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THE NEW POLITICAL PARTY

The emergence of a new political party under the leadership of Shri C. Rajagopalachary should promise an effective opposition to the ruling party in India. We are an infant democracy, following the British pattern and the absence of an effective opposition was a long felt need, as a corrective to any measures which the ruling party ushered in, in its zeal to establish a welfare state. It must however, be said to the credit of the Nehru Government that it has been able to establish the seeds of democracy and has earned world reputation for India, because of its neutralist policy of peaceful co-existence. But that is not all. Although, the measures that the ruling party has introduced are fairly good, the methods of implementing them lack efficient and uncorruptible personnel. This is so, because those who are in power are well aware that they have an effective majority and could afford to be indifferent to stray criticisms. It is to counteract this feeling of complacency, as also to apply a sort of a brake to the overzealous activities and the too leftist policies of the ruling party that an effective opposition was necessary and which we hope the "Swatantra Party" would like to play the role of. One thing we need to emphasise and it is that the majority of the members of the new party must come from the middle and lower-middle class. The vested interests, must be kept aloof as much as possible. The predominance of the rich will adversely affect the chances of success and appeal of this party. It should not become a political wing of the forum of free-enterprise.

The frustrated intellectual middle class and the urban people who are politically conscious will shun the "Swatantra Party" the moment they see that the party is out to establish the hegemony of vested interests by giving it another name. We therefore would like to see that the affairs of the new party are placed in the hands of the intellectuals and the down-trodden who have been feeling desperate under present conditions and who would wish to have a change for the better. Merely putting the same wine in new bottles will not cut much ice. This is a warning and the new party would be well advised to heed it!

Although *The Indian Exporter & Importer*, mainly devotes its columns to writing on export, import and trade questions, it feels justified in writing on a political issue, because, as Prof. G. D. H. Cole, very correctly observed, "you may not bother with politics, but politics bothers you," and there we are!!

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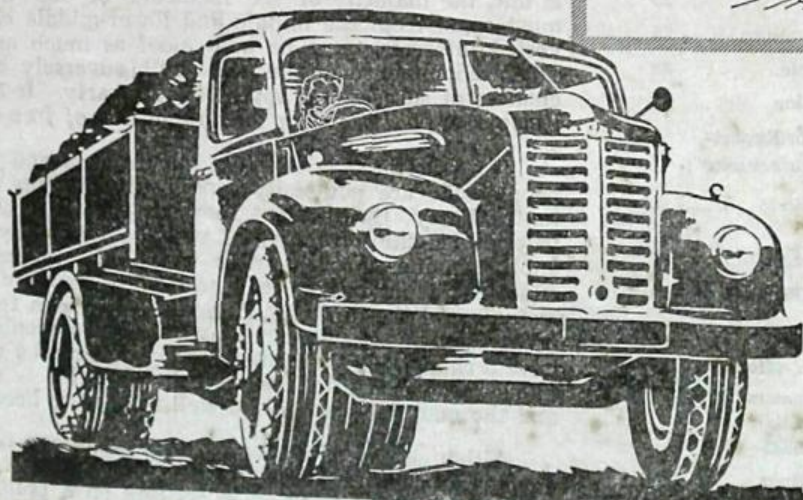
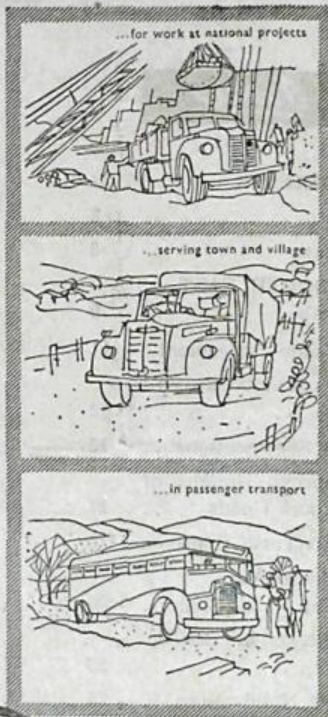
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