

We resume after a lapse of over ten months. In the Central Office's preoccupation with the national election campaign of the Party, the *Newsletter* was unfortunately the first casualty. We must apologise to our readers for this lapse. Though we could advance many excuses we do not wish to offer any.

The period of silence observed by the *Newsletter* has been eventful culminating in the General Elections of February 1967 which changed the political complexion of the country. The Swatantra Party has emerged stronger although not to the extent we had hoped. Elsewhere in this issue we report in some detail on the Party's performance in the General elections.

Partywise, the major event in the last ten months was the Fourth National Convention held in New Delhi on December 12 and 13, 1966. The Central Parliamentary Board and the National Executive met at regular intervals. This issue begins with a report on the meetings of these two bodies held in New Delhi on May 20 and 21, 1967.

Central Meetings in New Delhi

The Central Parliamentary Board met on the morning of May 20 with the President, Prof. N. G. Ranga, in the Chair.

Party's Strength in Parliament

Meeting as it did on the eve of the Budget session of Parliament the Board had a look at the strength of the Party's Groups in both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha — 45 members, Rajya Sabha — 13 members). It heard Mr. Masani report on the unsuccessful efforts to forge a democratic opposition bloc in Parliament.

By-elections

The Board reviewed the results of the by-elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies in which the Party had set up candidates.

The Board thanked the Srikakulam electorate and Mr. G. Latchanna for returning the Party's President Prof. Ranga to Parliament with a thumping majority, but regretted that the Party lost in the by-election to the Lok Sabha from Bhavnagar. The Party had contested two by-elections to the State Assemblies of Gujarat and Madras respectively. While Mr. H. M. Patel, the Party's nominee was successful from Dhrangadhra, our candidate in the Thirumangalam Assembly Constituency, in Madras, lost.

In the Rajya Sabha by-elections we had set up two candidates, one in Orissa and the other in Assam. The

Orissa candidate, Mr. B. K. Deo, was elected unopposed, but our candidate from Assam, Prof. Martin Narayan Majaw, was defeated.

Developments in State Legislatures

The Board then went on to discuss developments in the various State Legislatures.

Uttar Pradesh

The Party's opposition to compulsory procurement is well known. It was natural therefore that the support accorded to this measure by the Party in U.P. should have caused surprise. Accordingly, the Board considered carefully the reasons for this apparent contravention of the Party's policy. It was noted with satisfaction that in its initial form, the procurement scheme was strongly opposed by the State Unit of the Party; but in view of the extensive modifications in the scheme made by the Chief Minister of U.P. mainly at the instance of our Party in U.P., it was eventually decided by it to withdraw its objections to the scheme. In view of this and in the light of circumstances obtaining in that State, the Board agreed that the line taken by the Party in U.P. was justified.

The policy of the State Party Unit in U.P. of giving conditional support to the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal Government while reserving the right to re-examine its support in the light of policies adopted by the

Samyukta Vidhayak Dal Government from time to time, was also approved by the Board.

The Board noted that a member of the Party, Mr. Akhtar Ali Khan, M.L.A., was the Minister for Excise in the U.P. Government.

Orissa

The Board complimented the Orissa Government for abolishing land revenue expeditiously. It also expressed satisfaction with the manner in which the Swatantra-led coalition Government was functioning.

Haryana

The decision of the State Party Unit in Haryana in not permitting any legislator of the Party to join the United Front Government but extending to it conditional support from outside was approved.

The Party in Parliament

While reviewing the functioning of the Party's group in the last session of Parliament, the Board heard Mr. Masani's report on the efforts made under his initiative to arrive at a consensus of opinion in regard to the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, the President and Vice President.

While deploring the tactics of the Congress Party in general and of the Prime Minister in particular in thwarting these efforts, the Board commended the Group's performance, particularly because we had been able to achieve in many matters the tacit acceptance of the leadership of the opposition parties by Mr. Masani and had been able to bring about a measure of operational unity between them on most issues.

Lok Pal and Lok Ayukt

The proposal to appoint a Lok Pal and Lok Ayukt on the lines of the Ombudsman which the Swatantra Party has been repeatedly demanding was welcomed by the Board.

National Executive

General Secretary

Meeting in the afternoon of 20th May and the forenoon of the following day the Executive began the consideration of a request from Mr. Masani for an extension of his leave of absence as General Secretary. At an earlier meeting of the National Executive, on March 15, Mr. Masani had informed the Executive that, in view of the strain of election campaigning on his health and the operation he had to undergo he wished to go on leave for a couple of months at the end of the last session of Parliament. Mr. Dandeker had agreed to officiate in his absence. At the meeting of the Executive on May 20, Mr. Masani said he felt

compelled to request an extension of leave in view of the heavy work involved on his acceptance of nomination as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee as desired by the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Group. He also conveyed to the meeting that Mr. Dandeker had kindly agreed to carry on as Officiating General Secretary till the end of Mr. Masani's term of office at the end of 1967. The National Executive approved of the arrangement.

New State Committees

Two new *ad hoc* State Executive Committees have been brought into existence by the National Executive in the Punjab and Bihar respectively.

