

Swatantra Newsletter

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C. O. C. and G. C. Meetings:

Bombay City will be the venue of meetings of the Central Organising Committee and the General Council of the Party scheduled to take place from the 29th to the 31st of July.

A feature of the General Council meetings will be the holding of an open session where members of the public will be permitted to attend by tickets.

The Bombay Party taking advantage of the meetings, is arranging several functions for Rajaji and the visiting leaders from other states. A subscription dinner at Rs.100/- a plate has been arranged in honour of Rajaji. Similarly a public meeting under the auspices of the Party will be held at Chowpatty sands on the 31st of July.

Students & Politics:

In our last Newsletter we had published our General Secretary's statement endorsing the findings of the Committee appointed by the University Grants Commission on student indiscipline and assuring the Commission of the Party's resolve to abstain from political activity among students. This was on June 10. On July 29, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. Chavan, addressing a public meeting at Ahmednagar, suggested that all political parties should enter into an agreement to keep students out of politics.

It is a matter of satisfaction that we were the first to go on record supporting the U. G. C.'s recommendations and we are glad that the Chief Minister of Bombay is in agreement with us on this issue.

In the meanwhile, the Chairman of the University Grants Commission has, in the course of a communication to our General Secretary, promised to circulate the statement along with the paragraph dealing with students in our Statement of Policy to the Vice-Chancellors of the various Indian universities, who, he believes, will appreciate the Party's attitude.

Public Aid Committee:

During the last two months the Public Aid Committee has been very busy setting up associate committees wherever our Regional and State Parties are operating. They have so far been successful in setting up such committees in the Punjab, Mysore and Madhya Pradesh. The most active of these committees is the one functioning in Bombay city where a panel of nine lawyers meets every Saturday afternoon to consider cases that have been referred to it. Of the twelve cases that were referred to it, eight have already been dealt with while the remaining three are being processed. Many people are availing themselves of the P. A. C.'s services and it is hoped that our units in the areas where no committees have so far been set up will take up the matter and provide this useful medium of service to the community.

A Congressman on the Congress Democracy:

In the course of his statement to the Andhra Legislative Assembly explaining the reasons why he had resigned from the Cabinet, Mr. Subba Reddy commented: "Democracy has little meaning if its very guardians deny the right to contest a simple election to one of the bodies in the party. To one like me who, as a humble member of the Congress for the last thirty years, has fought for freedom, this scant regard for even basic democratic principles has come as a great shock. I am confident that the impression on all lovers of democracy in the State is precisely the same."

NEWS FROM STATE PARTIES:Andhra:

The General Council of the Andhra Party met in Hyderabad on 15th July to elect a new Executive for the State. The following Office-bearers were elected: Shri B. Ramachandra Reddi, President; Mr. G. Latchanna, M. L. A., Mr. K. Subbarao, Mr. J. Chandramouli, M.L.A., and Mr. S. N. Reddi Vice-presidents; Mr. T. Krishnamma, Mr. G. B. Apparao, M. L. C., Mr. Pasupuleti Koteswara Rao and Mr. C. L. Narasimha Reddi, General Secretaries and Mr. T. Jagannatham, Treasurer.

A Joint meeting of the new office-bearers and the Party's Legislators in the Andhra Assembly was held in Hyderabad on 28th June to decide on our attitude to the Land Ceilings Bill introduced in the Assembly by the ruling party.

The month of June saw active Party work in the various districts of Andhra. Mr. Subbiah and Mr. Koteswara Rao accompanied by other active members of the Party and district leaders visited Krishna District for a fortnight. Shri Pratti Seshayya, former Bhoodan worker completed a forty days Jatra in West Godavari enrolling members and collecting funds. In Ongole Taluk, Mr. N. Venkayya, M.L.A., helped to enrol 2000 members by touring the area. Similarly Shri J. Chandramouli, M.L.A., toured Guntur district for over twenty days. Mr. P. Rajagopal Naidu, M.L.A., Deputy Leader of the Swatantra Party in the

Andhra Legislative Assembly, accompanied by Mr. M. R. Subbarao toured the Chittoor District for fifteen days organising Famine-Relief Committees and activising party work in the area. Shri N. Ranga Reddi and Shri N. S. Reddi, both former ministers toured Cuddapah and Kurnool District.

