

# Swatantra

Good Write

# Newsletter

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## RAJAJI : 92

Whether soldiers or statesmen, consistency has never been a characteristic of outstanding men. On the other hand, it only suggests a static mind impervious to dynamic changes. Often lacking in courage to change its opinions, such a mind is inevitably neither sensitive nor far-seeing.

The Swatantra Party is therefore naturally proud to have as its founder and mentor Rajaji whose only consistency, if at all, is that he has always been a non-conformist. To be so, calls for deep conviction and courage, two qualities which have always been present in Rajaji.

Though belated, the *Swatantra Newsletter* offers its heartfelt felicitations on his ninety-second birthday

and prays for his long life in the service of the nation and the party.

Reports received from various parts of the country indicate that Party workers observed this happy event with unbounded enthusiasm. Special prayers were held in temples and prayers were offered in mosques and churches. On December 8, many called on Rajaji who, in his characteristic vein, said, "why do you want a message? Nobody listens to my advice" and then dictated the following message: "I wish and pray that the younger people will be blessed with strength and spirit of dedication to serve the country in some way or other."

## President's Acceptance Speech

I am grateful to the General Council for the confidence they have reposed in me by asking me to take up the Presidentship and leadership of the Party. The Presidentship of the Swatantra Party at this moment is not likely to be a bed of roses. In fact, it appears to be a frightening burden to take on for the next two years in the context of the present state of our national affairs and the state of the Party organisation.

### Present Political Situation

We all know the troubled times through which our country is passing. Twenty years of wrong economic policies have created a situation where the political crisis is bound to recur with ever increasing intensity unless these policies are abandoned and the country is put on a proper track. This itself will require a radical shift in our political structure. This may flow from the recent split in the Congress Party and the end of its monopoly of power after two decades if we all do our bit. The country is, however, likely to pass through turbulent times and there is every danger of a further abdication and destruction of law and order. Bengal and certain other parts of our territory

are in the hands of elements whose patriotism is not above question and, in the coming years, guerilla warfare developing into dangerous threats to our national security cannot be ruled out in Bengal and in the North East Frontier.

### Swatantra's Role and Task

At such a time, the Swatantra Party has a tremendously vital and important role to play as one of the elements committed to the defence of India's independence and its democratic way of life embodied in the Constitution. As the Party that stands for the liquidation of permit-licence-raj, over-centralised planning and the forest of controls, the Swatantra Party is the most radical party in Opposition, pitched as it is against the Socialist Establishment with its twenty years of misrule.

In what condition do we find the Party to cope with its tasks? We would be lacking in candour if we were not to admit that a great deal needs to be done before we can cope with this challenge in a worthy manner. Having made an excellent start and become within a decade the biggest Opposition Party in the

country, since the General Elections in 1967 we have not only lost several by-elections but have also lost ground organisationally. The state of the Party's discipline leaves a great deal to be desired. Some individuals and certain groups of members in State Assemblies are behaving in a way which brings no prestige to our organisation. All this will have to stop if we are to meet this challenge. My own clear position in regard to the need for strict adherence to disciplined and ethical methods is well-known to you all. I am, therefore, confident that, in the light of the experience of the past two years, the newly elected National Executive and Central Parliamentary Board will take steps to curb activities of this nature which are so damaging to the credibility of the Party and to its future.

Discipline is not enough without dynamism and hard work. These are two sides of the same coin and one without the other would be inadequate for our task. The General Council of the Party at its meeting in New Delhi on November 15 and 16 has provided the necessary guidance through an important and worthwhile Mid-Term Report recording the balance sheet of the gains and losses for the last two and a half years and charting the Party's course during the next couple of years. It has not received the publicity it deserves. It will be one of the first tasks of the newly elected National Executive and State Executive Committees to get this document into the hands of every active member of the Party and to make them aware of what needs to be done between now and 1972.

Do we need to change or modify our policies? In my opinion, there is neither need nor call to change our policies. If there is one Party whose political, social and economic policies have stood the test of time, it is the Swatantra Party. If there is one Party whose warnings about the ruling Congress Party during the last ten years and the course it was following have come true, it is the Swatantra Party. We shall not lower our flag even an inch. It is for others who have been pursuing false paths to rectify their course.

At the same time, we must admit that we have failed effectively to put our policies across to the public at large. This is due to the lack of adequate cadres, of trained and disciplined Party workers who can act as a conveyor belt to carry the Party's policies and programmes to the remotest corners of this country. One of the first tasks of the Party, therefore, will be without further delay to recruit and train cadres of Party workers and instil in them a dedication to the values of freedom.

