

A Month of Tragedy

JANUARY 1966 has been a month of tragedy. Tragic for the Nation and tragic for the Swatantra Party. The Nation lost an outstanding Prime Minister and the Party two of its pillars — Mr. V. P. Menon and Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, founder-members of the Party.

When informed of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri's death, "Too horrible for Words" was the terse but pregnant comment from Rajaji. Mr. Lal Bahadur was mourned by every Indian irrespective of his political affiliation. In a statement on January 11, Rajaji said:

"Lal Bahadur was a rare personality, so rare that the jealous gods have taken him away too soon. His soul has put its seal on the pledges given at Tashkent and the hopes raised of future friendliness and co-operation between the two nations that must live next door to each other in Asia.

If we could reap this promised friendliness, goodwill and economic cooperation and avoid the temptations of suicidal conflict and hatred, we would have raised a memorial for the departed Prime Minister for all time in the hearts of 600 millions and raised the prestige of this ancient continent."

One of the last acts of Lal Bahadur Shastri before his death in Tashkent was to dictate a letter to Rajaji. Fate decreed that it should remain unsigned. Rajaji had written to the Prime Minister on December 27 enclosing an advance copy of his article in *Swarajya*. Mr. Shastri dictated the following reply on the eve of his sad demise:

"I have seen your article. I am sure you agree with what we have done in Tashkent and it would get your full support. Trust you are keeping well."

Mr. Shastri's unsigned letter was forwarded to Rajaji by Mr. L. K. Jha, the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary.

Speaking on behalf of the Swatantra Party at the mass rally at Ramlila Grounds in Delhi on January 11, Prof. N. G. Ranga said:

"Lal Bahadurji has been known to us all as a great patriot a fighter for our freedom and sincere disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and a lover of peace... He brought us strength and led the nation in the hour of trial. At the same time he gave the nation the lead towards peace.

"God willing, if this peace were to become

permanent, peace in the sub-continent will lead the way to peace in Asia and the rest of the world."

Only nine days earlier in reply to Prof. Ranga's letter of good wishes, the Prime Minister had written:

"As I have said publicly, we shall make every endeavour in Tashkent to bring home to the Pakistani leaders the imperative necessity of peace and amity between our two countries."

In a statement to the press on January 11, Dr. K. M. Munshi observed that Mr. Shastri had died in the "finest hour of his life" but his death "came as the greatest calamity which can overtake this country."

The Tashkent declaration, he said, was a historic step to bring about the much needed Indo-Pakistani amity and thus usher in stable peace in Asia and the world. "As one of the architects of this declaration, Mr. Shastri's name will go down in history as an honest peace-maker".

In a broadcast over All India Radio on January 11, Mr. Masani, the Party's General Secretary, said:

"Lal Bahadur Shastri may not have been a great man but, what is perhaps more important, he was a good one. Throughout a long association of over thirty years I have never known him to be anything but kindly and fair to all.

"On his becoming Prime Minister last year Lal Bahadurji was faced with an onerous legacy. He approached the many problems he faced in a spirit of pragmatic liberalism. He gave freely of himself but alas, as events have shown, too generously.

"The agreement to which he put his signature in Tashkent on behalf of India will probably be recognised as his crowning achievement. It is a tragedy that he should have been struck down before he could build on that foundation of goodwill and peace. It is for us who remain to pursue that path and to see that the noble objective in the pursuit of which he laid down his life is fulfilled."

Party Treasurer Dr. R. C. Cooper addressing a condolence meeting organised by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan said that the short duration of Mr. Shastri's leadership was an "extremely eventful period". It was full of a series of very serious crises. Each of these crises was a legacy of the past and Mr. Shastri had handled each situation in a masterly manner. Mr. Shastri took statesman-like decisions and was invari-

ably guided by his robust commonsense instead of set dogmas.

The Swatantra Party in Parliament in a condolence resolution adopted on 11th January expressed its "shock" at the "sudden and untimely demise of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri at this crucial moment." The resolution added:

"His presence at this juncture was needed by the country and Parliament to ensure effective implementation by both sides of the Tashkent Agreement for which he laboured so hard till the last minute of his life. India could ill afford such a grievous loss."

The Bombay Unit of the Party at a condolence meeting adopted a resolution which said among other things that Mr. Shastri's leadership had restored to the nation a badly needed sense of confidence in its destiny.

Describing the Tashkent Agreement as his finest achievement, the resolution stated:

"The most fitting memorial to Shastriji would be for all of us to continue to work for Indo-Pakistani friendship in the same spirit in which he strove for it."

Mr. N. Dandekar presided.

A big citizens' meeting convened by the Madras City Unit of the Party on 12th January placed on record its deep sense of sorrow at the passing away of "our good and beloved Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri," and respectfully tendered its heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

The meeting expressed its deep sense of gratitude to the President of Pakistan, and to the Soviet Prime Minister whose untiring efforts brought about the historic declaration of peace and goodwill subscribed to on behalf of Pakistan and India.

The meeting resolved that to honour the sacred memory of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri the nation should dedicate itself to intensify every effort for the promotion of goodwill and friendliness initiated by the late Prime Minister at the cost of his life.

V. P. MENON

Mr. V. P. Menon, member of the Party's National Executive, died in Jabalpur on January 1, 1966 at the age of 71. His death is a grievous loss not only to the Mysore Unit of the Party, of which he was a pillar, but to the Party throughout the country. A press statement issued by the General Secretary of the Mysore Unit said:

"The sad news of the passing away of Mr. V. P. Menon at Jabalpur on 1.1.66 has been received with shock and regret by the Executive Committee of the Mysore State Swatantra Party. As the Senior Member of the Mysore State Executive of the Party ever since the Party was founded by Rajaji, Mr. V. P. Menon was the friend, philosopher and guide of the Mysore Party and played a prominent part in stabilising the Party in Mysore State. The State Executive conveys

to Mrs. V. P. Menon and other members of the bereaved family its sincere condolences in the irreparable loss sustained by them. May God rest his soul."

Mr. Masani cabled the Mysore Unit on hearing the sad news of Mr. Menon's demise:

"Deeply grieved to read of V. P. Menon's passing away, our sympathies to you and Mysore colleagues on your great loss which we share with you."

The President of the Andhra Unit of the Party, Mr. G. Latchanna, in a press statement called it an "irreparable loss to the country in general and the Swatantra movement in particular".

In an editorial comment, the *Free Press Journal* of Bombay observed in its issue of January 4, 1965: "His death will be widely mourned by friends, foes and admirers alike. In him, a giant has toppled."

A comment in the *Times of India*, also of 4th January after eulogising his services to the Nation, said: "His part in the historic transformation of India's political set-up is generally acknowledged. But his role in the transfer of power from British to Indian hands and in the partition of the sub-continent has yet to be finally established. Even so, there is little doubt that he was one of the most important actors in that great drama, even if his part was mostly played behind the scenes."

JATHEDAR UDHAM SINGH NAGOKE

Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, President of the Punjab Unit and Vice-President of the Party, passed away at Chandigarh on January 11. A circular issued by the State Office in Patiala reported that Jathedarji was cremated with "full honours in the presence of thousands of his admirers, relatives, well-wishers and followers, as also of the representatives of all political parties, viz. the Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal, the S.G.P.C. and the Jan Sangh".

A condolence resolution adopted at a meeting convened by the Bombay Unit said:

"A redoubtable freedom-fighter, Jathedarji was in prison for over 13 years during the freedom movement and resigned from the Congress in 1959 in disgust at the corruption within that Party."

"When the Swatantra Party was formed in August 1959, Jathedarji rallied to its banner and his newly-formed party merged in the Swatantra Party."

"This meeting conveys its deep sense of sorrow to the members of his family and to the Punjab unit of our party with whom it shares this great loss."

The Rajasthan Unit at a meeting convened for the purpose condoled the death of Jathedarji and adopted a resolution lauding his services to the Nation and to the Party and conveying the Unit's sympathies to Jathedarji's family and the Punjab Unit of the Party.

The Party's General Secretary in a telegram to

the State Unit on hearing of Jathedarji's death said:
"Deeply distressed at sad news of passing away of Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke. He was one of the founding fathers and stalwarts of the Party and all

of us throughout the country share the Punjab Unit's loss. Kindly convey our sympathies to his family."

Swatantra Newsletter bows its head in reverence to the memory of these departed leaders.

Choosing A Prime Minister

Addressing a public meeting in Madras on January 12 Rajaji referred to the succession to Mr. Shastri. Stating that the acting Prime Minister, Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, should continue as Prime Minister till the next General elections, Rajaji added: "I am now appealing to the leaders at Delhi that unnecessary political bickerings should be avoided over the election of the Prime Minister at this stage as the next general elections are not far off". But this was asking for too much. Even before Mr. Shastri was cremated, the political bosses of the Congress set to work to ensure that they continued to hold tight the reins of authority. The scramble began and the "consensus" farce was sought to be re-enacted. Thanks to brutal power-politics which threw to the winds all canons of parliamentary democratic processes, Mrs. Indira Gandhi rode to Power with the good wishes of the Congress High Command, Congress Leftists and of course Comrade Dange.