Special attention was devoted to Telangana. Our President, Professor Ranga, toured the area and undertook membership enlistment work at the grass-roots level by going to the villages so as to set an example to local workers and whip up enthusiasm for the membership campaign. In addition Professor Ranga also toured the districts of Krishna, Guntur and Nellore.

Assam:

The Party unit in Assam, despite severe handicaps, is trying to push ahead with the expansion of Party activities. The President and Secretary of the State Party have been touring various areas. For instance, the Chairman, Mr. Stephen Narayan visited Gauhati and met people who were interested in the Party while the secretary, Mr. John Deng, visited Nowgong. Similar visits were also undertaken to Gouripur in the Goalpara District.

Bihar:

The Vice-President of the Bihar Party, Mr. Rambinod Singh, M.L.A., accompanied by Mr. Ambika Pd. Singh and Mr. Saligram Singh, addressed a mammoth meeting at Bahara in the district of Arrah. It is reported that as a result of the appeal made by these leaders many present at the meeting enrolled themselves as Party members.

Mr. Janki Nandan Singh, M.L.C., General Secretary of the Party, visited Madhepura, Supaul, Nirmali, Darbhanga, Birol and Bahera, constituting local committees and addressing meetings of workers and public rallies.

At a meeting of the State Working Committee held on May 25 under the Presidentship of Mr. Rambinod Singh, important decisions affecting Party organisational work were taken. For example, this meeting decided that every member of the State Working Committee should put his best effort forward in enrolling at least 1000 members each by the end of July and organise public meetings in at least twelve different place before the rains set in. Another decision taken was that the Working Committee members should enrol 100 subscribers each for the Party weekly "Swatantra" in each district and Town Committee within a period of two months.

Bombay:

The activities of the Bombay Party recorded an increased intensity during the last month. While units of the Party in the City continued to spring up in various wards, the Party has taken up a number of issues with the local authorities. For example the Bandra unit of the Party within ten days of its formation got ready to agitate against a decision of the department of Education to construct a Marathi school in a predominantly Christian area. A signature campaign sponsored by the Party is in full sway and a deputation will shortly

wait on the Mayor of Bombay, Mr. A. Vakil who has been doing excellent work in the area, has permitted the use of his residence as the Ward office.

Service Centre: Imitation is the best form of flattery and we have every reason to feel flattered at the uninhibited way in which the Congress Party has been aping our activities. The Bombay Regional Congress Committee has set up a Civic Grievances Bureau almost on the model of our own Party, with one difference as the Free Press Journal in an editorial so tersely commented: "We feel this (the setting up of the Civic Grievances Bureau) is somewhat unfair on the part of the Ruling Party - to create grievances with the right hand and then give its left hand a chance to take the cudgels." In fact, the editorial began its comments with the poser "When Swatantra is there, can Congress be far behind?"

A Public Meeting sponsored by the Party was held near a fishing village in Versova to express the Party's concern at the indifferent attitude of the government towards the rapid erosion of the beach-line, which, if not checked immediately would make living there a hazardous for the residents. This meeting was addressed by Mr. M. R. Masani and Mr. Murarji Vaidya. Later a deputation led by Mr. Vaidya the Chairman of the Bombay Party waited on the Chief Minister Mr. Chavan, and urged him to take steps immediately to provide immediate relief and to undertake a project to seek a long term solution of the problem.

The Party has inaugurated a Youth Volunteer Corps. A uniform of white shirt and blue trousers has been decided upon and recruits are required to sign a pledge of loyalty to the Party's principles.

The President of the Bihar Party and Vice-president of the All India Party, Raja Kamakhya Narain Singh, was in Bombay last month. Among the programmes arranged in his honour was a luncheon in his honour at the residence of Mr. Murarji Vaidya. The Raja Saheb later addressed a crowded meeting of active workers of the Party in Bombay and exhorted them to activise their work. His prediction at the meeting that our Party will capture power in Bihar in the next General Elections considerably enthused active workers in Bombay with a determination to put forth their best to strengthen the Party in Bombay.