Punjab

The Punjab *ad hoc* Committee replaces the one dissolved at the same meeting of the Executive. The following are the members of the newly constituted Committee:

Mr. Sant Prakash Singh — *President*.
Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman
Col. Naunihal Singh Mann
Sardar Gurcharan Singh
Brig. Gurbachan Singh
Mr. Prem Nath Mayor
Major Naurang Singh
Mr. Madan Saggi
Sardar Basant Singh — *General Secretary*

Bihar

Ever since the Bihar Committee was dissolved in August 1964 the Party's work in that State was being attended to by a branch of the Central Office at Patna. While the Party fared poorly in the elections in that State, it has fortunately been able to attract to its fold several responsible workers and members. The decision of an eminent independent trade unionist in Bihar, Mr. T. Parmanand, to join the Party encouraged the Central Office in venturing to recommend the setting up of a small *ad hoc* State Committee of four consisting of:

Mr. T. Parmanand — *Convenor*
Mr. Jitendra Kumar Singh — *Treasurer*
Mr. Nathumal Dokania, M.L.A.
Mr. Yashwant Kumar Choudhary M.L.A.

This recommendation was approved by the National Executive; and the new Committee was given power to recommend five more persons to be co-opted to the Committee.

Party Elections

On the request of some members and State Units it was decided to postpone the last date for enrolment

of members to June 30, 1967. The following is now the revised scheduled of Party elections:

Last date for enrolment of Workers and Life Workers for purposes of Party elections	.. June 30, 1967
Last date for receipt of Register of membership entries and Centre's quota of subscription	.. July 15, 1967
Conclusion of scrutiny of Workers/Life Workers registers and their verification	.. August 15, 1967
Completion of elections at the Primary level	.. Sept. 15, 1967
Completion of elections at District level	.. Sept. 30, 1967
Completion of election for State Committees	.. Oct. 15, 1967
Completion of election for General Council	.. Oct. 30, 1967
Election of National Executive by General Council	.. Dec. 1, 1967
Assumption of office by new National Executive	.. Dec. 1, 1967

A Sub-Committee to decide on any modifications required to existing election procedure (prescribed in 1964) and to consider any issues that may arise in the conduct of the elections, was appointed consisting of Mr. Dandekar, Mr. S. S. Mariswamy and Mr. Sundermani Patel.

The procedure for party elections is expected to be ready for distribution to State Units by the end of June.

Resolutions

The National Executive adopted resolutions on the following subjects, the texts of which form Annexure "A" to this issue:

- i. Gherao
- ii. Congress Working Committee's Resolution on Economic Policy.
- iii. Famine and Drought Situation
- iv. Mr. Chagla's Statement on South East Asia.

The Dignity of Parliamentary Democracy

An important issue on which the National Executive took a policy decision had to do with the unrestrained behaviour of certain members of the Opposition Groups (other than Swatantra) in Parliament. The Executive took the firm view that the plea of Opposition Unity should not come in the way of senior members of our Group dissociating themselves from and when necessary expressing disapproval of

behaviour which brought parliamentary institutions into ridicule or discredit.

Towards a Government of Democratic Unity

The post-election phenomenon of "United Front" Governments being formed in some States with the assistance of defections from the Congress Party attracted serious thought by the National Executive. Did the Party consider such developments to be helpful to the growth of sound policies based on democratic institutions and practices? Would the Party support or participate in such Governments despite the inclusion of Communists in them? If not, what solution had the Party to offer which while fulfilling people's aspirations would preserve democratic institutions? These were some of the questions which were debated at the Executive meeting at some length.

The answers to these questions were unanimous. The Executive was convinced that the formation of patchwork Governments where a small number of Congressmen crossed the floor merely to bring down the Government and/or to enable non-Congress coalitions to be formed was unworkable in the long run. Such arrangements while being unstable would merely afford opportunities to Communists and extreme Socialists to entrench themselves in strategic positions and extend their grip on the country. The Executive further felt that the almost inevitable failure of such governments could only lead either to the Congress being returned to power with greater strength in the next election or to the failure of democratic institutions. In any event, the Executive was unanimous in rejecting any proposal to participate in any Government which included Communists (with the temporary exception of U.P. where, under very special circumstances, the Party had permitted a member of the Swatantra Party to join the Charan Singh Ministry, making it clear at the same time that this was being done as a very special case and would not be treated as a precedent).

Party Organisation

A discussion on Party organisation in the context of the recent general elections listed several causes for the Party not faring as well as it should have in the elections. Among them were:

- a. wrong choice of candidates, many of whom were nominated at the last moment;
- b. failure to arrive at electoral understanding in certain States and the unsatisfactory working of such understanding in some other States;
- c. bad management, especially in certain States where the Party had hoped to do particularly well;
- d. the fact that almost every responsible national leader and office-bearer was himself a candidate, thus leaving the campaign leaderless; and

- e. the absence of disciplined cadres of workers and of a Youth Wing.

Youth Wing.

The Executive after listing the causes proposed expeditiously with a consideration of the cures, beginning with the decision to set up a Youth Wing.

At the meeting of the Executive in March this year a Sub-Committee headed by the Party's Vice-President Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy was set up to submit a scheme for the proposed Youth Wing. The scheme was submitted to the National Executive on May 20th. The Executive agreed in principle with the scheme, asked the Central Office to examine the details in consultation with Prof. Ruthnaswamy, and also to circulate the scheme to State Units for their comments before it was finalised.

To enable readers of the *Newsletter* to offer their comments we publish (as Annexure "B" to this issue) the scheme as submitted by the Youth Wing Sub-Committee.

Training Camps

The Executive also decided to organise training camps in various parts of the country to impart ideological, organisational and propaganda training to

Party cadres. On the request of the Executive Mr. Masani undertook the responsibility of organising such camps.

Swatantra Parliamentary Group

When Prof. Ranga the Party's President, who was also the Leader of the Party's Group in the Lok Sabha in the last Parliament, was unhappily defeated in the General Elections, the mantle of leadership of the Group fell on the Group's Deputy Leader and General Secretary of the Party, Mr. M. R. Masani. Even while so accepting the leadership of the Group, Mr. Masani had made it clear that he wished to step down as soon as Prof. Ranga returned to Parliament through a by-election.