In a statement, Rajaji said:

"One who is fundamentally and strongly opposed to the policies of the Congress Party cannot have much to say by way of satisfaction or the opposite about the result of an internal contest over the Party's leadership. Much more is this the case when as now the election of a leader is only for a brief period until the general elections.

"But there are a few matters which I may touch upon, so far as certain national issues are concerned. Mrs. Indira Gandhi may be more broad-minded in her outlook and will probably follow her illustrious father's bent of mind than Mr. Morarji Desai. I am thinking, for instance, of development of good relations between India and Pakistan and the language issue over which Bengal and South India are still very anxiously concerned.

"I am glad also that Mr. Morarji Desai has done

a decided piece of service to the cause of democracy by halting the downward slide of the Congress Party towards monolithic, totalitarian organisational procedures.... The debates and differences of opinion cannot possibly be kept secret or camouflaged to beguile the people.

"In my opinion, totalitarianism had definitely a set back in January 1966 — thanks to Mr. Morarji's firm attitude and loyalty to principles of democracy. Perhaps, this is much more important than the immediate effect of Mrs. Indira's success which may tend to the central leadership yielding to local pressures of various kinds against its own conviction".

The President of the Party, Prof. Ranga, refused to say whether the Cabinet showed any leanings — left or right. "The duty of the Opposition is to deal with the Government of the day and it does not matter who presides over it. After all, it is the Congress Government and not a national Government", he said.

When approached by a news agency for comment, the Party's General Secretary, Mr. Masani, said:

"As a member of the Opposition, I am not concerned with the personalities of rival candidates within the ruling party, but as a believer in Parliamentary democracy, I am concerned at the way in which the election was 'cooked'. The action of the Congress President and Chief Ministers in calling M.P.s from different States in small meetings Statewise, and trying to commit them in advance showed a cynical contempt for the sanctity of the ballot which is frightening. Are these the men to be trusted with the future of Parliamentary democracy in India?"

Mr. Dahyabhai Patel said that he was "sorry that the Congress members had succumbed to pressure" in electing Mrs. Gandhi.

Rajaji's Birthday

Rajaji turned 88 on December 10, 1965. His birthday was observed by Party units throughout the country. Speakers at various meetings wished him long life in the cause of the Swatantra Movement that he had launched.

In Madras, numerous personalities called on him from various walks of life to offer their good wishes. Addressing a public meeting at Gokhale Hall on December 19, Acharya Kripalani said: "Rajaji stands as a bright jewel, and it is the smallness of the Government that with such a jewel, they do not benefit by

his public service" He added: "the Government should have called Rajaji to Delhi and asked him to stay there and advise them from day to day on various problems and policies. I do not think," he averred, "that at 88, there is any ambition left in Rajaji to become the Prime Minister of India. Even a younger man like myself, I do not have any such ambition". Criticising Congressmen he said that the "Congress is represented by bulls, and someone said they required some kind of control. But I am afraid that no amount of pulling them with the ropes is going to

keep them on the track. You have now the Defence of India Act; it is no defence of India but only an offence of India. They want to smother the conscience of people and the voice of the Press. While Minister's speeches and 'words of wisdom' are recorded faithfully verbatim, the Opposition speeches are not. Not to appreciate a great man is to be doubly damned," Mr. Kripalani remarked, referring to certain criticism made of Rajaji.

Others who spoke at the meeting were Prof. N. G. Ranga, MP, Mr. G. K. Sunderam, Mr. S. S. Mariswamy, Mr. M. Santosham all of the Swatantra Party, Mr. Abdus Samad of the Muslim League and Mr. M. P. Sivagnana Gramani of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam.

Speakers at another meeting held under the auspices of the Voters' Council eulogised Rajaji's services to the Nation. Also speaking at the meeting was Mr. Kripalani who observed that Rajaji spoke out what the people said at their homes and bazaars, and their clubs. Among others who spoke were Prof. Ruthnaswamy, Mr. S. S. Mariswamy, and prominent Film actor S. S. Rajendran.

In Bangalore, leaders of other political Parties participated in a meeting convened by the Mysore Unit. Among those who spoke were Mr. T. Subramanyam, leader of the Janata Paksha, Mr. S. Sivappa, MLA, leader of the PSP Opposition in the Assembly, Mr. M.P.L. Sastry, MLC, nominated by the Congress Party to the Legislative Council, Mr. S. B. Swethadri, leader of the Jan Sangh, and Mr. T. Dravidamani, leader of the D.M.K. The Mayor of the Corporation of Bangalore, Mr. K. M. Naganna, presided and moved the following Resolution from the Chair:

"This public meeting of the Citizens of Bangalore who have met on the occasion of the 88th birthday of Shri Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, who is the most eminent among the elder statesmen of India today, offers to him its sincere and respectful felicitations. Known for his wide learning, scholarship and high character, Bharata Ratna Rajagopalachari has worked ceaselessly for the public good in the fields of literature, social welfare and public administration and has been striving for purity and integrity in the political life of the country.

"This public meeting prays to God to grant Shri C. Rajagopalachari good health to enable him to continue to serve the country for many more years."

Mr. D. V. Gundappa of the Gokhale Institute of Public Opinion delivered the welcome address.

The Kerala Unit observed Rajaji's birthday with a public meeting in Kottayam with Mr. P. D. Thomman in the Chair. Prof. T. R. Subramania Iyer, Mr. K. P. R. Pillai, Mr. George Isaac and Mr. P. C. Thomas spoke. Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla and Mr. A. Madhava Warriar, the Vice-President and General-Secretary respectively of the State Unit also spoke.

Replying to felicitations from the Swatantra Group in Parliament, Rajaji wrote:

"I am grateful to all you Swatantra M.P.s for your kind message sent through Mr. Masani. You are all doing as important work as the Prime Minister and his colleagues. If he is the bolt, you are the nut. Convey affectionate regards to all the members. My best wishes to them."

From far away Berne, in Switzerland, by a remarkable coincidence came the following tribute to Rajaji in the *Swiss Press Review and News Report*. Entitled "Statesmanship in India" the report said:

"It is hardly fashionable in India to say pleasant things about Pakistan. Yet the Kashmir situation can hardly change much until this fashion changes. So it is both surprising and hope-inspiring when an Indian politician says something agreeable about Pakistan. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari may be the elder statesman of India, but he is still one of the wisest voices in the sub-continent. The following paragraph appeared in his weekly column in the December 11th edition of the Madras weekly *Swarajya*:-

"I am told that an esteemed friend recently opined that Pakistan which was born in hate and nourished in hate offered no hope for friendship or reconciliation. I claim to have known Mr. Jinnah (the founder of Pakistan) fairly well. He was in latter days obsessed with fear of the Hindu majority and of Hindu leaders, not by hatred. He felt that a wave of Hindu nationalism was inevitable when Freedom came. He foresaw that the long Muslim rule in India must produce a Hindu nationalistic swing along with Independence. There is much distinction between fear and hatred."

"This may not get us very far towards solution of the Kashmir problem as such. But the root of the matter is the atmosphere of war hysteria in both India and Pakistan. This has to be tackled first. Rajagopalachari has had the wisdom to make a first effort. We can hope that others will soon show he is not alone."

T. T. K.'s Exit

On November 22, 1965, Mr. Dahyabhai Patel, leader of the Swatantra Group in the Rajya Sabha, along with some other members of Parliament, presented to the President of the Republic a Memorandum signed by several Members of Parliament belonging to five political groups, praying for a public enquiry under the

Commission of Enquiries' Act into certain charges they made against the former Union Finance Minister, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari. The 9-page Memorandum with, 64 pages of annexures had for its principal signatory Mr. Dahyabhai Patel.

In substance, the Memorandum stated that the

family of Mr. T.T.K. had amassed "enormous wealth" using "for its financial aggrandisement the name and prestige of Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari himself".

The Memorandum recalled that Mr. T.T.K.'s family had "only nominal wealth and a few agencies in 1952 when he became Minister for Commerce & Industry" and that "all the huge wealth and large number of joint stock companies, secured loans and unsecured loans have all been acquired by his family after he became Union Minister in 1952". Returns filed with the Registrar of Companies, the Memorandum said, showed that eight companies which Mr. Krishnamachari's sons were controlling had been working in continuous loss from 1953 to 1963. It was not possible for any company to carry on business operations if such continuous losses were incurred every year.

On the other hand, despite such losses, the family had continued to expand its business. The eight companies, though on paper working at a loss of Rs. 8,58,844 with a block investment of nearly Rs. 36 lakhs or more, "have managed to borrow Rs. 52,47,100 from banks. In addition, they have also managed to get unsecured loans of Rs. 29,33,556".

