

Devaluation

Devaluation and its consequences have occupied the public mind to a greater extent than any other topic during the past few weeks. Rajaji, Prof. Ranga, Mr. Masani and other Party leaders have spoken on this subject and expressed the Party's view of these developments and its implications.

When Prof. Ranga and Mr. Masani met the Prime Minister in New Delhi at her invitation on June 22 for a discussion of this matter, they handed over to her a Note on devaluation and the measures by which it should be followed, the text of which is attached (annexure A). At Bangalore on June 11 and 12, with Prof. Ranga in the Chair, and with Rajaji and Mr. Masani participating, the State Convention of the Mysore Unit adopted a resolution on the subject (annexure B).

Since mischievous attempts have been made in certain quarters to suggest that there was a difference of opinion between leading members of the Party on the subject, Rajaji in his "Dear Reader" column in *Swarajya* of July 2, 1966, had this to say:

"Some Communists and others are circulating the notion that I 'oppose' devaluation while Mr. Masani welcomed it. Mr. Masani rightly said at the meeting of the Progressive Group that this is a fallacious notion. You cannot either like or dislike, support or oppose

devaluation any more than you support or oppose a storm. You cannot welcome nor refuse to face a calamity. When you are faced with the fact that your rupee has lost its value, you do not take sides about it. We both, Mr. Masani and I, deeply deplore the causes that have brought the value of the rupee down. We both see no good in shutting our eyes to the fact that our rupee has gone down in value to half of what it was when we got freedom. We both are clear in our judgment that it is the Congress Party's foolish ambitions, over-spending and reckless borrowing, which have brought this about. We both are of the opinion that this gross mismanagement disqualifies the Congress being an hour longer in office. We both, again, agree that an immediate act of repentance, a thorough change of policy is what is called for and not merely devaluation. Lastly we agree that as the Congress Party has disqualified itself by dogmatism to change its policies, a change of Government is what is called for. This would rehabilitate India in international world economy, and we can get over all our troubles with honour."

The full text of the General Secretary's speech to the Progressive Group referred to by Rajaji has been published in a booklet under the title *Devaluation - What Next?* and copies are available at the Central Office.

Defeating Congress — Swatantra Aim

"The Swatantra Party's policy continues to be to work for the defeat of the Congress Government in the General Elections next year," affirmed the General Secretary, Mr. M. R. Masani, in a statement to the

Press on June 29 while correcting certain tendentious reports which had appeared in the press in regard to what was supposed to have transpired when Prof. Ranga and he saw the Prime Minister on June 22.

Electoral Adjustments

Interviewed by PTI on July 6 in New Delhi, the General Secretary called upon all democratic Opposition Parties to make a combined bid through electoral adjustments to oust the Congress from power at the Centre and in the States. Mr. Masani told newsmen that, in the election to the Lok Sabha, the highest

vote secured by the Congress since Independence was only 48 per cent of the votes polled (the lowest was 44.72 per cent, in 1962). The Congress Government at the Centre all these years was, therefore, a Government which had the backing of only a minority of the voters.

In the States, in the 1962 general election, the Congress secured a minority of the votes polled in all States except three, he said.

This, said Mr. Masani, constituted a distortion of the popular will. Had there been a system of Proportional Representation, such distortion would not have been possible, but he was sure the present Government would not agree to instal that system here.

He said one way of correcting this distortion of the peoples' will was to have a "second ballot in advance."

He said the Swatantra Party would make a bid for power in Gujarat and Orissa. Even if the party did not secure a clear majority in these two States, he was confident it would be in a position to oust the Congress from power by forming Swatantra-led Governments with the help of smaller groups like the Jana Congress in Orissa.

He said discussions for electoral adjustments were

going ahead, with hope of success, between the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh, the SSP and the Republican Party at the national level, and the Kerala Congress, Janata Paksh (Mysore), Jana Congress (Orissa) and DMK (Madras) at the State level.

Mr. Masani said that the climate for electoral adjustments "has improved considerably in the last few months".

About the attitude to the Communist Parties (Right or Left) and the Congress, "we refuse to make any choice and consider one as the lesser evil. Ours is a policy of double rejection. We wish to defeat the Congress without having any truck with the Communists."

Mr. Masani clarified that electoral adjustments had nothing to do with ideologies. They were only a means to sparing the country from any further misgovernment by trying to avoid splitting of votes.

Swatantra Support in Defence of Vietnam

In contrast to the parrot-like moaning and groaning over the successful prosecution of the war for the defence of S. Vietnam, Rajaji, in the course of an interview with *The Hindu* on July 5 came out in robust support of the U.S. bombing of the hostile fuel dumps in Hanoi and Haiphong.

Rajaji said: "Air force operations to bomb enemy bases are something entirely different from the use of nuclear weapons or exploding nuclear tests. Mrs. Indira Gandhi appears to have got into a confusion over it when a Press reporter put her a question about it. My well-known campaign against nuclear tests and nuclear weapons has nothing to do with air bombing from ordinary air force bombers where it is necessary in a war. At the meeting at Gokhale Hall on Saturday last, I expressed my hundred per cent approval and support to President Johnson's bombing of Hanoi petrol dumps. I objected also to our Government's disapproval of this bombing. This statement of mine received vociferous cheers from the very large audience that had gathered to hear Mr. Masani's address on devaluation.

"Mrs. Indira Gandhi appears to have discovered a contradiction in my attitude in that I, who vigorously opposed the nuclear tests of America, should now support President Johnson's bombing of Hanoi fuel dumps. I suppose it was a hasty reply to a hasty question. I do not suppose it is expected that I should always be pro-American or always anti-American and that, therefore, there is a contradiction in my attitude. I am firm in my opposition to Communist or any other aggression through armed violence. I am firmly opposed to the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons. I want nations to learn to live in danger and not be reduced to impotence and inaction on account of the fear that a war may escalate into a nuclear war. This

is in my opinion the lesson that President Kennedy's courageous action over Cuba has left for this complicated world. The American operations in Vietnam are operations in which the whole of South Asia is deeply interested. We should, even if we do not help, at least abstain from stabbing America in the back."

