

Swatantra Newsletter

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

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August 1960.

No. 9

CENTRAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND GENERAL COUNCIL MEETINGS :

The Central Organising Committee and General Council of the Party met in Bombay from the 29th to 31st July, 1960.

Sixteen out of twenty-three members were present at the meetings of the Central Organising Committee which met at the residence of Sir Homi Mody, Treasurer of the Party. The Committee discussed a number of resolutions that were to be placed before the open session of the General Council as well as organisational problems. Among the resolutions discussed were : (1) The Government Employees' Strike, (2) Third Five-Year Plan, (3) The Next General Elections, (4) China and Tibet, (5) Assam, (6) Threat to National Unity and Democracy.

Mr. N. C. Chatterjee who was present at the meeting reported on the developments in Assam and his correspondence with the Prime Minister. Mr. John Deng and Mr. J. Stephen Narayan, our representatives from Assam, were invited to give the Committee a first hand report on the developments in Assam. The Committee then adopted the following resolution :

"The Central Organising Committee, having heard Shri N. C. Chatterjee, Shri John Deng and Shri J. Stephen Narayan, feels that the situation in Assam continues to be very disquieting and calls for effective and immediate attention on the part of the Government of India. This Committee requests Shri N. C. Chatterjee to take up the matter with the Prime Minister once again and report the result to the President, Prof. Ranga."

It was decided to observe Anti-Inflation Day on Sunday, 18th September 1960 to protest against the policies of Government which were leading the country towards inflationary ruin.

Similarly the meeting decided to observe December 9, 1960 as Party Flag Day.

The General Council of the Party met in private session on July 30. Members, Office-bearers of State and regional Parties and special invitees numbering 52 attended. A review of progress, State by State, took place when representatives from the units spoke on the progress so far made and the problems confronting party organisation in their State.

The Open Session of the General Council met the next day. Apart from members of the Council, Special Invitees and Office-bearers of State and regional units, over 600 members of the public who had bought admission tickets were present. The resolutions proposed by the Central Organising Committee were placed before the General Council. The text of these resolutions is to be found at the end of this Newsletter. (Annexure A).

Shri C. Rajagopalachari then addressed members of the General Council and others present on the occasion.

Anti-Inflation Day :

As has been reported earlier, it has been decided to observe September 18, 1960 as "Anti Inflation Day." In the course of a letter to the State and Regional units on the subject, the General Secretary states that the "observance of the day is to focus people's attention on the mounting inflation that faces our country as a result of the policies of Government."

Calling upon State units to make adequate preparations to ensure effective observance of the Day, the General Secretary suggests that "leaflets which would dwell on the evils of inflation and fix the responsibility on the Government for the rising cost of living" should be put out by the State units. In addition, leaflets should emphasise our own Party's economic programme to combat this tendency.

It is hoped that our units in the States will immediately address themselves to this task and will ensure that the day will be so observed as to bring home to the man in the street the realities of the present economic situation.

Acharya Bhave on Government's allergy to Criticism :

Acharya Bhave addressing a meeting at Indore on August 5 said that Government was "very touchy" of criticism, whether right or wrong. "The Government always stood on prestige and did not relish criticism," he added.

Acharya Bhave said that during his recent tour of Gujarat some friends had "advised" him not to criticise the Government publicly but to write to it confidentially. His reply was "I am neither the wife nor the daughter of the Government to correspond with it in private or confidentially. He said that he was the servant of the people and he would express his views "before my masters". (Times of India, August 6, 1960.)

NEWS FROM STATE PARTIES :

Andhra:

Our President, Professor Ranga has set a personal example as to how the Party's message should be carried into the villages where the major part of our people live. He recently concluded a strenuous but successful tour of villages in the districts of Krishna, Guntur, Nellore and large areas of Telengana. He visited the homes of villagers and discussed with them their problems. He addressed lectures explaining the Party's principles and policies and exhorting the people to support us. Prof. Ranga also criticised Congress policies which would lead to the ruin of self-employed peasants. His activities at the grass-roots level and its successful culmination have demonstrated that there is no substitute for hard work. In the politically critical districts of Krishna and West Godavari, Prof. Ranga inaugurated 'padayatras' by Party workers. The Andhra Party reports that the rural tours of Prof. Ranga have created a new and heartening atmosphere for our Party.