Prof. Ranga having been elected to Parliament in a by-election from the Srikakulam Parliamentary Constituency (Andhra Pradesh), Mr. Masani tendered his resignation from the leadership at the very first meeting of the Parliamentary Group held in New Delhi on May 21 on the eve of the Budget session, and invited the Group to elect Prof. Ranga as Leader. This was done unanimously. The Group went on, also unanimously, to elect Mr. Masani as the Deputy Leader of the Group.

Swatantra Anniversary

The ninth anniversary of the day on which the All-India Agriculturists Federation met and took the decision to form the Swatantra Party was observed at a public meeting in New Delhi on June 4. The meeting was presided over by Mr. H. P. Nanda, the President of the Delhi Unit of the Party. Prof. Ranga and Mr. Masani were the principal speakers. Mr. Dandekar was unavoidably absent.

Prof. Ranga reiterated the Party's resolve to work for the removal of the Congress from power and for its replacement by a coalition government of patriotic and democratic parties. Prof. Ranga added that the Swatantra Party would never be a party to any coalition in which the communists, whether Left or Right, also participated. He said that though the Congress had received quite a few hard knocks in the recent

elections, there was little evidence of that Party being any the wiser for it.

He added that the Congress leadership ought to realise that it was on its way out and that sooner rather than later an alternative government at the Centre was almost a certainty.

Mr. Masani endorsed Prof. Ranga's view.

In the course of his presidential remarks, Mr. Nanda welcomed a circular from the Central Office communicating the National Executive's decision discouraging patchwork coalition governments whether in the States or at the Centre and making it clear that the Swatantra Party would never agree to participate in coalition governments which included the communists.

Crisis in West Asia

The Swatantra Party's position on the crisis in West Asia has been made unmistakably clear.

Writing in the columns of *Swarajya*, Rajaji said: "The non-alignment of India has become indeed a joke. The latest phase of this untruth is the Government of India's support to Nasser against Israel in regard to the Aqaba Gulf. In the Suez crisis I vigorously supported Egypt, if I remember right even before the Government of India made up its mind; but the

case is very different now and India ought to support Israel in its refusal to be shut out from the open sea traffic.

The Government of India's standing alignment against Israel is unfortunate. But India can do nothing material in this Middle-East crisis. Since the US and UK are both interested in justice for Israel, it may be hoped that a satisfactory settlement will be reached in spite of the ugly developments that get featured

in the press. Israel cannot be allowed to be strangled as proposed by Nasser of Egypt. The USA and Britain should make things clear to Nasser, who may be under a mistaken impression that America will not intervene if he proceeds with his plan of bottling up Israel by blocking her traffic in the Aqaba Gulf. The late President Kennedy used to say that recent wars have been mostly due to grievous miscalculations by one or more of the belligerent parties. The Korean War he said resulted from the North Koreans believing that the USA would not intervene and later from the belief of the United Nations that Communist China would not intervene. Nasser should be told definitely that brinkmanship will not pay. One can imagine the USA being bored with Vietnam and world criticism over it, but it can never let Israel down. This must be made clear to Nasser."

Referring to the crisis in West Asia while addressing a public meeting in New Delhi on the occasion of the Party's ninth anniversary, Mr. Masani said that the Government of India had brought disgrace to itself and the country by acting as the "chaprasi" of the UAR Government. He said that the Indian Government's stand answered the test neither of the proclaimed policy of non-alignment nor of any desire to save peace.

He pointed out that during the Chinese attack on India in 1962 and again during the Pakistani invasion in 1965, the UAR had kept itself aloof and was neutral. In his view, this is precisely what India should have also done during the West Asian crisis on the principle of reciprocity in diplomatic relations.

On the immediate merits of the Israel-UAR dispute, Mr. Masani said that "once the right of a country to block an international waterway was conceded, there would be no end to complications that might follow; some day the Suez might be closed to international traffic by the same logic. If that were to happen the immediate effect would be that food shipments to India would be disrupted and thousands might die of starvation."

In a subsequent Press statement issued on June 8, Mr. Masani referred to the fate of the Indian contingent of the UNEF and said that "the ostrich like refusal of the Congress Government all these years to establish diplomatic relations with Israel has now boomeranged against us by leaving us so ill-informed about developments in West Asia and by leaving our men in the U.N. contingent who now find themselves behind the Israel battleline, friendless and defenceless."

The General Elections of 1967

A Report on Swatantra Performance

Soon after the General Elections, the Central Parliamentary Board met in Madras on March 1 to review the Party's performance. This is what the Board said:

"The Board expressed general satisfaction at the results of the elections and, in particular, its appreciation of the excellent performance put in by the Madras and Mysore State Units. While the results in Orissa, Rajasthan and Gujerat were not unsatisfactory, the Board felt some disappointment that our Party did not do better. On the other hand, the Board noted that the results of the elections had been very unsatisfactory in so far as Bihar, Bombay, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab and U.P. were concerned."

Elsewhere in this issue we have reported on the reasons given by the National Executive at its meeting on May 20 and 21 for the Party not faring as well as it should have in the General Elections.

Performance can only be judged in the light of targets. What targets did the Party set before itself? They were threefold:

1. Wiping out in collaboration with other democratic parties, the Congress majority in the Lok Sabha by carrying a large number of seats for the Swatantra Party;
2. Eliminating the Congress majorities and establishing Swatantra (or Swatantra-led) Governments in Orissa, Rajasthan and Gujerat;

3. Becoming the principal Opposition in some other States, e.g. Andhra.

To what extent did the Party achieve these targets?

The Party came quite close to achieving these targets in the States, but fell far short of the first target concerning the Centre.