Interviewed by the P.T.I. in Delhi the following day, Mr. M. R. Masani, the Party's General Secretary, affirmed that anybody who denounced the American action was "giving aid and comfort to the enemies of India".

Mr. Masani told newsmen that the important thing to remember in regard to Vietnam was that the defence of South Vietnam was vital to the protection of India. "The war against North Vietnam must be won if India is to be safe."

Asked for his comments on Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's criticism of the bombings, the Swatantra leader said the fear of escalation of the war as a result of these bombings was largely an imaginary one.

He said China was in a mess and was not in a position to take on a major war. It had administered quite a few hundred warnings but not moved a single soldier! He had no doubt, he said, that even if the whole of North Vietnam "is liberated by South Vietnamese troops which have been needlessly prevented by America from marching North," China was not going to move in.

He did not expect the Soviet Union to move in either. Mr. Masani said whenever Communist Powers had faced determined resistance, they had run away from the conflict. This had happened in Cuba, in Quemoy and Matsu, and in Berlin.

He said the present Government of India did not represent Indian public opinion on the Vietnam issue.

Prof. Ranga for Assam Hill State

Prof. N. G. Ranga, President of the Party said in Calcutta on June 28 that the Party supported the Assam Hills Peoples' demand for a separate autonomous State.

Prof. Ranga told reporters that the creation of such a State on the pattern of Goa and Pondichery would

put a check on anti-national activities in the strategic area. He, however, suggested that overhead expenditure for creating this State should be cut down by having a common Governor, a common capital and a common High Court.

Gujarat Forges Ahead

With the entry into the Party of stalwarts like Mr. H. M. Patel, Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai Mehta, Mr. Prabhudas Patel, Mr. C. C. Desai, Mr. Ratilal Ukabhai Patel, Mr. Shivbhadrasinhji of Bhavnagar and Mr. Digvijaysinhji of Wankaner, the Gujarat Unit has stepped up considerably its preparations for the General Elections. The State Parliamentary Board has been expanded and an Election Campaign Committee set up.

The State Parliamentary Board and the Campaign Committee meet every week to recommend candidates to the Central Parliamentary Board for Parliament and the State Assemblies and to review progress made, decide on strategy and discuss other matters connected with the campaign for the General Elections. There is an atmosphere of confidence among the Party's

workers in that State and the very fact that the Congress Party in Gujarat was compelled to issue a statement that the Swatantra Party would not come to power in Gujarat was itself an indication that the ruling party was whistling to keep up its spirits.

Mr. Bhailalbhaji Patel, President of the State Unit, said in Ahmedabad on June 28: "In 1961, the Party was in existence for only two years. Even so, we secured more than 1.3 million votes in 106 constituencies against 2.5 million secured by the Congress in 154 constituencies. Since then, we have put in five more years of hard work." Bhaikaka, who was talking to a correspondent of the UNI, said that the Gujarat Unit will be putting up the ablest men available for both the Assembly and the Lok Sabha seats.

A Businesslike Convention

The Convention of the Mysore State Unit of the Swatantra Party was held in Bangalore on June 11 and 12. By all accounts, the Convention was an impressive affair. Readers will recall that the Third National Convention of the Party was also held in Bangalore and the pattern set by that Convention was emulated with good results. The Convention was held in the Town Hall. The usual money-wasting, time-consuming paraphernalia that go with such Conventions like processions, shamianas etc. were avoided. The session was conducted in a businesslike manner.

Several resolutions were adopted by the Convention. The Resolution on Agriculture was moved by Mr. K. H. Srinivasan and seconded by Mr. K. B. Jinaraja Hegde, the President of the State Unit. It called for the removal of zonal restrictions; providing at subsidised rates foodgrains to the weaker elements of the population; abolition of land revenue; encouraging the establishment of fertiliser factories; supply of tractors at subsidised rates and without any commission to the State Trading Corporation which is at present Rs. 2,000 per tractor; the highest priority to the completion of irrigation projects, suspension by the State Government in implementing land ceiling acts. The Resolution also called for new legislation to replace the Mysore Land Reforms Act with the following aims in view, viz: the maintenance of existing harmonious relations between

landlord and tenant; ensuring permanency of tenure to the tenants at a reasonable rent and making his tenancy transferable; providing option to the landlord to transfer his rights to the land without interfering in the existing conditions of tenancy.

Another Resolution opposed the nationalisation of trade and the monopoly enjoyed in certain sectors by the STC. The Resolution stated among other things: "Government will be well advised to concentrate its attention on its proper and more urgent duties such as defence, law and efficient and clean administration instead of entering trade which can be managed more efficiently and cheaply by the traditional traders for the benefit of consumers."

On the boundary issue between Mysore and Maharashtra, the Resolution expressed the opinion that "it is not the proper time to reopen this question and that it will only add to the existing emotional stresses and strains which pose a grave danger to the peace and security of the country." The Convention also expressed the view that when the question of redrawing the boundary is taken up ultimately, the work should be entrusted not to a one-man Commission as now proposed but that the Commission should include the representatives of all the States affected and presided over by a Judge of the Supreme Court.

Other resolutions adopted included political intimi-

dation and the misuses of the DIR; age bar for admission to the University of Bangalore; water rates; the issue of identity slips which suggested that the election commission should arrange for the issue of identity slips and ban the production of any other slips at the polling booth; control over the prices and movement of foodgrains; opposition to the nationalisation of road transport; Upper Krishna project; elections to Village Panchayats; and the resignation of Ministries 3 months before the elections.

