

Swatantra Newsletter

ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE SWATANTRA PARTY, 143 MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY 1 • TELEPHONE NO: 252076

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CENTRAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND GENERAL COUNCIL MEETINGS :

The Central Organising Committee and General Council of the Party met in Bombay from the 29th to 31st July, 1960. ✓

16/23 Sixteen out of twenty-three members were present at the meetings of the Central Organising Committee which met at the residence of Sir Homi Mody, Treasurer of the Party. The Committee discussed a number of resolutions that were to be placed before the open session of the General Council as well as organisational problems. Among the resolutions discussed were : (1) The Government Employees' Strike, (2) Third Five-Year Plan, (3) The Next General Elections, (4) China and Tibet, (5) Assam, (6) Threat to National Unity and Democracy. ✓

Mr. N. C. Chatterjee who was present at the meeting reported on the developments in Assam and his correspondence with the Prime Minister. Mr. John Deng and Mr. J. Stephen Narayan, our representatives from Assam, were invited to give the Committee a first hand report on the developments in Assam. The Committee then adopted the following resolution :

"The Central Organising Committee, having heard Shri N. C. Chatterjee, Shri John Deng and Shri J. Stephen Narayan, feels that the situation in Assam continues to be very disquieting and calls for effective and immediate attention on the part of the Government of India. This Committee requests Shri N. C. Chatterjee to take up the matter with the Prime Minister once again and report the result to the President, Prof. Ranga."

It was decided to observe Anti-Inflation Day on Sunday, 18th September 1960 to protest against the policies of Government which were leading the country towards inflationary ruin.

Similarly the meeting decided to observe December 9, 1960 as Party Flag Day.

The General Council of the Party met in private session on July 30. Members, Office-bearers of State and regional Parties and special invitees numbering 52 attended. A review of progress, State by State, took place when representatives from the units spoke on the progress so far made and the problems confronting party organisation in their State.

The Open Session of the General Council met the next day. ✓
ent for members of the Council. Special Invitees...

Shri C. Rajagopalachari then addressed members of the General Council and others present on the occasion.

Anti-Inflation Day :

As has been reported earlier, it has been decided to observe September 18, 1960 as "Anti Inflation Day." In the course of a letter to the State and Regional units on the subject, the General Secretary states that the "observance of the day is to focus people's attention on the mounting inflation that faces our country as a result of the policies of Government."

Calling upon State units to make adequate preparations to ensure effective observance of the Day, the General Secretary suggests that "leaflets which would dwell on the evils of inflation and fix the responsibility on the Government for the rising cost of living" should be put out by the State units. In addition, leaflets should emphasise our own Party's economic programme to combat this tendency.

It is hoped that our units in the States will immediately address themselves to this task and will ensure that the day will be so observed as to bring home to the man in the street the realities of the present economic situation.

Acharya Bhave on Government's allergy to Criticism :

Acharya Bhave addressing a meeting at Indore on August 5 said that Government was "very touchy" of criticism, whether right or wrong. "The Government always stood on prestige and did not relish criticism," he added.

Acharya Bhave said that during his recent tour of Gujarat some friends had "advised" him not to criticise the Government publicly but to write to it confidentially. His reply was "I am neither the wife nor the daughter of the Government to correspond with it in private or confidentially. He said that he was the servant of the people and he would express his views "before my masters". (Times of India, August 6, 1960.)

NEWS FROM STATE PARTIES :

Andhra:

Our President, Professor Ranga has set a personal example as to how the Party's message should be carried into the villages where the major part of our people live. He recently concluded a strenuous but successful tour of villages in the districts of Krishna, Guntur, Nellore and large areas of Telengana. He visited the homes of villagers and discussed with them their problems. He addressed lectures explaining the Party's principles and policies and exhorting the people to support us. Prof. Ranga also criticised Congress policies which would lead to the ruin of self-employed peasants. His activities at the grass-roots level and its successful culmination have demonstrated that there is no substitute for hard work. In the politically critical districts of Krishna and West Godavari, Prof. Ranga inaugurated 'padayatras' by Party workers. The Andhra Party

At Ammapet a Convention was held. The attendance was so large that local residents were heard to observe that they had not seen such a gathering till then.

