

SAVE INDIA

Much has happened since the clarion call given by the AICC of the Organisation Congress calling for a consolidation of nationalist and democratic forces. Both the Jan Sangh and Swatantra Party responded to this call to Save India from communism.

The people of India looked forward to the emergence of a powerful bloc in Parliament as the first step towards what many thought would be the polarisation of our country's politics on the right lines viz., between the forces of democracy and nationalism on the one side and totalitarian forces acting as a fifth column on the other.

But the people's expectations have been rudely shattered by the vacillations and gyrations of the leaders of the Organisation Congress many of whom still appear to be under the spell of intellectual confusion cast on them by the late Jawaharlal Nehru. Thus, for the present, party vested interests appear to have prevailed over national interests to such an extent that certain leaders of the Organisation Congress are hesitant even to take part in a loosely knit coordination committee. When Swatantra President, Mr. Masani, expressed his disappointment with the lack of courage shown by the Organisation Congress, he was perhaps echoing the thoughts of Indians. In the course of the press statement he observed:

"There is no doubt that the decision of the Parliamentary Board of the Congress (O) yesterday will be a disappointment to a large number of people throughout the country who have been looking forward to a concrete step forward being taken for the consolidation of nationalist and democratic forces. It is a pity that timidity, irrational fear of being dubbed 'reactionaries' and short-term considerations have prevailed for the moment over courage, dynamism and faith in the people.

"As it happens, however, the march of history and the laws of economics overcome in the end human weaknesses of this nature and the hangover of the past. The Resolution of the A.I.C.C. of June 28 had shown the correct path for saving freedom and democracy in India. Even though some members of the Party that adopted that resolution may have developed confusion

and hesitation, I am confident that wisdom will ultimately prevail as an awareness of the dangers to which the country is exposed spreads and public opinion asserts itself.

"Hence I would appeal to all concerned, particularly members of the Swatantra Party, to exercise patience and avoid being needlessly dejected or critical. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Swatantra Party has come out of this without any hesitation or confusion and that, thanks to Rajaji's vision and dynamism, our Party has sounded a clear note and a clarion call to battle.

"We in the Swatantra Party should continue with our efforts to educate the country about the perils to it and how to meet them. At the same time, current developments emphasise the need for us to intensify our efforts to build up our own organisation and gather support for our Party as a Party of Hope for the Indian people."

The Swatantra Party's efforts to bring about a unity of democratic forces is not something new. The Party has for some years now been pleading for democratic opposition parties to get together. After the Congress split last year the Swatantra Party reiterated its plea when in the resolution on the current Political Situation (adopted by the National Executive on February 16, 1970) it was stated *inter alia*: "A change of Government in New Delhi can only be made effective and meaningful if the people of India see the emergence of an alternative government of patriotic and democratic elements who are prepared to come together to take over the government of the country."

As the Party's President observed while winding up the discussion on the resolution on the Political Situation, this is because "we are a little ahead of the times and should cheerfully put up with the inconveniences of being pioneers in progress." The country's interest and not Party considerations motivate Swatantra's actions.

In the following pages we have reproduced the text of speeches to the General Council (Madras, July 21, 1970), delivered by the President and Rajaji, and the text of the Resolution on the Political Situation.

Masani : A Call for Consolidation

(Swatantra President Masani's Address at the Party's General Council on July 21, 1970)

I have great pleasure in welcoming the members of the General Council of the Swatantra Party to this meeting. We meet after an interval of six months during which a great deal has happened, and it is appropriate that we should take stock of these happenings and determine our course for the months and years that lie ahead.

Undoubtedly, the most momentous development of the past half year has been the major step forward that has been taken in the direction of the consolidation of all nationalist and democratic forces in India to cope with the threats that are posed to the country's security and its democratic Constitution. I refer to the Resolution of the A.I.C.C. adopted in Delhi on June 28.

Ever since the Congress Party split last year, hopes were aroused of a polarisation in our national politics on sound democratic lines and the possible coming into existence of two or three *blocs*, if not of a two or three party system, which would make for both stable and efficient government on the one hand and effective and constructive Opposition on the other. At last it seemed that these possibilities might become a reality. However, since the beginning of this year it appeared as if these hopes were about to be blighted and personalities and caste and religion would continue to form the dividing lines and not broad philosophical or ideological issues.

The AICC resolution represents a constructive attempt at polarisation on the right lines. These lines, as the National Executive of our Party has repeatedly stressed, are not between the so-called "Left" and the so-called "Right", neither of which exist except in Marxist jargon, nor between socialists and non-socialists, which is hardly the issue before the country, but between those who are pledged to maintain our democratic Constitution and the country's independence on the one side and those who are out to destroy our Constitution and establish a dictatorship which would be a satellite of either Moscow or Peking on the other. In regard to this line of demarcation, the resolution has given a correct lead to the country.

The programme which has been placed before the country by that resolution is a constructive and pragmatic one free from bias and prejudice. It is a middle-of-the-road programme such as advanced countries are practising with great success. It is one which should be as acceptable to Democratic Socialists as it is to us Liberal Democrats. There may be some things in it which do not appeal to all of us. That is only natural. But it does provide a worthwhile basis for discussion. In our National Executive's earlier decisions we have

stressed that everything is negotiable except the security of the country. Here is an opportunity for us to show that we mean what we say and that we are prepared to enter into the process of give and take with those with whom we may not agree fully on economic or social affairs but whose patriotism and love of freedom we accept.

It is in this spirit that on June 29, I as your President responded to the call of the AICC. The National Executive have yesterday endorsed that response and have recommended that we should be authorised to enter into negotiations and discussions for the consolidation of national democratic forces. This will have a tremendous influence on the country. It will transform despondency into hope among a large number of people.

I know Rajaji has been somewhat depressed by the confused welter of voices that has gone up during the last three weeks. That is natural because, enjoying as he does one of the most clear-cut minds in the country, confusion and intellectual waffling of any kind are alien to him. Many of us share his impatience. It is disappointing that, though three weeks have passed, no concrete move has been made to establish a *bloc* in both House of Parliament which would provide an alternative government and a shadow cabinet to the country. I would however suggest to members of the Council that we should desist from being overly critical or impatient with those who are hesitant or confused.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the hesitation and confusion of the past three weeks in certain quarters is that the fog of confusion that enveloped this country as a result of twenty years of the cult of personality of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has not yet been completely dispelled. The kind of vulgar Marxism, with perverted ideas of what is "progressive" and what is "reactionary", that was fashionable during that period and which many of the so-called intellectuals in our country accepted, despite the efforts of a few of us, has still not lost its influence among the educated classes. Labels and slogans continue to obscure reality.

How else can one explain the strange caste system that our Socialist friends have created in this country and the concept of untouchability that they practise when they repeatedly announce that they cannot possibly join hands with non-socialists even to fight the communist threat to India? How else is one to understand the fatuous suggestion that some socialists cannot join such a front unless the Communist Party (Marxist) is invited to join it? Do they mean

that Chancellor Willy Brandt, the leader of the biggest Social Democratic Party in the world, has ceased to be a socialist by joining hands a couple of years back with the conservative Christian Democratic Party and this year with the liberal Free Democratic Party to head a coalition government? Do they suggest that President Saragat, a veteran of the Italian Socialist movement, has abandoned socialism by cooperating with the conservative Christian Democratic Party of Italy and accepting nomination as President of the Republic at its hands? Or is that they are in an intellectual fog, are living in the past and are unable to realise that, while differences between socialists and non-socialists are negotiable, those between totalitarians and democrats are not? That, at least, is our understanding, and I for one would appeal to my socialist friends to catch up with the times and realise what the interests of the country demand of us all.