Gujarat:

In the second week of May, Mr. Bhailalbhair Patel, Mr. Dahyabhai Patel and Mr. Navin Patel toured Panchamahals and set up a District Committee. A former President of Godhra Municipality was made the President of the Panchmahal District Committee. Mr. Bhailalbhair Patel, accompanied by Mr. Kushalbhair Patel and Mr. Lalitmohan Gandhi, toured Surat and Broach Districts and organised Taluka units.

An important meeting was held at Baroda on June 19 where members of the Regional Committee were present. District and Taluka Presidents and Secretaries also attended this meeting by invitation. The organisational work of the Party in the State was discussed in great detail and a number of decisions were taken. It was decided that active workers should tour their respective areas accompanied by two or three members of the Regional Committee to popularise our Party's policies and to assist in a fund raising campaign. The meeting decided

to enrol one lac members and raising a fund of Rupees one lac before the end of September.

Madhya Pradesh:

On June 4, our Party flag was ceremonially hoisted at our Party Office in Bhopal by Mr. R. Agnibhoj, Convenor. Similar flag-hoisting ceremonies were also held in the Sehore District and city offices.

A Regional organiser for the division of Bhopal has been appointed. He is Pandit Shivrinarain Vaidya. Similarly Mr. Gopal Rao Ghadge has been appointed the Dewas District Organiser. A former member of the Jan Sangh, Mr. Ektare, has joined the party and is now doing active work in the Nimar District.

In the Indore Division, Thakur Naharsinh, Rajkumar Udaisingh, Shri Parulekar and Shri N. C. Zamindar are actively organising district and constituency Committees. The Raipur and Bilaspur divisions have launched a membership drive.

Madras:

Immediately after the Patna Convention, the Chingleput District Party held a Convention at the holy city of Kancheepuram. Before this Convention, 35 Constituency, Firka and Polling area Committees had been officially constituted. The Convention was a very impressive affair and this is especially creditable when it is realised that the District Committee itself was formed just six months earlier. Held on May 1, the Convention started off with a flag-hoisting ceremony by Mr. K. S. Venkatakrishna Reddiar and was inaugurated by Mr. S. S. Ramaswami Padayachi, M.L.A., of South Arcot District. The function was presided over by Sri Sa Ganesan. A notable feature of this Convention was the production of an attractive souvenir. 750 delegates representing the entire area of the district attended and participated in the deliberations.

Another important function was the holding of a Conference at Sathiamangalam in the district of Coimbatore. The Coimbatore district Committee has embarked on a project of arranging a series of Taluk Conferences in the district of which Sathiamangalam was the first one. This Conference presided over by Mr. V. K. Ramaswamy Mudaliar was inaugurated by Mr. S. S. Mariswamy, the State General Secretary. Over 500 delegates from villages far in the interior of the districts, attended the Conference.

The next Taluk Conference was held at Tirunelveli under the presidentship of State President, Sri Sa Ganesan. About over 3000 people attended the Conference which was addressed by Sri Sa Ganesan Mr. Mariswamy and Mr. G. K. Sunderam.

Mr. Mariswamy undertook an extensive tour of Tirunelveli district covering an area of five talukas. He addressed over twenty meetings. Dr. M. Santhosham, President, Madras District Swatantra Party, also participated in this tour. Mr. Sa Ganesan similarly toured three talukas in the district.

A meeting of the State Committee was held on June 4 in Madras, in the presence of Rajaji and Professor Ranga. This meeting accepted the resignation of Mr. K. S. Venkatakrishna Reddiar and elected Mr. Sa Ganesan, a noted scholar as President of the Party. On the evening of June 4, a party was held to celebrate the day when the Swatantra Party was first conceived. Rajaji, Professor Ranga, Mr. Sa Ganesan, Professor Ruthnaswamy, Dr. Santhosham and others spoke on the occasion.

Many public meetings were held during the last month. On June 6 Rajaji addressed a mammoth public meeting at Gokhale Hall. On June 18 a public meeting at Choolai was addressed by Mr. Ramaswamy Padayachi, who spoke at length on the evils that would result from the proposed Bill on Land Ceilings. Public meetings were also held at Peddunaickanpet, Sunnambukulam, Arantangi, Avadiavkoil, and Singaperumal Koil.

