided that every single member constituency will be represented on its Council by at least 15 members. Similarly a double-member constituency will be represented by 30 members.

The Visakhapatnam District Committee is headed by Shri G.V.Appa Rao, M.L.A.

During January, 15 Constituency Committees were also formed.

Eight Town Committees were formed at Vijayawada, Guntur, Tenali, Kakinada, Eluru, Cuddapah and Anakapalle. An interesting feature has been the keen interest taken by lawyers and merchants in our Party in these towns. In Tenali, over 50 lawyers have joined the Party.

Shri G. Latchanna, Vice-Chairman of the Andhra Party, toured Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, East and West Godavary and other districts.

From Andhra comes news of the enrolment in the Party of many veteran Congressmen, socialists and the Kisan workers. At Srikakulam, a meeting held on the 6th January saw the entry into the Party of former socialists Shri Pundarikachari and Shri D.S. Reddy. Similarly, veteran Congressmen like Shri Pottinuri Swamibabu, Shri Shivala Subba Rao and Shri Garimanna Ramanamurty have joined our Party.

Shri B. Ramachandra Reddy, member of the Central Organising Committee of the Party, toured the Kistna District. During this tour he addressed many meetings of Party workers and also a public meeting. He addressed Rotarians on the subject "Land Reforms & Co-operative Farming".

State Organiser Shri N. Vijayaraja Kumar, an eloquent speaker and popular political pamphleteer, toured several districts addressing public meetings and distributing pamphlets on Co-operative farming and on the principles of the Swatantra Party.

Assam:

Our Branch in Shillong reports a doubling in membership since the report in the last Newsletter.

Professor Ranga visited Shillong; addressed a press conference on the 19th and a public meeting on the 20th of January. The public meeting was presided over by Shri Hoover Hynniewta, M.P., of the Eastern India Tribal Union. Shri Hynniewta pointed out the problems facing the tribal people with particular reference to their demand for a separate Hill State. Professor Ranga in his address explained the Party's principles and the Party's belief in the autonomy of the States. He said that by this alone could the cultural life of a particular community be preserved. He commended the tribal people for their sturdiness and fearless advocacy of the free way of life. Prof. Ranga added that the Swatantra Party greatly valued the independence of the individual, family and society.

Shri Badal Gangopadhyaya, Secretary of the West Bengal unit of the Party, also addressed the meeting. He conveyed to the people of Assam fraternal greetings from the people of West Bengal.

Bihar:

Following up on the good work being done by our Party, reports have come in of the formation of more No. district committees at Gaya, Saran, Champaran, Mirzapur, Darbhanga, Bhagalpur, Saharsa, Purnea, Hazaribagh and Palamau, now totalling 12 out of the 17 districts of Bihar. In addition sub-divisional committees have been formed at Banka, Katihar, Samastipur and Madhubani.

The State Working Committee met on January 12 and reviewed the working of the different district committees in the State. Decisions were also taken at the meeting regarding the arrangements for the forthcoming National Convention of the Party at Patna on March 19 and 20.

The President of the Bihar Party, Shri Kamakhya Narain Singh visited Bhagalpur, Purnea and other districts of Bihar organising district committees, addressing public meetings and Party Workers' meetings.

The State General Secretary, Shri Janki Nandan Singh, M.L.C., also toured Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Palamau and other districts with the purpose of organising district committees and sub-divisional committees.

Madras:

On the 24th January a very interesting meeting was held in Madras City. Named the Madras City Hut Dwellers' Conference, it was attended by 1000 delegates representing all the slums of Madras City. This conference was organised by some important members of the Madras Swatantra Party. The meeting was addressed by Rajaji. Various resolutions were passed at this meeting criticising the government for their indifference in tackling the problem of the slum areas. It demanded that government should immediately adopt a more realistic and dynamic programme of improving the living conditions of the working people in Madras City.

The success of the Conference is at once a tribute to its organisers and a very strong and clear indication of the fact that the Swatantra Party is keenly interested in solving the problems of the neglected and impoverished sections of our population.

Mysore:

Coorg district in Mysore held its Convention on the 6th December 1959. Prof. Ranga presided over this Convention which was also addressed by Mr. Jinaraja Hegde. Shri J. Mohammed Imam inaugurated the Convention.

Maharashtra:

Steady progress in the enrolment of members has been reported by the Poona City unit.

