

SWATANTRA WINS AT KEONJHAR

Mr. Karunakar Pradhan, the candidate of the Swatantra Party, was declared elected to the Orissa Legislative Assembly from the Keonjhar constituency on June 29.

In a straight contest, he defeated the Congress candidate, Mr. Bankim Chandra Das, by 1,818 votes, thus retaining the seat for the Party.

Mr. Pradhan secured 8,585 votes as against 6,767 votes by Mr. Das.

The following is based on a report submitted by the General Secretary of the Orissa Unit of the Party on the by-election:

There was no proposal of any by-election being held in the constituency even till the middle of May and, naturally, it was thought that it would be held possibly sometime in winter. As it was rumoured that the Government had sent a proposal to hold the by-election on June 27, later confirmed by the Chief Electoral Officer, the President of the Orissa unit sent a telegram to the Election Commission pointing out the unsuitability of the date for the by-election owing to the outbreak of monsoon. This was followed by a letter to the Chief Minister, urging him to postpone the poll.

But the representations were of no avail, and the date remained unaltered. The Election Commission has stated, in its report on the Third General Election to the Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1961, that "the dates of poll have to be fixed ahead of the onset of the monsoon in the State."

In fact, it rained in the constituency almost every day after June 20 and on the date of poll (June 27), it rained almost continuously from morning till evening, causing lot of difficulties and preventing voters from going to the booths.

An analysis of the voting figures in the General Elections held in 1952, 1957 and 1961 goes to prove that the holding of elections in the months of May and June virtually results in the disenfranchisement of many voters in a comparatively large area of the State. It is necessary that the Election Commission should realise this aspect.

On June 14, Mr. Karunakar Pradhan and I went to Palasapanga area and also visited some of the inter-

ior villages. The people's support everywhere was overwhelming.

However, I was somewhat unhappy at the looseness of our organisation and informed many of our MLAs and Party organisers to rush to the constituency. They began to arrive after June 16, and the Maharaja of Kalahandi came to the constituency on June 20.

From June 15 to June 26, public meetings were held daily at Keonjhar and which were addressed by the Maharaja of Kalahandi. The Maharaja was assisted in his task by Mr. Abhimanyu Rath, Mr. Harihar Das, Mr. Rajballav Misra and Mr. Lokenath Misra.

As we go to the press we learn with a deep sense of sorrow of the demise of Mr. S. P. Singh Deo of Dhenkanal, a Swatantra member of the Rajya Sabha and one of the leaders of the Party in Orissa.

We convey our deep sympathies to his family and to our colleagues in the Orissa Unit of the Party in their bereavement.

An idea about the election campaign. All the Ministers and Deputy Ministers, excluding the Chief Minister, the Health Minister and the Gram Panchayat Minister were camping in the constituency at different places and were conducting their election campaign under the leadership of Mr. Biju Patnaik.

The Ministers resorted to gross abuse and misuse of powers, threat and intimidation of voters, and unduly influencing them to vote for Congress. Government officials were carrying on propaganda in the Suakati area, and an atmosphere of fear had been created to such an extent that the people were even afraid of giving any shelter to us.

On June 23, we had rented a house by the side of Suakati main road but on the following morning, the owner of the house asked our party workers to vacate, under pressure from the opposite camp. We had to move into an interior village. In this area, we found that umbrellas, cloth, wheat and rice, were being widely distributed by the Congress and Government officials to secure votes for the Congress candidate.

A stone-throwing incident at Raisuan, where the Education Minister was holding a meeting, was seized by some Congress workers for propaganda against us. It was alleged by the Congress workers that the stone throwing was at the instigation of our Party. Under this pretext, some people of the village, along with drunken goondas, came to the Swatantra Party camp in the village where Mr. Sundarmani Patel, M.P. was alone at that time. They threatened him and asked him to vacate the house.

The villagers complained that due to the stone-throwing incident, the Education Minister went away without giving Rs. 10,000 to the village school which they had expected from him that day. Mr. Sundarmani Patel faced the situation boldly and had to run up to Keonjhar to inform the police.