Maharashtra:

The Poona city unit of the Swatantra Party deserves credit for taking the lead in protesting against the Government's policy of permitting an increase of fees in middle schools. The Ad hoc Committee at its meeting held on 9-6-60 passed a resolution requesting the Government of Maharashtra to revise their decision. At a public meeting of members held on 18-6-60, Shri Bhandare and Shri Dandekar of our Party denounced government policy which would only result in further hardships to the middle class parents. Copies of resolutions passed at the meeting were sent to the departments concerned. It is gratifying to note that the Government of Maharashtra subsequently withdrew the order.

Good propaganda work is reported from the Thana and Kolaba districts. Shri D. E. Reuben has taken up with the Thana District School Board, the question of implementation of a Government directive of introducing English from the 5th standard.

Satisfactory progress in the enrolment of members is reported in the Amraoti District by our Organiser, Dr. Mehta. Mr. Koshti, Conventor for Maharashtra, addressed a public meeting held at Nasik on the 25th June under the presidentship of Shri Gangaram Goenka, a prominent social worker from Vidarbha.

Mysore:

A public meeting was held on June 11 in the Town Hall at Bangalore. This meeting held under the auspices of our Party was addressed by Mr. R. M. Seshadri, a member of the Public Aid Committee, and was presided over by Mr. J. Mohammed Inam, M.P. Mr. V. P. Menon also addressed the gathering. In his address Mr. Seshadri severely criticised the policy of the ruling party in regard to land reforms. He pointed out that the proposed Land Ceiling Bill could neither remove the present inequalities in the ownership of agricultural land nor change the pattern of agrarian economy with efficiency and economy. He said the Bill would actually retard productivity and that in about four or five years towns would be denuded of food supplies and industrial areas would be bereft of any foodgrains.

Mr. J. Mohammed Inam characterized the Land Ceilings Legislation as "aggression" on the part of the Congress Government in the same

manner as the Chinese aggression on Indian soil. He expressed the grave fear that the Congress by their policy, under the guise of veiled Socialism, was leading the country to Communism.

Mr. V. P. Menon referred in his speech to a report in a section of the Press of an alleged "rift" in the Party and said that the report to the effect that he was resigning from the party was a "wishful" thinking. There was no kind of rift either between Rajaji and himself, or between Masani and himself. "We are all perfectly united in our Party affairs and ideologies and with the support of the people which we get every day and the blessing of God, we will show to our opponents what we are capable of in the next general elections," concluded Mr. Menon.

Punjab:

Throughout the month of May the President of the Punjab unit, Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, toured the Northern districts of the State. He visited Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur and Ludhiana districts addressing several conferences and meetings both in the town and the rural areas. He continued his tour of the Northern Districts in June in spite of the extremely hot weather which unfortunately affected his health.

Raja Maheshindra Singh and Sardar Basant Singh toured Bhatinda and Ferozepur districts with a view to establishing units at the Constituency level in these districts.

In spite of the political turmoil in the State, our Party held various conferences and meetings in the districts of Gurdaspur and Hoshiarpur, Rohtak, Gurgaon and Hissar.

Chaudhri Dharam Singh Rathi, M.L.A., General Secretary of the Punjab Party, accompanied by the Convenors of the districts concerned toured Gurgaon and Hissar districts for the purpose of establishing constituency units. As a result Constituency Committees were established at Rewari East and West, Pataudi and Palwal Constituencies of Gurgaon District. He also made arrangements for the establishment of Constituency units at Ferozepur, Jhirka and Ballabhagarh Tehsil, with the co-operation of Rao Prabhu Dayal, the district Secretary in Gurgaon.

A joint meeting of the State Ad hoc Committee and the State Consultative Council was held on June 26 at Karnal under the presidency of Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, wherein several important decisions were taken unanimously. The meeting was well-attended.

Work in Hissar district has been taken in hand vigorously and about 1100 members were enlisted during the month.

The Jullundur district unit has now its own Urdu weekly entitled "Swatantra Punjab". The paper whose first issue was brought out on June 12 was received quite well.

The district units are actively preparing themselves for the Party's "protest-cum-prayer" day on August 16 demanding the abrogation of the Hindu Succession Act. They have an ambitious programme of contacting all the 21452 villages in the State to participate in the agitation. The meeting of the State Ad hoc Committee held on June 26

authorized the President to chalk out a programme of action. The district organisers were allotted the responsibility of visiting villages in their areas and to train five active workers in every village to educate the residents on the obnoxious act. Prayers will be offered at all Gurudwaras and temples on the 16th of August "entreating the Almighty to bestow sufficient sense to the Congress Government to repeal the act." A minimum of five workers in each village will go on fast that day.

