

General Council to meet in Bombay

The Central Parliamentary Board, National Executive and General Council of the Party are scheduled to meet in Bombay on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, May 26, 27 and 28, 1966.

The Central Parliamentary Board and the National Executive will meet on May 26, while the General Council will be in session on May 27 and 28.

While the Parliamentary Board will discuss various matters connected with the General Elections of

1967, the National Executive will be concerned with organisational and policy matters. The Executive will also take a decision on the date and venue of the next National Convention.

The General Council will have before it for discussion the General Secretary's Report on the state of Party organisation since the last meeting of the Council in February 1965. Members of the Council are requested to try and attend the meeting.

Foreign Aid Perpetuates Misgovernment

The Congress would have been kicked out of power long ago but for the generous aid given by the United States, said Rajaji in Madras on April 21, addressing a public meeting organized by the Madras City Muslim League. He said the United States was really the financier and protector of the Congress Party.

Rajaji said Government-to-Government aid by the U.S. was responsible for "openly keeping up this autocratic Congress Government in power." In a way, America could be termed as an "enemy" of the opposition parties in India, he added amidst laughter.

He said the present day Congress was not the Congress that was before independence. In fact, the Congress now could be rightly called a "totalitarian, tyrannical, mutual benefit association."

Rajaji said that the Congress, even after being in charge of the affairs of the country for 20 years, could not provide elementary requirements like protected drinking water, drainage and other sanitary facilities to 90 per cent of the population in the villages.

He said he did not understand what the Congress meant by Socialism if it could not provide these

elementary requirements to the population even 20 years after independence.

Rajaji traced the root of all the present-day difficulties to the Congress Party's faulty economic and foreign policies. If it had been otherwise, the Indian people would have been leading a happy and contented life, he added. The Socialism of the Congress has "really made us debtors for all times." Even now, if the Congress Government corrected its faulty economic and foreign policies, the aid-giving countries would be prepared to wipe out all the debts and give us a clean slate.

(Referring to Congress President Kamaraj's allegations that the opposition parties in India were obstructing the country's march towards Socialism, Rajaji said: "If that is so, the Congress Party can be called a stumbling block in the way of achieving democracy.")

Commenting editorially on Rajaji's speech, the *Ambala Tribune* said: "Mr. Rajagopalachari's criticism of the Congress brand of socialism is amply justified. It is an ironic comment upon Congress rule that even after being in power for nearly 20 years, the party has failed to provide even the elementary requirements of the rural people."

Is Bastard the Writing on the Wall?

"The vanquished in argument start making faces," says a Malayalam proverb. This is what the Congress leaders — right from the late Mr. Nehru down to the lowest ranks in the Congress — have been all along

doing to the Swatantra Party, ever since the Party was born, calling it a "Ghost party", "Richman's party", and what not. Like true democrats and upright men they could never meet the Swatantra platform case ideo-

logically and therefore started hurling abuses at the Party. But Swatantra never faltered. It proved in the first elections in which it took part that it had come to stay. The Congressmen and the Communists, who had at one time fancied themselves as the only alternative to the Congress, are now painfully realising that Swatantra is gaining momentum. Demoralisation has set in among them with the result that from hurling abuses they have gone one step further. They have started intimidation and assault. The incident related below by Prof. N. G. Ranga strengthens the feeling that Bastar was perhaps not an accidental occurrence but that there is an organised group in the ruling party, aligned with the Communists, determined to cling to power, whatever the means. Prof. N. G. Ranga's letter to Home Minister Nanda is reproduced below.

"My dear Nandaji,

"I am enclosing herewith a letter which I have received from Shri N. Vijaya Raja Kumar, Organising Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Swatantra Party. You will find from the letter that Shri Vijaya Raja Kumar and our President Shri G. Latchanna, were assaulted by some Congress workers with the help of their allies, the Communists, at Suryapet on the 31st March, 1966, where they had gone to address a public meeting.