Mr. B. Ramachandra Reddi, the new President of the Andhra Party also undertook an extensive tour in his home district of Nellore. He addressed numerous meetings, discussing at length the

principles of the Party and pointing out the dangers inherent in the acceptance of socialism as a way of life.

Assam :

On 27th September, our unit in Shillong will be a year old. The Shillong branch has been entrusted with the work of organising the Party throughout the State of Assam. Mr. J. Stephen Narayan and Mr. John Deng, President and Secretary respectively, have been working for setting up of an Assam State unit of the Party.

In Shillong itself, our unit has been doing good work. Our Party has a fairly good hold in the Khasi-Jaintia Hills where men of influence, Sirdars or Heads of Villages have joined us.

If the Party has not been making more rapid progress in the State as a whole, several factors are responsible for the situation. For example the Assam State Language agitation has made party work extremely difficult. The violent turn that the agitation took further complicated matters and the imposition of Section 144 etc. made it impossible for our organisers to draw people's attention to our Party.

There are other problems of organisation in the State. The hilly terrain makes mobility difficult. The majority of educated men in State are employed in Government services with the result that they are either afraid or not free to join the Party. The tribal folk distrust an all-India Party-thanks to their past experience as members of the Congress, which has let them down on many occasions.

In spite of all these handicaps, our organisers from Shillong are optimistic of the Party's future in the State. Recently Mr. D. N. Bhattacharyya of Nalbari in the district of Kamrup has been appointed organiser for the Plains Districts.

Bihar :

Organisationally, Bihar can legitimately claim pride of place. In all the Seventeen Districts of the State, Ad-hoc Committees have already been formed and full fledged offices established to carry on the day-to-day work at the district levels. The District offices have in turn organised offices and appointed ad-hoc committees in all their Sub-Divisions numbering 58 in all. Out of 497 thanas in the State, 280 thanas have individual offices and ad-hoc committees.

District Conventions were held at Darbhanga and Monghyr recently. At the Monghyr District Convention, over twenty thousand people were present. Similarly the Darbhanga district Convention was very well attended.

The Office-bearers of the Bihar Party have been continuously on the move touring the various districts, addressing public meetings, inspecting district and sub-divisional offices and giving detailed instructions on organisational matters.

With a network of offices at Thana, Sub-division and district levels, the membership in the State has already reached nearly a lakh.

Four active members of the Swatantra Party were recently elected to the Bihar Legislative Council. They contested the election as independent candidates. The Bihar Party reports that the very fact that two of our members could give a crushing defeat to the ruling Party even in the Legislative Assembly constituency for the Council, where the Bihar Party is in a minority at the moment, clearly indicated the influence our Party had even among legislators.

The twenty six Swatantra Party members in the Bihar Legislative Assembly have been very active on the floor of the Assembly and have vehemently criticised the Land Ceiling Bill and the Bihar State Universities Bill.

The Party has ambitious plans. At a recent meeting of the State Committee, the Party considered its immediate objective to be the defeat of the present Government in Bihar in the 1962 General Elections. They have set before themselves several targets in various fields to be achieved before the year is out.

The Party has its own weekly entitled "Swatantrata". The circulation of this journal, reports the Bihar Party, is steadily increasing not merely among members but the general public as well.

Bombay :

The Bombay Office of the Party was a beehive of activity during the last fortnight. Almost all prominent leaders of the Party from other parts of the country converged on the City to attend the meetings of the Central Organising Committee and the General Council. With the assistance of the Swatantra Service Centre and the newly formed volunteer corps, the visiting members were given every attention to ensure their comfortable stay during the period of the meetings.

Rajaji, who arrived in the City on 28th July, was given a rousing reception at the Airport and the Volunteer Corps clad in blue pants and white shirts provided Rajaji with a guard of honour. The Airport reverberated with slogans of "Rajaji Zindabad" and "Jai Swatantra".