The nearest the Party came in achieving the first target was in helping to reduce very considerably the Congress majority in the Lok Sabha. While doubling our strength from 22 to 45, we unfortunately fell short of the minimum requirement of 53 to qualify for recognition as the Official Opposition. The reasons are not far to seek. In the first place the Party found it somewhat difficult to find "good men and true" who could be the Party's Parliamentary candidates. This does not mean that there was any dearth of applications for Party candidatures. There were numerous applicants, and a very large number were selected; indeed, in retrospect, *qualitywise* perhaps far too many. Nevertheless, proportionately the outcome was better in 1967 than in 1962; as against 192 candidates in 1962, we put up 178 in 1967, but with a greater measure of success.

Another reason was the paucity of leaders of all-India stature and the absence of party organisation in many of the constituencies where candidates were put up just about a month or two before polling. The third was our weakness in party cadres. And there was of course the usual shortage of finance and vehicles, —

always a chronic problem. One could go on to catalogue many other reasons but these were some of the more important ones.

The second target met with a larger measure of success. We succeeded in eliminating the Congress in Orissa and establishing a Swatantra-led coalition Government. In Rajasthan though the adjustments with other democratic opposition parties like the Jan Sangh and the Janata Party helped in increasing our strength from 36 to 49, the combined strength of the opposition fell short of an overall majority. The modest increase in the Party's own strength was due to weak organisation, unsatisfactory functioning of electoral adjustments in a number of constituencies and last minute nominations of ineffective candidates.

In Gujarat though we fell short of the target the increase in the Party's strength in the State Assembly from 26 to 66 was most impressive. The result would have been far better had the victories in Saurashtra not been offset by inexplicable failures in certain strongholds of the Party. Nevertheless, the Party need not feel unduly disappointed with the result.

In so far as the third target is concerned Andhra fulfilled the target by moving to the position of being the leading opposition Group by improving its strength from 19 to 29. In Madras we leaped forward from 6 to 22, though, still behind the Congress which collapsed from 139 to 49. Our strength was reduced in U.P. from 15 to 12; and we entered the West Bengal and Assam legislatures with 1 and 2 members respectively. Bihar was the bitterest disappointment where we were able to return just 3 members to the State Assembly.

Three statistical tables follow which give a picture of our performance from different angles (Annexure C).

It is important to note that with fewer candidates than in 1962, both for Parliament and the State Assemblies, we have increased the number of seats in both the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies. As the youngest political Party in the Indian political scene our performance may justly be described as fair. With better candidates, improved organisation and ampler resources it could and should have been better.

Focus on Orissa

"I will close with the assurance on behalf of myself and my colleagues that there will be no lack of sincerity or earnestness on our part to serve the people of Orissa and to make our State a progressive and prosperous democracy, of which we can all feel proud. We have entered our new responsibilities in a spirit of humility and dedication and appeal for your co-operation and support".

—R. N. Singh Deo, Chief Minister, Orissa, on the Cuttack Station of A.I.R. on March 9, 1967.

On December 30, 1966, the General Secretaries of the Swatantra Party in Orissa and of the Orissa Jana Congress announced that an agreement had been reached between the two Parties for "electoral adjustment and alliance for a coalition". A press communique issued on the occasion said:

"The parties will go to the Polls in the 1967 General Elections with the positive offer of a clear cut alternative non-Congress government in the State."

The partners in this alliance agreed on the following 21-point common programme:

1. Establishment of a clean and good government,
2. Ruthless elimination of corruption, favouritism and nepotism at all levels and setting up of a Commission of Enquiry into charges of corruption by Ministers,
3. Setting up an institution of the type of Ombudsman for the eradication of corruption,
4. Increasing the efficiency, uprightness and integrity of administration and the elimination of administrative delays,
5. The establishment of the Rule of Law,

6. Change of outlook of the Police for public service and increasing their efficiency and sense of discipline,
7. Freeing the administration from political pressures and ensuring impartiality and fair deal to the employees,
8. Equal justice and fair dealing to all,
9. Utmost economy in expenditure and strict avoidance of all wasteful expenditure,
10. Elimination of unnecessary controls, permits, licenses and quotas and administration of remaining controls, permits, licenses and quotas through a non-political independent statutory Board,
11. Abolition of land revenue, reduction of tax burden and elimination of harassment in the collection of State dues,
12. Establishment, expansion and completion of existing Universities,
13. Elimination of restrictive procedures and creation of proper conditions and freedom for expansion of business and industry and creation of increasing employment opportunities.
14. Introduction of Oriya as State language in all spheres of administration,
15. Special attention for the development of Scheduled Castes and Tribes and other Backward Classes and underdeveloped or backward areas,
16. Abolition of multifarious Panchayat taxes and entrusting Panchayats with resources of non-tax revenue and effecting real decentralisation as envisaged in the Directive Principles of the Constitution,
17. Liberating primary education from the control of Panchayat Samities,

18. Expansion of both technical and general education throughout the State with special attention to backward areas,
19. Reorientation of development plans on a practical basis with the emphasis on the development of agriculture, provision of basic necessities for the people and the provision of the infrastructure for economic development,
20. Changing of the monopoly system in the Kendu Leaves trade,
21. Appointment of a Famine Commission for enquiry and report on all aspects of the Orissa famine of 1966.

The people of Orissa voted the coalition into power and thus was born the first Swatantra-led Government. And herein lies the difference between the "patchwork coalitions" in Punjab, U.P., Bihar and Bengal on the one hand, and the Orissa coalition which obtained its mandate direct from people of that State, on the other. It is not therefore surprising that such a government should do well. Even a socialist politician like Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia of the S.S.P. was constrained to comment that the Orissa Government had done best. This is what the *Hindustan Times* of May 28 reported:

"Kanpur, May 27 — Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia said here today that the Orissa Government among all States which have non-Congress Ministries has had the best record so far.