"As the Jeep which was occupied, amongst others, by Shri Vijaya Raja Kumar and Sardar Latchanna was proceeding slowly towards the town of Suryapet, stones were hurled at them by the Congress and Communist workers. Fortunately, Sardar Latchanna escaped by a hair's breadth but one of the stones hit Shri Vijaya Raja Kumar on the head and he started bleeding profusely. The Sub-Inspector of Police and the two local constables on duty, who happened to be close by, silently witnessed this criminal assault without taking any cognizance.

"It seems that Congress party wanted to induce one of our important local workers, Shri Jogaiah, through the local Communist Party workers to resign from Swatantra Party and to join the Congress. In spite of allurements and also some temptations which were offered to Shri Jogaiah, even from quarters close to the Chief Minister, he bluntly refused to change his convictions. It is this which invited the wrath of the Congress and Communist parties' workers.

"Sardar Latchanna and Shri Rajagopal Naidu, our Leader and Deputy Leader in the Andhra Assembly, met the Chief Minister the following day and apprised him of the incident. They told him if such things were allowed to go unchecked, they would not be responsible for the consequences.

"I wish to remind you of another such earlier assault made on Sardar Latchanna by some Congressmen in Srikakulam District, about which both he and myself had to write to you at that time.

"I recall here what I said the other day, while speaking on the Bastar affair in the Lok Sabha, that Bastar was the red light for all opposition party members. Bastar might prove to be an awful presage for many more such ghastly tragedies to follow. The sad experience of my colleagues in Andhra confirms my fears that certain elements in the ruling party are out to liquidate their opponents in the most undemocratic and unlawful manner.

"May I, therefore, request you to have this incident investigated through the CBI and the culprits punished properly. It is high time that you try to arrest further degeneration of the law and order situation in our country to save our whole democratic system from being throttled at the hands of anti-social elements.

"With regards,

Yours sincerely,
N. G. RANGA"

RKS The Basic Issues

The Swatantra Party, ever since it was born, has always stood steadfast by constitutional and democratic principles. It has behaved in a mature way when the ruling party itself has behaved immaturely on many occasions.

The recent disorderly scenes witnessed in the Lok Sabha which led to the suspension of 3 SSP members will be regretted by all democratic-minded persons. While such occurrences are indeed unfortunate and might endanger the growth of democratic institutions the real issues should not be lost sight of. There is no use just condemning outright such incidents for they are nothing but symptoms of maladies which lie underneath and which to a great extent have been the result of the attitude of the ruling party. Commenting on the incidents, the *Indian Express* rightly said.

"While obedience to the Chair is an essential pre-

condition for the orderly conduct of Parliamentary business, some other conditions also need to be fulfilled. The Opposition members should not be made to feel that they are getting less than a fair hearing either from the Chair or from the House as a whole. Though the numerical strength of the Opposition parties in Parliament may not be impressive it remains true that collectively they represent the greater part of the national electorate. As Mr. H. V. Kamath is believed to have pointed out at the conference, (when the speaker met the various party leaders following the incident) one reason for dissatisfaction among members is that they do not find enough opportunities to raise discussions on important issues because of the arrangement of various sessions. The suggestion that Parliament should meet at least seven months in a year certainly merits serious consideration. Perhaps the most constructive suggestion at the conference

came from Mr. M. R. Masani. He is believed to have urged that the Chief Whip of the Congress Party and the Whips of various Opposition parties should meet

frequently to discuss the business of the House and try to arrive at agreement on the issues to be taken up. This is a remedy well worth trying."

The "Right" Direction

S.N. May 66

RKS
(Mr. N. Dandekar, MP, Joint Secretary of the Swatantra Party, refuted the arguments recently put forward in USA by Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, that only a centrist government leaning to the "left" could survive in the present context in India.

Mrs. Gandhi had also reportedly said during an interview in America that the "right wing" forces were not an effective factor in Indian politics.

The Swatantra leader speaking at Ahmedabad on April 9, rejected Mrs. Gandhi's contention as unreal and asserted that the present trends were strongly in favour of centrist government leaning to the "right".

