

S.V. RAJU

L/9/72 Tilaknagar
Bombay 400 0089.

November 27, 1975

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My dear Srikumar,

Thank you for your letter dated November 21, 1975.

Mr. Masani is in Calcutta, and on receiving your letter to him (in his absence) I sent him a message asking for confirmation of his visit to Madras on December 8 to address a public meeting. As soon as I hear from him I shall send you a telegram.

I have sent a small note through Mr. Girish Munshi which records some views on the current situation.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

(S. V. Raju)

Mr. V.S. Srikumar
Joint Secretary
Swatantra Party National Headquarters
10-A, Flowers Road
Madras-84.

After this was typed I received a call from Mr. Masani confirming he will be in Madras provided the Madras Unit will arrange overnight accommodation for him either at the Connemara or the Taj Coromandl. I conveyed this over the phone to Shri Aravanmudham. Mr. Masani is proceeding to Calcutta on the 9th flight. Please confirm.

with note -
letter sent through Mr. Girish Munshi
on 28th November 1975:
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NOTE

(For consideration by Swatantra Party National Executive)

Today the Swatantra Party in Maharashtra is leading a sedate existence. That it has been able to keep alive is in itself some kind of an achievement!

Where do we go from here and in what direction the country is heading are in my view both linked.

The Swatantra Party has always stood for a democratic alternative to the Party in power but it refused to go along with the so-called decision taken at an illegally held Convention in August 1974 to dissolve the Party for the very valid reason that the dissolution of the Party was sought for something of a doubtful nature.

Rajaji and the Party have always insisted that the Party is always willing to submerge itself if this action will help the emergence of a genuine alternative. Recent events in the country have clearly shown the need for democratic parties to close ranks. A question mark was the attitude of the Tamil Nadu unit of the Party in case the possibility of a merger at the national level presented itself.

The passing away of Kamaraj and the subsequent split in the TNCC(O) now make it almost certain that the Congress-O would be in a mood to merge into a larger national party. Our Tamil Nadu unit's objection will not be material.

I for one get the impression that while the PM is tightening political control she is loosening up economic control (even though half heartedly). Apparently, if the PM is to survive politically and win the next elections (as and when they are held) she can only do so by improving the economic situation i.e. by bringing prices down, creating employment opportunities, and increasing production. Having tried the socialist or the statist methods and failed she has only the Swatantra pattern to adopt. Recent economic decisions (though half hearted) are a clear indication of the direction of ^{her} economic policies. The halting steps are perhaps understandable. A total break with her socialist policies (even while justifying everything in the name of socialism) is not possible without creating other problems.

In the event that a re-alignment of opposition forces not materialising then the Swatantra Party must carry on and do what it can to rebuild itself. In such an eventuality what should be its attitude to government's policy?

I am clear we should not hesitate to welcome economic measures which vindicate what Rajaji, Masani and the others have been advocating. At the same time we should with equal conviction insist on a return to democratic processes, the lifting of press censorship, the restoration of fundamental rights, the release of political prisoners and the removal of the emergency among other things.

In a discussion we had yesterday, Mr. Kejriwal our President and Mr. Girish Munshi, our General Secretary and I agreed that the resolution to be adopted by the Executive should be a brief one reiterating our demand for a consolidation of democratic opposition forces. What I would like to add would be a sentence or two to point out that recent economic policy decisions though inadequate are in effect a vindication of the Party's criticism and therefore to be welcomed.

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DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION.
(BY SRI V.S.SRIKUMAR).

RESOLUTION I.

This meeting of the executive committee of the ^{All India} ~~Tamil Nadu~~ Swatantra party gratefully recalls that late lamented Rajaaji in his ^{sanctly} ~~sanctly~~ wisdom ensured that the Swatantra party remained at all times a champion of true democracy. He made it take the hard and straight path and condemn deviations in no uncertain terms and insist on a clean line of demarcation between the party and the government. It is the sacred duty of the Swatantra party to fight for maintaining the distinction and not allow the sacrilege of equating a party with the country and more so a person with the whole of the hoary and cultured BHARAT.

2.Hence this meeting of the Executive committee of the ^{All India} ~~Tamil Nadu~~ Swatantra party deeply regrets and strongly condemns the pre-meditated and grievous attack launched on the democratic rights and freedom of the people of this great and ancient country by the unwarranted and unjustified declaration of a second emergency on 26-7-75 at a time when public opinion was clamouring for the lifting of the emergency declared as early as 1971 at the time of the Bangladesh crisis.