"This was stated by him when asked to assess the performances of different non-Congress Ministries in the States.

"He said that though the Government in Orissa was called a reactionary regime by Leftist parties, it had taken a progressive step by completely abolishing land revenue which had not been done by non-Congress Ministries in other States with representatives of Leftist parties, as its constituents.

"Dr. Lohia said it clearly proved that the terms "Leftist" and "Rightist" were meaningless in the present political context."

The Times of India of April 24 in its series "Post-election scene" described the Orissa Coalition Government as having "characteristics strikingly different from those of the non-Congress Governments in other States." We reproduce below some extracts from the report:

"It is a Government of two like-minded parties, the Swatantra Party and the Jana Congress, and not of a number of widely differing groups based on ideological compromises.

"The coalition Government in Orissa has natural leadership, that of the Swatantra Party which has a telling majority in the coalition, unlike in some non-Congress States where the leadership has gone to the breakaway group of Congressmen in an embarrassing minority position.

"The Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition is also not a post-election tie-up dictated by the party position in the new Assembly. The alliance between the two parties was concluded as an election strategy.

"The coalition Government can reasonably claim that its 21-point programme has had the people's approval because it was placed before the electorate jointly by the two parties.

"Unless the partners fall out, of which there is only an outside chance, the new Government is expected to have the full five-year tenancy at the Secretariat. This itself will be no mean achievement in a State where the Government had changed thrice in the previous five years although the ruling party—the Congress — remained the same. The Opposition parties do not pose any threat as they are unlikely to pool their strength of 63 which is only 12 short of the ruling party's in the present House of 138."

Nine Swatantra and six Jana Congress members make up the 15-man coalition Ministry. They are:

- Mr. R. N. Singh Deo (Swatantra) Chief Minister, Finance, Home, Planning and Coordination.
- Mr. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan (Jan Congress) Deputy Chief Minister, Political and Services, Education, Mining and Geology.
- Mr. Raj Ballabh Misra (Swatantra) Community Development and Panchayati Raj, Labour and Tourist Traffic (Home) Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
- Mr. Surendranath Patnaik (Jana Congress): Revenue, Irrigation and Power
- Mr. Harihar Patel (Swatantra): Industries, Commerce, Forestry, Cooperation and Fisheries
- Mr. Santanu Kumar Das (Jana Congress): Tribal and Rural Welfare and Excise
- Mr. Nityanand Mahapatra (Jana Congress) Supply, Cultural Affairs.
- Mr. N. Ramaseshaiah (Swatantra): Health.
- Mr. Haraprasad Mahapatra (Swatantra): Law and Urban Development.
- Mr. Dayanidhi Nayak (Swatantra): Works and Transport.

Deputy Ministers

- Mr. Himansu Sekhar Padhi (Jana Congress): Revenue, Irrigation and Power.
- Mr. Man Mohan Tudu (Jana Congress): Tribal and Rural Welfare.
- Mr. Murari Prasad Misra (Swatantra): Forestry, Cooperation and Fisheries.
- Mr. Ananta Narayan Singh Deo (Swatantra): Community Development and Panchayati Raj.
- Mr. Kartik Chandra Majhi (Swatantra): Finance and Home.

"Focus on Orissa" will be a regular feature in the *Newsletter* to keep readers informed of developments in the first Swatantra-led Government in the country.

from the General Secretary's desk

Dear friend,

As you will have read elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Masani has extended his leave till the end of November this year in view of the heavy load of work he carries as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament. At his request I have taken over as Officiating General Secretary of the Party with the approval of the National Executive. I send my greetings to all Party Units and to members of the Party all over the country.

The issue I wish to discuss this month is one of considerable importance, namely: what should be the policy of the Swatantra Party towards the formation of, and participation in, multi-party coalition governments based on what has now come to be known as the "Charan Singh model"? A few Congressmen cross the floor to prevent the formation of or to bring down a Congress Ministry and then go on to take the leadership of a multi-party non-Congress coalition Government, with a dissident Congressman chosen as the leader despite his group being in a minority; what should our Party's reaction be to such a situation?

The recent General Elections have radically altered the political face of India. In the Lok Sabha the ruling Party's majority has been reduced from 133 to 48. Out of the 17 States of the Union (including Jammu & Kashmir and Nagaland), the Congress was formerly in power in 15 (Kerala and Nagaland were the exceptions); now it retains power in only 8 States. While Madras is the only State in which an Opposition Party (the DMK has been able to form a single-party Ministry, Orissa is the only other to have a two-party coalition Ministry led by the Swatantra Party. A wide belt of States in North India stretching from West Bengal, through Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana to Punjab have multi-party non-Congress Governments; so too the State of Kerala in the extreme South. Of these, the coalitions in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh were made possible by some Congressmen crossing the floor, bringing down a Congress Ministry and then assuming leadership of a Coalition grouping even though such "dissident" Congressmen were themselves in a minority. Only one such "floor crosser" thought fit to resign and contest; and in the resultant by-election he won again with a comfortable majority.

Power alone had kept the Congress together before the General Elections, even though rumblings of dissensions had already begun. The General Elections exploded the myth of Congress invincibility and with it has begun the process of its disintegration. Quite predictably, therefore, power seeking Congressmen, whose loyalty is not to any ideology but to power, have crossed the floor (or are contemplating doing so) with a view to climbing the winning band-wagon whatever

its complexion. For them there is only one criterion; which Party (or Parties) has power; and so we have today the not very edifying spectacle of ex-Congressmen with no distinguishing ideological convictions leading coalitions which include even Communists of both varieties.