The Memorandum further stated that Mr. Krishnamachari's policies of liberalising imports and allowing *ad hoc* import licences of consumer goods like cosmetics, milk powder and soda ash had resulted in frittering away a large amount of foreign exchange.

The Memorandum alleged that Mr. Krishnamachari had, during his regime as Minister for Commerce and Industry and subsequently, "intentionally manoeuvred the rules, regulations and orders of the Government under the Import Trade Control and Industries

(Development and Regulation) Act, 1951, for the benefit of his family (sons) who are controlling a large number of joint stock private companies and for the benefit of his other friends". In support of the charges listed, 29 documents have been appended to the Memorandum.

Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, responded to the Memorandum by wishing to appoint the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to enquire into the allegations. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, who had managed to wriggle out of the Mundhra affair by hanging on to the coat-tails of the late Mr. Nehru, found himself unable to face another enquiry and wanted the Prime Minister to clear him of all the charges. This was not found acceptable by the late Mr. Shastri and hence Mr. Krishnamachari resigned in a huff, but not before he had a final fling with a discourteous letter to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Dahyabhai Patel, the principal architect of T.T.K.'s fall, said, "My stand has been vindicated. I congratulate the Prime Minister on showing courage and firmness in accepting the resignation of Mr. T.T.K." Prof. Ranga, welcomed T.T.K.'s resignation and hoped that "this would be the beginning of the reconstitution of the Cabinet and liberal taxation measures".

Mr. Masani hoped that "this would mean a change of policies and not merely of personalities."

Not surprisingly, the Bombay Stock Market reacted favourably.

The general market feeling was one of relief. Shares in the Bombay and Delhi Stock Exchanges looked up. Business circles heaved a sigh of relief.

Action Against Sukhadia

In April last year, some members of the Party in Parliament and the Rajasthan State Assembly submitted to the late Prime Minister a Memorandum levelling charges against Mr. Mohanlal Sukhadia, the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, who is now being drafted as one of the General Secretaries of the Congress.

Following on his success in getting Mr. T. T.

Krishnamachari's exit, Mr. Dahyabhai Patel headed a 3-Man Delegation which called on the Union Home Minister Mr. G. L. Nanda, on January 29 to urge him not to drop an inquiry into the charges against the Rajasthan Chief Minister, Mr. Sukhadia, on the ground that he was leaving office.

Cases Against Kalki and Swarajya Withdrawn

It was a case of "much ado about nothing". The cases against *Kalki* and *Swarajya* were withdrawn without ceremony. The Chief Minister of Madras Mr. Bhaktavatsalam stated that the cases had been withdrawn "after he had received a letter from Rajaji", which prompted the latter to publish the correspondence between him and the Chief Minister to remove any "misconception" in the minds of the people as to what he wrote.

In his letter of 22nd December, 1965 Rajaji had written among other things:

"...the charges filed against Mr. Pothan Joseph and

Mr. T. Sadasivam for publishing my articles and their translations in *Swarajya* and *Kalki* are really unsustainable. The interpretation put on the articles that they would prejudicially affect the defence of India is far-fetched...my criticism and suggestions are intended to help the government and not hinder the defence of India...the prosecution for publishing my articles is likely to prejudice India's good name as a democratic country with a free press. It is made abundantly clear in the articles forming the basis of the charges that I do not want the Government to make any offer to Pakistan in respect of

Kashmir and I urge them that Pakistan's aggression should stoutly be resisted by our defence forces. "That I plead for a reference to the wishes of the people of Kashmir, in accordance with the solemn promises repeatedly made to the people of Kashmir and the nations of the world to be made by the Government of India on its own initiative at some future time of peace is not to be interpreted as weakening of the present resistance to Pakistan's aggression.....

"The Editor and publisher of *Swarajya* deem it a privilege to assist in the dissemination of the opinions and criticisms and the advice of a person, as they put it, of my standing and holding the record of public service which I do. I am pained when they are prosecuted, while I am not proceeded against. In international circles these prosecutions are bound to be deemed as a prosecution launched against me. In the interests of justice as well as the good name of the Government of India the matter should be reconsidered. I am writing this letter in order that you may give earnest attention to the matter and re-examine the position."

"Re-examine" they did; and on December 30 the cases were withdrawn.

Immediately on his return from New Zealand where he had gone to attend a conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Prof. Ranga had expressed his indignation over the attempts to victimise *Swarajya* and *Kalki*. Characterising the action of the Madras Government as "bad publicity for India's case on Kashmir" he had reported that he was unable to answer when asked "why should the Government of India try to silence the voice of an ex-Head of State in a democracy?"

The Swatantra Party in Parliament at a meeting in New Delhi on December 10 had expressed concern at the widespread misuse of the Defence of India Rules. Referring to the prosecution launched by the Madras Government against the editors of *Kalki* and *Swarajya* and the detention of Mr. A. G. Noorani, the meeting cited them as examples of "the improper resort to the far-reaching powers acquired under the Defence of India Rules for penalising expression of opinion and suppressing criticism of the policies and actions of the Union Government."

Relations with Jan Sangh

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Reports in a section of the Press about our Party's negotiations with the Jan Sangh have created a certain amount of confusion. We, therefore, reproduce, in full a statement issued by our President, Prof. N. G. Ranga on December 30, 1965, which sets out the actual position.

"Certain press-feelers regarding the electoral arrangements between the Swatantra and Jan Sangh have created misgivings in several quarters. My attention has also been drawn to observations made by Shri Deen Dayal Upadhyaya in this regard. When I was asked about the press-feeler published in one of the national dailies of Delhi, I said talks between Jan Sangh and Swatantra had been going on for over 2½ years at formal and informal levels but no definite decisions had been taken in this regard. Recently no fresh talks have been held nor any agreement arrived at between the two parties. However, there have been from time to time electoral adjustments and under-

standings at State level between the local leaders whenever we had by-elections, both for Parliament and the State Assemblies. As for an electoral adjustment on an all-India basis for the forthcoming General Elections in 1967, no agreement has yet been arrived at between the two parties.

There is, however, an emergent need in the national interest to strengthen democratic forces and avoid rivalries in as many constituencies as possible—Assembly and Parliament—and thus prevent the continuation of the unfortunate imbalance in our Parliamentary democracy. I am glad that both Rajaji and Acharya J. B. Kripalani have reminded the nation of the imperative need for such electoral adjustments irrespective of the ideological differences between all democratic opposition parties. Let us hope that the responsible leaders of all the democratic opposition parties will try to explore possibilities for such adjustments."

Volunteer Leaders' Training Camp

Beginning the 5th February, a 30-day Camp to train volunteer leaders is being held in Hyderabad.

The Training Camp is intended to train volunteer leaders who in turn will return to the respective Units and organise Volunteer Forces in their States. Lt Appa Rao of the I.N.A., Mr. P. Rajagopala Naidu,

MLA, Mr. Tej Karan and Mr. Hanumantha Rao, the State General Secretary, are taking charge of various aspects of the Training Camp.

The Camp has been organised by the Central Office of the Party in collaboration with the Andhra State Unit.

Arrival and Departure

The former Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan and a member of the I.C.S., Mr. C. C. Desai has joined the Swatantra Party. In a statement issued from New Delhi on January 14, 1966, Mr. Desai said he had come to the conclusion that the principles of the Swatantra Party were such as would offer the best scope for work and service.

Four Members of the Congress Party and three Communists from the Huzurnagar Taluka in Andhra have resigned from their parties and have applied for enrolment in the Swatantra Party. In their letters of resignation, they have stated that they have lost faith

in the policies and leadership of their respective Parties. The following are the names of the members concerned:

Mr. N. Venkatesham
Mr. Chamkuri Pullaiah
Mr. M. Venkaiah
Mr. N. Lingaiah

} Congress

Mr. K. Jogaiah
Mr. Baltu Nagaiah
Mr. D. Sunderkotiah

} Communists

We have no departures to report.

Agitation Against Enhancement of Land-Levy

"The Swatantra Party stands for a fair deal to the farmer and holds that the peasants who under difficult conditions follow the avocation of producing food for the nation should not be taxed but should be adequately rewarded for their service. It will:

(a) abolish taxes on land except to the extent necessary for maintaining ownership records".

(Swatantra Party Manifesto adopted at the Second National Convention, Agra November 1961)

We have quoted above our pledge to the peasantry of India. If the Swatantra Party had been voted to power it would have fulfilled this pledge. This not being the case, as a party in Opposition it has taken on the role of the watchdog of the farmer's interests. Therefore, when the State Governments in Andhra, Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh sought to increase the land levy in their States, our units were quick to respond with both legal action and agitation.

In our last issue we had reported in some detail the successful effort made by the Party's unit in Andhra in getting the Additional Land Revenue Assessment Act of the Andhra Assembly nullified by the Andhra High Court. The State Government, as was to be expected, appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court granted an ex-parte stay order. The Supreme Court however imposed the condition that the State Government issue separate receipts and should keep separate account for the amounts of additional assessment collected.