On the night of the 29th, Rajaji was the guest of honour at a subscription dinner given by the Bombay Party. Over 350 people, each of whom had contributed Rs.100 to the Party's funds, were present. After dinner Rajaji addressed the gathering and later went round the hall meeting the diners and talking to them.

After the meetings of the Central Organising Committee and the General Council were over, Rajaji addressed a big public meeting at Chowpatty. In spite of the inclement weather over 20,000 people were present. Criticising the Government for its misdeeds, Rajaji exhorted the people not to be afraid of the Government, which he said was after all only a paper tiger.

A day later Rajaji addressed a public meeting in the slum area of Dharavi. Speaking in Tamil he said that if the Swatantra Party came to power, it would not demolish the hutments of the poor.

Cowasji Jehangir Hall, venue of the last public meeting addressed by him, was packed to capacity. Speaking for nearly an hour he challenged the Congress on two issues. The first one was that the Ruling Party should vacate office six months before the next General Elections to ensure free and fair elections. The other was that the Congress should agree to an amendment to the Constitution prohibiting Companies from giving funds to political parties. He added that the Swatantra Party would agree to such a step and he had no doubts that the other Parties in the country would also be willing to follow suit.

The Bombay Tamil Sangham accorded a reception to Rajaji on August 1. A joint luncheon in his honour was provided by the Progressive Group, the Commerce Graduates Association and the Democratic Group.

Himachal Pradesh :

The drive for enrolment of members in the Himachal Pradesh region continued in full swing although heavy rains in the first fortnight hampered this work to some extent.

Out of the target of 6 district and 36 Unit Committees proposed to be set up in the Territory, 5 district and 30 Unit Committees have so far been established.

The Pradesh Convenor, Shri Anandchand, M.P., toured the districts of Bilaspur, Mandi and Chamba and addressed a number of public meetings wherein he explained the aims and objects of the Party. He also visited Simla and set up the Mahasu District Committee of the Party.

The Himachal Regional Organising Committee of the Party held its third meeting at Simla on the 27th and 28th July, when thirteen of the seventeen members were present. The meeting considered various organisational matters and passed a number of resolutions dealing with the future of Himachal Pradesh, the third five Year Plan for the area and the growing corruption in the administration.

Among other things/^a resolution adopted at the above meeting pointed out the "invidious distinction between the representative administrations prevailing in the adjoining States and the Pradesh" and asked that Himachal Pradesh should be granted the "status of a full fledged State of the Union with a council of ministers responsible to the legislature."

Another resolution expressed the Party's concern at the "tragic failure of the first and second Five Year Plans in the Pradesh on account of the absence of enthusiasm on the part of the masses." It appealed to the Government to "lose no time in winning back the confidence of the people by associating popular representatives in the preparation and execution of the Third Five Year Plan."

A resolution on corruption expressed its alarm at the growing corruption in the region. It stated that "this malady has eaten into the very vitals of the administration and the people's patience is well nigh exhausted." The Committee requested the Government to "constitute appropriate non-official machinery to go into this question and bring to book all those who are guilty of bribery, favouritism and nepotism in the Administration of Himachal Pradesh."

Madras :

Tanjore, where the proposed Land Ceiling Bill would cause the greatest havoc, has had three Party conferences and has contributed nearly Rs.17,500 to Party funds. The District has to date enrolled over 20,000 members. The popularity of our Party in the District was easily discernible at the time of the recent biennial election to the Legislative Council through Local Bodies, when a candidate belonging to our Party stood independently and had an easy walk over in the face of keen rivalry and corruption.

Another district in the State which has been doing magnificent work is Coimbatore. This industrial area has so far conducted over 75 public meetings and three conferences ranging from district to Taluk level. The District Committee contributed Rs.20,000 to Party funds and its membership is well over 20,000. Coimbatore will be the venue of the first State convention of the Madras Swatantra Party. Miss Khurshed A. D. Naoroji will preside over the Convention which will be inaugurated by Shri K. M. Munshi.

Similarly Trichy district too has done well. With a membership of over 20,000, the district has contributed Rs.12,000 to Party funds.

