

Swatantra Party and International Questions:

The rationale of the Party's ideology and functioning has been primarily derived from National questions.

Since the Chinese incursions into Indian territory and the rapidly deteriorating relations with Communist China, the climate of politics in India has developed into a new and radical emphasis on International questions as well. People at large have become much more acutely sensitive to International questions than ever before and demand attitudes, and clarifications from the Party.

This process is bound to expand because of this new consciousness.

In this situation the Party faces certain difficulties in its work in the field. Its own members demand attitudes, delineations of policy and guidance from the party leadership on such questions as the Party's attitude to Panchashila,

Pakistan-relations, S-East Asian problems in the context of threat to India from Communist China, policy towards the nervous Himalayan kingdoms which are showing signs of nervousness about spontaneous alignment with India in the present Sino-Indian conflicts, appraisals of attitudes to West, and African countries etc. These questions are asked of our active party organisers at ward levels from the General public and it is found that there is at present no formulations available in the party's policy statement from which some attitudes to these International questions could be delineated. At present there is a big gap in the Party's formulations on International questions.

Every political party in opposition has had to perforce reckon with this radical shift in Indian political climate and while the main activities of all political parties in India in the present conditions are deployed over the question of Chinese aggression and connected question of International relations like the admission of China in the U.N., status of



Tibet, attitude to Pakistan, relations with S-East Asian countries and Arab countries etc., the Swatantra Party as a party, finds itself in the difficult position of saying "no comment" for fear that any comments may transgress into foreign policy statements.

This silence on burning international questions of great sensitiveness to India, has considerably handicapped the work of party members and active workers in the field. Much of the favourable response the Party has obtained stands to get dissipated on account of our silence on at least some international questions, particularly when the party has very clear and unambiguous stand on fundamental national questions. This precision on National question and silence on international problems presents the party as a "split personality".

It is therefore essential that in the logic of our position on National questions, some formulations are essential on International questions which are of great and immediate relevance to India.

This problem is particularly acute for party units in urban areas where political consciousness among the urban areas where political consciousness among the urban middle class, the backbone of the party, is highly developed.

The National Executive of the Party is requested to give serious and early consideration to this problem as it affects organisational work of the Party very much.

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