There is also room for improvement in the emphasis and orientation that we give to our activities. The Mid-Term Report has made several constructive

suggestions about implementing this programme. We must admit that there are sections of the people we have neglected, to whose problems we have not given adequate attention. Such, for instance, are Youth, Women, the Minorities, the Consumer, the Landless Labourer in the countryside and other under-privileged sections of the community. The fact that they are referred to in our Election Manifesto is not enough. We must prove to them that we are concerned for them and care for them. This can only be done when a large number of our Party workers show this concern concretely in the shape of what Gandhiji used to call "constructive work" in the service of these elements.

I have stated earlier that we are a Party that stands for a radical change in the social and economic policies that have been followed. We want to modernise our social structure, and we have nothing in common with obscurantists. The Swatantra Party has to prove to the people that it is not a party of the *status quo* but stands for such radical change in the policies of the Socialist Establishment as will bring prosperity to the masses of the people. Let those who have created the present mess in the country defend the *status quo*. We have no part or lot in it and have come into existence to change it.

#### The Need of the Day

The job that faces the country is bigger than any single Party can handle alone. To deal with the country's problems, to give it a clean and efficient public administration and rid it of its many evils and blemishes, is more than any one Party can manage.

The issue before the country today is not between the so-called "Left" and "Right", which are meaningless terms. The issue is between those who stand for the democratic way of life enshrined in our Constitution and those who accept totalitarian Communist doctrines. In this connection, the wise words of advice of Acharya J. B. Kripalani in Ahmedabad the other day that democratic parties should concentrate on providing good and clean government and stop competing with the Prime Minister in her demagoguery is to be welcomed.

A Front in which all patriots and democrats can get together, cutting across present party lines, is on the order of the day. It is the Party's task to be in the forefront of such a development. This can only be done if the conduct of our leaders and members is more ethical and dedicated than that of other Parties and if we can show that we are prepared to put the country before our Party.

Let it be our New Year resolve that together, with Rajaji's wise guidance, we prove worthy of the historic role assigned to us.

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The outgoing National Executive, the newly elected General Council and the new National Executive met in Madras on December 27 and 28, 1969.

#### NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

The outgoing Executive met briefly to recommend to the General Council the number of Vice-Presidents,

Treasurers, Joint Secretaries and members of the National Executive.

Mr. Masani praised the services rendered to the Party by Prof. Ranga who had been the Party's President for a decade. The Executive whole-heartedly endorsed the tribute paid to him.

Prof. Ranga regretted Mr. Dandekar's inability to be present due to ill-health. While hoping for his speedy recovery, Prof. Ranga paid compliments to the hard work put in by Mr. Dandekar as General Secretary. The Executive fully endorsed the sentiments expressed by the President and resolved to place on record his valuable services to the Party.

Rajaji spoke on the need for the Party to remain united and felt that the split in the Congress Party had made the Party's educative role easier.

### GENERAL COUNCIL

Apart from a two-hour discussion on Party organisation on the second day (December 28), the Council's time on the 27th and 28th was largely taken up with election of the office-bearers of the Party and members of the National Executive. A detailed report on the elections appears below.

Rajaji addressed the meeting and stressed the need for hard work to instal a good, efficient and honest government in Delhi.

### President's Acceptance Speech

The newly-elected President, Mr. M. R. Masani, delivered his acceptance speech on December 28. The text of his speech has been reproduced elsewhere in this issue.

### NEW NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

The new National Executive met in the afternoon of December 28.

## Third Party Elections

Organisational elections of the Swatantra Party were held for the third time concluding at the national level with the election of office bearers of the Party and members of the National Executive. The process which had begun in early September last year with the election of primary committees, was followed by elections at the district and state levels. While the first two Party elections were spread over a period of five months, the elections this time were completed in just a little under four months.

✓ The Party's Constitution as amended by the Fifth National Convention at Bhubaneswar brought in some changes in regard to membership. The first was a changeover to subscription based on the calendar year. In other words, irrespective of the month of enrolment, all subscriptions now expire on 31st December of each year, renewals being effected on or before 31st March of the following year. The next change was the conferring of concessional subscription for members belonging to scheduled castes and tribes and other backward classes who are required to pay only 50% of the normal membership and renewal fees. A

### Central Parliamentary Board

The Executive unanimously constituted the following Central Parliamentary Board:

#### Ex-Officio Members

##### President

MR. M. R. MASANI

##### General Secretary

DR. R. C. COOPER

##### Members

MR. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

(The following Leaders of the Party in Parliament and State Assemblies)

Prof. N. G. Ranga — Lok Sabha

Mr. Dahyabhai V. Patel — Rajya Sabha

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo — Orissa

Mr. Lakshman Singh — Rajasthan

of Dungarpur — Gujarat

Mr. Jaideepsinh of Baria — Andhra

Mr. G. Latchanna

### The Party's Political Attitude

Arising out of the Mid-Term Report which the (old) General Council adopted at its meeting in New Delhi on November 15 and 16, 1969, it was decided to spell out in greater detail the Party's attitude to the current political situation and in particular to other political parties. Such a statement of policy will be adopted at the next meeting of the National Executive.