In a press note issued by the Andhra unit president Mr. G. Latchanna, he has advised ryots that in case the Government chose to collect the additional levy, the ryots should insist upon proper notices and receipts from appropriate revenue authorities. Otherwise, the Press note warns, there is the risk of the payments being regarded as voluntary payments and hence not recoverable in case the Supreme Court dismisses the State Government's appeal and confirms the judgement of the Andhra High Court.

In Bihar, the Party's unit which is in the process of reorganisation has taken up the cudgels on behalf of the Bihar peasants. A signature campaign has begun

in right earnest. The signatures are affixed to a plea to the Governor of Bihar to secure the withdrawal of the Paddy levy order. Thousands of leaflets are being distributed exhorting the farmers to protest against the additional levy.

As we go to Press, a report has come in from Patna which makes impressive reading. The tempo of Party activity has been stepped up since we took up the agitation to demand a withdrawal of the Paddy Levy Order.

A signature Campaign is well under way in the district of Palamau. In Champaran district similar activity has been reported.

A ten thousand strong demonstration at Khunti in Ranchi district was organised to demonstrate against the Order. The report states that over 5000 signatures have already been sent to the State Governor on a memorandum demanding the withdrawal of the order from Ranchi alone. 3000 signatures have been collected and a demonstration organised in the Asthawan Constituency in Patna District. In Patna town, a similar campaign of collecting signatures is under way as also in the districts of Saran, Muzafferpur, Darbhanga and Saharsa.

In Rajasthan, the State Committee at its meeting on 20th November, adopted a Resolution on Food which among other things opposed the Rajasthan Government's decision to enhance Land levy. Quickly following up this decision, the State Office issued directives to its Units throughout the State to take on hand immediately the task of organising agitation of farmers through public meetings and other channels of constitutional protest.

In a Press note issued on December 26, the State Unit pledged its support to the farmers and called

on the Government of Rajasthan to withdraw the order. The Press note added that among the ways to strengthen defence was to provide farmers with the necessary incentive to produce more instead of which Government by its cruel taxation policies, was dampening the enthusiasm of the farmers to produce. It pleaded for the restoration of the free market, removal of restrictions on movement of foodgrains within the State and outside.

The State Unit's efforts which included a signature campaign on a memorandum submitted to the State Government received wide Press coverage. The agitation gathered so much momentum, reports our Jaipur Office that the State Government thought it wise to reconsider its position and announced on January 7 that it had withdrawn the enforcement of compulsory levy for the current crops of Jowar and Bajri. The State Unit quickly issued a Press note which, while welcoming the State Government's move, said that this was not enough. The Press note urged the Government to abandon "the principle of levy not only for the present crop but for all future crops to come." It once again pledged the Swatantra Party's solidarity with the peasants in fighting the oppressive measures directed against them. Throughout the State, Farmers big and small all rallied to the banner of the five-pointed STAR as being their only true friend.

In U.P. the Party is on the warpath. On 25th November, an anti-land revenue surcharge conference was convened in Lucknow. 257 delegates from 27 districts took part to chalk out plans to launch a statewide protest against the imposition of surcharge of 25% on land revenue. Presiding over the Conference, the President of the State Unit, Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh charged the present Congress rulers with having inherited the feudal outlook of the erstwhile Zamindars whom they have now replaced. He said that the Congress thought the land belonged to the State and not to the peasant. The Zamindars used to levy additional rent on lands growing cash crops. The Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Mr. Asoka Mehta (in true Zamindari tradition) has now advised State Governments to levy a smaller surcharge on lands growing cash crops. Even share-

cropping, he said, the worst feudal exploitation, is being introduced in the form of compulsory procurement at arbitrary prices. In short, it was once again the story of old wine in a new bottle.

"Land revenue in itself is the most irrational form of taxation. It is the only profession which is taxed whether or not there is profit in the business," said Mr. B. P. Singh. He said that the rate of land revenue in U.P. is already twice the average rate of Land Revenue in the rest of the country. "Additional surcharge is a flagrant violation of the promises that the Congress has been making to the peasantry of U. P., since 1961 and also of the solemn declaration made at the time of granting Bhumidhari rights to the tenants."

Lambasting the plea of emergency made by the State Government, Mr. B. P. Singh said "there is no reason why Rs 10 crores required for the defence preparedness of the State, cannot be saved out of Rs 265 crores, the amount proposed to be spent by the state, during the current year. Even a 4% all round economy in the State expenditure could have saved enough money to meet the limited defence responsibilities of the State Government. Moreover, the burden of the defence of the country should be borne by those, who are in a position to bear it. It should not be shifted on to the poorest class in the State, namely the agriculturists, 86% of whom have uneconomic holdings and less than 68 paise per day as their average income."

He assured the peasantry of the Swatantra Party's support and promised that it would carry on the relentless campaign of protest against the land revenue surcharge till it is withdrawn. At the time of writing, the Swatantra banner is marching at the head of a number of processions, and fluttering atop platforms of numerous public meetings denouncing the surcharge and demanding its withdrawal.

The persistent lie sedulously propagated by the late Mr. Nehru and his followers that the Swatantra Party is a Party of the Zamindars, of the feudal classes, of the money-bags now stands exposed in the light of the initiative the Swatantra Party has taken to protect farm, family and freedom.

Around The State Assemblies

ANDHRA

The following is an extract from a Report submitted by the Andhra Unit of our Party on the work done by the Party's members in the Andhra Legislative Assembly during its winter session:

PARTICIPATION IN DEBATES:

(a) Government Bills:

Messrs. P. Rajagopal Naidu, G. Latchanna, C. D.

Naidu and Ramachandra Rao Deshpande participated in debates on the following Government Bills:

Messrs. P. Rajagopal Naidu & Ramachandra Rao strongly opposed the Bills seeking postponement of Elections to the Municipalities.

Likewise Mr. P. Rajagopal Naidu opposed the A. P. Cooperative Societies (postponement of Elections) Amendment Bill 1965 seeking to postpone the elections to the various cooperative societies in the State on the grounds of the emergency.

Messrs. G. Latchanna & P. Rajagopal Naidu oppos-

ed the Amendment Bills pertaining to the three Universities in the State namely:

- (a) Sri Venkateshwara University.
- (b) Osmania University.
- (c) Andhra University.

Mr. C. D. Naidu vehemently opposed the A.P. Sales tax Amendment Bill of 1965 seeking to levy additional sales tax on commodities including paddy and rice.

(b) Non-Official Bills:

Sri Ramachandra Rao Deshpande moved the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayat (Amendment) Bill 1965 which sought to do away with the statutory requirement under the Panchayat Act to serve a notice to the Panchayat Sarpanch, any member or any officer of the Panchayat if any person wished to bring a suit against it. This amendment sought to ensure that hiding behind a two-month time limit, the Sarpanch did not have the opportunity to delay action for two months and prevent any legal action sought to be moved against him or any officer of the Panchayat. A similar provision in the Civil Procedure Code is being sought to be deleted through a non-official Bill of Mr. Nath Pai, M.P. in the Lok Sabha.

Mr. Ramachandra Rao Deshpande also supported the A. P. Cows and She Buffaloes Slaughter Protection Bill 1965, introduced by Sri Tenneti Viswanathan, which was postponed.

(c) Non-Official Resolutions:

(i). Mr. P. Rajagopal Naidu strongly opposed the non-official resolution seeking to recommend to the Government the nationalisation of all Scheduled Banks in the State. The Resolution was moved by the Communist Party.

(ii) Messrs. G. Latchanna & P. Rajagopal Naidu participated in the debate on the resolution to felicitate the Jawans for their valour in the recent Indo-Pak War. Sri Naidu condemned the attitude of the Government in not taking Swatantra Members on the Peoples' Defence Committee, particularly when even the Communists were being taken in.

(f) Food Situation and Drought Conditions:

Messrs. G. Latchanna, P. Rajagopal Naidu, Ramachandra Rao Deshpande and K. S. Appala Naidu participated in the debate and focussed the attention of the Government on the condition in the various districts of Andhra Pradesh. Members were very critical about the Levy procurement order and pressed for its annulment.

SELECT COMMITTEES

A.P. Hindu Religious Endowments and Charitable Institutions Bill 1965:

Messrs. P. Rajagopal Naidu and Ramachandra Rao Deshpande have been chosen to serve on this joint select committee.

CALL ATTENTION:

The following members focussed the attention of the Government on matters of Public and urgent importance mentioned against their names:

- (i) Mr. G. Latchanna & Mr. P. Rajagopal Naidu
Regarding the fire accident in Dokkalpad village on the sea coast Kasibugga Block.
- (ii) Mr. Ramachandra Rao Deshpande

To provide opportunities to teach the State language to the students studying through the medium of Marathi which does not exist today thus putting them at a handicap in matters of competitive examinations and recruitment to various State services, while the same opportunity is being provided to Urdu medium students and thereby remove the discrimination between people and people.