On the occasion of the Convention, an attractive Souvenir was published which contained articles of economic and political interest by Rajaji, Prof. Ranga, Mr. Masani, Mr. Lobo Prabhu, Mr. Morarji Vaidya and Prof. Ruthnaswamy, among others.

The Party launched its election campaign in Mysore when Rajaji, Prof. Ranga and Mr. Masani addressed a large gathering at the Town Hall on June 2, at the conclusion of the State Convention. Rajaji assured the

cheering audience that if the Congress was defeated in the next elections, he would himself go to Washington to tell the U.S. leaders that the time was ripe to give aid to India. Exhorting people to do their duty unmindful of the results, as the Gita taught, Rajaji asked them to behave and act like Arjuna of the Mahabharata in the campaign against the Congress. If people wondered at his energy, at his age (Rajaji is 89) it was because he was trying to grasp the secret of the Gita doctrine. What Krishna said was meant not merely for Arjuna but for all. "All of you can become Arjuna", he told his countrymen and said: "We must dismiss Congress to save democracy."

Prof. Ranga, President of the Party, in his opening remarks referred to the scandalous activities of the Sharavathi contractors and to the charge sheets against the State Ministry by the Congressmen and the Opposition and said that the state of affairs there deserved a judicial inquiry.

Autonomous Body for Railways

The General Secretary Mr. Masani, said in Rajkot on June 20, that a Presidential Commission should be appointed to investigate the running of the Railways.

This was necessary because of the heightened frequency of serious accidents involving a large number of deaths, he told a Press conference.

He said the railways should be taken away from the

Government and placed under an autonomous Corporation which would run them on efficient commercial lines.

"The railways suffer from being a State monopoly, the worst and most inefficient kind of monopoly", he added. He was commenting on recent rail tragedies near Ajmer and elsewhere.

Bastar Killing: Government Tampering with Evidence

The whole nation felt outraged by the terrible tragedy perpetrated by the Government in Bastar resulting in the shooting down of Maharaja Pravin Chandra Bhanj Deo. The recent meeting of the Party's General Council has in a resolution expressed its sympathy for the Adivasis of Bastar at this moment of their sorrow over the loss of their beloved leader who died as a martyr to their cause.

Prof. N. G. Ranga, MP, and Mr. P. K. Deo, MP, both visited Bastar a week before the General Council met and were convinced that the State Government officials and Congressmen were doing everything to prevent the rest of India knowing the truth about the Bastar killing. In a statement issued at the end of their visit at Jagdalpur on May 22, Prof. N. G. Ranga, demanded that Bastar should be removed from the control of the Madhya Pradesh Government and administered Centrally through a "local autonomous council." He said that the State Government officers

in the district should be immediately transferred to end the "terrorising" of the people and tampering with evidence concerning the Jagdalpur incidents of March 25 and 26. Prof. Ranga said that local Congressmen were threatening and offering temptations to witnesses in a bid to suppress the truth before the single-member inquiry commission.

Prof. Ranga described the Jagdalpur incidents as a "most sorrowful human tragedy." He said these acts could have been committed only by a "communist or fascist dictatorship."

Prof. Ranga reiterated the opposition demand that the Pandey Commission should be broad-based and one or more Supreme Court judges should be associated with it.

He said that the drought in Bastar was in no way less than that in parts of Orissa. The Government had not taken proper relief measures to help the Adivasis who were living in poverty.

The Deserted People of Orissa

Both the State and the Central Governments have been callously negligent in the matter of relief to the drought-affected people in Orissa. *Times of India* reports that people were eating Mahuvan flowers and Peepul leaves. Lands were being sold for a song. About the people eating leaves, says the *Times of India*, "We could not believe it. We went into a hut and found peepul leaves being boiled for the afternoon meal." Quoting instances of distress selling of lands, the report says: "In Renimunda village, 14 miles away from Khariar, an able-bodied farmer of 50 has parted with three acres of land in front of his dwelling for Rs. 500. A harijan has literally no roof over his mud hut for he has sold the tiles for Rs. 4."

It may be recalled that the General Council of the Swatantra Party condemned the Orissa Government for its lack of foresight and complete indifference to undertake relief measures in time. It pointed out: "The present distress and suffering would have been minimised if the Government had paid heed to the timely warning and advice from several quarters in recent months and had started relief measures earlier."

One has only to read the *Times of India* report under the heading "Niggardly and Hesitant Relief steps by the State" to confirm the charge of the Swatantra Party:

"It cannot be claimed that Bhubaneswar was in the dark about the rapid deterioration in this distant region. Four members of the Orissa Cabinet, including the Chief Minister, Mr. Sadasiba Tripathy, are from the affected districts."

C. M. WARNED

Mr. Anup Singh Deo, Deputy Minister, whose non-conformist attitude is known, and who hails from Nawapara sub-division, wrote a strongly-worded letter

as early as October to the Chief Minister, warning him that the situation was getting out of control.

The Opposition had forced a Special debate on the drought situation in the winter session of the State Assembly and obtained a detailed statement from the Chief Minister on the extent of the damage and the relief measures instituted in December. But only a paltry amount of Rs. 2 crores, which very soon proved totally inadequate, was provided in the supplementary budget.

"Even the niggardly and hesitant measures formulated at Bhubaneswar took an unconscionably long time to percolate to the block level. It would appear that the test relief works did get started till January, which should have commenced three months earlier.

FIRST SYMPTOMS

"By then, the first symptoms of famine had begun to manifest among the vast agricultural population in this region. The large scale exodus, sale of ornaments, utensils and even trinkets at miserably low prices and sale of farm cattle, agricultural implements at the nearest "hats" (village markets) for any price, were clear symptoms that should have made the authorities sit up and take note."

The *Times of India* correspondent who visited the entire area goes on to say:

"By the middle of March, there were accounts of people deserting children, of people eating mahuva flowers and peepul leaves. Then came reports of starvation deaths."

The correspondent concludes:

"If the government had made these arrangements when the first signs of famine appeared, even, Nawapara sub-division and pockets in Balangir district might have been saved the present agony."