On the 20th January a public meeting was organised in Poona by our Party to protest against rising food prices and shortage of sugar. Earlier, on 16th January, members of the Poona Swatantra Party organised a function to felicitate the newly elected Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Poona Municipal Corporation.

Shri Haribhau Bhandare, who was deputed to tour the southern districts of Maharashtra, formed Ad hoc district committees at Kolhapur, North and South Satara and Sholapur. The Convenor, Shri K.R.Koshti, visited Poona and Ahmednagar districts. Shri Ambadas Rao Dixit toured the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.

Prof.N.G. Ranga visited Nagpur and Wardha on 6th and 7th January. At Wardha, he presided over the District Convention which was well attended.

Bombay:

Mr.Morarji R. Vaidya is now Chairman of the Bombay Swatantra Party. He succeeds Mr.M.R.Masani who was appointed General Secretary at the meetings of the General Council and Central Organising Committee held at Hyderabad in December 1959.

As usual the activities of the Bombay Party spread over many fields. During January they celebrated Republic Day with a flag hoisting ceremony by Shri K.M.Munshi, Vice-Chairman of the Swatantra Party. Later in the day, the Party organised a luncheon for Party members in the City. Party members paid Rs.2/- per head for the function.

On 30th January (Martyrs Day) the Party organised a Prayer meeting in its office. Vedic hymns were chanted, followed by recitations from the Holy Koran and Avastha and the singing of Christian hymns. Mr.Munshi talked to the audience on the ideals preached by Gandhiji.

The Swatantra Service Centre continues to render active and useful service to Bombay citizens. All the 3 bureaus of the Centre viz., the civic grievances, youth centre and legal grievances are very busy. The legal grievances bureau has been receiving cases of harassment at the hands of government officials and other local authorities and has been attempting to help the harassed person in expediting solution of their difficulties.

At Dharavi, a predominantly labour area, the Centre has opened a free sewing class which has been taken advantage of by over 60 to 70 ladies.

The citizens' committee sponsored by the Bombay Party held a public meeting on 5th January to protest against the proposed increase in Tram and Bus fares.

Ward Organisation offices have been opened at Bhandup, Khar and Golibar - a slum area. It is reported that our Party has been receiving good support in these areas. Many meetings were held in these wards and specific problems affecting each ward were discussed.

The Bombay office is organising a study group of active members to discuss problems connected with Party organisation as also social, economic and political problems facing our country.

A notable feature has been the drawing up of an active-members list. These active members respond to the call of the Party at a very short notice for doing Party work.

The Party is continuing to concentrate on its membership drive and reports good progress.

Orissa:

A conference of ryots was organised by our Party in Balasore district on 29th December 1959. Attended by over 2,000 persons, the conference passed resolutions criticising co-operative farming, restrictions imposed on free trade and private enterprise and the imposition of ceiling on land.

On 17th January, a big fair was held at Balanja where people from the nearby areas congregated. This fair continued for a fortnight. The Swatantra Party opened a small stall in this Fair and put up for sale a small booklet in Oriya explaining the Party's principles.

Prof. Ranga, who toured Orissa, addressed a press conference at Burhampur on 13th January. While at Burhampur, he held discussions with important people and active workers of our Party. Similarly he addressed another press conference at Cuttack on the 14th January. Rangaji addressed a workers' meeting the same evening. Later in the day, addressing a public meeting, Shri Ranga pointed to the maladministration of the Congress and explained how the Swatantra Party would fight for the rights of the common man. On 15th January, Prof. Ranga addressed a women's meeting and a meeting of weavers.

Most welcome is the news of the inauguration of our own Newspaper in Orissa, christened Swatantra Samachar by Prof. Ranga. Shri Shankar Saran is its editor. Swatantra Samachar will be published in the Oriya language. What is even more gratifying is that this paper will be printed at our own Swatantra Press which was also inaugurated by the Party's President.

District Committees have been formed at Anandpur and Sambalpur. Party units on the constituency level ~~are being formed~~ at Jagatsinghpur, Salepur and Jajpur.

The Ganjam District Convention is proposed to be held on the 2nd of March at Burhampur.

Punjab:

Our Party in the Punjab is continuing to strive to make the Party's organisation effective in the rural areas of the State. With this in view, our leaders in the Punjab have been undertaking extensive tours of the rural areas.