A study made by me, with the assistance of Mr. Nityananda Mahapatra, has revealed that even though intimidated, threatened or bribed, many people will silently vote for us without making any loud

manifestation. In fact, many people have actually done so in this by-election.

Shortly before the by-election, the District Committee of our Party at Keonjhar published some very appealing songs. Two Oriya translations of the pamphlets, "Statism Rejected," and "Who is outdated?" published by the Central Office of the Party were widely distributed.

The Congress Party concentrated heavily on this by-election and resorted to all sorts of ignoble methods, unfair and corrupt practices to win the seat as they had made it a prestige fight. Mr. Biju Patnaik and other Congress leaders, including Mr. Bijoy Pani, President of the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee, made virulent and vile attacks against our Party leaders in their speeches and leaflets.

The lesson of this by-election is that, in the absence of a strong organisation to mobilise voters, we have to make a discount of about 20 per cent or so from our expectations.

DEFEAT FOR KAMARAJ AND PATNAIK

(The following is the text of the resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee of our Orissa unit held at Bhubaneswar on July 10 and 11.)

The Parliamentary Sub-Committee reviewed the report of the General Secretary of the State unit of the Swatantra Party on the Keonjhar by-election. This by-election, was necessitated by the death of Mr. Janardan Bhanj Deo, the sitting member.

In view of the wide publicity of the C.B.I. findings on charges of corruption against the State Congress Ministers and consequent unpopularity and discredit of the Congress organisation in the State, the Orissa Congress had made this by-election a prestige contest.

The Congress President, Mr. K. Kamaraj, inaugurated the campaign and practically all Ministers and top leaders of Orissa Congress camped and campaigned vigorously and used all their influence and power for the success of their candidate. The State Congress concentrated all the resources and used about 120 jeeps, besides many cars, trucks and rickshaws in its campaign, even carrying voters to polling booths.

Collective and individual bribery by way of promises of opening of schools, lease of Government lands, lump-sum grants to schools, supply of petromax lamps, musical instruments, umbrellas, shoes and money and distribution of cloth and food grains were openly indulged in on a large scale by the Orissa Congress.

The depth of meanness to which the Congress election propaganda degenerated is evidenced by the personal attacks and scurrilous and indecent leaflets distributed by Congress workers and even the Ministers.

At a meeting addressed by Mr. Kamaraj, Mr. Biju Patnaik, replying to a question, declared that tiled houses and piped water have been made available in constituencies which had elected Congress candidates and that the same would be provided for the people of Keonjhar, if and when they elect a Congress candidate.

The victory of the Swatantra candidate, Mr. Karunakar Pradhan, a member of the backward classes, against these heavy odds and the improvement of the Swatantra votes from 44 to 56 per cent, compared to 1961 Assembly elections and the significant reverse of the Congress, which had polled about 2,000 votes more than the Swatantra candidate from this Assembly in the Lok Sabha elections in 1962, is an eye-opener of the shape of things to come.

The Parliamentary Sub-Committee agrees with the report of the General Secretary that a poll of 75 per cent in our favour would have truly reflected popular support for us but which could not be fully utilised owing to lack of resources and weakness in our organisation.

The Sub-Committee advises the Keonjhar district unit to gear up the party organisation. It also congratulates the electorate for its clear verdict and its resistance to all sorts of temptations, inducements and threats, thereby giving a fatal blow to Mr. Biju Patnaik's boast of winning one hundred seats in the next General Elections.

VIGILANCE WINS

Mr. Brundaban Naik, Minister for Community Development and Panchayat Raj, has been unseated from the Vidhan Sabha following the Election Commission's verdict.

A voter from the Hinjilicut constituency Mr. Parikhita Biswal a Swatantra Party organiser had,

in his petition before the Commission, challenged Mr. Naik's continuance in the Assembly on the ground that the Minister had been carrying on business with the Government through his Kalinga Cement Products and Kalinga Agencies, Berhampur.

ON THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY

Mr. M. R. Masani, M.P. and General Secretary of the Party, told a public meeting in Shillong on July 12 that the country's economy "is on the brink of collapse and there is no hope for the country without a change of Government."