In Tirunelveli not a week passes without a Public meeting sponsored by our Party. The district has a membership well over 10,000.

The Madura district Convention held in Melur was such a success as to cast gloom in Congress circles, reports the Madras Party. Although Melur is a small town and the conference was at the district level there were over 20,000 people present including 3,000 delegates. It might not be out of place to mention here that at about the same time the All India Congress Committee was meeting in Bangalore. The very poor attendance at the A.I.C.C. in spite of the heavy expenditure incurred by the Congress is an open secret.

Ramnad District has a membership of nearly 15,000. Intense party activity is going on here to accelerate the campaign for enrolling members.

In Chingleput District, reports the Madras Party, Government machinery has been let loose to coerce, scare and tempt people from joining our Party. In spite of all this, the growth of our party in the District has been steady. Over 8,000 members have been enrolled in this district which held its Convention in the historic town of Kanjeevaram.

Plans are afoot to hold the South Arcot District Convention in the second week of September. Over 15000 members have been enrolled so far in the district.

Similar progress has been reported from Salem district (10,000 members), North Arcot (5,000 members), Madras (10,000 members).

During July, Party activity in the State continued with unabated vigour. On the 2nd of July a Public meeting was held in Madras city to felicitate Shri Sa Ganesan on his selection as the President of the State Party. Various State Party leaders spoke on the occasion lauding the services of Shri Sa Ganesan to the country. Rajaji concluded the meeting by congratulating the Party in having secured the services of a true patriot, an honest gentleman and a lover of Tamil literature.

The next day Rajaji inaugurated in the city an exhibition depicting the contribution of the private sector to the economy of the nation.

A public meeting held on the 4th July at Salem was addressed by State Vice President, Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy. Prof. Ruthnaswamy explained the Party's policy and principles and described as utter falsehood the claim made by the Chief Minister of Madras that the Congress would win the next General Elections.

Workers of the Karur Town Swatantra Party were addressed by State President Sa Ganesan on the 6th of July. He said that the Swatantra Party is now in the same position as the Congress was before 1935 and that workers should be imbued with the spirit of sacrifice and should be prepared to suffer great hardships in the name of Dharma. The meeting was addressed by other prominent leaders of the party in the area.

The Panchayat Boards at Thirukaruhavoor and Ammapettai in the district of Tanjore presented addresses of welcome to Shri Sa Ganesan, Shri S. S. Ramaswamy Padayachi, M.L.A., and State General Secretary, Shri S. S. Mariswamy. Shri Ganesan advised Panchayat Board members to eschew Party politics in the administration of village Panchayats and to do their service to the Village with a broad mind and a spirit of co-operation.

At Ammapet a Convention was held. The attendance was so large that local residents were heard to observe that they had not seen such a gathering till then.

Sirkali Taluk in Tanjore district also held a Convention when a purse of Rs.2,000 was presented to Rajaji by the middle-class and poor people of the Taluk. It is of interest to note that all the rich Mirasdars (landlords) absented themselves from the villages, when they heard that Rajaji was visiting the taluk. It is reported that this was largely a handiwork of Congressmen. A gathering of 10000 participated in the Convention.

Before the month was out Rajaji addressed two public meetings, one at Madras and the other at Arkonam in the district of North Arcot. A notable feature of the latter meeting was the presence of large numbers of village folk.

Maharashtra :

An Ad hoc Committee for Nagpur district was formed on July 24 with Mr. Chitnavis as President. Mr. Bhandare toured the five districts in the Marathwada region. He contacted a number of prominent people at each place and addressed groups of persons interested in the Party. As a result of his visit, Ad hoc Committees have been formed at Parbhani and at Jalna for Aurangabad district.

On his way back from Bombay after attending the meetings of the Central Organising Committee, Professor M. Ruthnaswamy was the guest of the Poona Swatantra Party. He addressed a public meeting under the auspices of our Party and a meeting arranged by the Catholic Association in Poona.

Mysore :

The Mysore City and District/unit of the Party has been actively engaged in enrolling members, organising public meetings and trying to popularise the party's policies among the people.