It is not unlikely that with the greatly reduced majority of the Congress such a situation might well develop at the Centre before long. Disgruntled Congressmen denied the plums of office may well precipitate a crisis by crossing the floor in the Lok Sabha so as to bring down their own Government in the hope that they might be in a position to lead a "United Front" of all opposition parties, including the Communists. This process will doubtless be assisted by many opposition parties who have started becoming impatient when power seems so nearly within their grasp and who would therefore like to see a U.P. type government established at the Centre "by hook or by crook".

If this were to happen, what should be the attitude of the Swatantra Party? Should it encourage such a development as one that is best calculated to advance the interests of the country? To put it at its lowest, would such a development not strengthen the Party? Would it be possible for such a Government to function at all cohesively? What would be the consequences of the failure of such a multi-party Government at the Centre?

Elsewhere in this issue we have reported in detail the decision of the National Executive on this subject. The Executive's answer is unhesitatingly unanimous, namely, that the Swatantra Party should *not* encourage the formation of a patchwork government at the Centre on the West Bengal, Bihar or U.P. models, since such a Government would in the long run be neither workable nor in the best interests of the country. The National Executive has gone on to affirm that apart from being unstable such strange coalitions would merely provide opportunities to Communists and extreme Socialists to entrench themselves in strategic positions and extend their grip on the country. The inevitable failure of such a Government, according to the National Executive, could only lead either to the Congress being again returned to power with greater strength in the next elections or to the total failure of Democratic Institutions.

In sharp contrast to this view concerning patchwork coalitions, the National Executive was firmly of the opinion that a stable government of "democratic unity" was possible only with the getting together of truly democratic parties like the Swatantra and the Jan Sangh, the DMK and the PSP, along with like-

minded Independents and even Congressmen who might leave their Party on ideological grounds.

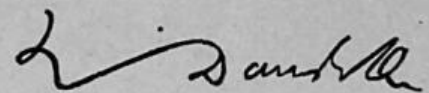
This is not of course a short-term prospect. It will take quite some time to achieve. As a matter of fact, it may not come about at all until the country goes to the polls again in the event of a crisis at the Centre. But this policy of the Swatantra Party is the logical outcome of its basic philosophy. We have repeatedly proclaimed, and with great pride, that we are the truly democratic alternative to the Congress. We have sworn to stand by the Constitution. We have rejected all policies which in the Party's view are not conducive to the preservation of Parliamentary Democracy. We would reject the large number of "fellow travellers" and mere "floor crossers" within and outside the Congress as firmly as we would agree cheerfully to sit with the larger number of Congressmen who we know are *ideologically* nearer to us. We have made it clear beyond doubt, time and again, that we do not look upon the Communist Parties of either variety as national parties in the sense in which we accept say the Jan Sangh, or the DMK or the PSP as patriotic democratic parties. The Indian Communists, we have always urged, are the instruments of an international conspiracy to subvert and destroy our democratic institutions. We have always held the view that the roots of the two Communist Parties of India are not in India, but in Moscow or in Peking. This being the case, with what logic can we be partners in a Government which includes Communists, fellow travellers and mere opportunist floor-crossers? Won't we be dubbed opportunists ourselves? Won't people be justified in branding us as power seekers who have elevated expediency above principles?

Above all, we must never overlook the historical evidence and experience in various parts of the world concerning the working of United Front Governments which included the Communists, and of the fate of the non-communist parties participating in them. The Communists have perfected the art of infiltration and subversion. In no country in the world have the Communists ever allowed themselves to be merely partn-

ers in a United Front. Either they break it up or they dominate the United Front and eventually swallow it at an opportune time chosen by them. They have never allowed a United Front to survive if they are unable to dominate and control it; and if such a government survives, it is only to facilitate a communist "take over." The manner in which communist Ministers in Bengal and Bihar literally run the State are portents of things to come. It is an open secret that the Chief Ministers of Bengal and Bihar are virtually prisoners of the communists; and meanwhile, the communists are fast entrenching themselves in those States at all key points in the country-side, in the industrial areas, in the labour movement and in the administration. Should we allow our Party to be trapped in a United Front government at the Centre in these circumstances?

Finally, where is the hurry. It has taken us less than eight years to cut the Congress down to its present size and there is no disputing the fact that without the false support of coalitions it will shrink further in the next General Elections if it has not already broken up in the meanwhile. Let us, therefore, refuse to be attracted towards short gains by the lure of office or allow our identity to be submerged into so-called "united opposition fronts". We must continue to project our distinct image as a democratic alternative to the Congress. Rajaji founded the Party with a purpose — the purpose of giving this country a truly democratic Government to which it is entitled. We have the right principles, the right ideas and the right policies for the progress and well being of his country and of its teeming millions. Let us not sacrifice our ideals for short cut solutions or short-term gains which will not only destroy the Party but also endanger the welfare of the country itself.

Jai Swatantra



(N. DANDEKER)

THE COMMUNIST VIEW OF UNITED FRONTS

"I would take them by the hand as a preliminary to taking them by the throat."

(T. A. Jackson in the British Journal *Communist*,
25th March, 1922 quoted in *United We Fall*

by Douglas Hyde.)

Text of Resolutions adopted by the National Executive on May 21, 1967

Gherao

The National Executive of the Swatantra Party views with grave concern the increasing resort in recent months to the new and essentially communist weapon of GHERAO.

2. Gheraos constitute a direct illegal assault on the personal freedom, rights and liberties of the individuals subjected to them, and of their families, involving as they do wrongful restraint and confinement under duress, backed by overt or implicit threats of physical violence.