On June 27 Jathedar Nagoke issued a Press Release on the rapidly deteriorating state of affairs in the Punjab. Commenting on the dictatorial manner in which the Kairon Ministry was trying to suppress the Akali agitation, Jathedar Nagoke said:

"The Government is entirely in the wrong in ordering indiscriminate arrests without provocation, gagging of the entire press, attachment of household effects and wholesale detentions, coupled with un-precedented abuse of Sections 107/151 of Cr. P.C., arrests of defence counsel, thereby denying the persons behind bars any opportunity for having themselves defended against unknown charges, misapplication of the Preventive Detention Act, as also partial enforcement of Section 144, leaving the Congress leaders and workers to carry on their unbridled propaganda, without any let or hindrance.

"The policy being pursued by the Government is being justified on the strength of purely mythical reports, irresponsible and irrelevant statements of the Congress leaders and its hirelings who have been welcoming the ruthless repression. Apparently these command performances are being purposely conducted to keep the true state of affairs in the background and to present the public with a one-sided picture. It is no political chivalry to condemn one's political victims while they are behind bars."

"The accumulated effect of all this irreligious policy of the Government has proved instrumental in driving the movement into the sacred precincts of Gurdwaras because when irreligion dominates and prevails all round the only refuge for religion to survive is to take shelter in the sacred temples."

"On top of all this, the Hon. Prime Minister's statement in justification of the brutal lathi charge and repeated use of tear gas in Delhi on June 12, on the Sikh procession, including women and children, is most regrettable. Instead of severe condemnation of the merciless beating by the police, he has thought it fit to congratulate them. To me and to many others, the Prime Minister's statement has come as a rude shock."

"I very emphatically assert that on 12th of June, Sikhs of Delhi were indiscriminately assaulted by the Police who dragged them out of Taxis and Motor Rickshaws and even pursued them to their hotels. This inhuman and unheard of conduct has generated a very genuine feeling in the entire Sikh community that it has been deliberately humiliated and I feel sure that any impartial enquiry into these allegations, which is not impossible as the Prime Minister has said, can bring out the true facts without any difficulty."

The Rajput brotherhood of Pathankot Constituency of Gurdaspur district met in a Conference on May 15. Jathedar Nagoke and Mr. Surrinder Nath Khosla addressed the conference and explained to the Assembly our Party's policies and programmes. It is reported that the entire Rajput community in the area decided to join our Party.

Another successful Conference was held at Jandiala, in the district of Jullundur. Jandiala is the home town of Mr. Darbara Singh, President of the Punjab Congress. In spite of the fact that members of the ruling party tried to dissuade the local population from participating in the Conference, their efforts were a miserable failure for the Conference got a rousing reception.

Rajasthan:

Two months after the Patna Convention, the Rajasthan Party has, after an intensive effort been able to set up district organisations in three out of five divisions in Rajasthan. In Jaipur division Ajmer District has been organised Constituencywise, while in Udaipur division His Highness Maharawal of Dungarpur is very actively organising the Party. In fact during the last two months the Maharawal visited over twenty towns in his division addressing well-attended gatherings of farmers and rural folk. This Division was once considered the citadel of Congress power but the effect of the Maharawal's tour has been such as to compel the Congress Chief Minister, Mr. Sukhadia to issue instructions to Government officers to arrange his programme in such a manner that he would be able to visit one place or the other in this division every Sunday. More interesting is his instruction that particular attention must be paid to his own constituency.

Shri Kalyan Singh, the Convenor of our Party, accompanied by Professor Madan Singh and others has been touring Ajmer district and the adjoining rural areas addressing meetings and enrolling members. In Bikaner division, all three units now have Ad hoc Committees. Similarly all the districts in Jodhpur division have been organised. Raja Kalyan Singh visited the districts in this division and reports of good progress in the district of Nagaur hitherto considered a Congress stronghold. Col. Dhonkal Singh who is a retired army man is doing good work. He has a programme of visiting one area every week in his district. Over 500 members were enrolled at the district at Nimaja after a meeting addressed by Raja Kalyan Singh.

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