At Kurugaval in the district of Mandya a public meeting was held on July 16 when over 5,000 villagers were present. Mr. Niranjanraj Urs, President of the District Council, presided. The Secretary of the District Council, Shri H. S. Subbarayappa, and others addressed the gathering.

The City and District Council has hit upon a new method of popularising the party with the people. Different slogans depicting principles of the Swatantra Party are being printed in large quantities and are being distributed house to house, door to door and shop to shop in the City every Saturday and Sunday.

A combined conference of five districts viz. Mysore, Mandya, Mangalore, Coorg and Hassan is being planned. Efforts are being made to convene the conference during the last week of September.

Of interest to Party members is the news that in the village of Gargeshwar with a population of nearly 5,000 all the 13 seats for the Village Panchayat contested by our Party members in their independent capacity were captured by them.

In the district of North Kanara the Party unit is taking on the role of an effective opposition. With commendable alertness the district Party has lost no time in agitating against Government's indifference towards the grievances of the people. For example the Foundation stone for the proposed Suratkal Engineering College was

laid over three years ago. But since then not one additional stone had been laid. Our Party took up the matter with the Government and construction of the College has now started in earnest.

A favourite electioneering stunt of the ruling Party in that area was the proposal to convert Mangalore into a major port. The idea usually languished in Government's shelves until an election came, when it was taken out and brandished about by the Ruling Party with a promise that if ~~was~~ returned to power it would take up the matter immediately and see that Mangalore became a major port. Our Party demanded immediate implementation of the scheme by the Government. Various other problems such as the widening of a road or protest against the procrastination by authorities has been tackled by this active unit. Individual grievances are also being attended to. The unit now proposes to hold meetings in villages to collect and press for improvements which have been hitherto neglected by the authorities.

Orissa :

In the district of Balasore, Anchal Committees have been formed at Sarugan, Balikuda, Pakhar, Soro and Kapur. Presidents and Convenors have been appointed at all these places.

At Mangalpur in East Jajpur a branch office has been opened with Shri Gokulananda Ray as Secretary. Shri G. Jena, State General Secretary, who was present on the occasion explained the Party's principles to the gathering.

Similarly a Committee has been formed at Rambag with Shri Gopal Prasad Singh as President and Shri Pitabas Naik as Secretary.

Throughout the month of May and June, numerous public meetings were held in the State at various places including Pirhat Begunia, Jamjhadi Simulia, Balichandaghat, Maitapur, Bauripada P.S. Simulia School field, Sarugan, Bidrahat, Brahmaniahath, Nadigan, Nauhat Adahat and Garasanga.

A meeting was held at Chakulipada in the district of Cuttack which was addressed by State president H. Kanoongo. Similarly Mr. Kanoongo also addressed meetings at Khambakul and Nishchata Koila. Another meeting at Mandapara in the Jagatsingpur Constituency was addressed by Mr. Kanoongo with Mr. Krushna Chandra Rath in the Chair.

At Khalikot Diggahandi in the district of Ganjam a meeting was addressed by Shri Harihar Das, M.L.A. At the end of the meeting Mr. Harihar Das was presented with a purse. Over 200 members were enrolled on the spot.

Punjab :

Out of 18 districts in the Punjab, our Party has organised itself in 17. District ad hoc committees have been formed in these districts. With a view to facilitate exchange of ideas on problems confronting district convenors in their respective areas, a system of monthly get-togethers by rotation, of district convenors, their secretaries and members of the State ad hoc Committee and the State consultative Council have been arranged and three such meetings have already taken place at Patiala, Karnal and Ambala Cantt. These

meetings have proved very useful. A number of routine matters are usually discussed and decisions taken on the spot which in turn save considerable time that would otherwise have been wasted in correspondence.

Active work for the formation of primary units at the Constituency level commenced in April 1960, after the Party's constitution was adopted at the Patna Convention. Constituency units have since been established in 11 Constituencies of Anritsar district, 8 of Gurdaspur, 9 of Ludhiana, 4 in Gurgaon. Constituency units in other areas of the State are being set up and the Party hopes to have a complete network of Constituency Committees in a short time.

