

An Apology and an Explanation

We come back to you after a lapse of almost six months. We apologise and wish to offer no excuses.

But an explanation for the inordinate delay is certainly called for. Among the principal reasons for this gap in publication has been the continued reluctance on the part of State Units to send in their reports of activity. There have been reminders on several occasions. Deadlines have been set; but alas! not to much effect.

At the last meeting of the General Council in Madras a member from Mysore suggested that all units of the Party, from the Primary to the State level should be required to send in their reports to the Central Office for publication in the *Newsletter*. The General Secretary took the opportunity to explain that while the suggestion was excellent, it was by no means new; and he drew the attention of members present to the

fact that on several occasions the Central Office had in fact requested for such reports.

At the same time we are glad to say that thanks to certain recent measures of reorganisation in the Central Office, we venture to assure you that beginning with this issue the *Newsletter* will be published at more frequent intervals, possibly monthly, but at any rate at not longer intervals than two months between successive issues. It is our fervent hope that State Units will as from now ensure that their reports of activities do reach us regularly every month. If they don't and if the Central Office has to rely upon press reports for information concerning Party activities, we should not be held responsible if a certain amount of inaccuracy creeps in. In the circumstances, we eagerly look forward to receiving promptly, every month, full reports of the activities in all States, from the State Units down to all Units of the Primary Level.

Meetings of Central Committees

There have been three meetings of the Central Parliamentary Board, three of the National Executive and one meeting of the General Council since the publication of the last issue. Featured below are a few highlights from the proceedings of these meetings.

Central Parliamentary Board

The first meeting was held in Cochin on January 27.

Rajya Sabha and Vidhan Parishads Elections

The main business was the consideration of recommendations of candidatures for the biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha and the Vidhan Parishads. As all recommendations had not been received, a sub-Committee consisting of Prof. N. G. Ranga, Mr. M. R. Masani and Mr. N. Dandekar was appointed to look into and decide upon such recommendations as might subsequently be received from State Units in this regard.

Haryana

Similarly, a 5-man Sub-Committee consisting of Prof. Ranga, Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy, Mr. N. Dandekar, Mr. M. R. Masani and Mr. Dahyabhai Patel was con-

stituted to attend to various matters relating to the mid-term elections in Haryana scheduled for early May.

Resolutions

Resolutions on the following subjects were adopted:

- (i) Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill
- (ii) Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices Bill (Texts attached - Annexure A)

The Parliamentary Board met again in New Delhi on April 13.

Results of the Biennial Elections

The Board noted with satisfaction that the recently concluded biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha had resulted in an increase in the strength of the Party's Group in that House from 13 to 15. But concern was expressed at the happening in Gujarat, resulting in the defeat of the Party's approved candidate.

While Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy and Mr. Sundermani Patel (the retiring members of the Rajya Sabha) were re-elected, Mr. J. Chandramouli from Andhra and Mr. K. C. Panda from Orissa were the new entrants.

In the Vidhan Parishad elections in Madras, Mr. Saw Ganesan and Mr. G. Swaminathan were elected to the Madras Legislative Council, increasing the strength of the combined legislature group in that State to 23.

The Need for an Upper House in States without One

In response to an inquiry as to what should be the Party's stand in regard to the demand for an Upper House in those States where there was none such, it was felt that the Party should not press this demand. However, in so far as the Rajya Sabha was concerned, the Board was of the definite opinion that since Indian Parliament was the supreme and sovereign legislature in India, it was desirable that it should continue to be bicameral.

Resolutions

A resolution on the Insurance (Amendment) Bill was adopted:

(Text attached — Annexure B)

The next meeting of the Board (the last meeting preceding this issue of our *Newsletter*) was held in Madras on May 31.

Haryana Mid-term Elections

It was noted that the party was able to secure only two seats in the mid-term elections to the State Assembly in Haryana, out of the 31 candidates it had set up.