### Papers on Policy Matters

The Executive decided to prepare well documented position papers on subjects like Transport and Communications, Food and Agriculture, Unemployment and Housing.

third change was the introduction of Election Tribunals at the state and national levels to settle disputes that might arise during the elections.

August 31 had been decided upon as the last date for enrolment for purposes of the third Party elections. All those who were enrolled on or before that date for the year 1969 or had renewed their subscription for that year were entitled to participate in the third Party elections.

The total enrolment as on August 31, 1969, including life members, (viz., those who had been enrolled as Life Members on or before December 31, 1963 on payment of Rs. 10/- but had not exercised their option to convert their life membership into that of worker or life worker) totalled 52,003 as against 47,151 on the rolls as on June 30, 1967. Renewals were however deplorably poor and the large majority of those on the rolls on August 31, 1969 represented fresh enrolment.

Table I gives State/Region-wise breakdown of this enrolment.

As on the last two occasions, enrolment figures of

each State/Region were certified after scrutiny at various State/Regional offices by the following representatives appointed for the purpose by the National Headquarters:

Mr. P. H. Krishna Rao, Mr. Sundermani Patel, Col. H. R. Pasricha, Mr. Budhi Prakash, Mr. T. Krishnamma and Mr. Aliyar Singh.

The reports submitted by these representatives represent a mixed bag. While some units were complimented on the impeccable manner in which enrolment procedures had been adhered to and records maintained others had paid scant respect to procedures and had not kept their registers and books in good order.

The Primary Unit Committee is at the base of the Party's organisation and the Party's health depends to a large extent on the spreadover of organised primary unit committees. Of the 1,736 primary unit areas, only 657 primary units could elect Primary Unit Committees. In other words, as many as 1127° units remain to be organised. Similarly, at the district level of the 238 districts, only in 88 was it found possible to have duly elected district committees, leaving as many as 72° districts unorganised.

At the State/Regional level, there is a slight improvement. As against 12 organised State/Regional units, we now have 14, the new entrants being Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir.

But the sad fact remains that the states of Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal continue to be without any party organisation.

While the Election Commission has recognised us as one of the seven National Parties, our claim to this description will really be meaningful only if the Party is organised in all or at least most of these states.

Table II gives a breakdown of organisation at the District level and Table III, a comparative study of the development of Party organisation at the Primary unit level.

Though the one-man election tribunals at the State/Regional level and the five-man national election tribunal at the National level had been set up, election disputes were few and these have either been disposed of or are being processed presently. The following constituted these Tribunals at the State and National levels.

#### One-Man Tribunals

Mr. N. S. Varadachari, Mr. H. M. Patel, Mr. N. K. Somani, Prof. P. J. Shroff, Sardar Basant Singh, Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy, Mr. R. V. Murthy, Mr. D. N. Patodia, Col. H. R. Pasricha, Mr. V. T. Sreenivasan, and Mr. Parmanand Kejriwal.

#### National Election Tribunal

Mr. K. M. Koushik, Mr. C. Narayanaswamy, Mr. Rajballabh Mishra, Mr. Harihar Patel, Mr. Y. G. Gowd.

The following Returning Officers presided over the first meetings of State/Regional Councils and conducted the elections of office bearers and members of

State/Regional Committees and the State/Regional representatives on the General Council:

Mr. V. T. Sreenivasan, Mr. H. M. Patel, Mr. N. K. Somani, Dr. R. C. Cooper, Mr. K. Sundaram, Raja Venkatappa Naik, Mr. R. V. Murthy, Mr. M. R. Masani, Mr. B. P. Singh, Mr. Piloo Mody, Mr. T. Krishnamma and Col. H. R. Pasricha.

The final round of elections took place when the General Council met in Madras on December 27 and 28, 1969 to elect the Office Bearers of the Party and Members of the National Executive. As on the last occasion, there was keen contest particularly for the offices of the five Vice-Presidents, five Joint Secretaries and for membership of the National Executive. The posts of President, General Secretary and two Treasurers were uncontested. The Returning Officer at the meeting of the General Council was Mr. K. M. Koushik, MP.