Dr. Sarabhai on Nuclear Bomb

The General Council of the Swatantra Party has reiterated its clear and firm view that India should not embark in any scheme of making nuclear weapons. "Any step towards arming ourselves with nuclear weapons" it said, "is bound to lead to a ruinous race in such manufacture, taking the nation to economic ruin and moral stultification. When we depend on foreign aid, even for supplying ourselves with the necessities of civil life, it would be utterly unreasonable to get involved in a nuclear race."

It would be of interest to note what Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, the new Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission has to say in the matter of making nuclear bombs.

Dr. Vikram Sarabhai pointed out that to ensure security, India required not just one atom bomb but a total nuclear defence system. This involved atomic

warheads, long range missiles for delivery and radar early warning systems. Dr. Sarabhai was addressing his first press conference after he became Chairman.

"Unless one establishes a defence system, one is only establishing a paper tiger" he said. "And if it were to be atomic defence against one of the major powers the cost would run into tens of billions of dollars every year," he said.

Those who advocated that India should test the bomb did so because of their desire to ensure the nation's security. But one had to realise that the threat to 'our security arises from external as well as internal causes,' he stated.

"If for example, we are not able to maintain a steady rate of economic development and provide social services, we might have the most serious crisis and a very great threat to our internal security".

"Establishing a military system based on Atomic warheads, must in the first place, depend on the amount of commitment of resources which one is willing to make and the sacrifices that it would entail in social and economic terms".

Commenting on a suggestion that India should pro-

duce the bomb at least to boost the people's morale, he admitted there was a widespread feeling that we had been outstripped by China but India's progress must be in "meaningful terms and not just window-dressing", which would ultimately cause frustration.

Congress Opportunism

✓ The admission of the Raja of Ramgarh into the Congress Party is a blatant example of Congress opportunism. Editorially commenting on the news the *Indian Express* says: "The timing of the High Command's decision shows that it has been influenced by the approach of the elections." It may be recalled here that the Raja is entering the Congress for the second time. And it will also be interesting to note that it was not very long ago he said that "... during the Congress rule, a new class among politicians in power had emerged and it had neither ethics nor morality" (*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Feb. 5, '66)

And what is the motive of Mr. Kamaraj in admitting a politician who has until recently been criticising the Congress and who has demonstrated himself to be a first-rate opportunist? The answer lies in the fact that he carries with him over 30 Assembly votes. For a new Party, such a following in an Assembly is not an inconsequential thing, yet the *Swatantra* Party was not prepared to compromise for such momentary gains. Without hesitation it expelled the Raja and proved that the Party's politics is not horse trading. But anything is game for the Congress if only it weakens other democratic Opposition and helps it to

come to power again. Says the *Express News Service*: "Mr. Kamaraj was anxious to admit the Raja to weaken the *Swatantra* Party in the State..." On the Raja's admission into the Congress, Mr. Frank Moraes comments: "The Congress Party is rapidly becoming a captive of its own cynicism... Parties can stoop to conquer but a party can sometimes stoop so low as to be in danger of toppling over."

So what the *Swatantra* has discarded in spite of votes, the Congress has clutched merely for the sake of the votes.

Let us now turn to the motive of the Raja in joining the Congress. In its Bihar Newsletter the *Express News Service* says: "Besides, the Raja seems to be most unconcerned about his future politics. His main concern now is to get out of the trouble arising from the Dhori mine inquiry report. He also wants to save his skin from about three dozen civil and criminal cases he has been fighting with the State Government."

How profound was Rajaji when he described the present-day Congress: "The Congress is a mutual benefit Organisation."

NEWS FROM STATE UNITS

ANDHRA

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the State Unit was held on May 4 and 5, 1966, at Vijayawada in the district Party Office with Mr. G. Latchanna, President of the State Unit in the Chair. The Executive discussed on May 4 the election strategy for the next elections and elected Mr. P. Rajgopal Naidu, MLA, as Vice-President of the State Unit and Mr. N. Vijaya Raja Kumar as the Joint-Secretary. Mr. V. Venkatakarishnaiah Naidu, President of the Chittoor District Unit was elected as a member of the State Parliamentary Board.

It was also decided to hold the next convention of the State Unit in Srikakulam district. Among other things, the position of the Party organisation in the State and public issues like famine conditions in the State, rise in prices, import restrictions, zonal restrictions on foodgrains' movements, land revenue collection and railway zones also came up for discussion.

The Executive also decided to award a prize to the

President of the Kurnool District Unit for enrolling the largest number of workers in his district. The prize will be awarded during the next State Convention.

A joint meeting of the State Parliamentary Board and the Executive Committee which met on 5th May, again discussed matters pertaining to Party Organisation and the holding of a Kisan Sammelan, *Swatantra* Youth Conference and an Agricultural Labour Conference and formed sub-committees for the purpose. The meeting also discussed with district leaders the possibilities of our Party contesting Assembly and Parliamentary seats in their districts.

A political school was held during the months at Narsaraopet in Guntur district where 70 Party workers participated. A number of State leaders took part in the training of workers. Another political school was also conducted at Gulyam in Kurnool district during the month in which also a number of State leaders participated. ✓ About 50 Party workers underwent

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training. A political school and a Seva Dal training camp attached to it would also be conducted in the month of August 1966 in Nellore district.

The State Parliamentary Board which met at Buchireddipalem on 19th of May with Mr. G. Latchanna in the Chair decided to recommend Mr. Divi Kondaiiah Chaudary, M.L.A., as the Party candidate to contest the biennial elections to the Legislative Council from the Assembly Constituency. Mr. Divi Kondaiiah has since been elected to the Andhra Legislative Council. The Andhra Legislature Group of the Party deserves congratulations for this success.