Politics in the State has been in a state of turmoil for a long time now. Beginning with the agitation in favour of Hindi as the State Language, it was followed by a State-wide strike by the Revenue Staff, then by the Communist agitation against 'betterment levy' and Marla Tax etc., and finally the Sikh demand for a Punjabi Suba. The last mentioned agitation is still in full swing. The people therefore, reports our Punjab Party, have had little or no time to settle down peacefully to ponder over other subjects affecting their future as a whole. Barring a short interval now and then, the State has almost continuously been under section 144 Cr.p.c. which prohibits holding of conferences, conventions and meetings restricting even movement. Normal enjoyment of civil liberties has remained curtailed and there has been wholesale repression and victimisation unheard of in any country which professes to be a democracy. These curbs have affected our Party organisation in the State which since its inception has not known a peaceful month. In spite of this, however, our Party has taken advantage of peaceful lulls to organise meetings and conventions. The continuous tours of Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, President of the State unit, have given considerable impetus to party organisation in the State.

Uttar Pradesh :

The party has established ad hoc committees in 50 of the 55 districts in Uttar Pradesh. The membership drive has been very successful and in spite of numerous difficulties U. P. now has a membership of over a lakh.

At present the State office is trying to reorganise the district ad hoc Committees constituency-wise. For this purpose and also for popularising the Party, the office Secretary has been touring various districts. Two jeeps have been purchased by the State unit. The General Secretary and a member of the State Executive Committee are motoring to the Western and Eastern parts of the State to assist personally in organising party work in the difficult units.

Numerous district conventions have already been held. A workers' training camp was organised by the Gonda District unit at Balrampur from 15th to 21st July. More than a hundred workers from different districts attended this camp.

Pamphlets and other Party literature written in Hindi and Urdu by members and sympathisers of the party are widely distributed among the people.

In the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, our Party has 25 members. Our group has been recognised as an opposition group by the Speaker of the Assembly.

West Bengal :

The new office of the West Bengal Party in Calcutta was opened formally by the General Secretary of the Party, Mr. M. R. Masani, on August 6, 1960.

Earlier the West Bengal Committee had met on 14th July in Calcutta under the presidentship of Mr. N. C. Chatterjee, to consider the Assam crisis. The resolution adopted on the occasion called on all responsible organisations to make a deeper study of the problem. It recalled the numerous occasions when the people of West Bengal had stood by the Assamese in the latter's moments of difficulty, to preserve the "safety and integrity of Assam". The resolution added that "What has happened recently in Assam reminds us of the worst days of the League rule in Bengal in whipping up communal passions and then in refraining from taking drastic actions against the miscreants responsible for the outrages."

Calling upon people to observe the State-wise Hartal in a peaceful manner it characterised it as a "spontaneous expression of outraged national honour, and cautioned Bengalis from acting in a retaliatory way.

Pointing out the authorities in Assam as being incapable of handling the situation the resolution stated : "The Bengalis in Assam feel that it will be dangerous to give more power to the Government of Assam in the name of suppressing the goondas or the lawless element. The real truth is that people have lost faith in the present ruling party in Assam and in the Assam Government's capacity in putting down the lawless elements."

The resolution also pointed out that "whenever the Bengalis have tried to withstand goondaism and had combined themselves to resist the aggressive elements they have been neutralised by the authorities. People who organised themselves to thwart goondaism were arrested or were persecuted by the authorities. Therefore the morale of the people has been rudely shaken."

Calling on the Centre to intervene the Resolution said : "... the suspicion is that there are people operating in the Government or occupying high position in the ruling party in Assam, who have been responsible for creating the ugly situation helping the organisers of the lawless campaign. We regret that the reports as to mass arson, looting and calculated assault and humiliation of Bengalis are well founded. In this situation drastic action is necessary. The Central Government's inactivity will lead to disaster. Fundamental rights guaranteed to the citizens of India have been violated ruthlessly... in this situation there is no other alternative but to demand action under Article 356 of the Constitution and the patent fact is to be admitted that there has been a deplorable failure of the Constitutional machinery in the State of Assam and the President should assume to himself the functions of the Government of that State...."