The following is the composition of the General Council :

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Andhra           | 20 |
| Bombay           | 9  |
| Delhi            | 5  |
| Gujarat          | 20 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 9  |
| Kashmir          | 5  |
| Kerala           | 20 |
| Maharashtra      | 3  |
| Mysore           | 10 |
| Orissa           | 20 |
| Punjab           | 9  |
| Rajasthan        | 20 |
| Tamil Nadu       | 20 |
| Uttar Pradesh    | 18 |

The General Council approved the outgoing National Executive's recommendation in regard to the number of Office Bearers and members of the Executive Committee as follows:

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| President                         |    |
| Vice-Presidents                   | 5  |
| General Secretary                 |    |
| Treasurers                        | 2  |
| Joint Secretaries                 | 5  |
| Members of the National Executive | 20 |

The following were elected unanimously:

|                   |                                                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| President         | : Mr. M. R. Masani                                |
| General Secretary | : Dr. R. C. Cooper                                |
| Treasurers        | : Mr. H. P. Nanda, and<br>Mr. Lalchand Hirachand. |

#### Vice-Presidents

There were eleven nominations for the five vacancies of Vice-Presidents. Three nomination papers were rejected on the ground that the persons so nominated were neither present nor were their letters of consent available. For the remaining eight candidates, elections were held by secret ballot with the following results:

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| 1. Mr. R. N. Singh Deo  | 97 votes |
| 2. Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy | 91 „     |

\* Information not available in respect of certain States (Please see Tables II & III).

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| 3. Smt. Gayatri Devi      | 91 votes |
| 4. Mr. N. Dandeker        | 86 "     |
| 5. Mr. Dahyabhai V. Patel | 79 "     |
| <i>Unsuccessful</i>       |          |
| 6. Mr. G. Latchanna       | 61 "     |
| 7. Mr. J. M. Lobo Prabhu  | 43 "     |
| 8. Mr. Piloo Mody         | 35 "     |

#### Joint Secretaries

For the five vacancies of Joint Secretaries, there were 12 nominations. One nomination paper was rejected by the Returning Officer on the ground that the person concerned was not present nor was his letter of consent available. Of the remaining 11 nominees, 4 withdrew leaving 7 in the field.

Elections which were held by secret ballot produced the following results:

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Dr. H. V. Hande   | 107 votes |
| 2. Mr. Harihar Patel | 104 "     |
| 3. Mr. N. K. Somani  | 99 "      |
| 4. Prof. R. K. Amin  | 92 "      |
| 5. Mr. Madhu Mehta   | 89 "      |

#### *Unsuccessful*

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| 6. Sardar Basant Singh | 45 " |
| 7. Thakur Bikram Singh | 12 " |

#### Members of the National Executive

There were as many as 51 nominations for the 20 vacancies. Since seven of the nominees had already been elected either as Vice-Presidents or Joint Secretaries, their nominations were deemed to have been withdrawn leaving 44 in the field. Of these 3 withdrew. Thus a contest was inevitable with 41 nominees contesting the 20 vacancies. In the election that ensued, by secret ballot, the following results emerged:

|                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari    | 109 votes |
| 2. Prof. N. G. Ranga         | 102 "     |
| 3. Mr. G. Latchanna          | 94 "      |
| 4. Mr. S. S. Mariswamy       | 90 "      |
| 5. Mr. J. M. Lobo Prabhu     | 88 "      |
| 6. Mr. H. M. Patel           | 83 "      |
| 7. Mr. Piloo Mody            | 80 "      |
| 8. Mr. K. Sundaram           | 79 "      |
| 9. Mr. P. K. Deo             | 76 "      |
| 10. Sardar Basant Singh      | 74 "      |
| 11. Mr. D. N. Patodia        | 71 "      |
| 12. Mr. Budhi Prakash        | 66 "      |
| 13. Mrs. Louella Lobo Prabhu | 64 "      |
| 14. Mr. J. Mohammed Imam     | 63 "      |
| 15. Mr. J. Vallikkappen      | 60 "      |
| 16. Miss Kusum Kumari Joshi  | 54 "      |
| 17. Mr. N. K. Ganapaiah      | 53 "      |
| 18. Col. H. R. Pasricha      | 52 "      |
| 19. Mr. Y. G. Gowd           | 52 "      |
| 20. Mr. Tribikram Tripathy   | 44 "      |

#### *Unsuccessful*

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| 21. Mr. Loknath Mishra    | 40 " |
| 22. Mr. V. T. Sreenivasan | 40 " |