- (iii) Sri G. Latchanna & Sri Rajagopal Naidu
Implementation of the 100 years old proposal of Vamshadhara Project.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS:

Messrs. Ramachandra Rao Deshpande, Rajagopal Naidu and G. Latchanna discussed the various problems and policies arising out of the recent judgement of the A.P. High Court declaring the A.P. Additional Land Revenue Assessment & Cess Revision Act 1962 Ultra Vires of the Constitution.

ORISSA

The State Legislative Assembly concluded its three-week Session on December 24, 1965. A Motion of No-Confidence in the Speaker of the Assembly was a highlight of the Session. The entire Opposition including its Leader Mr. R. N. Singh Deo of our Party expressed their dissatisfaction with the Speaker and retired Chief Justice, Mr. Panigrahi. They accused him of giving undue protection to the ruling party. Mr. Singh Deo, while condemning the attitude of the Speaker towards the Opposition, alleged that the Speaker's action in disallowing a Motion of Breach of Privilege was totally arbitrary and unjustifiable. Efforts by the Treasury Benches to secure the withdrawal of the No-Confidence Motion were unsuccessful.

The State Government's Food policy and the manner in which they sought to deal with the drought situation in the State was the subject of severe criticism of the Treasury benches by Swatantra members. They accused the Government of playing politics with food, and of partisanship. The Leader of the Opposition suggested to the Government that Committees at the Panchayat, District and State levels should be set up to tackle the desperate food situation on an all party basis.

Later, on December 28, Mr. R. N. Singh Deo and Mr. P. K. Deo, along with the State Chief Minister and some other Ministers, visited the drought affected areas of Kalahandi and Balangir.

NEWS FROM STATE UNITS

ANDHRA

Prof. N. G. Ranga toured Warangal district on 25th and 26th Oct. 1965. On the 25th, he opened the Narasampet Taluk party office. He also opened another office at Gudur. He spoke at the District Kisan Sammelan at Katrapalli in which one hundred representatives from the taluks attended besides some 2,000 people who had gathered to witness the proceedings. Mr. G. Venkatasubbaiah inaugurated the Conference which was presided over by the State president, Mr. G. Latchanna. Mr. P. A. Chowdary who was responsible for getting the Additional Land Revenue Assessment Act of the Andhra Government struck down by the State High Court, spoke exhorting the kisans to fight for their rights.

Driving on to Warangal, Prof. Ranga addressed a 10,000 strong public meeting which was presided over by Mr. K. Kasinadham, President of the District Unit. Mr. G. Hanumantha Rao, State General Secretary, and Mr. N. Vijayaraj Kumar also spoke.

Birthday celebrations on the occasion of Rangaji's 66th birthday were conducted at Chittoor, Nellore, Guntur, Krishna, Srikakulam and other districts in the State.

Peoples Protection marches were conducted in Chittoor, Bangarupalem, Punganur and Palamaneru in Chittoor District. Prof. Ranga, and Messrs. P. Venkatakrishnaiah Naidu, President District Unit, C. D. Naidu, MLA, P. Rajagopala Naidu, MLA, C. V. Siddaiah Murthy and K. B. Siddaiah led the marchers 5,000 strong, to the Collector's office and presented a memorandum on the drought conditions, protesting against the Additional Land Levy, compulsory procurement etc. A similar procession organised at Srikakulam and led by Mr. G. Latchanna and Mr. S. Jagannadham, MLA, presented a similar memorandum to the District Collector.

On 17th November, the State Committee met at Vijayawada and passed resolutions criticising the Andhra Government for having gone in appeal to the Supreme Court (for details see item under "Agitation against Enhancement of Land Levy"). The State Committee considered the report of the Madanapalli and Perecherla Political schools, conducted by the party and constituted a Sub Committee for conducting more such schools.

The Committee deplored the efforts of the Congress Government in organising civil defence in a manner calculated to strengthen itself and perpetuate its rule. The Committee urged the Government to abstain from such exploitation and take immediate steps to prevent fraudulent collections in the name of national defence.

The resolution on the critical food situation expressed its concern over the drought and famine conditions prevailing throughout the State and called on the Government to:

- a) Give highest priority for agricultural development.
- b) Stop collections from peasants in drought affected areas.
- c) Grant full remission for 50% and below crops.
- d) Supply free seeds and fertilisers at subsidised rates to peasants who lost their crops.
- e) Take up famine relief work and
- f) Amend the out-moded Famine code and take steps to prevent recurrence of such famine conditions.

In order to bring home to the Central and State Governments the evil effects of their oppressive and reactionary food policies, the State Committee called on all district and constituency units to organise Public Protection morchas and present memoranda explaining the serious problems facing the public and demand their redressal.

The State President then went on tour.

On 14th December, he presented a memorandum to the District Collector of Ananthapur drawing attention to the serious conditions prevalent in the district.

He addressed a largely attended public meeting at Guntakal.

After touring the various districts in Rayalseema, the State President reported to the Chief Minister on the very sad condition of the people. He said that during his tour, he saw hundreds of families migrating in the middle of the night to far off places in search of livelihood. He saw several batches of ryots, driving their cattle in hundreds to shandies for sale for want of fodder. He wrote:

"I am very much surprised and greatly disappointed at the lukewarm attitude of the Government of Andhra Pradesh for not taking so far any famine relief works for execution either in Anantapur or Cuddapah districts.

"When I saw the Collector of Anantapuram on 14-12-65 at Anantapur to present a memorandum, I was really astonished to learn that under the orders of the Government he has already directed all the Departments namely, Public Works, Highways, Zilla Parishads and Panchayat Samithis to take up immediately all the Schemes for execution so far sanctioned and allotted in the usual course of things.

"It is really deplorable for the Government of Andhra Pradesh to state on the one hand that the crops in the whole of Anantapur and some other districts have completely failed and the people of those parts subjected to famine conditions and on the other hand not starting any famine-relief work so far is nothing but self-contradictory and also misleading the public."

On receiving information that 18 houses in Nemali village in Mogillipadu Group of Tekkali Taluk,

Srikakulam Dist. were completely devastated by fire causing an estimated damage of Rs. 20,000/-, the State President appealed to the authorities to provide a minimum of grant Rs. 50 and not Rs. 20 per house as also the supply of building materials to enable the victims to rehabilitate themselves.

The Swatantra Youth Forum in Krishna District has been functioning actively, since May last year. A report submitted by them for the period June to December makes impressive reading. A number of public meetings were organised by the Forum throughout the district. A memorandum was presented to the State Government opposing the University bills. The members of the Forum cooperated with the Party's district unit in demanding amelioration of famine conditions.

The State unit reports encouraging news of support for the Party in Nalgonda district, a stronghold of the communists. As reported elsewhere in this issue a number of former communists in Huzurnagar Taluk have applied for membership of our Party. Sixty of them have already been enrolled.

ASSAM

A Town Committee of the Swatantra Party was established last month in Shillong, representative of all the major communities of Assam's capital.

Meanwhile, the enrolment of workers is spreading to other parts of the State. Mr. A. K. Mojumdar, Director of "Steel Fabs", Tinsukia, Upper Assam, has been appointed Organiser for the Tinsukia Assembly Constituency. Miss Fennis Kharshiing of Mawphlang, Khasi Hills District, has also been appointed Organiser in the Nongstoin Assembly constituency.

With cooperation from the Central office, the recent resolutions of the National Executive were translated into Assamese and distributed to all the M.L.A.s, M.P.s, leaders of all political parties, Chairman of Village Panchayats, the Press and Professors of Economics and Political Science in all the Colleges of Assam.

BIHAR

Reports in the Bihar press of a United Front that has been forged between 5 Opposition parties, viz. the S.S.P., Communists (Right), Revolutionary Socialist Party, Jharkhand Party and the Janata Party made it necessary for the General Secretary, Mr. Masani to issue a press statement clarifying the Swatantra Party's stand on this issue. The following is the text of the statement which appeared in the leading Bihar dailies:

"I have seen Press reports of a United Front that appears to have been formed between the Right Communists, the S.S.P., the Jharkhand Party and the Janata Party. I have also noted that the P.S.P. and the Jan Sangh have refrained from joining this grouping.

"The Swatantra Party in Bihar will naturally

have nothing to do with this United Front, which is a motley crowd of incompatibles. The Front, led as it is by leaders who are not particularly noted for their ideological or political consistency, is bound to crack up much before the General Elections of 1967. Moreover, the Swatantra Party's policy is scrupulously to avoid any association with the Communists.

The Swatantra Party will retain its individual identity and build its organisation in the State slowly but surely from the grass roots level upwards and emerge as the only genuine democratic Opposition party in the State.

I would call upon the Party's members throughout Bihar to work hard to build up the Party in the State."

The Party's District organiser in Bettiah has taken up with the District Magistrate of Champaran the question of providing relief to the residence of Motipur village who were victims of fire that razed the entire village to the ground.