Raja Maheshindra Singh, M.L.A., extensively toured the Ferozepore and Bhatinda districts addressing as much as four to five meetings a day to explain our Party's principles and programme. Later in January Raja Maheshindra also toured Sangrur district and addressed meetings at Langowal and other places.

Sardar Udham Singh Nagoke, President of the Punjab Party, undertook an extensive tour of Gurdaspur district from the 25th to 29th of January. At some places the attendance at meetings was as much as 10,000. Accompanying Shri Nagoke on his tour were Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman, M.P., Sardar Teja Singh Akkarpuri, Col. Vikramjit Singh and Sardar Gurmaj Singh.

At Ferozepore, the District Committee held ^{Page No.} its Convention which was inaugurated by Prof. Ranga and presided over by Sardar Udham Singh Nagoke. A number of people of the adjoining districts also attended the conference.

Another very successful district conference was held at Ghorinda in the Karnal district. Chaudhury Vijay Singh, the District Convenor, and a number of other leaders of the district addressed the conference.

In the Bhavani constituency of Hissar district, a meeting of the Party was addressed by Pandit Shri Ram Sharma. An Ad hoc committee has been set up in this constituency. Patiala district also has now an Ad hoc Committee.

Uttar Pradesh:

To accelerate Party work in Uttar Pradesh, a Party Publicity Camp was organised in the district of Bijnor during the Kartike Ganga Mela from the 13th to 16th November, 1959. The value of the publicity camp can be gauged from the fact that over 2 lakhs of pilgrims gathered in the area in connection with the Mela.

The President of the Uttar Pradesh Party, Shri S.K.D. Paliwal toured Moradabad, Hathras and Ferozabad addressing many public meetings. He inaugurated district conventions at Ghazipur, Jaunpur, Hazangarh and Varanasi. At Kanpur, Shri Ramgopal Gupta was appointed as Convenor for our Party's district unit.

District Convenors have been appointed in 45 out of the 52 districts. District and Tehsil Ad hoc Committees have been formed in 39 districts.

As in Orissa, so in Uttar Pradesh our Party has its own journal called 'Sainik'. It is a Hindi Weekly devoted to the propagation of our Party's principles and carrying the message of Swatantra to the people.

The State Party office has published a small pamphlet entitled 'the Swatantra Party will protect your freedom, land, property and provision' in Urdu. They also hope to start an Urdu weekly called 'Swatantra Raj'.

West Bengal:

West Bengal reports continued progress. In Calcutta City itself, four units have been formed in the North, Burra Bazar, Central and South. In South Calcutta, Party units have started functioning in Kalighat, Bhawanipore, Park Circus, Ballygunge and Tollygunge. Committees have been formed in Jadhavpur and Sodepur in Greater Calcutta area.

Youths have always been in the forefront of the fight for freedom and are continuing to evince keen interest in our Party. Study circles are springing up in various parts of Calcutta City. Several College teachers are actively participating in the study circles.

In the field of labour, our Party leaders have been explaining the policy of our Party and it is a matter for pride that our leaders in Calcutta have actively helped as mediators, in their private capacity, in settling disputes.

Prof.N.G.Ranga visited Calcutta and was warmly welcomed at Howrah Station by a large crowd. Various organisations of youth, students and social service organisations garlanded Prof. Ranga in the station. On 16th January, Prof.Ranga met the West Bengal district workers in a conference. On the 17th and 18th January Prof.Ranga addressed two public meetings at the Indian Association Hall and Hazra Park respectively.

Speaking at the Indian Association Hall, Prof. Ranga stated that the Swatantra Party wanted another tree to grow beyond the influence of Mr.Nehru who has been described as a 'Banyan tree under which nothing grows'. He stated that the Swatantra Party had a distinct approach to the social and economic problems of the country. He added that the Communists, socialists and allied parties were merely pale imitations of the Congress. He affirmed that the Swatantra Party did not believe in 'co-operative' farming and wanted peasant proprietors to grow independently as they have done for ages past.

Prof. Ranga, accompanied by Shri Gangopadhyaya, went to Netaji Bhavan to pay his homage to the memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

On 23rd January the West Bengal Committee of the Party observed Netaji's birthday. A procession of youths headed by a life-size picture of Netaji paraded the streets of Calcutta.

(For Private Circulation Only)