

SWATANTRA PARTY
Bombay Region
Tel.No.253085

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FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION:

"There are only two alternatives before the Country - we can fight to the bitter end and regain our honour or we can appease the Chinese, encourage International Communism and humiliate our country", said Mr. Piloo Mody, Executive Chairman of the Swatantra Party, who presided over a mammoth public meeting held at the K.C. College Hall under the auspices of the Swatantra Party (Bombay Region), on 21st January 1963.

He said that it has to be realised and accepted that aggression has been committed, that the India-China issue is ideological and that China wishes to turn India into a Peking Satellite.

Mr. Piloo Mody warned the Nation of the Enemy within, who by their insidious propaganda was undermining our nation's morale.

Sir Homi Mody said that he was not a little confused by the Chinese situation which appeared to him to be more complicated than a Chinese puzzle. The issue immediately before the country was grave and the question that had to be decided was whether the Colombo proposals offered an honourable basis for negotiations. He criticised the approach of most of the Colombo Powers and stated that they sought to equate the aggressor with the victim.

Sir Homi continued that the Government's first reaction to the Colombo proposals was unfavourable as being contrary in spirit and substance to the position Government had repeatedly taken up. Government were apparently having second thoughts, and it seemed now that they were prepared to accept a basis of settlement on whatever terms proved acceptable to the Chinese, and not such as were calculated to safeguard the nation's honour and interests. This situation was fraught with peril to the country.

Sir Homi next dwelt on what the Government had been saying and doing since the Emergency was declared, and argued that that was hardly the way to close up the ranks and mobilise public opinion. The people of India to a man, barring the Communists, had given a striking demonstration of their whole-hearted support to whatever action Government may take to repel the invader, and there was no question of their wavering in their will and determination. That they were not prepared to accept, however, was the half-hearted way in which the war was being waged. India had a right to expect resolute leadership at this crucial juncture, and negotiations on terms which the vast majority of thinking people must reject was not the way to safeguard the honour, integrity and interests of the Nation.

Mr. M.R. Masani, General Secretary of the Swatantra Party who spoke next said that "while Mr. Nehru considers it 'uncivilised' to refuse to talk with the enemy after the military defeat India has sustained, the Indian people hold the view that it is the only patriotic attitude to adopt. "In the face of practically nation-wide unanimity in rejecting the Colombo proposals given expression to by all democratic Opposition parties and prominent Congress spokesmen like

Mr. C.B. Gupta, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mr. K. Hanumanthiah M.P., and Seth Govind Das, M.P., the Indian Government will be taking on a heavy responsibility if it tries to persuade Parliament, against its better judgement, to give it the liberty to negotiate with the enemy while he is still on Indian soil," continued Mr. Masani.

On a detailed analysis of the Colombo proposals, Mr. Masani showed how their acceptance as a basis for negotiations would not only be resiling from the solemn and unanimous resolve proclaimed by Parliament on November 14 but even a climb down from the Government's own position that it would not negotiate with the Chinese till the September 8 line was restored by the reoccupation of territory lost since that date.

No Nation that believed in its future could agree to enter into negotiations after a military defeat such as that India sustained in October and November last year. It would be as if Britain had accepted an armistice from Hitler immediately after Dunkirk. Since Khrushchev's views were held in such respect in Delhi, Mr. Masani quoted from the Soviet statesman's speech at Leipzig on 7th March 1959: "History teaches us that conferences reflect in their decisions the established balance of forces resulting from victory or capitulation in war or similar circumstances." It was natural that the Chinese Communists should be keen to get us to the conference table. It was equally clear that India's national interests lay in refusing to negotiate with the enemy. It appeared as if New Delhi was drifting back to the old policy of craven appeasement and negotiating from weakness which had already led India once to the brink of disaster. Parliament must see to it that such folly was not repeated.

Among others who spoke were Mr. K.M. Munshi, Vice-President of the All-India Swatantra Party. He spoke first in the order of speakers.

Mr. Madhu Mehta, Hon. Secretary of the Swatantra Party (Bombay Region) proposed a vote of thanks.

S. Srinivasan
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Office Secretary