The justification for a combination of nationalist and democratic parties and elements in this country was provided a long time ago by that great man, Edmund Burke, when he said that "when bad men conspire, good men must unite." It is in that spirit that Rajaji and our Party have been prepared to subordinate our own ideological axioms and indeed the interests of our Party to the greater good of the nation.

Another development in recent months which has attracted some attention but which I do not consider to be of any national significance is the reshuffle of the Union Cabinet. Comparing the new government with the old, one can only be reminded of a feud that was waged some centuries back between two well known musicians. On that, a poet wrote a poem called "Epigram on the Feuds between Handel and Bononcini". The poet wrote:

"Some say that Signor Bononcini
Compared to Handel's a mere minny,
Others aver, to him, that Handel
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle.
Strange! that such high dispute should be
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee'."

No change of policy, either domestic or international, need be expected as a result of this reshuffle from Tweedledum to Tweedledee. It is the same old gang as before occupying new chairs but the conductor of the orchestra remains the same and the tune that emerges can be depended upon to be as raucous and discordant as before.

Meanwhile the country may be expected to continue heading down the slippery slope to chaos. When the Communist-dominated Government of West Bengal was replaced by President's Rule, a sigh of relief went up from the people of Bengal at what they thought was the relief coming their way. Now they are thoroughly disappointed and indeed it has been alleged that there has been no improvement whatsoever in so far as the

protection of the lives and liberties of the people is concerned. Mao-inspired Naxalites function with impunity. The preparations for guerilla warfare through the collection of caches of arms and the training of guerillas continue. Peking quite obviously wishes to convert Bengal and later India into another Vietnam. It is clear that Delhi has neither the desire nor the will to prevent this. So far as I am concerned, it was clear to me what the government's intentions in Bengal were when they appointed the egregious Mr. S. S. Dhawan as Governor of West Bengal. This was done after I had taken the trouble to educate them, in case they needed it, about Mr. Dhawan's background and ideological colour.

On December 23, 1967, I had taken the trouble, during a debate on international affairs in the Lok Sabha, to try to give Mr. Dhawan's background since he had then been appointed High Commissioner designate to Britain. I pointed out that his anti-British outbursts were not isolated acts but that he had been a consistent Communist fellow traveller for a long time. I had quoted from his articles in the *National Herald* during the Fifties, in the course of which he had written:

"A few months ago, I was asked to give the definition of a progressive person, I replied: 'Today the test of a progressive person is his attitude towards the Soviet Union'."

When Communist China attacked Tibet, Mr. Dhawan wrote an article in the *National Herald* on 9th November, 1950, where he said:

"The interests of India are not directly involved and the question of our making a protest simply does not arise. The propaganda about Chinese 'aggression' in Tibet is completely baseless."

Then he had gone on to welcome the liberation of Tibet by his Communist friends, and said:

"I have no doubt that the people of Tibet will benefit greatly as a result of closer contact between Tibet and China. Tibet is one of the most backward countries in the world. . . . All this will change under Chinese rule. Tibet will now share the benefits of civilisation like all the other countries in Central Asia which have passed under Communist rule."

In an article in November 1966, writing about his visit to the Soviet Union, he said there was full Rule of Law in the Soviet Union; in fact, there was more rule of law there because the Soviet Union had no Preventive Detention Act!

What is happening in Bengal can easily be understood when this appointment is placed in perspective. The failure to remove him, despite appeals by the people of Bengal including the Prime Ministers' own Party in Bengal, is significant. If the day comes when guerilla

warfare and civil war engulf Bengal and India, the responsibility of Mrs. Gandhi and her colleagues at the bar of history will be an extremely heavy one.

The position in Bengal is only one facet of the policy of satellitism to the Soviet Dictatorship that the present Government in New Delhi is practising. The Prime Minister in an interview given to an international journal last month described as "incorrect and wholly unwarranted" reports that New Delhi had been increasingly turning to Moscow. "It is not true", she said, "that we lean towards one country or another". Let us consider whether this claim can stand even a minute's scrutiny.

On every issue of international affairs, the stand of this Government fits in with that of Moscow. It is difficult to find a single deviation. Have we forgotten the manner in which Mrs. Gandhi prevented her own Party in Parliament from accepting a motion condemning the brutal Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia at a time when even the Communist parties of Italy, France and England had denounced it? In Vietnam and Indo-China, the Indian Government has given aid and comfort to Peking and its satellites while needling those who are seeking to impede Chinese Communist expansionism.

When neutral Cambodia was attacked by North Vietnam, and the Government of Indonesia, a non-aligned country, issued invitations to a conference in Djakarta to consider how the independence and neutrality of Cambodia could be protected, the Indian Government almost accepted the invitation and then backed out as soon as the Soviet Union denounced the Conference. Similarly, after agreeing to activate the International Control Commission in Cambodia, of which India is the Chairman, New Delhi quickly dropped the move when the Soviet Union vetoed it. The AICC of the Ruling Congress Party distinguished itself by adopting a Resolution demanding that American troops withdraw first from Cambodia while making no reference to the real aggressors who had invaded Cambodia much earlier. The invitation to Mme. Binh, Naxalite Number One of South Viet Nam, as a Government guest is a gross violation of international law and propriety.

Our Government was alone among the countries of Asia to welcome Brezhnev's call for an Asian pact under Soviet hegemony while it was given short shrift by every other Asian country.

There is then the closing down of the USIS libraries in India while permitting the Soviet Union to build a Centre at Trivandrum which they had erected illegally and without sanction.

There is also the banning of a book by Mr. Greville Wynn, "The Man from Moscow", on the ground that it would hinder our relations with the Soviet Government.

We have accepted at face value the Soviet claim of *Radio Peace and Progress* which intervenes daily in

our domestic life as being an example of free enterprise over which the dictatorship has no control and now New Delhi has discontinued supplying to the Indian press and public transcriptions of what *Radio Peace and Progress* broadcasts to India and the rest of the world.

The policies of this Government at home are just as sinister. Many sensitive positions are being filled by communists and crypto-communists. To mention only a few, there are the recent appointments of Mr. Mohan Kumaramangalam as Chairman of the Indian Airlines Corporation, Mr. K. T. Chandy as Chairman of Hindustan Steel, Mr. Shelvanker as Consul-General in Hanoi, Mr. Rajni Patel as Director of Bennett Coleman & Co., which controls the *Times of India*, Mr. R. K. Hazari as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank and the greater authority in Government given to Mr. Raghunath Reddy and Mrs. Nandini Satpathy.

A proposal for a measure of Preventive Detention against communist insurrectionaries in Bengal was dropped simply because Mr. Bhupesh Gupta of the C.P.I. voiced opposition to it at a meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament.

Naxalite murderers are described by our Prime Minister as "Left adventurists" as if they are school boys engaged in a harmless prank!

During the recent reshuffle, the Prime Minister expressed her determination to secure personal control of the Intelligence Services, a preoccupation normal with communists and other dictators but never evinced so far by the Prime Minister of any democracy.

There are snide attacks on the freedom of the Press, on the Supreme Court and the Fundamental Rights of the Citizens. There is the insistence on maintaining the monopoly of Radio and Television Services in the hands of the Government of the day. There is the demand for "committed" civil servants.

One or two or even three of these activities might be explained away as aberrations of one kind or another. But how else can the sum total of all these policies pointing in the same direction be explained than by the answer that the Prime Minister and her Government are becoming satellites of the Soviet dictatorship abroad and tools of the Communists in India on whose support they depend for their continuance in office? Hence the need for a change in Government at the earliest possible moment. Hence the need for all good men and true to come together for this purpose.