The Swatantra leader expressed the hope that his party would capture power in Gujarat, Orissa and Rajasthan, either alone or with the cooperation of other non-communist parties.

P.M.'s Visit a Lost Opportunity

Mr. M. R. Masani, General Secretary, has criticised the attitude of Pakistan vis-a-vis the implementation of the Tashkent agreement.

Addressing a Press conference at Rajkot on April 10, Mr. M. R. Masani said that he was sorry that the happy climate created by the Tashkent Agreement, in arriving at which the late Lal Bahadur Shastri laid down his life, appeared to be undergoing some erosion during the last few weeks. "Let us hope that, in the cause of long-term friendship between the two countries, this unfortunate trend may still be reversed," he said. Mr. Masani said that he did not think the

stand of the Pakistani Government that a solution to the Kashmir issue was a pre-condition to making progress with other aspects was at all "helpful or constructive".

He described Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi's visit to the US as a "lost opportunity". Whether the Prime Minister's visit had been successful or not depended on how one understood its objective, Mr. Masani said. If the objective was to earn goodwill from all concerned, then she could be complimented. If, on the other hand, the visit was looked at from the angle of massive economic aid, it had not been a success, Mr. Masani added.

Planned Scarcity

RKS
The Socialist planning of our Congress government has added yet another problem to the Bombayite whose plight indeed is awful. He has to stand in the queue for hours on end for his ration; he has to sit late or wake up early in the morning to get his water from the tap and now he has to stand overnight in queues for his daily supply of kerosene.

The root cause of the acute shortage of kerosene all over the country, and in Greater Bombay in particular, has been the mistaken decision of the Central Government in May 1965 to stop essential imports of diesel and kerosene from world markets and its attempt to build up a monopoly for the Indian Oil Company of supplies from Soviet Union under the ridiculous plea that imports from Soviet Union do not involve a drain on foreign exchange! This has been pointed out by Mr. M. R. Masani in a telegram that he sent on April 21, to Mr. O. V. Alagesan, Minister of State for Petroleum and Chemicals. He also points in the course of the telegram to the inadequate distribution channels of the Indian Oil Company which aspires to play a big role and which has been

increasingly assuming monopoly in the oil field. Mr. Masani's telegram reads:

"You are undoubtedly aware of considerable hardship and distress caused to citizens of Greater Bombay during last fortnight due to inadequate supplies of Kerosene. Having investigated the facts, I would like to share with you the following conclusions. The immediate crisis was caused by your Ministry laying down as from March 1966 needlessly restrictive Statewise allocations for distribution of Kerosene in an attempt at stockpiling by the wrong method. These allocations represented a reduction in stocks till then made available for distribution in the free market and resulted in a psychology of scarcity which has aggravated actual shortage.

"While the other oil companies have scrupulously placed on the market the quantities allotted to them, it would appear that the Indian Oil Company owing to its inadequate distribution facilities and the probable failure of Soviet tankers to arrive in time have found themselves in difficulties. It was obviously a mistake on the part of your Ministry to allocate nearly half of the total allocation for the State of Maharashtra

to Indian Oil Company who have to rely predominantly on imports while the local refineries are in a position to supply a large proportion.

"The announcement made by the Maharashtra Government on 18th April of an increase from 600 kilo litres to 750 kilo litres for daily distribution in Greater Bombay does not represent a real increase but only an accelerated release from the monthly allocation which I regret to find has still not been increased. This will only make the crisis recur with increased violence in the last days of the month. I, therefore, strongly urge that your Ministry revise with immediate effect the allocation for the month of April made by it to enable the expanded supply to be maintained.

Gokhale: The Liberal Statesman

Rajaji has exhorted young people to follow the good precepts laid down by Gopal Krishna Gokhale and to be brave, truthful and courageous like him. He was speaking at Madras on May 9th, after unveiling a portrait of Gokhale at the Lakshmipuram Young Men's Association on the occasion of the birth centenary celebrations of the leader of the liberal thought.