Sirkali Taluk in Tanjore district also held a Convention when a purse of Rs.2,000 was presented to Rajaji by the middle-class and poor people of the Taluk. It is of interest to note that all the rich Mirasdars (landlords) absented themselves from the villages, when they heard that Rajaji was visiting the taluk. It is reported that this was largely a handiwork of Congressmen. A gathering of 10000 participated in the Convention.

Before the month was out Rajaji addressed two public meetings, one at Madras and the other at Arkonam in the district of North Arcot. A notable feature of the latter meeting was the presence of large numbers of village folk.

Maharashtra :

An Ad hoc Committee for Nagpur district was formed on July 24 with Mr. Chitnavis as President. Mr. Bhandare toured the five districts in the Marathwada region. He contacted a number of prominent people at each place and addressed groups of persons interested in the Party. As a result of his visit, Ad hoc Committees have been formed at Parbhani and at Jalna for Aurangabad district.

On his way back from Bombay after attending the meetings of the Central Organising Committee, Professor M. Ruthnaswamy was the guest of the Poona Swatantra Party. He addressed a public meeting under the auspices of our Party and a meeting arranged by the Catholic Association in Poona.

Mysore :

The Mysore City and District unit of the Party has been actively engaged in enrolling members, organising public meetings and trying to popularise the party's policies among the people.

At Kurugaval in the district of Mandya a public meeting was held on July 16 when over 5,000 villagers were present. Mr. Niranjanraj Urs, President of the District Council, presided. The Secretary of the District Council, Shri H. S. Subbarayappa, and others addressed the gathering.

The City and District Council has hit upon a new method of popularising the party with the people. Different slogans depicting principles of the Swatantra Party are being printed in large quantities and are being distributed house to house, door to door and shop to shop in the City every Saturday and Sunday.

A combined conference of five districts viz. Mysore, Mandya, Mangalore, Coorg and Hassan is being planned. Efforts are being made to convene the conference during the last week of September.

Of interest to Party members is the news that in the village of Gargeshwar with a population of nearly 5,000 all the 13 seats for the village Panchayat contested by our Party members in their independent capacity were captured by them.

laid over three years ago. But since then not one additional stone had been laid. Our Party took up the matter with the Government and construction of the College has now started in earnest.

A favourite electioneering stunt of the ruling Party in that area was the proposal to convert Mangalore into a major port. The idea usually languished in Government's shelves until an election came, when it was taken out and brandished about by the Ruling Party with a promise that if ~~was~~ returned to power it would take up the matter immediately and see that Mangalore became a major port. Our Party demanded immediate implementation of the scheme by the Government. Various other problems such as the widening of a road or protest against the procrastination by authorities has been tackled by this active unit. Individual grievances are also being attended to. The unit now proposes to hold meetings in villages to collect and press for improvements which have been hitherto neglected by the authorities.

Orissa :

In the district of Balasore, Anchal Committees have been formed at Sarugan, Balikuda, Pakhar, Soro and Kapur. Presidents and Convenors have been appointed at all these places.

At Mangalpur in East Jajpur a branch office has been opened with Shri Gokulananda Ray as Secretary. Shri G. Jena, State General Secretary, who was present on the occasion explained the Party's principles to the gathering.

Similarly a Committee has been formed at Rambag with Shri Gopal Prasad Singh as President and Shri Pitabas Naik as Secretary.

Throughout the month of May and June, numerous public meetings were held in the State at various places including Pirhat Begunia, Jamjhadi Simulia, Balichandaghat, Maitapur, Bauripada P.S. Simulia School field, Sarugan, Bidrahat, Brahmaniahath, Nadigan, Nauhat Adahat and Garasanga.

A meeting was held at Chakulipada in the district of Cuttack which was addressed by State president H. Kanoongo. Similarly Mr. Kanoongo also addressed meetings at Khambakul and Nishchata Koila. Another meeting at Mandapara in the Jagatsingpur Constituency was addressed by Mr. Kanoongo with Mr. Krushna Chandra Rath in the Chair.

At Khalikot Digpahandi in the district of Ganjam a meeting was addressed by Shri Harihar Das, M.L.A. At the end of the meeting Mr. Harihar Das was presented with a purse. Over 200 members were enrolled on the spot.