3. But the far more menacing aspect of Gheraos is the fact that some of the State Governments concerned have as a matter of policy failed to intervene on such occasions to protect the rights and liberties of the gheraoed citizens, on the ground that Gheraos are legitimate weapons for the quick settlement of industrial disputes.

4. The National Executive of the Swatantra Party rejects this pernicious doctrine outright and declares that, unlike strikes and lock-outs, the Gherao is a wholly illegitimate, anti-social and illegal weapon against which there is ample provision in the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Penal Code which must be invoked and enforced by the authorities charged with the responsibility of protecting the citizen and maintaining law and order.

5. The National Executive is convinced that if the Gherao movement is allowed to spread instead of being immediately scotched, it will not be confined to attacking industrial and commercial enterprises, but, as has already happened in Bengal and Bihar, it will soon overtake all sections of the law abiding public and all sectors of public and private activity, including the Governments themselves. If Gheraos are countenanced instead of being condemned, there will be an end to all fundamental rights and the rule of law; civil liberties will be imperilled and democracy itself will be threatened with extinction by mob rule; and a new Indian version of the Chinese Communist Terror mis-called "the Cultural Revolution" will engulf the country.

6. The National Executive therefore demands that the Central and State Governments should put an end to the Gherao Terror firmly and forthwith.

The Congress Working Committee's Resolution

1. The recent resolution of the Congress Working Committee, issuing a mandate to the Central Government to widen and strengthen its control over the economy, has made it clear that the Congress Party is incapable of learning from its past mistakes. It also confirms the view that the growth of Statism is a self-perpetuating process: Statist controls leading to poor

production and allround misery, to relieve which a further dose of controls is prescribed. This process goes on till either the people wake up in time or lose their freedom altogether. State Enterprises have given poor returns and worse service conditions to their employees; and socialism generally has widened rather than narrowed inequalities. In spite of all this the Congress Working Committee has decided to traverse the same disastrous course which it embarked upon at Avadi a decade ago and which has led to allround shortages in the country and made its economy dependent on deficit financing and foreign doles.

2. The Swatantra Party has no quarrel with some of the pious intentions expressed in the resolution, such as provision of the minimum needs to the entire community, rural works programmes, drinking water facilities in villages etc., which have evidently been lifted out of the Swatantra Party Manifesto. But bereft of these sugar coatings, the Congress prescription is nothing but a stronger dose of State Capitalism which is bound to act like poison on the economy of the country in its present diseased condition.

3. Any attempt to implement the latest Congress programme involving extension of social control on banking, nationalisation of general insurance, further nationalisation of foreign trade, expansion of State sector in the processing and manufacturing industries and State Trading in foodgrains will only lead to further concentration of economic power in the hands of political bosses, bureaucratic proliferation, more corruption and waste of national resources which the country can now ill afford.

4. The Swatantra Party hopes that public opinion will still prevail and prevent the Congress Government from implementing this disastrous programme.

Famine and Drought Situation

1. The National Executive of the Swatantra Party expresses its deep concern over the cruel grip of famine over expanding areas and people in the country from Bihar to U.P. and parts of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan. This disaster is due not merely to the failure of the monsoon during the last two years but also to wrong planning and failure to give first priority to the development of agriculture, especially in regard to minor and medium irrigation, roads and drainage, the provision of security of tenure and adequate credit facilities to the peasantry. The disaster has been aggravated by compulsory monopoly procurement of foodgrains and zonal restrictions on the movement of foodgrains.

2. The National Executive therefore warns the people that the recurrence of such terrible tragedies resulting in starvation deaths and under-nourishment of millions of young men, women and children cannot

be avoided whenever there is even a partial failure of rains, until and unless the agricultural plans, policies and programmes of the Central and State Governments are radically changed.

3. In the meanwhile, it is the duty of all the political parties and social organisations in the country to mobilise public relief so as to minimise the sufferings of the people affected. The National Executive therefore appeals to the people as a whole and the Swatantra Party Workers throughout the country in particular to collect funds, foodgrains, clothes and medicines and send them to the local branches of the Ramakrishna Mission or such other social organisations as may be taking part in relief work.

ANNEXURE B

Youth Wing of the Swatantra Party

(Report of the Sub-Committee appointed by the National Executive to consider the question of the formation of a youth wing of the Swatantra Party and submit recommendations thereon)

Youth is on the march in the political arena. From Indonesia in Asia to Latin America and even in conservative Europe, youth have taken in recent years an active and sometimes as in Indonesia last year a revolutionary and violent part in political movements. Here also in India, ever since Mahatma Gandhi invited them to take part in the movement for freedom and independence, youth have taken part in the movement for freedom and independence, youth have taken part in politics whether in organised political parties or on their own account. In the recent general elections in Madras, they played a decisive part in bringing about the downfall of the Congress Party and Government. The Swatantra Party cannot afford to refuse Swatantra-minded youth participation in the activities of the Swatantra Party. It cannot afford to do without the enthusiasm, the single-mindedness and the energy of youth. Only this participation must take into account the peculiar position of youth and the interest of the party.

Their special position as citizens in the making places certain obligations on them and the interest of the party requires that the activity of the youth in the party should promote the prospects of the party. The first consideration imposes a requirement of age and maturity. They must be no longer in *statu pupillari*, in which state their first obligation is a whole-hearted and whole time devotion to their vocation as students namely their studies at school or college or university. They must therefore have finished their first degree course or their school final course if they do not go upto a university or they should be in employment earning a living. This requirement indicates the age of admission to the youth organisation at 18 to 21 the outer age limit would be 30 years.