The resolution concluded by saying that in view of the tragic happenings in Assam, "the demand for incorporation of Cachar and other Bengali - speaking areas into the State of West Bengal" should now be intensified.

Annexure A

Resolutions Adopted At The Open Session of the
General Council Held in Bombay on July 31, 1960.

1. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' STRIKE :

7 The General Council of the Swatantra Party congratulates the people of India on keeping calm and preserving the normal life of the community during the course of the recent strike of Central Government employees. The Council also expresses satisfaction at the fact that a large number of Government employees did not associate themselves with this ill-advised and unnecessary stoppage of work which caused great financial loss to the nation and thus helped in bringing the strike to an early conclusion and minimising distress and inconvenience to the public.

2. The Council disapproves of the action of those employees in the administrative and essential services of Government who went on strike and sought to hold the community to ransom. It deplores the action of the leaders of the strike. It is of the view that the situation was aggravated by the domination of the Government Employees' Unions by outsiders from the ranks of political parties who attempted to exploit the genuine discontent of the employees for personal or party ends. These developments have confirmed the correctness of the Swatantra Party's approach, as set out in the Statement of Policy adopted at the Patna Convention in March last, that outsiders should not be allowed to dominate and exploit workers' organisations and that the Swatantra Party would not enter the race whatever other parties may do.

3. On the other hand the Council is unhappy at the indiscriminate use in a number of cases of the extraordinary powers under the Ordinance and the Preventive Detention Act.

4. In the opinion of the Party, the root cause of the strike was the continuing rise in the cost of living due to the inflation that is inherent in the Congress Government's Five-Year Plans. The reckless resort to deficit finance, the imposition of excessive tax burdens, direct and indirect, and in particular the levying of excise duties on the necessities of life, have all contributed to setting in motion the vicious spiral of rising costs and wages. The refusal of the Union Government to

compensate their employees for the rise in living costs created by its own policies is inconsistent with the concept of removing disparities that they themselves put forward in other fields.

5. The attempt to utilise the threat of Chinese Communist aggression against this country as a reason why justice should not be done to low paid employees is ridiculous particularly when it is remembered that this grave threat has been sought to be played down by the Prime Minister and his Government in an attempt to conceal the utter failure of their foreign and defence policies.

6. In this context, the Indian people have become aware of the peculiar contrast in the attitude of the Congress Government towards its own employees as compared with its attitude towards those in the service of other employers. While encouraging labour for political purposes, to make demands on private industries which are not always capable of being met, the Congress Government has disclosed itself to be far from being a model employer. It is to be hoped that this experience of what happens in State employment and nationalised enterprises will open the eyes of the public in general and the working class in particular to the soundness of the Swatantra Party's thesis that State Capitalism and Free Trade Unionism cannot co-exist for long.

7. The General Council is of the view that a sound policy of dealing with Government employees needs to be evolved and should be based on the following considerations :

- (a) The drawing of a distinction between civil servants, those in essential services and those employed in industrial or other establishments managed by Government, with appropriate procedures applicable in each case;
- (b) The establishment of appropriate machinery for negotiation and conciliation in order to facilitate collective bargaining, including the establishment of suitable Joint Councils;
- (c) The acceptance of the principle that, whenever civil servants and those employed in essential services are denied the right to strike, there should be an opportunity for the matter in dispute to be referred to arbitration; and
- (d) The recognition of Unions and Associations of Government employees being made conditional on their office-bearers and executives being drawn from the ranks of the employees and not from those of outsiders.

8. The Council expresses the hope that Government will adopt a humane attitude in dealing with strikers who were misguided or intimidated. The Council notes that a large number of workers is facing prosecution under the Ordi-

nance and other laws and a much larger number is facing disciplinary proceedings. The Council requests the Public Aid Committee of the Party to look into this matter and render whatever legal help may be possible and necessary.

2. REPRESSION IN THE PUNJAB :

While the Swatantra Party has refrained from being involved in local and linguistic issues it is unhappy over the mounting tension over the people of Punjab and it strongly condemns the periodic repression that has been initiated in the Punjab with the acquiescence of the Union Government and the reign of terror that is reported to be prevailing in the State. The Council apprehends that this sort of repression will tend to have an adverse influence on the security and defence of India.