Rajaji said the late leader belonged to the school of thought which believed that freedom could be achieved by converting Britain with intelligent argument and that, while this process was on, people could be trained in the art of government. But the extreme nationalists who represented the other school of thought felt that people were always ready for freedom and that there was no need for educating them in the art of government. Bal Gangadhar Tilak belonged to the latter school.

"Now we see," he said, "it is not so easy to govern, whatever our education and temperament. Now we realise how difficult that art of government is, to govern ourselves through our elected representatives."

Rajaji said that Mahatma Gandhi chose Gokhale as his guru on his return from South Africa, because, he thought that Tilak believed there was no limit to the means to be employed for achieving freedom. Mahatma Gandhi also believed he could convert

"The real root of these difficulties lies in your Government's mistaken decision in May 1965 to stop essential imports of Diesel and Kerosene from world markets and your attempt to build up a monopoly for the IOC of supplies from the Soviet Union under the ridiculous plea that imports from the Soviet Union do not represent a drain on India's foreign exchange. The present distress of the people of Greater Bombay is nothing but a delayed consequence of that wrong policy which you will do well even now to rectify. The correct way to build up stocks without causing hardship to the people is by resuming imports from the traditional sources or by allowing local refineries to increase output of kerosene which you are needlessly preventing them from doing at present."

Gokhale to his view about the efficacy of passive resistance as a means of achieving freedom. Gokhale had been asking Gandhiji not to speak of passive resistance because he felt it would push the people into political activity for which they were not ready, and that it would lead to violence.

Both were right, Rajaji added. Passive resistance had led the country to freedom and on some occasions during the freedom struggle it had also led to violence in some places.

Rajaji pointed out that if Gokhale had been alive now, he would have died heart-broken after seeing the enormity of the tax burden imposed on the people by those whom he had authorised to govern. Gokhale had opposed the levy of salt tax. "But the present Government is bolder than the British Government. They have courage because we encourage them," he said.

The only limit to taxation by the present Government seemed to be the amount of money the Government wanted and not the people's "bearability" of the burden. Instead of spending what it had, Government laid down what it should spend and then started taxing the people. "This is robbery," Rajaji said.

Rajaji also referred to Gokhale's great love for education which impelled Gokhale to become a teacher.

Industrial Taj Mahals

RKS
Bokaro is an excellent example of the perverted sense of priority of our Planning pundits. Mr. M. R. Masani, while speaking on the Budget, described the proposed Bokaro Steel Project as an "Industrial Taj Mahal." "I give only one example at this stage," he said, "and that is the Bokaro Steel Plant, which is the

worst of these Industrial Taj Mahals which our present Moghuls are building as memorials to themselves". After carefully analysing the economics of the project, he asked: "Are we obliging the Russians? If we are obliging them what are we getting in return?"

Mr. D. K. Rangnekar, the Delhi correspondent of

the *Economic Times* in his article "Can we Afford Bokaro Today" (*Economic Times*, April 6) echoes the same sentiment and says: "There are those, for example, like Mr. T. N. Singh, who think that the Russian project report must be accepted and implemented for fear of offending Mr. Kosygin, as if this was the one way of showing our eternal gratitude for Tashkent". He asks: "But what kind of an economic argument is it to say that India would be ungracious in trying to conserve its scarce resources and in trying to save itself from being landed with an uneconomic and technologically questionable proposition. What is so wrong about submitting a costly venture to one or more independent technical and economic scrutinies? Any other country would do this without thinking about out-dated rural nicities which have no place in modern politics and economics. Even the Russians would think twice before launching on a venture like Bokaro in similar conditions. Why? They did not think they were being ungracious to themselves or us by returning our leather goods instead of paying for them when they found that they were not exactly what they had expected under a contract for the price they were being called upon to pay".

After discussing the economic aspects of the plant, Mr. Rangnekar says: "The truth is that Bokaro today has become a slogan which rumbles meaninglessly in the half-empty bellies of the poor people. What these ask for is not steel, but food, clothing and fairer shares of the cake, and a chance to live better. None of these things they will get because the Bokaro project has been accepted with a gusto and will be implemented with something similar to that or maybe less. Chances are that their condition will be worsened by an expensive and improperly assessed project like this one.