It is necessary to stress the high priority that these objectives should occupy in order to meet the doubts and hesitations of many good people including some valued colleagues who have expressed their doubts about the need to dilute the clear-cut ideology of the Swatantra Party and the concern of members of minority communities and modern men and women who are unhappy at the prospect of association with the Jana Sangh. Such doubts cannot be brushed aside

summarily and can only be met by a patient attempt to explain the need for a correct order of priorities. There can be no doubt that there are certain aspects of the pronouncements and activities of the Jana Sangh that do not appeal to many of us. We have little in common with those who would seek to "Indianise" Muslims or others who adopt the modern way of life. We want India to be a strong, modern, 20th Century country like Japan. Obscurantism and communalism are alien to us.

May I, however, reassure those who have expressed these doubts that we have every hope of weaning the Jan Sangh away from their fears and prejudices about Muslims and some other minorities and have no intention of compromising our fundamental position in regard to a modern, non-denominational Indian society? After all, what is being discussed is an agreement to work together on a concrete programme. The resolution of the AICC offers such a programme for consideration by our Party and other parties. I am glad to say that, in so far as the rights and liberties of the minorities are concerned, that programme is sound and categorical and leaves no room for communalism or sectarianism of any kind. This is what the resolution says:

"In a country such as India with its wide variety of ethnic origins, religions and languages, the treatment of minorities and backward classes assumes great importance. There should be complete equality as between citizens irrespective of their birth, religion, ethnic origin or caste and all forms of discrimination based on such considerations should be removed. The guarantees provided in the Constitution for the protection of religion, language and culture of all such groups should be respected and enforced. There have to be special measures taken for the uplift of the poorer and more backward sections of the people. The prompt redress of the grievances of such sections should be the responsibility of the Government.

"Equality of opportunity and education is a prin-

ciple that should not only be accepted but be worked out in every legitimate and equitable manner. The provision of adequate employment facilities in all Government services is another urgent task that has yet to be adequately fulfilled.

"A Commission on Civil Rights should be set up. It will look into and help correct discrimination against any section of the people in education, employment, economic activities etc. It will ensure effective assertion of equality of opportunity in economic and social life. The Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as well as the Commissioner of Linguistic Minorities will become a part of the new Commission."

If a plank in the platform of the new national democratic *bloc* is established in some such terms, could we not legitimately claim that, far from making any compromise with communalism, we are in fact evolving a broadbased consensus on the firm basis of adhering to a non-denominational democracy and a firm opposition to any attempt to discriminate on ground of religion or ethnic origin? I think that we would have a right to claim that in forging such a consensus we would be good friends of the minorities and of the tribal and scheduled castes in our country. As I see it, a broad based front of democratic and nationalist parties and individuals which we seek to develop will consist predominantly of those who are wedded to these values and can be trusted to see that they are adhered to by all who work together.

Before I conclude, a word on organisation. Without organisation, the finest policies and the noblest intentions count for very little. The two great strategists of our times, Mahatma Gandhi and Lenin, understood this. Hence Gandhiji's stress on Constructive Work and Lenin's dictum: "Cadres decide everything".

We shall be discussing our organisational problems tomorrow and the General Secretary will initiate the discussion with his report. I shall not therefore anticipate tomorrow's work today.

Rajaji : Let us Unite to Save India

(Rajaji's speech while moving the resolution on the Political Situation at the General Council on July 21).

"We have all gathered here on this critical occasion to consider the situation in the country and the problems facing the country—problems next only in importance to the problems that were considered when Mahatma Gandhi took up the freedom struggle.

I move this resolution, not formally as the President said, but with all my heart and with all the spirit of battle that has been revived in me for the time being.

The resolution is not mere words. It reflects heartfelt emotions and is absolutely devoid of any superficial fatuity. It reflects the realities of the situation.

The danger before the country is great. It may look somewhat odd if I should compare the position of Hitler with the present position in the country. If Hitler was a danger to Europe when he began his ambitious and mad career the present Prime Minister

is as much a danger to India now as Hitler was to Europe.

I am sure some evil star has come to distort her congenial character and natural temperament. Today we suffer from the consequences of a temper that has seized her now.

What we want is the spirit of the battle ground. A Munich atmosphere will not do now. It is not the time for negotiations. It is not negotiations we want. We want absolute unity of purpose on the part of all those who do not want the *sarcari sarvadhikari* spirit. What we want is *jana swatantradhikari* spirit in the country.

Unfortunately most of our people are untrained for democratic qualities. They are trained to absolute government for a long time. They have been suffering under absolute government and they seem to enjoy it also. It will not do now.

Now this is a dangerous period when the mistakes of people are bound to make the affairs of the country complex and move into further trouble. The people must be roused.

The present proposal of the Congress Party, as it is called, the Old Congress or the Organisation Congress, has come to save the country. Although the Swatantra Party had anticipated a development of this kind for a long period of time, the actual move has come only now. We must not lag behind anybody in taking advantage of this move and give a positive response to the Congress call.

Shri Kamaraj, Shri Morarji Desai and others are not the same people as they were before. I have been long in politics. I have been long dealing with people of all kinds. I claim the right to be somewhat presumptuous and tell you that I can judge people fairly even at my present age. They have changed a great deal now. Do not throw at them what they did and did not do some time ago. They now face a new problem. They may have realised it. Shri Kamaraj has been a man of few words. He cannot speak English well. He learnt to speak English from hearing others speaking it. He has been absolutely clear that India must be saved now and that democracy must be saved now.

If you are acquainted with the behaviour of some insects of the world, there is an order of insects which appear at a particular stage of life to develop a desire to die. They run into fire as if a man runs for woman. They run into fire and burn themselves.

Democracy is now trying to burn itself away in absolute *sarcari sarvadhikari*. We have to stop this suicide. This is a mission for which we have to come forward.

Nobody need be afraid that in this united battle for the freedom of the citizen we may lose our image. Leaders in political life develop a vested interest in leadership. I claim the privilege of my age if I speak un-

pleasant truths. Leaders develop vested interests without their being conscious of it. Then there are workers, as they are called. They also develop a vested interest in work. They feel their occupation will be gone if one party merges itself with another party. They imagine they would have no work to do thereafter. It is wrong. It is not correct for people to think they would have no work to do.

By merging, we may lose our party identity, but we do not lose our principles. We work for our principles right through, whatever our political affiliations may be. We have a common purpose now. Other things must be forgotten until the first battle is victoriously won.

Churchill plunged into battle in the Second World War and he stretched out his two fingers for victory. I want you all to stretch out your two fingers for victory as Churchill did.

I do not want the spirit of negotiations. It is good for traders. We want a martial spirit to fight the battle and win the battle now. Therefore, do not talk of negotiations now.

I wish and pray that all of you may be inspired with the same spirit as I have been at the critical juncture.

Have I to gain anything now? Have I enmity to Mrs. Indira Gandhi? She is as good as a granddaughter to me. Yet she has committed mistakes, taking the country to dangerous paths.

Take the visit of Madame Binh who has come on behalf of the rebel party of South Vietnam, for which country America has been fighting all these years against heavy odds, both inside and outside. Those militant rebels use arms and violence of all kinds and get assistance from Hanoi and even from China. The "Foreign Secretary" of that so called rebel "Provisional Government" arrives and Mr. Swaran Singh makes her his personal guest! I am glad that to a certain extent Mr. Swaran Singh's commonsense has prevailed upon him to make her his personal guest; and not a government guest. But it does not make any difference.

If the Naxalites of Bengal or Srikakulam are received by foreign governments, what would we think of them? That is how we should assess and estimate the visit of the "foreign minister" of the "Provisional Government" of South Vietnam.

The resolution has been drafted with great care and with every consideration of all points of view. I have thoroughly approved of it. I present it to you for total acceptance.

What we want is clear. The call from the Organisation Congress is clear. The response on our part, the positive response on our part, should be clearer still. We should definitely say without mental reservation that we unite to win this battle."

Difficult? — Yes! Unsurmountable? — No!