3.The arbitrary arrest and detention of some of the national leaders who had sacrificed their all for bringing freedom to this country from British rule and who were deeply committed to restore to the people of the country their inalienable right to have clean, efficient and honest government to provide them with food, clothing and shelter have caused a deep wound in the hearts of millions of the masses to whom these leaders were verily saviours come to free them from the clutches of the Moscow-oriented communists masquerading as Indira Congressmen in this country.

4.This committee demands with all the force at its command the immediate and unconditional release of all the leaders of the national democratic opposition parties and lifting of both the emergencies within the next few weeks.

5.This committee is shocked beyond measure at the total censorship imposed for the first time in Independent India on all news and comments the like of which has not been witnessed even during the war days and ^{will} do credit to totalitarian state of the communist or fascist type and which/damage democracy itself beyond repair if persisted in any longer. This committee while offering its congratulations to the few newspapers and journals who are boldly fighting back this barbarous attack demands that the right of the people to know facts and get correct information and enlightened ~~and~~ comments, be restored by lifting the pre-censorship of news and comments and giving full freedom for the Press to gather and publish news.

6.This committee repudiates in toto the false and malicious allegations

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made against the democratic opposition parties and their leaders by Indira Congress and their henchmen that they were bent on capturing power by any means, that they were obstructing the smooth functioning of democratic institutions and that they were preventing them from implementing the so-called progressive measures for helping the poor. Having used all the powers placed at their disposal by the people to create intolerable living conditions for the people by adopting wrong-headed and out-of-date economic policies which in their turn created shortages of all essential articles and caused mounting unemployment and misery, the ruling congress like the wolf in Aesop's fable tries to throw the blame on the democratic opposition parties for their failures and like true disciples of Dr. Goebbels go on propagating falsehoods through the misuse of A I R and other publicity media at the disposal of the Government of India. The committee demands the setting up of autonomous corporations for running the A I R and the television immediately to prevent their present prostitution to secure the ends of the ruling congress party.

7. Since this committee is afraid that Indira Congress will not listen to sane advice and withdraw the plans for creating a constitutional dictatorship it appeals to the parliament collectively and to its members individually not to accord their consent to the proclamation of the emergency and subsequent orders and regulations issued thereafter when these are placed before them for parliament's approval as required by clause 352(2) of the Indian Constitution. It also respectfully warns them that if they approve of these draconian emergency orders which strike at the roots of parliamentary democratic system they will be placing themselves out of court with the people. Further the people of the land will be put to the dire necessity of questioning their representative character and demand dissolution of the Lok Sabha and holding of fresh elections before February 1976 in order to ascertain the wishes of the people.

8. In this connection this committee wishes to draw the attention of the Indian people to the prophetic warnings uttered by the Sage and statesman, the late lamented Rajaji as early as 1969 and 1970. Addressing a meeting of the General Council of the All India Swatantra Party at Madras on July 21 of 1970 Rajaji declared "The danger before the country is great. It may look somewhat odd if I should compare the position of Germany under Hitler with the present position in the country. If Hitler was a danger to Europe when he began his ambitious and mad career the present Prime Minister is as much a danger to India as Hitler was to Europe. I am sure some evil star has come to distort her congenial character and natural temperament. Today we suffer from the consequences of a temper that has seized her now". Those words are true beyond measure and Rajaji would have been delighted if only his assessment had proved wrong.

9. Further the committee is fully convinced that the declaration of the second emergency has been made solely to protect and preserve the position of the ruling party and perpetuate a personal rule under false pretext of protecting the country from external danger and internal disorder. This committee calls on the people to be vigilant and defend their just rights and freedom at all costs.

10. This committee warmly welcomes the clear and unambiguous opposition voiced by the D M K. and the Congress (O) to the imposition of emergency and the other undemocratic steps taken by Indira Congress and offers its cooperation to fight the tyranny imposed on the people by the ruling congress and to restore all the democratic rights and freedom of the people so flagrantly taken away from them.

RESOLUTION II.

Pending release of the national leaders the committee demands daily bulletins by specialists and independent doctors about the health and well being of the great leaders like Sri J.P., Acharya Kripalani and Sri Morarji Desai.

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