Mr. G. Latchanna, M.L.A., President of the State Unit, toured during May some famine-affected areas in the State and found that the relief measures taken by the Government were extremely inadequate and touched only the fringe of the problem.

ASSAM

On behalf of the Central office, Prof. Martin Narayan visited the Mizo Hills from March 30 to April 2, 1966, on a fact finding mission.

Prof. Narayan personally met persons belonging to all shades of political thought, profession and caste, and took down evidence from 27 persons, including Pu. Bawichhuaka, Chief Executive Member of the Mizo Hills Autonomous District Council, Pu Chhunga, M.L.A., President of the Mizo Union, the Ruling Party in the District Council, Pu Pahlira, General Secretary of the Mizo Union, Pu Thanglura, a Congress Member of the Rajya Sabha, Pu Zailema a "contact" known to the Mizo National Front, Pu Saprawnga, a former Parliamentary Secretary to the Government of Assam, and former Chief Executive Member of the District Council, Mr. Gil, the Deputy Commissioner of the Mizo Hills District, Mr. Roberts, Principal of Aijal College (the only College in the District), the Commander of the Maharashtra and Bihar Reserve Police, and the Commanding Officer of the Assam Rifles Regiment situated in the Mizo Hills.

Records made in this fact-finding mission also include tape-recordings and photographs, as also mortar shells, rockets, tracer bullets and the burnt-out shells of bombs.

The most important finding resulting from the Mizo Hills visit was that through many sources, the Government of Assam was fully aware of the impending revolt by the Mizo National Front but paid little or no attention at all to these reports. The reports that were in the hands of the Assam Government were:

- i. Detailed reports submitted by Central, State & Military Intelligence.
- ii. A confidential report by Mr. P. Aiyer, Superintendent of Police, Mizo Hills District from 1963-1965, warning Mr. B. P. Chaliha, Chief Minister of Assam, of an expected uprising.
- iii. Military Intelligence informing the Government of Assam of the return to Assam early in 1965 of 1000 M.N.F. volunteers who had received six

months' intensive training in East Pakistan. The names and addresses of most of the volunteer leaders were known to the Government of Assam.

- iv. Information regarding the visit of Pu Laldenga & Pu Lalnunmawia, President & Vice-President of the now-outlawed Mizo National Front, to East Pakistan in the winter of 1964.
- v. The Election Manifesto of the Mizo National Front, published in 1963, during the by-elections in the Mizo Hills to the Assam Legislative Assembly, stated very clearly that the MNF had *only one goal*: "The creation of an independent sovereign state outside the Union of India for all the Mizo people now living in India, Burma and Pakistan." The Manifesto also called upon the Mizos to be prepared to shed their blood, if need be, for the achievement of their goal.

Prof. Narayan incidentally discovered that the houses of the President and the General Secretary of the Mizo Union, now the ruling Party in the district, were burnt to ashes by the soldiers of the Assam Rifles in the presence of two gentlemen, the D.C. and the Commander of the Assam Rifles Regiment.

Prof. Narayan fears that the temporary lull in the fighting, apart from sporadic attacks here and there, is deceptive. Informed Mizo circles speak of a big offensive by the MNF during the monsoon when all the roads become practically useless with several landslides and marshy areas.

BOMBAY

Mr. Madhu Mehta, General Secretary of the Party, Bombay Region, has strongly criticised the reported decision of the Maharashtra Government to charge 50 paise for a new ration card, which will be issued from July 1, 1966, through fair price shops, and 25 paise for temporary cards.

In a statement to the press, he said: "Government is out to make as much money as possible from every available source. Mr. P. K. Sawant, Minister for Food and Agriculture, has not yet clarified why Government should collect every year nearly Rs 24 crores for the purpose of covering the cost of maintaining the rationing department."

The City has been witness to two major accidents in the suburban railways. While in the first accident there was considerable loss of life, in the second a number of people were injured. It is believed that the figures published in the Press were generally an attempt at playing down the actual loss.

The Workers of the Bombay Unit of the Party led by Mr. Madhu Mehta, its General Secretary, were at the scene of the accident within a matter of hours. They visited the hospitals where the injured were being treated and helped in locating their relatives. They also took up with the railway authorities, the question of expediting the ex-gratia payment announced by the railway authorities.

The Bombay Unit also conducted a symposium on "Devaluation—the Result of Bankruptcy" on June 16, in which Mr. Masani, Dr. R. C. Cooper and Dr. P. J. Shroff took part. Mr. Morarji Vaidya presided over the symposium.

GUJARAT

Some dissident Congressmen of the Sayia, Muli, Cotila and Limbdi Talukas of Surendranagar district have joined the Swatantra Party at a meeting held in Sayla during the third week of May under the Presidentship of Mr. Shivarajkumar, Vice-President of the Gujarat Unit of the Swatantra Party. This meeting was also attended by Mr. Jaideepsinhji and Mr. Narendrasinh Jhala, the General Secretary and Joint Secretary of the State Unit and other Party leaders. It was announced that some 5,000 other active workers will join the Swatantra Party. It is becoming evident that Zalawad will become the Waterloo of Congress in Saurashtra.

Replying to the statements of Mr. Tribhuvandas Patel, Chief of the Gujarat Congress, that the Congress will return to power in Gujarat, Mr. Jaideepsinhji, General Secretary of Gujarat Unit has said in a press interview that Mr. Tribhuvandas Patel was not sufficiently aware of political currents in Gujarat. Mr. Jaideepsinhji has also said that in addition to the all-India manifesto, the Gujarat Party will publish a local manifesto, giving full details of the ways in which the Party proposes to bring happiness and wipe away the ugly memories of the long and painful Congress rule.

The State Unit called a meeting of its office-bearers, MLAs and MPs of the Saurashtra-Cutch area in Rajkot on May 21. The Party position on each contestable seat was examined, as also the basis of talks with other parties. An 11-man committee was appointed to advise the State Unit on the matter. It was decided to hold a Saurashtra-Cutch Merchants' Convention in Rajkot in August under the Chairmanship of Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai Mehta and to invite Mr. H. M. Patel and other leaders of the Gujarat unit for the convention.