(Summary of Mr. Masani's Reply to the Political Resolution debate in the General Council on behalf of Rajaji)

Replying to the discussion on behalf of Rajaji, Mr. Masani made it clear that the call for united action was not limited to Parliament but would ultimately extend to State and district levels. He said he realised the difficulties in working out such an arrangement but he assured members that he would not be cheated and that he would consult the Central Parliamentary Board and the National Executive of the Party on every appropriate occasion. "I have been warned of every conceivable danger but I have no fear at all. Fear is a craven thing that paralyses action. I do not think there is anything to be worried about. Let every proposal be judged on merits. It is good to accept a thing at its face value and try it out."

Referring to suggestions that assurances be obtained from the Jan Sangh in regard to minorities, especially the Muslims, Mr. Masani said: "That assurance is in the Constitution and we do not need any assurance from the Jan Sangh." In this connection, he drew attention to the fact that the Organisation Congress Resolution itself incorporated the guarantees sought by members. "We are proceeding on the basis of the AICC draft. Let us not anticipate any hurdles", he added.

At the same time, he realised that the fears of some Swatantra members about an association with the Jan Sangh were genuine. He assured them! "We have every hope of weaning the Jan Sangh away from their prejudices against the Muslims and other minorities and

have no intention of compromising our fundamental position in regard to a modern, non-denominational society". He pointed out to the Council that what was being discussed was an agreement to work together on a concrete programme. "The one offered by the AICC (O) resolution is sound and categorical and leaves no room for communalism or sectarianism of any kind."

The AICC(O) resolution represents a constructive attempt at polarisation on the right lines "between those who are pledged to maintain our democratic Constitution and the country's independence on the one side and those who are out to destroy our Constitution and establish a dictatorship which would be a satellite of either Moscow or Peking on the other." The programme contained in the Congress(O) resolution should be acceptable "as much to democratic socialists as to us liberal democrats".

He said it would be wrong for any one to suggest that this alliance was for ousting Mrs. Indira Gandhi from office. "We desire a change of Government in the Orissa way and we are against toppling any one". He was confident that once nationalist and democratic forces had forged a front, "we will get into power and we do not have to adopt backdoor methods."

The Swatantra Party was perhaps somewhat more mature and sophisticated than other parties in India. "We are a little ahead of the times and should cheerfully put up with the inconveniences of being pioneers in progress."

The Political Situation

(Text of Resolution adopted unanimously by the General Council on July 21).

"Recognising the grave threats facing the country, the General Council of the Swatantra Party welcomes the call given by the All-India Congress Committee of the Organisation Congress at its meeting in Delhi on 28th June, 1970, for a consolidation of national democratic forces to meet the threat of communist subversion and open up the path of ordered progress resulting in a better and richer life for the people. The Swatantra Party whole-heartedly responds to the Congress Party's appeal.

The Swatantra Party has been urging such a movement for the past twelve months since the possibilities of a worthwhile polarisation of forces in Indian politics opened up with the split in the Congress Party and the National Executive of the Swatantra Party adopted resolutions on the subject at its meetings on August 30, 1969 and February 16, 1970.

The issues on the basis of which the AICC has

invited all democrats and patriots to come together are:

- "(a) the unity and security of India;
- (b) the defence of the constitutional liberties of the people and preservation of democratic institutions;
- (c) the maintenance of law and order; and
- (d) establishment of a secular society based on principles of social and economic justice and equality of status and ensuring effective opportunity to all to earn livelihood and attain a basic minimum standard of living."

The programme provides a constructive and pragmatic approach to the country's problems and a useful basis for discussion. While there would always be room for differences of opinion on details, the General Council responds positively to the AICC's call.

There is little time to lose and it is essential that con-

crete steps be taken forthwith for the consolidation of National Democratic forces. The General Council therefore authorises the President of the Party to enter into appropriate arrangements.

The General Council calls upon all members of the

Party throughout the country to bend their energies to the success of this movement to "Save India" in which the Party will now be participating and to eschew scrupulously any action which might cut across this vital national task.

Shed Your Fears

(Summary of Rajaji's remarks at the Concluding Session of the General Council on July 22)

In the course of his remarks to the General Council at its concluding session on July 22, Rajaji welcomed the unanimous approval of the General Council to the resolution on the political situation which had been moved by him the previous day.

He noticed that the Press, which until recently had not been very enthusiastic about the consolidation of nationalist and democratic forces, seemed to have adopted a more positive attitude and he hoped this would continue.

Rajaji had no doubt about the nature of the danger to the country or the way in which it could be met. In this context he stated that the Organisation Congress had performed a service to the country by its AICC Resolution.

Calling upon members of the Swatantra Party to shed fears about the future of the Party in the changed conditions, Rajaji expressed his conviction that if the principles of the Party were true and Party members were true to those principles, they need not have any

fear of getting over-powered by anything bigger in which they might join.

Rajaji said it was a paradox that while our Party was considered to be a "rich men's party", it was the poorest of them all. Contradicting a suggestion that had been made earlier by a member that the Party should not expect funds from poor people but only from the rich, Rajaji said that the rich could not be expected to help the Party, but that the Party could expect help in small amounts from the poor whom it served. Every primary and district unit of the Party should make small collections and be self-sufficient and should not look to National Headquarters for financial assistance. As Gandhiji had said, any political worker who could not collect money from his own area or neighbourhood was not a good political worker and had little political influence.

Rajaji appealed to the President and members of the General Council to put aside all other considerations and to concentrate on bringing about a consolidation of nationalist and democratic parties.

Other Proceedings of Central Meetings

(The following is a report on other matters discussed at the meetings of the Central Parliamentary Board, National Executive and General Council)

CENTRAL PARLIAMENTARY BOARD

Meeting on the morning of July 20, the Central Parliamentary Board attended to various matters relating to the Party's work in Parliament and State Assemblies.

(i) Preventive Detention Act

After reviewing the position taken by the Party's members in the Consultative Committee of Parliament in regard to the need for a Preventive Detention Act in Bengal, the Board regretted that the then Home Minister, Mr. Y. B. Chavan, as Chairman of the Consultative Committee had acted in a partisan manner by showing special regard for the communist point of view while ignoring the protests of members from our Party, the Jan Sangh and the Congress (O) in regard to the order of business to be taken up by the Committee which had resulted in our members walking out in protest.

(ii) Levy of Octroi on Goods Entering Calcutta

The Board decided that the Party's group in Parliament should vigorously oppose any Bill to levy Octroi duty on goods entering Calcutta. In the opinion of the Board, the Octroi levy, apart from being an outmoded form of taxation (as reviewed in the findings of several responsible committees), would also retard the growth of road transport and lead to further corruption. At the same time, the Board realising the financial needs of Calcutta felt that some other more acceptable and suitable substitute for Octroi Duty should be considered.

(iii) Move to Impeach Supreme Court Justice Shah

The Board, while noting that some Swatantra MPs who had unfortunately signed a petition calling for the impeachment of Justice of the Supreme Court had withdrawn their signature and informed the Speaker accordingly, felt that the move to impeach Justice Shah was not an isolated attempt but part of a calculated plan

on the part of certain members of the Ruling Congress Party and the Communists to bring the Supreme Court into disrepute and curtail its powers. The Board decided that the Party's Leader in Parliament should write to the Speaker hoping that this matter would not be brought up for discussion in Parliament.

(iv) *Salaries and Perquisites of Ministers*

To focus the attention of Parliament and the public to the scandalously high salaries and perquisites of Union Ministers, it was decided that the Party's Group in the Lok Sabha should introduce a Private Member's Bill seeking to integrate the income and perquisites of central ministers into a consolidated taxable income.