"The economy today is marked by a severe stringency of resources, almost unprecedented inflationary pressures, and external payments difficulties, rising costs and prices, and grave shortage of consumer articles. Surely, this is not the best setting or even a tolerable one to launch on a project which will absorb something like Rs. 1000 crores and yield small quantities of steel in 1970-71 and perhaps more and better steel in 1980 or some other uncertain date, when many of the undernourished people of today may not live to applaud the performance and when even the type and cost of steel that will be produced will be outpaced by world steel developments". The Swatantra Party has all along been hammering these facts into the head of our intelligence-proof government.

Mr. Rangnekar, while discussing the capital cost of the project, observes:

"Some people have glossed over the Bokaro costs either because of vested interests or because of prejudices. But if we rub the dust off our eyes, we will realise that the capital cost of Bokaro will exceed the

Hindustan Steel's total investment in all the plants today. The project is going to cost two or three times more than almost similar steel projects in Italy, Japan, France, Canada and other countries. Some people have minimised the relevance of comparative costs in India and other countries by citing the exceptionally high import duty in India. Perhaps I might inform them that the import duty component approximates to less than 2 per cent of the total estimated cost of Bokaro."

Mr. Rangnekar also refers to the totally unsatisfactory state of the present machinery handling the selection and processing of major investment projects, which the Swatantra Party has always been pointing out. Mr. Rangnekar says:

"Even in normal times, diversion of Rs. 1000 crores in a poor country must involve independent technical and economic scrutiny and, of course, parliamentary sanction. In condition of stress like the present, there can only be second thoughts or caution, if you please, at least on the part of those who may not find it objectionable to think sometimes of the country also.

"The manner in which the Bokaro report has been hustled through without any proper technical and economic assessment creates grave doubts about the adequacy and probity of the present machinery entrusted with the charge of selecting and processing major investment projects in our development plans."

Pinpointing the perverted sense of priority of the Planning Commission, Mr. Rangnekar says:

"The Planning Commission has been resisting demands for additional allocations to emergency food and agricultural programmes on the plea that the resources position has become very tight. Is this not a perverted sense of priorities if from a cheaper Bokaro we are to move on to a costly Bokaro to produce steel over an uncertain period of time and deprive natural priorities of additional resources in conditions of scarcities and resource strigencies?

"In would be an interesting exercise to find out how many fertiliser plants we can put up with Rs. 500 odd crores corresponding Bokaro's first stage and Rs. 1000 crores or more marking the last. Maybe 25 or 30 very large ones immediately or 40 or 50 medium sized ones over an extremely shorter period of time. I do not know, but I commend this exercise to the technical experts and perspective planners".

The Swatantra Party has opposed at every stage this centralised pattern of planning. Danger is inherent in centralised planning even when it is handled by experts. The danger becomes all the more when it is in the hands of confused minds and men who are prisoners of complexes and obsessions. Imagine a monkey, which is itself an unsteady being, under the influence of alcohol and in that state bitten by a scorpion. And that is our Planning Commission today.

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Arrivals and Departures

The Swatantra Party is happy to accord its welcome to Mr. H. M. Patel, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai Mehta, Mr. Prabhudas Patel, Mr. Ratilal Ukabhai Patel, Maharajkumar Shivbhadrasinhji of Bhavnagar, and Mr. Balbhadrasinhji, who have recently joined the Party in Gujarat.

Mr. Vadilal Mehta and Prabhudas Patel are highly-respected and prominent political workers of Gujarat and were until recently in the Congress. Mr. Mehta who is also Chairman of the Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation, will be relinquishing that office soon. Mr. H. M. Patel was in the Indian Civil Service. He was at one time the Principal Finance Secretary of the Union Government and until recently the Chairman of the Gujarat State Electricity Board. Maharajkumar Shivbhadrasinhji of Bhavnagar, and Mr. Ratilal Patel, both sitting MLA's until recently belonged to the Independent Progressive Group in the Gujarat Assembly. Mr. Balbhadrasinhji is president of the Saylanagar Panchayat.

