



national headquarters

sassoon building, 143, mahatma gandhi road, bombay 1.

Camp : 2 Lodi Estate,
New Delhi 110003.

July 6, 1974

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

1473

Dear Friend,

We have received some complaints regarding the delegates quota, as approved by the National Executive (23 in favour, 3 against). Even a simple matter such as this has been unnecessarily turned into a controversy. Therefore, I feel I must write and explain the reasons for recommending the present delegates quota.

1. The National Convention is being called at a very critical juncture, when the nation is in turmoil and several things have to be done soon to save it from disintegration.
2. Unfortunately, the monsoons do not permit an open air session; it has to be a hall convention, and therefore of limited capacity.
3. The ratio of 10 : 1 was possible when the Party was cadre-based, but since the last Madras Convention when we reverted to a mass based party, the membership grew to the extent where a 100:1 ratio is manageable.
4. The National Convention is being called to discuss only one specific issue, namely : should we all make common cause with other opposition parties in order to create a National Alternative.
5. It is a decision which vitally effects each and every Party member personally and no one else. Therefore the system of delegate quota must accurately represent members, and members alone. Therefore no delegate can represent more members or less members, but each must represent the same number of members. In the past, we have had differential representation through the system of maximum and minimum delegates for various reasons. One reason was that certain regions should not have a preponderent say in matters, while weaker regions should be encouraged to participate and involve themselves in the party. It was an effort to build the party in areas where it was weak.
6. But in the present situation, we are going to take a decision effecting the lives and future of our own members, therefore it would be morally wrong and patently unfair to allow one delegate to speak and decide for 200 members, while another delegate would be speaking on behalf of only 10 members. And yet the vote of one would be equated to the vote of the other at the National Convention ! That would not be fair. Another argument in favour of equal representation of members is that this is a matter to be decided on a personal basis and not on a regional basis. I would be disappointed if I find that all the members of a particular state vote for or against the resolution en masse. This would only indicate that the Swatantra Party has sunk to the level of groupism and personalised politics, individual members surrendering their conscience and intelligence.

It was for this reason that the last General Council meeting was restricted only to members, contrary to the usual practice of inviting several others to participate.

This is too serious a matter to be treated at that level. We are really going to decide not only on the future of the Swatantra Party, but on the future of India itself. I am hopeful, and I have complete confidence, that you will apply your mind to this issue faithfully, sincerely and honestly.

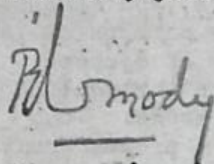
The objective We have before this National Convention are three :

- (A) That the Party must stick together no matter what the outcome of the National Convention.
- (B) That the verdict of the National Convention will be accepted by all. I on my part can assure you that as a member of the Party I will abide by the decision of the National Convention.
- (C) Every effort must be made to ensure that a split does not occur, leaving a rump to function, in case the verdict of the National Convention is to join the new Party. This would defeat the objective of a two-Party system and completely dilute the sacrifice The Swatantra Party is making for the nation.

It is for the above reasons that we decided that the total number of delegates should not exceed 1,000 for reasons of accommodation. And that each delegate must represent the same number of votes. I wish you fruitful deliberations at the Convention.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,



(Piloo Mody)