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| 23. Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh  | 39 votes |
| 24. Dr. M. Santosham        | 36 "     |
| 25. Mr. Abdul Wahid Raina   | 34 "     |
| 26. Sardar Harbhajan Singh  | 32 "     |
| 27. Mr. Iqbal Marwah        | 31 "     |
| 28. Mr. Suketu Shah         | 29 "     |
| 29. Mr. Harihar Das         | 27 "     |
| 30. Mr. V. N. Patil         | 26 "     |
| 31. Mr. O. P. Pathik        | 26 "     |
| 32. Mr. G. Hanumantha Rao   | 25 "     |
| 33. Mr. Ahmedullah Khan     | 23 "     |
| 34. Mr. Yatiraj Praharaj    | 19 "     |
| 35. Mr. Sundermani Patel    | 16 "     |
| 36. Thakur Bikram Singh     | 7 "      |
| 37. Mr. Gurbaksh Singh Bedi | 7 "      |
| 38. Mr. K. K. Sanyal        | 7 "      |
| 39. Mr. S. M. Abdul Karim   | 6 "      |
| 40. Mr. D. Chaturvedi       | 6 "      |
| 41. Mr. M. C. Sai           | 4 "      |

Unanimous elections were the exception rather than the rule in most elections at the State level. There was active canvassing and a desire to shoulder the burdens of office. This is encouraging in as much as it explodes a pet theory of the Party's opponents that the Swatantra Party is on its way out. If this was so, then why should there be such healthy competition for taking on what is undoubtedly a difficult task?

The third Party elections saw many new faces taking office or membership of Committees and Councils. The following details in this connection will interest readers:

#### ✓ State/Regional Committees

| Office              | Total No. of incumbents | New |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| Presidents          | 14                      | 9   |
| Vice-Presidents     | 49                      | 36  |
| General Secretaries | 14                      | 7   |
| Joint Secretaries   | 45                      | 36  |
| Treasurers          | 19                      | 12  |
| Members             | 222                     | 171 |

#### ✓ National Executive

| Office            | Total No. of incumbents | New |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| President         | 1                       | 1   |
| Vice-Presidents   | 5                       | 3   |
| General Secretary | 1                       | 1   |
| Treasurer         | 2                       | 1   |
| Joint Secretaries | 5                       | 5   |
| Members           | 20                      | 12  |

The National Headquarters is presently preparing an analysis of the composition and character of our membership based on the register entries that were received from State/Regional Units and hopes to publish it in a subsequent issue of the *Newsletter*.

The National Headquarters would like to take this opportunity to convey its grateful thanks to the representatives who scrutinised enrolment forms and

## Right to Property

The Jamboree that was held recently in Bombay last month started with a characteristic slogan "Quit Poverty". And what followed was a corollary to this — "Grab Property". This move to do away with the fundamental right to property has dangerous portents of depriving ultimately the individual of whatever he may possess and make him virtually and otherwise a "property" of the State. Orwell when he wrote his famous novel "1984" would certainly not have dreamt that Mrs. Gandhi and her junior hatchetmen would be the main actors in this drama loaded with frightening possibilities.

The Swatantra Party has already set up a programme of asking its workers and members to immediately start educating people in rural areas against Mrs. Gandhi's move to deprive the poor farmers and small shopkeepers in millions of India's villages of their small but hard earned lands and properties.

Messrs. Loknath Mishra, R. R. Singh Deo, K. C. Panda, D. Amat, G. C. Naik, D. N. Deb, M. Majhi and V. Narasimha Rao, all Swatantra MPs in a rejoinder issued on December 6, 1969, asserted that the right to property was "inalienable" and should not be diluted. They regretted that some Congressmen belonging to the faction now ruling at the Centre had brought in the name of Mahatma Gandhi in support of this move.

"We would like to remind them that Gandhiji moved a Resolution at the Karachi Congress wherein he strongly supported the idea of right to property", they added.

### Dr. R. C. Cooper

The following press statement issued by the General Secretary, Dr. R. C. Cooper, on 26th November 1969, warned that the Party would oppose vehemently any move to tinker with the Constitution in respect of this:

"Soon after its formation, some sections of the Prime Minister's New Congress Party demanded an amendment of the Constitution to remove the clause relating to the Fundamental Right to Property. This is a subtle move to deprive the peasant proprietor of his land and the small village shop-keeper, along with other businessmen, of his shop. And now some members of the rival Congress Group have come out in wholehearted support of this move.

"Both Groups of the Congress are competing with each other to show that they are more Marxist than Karl Marx himself in an effort to project to the people of India an image of being 'radical socialists'. Both sections seem to have a very poor assessment of the native intelligence and commonsense of the average Indian particularly in the villages.

"Some years ago, the late Prime Minister Nehru, in spite of vehement protests, rushed through an amendment of the Constitution which made the compensation for take-over of agricultural lands non-justiciable, after assuring the people that it will not be misused.