Announcing their decision to join the Swatantra Party at a press conference in Ahmedabad on May 6, Messrs. Vadilal L. Mehta, H. M. Patel and Prabhudas

Patel said that a large number of respected Congressmen and political workers of Gujarat would soon be joining the Swatantra Party. In a statement they said:

"Today the Swatantra Party is the only party that has a policy and an approach that is truly democratic and which alone can help the country come out of the sorry mess into which the Congress has slowly but steadily led it." They added that the Swatantra Party alone could give a good and efficient administration because its approach will essentially be pragmatic and because it will leave the individual the fullest scope for his development.

Mr. Ratilal U. Patel, MLA on joining the Party said:

"After 18 years of unbridled power in the hands of the Congress, the peoples' hopes in democracy have been shaken. Crores of rupees have been spent on five-year plans but the people have received no benefit."

"The time has come to remove the Congress from power and it is only the Swatantra Party that can assume the reins of power," he concluded.

We have no departures to report.

NEWS FROM STATE UNITS

BOMBAY

The Bombay City Unit of the Party continues to concentrate on the civic needs of the neglected suburban citizens of Greater Bombay.

Mr. Madhu Mehta, the General Secretary of the Bombay unit led a delegation of traders and residents of Ulhasnagar, which was the scene of a police firing recently, to the State Chief Minister.

The Bombay Unit also brought to the attention of the people the hoax perpetrated on the homeless by the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Nearly a thousand families are living in tenements, built by the Corporation, which may collapse like a house of cards during the monsoon. "Lakhs of Rupees of taxpayers have been spent to build these 1000 tenements, and in the coming monsoon several of them may collapse like a pack of cards. Almost all the ceilings will be blown off" said Mr. Madhu Mehta in a press interview. These tenements were built by the civic body for resettling hutment dwellers. They were offered to the teachers in November 1965 as the hutment dwellers refused to occupy them. The ceiling of the tenements consists of hard-board covered with gunny bags over which there is a thin coating of tar.

Addressing a largely-attended public meeting at Mahim, a suburb, on April 3, Mr. N. Dandekar, Joint Secretary, called for an end to the crazy planning, based on out-worn and discarded ideologies. He said the economic scene today presented a picture of grave crisis. The economic structure was gearing down and might even collapse unless the Western countries, Japan and Commonwealth countries undertook a major rescue operation. The worst hit in this sad state of affairs are the landless labourers, the middle class, and the widows, orphans, pensioners and others with fixed incomes. What was needed to set right things, Mr. Dandekar said, was to give a decisive set-back to the Congress Party at the next general elections. "Only then would sense re-assert itself at the seat of power," he added.

GUJARAT

During the recent Rajya Sabha elections in Gujarat the Congress wanted a showdown with the Swatantra Party and made a big effort to win all the four seats. However, the results shattered its illusions and the fourth seat was claimed by the Swatantra Party. Commenting on the elections the *Swarajya* says:

✓ "Four members were to be elected from the Assembly, which has 115 Congress, 26 Swatantra Party, 7 Independent Progressive Group, and 3 PSP. These with 3 vacancies make up the total of 154 seats. Thus of the four seats three should go to Congress and the fourth to SWP. It was so in the elections two years ago, when Shri Dahyabhai Patel was elected. But this time, the General Elections being near, Congress wanted a showdown with SWP. Probably it thought that like itself SWP was also ridden with internal strife.

"At first only three candidates were declared by Congress, but later when confidence was shown that many first preference votes could be secured from SWP members, a fourth name was declared. The infection spread and Shri Babubhai Vaidya, leader of IPG and a good friend of SWP, also joined the fray. He however depended on getting his bite from the Congress camp. When the votes were counted Congress was awakened to the fact that only its own house was in disorder and that the SWP was in order, as befits a Party out to capture power in Gujarat in the General Elections. The defeat of Congress was made complete by the fact that the SWP candidate came third and a Congress candidate was fourth. This showed that there were divided loyalties in the Congress camp.