After admission, comes the question—what kind of organisation should they be fitted into. One alternative

Co-operation with the countries of South East Asia

The National Executive of the Swatantra Party welcomes the announcement by the Minister of External Affairs (Shri Chagla) concerning a move to establish a Regional Organisation for Economic Co-operation in South East Asia. This belated recognition of the need which the Swatantra Party has repeatedly emphasised to establish close economic and cultural ties between the free countries of South-East Asia must be warmly applauded. It is the only way to establish mutual confidence between these countries, which could eventually develop into a system of collective security for mutual defence against aggression.

is to admit them as ordinary workers at the constituency and district levels and let them take part in the work of the constituency or district units with provision for their representation in the governing bodies of the constituency and district units in proportion to their numbers. But this absorption in the general body of members of the party will not bring out the full enthusiasm and energy and activity of youth. They would put their best foot forward only in an organisation of their own which allows for self-regulation, self-discipline and self-government. Even the Conservative Party of England has had to let their youth have and work in the organisation of their own. Lord Woolton who was summoned by Winston Churchill to organise the Conservative Party after their humiliating defeat in 1945 had to reckon with this attitude of the young Conservatives. In his memoirs, he acknowledges "they wanted to remain apart from the main organisation, to have their own officers, their own week-end schools, their own magazine, their own social functions". This isolation of the young conservatives, Lord Woolton admitted did not affect their work in the Constituency.

Starting from these considerations, the Sub-Committee would recommend the following organisation for the youth wing of the Swatantra Party;

1. This organisation shall be called the "Swatantra Youth."

2. Admission—Youth of both sexes who have left school or college after the first degree, between the ages of 18 and 30 shall be eligible for admission.

3. Subscription—They shall pay an annual subscription of Re. 1/-

4. Organisation for the first year:

Till enough members are enrolled at the constituency and district levels, say ten in each constituency and

Secretary
hundred in each district, (the work of the Swatantra Party will be organised by

- i) A State organiser
 - ii) A National organiser
 - iii) These shall be appointed by the General Secretary of the party to whom they will be responsible for work and money collected.
- 4) The State organiser shall have the duty of
- i) enrolling members at the constituency and district levels
 - ii) appointing organisers in the district and constituency whose first duty will be to enrol members and elect leaders as and when sufficient members have been enrolled.
 - iii) acting as liaison between the Swatantra youth of the State and the Swatantra State Party organisation.
- 5) The National Organiser shall have the duty of
- i) stimulating and co-ordinating the work of the State organiser and the first units of the State.
 - ii) acting as liaison officer between Swatantra youth and the General Secretary and the National Executive of the Party.

6) Whole time work for the National and State Organisers:

As the work for the National and State Organisers will be whole-time at least in the first year or two, they will have to be paid a salary and allowances—State Organisers Rs. 150 salary plus Rs. 150 T.A. per month; the National Organiser Rs. 250 salary plus Rs. 250 T.A. per month

Work for the Swatantra Youth

- 1) To place themselves at the service of the party organisation at the several levels.
- 2) To help in the arrangement of meetings, keep order etc. towards the success of the meeting.
- 3) To help in the enrolment of members of the party at several levels.
- 4) To work for the party by helping in the registration of voters, canvassing votes at Panchayat, Zilla Parishad, State and National elections.
- 5) To do propaganda for the party.
- 6) And to do such other work as may be allotted to them by the party organisation at the several levels.

The Character of the Swatantra Youth Organisation

This scheme as well as its successor, the Permanent scheme which will be submitted later has for its object the Organisation of the Swatantra Youth as an auxiliary force of the Swatantra party. Like the auxiliary force of an army, it will, while working in its own formation with its own discipline and officers, be called upon to help, supplement and strengthen the work of the Swatantra Party, as directed by the Supreme

command of the party at its several levels. It will do the work allotted to it by the party organisation at the constituency, district, State and National levels. The Character and particulars and directions of that work will be determined by the committee of the party at the several levels. These directions should not however be in the form of dictation. Swatantra youth like all youth will be self-conscious, sensitive, apt to take offence at any attitude of superiority or dictation. They will have to be handled tactfully. But treated with confidence, trust and tact they can be expected to render great service to the party. The organisation, temporary and permanent, sketched in this report is intended to give them that feeling of self-respect and self-confidence and self-reliance.

Permanent Organisation

1. At the constituency, district and State levels: Swatantra youth at each of these levels shall be represented in the Committees of and at the respective units of the party at the rate of

- one representative in the constituency committees
- two representatives in the district committees
- three representatives in the State committee
- one representative from each State having more than 1,000 Swatantra youth in the National Executive.

All elections by Swatantra youth of their representatives in the party committees will be by post, except at the constituency level.

2. At any of these levels, Swatantra youth will have an organisation of their own consisting of a leader at each of these levels elected by the Swatantra youth at each of these levels; the duty of the leader will be to keep the Swatantra youth at his level together, organise the work they have to do for the unit at their level, and, lead them in study clubs, training camps and in their work generally. The leader at each level shall be subordinate to the leader at the higher level.

3. There shall be a State Secretary of the Swatantra youth, elected by the Swatantra youth of the State by means of postal voting. He will act as an administrative officer of the Swatantra youth of the State and as a liaison officer between the Swatantra youth and the executive of the State party—and in general he will act as the leader of the Swatantra youth in the State.

4. The National Secretary

- i) Shall be elected by an electoral college consisting of the representatives of Swatantra youth in the Party's State Executive Committees.
- ii) he will be a member of the National Executive of the party in addition to the representative of the State Swatantra Youth.
- iii) his work will be to inspect and supervise the work of all State Swatantra youth organisations and report on that work to the National Executive of the party and in general act as