In a letter to the Chief Minister, Mr. Aziz has drawn the Chief Minister's attention to the need to renovate a tank that supplies water to Bettiah town. In his letter, he has deplored the fact that departmental wrangles have resulted in the tank being neglected with the result that it has become a danger to public health.

BOMBAY

Group and workers' meetings were the main feature of the Party's work in the city in November and December. In November, group meetings were held at Ghatkopar, Santacruz and Kurla. A traders' meeting was held at Chembur. The unit's president, Mr. N. Dandekar, addressed a workers' meeting on 26-11-65 at the Party office. A Ward committee was formed at Bandra in Municipal Ward No. 80 to implement a circular detailing a scheme of work that ought to be undertaken by the Committees at the constituency and district levels.

The scheme which has been prepared by the Unit's Vice President, Mr. Piloo Mody sets out in detail a plan of work which if followed would enable the effective functioning of a committee and in the process help the Party's growth. The scheme deserves a much wider readership and we have, therefore, reproduced it in full (see annexure). We do hope that our readers who are on constituency, Taluka or District Committees will read the scheme and benefit up it.

A statement was issued by Mr. Piloo Mody protesting against the proposed increase in bus fares and demanding the institution of an experts committee to go into the entire fare structure. Another press statement issued by the unit's General Secretary, Mr. Madhu Mehta, demanding an enquiry into the police firing on striking workers at Tarapur where a plant to generate power through atomic energy is under construction.

The Bombay Unit of the Party and in particular its General Secretary, Mr. Madhu Mehta, can feel proud at having resolved a deadlock between Management and Workers in the Tarapore Atomic Power Project where all work had ceased for 52 days as a result of a strike in the course of which a few persons died as a result of police firing.

In a press comment on this achievement, the *Indian Express* of 31st January stated that the resumption of work was a matter for satisfaction. Referring to the decision of both Management and Labour to let "by-gones be by-gones", the comment stated: "it is curious that it should have been left to Mr. Madhu Mehta, of the Swatantra Party to play the role of Mr. Kosygin while the State Government appears to have been content to be an onlooker seeing (it is to be hoped) most of the game. Be that as it may, the decision to resume work and then negotiate on the matters under dispute, is a step in the right direction."

GUJARAT

In pursuance of a decision of the Central Parliamentary Board at its meeting in New Delhi last October that Dr. K. M. Munshi, Mr. M. R. Masani, Mr. N. Dandekar and Mr. Dahyabhai Patel should visit Ahmedabad to assist in accelerating the growth of the Party's organisation in the City, Prof. Ranga, Mr. Masani and Mr. Dandekar were in Ahmedabad on December 25 and 26. The highlights of the visit were a public meeting and a Press Conference on December 25, and a meeting with the businessmen of the City the following day.

At the public meeting, held under the Chairmanship of the State President, Mr. Bhailalbai Patel, Mr. Masani stated that the present famine could not be attributed to the failure of rains. It was due to disastrous economic policies based on wrong priorities. He said that the country was at a "forking of roads" where the choice was between the Communists on the one hand and the Swatantra Party on the other.

Predicting the disintegration of the Congress in the near future, Mr. Masani said that the pro-Communists within the Congress would join the Communist Party and honest Congressmen would join the Swatantra Party which followed the principle of liberalism, democracy and Gandhism.

At a well-attended Press Conference earlier that day, Mr. Masani and Mr. Dandekar answered questions regarding the Swatantra Party's stand on Kashmir. Mr. Masani said that according to the resolution of the Swatantra Party's National Executive, Pakistan had no *locus standi* in Kashmir and this was an internal matter between the peoples of India and Kashmir. Mr. Dandekar stressed that it was no use remaining under the illusion that the Kashmir problem did not exist. "We cannot sweep it under the carpet in that manner," he said. Mr. Dandekar added that he and Mr. Dahyabhai Patel had visited Kashmir

in November and had come to the conclusion that "this problem can never be solved by merely repeating mechanically that Kashmir was an integral part of India." Mr. Dandekar said that he had already submitted his suggestions to the Prime Minister, giving an assessment of the situation in Kashmir.

Referring to the detention of Kashmiri leaders, Mr. Masani said that as long as the accepted leaders of the Kashmiri people were kept under detention, a solution of the problem would not be found. He added that those who met these leaders in detention had got the impression that they were definitely not pro-Pakistani. Mr. Masani charged the Congress with trying to cash in on the conflict with Pakistan.

Replying to a question on the coming General Elections, the General Secretary said that the Swatantra Party desired electoral adjustment with all nationalist and democratic parties to prevent the needless division of votes.

(The State Unit organised a Businessmen's Conference on 25th December 1965 which was well attended by a cross-section of the business community of Ahmedabad. Mr. N. Dandekar, the Joint Secretary of the Party presided over the Conference. Mr. M. R. Masani, General Secretary and Shri Bhailalbai Patel, President of the Gujarat Unit also participated.

Initiated by Mr. Mathuradas H. Mehta, a Vice-President of the Gujarat Unit, the Conference discussed the principles of the Swatantra Party so far as trade and commerce was concerned. Mr. Dandekar deprecated the licence-permit raj of the Congress and told the mercantile community to be bold and speak out the truth if they wanted to survive as a class. He said he was happy to attend this function, the first of its kind organised by the Party. He was also happy to see the large audience which included prominent industrialists and businessmen of the State.

Mr. Masani, addressing the gathering, said it was high time for the middle class to gather courage and push the Congress out of power. Mr. Masani charged the business community with following a suicidal tendency by supporting the Congress Party which was wedded to socialist principles. If the Swatantra Party came to power, he assured businessmen, it would reduce direct taxation and excise levies by 50 per cent so as to boost industrial and business activities which had been hampered by the wrong economic policies of the Congress Government.

He further promised traders that the Swatantra Party would immediately decontrol the distribution of food-grains and other commodities and abolish the compulsory levy system. Asserting that the Swatantra Party was against monopoly, whether private or Governmental, he charged the Government of India with being the single biggest monopolist in India. Mr. Dandekar presided over the meeting.

Shri Bhailalbai Patel, who also addressed the gathering, demanded that petro-chemical industries should be started in Gujarat soon. He also pointed

out that the oil regions of Gujarat should derive the maximum benefit and that the Koyali Refinery should be expanded to the required capacity so that the feeder industries might develop soon. He stressed the importance of the Narmada Valley Project which would benefit the farmers and turn the desert land of Kutch into a granary of Gujarat. He said that priority must be given to the development of such schemes and it is not upto the people of Gujarat to see that the dream comes true. Delegates from different districts of Gujarat participated and addressed the audience.

A unique function was held on December 25 at Ahmedabad. It was to present a Souvenir to Mr. Bhailalbhai Patel, the "Grand Old Man" of Gujarat. The President of the Party, Prof. N. G. Ranga especially came to Ahmedabad for this function. Mr. Masani, the Party's General Secretary, presided over the meeting and Mr. Dandekar the Joint Secretary, presented the Souvenir to Bhaikaka. The function was attended by Mr. Hitendra Desai, the Chief Minister of Gujarat and two other Ministers of the Gujarat Cabinet. The Mayor of Ahmedabad, Mr. Somabhai Desai was also present. Businessmen and industrialists of Ahmedabad, leading advocates, doctors, social workers, packed Dinesh Memorial Hall to capacity.

The Chief Minister, Mr. Hitendra Desai, paid glowing tributes to Bhailalbhai. Among others who spoke in praise of Bhaikaka were: Mr. Amritlal Hargovindas, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai, Mr. Shambhu Maharaj, Mr. Chimanbhai Desai, Mr. Somabhai Desai and Mr. Brahmakumar Bhatt (PSP).

The Ahmedabad daily *Sandesh* in its issue of January 2 provided an interesting sequel to the visit. Drawing attention to the promises made by the visiting Swatantra leaders that if the Party came to power it would remove controls, reduce taxation by 50 per cent etc., the daily pointed out that during the time that they were there, Mr. Manubhai Shah, was also in Ahmedabad. Mr. Manubhai Shah, the paper reported, was questioned by a Congress Worker about the promises made by the Swatantra Party. Instead of replying to the question, Mr. Manubhai Shah, is reported to have said that the Swatantra Party had no political or economic programme. This disappointed Congress Workers because they felt that only Mr. Manubhai Shah could have replied to Mr. Masani's statements on economic and political issues and considered Mr. Shah's general and vague criticism of the Swatantra Party as not being adequate.

MADRAS

We regret to announce the death in Tirunelveli of Janab Hamid, member of the General Council, Vice President of the Tamilnad unit, a member of the State Parliamentary Board and President of the Tirunelveli District unit of the party. Janab Hamid expired on 25-11-65. A letter from Tirunelveli convey-

ing the sad news expresses the District's sense of loss on his demise especially at a time when he was devoting all his energies to building up the Party in the district.

