

May 7, 1971

2219

My dear Ghorpade,

I have just received your letter of 30th April after a week in the post. I hasten to reply and I hope this reaches you in time for the meeting on the 10th of May which you have called in Coorg of the sympathisers and supporters of the Swatantra Party including leading planters and agriculturists. It is a very good idea and I hope that your meeting will be a great success. You will be meeting at a time when stout hearts and clear minds are necessary. We have not only to regain lost grounds but to move forth in the coming years.

Since its inception in 1959, the Swatantra Party has played a valuable part in our national life in more than one way. It has provided for the first time a democratic alternative to those who are not wedded to socialism or communism. It has acted as a brake on reckless adventure and demagoguery. It has placed before the country an alternative to the futile and disastrous statist policies of the last twenty years. The need for a strong opposition is going to be felt more than ever in the coming years.

The Swatantra Party is the only real opposition party because it presents a clear-cut alternative to the present day Socialist Establishment. The set back that we have received in the recent election has nothing to do with the principles of the Party. There were many extraneous reasons for the defeat of our candidates, the main one being the failure to build up a viable and visible alternative and our joining a meaningless front without policies and programme and without even heart unity on the part of the other parties. I am sure that under younger and fresher leadership of people like yourself, the Party can make a comeback. It is however important that there should be a change in leadership and it is for that reason as you know that I managed to persuade you and our other colleagues to agree to my stepping down from the Presidentship of the Party.

The real crisis and challenge will come two or three years from now when people realise that the facile promises made to them during the election have not and cannot be fulfilled. If, by that time, we have done our homework and educated our electorate, they will turn to us otherwise there is a danger of their turning as in Gujarat to the Naxalites and Maoists. We have therefore to start work from now and launch our big educational campaign.

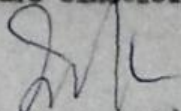
This can only be done if we have a cadre of workers and a grass roots organisation. Otherwise, our principles however beautiful would remain only on paper. Even truth, it has been told, needs wings.

Good

I hope the meeting you are organising on the 10th will consider some of these matters and come to fruitful conclusions.

My best wishes to you in your effort and my greetings to those who gather.

Yours sincerely,



(M. R. Masani)

Dr. Rajkumar R. Ghorpade,
Swatantra Party Coorg Unit,
Shakhti Bldg.,
Mercera P.O.,
N. Coorg.

P.S. Confirmatory Copy of my telegram is attached.

MRM:ri