The State Unit would launch a big agitation—bigger than Bardoli satyagraha—in the State if the Chief Ministers' Conference in July in New Delhi failed to arrive at an amicable settlement over the implementation of the Rs. 1000-crore Narmada Valley scheme. This decision of the Party was conveyed to the Union Minister for Irrigation and Power, Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, by M. Bhailalbhai Patel, President of the State Unit and Leader of the Opposition in the Gujarat Assembly during his talks with him on the Narmada project.

KERALA

The Cannanor district Unit of the Party has elected the following office-bearers at a meeting held on May 14, under the Chairmanship of Mr. T. K. Kalandan Haji. The new office-bearers are: President: Mr. C. H.

Abdul Khadar Haji; Vice-President: Mr. S. Hamid; General Secretary: Mr. Sukumar Kudali; Joint Secretary: Mr. S. V. Abdul Salaam; Treasurer: Mr. T. V. Gangadharan.

A meeting of Party workers of Poonjar Constituency was held on June 6, 1966 at Erattuputta. The meeting discussed the ensuing General Elections and organisational matters. Mr. K. K. Kuruvila, district Vice-President also participated in the meeting.

MAHARASHTRA

Mr. Shankar Rao Kalaskar of the Party has been elected President of the Degloor Municipal Council defeating the Congress candidate Mr. Madhavrao Deshpande. The vice-presidentship of the Municipal council went to Mr. Mukundrao Charnakar of the SSP.

For the last 14 years the Congress Party was in power in this Municipal Council.

MADRAS

Rajaji and Mr. C. N. Annadurai have appealed to the people to strengthen the Swatantra-DMK-Muslim League electoral alliance for voting the Congress out of power in the coming elections.

Addressing a public meeting in Madras in June 23, Rajaji said that while the triple alliance was becoming stronger, they should guard against the danger of the Congress attempting to subvert the alliance and use all its resources in money and power to divide the votes on communal basis.

He said Mr. Kamraj knew well that the Congress would be defeated if the Congress Ministers were to step out a few months before the elections. It was because of this that the Swatantra demand for the resignation of the Ministries prior to the elections had not been accepted.

Mr. Annadurai said his recent tour of the State had given ample evidence to show that the alliance of the three parties had become stronger and popular. The alliance was intended only for the benefit of the people, and neither he nor Rajaji was going to derive any benefit by winning the elections. Rajaji had already won his place in history, while the DMK leaders had already become popular even without being Ministers.

If the people wanted relief from the present hardships, it was for them to vote the Congress out of office.

In pursuance of the programme of intensification of propaganda in Madras City, six public meetings were held during May in different localities of the Madras City. Rajaji participated in two meetings. Mr. N. Dandeker, Joint Secretary of the Party, addressed one of the meetings held at Saidapet.

A conference of the West Ramnad district Unit of the Party was held at Virudhunagar on June 25. It passed a Resolution demanding the resignation of Congress Ministers in the Centre, as well as in the States, three months before the General Elections. The Conference demanded the abolition of land tax,

surcharge, etc. as a measure for increasing production, besides also demanding economy in Governmental expenditure.

The Conference also wanted the bifurcation of Ramnad District into West Ramnad and East Ramnad, with either Virudhunagar or Sathur as headquarters for the former and Manamadurai as headquarters for the latter.

Rajaji, Prof. Ranga and Mr. K. Sundaram addressed the conference.

ORISSA

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, President of the State Unit, met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 13th May 1966 at Raj Bhavan, Bhubaneswar, and submitted to her a memorandum outlining various measures to be taken to meet the drought situation in the State.

Earlier, Party members, including Mr. Singh Deo, Mr. Rajballabh Misra, M.L.A., and Mr. Ghasiram Mahji, M.L.A. made several suggestions to combat the drought situation when the State Relief Committee met on the 3rd and 4th May 1966. Mr. Singh Deo also made an extensive tour of the seriously drought-affected areas of Balangir, Kalahandi & Sambalpur during this month.

The State Executive of the Party had formed a Committee headed by Mr. P. K. Deo, M.P. on April 9, to undertake tours in the drought-affected areas in order to study the situation and suggest remedial measures. On the same day, Mr. Singh Deo convened a meeting of all Democratic Opposition Parties in Orissa when it was agreed that the approach of the political parties in the work of relief should be strictly from the humanitarian point of view.

The State Office conducted a Workers' Training Camp at Gopalpur from the 19th to the 22nd June 1966. About 55 workers from six Parliamentary Constituencies attended the Camp. Among those who participated in the Training Camp were Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, Mr. Rajballabh Misra and Mr. Harihar Das.

PUNJAB

The General Secretary of the State Unit of the Swatantra Party told newsmen in Jullunder on 29th June, 1966, that the movement launched by the Party in the form of Kisan marches to Chandigarh was a regular agitation and that it would continue till the demands contained in the charter adopted by the Kisan Sammelan were accepted.

The main demands were that India should be declared one food zone; that small land-holdings be exempted from land revenue; that fertilisers and other inputs used by Kisans be made available at lower rates and that the rate of interest on agricultural loans be reduced.

The Kisan Sammelan would welcome co-operation

from all democratic parties in this agitation, he declared.

The jathas would demonstrate and submit a memorandum to the Governor at Chandigarh on July 16 and later go to Delhi, he declared.

UTTAR PRADESH

A deputation of Swatantra Party Legislators and workers led by Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh, M.L.A., waited upon Mr. Madan Mohan Varma, the Speaker of the U.P. Vidhan Sabha on May 13, and presented to him about one lakh protest cards against the Surcharge on Land Revenue. The protest cards signed by heads of the peasant families, demand immediate withdrawal of the Surcharge on Land Revenue.

Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh impressed upon the Speaker that the Swatantra Party had adopted a perfectly constitutional method to protest against a much-hated levy. He hoped that the Legislature and the Government would respond and accept the just demand of the peasantry.

Mr. Singh expressed the fear that if civilized and constitutional methods of protest fail to move the Government, the people, in sheer desperation might lose faith in democracy itself.

The U.P. Unit of the Party has a proposal to conduct two surveys in urban areas. The one relating to rationing is designed to assess the reaction of the common man towards total rationing. This survey is to be conducted in Kanpur, the only town in Uttar Pradesh, where total rationing has been introduced. The other survey is designed to assess the public opinion on planning, nationalization, state trading in food grains, co-operative farming, deficit financing and non-alignment in foreign affairs. This questionnaire will not only enable the Party to know the views of the urban public, but also to make clear to them, what the Swatantra Party stands for.

The U.P. Party is also issuing to ten thousand prominent persons in the State a folder postcard, explaining the Swatantra stand in a nutshell, and inviting them to join the Party.

The disciplinary action against the Party's erring members in U.P. has been noted by the discerning public, and the Party in Uttar Pradesh instead of receiving a set-back, has received a fillip as witnessed from the jump in the figures of monthly enrolment of now active members in the Party.

On the allegations that collections for the controversial Gupta Birthday Fund were being forcibly made from the primary school teachers serving the Congress-dominated Farrukhabad Zila Parishad the Farrukhabad district unit of the Party has appointed a three-man commission headed by Subash Dubey to enquire into them and report.

The State Party has decided to hold its annual convention on October 15 and 16, 1966 at Farrukhabad.

from the General Secretary's desk

Double Rejection

Dear friend,

There is a great deal of discussion going on in certain quarters as to what the correct attitude of a party such as the Swatantra Party, wedded as it is to democracy, should be as between the Congress Party on the one hand and the two Communist parties on the other. In this context, the thesis advanced by Louis Fischer in his book, *The Great Challenge*, published in the late forties comes to mind. In a chapter entitled "Double Rejection," Louis Fischer had argued that friends of freedom should on the one hand reject old type Western imperialism and on the other new type Soviet communist imperialism, and refuse to make a choice between the two. The situation currently under discussion seems to call for a similar approach.

Let us consider for a moment the choice of "the lesser evil" suggested by certain friends. There are those who argue that, since the Congress Party is in office and since the end of its long tenure of misgovernment by its removal is the primary task, there would be no harm in arriving at electoral adjustments or understandings even with one or other of the Communist parties. This is indeed dangerous counsel. It is true that the removal of the Congress Governments at the Centre and in the States is overdue, but surely those adhering to Swatantra principles cannot be party to its substitution by a communist dictatorship? The plea that there is no such immediate danger is a superficial one. The list of those who claimed: "I know how to handle the communists" and entered into United Fronts with them, only to be liquidated at the end of the process, is a long one and extends to all the continents of the world. Anything that makes that ultimate tragedy more likely by giving respectability and indirect support to the votaries of communist dictatorship in our country must, therefore, be firmly eschewed.

There are two reasons why the Communists must remain beyond the pale of democratic cooperation. The first, that they are motivated or directed either from Moscow or Peking. The second, that they do not believe in permitting a plurality of political parties or the continuance of democratic liberties in Opposition wherever they acquire power. On any event, how can we associate in any way with a Party whose official organ, the *New Age*, of July 10 refers to our Party as "the most filthy political force—an excrescence of India's present day political life—which has got to be thoroughly isolated and hounded out?"

Quite apart from this objection in principle, even from the point of view of political advantage, any understanding with the Communists for electoral purposes would do the Swatantra Party incalculable

harm. Rajaji, with his keen perception, has sensed this and has explained this in an article in *Swarajya*:

"In our anxiety to build up and strengthen a united front to defeat the Congress Party at the polls, we should not commit the mistake of yielding to the temptation of taking into alliance the communists, right or left. The left-wing of the communists are perhaps more sincere in their efforts to assist in dislodging the Congress Party than their right-wing comrades who are only another edition of congressmen and who are only keen on somehow preserving themselves. The advantage of acquiring the assistance of the communists in a joint front carries with it an inevitable suicidal consequence, which I wish to point out here in advance of any such step being taken by the Swatantra, the Jan Sangh or other parties. Apart from the unconstitutional and illegitimate advantages the Congress Party has been utilizing for its perpetuation in office, its main strength with the middle classes whom they cannot bribe or hold in terror, rests on the psychological fear these classes have of power going to communist hands if the Congress were to be displaced."

"If any alliance or even electoral 'adjustment' rests on communist support in any degree, the fear will grow in the minds of the middle classes that the communists will manage to fill the place vacated by the Congress Party. This fear will drive these voters blindly to plump at the polls for the Congress. The Congress Party workers will let slip no opportunity of increasing this fear and exploiting it to the full. We shall therefore be committing suicide if we take the cooperation of the leftist or rightist communists in our eagerness to take all available help."

"I am sorry to have to utter this warning. I know that the leftist communist leaders are very sincere and would summon all their energy along with other parties towards defeating the Congress, notwithstanding 'differences in ideology.' But my appreciation of their sincerity does not prevent my sensing the inevitable consequence—that it will give rise to a sudden and great alarm among the voters, of communist rule replacing Congress rule, and consequently their blindly voting for the 'devil we know', the Congress."

Does it then follow that we should prefer the continuance in office of the Congress Party as a lesser evil? This would be a *non sequitur*. The Congress Party, as we have often argued since the Swatantra Party was established, is creating conditions where the drift to communism becomes likely. Perpetuating Congress rule out of a craven fear of the Communists would, therefore, only encourage that drift to communism to continue. "Keep us in office to keep out the communists"

is an alibi that has worn thin and which should not fool anybody any longer. Has not Mr. Kamaraja Nadar, the Congress President, openly invited the Communists to get back into the Congress, which some of them are busily doing? Has not Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Mr. Kamaraj's trusted lieutenant, gone so far as to say that, if the Congress Party is not in office, he would rather the Communists seize power than that the Swatantra Party should take over the government? Is the Party led by Mr. Kamaraja Nadar then the Party to defend democracy against communism?