ORISSA

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee strongly reacted to pressure put by the State Chief Minister and said in his letter to the Chief Minister: "the Public Accounts Committee is an autonomous body and can be subservient to none by yielding to any pressure whatsoever, from any quarters". Mr. Singh Deo clarifying the stand of the Public Accounts Committee said in his letter that the Public Accounts Committee had its own way and procedure in deciding matters and the Government should not hustle it. He has further stated that the Government deliberately caused delay in placing the Report of the Auditor General before the Public Accounts Committee on flimsy pretexts and would be responsible if the Public Accounts Committee finds it impossible to examine the Report this year.

Mr. Singh Deo added that if the Government is sincere and particular to take action against the real culprits, there is absolutely no bar to it because the audit concerns financial transactions only and all other issues relating to administrative improprieties etc. should not be mixed up.

Prior to the reply of Mr. Singh Deo, Mr. Nityananda Mohapatra (Ind.) in a separate Statement and Shri Harihar Patel and Shri Prasanna Kumar Dash (P.S.P.) in a joint statement deprecated the action of the Chief Minister which they described was the result of pressure exerted by corrupt elements.

Mr Singh Deo toured the drought affected areas of Kalahandi and Balangir districts and the State Home Minister who was also at that time touring the drought affected areas conferred with Mr. Singh Deo and discussed ways and means to help the people.

Addressing a meeting of workers at Pipli, the General Secretary of the State unit Shri Harihar Patel explained the aims and object of the Swatantra Party. The meeting was well attended by workers and Public from the locality. The local drought situation was also discussed.

The Parliamentary Sub-Committee and State Executive of the Swatantra Party met at Bhubaneswar on 23rd and 24th December 1965 respectively under the Chairmanship of Mr. R. N. Singh Deo. The Executive condemned the State Government's policy of Monopoly procurement of foodgrains. It asserted that such a policy will cause incalculable loss to both grower and consumer at the same time. The Committee sounded a note of warning to the Government to be alert and sincere in tackling the perilous drought situation and stressed the need for speedy implemen-

tation of the 31 point formula already given by the State Unit of the Party which, in the opinion of the Committee, would go a long way in solving the problem.

Several Public meetings were organised by the State unit at Gudum, Nachuni, Raj-Sunkhala, Harirajpur and Nayahat which were addressed by Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, Mr. Rajballav Mishra, Mr. Khetramohan Panigrahi and some other leaders of the Party. Mr. P. K. Deo, M.P., addressed a meeting at Sakhigopal which greatly impressed the local public.

PUNJAB

The Punjab State Council held an emergency meeting in Batala on November 7 under the Presidentship of the late Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke. A Resolution adopted at the meeting referred to the future of the State and the formation of Punjabi Suba. The meeting took exception to the stand taken by the Punjab Chief Ministers and some of his Cabinet colleagues on this issue and regretted that they should have opposed the formation of a Punjabi speaking State.

The Resolution supported the demand for a greater Haryana Prant and requested the Government to meet both the demands. Another Resolution expressed concern over the falling prices of wheat, paddy and maize in the State and expressed the view that if the Government was desirous of increasing food production, it must ensure that the producer receives equitable return for his produce.

RAJASTHAN

The State Committee of the Party met in Jaipur on 20-11-65. It adopted resolutions on border defence, food problem, and the shortage of electricity and water. It condoled the death of Mr. A. D. Shroff.

The resolution on border defence, while congratulating the defence forces in containing aggression, suggested that the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary should be better equipped with modern weapons; that roads should be constructed and means of communication improved, and that proper arrangements be made in the State for the supply of drinking water.

The resolution on food demanded an end to the compulsory Levy on farmers, wanted the Government to supply food grains at subsidised rates, demanded the removal of zonal restrictions and providing facilities to the peasants to increase production.

The State President toured the districts of Dungarpur and Udaipur between November 24 and December

21. He spoke at 23 meetings during his tour. A report from the President's Secretariat states that most of these meetings were well attended. The State President, in his tour, found that the entire countryside was in the grip of famine. Even clean drinking water was not available as the wells were fast drying up. Two of the Party's M.L.A.s, Mr. Udailal Vardia, M.L.A. and Mr. Mawa, M.L.A. accompanied the State President in his tour.

A report from Jodhpur states that due to strong representations made by the district unit of the Party, the Government of Rajasthan has decided against shifting from there, the High Court, Medical College, University and Sangeet Natak Academy.

A team of members of the State unit led by Smt. Chandrakumari Bai Sahiba, the sister of His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur, along with Thakur Mandhata Singh, General Secretary, Rajasthan Swatantra Party, Bawat Mansingh Mahar, Thakur Amar-singh of Boorthal, Capt. Ram Singh of Ettawa, Shri Anoop Singh and Thakur Narpatsingh of Bhadwa, visited the border areas where fighting had taken place during the recent Indo-Pak War.

The team went to Gangala where about 60 families and refugees from Dali (a village in Pakistan) had taken shelter. The team distributed 100 quilts, 150 jerseys and 100 sarees to the needy refugees. These items were similarly distributed in some other affected areas on the border. The team, in a Press note on its return from the tour has urged the State Government to immediately take steps to rehabilitate the affected inhabitants in the border areas.

UTTAR PRADESH

Addressing the opening session of a two-day District Conference of the Party at Farukhabad, Mr. B. P. Singh challenged the Chief Minister of U.P. and said that he was prepared to prove that there has not been the slightest increase in the per-capita income, consumption of cloth and food-grains of the poorer sections of the people while the consumption of luxury goods had considerably gone up. Mr. Singh further challenged that not a single target of the 3rd Five-Year Plan, had been fulfilled. On the other hand, he said, targets on deficit financing, taxation, foreign loan and aid had certainly crossed their limit.

The District Conference adopted four Resolutions. One of these, appoints a five-man Sub-Committee to organise public opinion against the ever-increasing corruption in various Government departments in the district.

from the General Secretary's desk

Dear Friend:

THE IMAGE OF A PARTY

The other day I was asked by the Public Relations Society of India to give a talk on "Public Relations for Political Parties". What this group of technicians in public relations wanted was that I should share with them my thoughts on the extent to which the techniques of public relations, which have been well tried out in business and industry, are applicable in the realm of politics. As it happens, this is a matter of some interest and importance not only to public relations men but also to active workers in the political field, such as readers of this Newsletter.

In my view, the situation of a business enterprise and a political party are largely analogous. The party, like a business enterprise, has a product to sell. In normal times, the product is the party's programme and its principles. During an election campaign, however, the product is the party's candidate in a particular constituency or its list of candidates throughout the country.

Public Relations, as distinct from advertising, seeks in various ways to create a favourable public image of a business enterprise or a party. It is based on a study of human nature, of the consumer in the one case and of the electorate in the other. As far back as 1908, Graham Wallas had dealt with this aspect in his book (Human Nature in Politics).

The media of public relations in politics are many and varied. There is first the printed word conveyed through the news and editorial columns of newspapers and periodicals and of advertisements placed in the press. Thus, the Conservative Party spent as much as half a million pounds sterling in the two years preceding the General Elections of 1954 in Britain on booking advertising space in the press for its message. In more recent years, Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, the Socialist M. P., complained bitterly that Mr. Harold Macmillan, the conservative Leader, was being sold by his party as though he were a detergent. Mr. Crossman's complaint notwithstanding, advertising is a perfectly legitimate form of publicity and public relations. Then, there are posters, booklets, pamphlets and leaflets of various description.

As it happens, however, since around eighty per cent of the Indian electorate is illiterate, the printed word does not get very far. One therefore has to fall back on audio-visual aids.

The best audio-visual medium is the speaker at a public meeting since he can be both seen and heard. Speeches at meetings involve trained, mobile speakers. This in turn involves vehicles, cars, jeeps and bicycles.

Other forms of audio-visual publicity include the

cinema, where one can either have a documentary or a slide. Then, there are radio and television. The latter is not yet available in India, but the radio is there. Unfortunately, we have a government radio system, departmentally run, and this naturally rules it out from the field of political education and publicity. Recently, during the election of the Congress Party's leader and potential Prime Minister, the complaint was made that A.I.R.'s facilities were misused to boost the prospects of a particular candidate. In this context while A.I.R. remains what it is, the best one can hope for is its abstention from political broadcasts accompanied by the fair coverage of news. If, however, autonomous Corporations were to be established for running the radio and television services, like the B.B.C. in Britain, we could look forward to the fair and proper use of radio and television facilities for political enlightenment.

The more new and backward a democracy, the less the influence of ideology and the greater the importance of organisation and of the political machine. It is not enough that Truth should be on one's side. It is necessary that the Truth should be widely known or, as has been put, "even truth must have wings." It is the media of public relations and publicity that provide the wings. Unfortunately, the wings themselves cannot be forthcoming if the necessary material and financial resources are not there. We in the Swatantra Party, who have to function on a shoestring, are only too painfully aware of these limitations.