"The newly-elected Swatantra Party M.P. Dr. Biharilal Anantani, B.A., D.Litt. (Oxon.), Bar-at-Law, is widely travelled and scholarly. He came in close contact with Gandhiji in Africa. He led an Indian delegation to London to seek release of Mahatmaji when he was imprisoned. Dr. Anantani has been Prime Minister in some Indian States. He accompanied the Jam Saheb to the UN, as his Secretary. Dr. Anantani is known for his habit of coming to grips with the problems in hand. He will be an asset.

"This election gives representation to Cutch, which was denied by Congress. Cutch gave the quit order to Congress in the last General Elections and returned the SWP fully. Now SWP has returned the compliment by sending Dr. Anantani of Cutch to the Rajya Sabha."

The visits of both Mr. M. R. Masani, the General Secretary and Mr. N. Dandekar, Joint Secretary, Swatantra Party, to Gujarat during April have created a flutter in the Congress pigeon-house. The Congressmen's fear was strengthened by the success of the conference of merchants called by the Kaira District unit of the Party.

Outlining the policies of the Party during a visit to Ahmedabad Mr. Dandekar said Food Zones would go if Swatantra came to power. Foreign, Food and Teaching Medium policies would be reconsidered. Mr. Dandekar also hit out at the Gujarat Government's policy regarding the teaching of English from Standard VIII, which has sealed the fate of the average student in Gujarat. Gujarat students are

finding it extremely difficult to get into higher services because of their lack of proficiency in English. It has also greatly prejudiced their pursuit of studies abroad.

HIMACHAL PRADESH

It has come to the notice of the Swatantra Party from reliable quarters that the poor villagers in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh are being coerced by the Co-operative Department officials to become members of co-operative societies to get Government foodgrains and Mandi Rock Salt. The Co-operative Department officials in Himachal Pradesh, who are also civil supply officers, are resorting to this kind coercion to reach targets set for them by higher authorities, who presumably are in turn under pressure from Congress ministers. A starving villager has no option except to yield to such a kind of oppression of the so-called Socialist government of the Congress.

MADRAS

Rajaji toured the Kanyakumari district from March 10 to 14 and addressed a number of largely-attended public meetings. Meeting were held at Marthandam, Iranial, Nagar Koil, Kottaram and Thakkalai. Besides Rajaji those who addressed these meetings included Dr. M. Santosham, Messrs. Purasai Rajagopal, Subramanya Nadar and Doraisamy Nadar.

Influential persons like Dr. Mathyas, Mr. Kunjan Nadar, M.L.A., Mr. Christopher, ex-chairman of Nagar Koil municipality met Rajaji at Kanyakumari. A strong local election committee with influential people was also formed. Rajaji speaking to pressmen later said he found the response to the Swatantra Party to be very encouraging in the district.

MYSORE

A public meeting was held under the auspices of the Swatantra Party, Mysore District Unit, at the Town Hall Maidan on March 27, 1966, Mr. S. Chenniah, a former president of the Mysore Pradesh Congress and presently president of the Janata Party, presiding. About 5000 people attended the meeting.

Mr. P. H. Krishna Rao, the Organizing Secretary of the Swatantra Party, Mysore State Unit, speaking at the meeting criticised the inflationary fiscal policies of the government which had resulted in a rise in prices and which had also affected production. He also criticised the new budget levies which hit hard the poor man. He also urged that all controls and rationing should be removed.

Mr. T. Subramanya, a former Congress Minister in Mysore Government and now a leader of the Janata Party speaking next appealed to the people to oust the Congress Party from power. He said the people

should resist the imposition of the urban land tax and the enhancement of water rates in Mysore. Mr. A. Ramanna, Editor of *Vijayam* and a prominent member of the Janata Party and Mr. Narayana Swamy, a corporator of Bangalore, also spoke condemning the Congress misrule and their top heavy administration.