(v) *Forthcoming General Elections in Kerala*

In connection with the forthcoming General Elections in Kerala, the Kerala Unit was authorised to call for a Front of democratic parties in the State barring the two communist parties and the Ruling Congress.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Political Situation

After hearing a report from the President of the Party on the discussions he had had with leaders of other political parties, particularly the Congress(O) and the Jan Sangh and his Press interview on 30th June welcoming the AICC(O) Resolution calling for a consolidation of nationalist and democratic forces in the country, the Executive settled a draft Political Resolution and recommended it to the General Council for adoption.

As a corollary to this decision, the National Executive decided that the Party's members, units and legislature Parties be called upon to desist from activities of any kind which would involve a call or action for the overthrow of any State Government run by a Party with which the Swatantra Party has indicated its willingness to enter into a Front or which may form part of such a Front in future. The Party should, however, continue to perform its legitimate function as an Opposition of exercising vigilance and criticising on merits the policies and activities of such governments.

Draft Resolutions

Draft resolutions on various other matters were also drafted and recommended for adoption by the Council.

C. C. Desai

A resolution of the Gujarat State Council at its meeting on 19th June requesting the National Executive to reconsider Mr. C. C. Desai's expulsion from the Party was then taken up for consideration.

There was a full and frank discussion in the course of which Mr. H. M. Patel and Prof. R. K. Amin conveyed the views and feelings of some of their colleagues on the Gujarat State Council. In view of the overwhelming consensus at the meeting that no further action was called for in the matter, Mr. H. M. Patel's motion

for reconsideration was rejected and it was decided that the decision of the National Executive expelling Mr. Desai for gross and persistent indiscipline and disloyalty to the Party should stand.

Situation in Gujarat

The situation in Gujarat in the light of recent events particularly in the context of the unsuccessful efforts to dislodge the Hitendra Desai Government was discussed. Arising out of the discussion and in consonance with the draft Resolution on the Political Situation recommended by the National Executive for adoption by the General Council, the Executive decided that its earlier directive of February 16, 1970, permitting the Gujarat Unit to work for the defeat of the Gujarat Government was no longer operative and had lapsed.

Orissa Situation

The President of the Orissa Unit, Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, gave an account of the functioning of the Coalition Government in Orissa. The President, Mr. Masani who was in Orissa the previous week, reported that he had useful discussions with the Party's State leadership on the one side and Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab, Mr. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan and other leaders of the Jana Congress on the other. During these discussions the work of the coalition government in Orissa during the last three years was reviewed. There was general satisfaction expressed at the clean and stable government provided by the State Government. Several shortcomings in the administration were also mentioned. Some concrete measures to improve the administrative performance and public relations were suggested. The unanimous feeling was that the relations between the two partners of the coalition had been close and harmonious and that no other possible combination could provide a stable and clean government to that State. It was therefore felt that nothing should be allowed to be done to disturb the smooth functioning of the coalition until the next General Elections. Mr. Masani further reported that it was agreed to have a similar meeting after three months. The National Executive expressed its satisfaction with our performance in Orissa except for the feeling that the good work being done in that State deserved wider and better publicity.

Shri Jaideepsinhji's membership of the Central Parliamentary Board.

The President, Mr. Masani reported that despite repeated requests both at the personal level and through correspondence, the leader of the Party's Group in the Gujarat Assembly, Mr. Jaideepsinhji of Baria* had declined to serve on the Central Parliamentary Board. He had repeated his disinclination recently when notice of the meeting of the Central Parliamentary

* Mr. Jaideepsinhji's has since resigned from membership of Party.

Board held on July 20 was sent to him. In view of this, the Executive nominated Mr. H. M. Patel, the President of the Gujarat State Unit, to the Board. It further decided that the Deputy Leader of the Party's Group in the State Assembly, Mr. Liladhar Patel, be invited to meetings of the Central Parliamentary Board as a special invitee.

Fundamental Rights Campaign

The General Secretary reported on the initiative taken by the Party in organising a campaign for the defence of Fundamental Rights. Several lakhs copies of a leaflet on Fundamental Rights had been printed and distributed in the various States with the assistance of the National Headquarters. Thanks to the Party's initiative, other parties including the Congress(O) and the Jan Sangh had now started taking interest in the campaign.

Prof. Ranga had been able to persuade former Chief Justice Subba Rao to be the Chairman of a non-partisan "Fundamental Rights Front" which was planning to hold its first Convention in New Delhi on August 30.

Anti-Naxalite Day

The General Secretary reported that the response to the National Headquarters call to the Party's Units to observe May 24 as anti-Naxalite Day had been heartening. This was the first time that the National Headquarters had sent its circular to Units at the Primary and District levels in addition to the State Units.

Among other matters discussed was the need to set up farmers' associations at the State level; the need for the early and careful selection of candidates for the next General Election, the financial position of the Party which the Treasurer reported was far from satisfactory, and the next National Convention.

Next National Convention

In regard to the last matter, the Executive considered the invitation from the Bombay City Unit to hold the next National Convention in Bombay. While authorising the President and the General Secretary to take a final decision in regard to the venue and date of the next national convention, it was decided that the National Headquarters should, before accepting the Bombay Unit's invitation inquire whether any other State/Regional Unit desired to play host to the National Convention.

GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council met on July 21 and 22. The proceedings began with the singing of Vande Mataram by Smt. M. S. Subhalaxmi.

Condolence:

The President paid tributes to the memory of leading members of the Party who had passed away since

the last meeting of the General Council. The following resolution condoling their demise was adopted unanimously and the Council observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to their memory.

"The General Council of the Swatantra Party records with deep sorrow the passing away in recent months of several leading stalwarts of the Party.

Mr. Bhailalbhair Patel, the architect of the Party in Gujarat, literally died in harness. Though seriously ill, Bhaikaka insisted on exercising his right to vote in the biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha held early this year. The death of this engineer turned statesman is a national loss.

The passing away of Raja Giriraj Saran Singh of Bharatpur who adorned the benches of the Party's Group in the Lok Sabha, has robbed the Swatantra Party and Parliament of a valued member.

The Tamil Nadu Assembly Group of our Party has had more than its share of tragedy with the passing away of its Chief Whip, Mr. K. M. Ramaswamy Gounder, and of its Deputy Leader, Mr. G. S. Audimoolam.

Mr. T. Parmanand, a member of the last General Council and a leading trade unionist of Bihar, passed away suddenly. His death is a grievous loss to the Party in its efforts to reorganise the Bihar Unit of the Party.

The General Council expresses its grievous sense of loss at the passing away of these stalwarts of the Party and conveys its deepest sympathies to their families.

Though not a member of our Party, Maharaja Sawai Man Singh of Jaipur was a source of great inspiration to the Party particularly in Rajasthan. The General Council of the Swatantra Party conveys to Smt. Gayatri Devi of Jaipur its deep sense of sorrow on the tragedy that has befallen her."

The first day's discussions were devoted to political matters particularly the draft Resolution on the Political Situation recommended by the National Executive. The Resolution was moved by Rajaji. The text of his speech is published elsewhere in this issue. Seconding the Resolution, Prof. Ranga urged the Council to adopt it unanimously. The following participated in the discussion that followed:

Mr. N. K. Ganapaiah, Mr. Piloo Mody, Mr. J. Mohammad Imam, Mr. Budhi Prakash, Mrs. Louella Lobo Prabhu, Mr. V. V. Ramana, Mr. V. T. Srinivasan, Mr. A. V. Varkey, Major Munshi Ram, Mr. V. L. Narsimha Moorthy, Prof. R. K. Amin, Mr. Babu Joseph, Mr. Harihar Das, Dr. H. V. Hande, Mr. K. P. Singh Deo, Mr. Mohammad Hussain and Mr. H. M. Patel.

On behalf of Rajaji, the President, Mr. Masani, summed up the discussion and referred to various points made by Speakers. A summary of Mr. Masani's remarks and the text of the Resolution are published

elsewhere in this issue. The Resolution was adopted unanimously.