Communism undoubtedly remains our country's "Public Enemy Number One," as it was correctly stigmatised by Rajaji some years ago. The trouble, however, is that both the Communists on one side and the Congress Party on the other are pushing the country to communism in their own distinctive ways.

Annexure A

A NOTE ON DEVALUATION AND THE MEASURES BY WHICH IT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED

The economic collapse of which the devaluation of the currency is only one aspect is the cumulative result of the mistaken economic policies and planning of the Union Government over the last decade and a half. If the repeated warnings sounded by the Swatantra Party spokesmen, both in Parliament and outside, had not been ignored, the country would not today be in its present plight.

2. In order that the sacrifices entailed in the process of devaluation may not be wasted, the corrective effect of devaluation may operate fully and the economy may derive the fullest benefit, it has now become necessary for the Government to come forward with a Declaration of Policy on the following lines:

(a) A clear declaration that from now on inflationary policies of every kind will be scrupulously eschewed and that, subject to whatever foreign assistance may be made available, the Indian Government will live within its means.

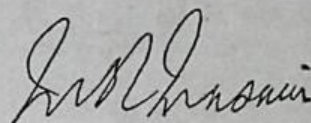
(b) Appropriate reduction in civil non-developmental expenditure of the Union and State Governments and the observance by the Union and State governments of fiscal discipline by eschewing deficit finance and overdrafts. All further recruitment of the civil services to be stopped.

(c) The restriction of foreign loans on government-to-government basis only to such legitimate purposes as fall within the natural duties of the State like the laying of infrastructure, including the provision of irrigation, roads and communications that would encourage indigenous and foreign capital to produce the goods that are required by the people.

It is these considerations that led the Central Parliamentary Board of the Party at its meeting in Bombay on May 26 to come to the conclusion, at Rajaji's instance, that "the policy should be one of double rejection, that is, with the object of defeating the Congress but at the same time having no truck with Communists of either party."

Let us carefully adhere to this well considered position and not allow ourselves either in word or in deed to depart from it one way or the other.

Jai Swatantra!



(d) A postponement and recasting of the proposed Fourth Plan by dropping all new capital projects in the State sector (including the proposed Bokaro Steel project), except such as fall within the area indicated in (c) above.

(e) A sharp reduction in both direct and indirect taxes so as to increase the flow of national savings and thus make available a large supply of rupee finance for expanding production and lowering the cost of domestic goods.

(f) The complete dismantling of the structure of permits, licences and controls including import licensing, exchange control and Gold Control, so that the machinery of production and competitive enterprise comes under the direction, and caters to the needs, of the common man instead of being manipulated arbitrarily by the planners and the administration, as this is the only effective way of increasing production and bringing down prices.

(g) The commencement of negotiations with India's creditors designed to secure a reduction in the debt servicing charges on foreign debts already incurred.

3. These are long-term measure and it is realised they may take some time to be implemented. Pending their introduction and their beneficial effects materialising, the following measure should, however, be taken immediately to prevent dislocation of the economy and reduce hardship on those concerned:

(a) Orphaned industrial projects stranded in mid-stream should be helped out by easy loans from public financial institutions.

(b) An adequate supply of imported raw materials

should be ensured to exporters of non-traditional exports who have lost their import entitlements.

(c) The new export duties introduced with devaluation should be withdrawn, as they are likely to obstruct the corrective effect of devaluation by reducing the incentive to promote exports, hinder the necessary encouragement to a shift of production to

the export industries and impede the solution of our difficulties in regard to the balance of payments.

(d) Import duties and surcharges and countervailing excise duties on raw and intermediate materials, fuels and spare parts should be completely abolished, in place of the present illusory reduction in import duties.

Annexure B



RESOLUTION ON DEVALUATION

This Convention takes note of the fact that the repeated warnings given by spokesman of the Swatantra Party, both in Parliament and outside, during the past two years that devaluation of the currency would become inevitable if the Congress Government persisted in the inflationary policies embodied in all their measures and especially in excessive taxation and the framing of plans seeking to invest non-existent resources with a false order of priorities in favour of low and slow return capital-intensive industries to the neglect of agriculture and goods greatly wanted by the mass of consumers have come true.

2. The Convention notes that the Congress Government have belatedly realised the futility of adhering to an artificial rate of exchange which has no relation to the facts of the international price level and have admitted that this step has been necessitated by the rise of as much as 80 per cent in internal prices during the last decade. The Convention also notes the admission by the Finance Minister that it is beyond the capacity of the Congress Government to bring down the general price level in the country to the level that prevailed even five years back. Coercive measures will only expand and multiply the black market.

3. The Swatantra Party has ever since its inception been cautioning the Government and the country against the perils of inflation. The criminal disregard of these warnings by those in office has landed the country in its present predicament with considerable hardship and distress to honest citizens of all classes.

4. The entire responsibility for this disaster rests on the shoulders of the Congress Government, which has shown utter unfitness to remain in office a day longer in view of devaluation of the rupee which it has mostly unwillingly accepted in view of expert world opinion and the need for getting aid and loans to keep itself afloat.

5. In order that the heavy sacrifices entailed in the process of devaluation may not be wasted and the gains that may be possible as a result of this step are not lost, this Convention calls on the Government to take the unbiassed advice of experienced men and organisations as to the lines of policy that should be framed at once. Over and above this there should be a clear declaration that from now on inflationary policies of every kind will be scrupulously eschewed and that, subject to whatever foreign assistance may be made available, the Indian Government will learn to live within its means.

(For Private Circulation)