He said: "I believe this change is possible in February 1967 through a popular vote against the stagnant and bankrupt economy of the Congress."

The meeting was organised by the local unit of the Party.

Mr. Masani added that the country was already on the verge of bankruptcy. The reasons are:

- The country's sterling balance which stood at over Rs. 1,400 crores had dropped to Rs. 3.45 crores last month;
- The value of the rupee had dipped by one-half in the international market and had deteriorated to a mere 14 paise at home, compared to what it was in 1939;
- India's dependence on foreign aid had gone beyond legitimate proportions;
- Repayment liabilities of the huge loans taken from foreign countries meant that the country's future was being mortgaged, and
- the collapse of the capital market.

the rupees accumulated by Russia was used by her for buying valuable materials for exporting to the Soviet Union. These materials would have gone otherwise to other foreign countries and earned our country valuable foreign exchange.

Thus, from whatever country India imported, she had to pay in exports. Therefore, Mr. Masani said we should buy in the cheapest market and not sacrifice our economic interests for this false theory, which he described as the "rupee sources racket."

Ordered Anarchy

Mr. Masani said: "At present, we are heavily subsidising exports to Russia and selling some of our goods to her at a very cheap price."

He described India's planning as "ordered anarchy" and advocated the "liquidation" of the Planning Commission. "These paper plans are an obsession without reality," he added.

Mr. Masani concluded by saying that through "progressive decontrol and holiday from planning the incidence of taxation could be reduced by half. And then there would be a spur in productivity, and the country will prosper. If these measures are taken, prices will also stabilise and there will be no food shortage. These economic problems can only be solved by political means and that is a change of Government without which I see no hope for this country."

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

WHY I TOOK TO POLITICS

BY CHARANJIT RAI

CAN INDIA ESCAPE BANKRUPTCY?

BY M. R. MASANI

20 paise per copy

Copies are available from the Central Office of the Swatantra Party, 143, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1

Big Lie

Mr. Masani blamed the state of affairs on the Planning Commission. He suggested that there should be a holiday from planning for at least two years by prolonging the Third Plan and making it a seven-year-plan so that at least some of the targets might be fulfilled.

Mr. Masani described as a "big lie" the claim by Government that when something was bought from the Soviet Union on rupee basis no expenditure of foreign exchange was involved. He pointed out how

NEWS FROM STATE UNITS

ASSAM

The General Secretary of the Party spent two days in Shillong to discuss with our members and friends the prospects of developing a State Unit in Assam. Soon after his arrival on July 12, he addressed workers and sympathisers and had an informal discussion later in the day with leaders of the All-Party Hill Leaders' Conference.

The following day he addressed the Planning Forum of the Department of Political Science, at St. Anthony's College, Shillong, and later inaugurated the Swatantra Forum, which will devote itself to the propagation of the Party's philosophy and programme among the intelligentsia at an ideological level.

Professor Martin Narayan, the enthusiastic son of the former President of the Shillong Branch, Mr. Stephen Narayan, has undertaken the responsibility of trying to organise a Party Unit for the entire State.

BIHAR

The Party's reorganisation programme in the State is making satisfactory progress. Some 2,000 active workers have been enrolled. Elections at the Constituency level are in progress in ten districts.

Mr. Budhan Rai Verma, the Field Organiser, has been on an extensive tour of the State for establishing new contacts.

District Committees are expected to come into existence in a majority of districts by the end of the year.

Mr. M. R. Masani and Mr. Dahyabhai V. Patel were present at a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Party for Bihar, which met in Ranchi on July 10. A resolution adopted at this meeting stated that the "attempt at compulsory procurement of paddy and rice in Bihar has failed." It welcomed the belated acceptance of this reality by the Bihar Government in contrast to the persistence with this oppressive policy on the part of other State Government like West Bengal and Maharashtra.

The Committee took note of the ever rising level of prices and in particular, of foodgrains, especially of rice. "This is causing untold distress to the people of Bihar."