The following are the other Resolutions which were, after discussion, adopted unanimously:

Situation in West Bengal

Mr. Piloo Mody moved the resolution which was seconded by Dr. M. Santosham. Mr. Nana Chudasama, Mr. Madhu Mehra, Mr. Mohanlal Jatav, Major Munshi Ram and Mr. H. M. Patel participated in the discussion.

Cambodia

Mr. Dahyabhai Patel moved the Resolution and Mr. V. T. Sreenivasan seconded it.

Government's Proposals to Nationalise the Cotton and Distributive Trades

Mr. Manu Amersey moved this Resolution and it was seconded by Mr. S. Narayanaswamy.

Growing Unemployment and Spiralling Prices

This Resolution was moved by Mr. J. M. Lobo Prabhu and seconded by Mr. Lalchand Hirachand. Dr. Hande, Dr. R. C. Cooper and Mr. Harihar Das participated in the discussion.

Land Grab Agitation in Bihar

The Leader of the Party's Group in the Bihar Assembly, Mr. Y. K. Choudhary moved the Resolution which was seconded by Mr. G. Swaminathan, MLC, Tamil Nadu.

Agricultural Wealth Tax

This Resolution was moved by Mr. N. K. Ganapaiah and seconded by Mr. Johnson Vallikkappan. Among those who participated in the discussion were Prof. Ranga, Mr. Harihar Das and Mr. V. L. Narsimha Moorthy.

Steel Plants

This Resolution was moved from the Chair.

Recovery of Indian Territory Occupied by Communist China

The only unofficial Resolution, it was moved by Mr. R. Srinivasan

The texts of the above Resolutions are reproduced in Annexure A.

A feature of the General Council meeting was the fact that for the first time, the proceedings on the 21st were kept open to the Press. Apparently this was a good decision judging from the extensive coverage given to the proceedings in the Press.

Party Organisation

The General Secretary presented his report on Party organisation, extracts from which form Annexure B. The following participated in the discussion that ensued:

Mr. Harihar Das, Dr. M. Santosham, Mr. Budhi Prakash, Mr. Iqbal Marwah, Mr. S. S. Mariswamy, Mr. N. K. Ganapaiah, Mr. Manu Amersey, Mr. M. R. Arya, Mrs. Louella Lobo Prabhu, Mr. Yashwant Kumar Choudhary, Mr. J. M. Lobo Prabhu, Mr. Ghashiram Majhi, Mr. S. P. Shah, Mr. Mohammad Farooq Khan, Mr. N. C. Zamindar, Mr. V. T. Sreenivasan, Mr. Devanathan, Miss Kusum Kumari Joshi, Dr. Ramchandran, Mr. Piloo Mody, Mr. Mohammad Hussain, Mr. B. K. Behura, Mr. Mohanlal Jatav and Mr. R. N. Singh Deo.

Replying to the discussion, the General Secretary assured the meeting that he had made detailed notes of the various points made during the debate and that he would try and implement them to the extent feasible.

SARDAR BASANT SINGH

As we go to press we learn with deep sorrow of the assassination of Sardar Basant Singh, a founder member of the Party, General Secretary of the Punjab Unit and member of the General Council and National Executive. Rajaji said in Swarajya (August 15):

"After the passing away of Master Tara Singh, there was no one in Punjab whom I trusted and loved as I trusted and loved Basant Singh. Putting aside my deep personal grief, Acharya Ranga's appreciation of what Sardar Basant Singh was to the Swatantra Party is not an exaggerated obituary. It is a fully deserved expression of the grief of all of us in the Swatantra Party. The foul assassination of Sardar Basant Singh is another demonstration of the folly of not tackling communist violence as it should be done with determined will, speed, energy and clarity of thought."

ANNEXURE A

Text of Resolutions adopted by the General Council at its meeting in Madras on July 21-22, 1970.

Situation in West Bengal

The Swatantra Party takes a very serious view of the fast deteriorating situation in Bengal and notes with dismay that the people are becoming despondent and demoralised.

If the situation is not tackled on an emergency basis, it is not unlikely that Bengal will soon be India's North Vietnam with the Communists in the rest of the country playing the role of the Viet Cong actively assisted by the Chinese Communists. The Swatantra Party is sure that there are patriotic persons even within Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Party who would not like to see this happen.

The imposition of President's Rule in West Bengal earlier this year was greeted with relief and hope by the people of that State. Relief because the endless bickering and the grim struggle for power on the part of the fourteen members of the United Front, particularly the CPI(M) had been brought to an end. Hope, because at last the peace loving citizens of this troubled State could look forward to effective Government which would bring a sense of security to public affairs. A review of the fruits of President's rule shows that these hopes have been belied particularly because of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's insistence on retaining Mr. S. S. Dhawan as Governor of West Bengal in spite of the fact that his actions and pronouncements as Governor have confirmed the charge of his being a crypto-communist. The Communists, naturally, are taking full advantage of the situation and there has been in fact an increase in subversive and violent activities and in the propagation of the doctrines of Mao tse Tung. Pressure from the CPI was responsible for abandoning the proposal to introduce the Preventive Detention Act for which there was an unanimous demand from the Police authorities and the Government of West Bengal and which was fully supported by public opinion in the State.

At this critical situation in the nation's history, the Party calls upon all law-abiding and patriotic citizens to raise their voices against this suicidal policy of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

The Swatantra Party is of the view that:

- (i) President's Rule be made purposeful and effective to ensure that law and order and the safety of life and liberty is restored without delay, if necessary with the help of the Army;
- (ii) Mr. Dhawan, who has consistently given aid and succour to the Communists, be removed from office of Governor forthwith;
- (iii) the Communist parties be banned in this State without further loss of time;

- (iv) the civil Administration which has been infiltrated and demoralised by the Communists be restored to its full vigour and a sense of confidence brought back to its functioning;
- (v) anti-social elements who have disrupted production, intimidated loyal workers and deliberately attempted to create chaos in industrial enterprises causing hardship and privation to workers who are being rendered jobless by the thousand and are rapidly bringing industrial production to a grinding halt be ruthlessly dealt with;
- (vi) lands grabbed in violation of law should be restored to the owners.

Cambodia

The General Council of the Swatantra Party condemns the Indian Government's policy of servility to the Soviet Union. It feels that our country's future has already been heavily mortgaged to Mrs. Indira Gandhi's mentors in Moscow so that her Government may survive.

The General Council conveys its sympathies to the brave people of Cambodia in their struggle to survive as a free nation and congratulates all those governments of South East Asia who have gone to the succour of the Cambodian people.

In the war to destroy the freedom of South Vietnam, North Vietnamese regular forces and the Vietcong have used neighbouring Cambodia for base camps where their forces can rest, regroup and re-enter South Vietnam. This "safe haven" across the border was for many years endured with great forbearance by the Governments of South Vietnam and the United States in the hope that Norodom Sihanouk would be able to get these sanctuaries eliminated. When Sihanouk failed, the Cambodians threw him out. Norodom Sihanouk turned to Communist China and has become a Quisling of Peking. The change of Government was naturally not to the liking of the Communist aggressors. North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces entered Cambodia and occupied the entire zone along Cambodia's border with South Vietnam. It was against this background that South Vietnamese and United States forces at long last entered Cambodia to liquidate the sanctuaries.

The General Council congratulates President Nixon of the United States for his courage in intervening in Cambodia even at a risk to his own political future thus giving the brave people of Cambodia a breathing spell in their struggle to retain their country's independence.

The Government of India's policy on Cambodia is in reality an extension of their policy of Soviet satellitism.

