

Dr. M. S. Aney

M. P.

P. No. 3323.

Bobade's Banglow
Civil Line,
NAGPUR.

Date 29.3.62.

2804

Dear Revered Rajaji,

I am in due receipt of your letters. One was received on 27th and another which is the exact copy of the first on 28th in the morning. Messrs. Ranga and Masani also had come and discussed the question of my joining the Swatantra party with me. Both of them gave me the clarification which I had sought from you in my last letter. Your letter has clearly stated the position of the Swatantra party on the three points which I had referred to you. Mr. Masani specifically said that I should be an associate member if I feel some difficulty in becoming the full-fledged member of the Swatantra Party. Your letter has ended on the same note. But there is one point more which you have mentioned in that note. That is that I should guide the Parliamentary party as a 'de facto' leader. I only understand it to mean that there will be a 'de jure' leader of the party who will of course be a full-fledged member of the party in the house, and you expect me to advise the party about the questions that may come up for consideration before the House from time to time retaining my position as an associate member.

I will have to formally place your reply for consideration before the members of the N.V.A. Samiti. Executive Committee. That Committee is going to meet soon at Nagpur. The meeting of the General Council of the N.V.A. is also going to meet in the first or second week of April.

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Besides myself Raje Lal Shamshaha of Chanda District the leader of the Adivasi Sevak Samaj is also elected to the Lok Sabha. Adi Sevak Samaj and N.V.A.S. have fought the election jointly on the issue of the formation of an autonomous Vidarbha State. The great success of N.V.A.S. in the last election in Chanda District is due to this joint effort of the two bodies. The successful candidates of these two bodies will form one group in the State Legislature and similarly in the Central legislature also.

When I go back to Nagpur on 2nd of April, this whole matter of joining the Swatantra party will be discussed with him also. I shall explain to the Executive Committee and the General Committee the significance of the correspondence between yourself and myself and the gist of the views expressed by Mr. Masani and Prof. Ranga.

I will try to bring home to them the obvious advantage of our members being associated with an All India Party group in the Central Legislature particularly. There are certain members from Punjab who belong to Akali Dal who will be joining the Swatantra party. An associate member gets more opportunity to persuade these members and enlist their sympathies and support to the stand of the N.V.A.S..

I will be in a position to inform you by the end of the first or second week of April the considered view of the

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N.V.A.S. and my own decision.

Biyani's resignation has created a sense of frustration in the N.V.A.S. party. If I also take any definite step without any attempt to get their consent and support, the result will be disastrous.

Since my recovery from illness in the last 4 years I have been engaged in helping my friends of the N.V.A.S. to form a strong fighting party for the cause of Vidarbha.

In the last election fight the Congress has come out successful in almost all the parts of Vidarbha except the city of Nagpur and Chanda District. This routing has had a very depressing effect on the general body of workers. I have to take this aspect into consideration before taking any final decision. It is painful to me that my hesitation and taking time to arrive at a definite decision is causing you some embarrassment. My main question today is to find out what shall keep up the spirit of the few sturdy fighters to carry on the campaign and hold aloft the flag of the N.V.A.S. and save the movement from being crushed out of existence due to antipathies of the foes of Vidarbha and apathies of the lukewarm friends. The demoralising trend of depression has to be arrested and a new spirit of hope and optimism has to be infused in them.

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I assure you that I shall try to the best of my ability to carry my colleagues in the N.V.A.S. to willingly permit me and my colleague Raje Lal Shamsaha to sit in the Lok Sabha as associate of the Swatantra party.

I hope that I may be successful, if not it shall be my regretful duty to inform you accordingly with an apology that should have caused you so much wrong and embarrassment by writing a letter containing an assurance of my joining the party and taking steps in pursuance of it after a certain date, and now pleading for more time to consider the question and to make an effort to win the support of friends if possible or as the last alternative to be prepared for a disappointing reply.

With my kindest regards,

I am

Yours truly,

M. S. Aney

(M. S. Aney).