"The responsibility for this state of affairs is entirely that of the Congress Governments in Bihar and at the Centre due to their wrong policies and their inability to co-operate on this issue. The way in which restrictions on the free movement of foodgrains have been imposed both as between States and within the State of Bihar itself, has further aggravated

the situation and has led to greater opportunities for corruption and harassment of the people."

The Advisory Committee was glad to have the assurance that the question of readmitting the Raja of Ramgarh and Mr. Shyam Sunder Prasad, the former President and the General Secretary of the State unit, who had been expelled for gross indiscipline and disloyalty to the Party does not arise. This issue was discussed by the Central Parliamentary Board of the Party at its meeting in Madras on June 4. However, the question of readmitting the Party's members in Parliament and the State Legislature, who had not been expelled but had resigned, was left open and any member's application for readmission into the Party showing an awareness of his having been misled would be considered on its merits, in consultation with the State Advisory Committee.

BOMBAY

During the last week of July Bombay was lashed by heavy rains which rendered some 25,000 poor people homeless. The majority of the victims of the down-pour were hut dwellers and squatters in Kurla and other low-lying areas of North Bombay.

Members of the Bombay unit of the Party immediately set about arranging food and clothing for the poor. Mr. Madhu Mehta, General Secretary of the Bombay unit contacted various firms and appealed to them to lend trucks and vans for distributing relief.

Messrs. Tata Hydro, Parle Products, the Carona Shoe Company and Tata Oil Mills placed several vehicles at the Party's disposal. Numerous anonymous donors lent their private cars. The Party received Rs. 500 from an anonymous benefactor to buy bread, biscuits, etc.

One gentleman walked into the Party office and offered to supply bread and vegetable curry for as long as the Swatantra Party undertook these relief measures. Many other individuals came forward with offers of help in cash and kind.

The Party's relief vans went into action on the morning of July 22nd and went on feeding victims at various places till the evening of Sunday 25th.

The Party also distributed APC tablets, enterovioform and streptomycin injections. Two Kurla doctors immediately volunteered to help.

On July 19 a gentleman said he'd like to donate 1000 pairs of shirts and pants for boys and 500 frocks for girls. The Bombay Dyeing and Manufacturing Co. donated 150 blankets.

Party workers, too numerous to mention, helped in the distribution.

Perhaps the most heartwarming gesture of all was when two young boys came to the Party offered all their pocket money for relief. A driver employed in private service also dropped into the office with bread worth Rs. 18.

The Bombay Unit of the Party deserves to be congratulated on the signal service they have rendered the community in their hour of distress.

KERALA

Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy, M.P. completed a successful tour of Kerala from June 11 to June 18. During the tour, he addressed party workers at Trivandrum, Quilon, Kottayam, Erattupetta, Kanjirapally, Thodupuzha, Moovattupuzha, Karimannoor and Ernakulam.

MYSORE

The Mysore unit of the Swatantra Party has strongly opposed the Congress Parliamentary Board's proposal to hold elections in Goa in the next six months to settle its future.)

A resolution to this effect was passed at a joint meeting of the State Council and the Executive Committee of the Mysore unit held in Bangalore on June 18.

The resolution said that 'status quo' in respect of Goa should continue for ten years as was decided by the late Prime Minister.

By another resolution, the Party opposed the Mysore Land Reforms Act which, it said, was "destructive of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Party deplored the delay on the part of the State Government in meeting the reasonable requests of Non-Gazetted Officers in the State in regard to immediate interim relief and the appointment of a Pay Commission to frame fair scales of pay.

Such 'threats', the resolution added, "are the natural consequence of injustice and a sense of frustration."

The resolution said further: "The N.G.O. is as essential to the effective functioning of Government as the worker is for a factory or business; and former's basic needs deserve no less consideration at the hands of Government than those of organised labour."