Punjab

Out of 18 districts in the Punjab, our Party has organised itself in 17. District ad hoc committees have been formed in these districts. With a view to facilitate exchange of ideas on problems confronting district convenors in their respective areas, a system of monthly get-togethers by rotation, of district convenors, their secretaries and members of the State ad hoc Committee and the State consultative Council have been arranged and three such meetings have

meetings have proved very useful. A number of routine matters are usually discussed and decisions taken on the spot which in turn save considerable time that would otherwise have been wasted in correspondence.

Active work for the formation of primary units at the Constituency level commenced in April 1960, after the Party's constitution was adopted at the Patna Convention. Constituency units have since been established in 11 Constituencies of Amritsar district, 8 of Gurdaspur, 9 of Ludhiana, 4 in Gurgaon. Constituency units in other areas of the State are being set up and the Party hopes to have a complete network of Constituency Committees in a short time.

Politics in the State has been in a state of turmoil for a long time now. Beginning with the agitation in favour of Hindi as the State Language, it was followed by a State-wide strike by the Revenue Staff, then by the Communist agitation against 'betterment levy' and Marla Tax etc., and finally the Sikh demand for a Punjabi Suba. The last mentioned agitation is still in full swing. The people, therefore, reports our Punjab Party, have had little or no time to settle down peacefully to ponder over other subjects affecting their future as a whole. Barring a short interval now and then, the State has almost continuously been under section 144 Cr.p.c. which prohibits holding of conferences, conventions and meetings restricting even movement. Normal enjoyment of civil liberties has remained curtailed and there has been wholesale repression and victimisation unheard of in any country which professes to be a democracy. These curbs have affected our Party organisation in the State which since its inception has not known a peaceful month. In spite of this, however, our Party has taken advantage of peaceful lulls to organise meetings and conventions. The continuous tours of Jathedar Udharn Singh Nagoke, President of the State unit, have given considerable impetus to party organisation in the State.

Uttar Pradesh :

The party has established ad hoc committees in 50 of the 55 districts in Uttar Pradesh. The membership drive has been very successful and in spite of numerous difficulties U. P. now has a membership of over a lakh.

At present the State office is trying to reorganise the district ad hoc Committees constituency-wise. For this purpose and also for popularising the Party, the office Secretary has been touring various districts. Two jeeps have been purchased by the State unit. The General Secretary and a member of the State Executive Committee are motoring to the Western and Eastern parts of the State to assist personally in organising party work in the difficult units.

Numerous district conventions have already been held. A workers' training camp was organised by the Gonda District unit at Balrampur from 15th to 21st July. More than a hundred workers from different districts attended this camp.

Pamphlets and other Party literature written in Hindi and Urdu members and sympathisers of the party are widely distributed among people.

In the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, our Party has 25 members. Our group has been recognised as an opposition group by the Speaker of the Assembly.

West Bengal :

The new office of the West Bengal Party in Calcutta was opened formally by the General Secretary of the Party, Mr. M. R. Masani, on August 6, 1960.

Earlier the West Bengal Committee had met on 14th July in Calcutta under the presidency of Mr. N. C. Chatterjee, to consider the Assam crisis. The resolution adopted on the occasion called on all responsible organisations to make a deeper study of the problem. It recalled the numerous occasions when the people of West Bengal had stood by the Assamese in the latter's moments of difficulty, to preserve the "safety and integrity of Assam". The resolution added that "What has happened recently in Assam reminds us of the worst days of the League rule in Bengal in whipping up communal passions and then in refraining from taking drastic actions against the miscreants responsible for the outrages."

Calling upon people to observe the State-wise Hartal in a peaceful manner it characterised it as a "spontaneous expression of outraged national honour, and cautioned Bengalis from acting in a retaliatory way.

Pointing out the authorities in Assam as being incapable of handling the situation the resolution stated : "The Bengalis in Assam feel that it will be dangerous to give more power to the Government of Assam in the name of suppressing the goondas or the lawless element. The real truth is that people have lost faith in the present ruling party in Assam and in the Assam Government's capacity in putting down the lawless elements."

The resolution also pointed out that "whenever the Bengalis have tried to withstand goondaism and had combined themselves to resist the aggressive elements they have been neutralised by the authorities. People who organised themselves to thwart goondaism were arrested or were persecuted by the authorities. Therefore the morale of the people has been rudely shaken."