The resolution adopted by Mrs. Indira Gandhi's AICC exposes the lopsided neutrality of the Government of India when it calls for the withdrawal of American troops first before the Communist aggressors who were there much earlier are asked to leave. For instance, when India wanted the International Control Commission to be revived, Moscow opposed the move and India dropped it hastily. When the Indonesian Government, which is also non-aligned, invited India to a Conference in Djakarta to consider the situation in Cambodia, the Government of India after initially not being averse to the idea declined to attend when Moscow attacked the Indonesian Government's initiative. When the Djakarta conference took decisions that were in line with our own stand, the Government of India welcomed them. Every single action of the Government of India in regard to the Cambodian crisis betrays its utter servility to the Soviet Union.

And now, the Government of India has gone out of its way to invite to this country Madame Binh who, like our Naxalites, is trying to subvert the government of her own country in violation of normal diplomatic procedure. Last June visas were issued by the Government of India to Sihanouk's envoys though they had no travel papers and only passports of a non-existent government which we have not recognised.

Government's Proposal to nationalise the Cotton and Distributive Trades

The Swatantra Party is emphatically of the opinion that if the Government persists in its decision to take over the Cotton Trade and canalise cotton imports through a State body, the results would be:

- (a) the farmer who at present gets a good price by selling his crop to the highest bidder will be subject to monopoly procurement and will be compelled to sell his produce at a price arbitrarily fixed by Government and will be reduced to the level of serfs.
- (b) to render jobless over three hundred thousand persons who have acquired expert knowledge and are operating in the cotton trade and thus add to the country's unemployment problem.
- (c) to destroy a mechanism perfected over the years which ensured a fair price to the farmer and quality control so far as the purchaser is concerned and through inefficient and bureaucratic procedures make the consumer pay a higher price for cloth to cover the heavy overheads which inevitably result from State Trading; and
- (d) concentrate one more important economic activity in the hands of government.

The Swatantra Party congratulates the cotton and also foodgrains traders on their having decided to fight government's onslaught and pledges its support to them in combating these harmful measures.

Mrs Indira Gandhi's Government appears to be bent

on destroying whatever little is left of the economy in their pursuit of policies based on their Marxist obsession to concentrate all economic power in their own hands and create a regimented economy. Their recent proposal to take over the cotton, foodgrains and oilseeds trades is the latest example of utter disregard not only for the privations and misery of millions of cotton, foodgrains and oilseeds traders but also their ruinous effect on farmers and consumers.

At a time when Government's energies ought to be concentrated on devising steps to increase cotton production, they are devoting their time and energy in making plans to take over the trade. All sorts of dubious arguments are being advanced to explain what is essentially an ideologically motivated action regardless of consequences including the prospect of over three hundred thousand traders facing unemployment and starvation.

The supposed objective of Government in taking over the cotton, foodgrains and oilseeds trades is to ensure to the producer economic and remunerative prices and to avoid the alleged exploitation of the producer and consumer by the "middle man". If past performance is any indication, this objective will most certainly not be achieved. State Trading has already shown Government to be the biggest profiteer and exploiter of both farmers and consumers.

Growing Unemployment and Spiralling Prices

The Swatantra Party expresses its deep concern over the serious deterioration in the country's economy manifested through the slowing down of industrial production, growing unemployment and a rapid rise in prices. Unemployment is one of the principal causes of growing discontent and violence among the people in all parts of the country.

The price level, which was relatively stable last year, with only about 3% rise in wholesale prices, suddenly rose by 7% in May 1970 as compared to the same month last year. This alarming situation is wholly attributable to the faulty and doctrinaire approach and impractical economic policies followed by Mrs. Gandhi as Finance Minister. Having realised that the economic policies which she has pursued since the split in the Congress Party have failed miserably, she has now handed over the Finance portfolio to Mr. Y. B. Chavan to make him a scapegoat for the disastrous consequences of these objectionable policies.

The Swatantra Party once again reiterates its stand that the only way out of this chaotic economic situation is for the Government to assist in every possible manner in increasing production rather than insisting on out-moded ideological policies and programmes and Government expenditure should be planned in directions which have high employment potentialities.

Land Grab Agitation in Bihar

The General Council of the Swatantra Party denounces the Government of Bihar's connivance at the vio-

lation of the Fundamental Right of farmers in that State. The Council congratulates the farmers of Champaran and other districts for their initiative in organising a Kisan Sena as also a Farmers Association to defend themselves against this onslaught by the Communists in collusion with the State Government. If the present government, which is actively encouraging criminal activities in the name of so-called socialism, is not removed at the earliest possible opportunity, there is the danger of Bihar before long going the way of West Bengal.

The General Council of the Swatantra Party promises the farmers of Bihar the Party's unstinted support in the struggle they are waging to defend their farm, family and freedom.

The Bihar State Government depending for its survival on the Communists has not only closed its eyes to Communist depredations but, judging by certain pronouncements of the Bihar Chief Minister, is actively conniving at the CPI land-grab agitation.

On June 25, the Bihar Chief Minister is reported to have openly exhorted landless labourers to grab lands, violently if necessary. This call to violence from official quarters is in total defiance of the oath of office to protect the Constitution. The northern district of Champaran in Bihar lies at the trijunction of Bihar, Nepal and U.P. and the neighbouring district of Purnea borders West Bengal. Communists, whether they be in the garb of Naxalites or others trained in guerilla warfare in Communist China, infiltrate into Bengal and through Bengal into Champaran and Purnea. Recently at Sathi in the district of Champaran peasants were dispossessed of their lands by Communists with the active connivance of the police and local officials. Instead of protecting the peasant owners, they were actually threatened and issued non-bailable warrants and were compelled to surrender their land despite the fact that they were the lawful possessors of such lands for decades. Instructions appear to have been issued by the State Government to "persuade" landholders to part with their lands. Such "persuasion" in Communist jargon is a euphemism for coercion.

The land grab agitation launched by the Communist Party of India not only in Bihar but covering all India, explodes the myth about the CPI being different from the other Communist parties. They are all the same poison with different labels.

ANNEXURE B

(Extracts from the General Secretary's Report while initiating the discussion on organisation at the General Council on July 22, 1970).

Yesterday, we had a detailed and fruitful discussion on political matters. On the whole, we felt that recent events held out some hope for the country. If we

Agricultural Wealth Tax

The General Council of the Swatantra Party regrets the Union Government's decision to bring into operation the Wealth Tax on Agricultural Land including orchards and plantation. The Council is of the opinion that just when Indian Agriculture is looking up after many years, the imposition of this Tax at the present juncture would have a deleterious effect on food production. The General Council is of the view that agricultural wealth tax should not be levied.

Moreover, the imposition of this tax by the Union Government may constitute an encroachment on a source of revenue of State Governments, and has become a source of conflict between the Union and the States.

Steel Plants

The General Council of the Swatantra Party notes with concern the continued unwillingness of the Union Government to evolve a sound policy in regard to the production of steel. The existing steel plants in the governmental sector are making heavy losses and have not yet reached their full capacity. The Union Government are not taking any steps to achieve efficiency and improve production. The Swatantra Party is therefore opposed to the establishment of more steel plants in the governmental sector.

The Government of India has, on the one hand, decided to establish three steel plants in Andhra Pradesh, Mysore and Tamil Nadu and, on the other hand, has turned down the request of the Orissa Government even for the preparation of a feasibility report for the establishment of a plant in Orissa which is considered by two consultants of international repute to be ideally suited for another steel plant. The resentment of the people of Orissa can therefore be easily understood.

In view of the Union Government's persistence in proceeding with the establishment of steel plants in the governmental sector, the Council is of the view that this should only be undertaken after these projects have been fully examined and from that point of view feasibility and project reports should also be prepared in respect of sites proposed by Orissa.