AN ALL POWERFUL MONOPOLIST

"Our freedom of choice in a competitive society rests on the fact that, if one person refuses to satisfy our wishes we can turn to another. But if we face a monopolist we are at his mercy. And an authority directing the whole economic system would be the most powerful monopolist conceivable. While we need probably not be afraid that such an authority would exploit this power in the manner in which a private monopolist would do so, while its purpose would presumably not be the extortion of maximum financial gain, it would have complete power to decide what we are to be given and on what terms. It would not only decide what commodities and services were to be available, and in what quantities; it would be able to direct their distribution between districts and groups and could, if it wished, discriminate between persons to any degree it liked. If we remember why planning is advocated by most people, can there be much doubt that this power would be used for the ends of which the authority approves and to prevent the pursuits of ends which it disapproves?"

F. A. HAYEK — *The Road to Serfdom*

from the General Secretary's desk

How Not To Organise A Meeting

Dear friend,

Last week, I was invited to address a discussion group which meets once a week. There were about 400 to 500 enthusiastic young men and women present who came to listen to my talk, after which questions lasted for the best part of an hour. At the end of the meeting, as I was leaving the place, a young man came up and asked me very timidly and apologetically whether it would not be possible for him to get a form for enrolling himself as a Worker of the Party? I turned to our local Party Organisers who had arranged this very successful function, but, alas, they had forgotten to bring with them either Party literature or enrolment forms! I could only apologise to the young man for our default. This is by no means an unusual occurrence.

We call a lot of people together to listen to Rajaji or someone else who can draw a crowd and, at the end, when we should go out of our way to put our literature in their hands and urge them to fill up enrolment forms and join the Party, we send them away empty-handed to fade away once again into anonymity! How many thousand willing recruits must the Swatantra Party have turned away in this manner from its doors in the last few years?

Our Party is very short of funds, both at the Centre and at the State and district levels. We function on a shoe-string; our resources are pathetically inadequate for the gigantic task of providing an alternative Government in a country the size of Western Europe and with an electorate as big as that of all the countries of Western Europe put together. Do we try to supplement our meagre resources by raising money at the public meetings we organise, as other Parties do in much more prosperous countries? No. We are much too lordly to take that trouble! What would it cost to prepare a few metal or wooden boxes, properly sealed, with a slit for currency notes and coins and have a few of our young men and women to go around the audience and ask for small contributions to the Party's funds? By not doing so, not only do we deny ourselves the money we so desperately need, but we also strengthen the completely false impression our enemies have spread that we are a Party of rich people who do not care for the small man's mite!

Another little trait that is noticeable is that the distinguished speaker from outside is not allowed to proceed to the place of the meeting at the appointed

time. He is held back in some obscure corner until the hall has filled to the satisfaction of the local Organisers and is then produced fifteen, twenty or thirty minutes late, as if it is we who had kept the audience waiting, like any old Congress leader, and not the other way around! I am delighted that Rajaji quite rightly refuses to cooperate and insists on being fair to the punctual members of the audience by appearing on the platform at the correct time announced for the meeting and keeping them company. The Swatantra Party would do itself and its image a great deal of good if, by starting its meeting punctually, it could distinguish itself from the Congress netas who make it a habit to keep crowds waiting for them in order to make a belated appearance with an extremely busy look on their faces!

A little gimmick that some of us often try out on the audience is to decoy it with the announcement that Rajaji, Smt. Gayatri Devi or some other distinguished speaker will address the meeting. What happens, however, is that the first hour or so is taken up by local speakers monopolising the microphone. It is just about the time that the captive audience starts thinking of going home that Rajaji is at last called upon to speak. He, being more sensitive than others, winds up his talk in a few minutes. In other countries, the procedure is that the main speaker speaks first, and then the supporting speakers follow, thus giving the audience the freedom of choice, on which the Swatantra Party is so keen, to decide whether to stay till the end of the meeting or not.

My plea to our local Workers and Organisers is therefore to ensure that:

- Our meetings start at the time announced and that, even if the audience has not gathered, our speakers are on the platform on time;
- Collection boxes are taken around among the crowds and contributions to the Party invited;
- Literature and Enrolment Forms are distributed to those who attend these meetings as they come in or go out;
- Meetings do not drag on for more than an hour and a half or two hours at the most, so that the patience of the crowd is not exhausted.

These are all painless methods and procedures and their observance will give us manifold returns.

Jai Swatantra!

(For Private Circulation)