"In fact several Congress Governments, at the State level, resorted to legislation which virtually amounted to expropriation of agricultural lands. The late Mr. Nehru himself wrote to some of the Congress Chief Ministers, particularly Dr. B. C. Roy of West Bengal, urging payment of fair compensation. I know for a fact that Dr. Roy turned a deaf ear to his appeal. Later, Mr Nehru himself admitted to me that he was helpless.

"The Swatantra Party warns the people of India that this their last chance. Any move to tinker with the Constitution must be vehemently opposed."

### Bombay

At a Press Conference on 19th December, 1969, Mr. Lalchand Hirachand, Treasurer, Swatantra Party and President, Bombay Regional Unit, said that the talk of abolition of fundamental rights to property was very mischievous. Commenting on the report of the economic panel of the (Marxist) Congress Party he said that it would take away the incentive for work and affect the nation's economic development. "Our pseudo-communists" he added, "are outdoing the communists themselves". The Party proposes to launch a massive campaign against the proposed abolition of property rights, he said.

### Mysore

The Mysore State Unit has launched a State-wide campaign against the move to take away the fundamental right to property. The campaign was inaugurated on January 2, at Bangalore by Prof. N. G. Ranga, M.P., the Party's leader in the Lok Sabha.

Prof. Ranga warned that Democracy will be imperilled if property rights are taken away. Instancing the happenings in Kerala and West Bengal to small landholders, he asked the gathering to imagine their plight, if one morning, the few house owners were pushed out of their homes or asked to dwell in a room by the houseless with the support of the Government.

Mr. N. K. Ganapaiah, President, Mysore State Unit, who presided, said that nothing but slavery would be the lot of citizens if property rights were denied.

Mr. M. R. Janardana, Vice-President of the State Unit welcomed the gathering and Mr. A. S. Nagabhushana Rao proposed a vote of thanks.

## By-Elections

The Party retained the Jeypore seat in Orissa in the recently held by-election. Mr. P. N. Singh Deo defeated the Congress Candidate by 3,369 votes. Readers would be interested to know that this seat was won by (late) Mr. Ramaseshiah, who was the

State Health Minister. In the 1967 election the difference was only two hundred and odd votes. The Congress candidate polled 5,910 votes while Mr. Singh Deo secured 9,279 votes.

## Patriots Should Quit P.M.'s Group

Addressing a news conference in Bangalore on January 2, Prof. N. G. Ranga, M.P., and Leader of the Party in the Lok Sabha, said that if a sufficient number of patriotic Congressmen are not ready to leave Mrs. Gandhi's side and go over to the Opposition, it would be intolerable for the country and the Parliament to continue the present political stalemate — a stalemate where the country was being ruled by a minority government propped up by Communists and other elements.

He, however, felt a mid-term election was in the best interest of the country. He said that efforts were afoot in Parliament to forge an understanding between all democratic parties on a minimum programme with each party free to go on its own as far as the policies outside the programme were concerned.

As regards the Swatantra Party, he said it welcomed the split in the Congress, which, in any case, was long overdue. The Party would judge both the groups on merits though his personal view was that Mr. Nijalingappa and Mr. Morarji Desai stood for certain public standards and good government.

Discussing the Jagjivan Ram affair in detail, Prof. Ranga charged Mrs. Gandhi with foisting on the country a leadership that lacked moral standards and which could not promote efficiency and honesty in administration. By making him president of her Party Mrs. Gandhi had set a very low standard of morals. It would be worse if she made him a Deputy Prime Minister, he said, if the reports appearing in the press were true.

### ✓ Mrs. Gandhi has no Mandate

Addressing a crowded Press Conference in New Delhi on December 31, Mr. M. R. Masani, MP, the newly elected President of the Swatantra Party declared that Mrs. Indira Gandhi's "mandate" to rule had expired, after the split in her Party. She should therefore dissolve Parliament and seek a fresh verdict. He suggested the coming together "in a broad-based democratic front" of all patriots and democrats cutting across Party lines as the task facing the country was bigger than any single Party alone could handle.

More specifically he envisaged the prospects of a dialogue between the Swatantra Party, the Congress (Opposition), the Jana Sangh, the PSP, the SSP and others to provide the nation with an alternative Government.

While not appreciating the Jana Sangh's latest emphasis on the need to "Indianize" certain categories of people in the country, Mr. Masani however said "it was noteworthy that the Party at its Patna Conference had given the call for the coming together of national and democratic parties". The Swatantra Party, Mr. Masani pointed out, "stood for a radical change in social and economic policies." "We want to modernise our social structure and we have nothing in common with obscurantists. The Swatantra Party", he added, "has to prove to the people that it is not a Party of the *status quo*."

Mr. Masani said that there are millions of young people wanting a change. But "we have nothing in common with the ideas as propounded by Mr. Vajpayee. We believe in modern techniques and modern administration and catching up with the rest of the world, he declared".