Recovery of Indian Territory Occupied by China

The Swatantra Party calls upon all political parties in India and all patriotic Indians to work for the recovery of Indian territory occupied by Communist China.

are to play our part in making this hope a reality, it is necessary that our own organisation be strengthened.

At the last meeting of the General Council, several

suggestions were made which we noted and the following Circulars were issued in pursuance of these suggestions:

- (a) the need to translate and publish the mid-term report in the various regional languages.
- (b) to organise a panel of speakers who would be willing to go round the different States at the invitation of the State Units to deliver talks and conduct public meetings.
- (c) a programme of tours by the Party's Vice-Presidents, who could be invited to sit with the State Executive Committees, discuss their problems and enthuse Party workers by addressing as many workers' meetings as possible, and finally,
- (d) the need to hold State/Regional Conventions.

In regard to the Mid-Term Report, the states of Delhi, Gujarat, Orissa and Tamil Nadu printed the mid-term report in the respective languages of their State. The Maharashtra Unit printed an abridged version.

The National Headquarters has now been able to put together a panel of 104 speakers from various States. This panel will prove very useful in our campaign for the next General Elections.

In response to our Circulars calling upon our Units to hold their Regional Conventions, the following States have held their Conventions: Bombay, Delhi, Kerala (Southern Region) and Orissa. Mysore is holding its Convention in October. Madras plans to hold it some time in November.

Immediately after my election as General Secretary I issued a circular giving a detailed scheme for the decentralised fund collections by Swatantra Party Units.

The National Headquarters decided to send out Circulars which gave directives in regard to matters relating to specific party activity, to the Party's Units not merely at the State level but also at the district and primary levels. At present, the National Headquarters has with it a list of 572 Primary and District Units. The decision of the National Headquarters calling upon Units to observe anti-Naxalite Day, has been eminently successful.

Similarly the response to our call to organise a campaign for the protection of Fundamental Rights of our people has evoked good response. Here again, I would like to compliment Mr. Ganapaiah who has so far sent to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha through the National Headquarters as many as 3,715 signatures. In this connection, I would also like to make a brief reference to the assistance which the National Headquarters was able to give to several states for the purpose of printing literature in vernacular languages, arranging meetings and distribution of leaflets propagating the Party's point of view on the question of Fundamental Rights.

So far, with the assistance of the National Headquarters, several lakhs of leaflets have been printed and distributed in Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Oriya, Kannada, Urdu, Tamil and Malayalam. The Telugu and Kashmiri versions are presently in print.

The impact of this project has been very satisfactory. Initially, the Swatantra Party was the only Party which had taken up the stand of protecting the Fundamental Rights under the Constitution. Latterly, some other Parties like the Congress (O) and the Jana Sangh have also joined this campaign for protection of Fundamental Rights under the Constitution and maintaining the dignity of the Supreme Court.

Thanks to the efforts of Prof. Ranga, a non-political, non-partisan Fundamental Rights Front has been brought into existence. Justice K. Subba Rao has very graciously agreed to be the President of the Fundamental Rights Front. We have been promised active support from a large number of professional people and young intellectuals in making this an effective organisation. Convenors have been appointed in several States. I would request Prof. Ranga in the course of this session to give a more detailed idea about this Front which is holding its first Convention in New Delhi some time next month. Similarly, our call to the Party's Units to protest against the levies in the Union and Railway Budgets evoked healthy response. This encourages me to say that given proper encouragement and guidance, I see no reason why our organisation cannot gear itself up into a well-oiled machine.

I would particularly like to emphasise the crying need for the Swatantra Party to organise youth wings at every State, District, City and Village level, *inter alia*, to protect our homes and families against growing lawlessness and failure of the government machinery to protect life and property. Among other functions of the Youth Wings will be to channelise the energies of our young boys and girls in purposeful work, promotion of anti-communalism, national integration and Indianisation in true sense of the term. By Indianisation, I mean, the effort of inculcating in our youth the spirit of dedication to his country, in complete disregard of any consideration of caste, creed, religion, regionalism and community. Real Indianisation will also involve a strong fight against all elements in Society having extra-territorial loyalties or professing subversion of the Indian Constitution or the Courts of Law.

Similarly, the Swatantra Party will also have to urgently organise the cultivators throughout the country in "Farmers Forum" to protect their interests and prepare for a bitter fight against the dangers to their Fundamental Right to own their lands, obtain fair prices for the produce, and safeguard their various other interests against grave threats from anti-social elements, and governmental and Communist onslaughts.

I am sure, in subsequent deliberations, the General

Council will give adequate attention to the need for organising the youth and the Farmers.

I hope that the discussions that will follow will not only be of a high level but also enable us to arrive at a

concrete programme of activity. The main purpose will be to keep the Party in a state of readiness irrespective of when Mrs. Indira Gandhi choose to call the next General Elections.

Fundamental Rights Front

(Guidance to Convenors)

The Fundamental Rights Front which has been set up with former Chief Justice Subba Rao (of the Supreme Court) is a non-partisan body to effectively meet the growing threats from many quarters to the Fundamental Rights of our citizens and the attempt to denigrate the authority of the Supreme Court. Any threat to Fundamental Rights will effect every Indian citizen, irrespective of his caste, creed, vocation or station in life. As such, the Fundamental Rights Front is a mass movement to organise the country's citizenry in one mammoth defensive operation.

To ensure the maximum possible participation, the FRF does not propose to restrict its scope by having a formal Constitution, rules and regulations, a hierarchical system etc.

There will be a simple system of Convenors. There can be any number of Convenors in a city, town, district and village. School teachers and college students, leaders of various non-political organisations, social workers, ladies, representatives of Youth Groups etc., can all be Convenors. A convenor to be so designated must collect a minimum of 20 signatures on a Petition addressed to the Secretary of the Lok Sabha protesting against the provisions of Mr. Nath Pai's Bill which are calculated to confer on Parliament the authority to amend the chapter on Fundamental Rights in the Constitution. The Text of the Petition is given alongside. When 20 signatures or more have been collected, the Convenor should forward the memorandum to the Headquarters of the Fundamental Rights Front at 143, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1. The Headquarters will in turn, forward these signatures to the Secretary of the Lok Sabha. A copy of the forwarding letter will be sent to the concerned Convenor with a badge in recognition of his/her effort.

The National Headquarters will keep a record of the number of signatures so forwarded and other details. Members of Parliament will refer to these signatures on the floor of Parliament.

Apart from collecting signatures, the Convenors should propagate the principles and views of the FRF by issuing and/or distributing literature, and organising meetings etc.

For the purpose of coordinating the work of the Convenors within a State, there shall be a Convenor-in-Charge to whom local Convenors can turn to for guidance and assistance whenever required.

The first Convention of the Fundamental Rights Front was held on Sunday, 30th August, at Vithalbhai Patel Bhavan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi.

Such Conventions should be held at the State, District and town levels.

Text of Petition

The Secretary
Lok Sabha,
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

We, the undersigned, pray that Parliament should respect the inviolability of the third chapter of the Constitution on Fundamental Rights and desist from taking any steps to amend or curtail or weaken or abolish the Fundamental Rights, (Articles 12 to 55 especially Articles 19 and 31 including the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property along with all the limitation mentioned in that chapter) and respect Article 32 guaranteeing the right to appeal to the Supreme Court for redress regarding any infringement of Fundamental Rights.

We request the authorities concerned to convey this appeal to the Speaker, Lok Sabha.

Extracts from the Constitution:

"Article 19(i): All citizens shall have the right—
(a) to freedom of speech and expression; (b) to assemble peaceably and without arms; (c) to form associations or unions; (d) to move freely throughout the territory of India; (e) to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India; (f) to acquire, hold and dispose of property and (g) to practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business.

Article 31(1): No person shall be deprived of his property save by authority of law, subject to the limitations mentioned in the same chapter."

(For Private Circulation)