The Council is grieved to have received the following telegram from Sardar Harbans Singh Gujral, leading advocate of Chandigarh :

"Two lawyers of Ludhiana Amrjitsingh Gursharan-singh defending persons arrested in connection with the Punjabi Suba movement arrested yesterday when waiting to appear in court held inside jail apparently to prevent them from discharging their professional duties as well as to deprive the undertrials of their right to have legal assistance stop serious encroachment of the fundamental right of the accused guaranteed under the constitution on the civil liberties and Rule of Law stop defence work in the state paralysed stop action being indefensible in a democratic setup deserves serious notice pray intervene."

In view of the telegram and other communications, the General Council requests the following gentlemen (with powers to co-opt) to pay an early visit to the Punjab to make an impartial appraisal of the situation with particular reference to the repressive measures taken by the Government irrespective of the political issues raised by the various Parties in the State and to make a report to the Central Organising Committee :

1. Shri K. M. Munshi
2. Shri N. C. Chatterjee
3. Sardar Kartar Singh Campbellpuri
4. Shri C. B. Agarwala

contd....

3. DRAFT OF THE THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLAN :

The General Council is of the view that a Panel from among the members of the Party and others should be requested to examine the draft of the Third Five-Year Plan published by the Government and to help the Party with a report on the subject within the next two months.

The following gentlemen may be requested to undertake this work :

1. Prof. B. R. Shenoy
2. Sardar Lal Singh
3. Mr. M. A. Sreenivasan
4. Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy
5. Mr. J. M. Lobo Prabhu

Mr. Lobo Prabhu will kindly undertake all correspondence in this connection.

4. THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTIONS :

The General Council calls on the State units of the Party to ensure that no one who is eligible to vote is deprived of his civic rights. For this purpose they should interest themselves in the preparation of the Electoral Rolla and ensure that the names of those who are eligible to vote are included in the appropriate rolls so as to make them correct and up-to-date.

The Council is confident that the Swatantra Party will secure a gratifying response at the next General Elections if it chooses men of ability, quality and character as its candidates and gives them adequate time to approach their constituencies. With a view to enable the new National Executive and General Council of the Party which will come into existence by the beginning of 1961 to commence adopting candidates for Parliament and State Assemblies, the Council calls on Party units in the states to undertake, as soon as the enrolment of members concludes by the end of September 1960, the preparation of tentative panels of prospective Parliamentary and State Assembly candidates and to forward such lists to the Central Office of the Party by the end of February 1961.

5. CHINA AND TIBET :

The General Council of the Swatantra Party takes note of the continued resistance of the valiant people of Tibet to the Chinese occupation of their country and pays its respectful tribute to the heroism and tenacity of the Tibetan people.

The Council notes with deep concern and regret the lack of a firm and effective policy on the part of the Government of India to meet the continued aggression of the Communist Government of China on the Hinalayan frontiers.

6. ASSAM :

The General Council views with pain the recent happenings in Assam and condemns the grievous failure of the Congress Government in Assam to maintain law and order to protect the lives of people of Bengali and Tribal origins residing in that State. The Council is of the view that Government should take steps to combat this tendency to violence and injustice arising from linguistic and communal fanaticism flowing from its own policies and take effective steps to prevent similar outbreaks in any part of the country.

7. THREAT TO NATIONAL UNITY AND DEMOCRACY :

The Swatantra Party holds the view very strongly that the policies initiated and persisted in by the Congress Party in the face of opposition of the saner elements of the community as well as in its own ranks, though not always expressed publicly for a variety of reasons, have resulted in a parochial and disintegrating tendency throughout the country weakening the united strength of the people.

The Party is of the view that many of the Congress policies, which appear on the surface to be aimed at progress and unity, have resulted in parochial chauvinism; at the same time they have led to the concentration of all economic power in, and a mood of dependence on Government, thereby inevitably preparing the country for a disastrous and undemocratic regime.

The General Council therefore appeals to the people to reinforce the efforts of the Swatantra Party in resisting this process of national disintegration."

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