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4th April, 1972

My dear Bhai,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of March 28 to Mr. H.M.Patel. Since you say in the last para of your letter that you are doing so in order to obtain our views on your suggestions, I am dropping you this line in reply. I am sending copies of this letter to Rajaji, Dandekar, the General Secretary, the Treasurer and the Executive Secretary of the Party. /H.M.Patel,

Since I have had the benefit of seeing Raju's reply to you of 30th March and since I agree by and large with what he has to say, it is not necessary for me to traverse the same ground again. With Raju's analysis of the reasons for the condition of the Party, I am in complete accord.

In regard to the consequences that follow from such an analysis, my own thoughts are as follows. I fear I would not take any of the three paths you have suggested. I believe each of them would do more harm than good.

In so far as the dissolution of the Party is concerned, I am inclined to doubt whether its continued existence comes at all in the way of any of us who want to do our bit to educate public opinion and to do public service in other ways short of joining the Ruling Congress Party or any other political party which I would rule out as utterly defeatist. I for one have not felt that my membership of the Swatantra Party has come in the way of the Leslie Savhny Programme, the Indian Liberal Group, the editing of Freedom First or any other extracurricular activities. Indeed, I would be inclined to say that, knowing that I am one of the fraternity of the Swatantra Party gives me additional courage and a little more morale.

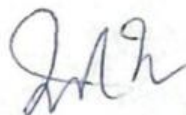
My own thought is that, at the present moment, no line of work - not even Raju's prescription - will yield immediate results. I am a short-term pessimist, but a long-term optimist. I believe, therefore, that basic education, making the people aware of the realities and preparing the ground for the necessary changes will, in course of time, help in yielding results. In this task of basic education, the Swatantra Party, if only it will make up its mind to do so by eschewing electoral politics and concentrating on its basic task can do a great deal. Even if, as we may apprehend, it is not able to perform this task adequately with its present composition, its very existence will keep the flag flying and avoid further demoralisation. It is also possible that,

when the time comes, it may provide a good rallying point in favour of a change.

Let me give an example. As you are aware, the non-Communist parties in Hungary, including the Social Democratic Party and Peasants' Party, were suppressed by the Communists under Rascosi when they took over Hungary after World War II. Yet a decade later, when Hungary revolted, the former adherents of these parties, who had probably been keeping themselves underground, immediately reopened their offices, rallied their followers and Hungary was able to throw up a coalition government with Imre Nagy, a Communist, as Prime Minister and with other ministers representing the Social Democratic, Peasant and other parties. I think this gives an indication of something that may well happen in other countries.

These are my off-the-cuff reactions but I shall look forward to the discussion in the General Council with an open mind.

Yours sincerely,



(M. R. MASANI)

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The Executive Secretary, Swatantra Party

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