Notwithstanding this, Mr. Masani did not think that the differences with the Jana Sangh were so insuperable that they cannot be negotiated. The same held good for the PSP and the SSP. Everything in fact is negotiable. The only thing that is not negotiable is

the security of the country and its take over by totalitarian forces, he declared. ✓

As regards the Congress (Opposition), Mr. Masani said that he could only repeat the wise words of advice given to it at its Ahmedabad session by Acharya Kripalani when he asked it to concentrate on providing a good and clean government and stop competing with the Prime Minister in her demagoguery.

Mr. Masani however said that he was not looking to building of a broad based front immediately in the Parliamentary sphere. Such a front of his concept would be much bigger thing than the five or six of our Parties can put together. "I would like non-Party people to come together into such a Front. If this can be created, it would be a bigger job done than our mere effort to provide an alternative government".

While talking about the Bombay Session of the Ruling Faction of the Congress, Mr. Masani said that what had been overlooked was that Mrs. Gandhi had no longer the mandate to carry out the policies of her Party which was elected to power in 1967. Democratic practice now requires that she should seek a fresh vote of confidence from the people and if she does not, it would be clear that she does not have confidence of the people. He had no doubt that in a new election Mrs. Gandhi's Party "will be decisively defeated."

Mrs. Gandhi's popularity had been grossly exaggerated. The support that she received was only in the urban section and that too mainly among the two categories of people—a class of businessmen who wanted to make a quick rupee and the Marxist lumpen proletariat. Never before was there such a need for a change in the Government as now. The stability of the country demanded it. What more danger can be there for the security and stability than the fact that the country is now being ruled by a Minority Government depending on Communists for their support.

Mr. Masani said that the nation needed a simple four-point programme: a clean and efficient administration, restoration of law and order particularly in places like West Bengal, hard work and increased production and a pragmatic approach free from ideological pre-concepts.

The economic programme that emanated from the Bombay session of Mrs. Gandhi's Party failed to tackle many problems like price level and the rising tide of unemployment. There is "galloping" inflation in the country. Additional currency of Rs. 50 – 53 crores had been pumped in the week ending December 12, 1969, and another Rs. 125 crores in the fortnight before that.

Finally, the attempt to do away with the Fundamental Right to Property was fraught with danger. The right to property is the basic right of the individual to his environment and from this sprang other rights like freedom of expression.

✓ Mr. Masani said that the motive behind this was to take away farms from farmers and to strike at the root of peasant proprietorship that existed in India.

✓ As in 1959, after the Nagpur Session of the Congress Party and as in 1963, again, the Swatantra Party fought the Congress attempt to enforce collectivised co-operatives, so would the Party fight again, tooth and nail against depriving the farmer of his land.

As regards coalitions, Mr. Masani said that they have worked satisfactorily in Germany, Italy and the Scandinavian countries, where there was hardly any instability. The Swatantra Party stood for a combination of all patriotic and democratic elements, "leaving out only the communists and those aligned with them."

✓ The Swatantra Party, he said, is a Party of change. It wanted to liberalise the people from the shackles of controls and statism. Its policy was one of free competitive market and the Gandhian theory of trusteeship.

### To All Swatantra Workers

YOUR MEMBERSHIP HAS EXPIRED ON 31 DECEMBER  
1969. PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ON OR  
BEFORE 31 MARCH 1970.

## from the General Secretary's desk

Dear Friend:

The text of the Speech delivered by Mr. Masani while accepting the office of President has been reproduced elsewhere in this issue.

Rajaji who despite the strain imposed on him sat through almost the entire meeting of the General Council, addressed the members and gave them the

benefit of his wise counsel. Luckily, he has, in the front page article of *Swarajya* (January 10), touched on many of the points he made in his address to the General Council. The article deserves the serious attention of every Party member and I therefore decided to devote this column to his article.

### EDUCATE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE SPURNING CHEAP DEMAGOGY

The Swatantra Party begins a fresh two-year period with a newly elected national executive after completing its first decade. It is my pleasure and duty to give to the party my most sincere blessings. Whatever may be the misconceptions of people, including even some of the party members themselves, the Swatantra Party is a poor party which cannot spend as much money as the present election procedure entails. Self-supporting candidates hesitate to declare their difference with the Congress and to stand for election to the National and State legislatures on behalf of the Swatantra Party. If and when the procedure at elections is drastically altered and the Government takes over, as it should, much of the expense now incurred by candidates and parties, the Swatantra Party can attract the right type of candidates and make good in the measure of the merits of that party. Till then we have to be content with the undoubted influence we exert and not worry ourselves with thoughts of achieving direct power. We are an educating body rather than a power-seeking group, and we should accept and be proud of this role, vigorously adhering to our economic and political policies without selling ourselves for popularity among the, as yet very gullible, people. Our educational function is our *swadharma*, to use a *Gita* phrase, and we should zealously seek to fulfil that function, and not abandon it by way of compromise in order to get votes. In particular, this warning is for candidates in their local and individual electioneering work. The party's quality ultimately depends on the sum-total of the qualities and practices of the individual candidates working in the name of the party. If half-a-dozen of our members or candidates indulge in drink or in any morally wrong practices, the whole party gets the bad name by the laws that govern reputation.