Calling on the Centre to intervene the Resolution said : "... the suspicion is that there are people operating in the Government or occupying high position in the ruling party in Assam, who have been responsible for creating the ugly situation helping the organisers of the lawless campaign. We regret that the reports as to mass arson, looting and calculated assault and humiliation of Bengalis are well founded. In this situation drastic action is necessary. The Central Government's inactivity will lead to disaster. Fundamental rights guaranteed to the citizens of India have been violated ruthlessly... in this situation there is no other alternative but to demand action under Article 356 of the Constitution and the patent fact is to be admitted that there has been a deplorable failure of the Constitutional machinery in the State of Assam and the President should assume to himself the functions of the Government of that State...."

resolution concluded by saying that in view of the tragic

Annexure A

Resolutions Adopted At The Open Session of the
General Council Held in Bombay on July 31, 1960.

1. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' STRIKE :

7 The General Council of the Swatantra Party congratulates the people of India on keeping calm and preserving the normal life of the community during the course of the recent strike of Central Government employees. The Council also expresses satisfaction at the fact that a large number of Government employees did not associate themselves with this ill-advised and unnecessary stoppage of work which caused great financial loss to the nation and thus helped in bringing the strike to an early conclusion and minimising distress and inconvenience to the public.

2. The Council disapproves of the action of those employees in the administrative and essential services of Government who went on strike and sought to hold the community to ransom. It deplores the action of the leaders of the strike. It is of the view that the situation was aggravated by the domination of the Government Employees' Unions by outsiders from the ranks of political parties who attempted to exploit the genuine discontent of the employees for personal or party ends. These developments have confirmed the correctness of the Swatantra Party's approach, as set out in the Statement of Policy adopted at the Patna Convention in March last, that outsiders should not be allowed to dominate and exploit workers' organisations and that the Swatantra Party would not enter the race whatever other parties may do.

3. On the other hand the Council is unhappy at the indiscriminate use in a number of cases of the extraordinary powers under the Ordinance and the Preventive Detention Act.

4. In the opinion of the Party, the root cause of the strike was the continuing rise in the cost of living due to the inflation that is inherent in the Congress Government's Five-Year Plans. The reckless resort to deficit finance, the imposition of excessive tax burdens, direct and indirect, and in particular the levying of excise duties on the necessities of life, have all contributed in motion the vicious spiral of prices and wages. The refusal of the Union

compensate their employees for the rise in living costs created by its own policies is inconsistent with the concept of removing disparities that they themselves put forward in other fields.

5. The attempt to utilise the threat of Chinese Communist aggression against this country as a reason why justice should not be done to low paid employees is ridiculous particularly when it is remembered that this grave threat has been sought to be played down by the Prime Minister and his Government in an attempt to conceal the utter failure of their foreign and defence policies.

6. In this context, the Indian people have become aware of the peculiar contrast in the attitude of the Congress Government towards its own employees as compared with its attitude towards those in the service of other employers. While encouraging labour for political purposes, to make demands on private industries which are not always capable of being met, the Congress Government has disclosed itself to be far from being a model employer. It is to be hoped that this experience of what happens in State employment and nationalised enterprises will open the eyes of the public in general and the working class in particular to the soundness of the Swatantra Party's thesis that State Capitalism and Free Trade Unionism cannot co-exist for long.

7. The General Council is of the view that a sound policy of dealing with Government employees needs to be evolved and should be based on the following considerations :

- (a) The drawing of a distinction between civil servants, those in essential services and those employed in industrial or other establishments managed by Government, with appropriate procedures applicable in each case;
- (b) The establishment of appropriate machinery for negotiation and conciliation in order to facilitate collective bargaining, including the establishment of suitable Joint Councils;
- (c) The acceptance of the principle that, whenever civil servants and those employed in essential services are denied the right to strike, there should be an opportunity for the matter in dispute to be referred to arbitration; and
- (d) The recognition of Unions and Associations of Government employees being made conditional on their office-bearers and executives being drawn from the ranks of the employees and not from those of outsiders.

nance and other laws and a much larger number is facing disciplinary proceedings. The Council requests the Public Aid Committee of the Party to look into this matter and render whatever legal help may be possible and necessary.

