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Swatantra to function "as before"

MADRAS, December 8.
THE national council of the Swatantra Party, which met here today, decided that the party would continue to function "as before". It elected Mr. G. K. Sundaram, industrialist, its president. Mr. Sundaram will continue to function as treasurer also.

Mr. Paramanand Kejriwal and Mr. Harihar Patel were elected vice-presidents, Mr. Girish Munshi general secretary and Mr. V. S. Srikumar joint secretary.

The council supported the movement led by Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan and authorised the party president to contact the Sarvodaya leader to "co-ordinate" the party's activities with the movement.

The council viewed the Naroda meeting of the Congress as "ineffective" in its impact on the country's economic problems and considered it a "dangerous portent" of how the government tried to "bypass established forums to tackle the country's problems."

It said the 13-point programme of the "secret conclave" showed the

ruling party's "easy recourse to populist policies, which ignore basic problems of production and concentrate on methods of distribution."

The council adopted a few resolutions on organisational matters, including shifting of the party headquarters from Bombay to Madras.

Briefing newsmen, Mr. Sundaram said 30 out of 45 members, including representatives from Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Orissa attended the meeting. A few had also expressed their inability to attend, due to short notice. Mr. M. R. Masani, a former president of the party, could not also attend, because of another engagement.

He said the party would urge the election commission that it should continue to be allotted its symbol.

Mr. Sundaram said the party's organisational elections would be held in November next year. They should have been held by now but for certain recent development.

The Tamil Nadu unit of the party would meet in Salem on December 15 and decide its stand vis-a-vis the civic elections in the state.

Swatantra Party, Maharashtra.
143, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1

Copy of Resolution adopted by the State
Council of the Swatantra Party, Maharashtra
at its meeting held on 6th July 1974 at Bombay.

"This meeting of the State Council of the Swatantra Party, Maharashtra, has carefully considered the proposal placed before it that the Swatantra Party be dissolved along with the similar dissolution of six other parties so as to facilitate the formation of a new Party.

-- The State Council notes that of the seven parties that are expected to dissolve to enable the formation of the new Party, the others being confined to particular States or parts of a State.

The State Council is firmly convinced that the Party's principles and policies continue to be valid and that had the policies of Government been formulated on the basis of the said principles, our country would not be in the present critical situation.

The Council is equally convinced that the new Party will mark no advance in the search for a truly national alternative comprising as it does those who, though for the present have consented to get together on a general programme are bound to disagree in regard to the interpretation of a vague and general statement of policy.

Moreover, with opposition parties like the Congress (O) and the Jan Sangh continuing their individual existence, the objective of a two-party system and its electoral benefits will continue to elude us. On the other hand, there is real danger of the ruling Congress on the one side and the Jan Sangh on the other being the direct beneficiaries of such a development.

The State Council of the Swatantra Party, Maharashtra does not consider the time or occasion opportune for the disappearance of the Swatantra Party from the Indian political scene and is, therefore, opposed to the proposal to dissolve the Party.

The Maharashtra State Council therefore requests the office-bearers of the Party to convene another meeting of the General Council on the eve of the National Convention to enable this matter to be reviewed once again before it is brought up at the Convention.

In the event of a resolution to dissolve the Party being carried in the National Convention, the Maharashtra State Swatantra Party will continue to retain its identity as Swatantra Party and carry on the message and flag of the Party."