Let us not be afraid of bad names hurled at us by those who are in the present ruling group's bandwagon. We are called 'reactionaries' by people who are ignorant of economic truths and of the realities of life and by people who dole out slogans and promises

for obtaining votes. Let us not be afraid of any man or woman, whatever be the power wielded by him or her. Let our loyalty centre on economic truth and the political wisdom which we have been taught by Gandhiji. Truth must be our lodestar. Let us be afraid of nothing except of deflecting from honesty and of being hypocrites. Let interested people call us 'reactionaries' if they like. Honesty and economic wisdom are ancient rules and in that respect let us be old-fashioned, whatever bad names may be given to us by ignorant and dishonest opponents. Let us not be afraid of slogans invented by them, however widely and loudly they may be shouted from seats of power or by those who receive benefits from those in power. Loyalty to our *swadharma*, which is to educate people out of their ignorance, must mark the activities of our party and of our members.

We cannot hope to raise the poor to better conditions of life or equality with others, as we wish to do, unless and until the nation as a whole increases its gross production in an adequate degree. This latter condition is a necessary prerequisite for what it vaguely talked and-sloganed about as 'socialism'. The Swatantra Party works for the fulfilment of this prerequisite. Present-day socialist talk is all hate-centred. Hate does not produce wealth but impedes the processes of production.

We should educate wage-earners and make them realize that under authoritarian socialism they will be reduced to the status of serfdom and deprived of the rights they now have by way of collective bargaining. The condition of workers in Soviet Russia and the dictatorship exercised over them from Kremlin and the state of affairs in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other countries should be brought to the notice of the workers in our country so that they may realize what their condition would be if India adopted Congress Statism or the communist way of life.

About the Swatantra Party, we do not need any compliment or appreciation beyond what Babu Rajendra Prasad expressed a couple of years ago.

During later days he (referring to me) has felt that in a democracy a well-organized Opposition is as necessary as the party in power. With that end in view he has founded what is called the Swatantra Party which has a programme of its own, which differs from that of the Congress and can very well form an alternative to the Congress programme, if it can gain the support of the people. With the exception of the Communist Party no other party has got such a clear-cut and well-defined programme differing from that of the Congress as the Swatantra Party has.

Our mission of educating and taking people out of wrong economics and out of racial, religious and class prejudices and conflicts has been rendered easier now than it was until recently. The debacle of the Congress has brought about this result. More than twenty years of trial have been given to the Congress Party to justify their wrong notions about how to bring about general social welfare. The failure is too patent to fail to help us in promoting right policies. It is easier now for us to convince the people of the truths the Swatantra Party stands for. We should take this opportunity and put forth all our strength in the task.

If, as I have stated, owing to the expensiveness of elections, and owing to apathy or fear on the part of those who can afford the expense, they do not come forward to stand as Swatantra candidates, and we do not secure as many seats in Parliament and in the State legislatures as we ought to secure, let us not think we have failed. Our influence is surely felt what-

ever be our numbers. We have seen it even in our present experience. The time is not far off when the reform of electoral procedure will come about and financial hurdles will then be immensely diminished and truth will have the chance to which it is entitled in democracy. The time is also not far off when all the people who can help us with funds will realize their duty to do so in order that wrong and futile economic policies may be replaced by what will effectively further national prosperity and leave a better India for our children to live in.

✓ Other parties believing in democracy who have not fallen victims to the lure of Statism can join with us and reduce the hurdles we have to get over and save the country from Congress totalitarianism making India a satellite of Moscow. But at present I see that they are all easy victims of illusory programmes of socialism-in-a-hurry and compete with one another in futile extremism and promise to build up welfare without adequate production. They are tempted to declare policies to get votes anyhow and reach the means to power. Let us be patient. These other parties cannot but see the truth in course of time and co-operate with the Swatantra Party. Let others co-operate or not, let us be ready to co-operate when others see the wisdom of cooperation. And until that time, let us be quite content to work alone, loyal to truth and wisdom and spurning cheap demagogy.

Jai Swatantra

R. C. COOPER  
General Secretary

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