2. REPRESSION IN THE PUNJAB :

While the Swatantra Party has refrained from being involved in local and linguistic issues it is unhappy over the mounting tension over the people of Punjab and it strongly condemns the periodic repression that has been initiated in the Punjab with the acquiescence of the Union Government and the reign of terror that is reported to be prevailing in the State. The Council apprehends that this sort of repression will tend to have an adverse influence on the security and defence of India.

The Council is grieved to have received the following telegram from Sardar Harbans Singh Gujral, leading advocate of Chandigarh :

"Two lawyers of Ludhiana Anrjitsingh Gursharan-singh defending persons arrested in connection with the Punjabi Suba movement arrested yesterday when waiting to appear in court held inside jail apparently to prevent them from discharging their professional duties as well as to deprive the undertrials of their right to have legal assistance stop serious encroachment of the fundamental right of the accused guaranteed under the constitution on the civil liberties and Rule of Law stop defence work in the state paralysed stop action being indefensible in a democratic setup deserves serious notice pray intervene."

In view of the telegram and other communications, the General Council requests the following gentlemen (with powers to co-opt) to pay an early visit to the Punjab to make an impartial appraisal of the situation with particular reference to the repressive measures taken by the Government irrespective of the political issues raised by the various Parties in the State and to make a report to the Central Organising Committee :

1. Shri K. M. Munshi
2. Shri N. C. Chatterjee
3. Sardar Kartar Singh Campbellpuri
4. Shri C. B. Agarwala

399

3. DRAFT OF THE THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLAN :

The General Council is of the view that a Panel from among the members of the Party and others should be requested to examine the draft of the Third Five-Year Plan published by the Government and to help the Party with a report on the subject within the next two months.

The following gentlemen may be requested to undertake this work :

1. Prof. B. R. Shenoy
2. Sardar Lal Singh
3. Mr. M. A. Sreenivasan
4. Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy
5. Mr. J. M. Lobo Prabhu

Mr. Lobo Prabhu will kindly undertake all correspondence in this connection.

4. THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTIONS :

The General Council calls on the State units of the Party to ensure that no one who is eligible to vote is deprived of his civic rights. For this purpose they should interest themselves in the preparation of the Electoral Rolla and ensure that the names of those who are eligible to vote are included in the appropriate rolls so as to make them correct and up-to-date.

The Council is confident that the Swatantra Party will secure a gratifying response at the next General Elections if it chooses men of ability, quality and character as its candidates and gives them adequate time to approach their constituencies. With a view to enable the new National Executive and General Council of the Party which will come into existence by the beginning of 1961 to commence adopting candidates for Parliament and State Assemblies, the Council calls on Party units in the states to undertake, as soon as the enrolment of members concludes by the end of September 1960, the preparation of tentative panels of prospective Parliamentary and State Assembly candidates and to forward such lists to the Central Office of the Party by the end of February 1961.

5. CHINA AND TIBET :

The General Council of the Swatantra Party
note of the continued resistance of the valiant

The Council notes with deep concern and regret the lack of a firm and effective policy on the part of the Government of India to meet the continued aggression of the Communist Government of China on the Hinalayan frontiers.

6. ASSAM :

The General Council views with pain the recent happenings in Assam and condemns the grievous failure of the Congress Government in Assam to maintain law and order to protect the lives of people of Bengali and Tribal origins residing in that State. The Council is of the view that Government should take steps to combat this tendency to violence and injustice arising from linguistic and communal fanaticism flowing from its own policies and take effective steps to prevent similar outbreaks in any part of the country.

7. THREAT TO NATIONAL UNITY AND DEMOCRACY :

The Swatantra Party holds the view very strongly that the policies initiated and persisted in by the Congress Party in the face of opposition of the saner elements of the community as well as in its own ranks, though not always expressed publicly for a variety of reasons, have resulted in a parochial and disintegrating tendency throughout the country weakening the united strength of the people.

The Party is of the view that many of the Congress policies, which appear on the surface to be aimed at progress and unity, have resulted in parochial chauvinism; at the same time they have led to the concentration of all economic power in, and a mood of dependence on Government, thereby inevitably preparing the country for a disastrous and undemocratic regime.

The General Council therefore appeals to the people to reinforce the efforts of the Swatantra Party in resisting this process of national disintegration."