Mr. Chenniah in his presidential remarks said that all efforts should be made to end the Congress regimes which had become hopelessly corrupt. He said he was making efforts to bring all opposition parties together to chalk out a common programme with a view to defeating the Congress. He had met Rajaji in this connection, he added.

ORISSA

Throughout the month of March, the Swatantra members strove to draw the attention of the State Assembly to the serious drought situation in the State. And after great pressure from Swatantra members the State Assembly devoted March 30 exclusively for the discussion of the drought problem. The leader of the opposition Mr. R. N. Singh Deo initiated the debate. A 19-point formula, which was appreciated in all circles, was placed by the Swatantra Party members before the House to combat the drought situation.

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo vehemently criticised the Kendu leaf policy of the government, which he described as arbitrary, undemocratic and designed to serve Congress party ends.

Apart from organisational progress made by the State unit such as the reorganisation and bifurcation of the Puri District Committee the President of the State unit, Mr. R. N. Singh Deo also addressed public meetings at Deogadh and Balberena Khurda. The meetings were attended by large gatherings including influential persons of the areas.

Another public meeting was organised at Balipatna which was addressed by Messrs. K. M. Panigrahy, M.L.A., A. Mahananda, M.L.A. and Ghasiram Majhi, M.L.A. and Joint Secretary of the State unit.

Mr. Ghasiram Majhi, who has been appointed member of the Drought Committee, made an extensive tour of the drought-affected areas and gave some suggestions to the government in the matter immediate relief to check starvation deaths.

UTTAR PRADESH

The executive of the U.P. State unit has passed the following resolution at its meeting held on April 27 '66. The resolution said:

"Eighteen years of Congress rule, and fifteen of statist planning have produced only all round shortages, inflation and corruption in the Country. The nation has been reduced to humiliating dependence on other nations, for its supply of food, defence needs, and developmental finance. While the attention of the nation should be focussed on salvaging

the ruined economy of the Country, it is a pity, that due to intransigence of the ruling party, which seems to regard persistence in its follies, a virtue, the opposition parties are being forced to resort to agitation, demonstrations and Bundh tactics. These more often than not result in violence, disorder, and loss of property, which does good to nobody, except to those who hope to flourish only under chaotic conditions.

"The responsibility for strengthening the forces of disorder in the Country lies entirely with the ruling party, which by refusing to accept reasonable and just demands of the saner political elements in the country is offering a golden opportunity to anti-democratic parties in the country to make themselves respectable in the public eye.

The Swatantra Party was the first to demand the withdrawal of the 25% surcharge on Land Revenue. Since then, all the opposition parties have joined in making this demand. And yet, out of a false sense of prestige, the Government is hesitating to withdraw this surcharge, which cannot be justified on any ground.

"The demand for linking the dearness allowance of State Government Employees to cost of living index can also no longer be refused, nor can the inadequacy of funds be made an excuse for denial of equal pay for equal work. Union Labour Minister Shri Jagjiwan Ram recently declared that incapacity to pay cannot be accepted as a valid excuse for making inadequate payment to the employees. This principle should be applied not only to private sector employees but also Government employees. Genuine relief from dearness can come only by placing restrictions on further extension of Government activities in industry and trade, drastic reduction in excise duties, on consumers goods and total abstention from deficit financing.

"The Swatantra Party reiterates its demand for withdrawal of surcharge on land revenue and other crushing taxes on the poorer sections of the people. It also demands immediate withdrawal of the Emergency."

The Swatantra Party has set up a committee headed by Dr. K. P. Bhatnager, former Vice-Chancellor of Agra University to investigate the crisis facing the textile industry in Kanpur city. The other members of the committee are Prof. I. C. Tandon, Dr. S. N. Srivastava, Dr. A. P. Gour, Prof. C. P. Srivastava, Prof. Sri Prakash, Mr. A. P. Bhatnager and Mr. B. P. Bhatia.

Commenting on the effort of the Swatantra Party, the PTI report says, "This is the first non-official committee of its type set up by a political party to study the crisis."