Public relations can be no substitute for policy. If a Party's policies are bad and its public relations good, what may happen is that there may be a big gulf between image and achievement, and ultimately the image may collapse. The most important thing, therefore, is for a party to have sound policies and a good manifesto.

In a recent debate in Parliament, when some Members of Parliament complained that our diplomatic missions abroad had failed and that was why India was isolated during the clash with Pakistan, I sought to deal with this point when I spoke in the Lok Sabha on November 15, 1965. "Was it only bad public relations," I asked, "as some of our colleagues allege? Was it the fault of our diplomats? Let me say, in all fairness to our diplomatic service and publicity, that it was not a failure of public relations or diplomacy. I have been a practitioner of public relations. You cannot sell a product if the product cannot be sold. The first thing in public relations is to have a good product which can be sold. Then only can you advertise it and sell it. It is no good blaming our diplomats and ambassadors. The fault lay deeper. It lay in our foreign policy. We did not give them a product they could successfully sell in the councils of the world."

Another factor that has a bearing on the creation of a good image of a party in the public mind is neither its policy nor its publicity, but its behaviour. Does a party present a picture of a group of earnest, sincere, dedicated men who are prepared to work hard for their beliefs and to make the necessary sacrifices for the public good? A great deal hangs on this. Perhaps Senator Dirksen, the Republican leader in the United States, had this in mind when he said recently: "Parties do not defeat each other. Generally speaking, parties defeat themselves." How very true. A party organisation that leaves its rent unpaid, that has its telephone connection cut for failure to pay its dues, that keeps its employees waiting for their salaries beyond the end of the month, creates a bad image which undoes a great deal of its pious professions. Similarly, a political leader who makes a speaking engagement in a particular town on a particular date and then fails to turn up strikes a body blow at the morale of his supporters and at the image of his party in the public mind.

It is, of course, true that those in Opposition are at some disadvantage compared to those in government, in so far as reporting in the press in India is concerned. The press generally presents ministers as men of achievement, while treating Opposition lead-

ers as captious critics. Against this disadvantage must be set the advantage of the freedom we in the Opposition enjoy to speak our minds, which is denied to Ministers who are inhibited by their own fears and cramped by the susceptibilities of their colleagues from telling the truth. It is, therefore, more fun to be in Opposition. According to Mr. Harold Macmillan, it is also a mistake to be pompous when in Opposition. That is a privilege to be left to those in office! In a newspaper interview in January 1959, Mr. Macmillan made fun of Mr. Gaitskell, then Leader of the Labour Opposition, for not making the most of his position. He said: "The trouble about Mr. Gaitskell is that he is going through all the motions of being a Government when he isn't a Government. It is bad enough having to behave like a Government when one is a Government. The whole point of being in opposition is that one can have fun and lend colour to what one says and does. To be colourful: that is the opportunity Opposition gives you."

Jai Swatantra!

Annexure

A scheme circulated to members of the Constituency and District Committees in Bombay City by the Unit's Vice President Mr. Piloo Mody

Many of the Committees elected during the Party Elections have not been functioning effectively. There are several causes:

- 1) The Committee members do not attend the Committee meetings;
- 2) When meetings are held, no programme is chalked out;
- 3) Some Committees suffer from ineffective leadership;
- 4) The Committee members are too busy and have little time for political work;
- 5) A general ineptitude on the part of the members of the Constituency Committee;
- 6) In some areas, there is no proper office or meeting facilities.

Any one or more of the causes mentioned above may be afflicting your Committee.

Those of you who are office-bearers and members of your Committees should take note of what are the causes that affect you work and you should devote your attention towards eliminating them and setting things right.

To help Committees function effectively, I would like to recommend the following programmes of activity:

Where it is not possible for the Party to rent office premises in your area, every effort should be made to

establish a common meeting place in somebody's house or office. Many offices, shops, consulting rooms, etc. are not in use on Sundays and holidays, and advantage may be taken for holding meetings and doing organisational work from these premises.

II. SURVEY OF YOUR CONSTITUENCY/DISTRICT

It is important that you should have a complete record and survey with you of the area in your jurisdiction, which will include:

- i) A review of the existing political forces in your jurisdiction, which will include:
 - ii) The relative strength of all political parties (Swatantra Party, Jan Sangh, PSP, SSP, Communist and Congress and dissident Congress men);
 - iii) The existing influence of Trade Unions in your constituency, the colour and character of all Trade Unions and the leaders of these Trade Unions, along with their background and political colourisation;
 - iv) A list of religious, social, cultural and sports organisations in your area, along with a list of their office-bearers and an indication of their political sympathies;
 - v) A separate list of all the prominent members of

118
your constituency and their political background. (These lists should be compiled categorywise, wherever possible, such as professional men, men in service and their employers, social workers, trade unionists, etc.

- vi) A detailed survey of all candidates who fought during the last three elections from your area and wherever possible, detailed information about these candidates and the votes polled by each one of them. (With some effort, it should be possible to collect even some more detailed information about the locality, community, or the group in which certain candidates enjoy relatively more influence. Such groups should be contacted and nursed.
- vii) You should make it a point to know the M.L.A. and M.P. from your locality and prepare a regular dossier on him about his effectiveness, about the services rendered to the Constituency, his attendance in the legislature or Parliament and his voting record;
- viii) You should constantly analyse and learn the problems of your constituency and the grievances of the constituents. You should keep an eye on what the sitting member in the constituency is doing to redress these grievances. You should also try and seek solutions on behalf of the Party for these grievances with the active co-operation of the constituents; and
- ix) You should keep your eyes and ears open about what is being said about our Party and you should try, with the help of the Regional Council, to clarify our stand on various issues to the voters in your constituency.

III. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

You should try and associate as many Party members as you can with the organisation of Party work. Members in your constituency should be allotted specific areas or streets in which they live. They should be made responsible for public relations in their allotted areas, and they should be asked to be in constant touch with their neighbours—convince them and enrol them. Wherever possible, this should be done in pairs as it generally makes a good impression. If only every worker of the Party enrolled ONE member EACH month, to the exclusion of all other work, our Party would grow very rapidly.

IV. REPORTING AND FEEDBACK

In order that the work in your constituency gets the necessary appreciation, you should file a monthly report with the Regional Office so that your experiences can be passed on to other constituencies and their experiences in turn can be passed on to you. These monthly reports should come to us as far as

possible, under heads described above, so that it may be easy for the Regional Office to tabulate your activities and compare them with those of other constituencies.

V. ABSENTEE MEMBERS

If you have members on your Committee who are not functioning adequately and shouldering their share of responsibility, you should report them to the Regional Council. According to the latest ruling arrived at by the National Executive in Delhi this month, the Regional Council has been empowered to take effective action against such members. Wherever possible, every effort should be made to contact the delinquent members and persuade them to participate more fully in the activities of the Party and impress upon them their responsibility as members of the Committee. Only when such efforts fail and he continues to be ineffective should the matter be reported to the Regional Council.

VI. FINANCES

Collecting money locally and putting your unit on a self-sustaining basis is one of the most important tasks for your Committee. The subvention you may get from the Regional office will never be sufficient to finance your activities. It is most essential, therefore, that you must contact the influential and wealthy people of your constituency and request them to make monthly donations to your party unit.

VIII. ACCOUNTING

To inspire public confidence, proper books of accounts should be kept, so that no one can ever raise a finger against individual members of your Committee, or your Committee as a whole, or the Swatantra Party in general. Public funds are a matter of public Trust and they should be administered exactly like Trust funds.

The programme and activities listed above are mandatory for your Committee. In addition to the above programme, you are at liberty to organise and arrange other programmes to suit your constituency. Please note that failure to implement the above programme will bring your Committee to the notice of the Regional Council.

The Swatantra Party is fighting an uphill battle with overwhelming odds against the Congress Government. The only basis for our programmes and policies are Truth, Morality and Intelligent Thinking. Our Party is not based on empty slogans, cheap popularity and unfulfilled promises. We have, therefore, to work twice as hard as the workers of other political parties. I and my committee rely on you to put forth your best efforts with sincere, devoted and sustained work. With your wholehearted cooperation, I know we shall not fail.

Anti-Excessive Taxation Day

February 20, 1966



We, the members of the Swatantra Party

DEMAND

- that no new taxes should be imposed in the forthcoming Union Budget
- that there should be no enhancement in Land-levy
- that wherever land or paddy-levy has been enhanced, it should be withdrawn
- that excise duties on the daily necessities of life of the common man should be reduced drastically. Such items include Cloth, Kerosene, Sugar, Tobacco, betel nuts
- that the strangulating taxes on the middle class should be drastically reduced
- that inflationary policies which lead to rising prices should be scrupulously avoided
- that the infamous Gold Control Act should be scrapped
- that zonal restrictions on the movement of foodgrains from State to State and District to District should be abolished

Jai Swatantra!

We call on the Party's members throughout the country to offer their unstinted cooperation in making February 20, 1966, a Day of education for the people on the realities of oppressive taxation and a Day of warning to the Government.

(For Private Circulation)