The General Secretary outlined the following main causes for this poor showing:—

- (i) the absence of an established Party organisation;
- (ii) inadequate resources in men, money and vehicles;
- (iii) the fact that most candidates depended excessively on local, communal and caste appeals, with little or no reliance being placed on Party literature, propaganda or principles;
- (iv) the fact that many Senior Ministers of the Central Government (including the Prime Minister) participated in a whirl-wind campaign for the Congress Party, their main theme being the ouster of the "defectors" and the capacity of the Congress to provide a stable government which no "United Front" of Opposition Parties could possibly offer;
- (v) the unhappy experience of the "understanding" with the Jan Sangh;
- (vi) the heavy influx of jeeps and workers of the Congress Party from the Dausa Parliamentary and Chomu Assembly Constituencies fresh from their victory;

- (vii) the pinning down of the leader (Ch. Hardwari Lal) to his constituency as a result of the powerful campaign mounted against him by the Congress Party; and
- (viii) the peculiar and inexplicable phenomenon of almost every other Party singling out the Swatantra Party for attack.

However, the Board noted with some satisfaction that while out of the 31 candidates put up by the Party only two were successful, as many as eleven came second and ten came third. There was also a substantial increase in the percentage of votes polled by the Party.

As to the attitude which the Party's M.L.As should adopt in regard to cooperating with the "United Opposition" led by the former Chief Minister, Rao Birendra Singh, the Board agreed that there was no objection to such cooperation, but without holding office in it, provided that the policies of the "United Opposition" did not conflict with the Party's policies, and provided that such cooperation could be extended without submerging the identity of the Party.

Performance in By-elections

We lost two by-elections to Parliament, both of which had returned Swatantra members in the last General Elections. Both vacancies were caused by the demise of the Swatantra M.P.s concerned, namely, Mr. G. D. Patil, member of Parliament from Bijapur Parliamentary Constituency in Mysore, and Mr. Charanjit Rai, member of Parliament from the Dausa Parliamentary Constituency in Rajasthan.

An Independent candidate who contested with the Party's symbol from the Chomu Assembly Constituency in Rajasthan was also defeated. This vacancy had been caused by the resignation of an independent who had joined the Party in the State Legislature and had subsequently resigned his membership of the Assembly.

Naturally, the Board was greatly concerned with these reverses. It discussed the reasons at great length and decided that:

- (i) wherever a by-election to Parliament or Legislative Assembly was likely to take place, it was for the State Units to take an *early decision* as to whether they wished to contest at all, having due regard to all the circumstances including especially the fact that the Centre would not be able to extend any financial or other assistance;
- (ii) candidates whose names were suggested by the State Parliamentary Board for approval by the Central Parliamentary Board should (save in exceptional cases) be members of the Swatantra Party; and
- (iii) the Party's MLAs, and its workers and vehicles in all Primary and District Units from all parts

of the State concerned should be mobilised to assist in the by-election.

Work in Parliament

A detailed report prepared by the Parliamentary Office of the Party, high-lighting the Party's activities during the Budget session of Parliament was circulated to members. (Lack of space prevents us from reproducing this report. Readers interested in perusing this report are earnestly requested to write to the Central Office for a copy of "Swatantra In Parliament" which contains substantial extracts from this report.)

Apart from a general discussion on the Party Group's actions in Parliament, the Central Parliamentary Board attended to the following specific issues:

(i) Approach to Fourth Plan

The Board endorsed the decision of the Party's Group in Parliament not to participate in the meeting called by Government to discuss the "Approach to the Fourth Plan". The decision to abstain was designed to ensure that the Party's objections to the Planning Commission's "approach" should be placed on record. It was felt that attendance at such meetings, while serving no useful purpose, gave rise to the erroneous impression that the Party had given tacit approval to the proposed "approach" to future planning.

But in regard to the attitude of the Party's Groups in State Legislatures when invited by State Governments to participate in discussions of State Plans, the Board expressed the opinion that since such meetings at the State level involved only discussions of specific projects and of priorities between the various projects *inter se*, there was every reason and justification for accepting such invitations and participating effectively in the discussions at the State level;

(ii) National Integration Council

The Board endorsed Prof. Ranga's action in declining to participate in the deliberations of the National Integration Council since it was the Party's views that this body ought not to be a sort of "official" organ of Government nor should its meetings be convened by Government. It should, it was felt, be a non-official body composed of all elements in national life instead of being dominated by the Congress Party or the Government.

Mid-term Elections in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh

West Bengal

The Board felt that what was important was political stability and that until such time as stable conditions were assured, mid-term elections should not be held in that State. In any event, the Board was

definitely of the view that the mid-term elections should not be held in November.

Uttar Pradesh

As regards Uttar Pradesh the Board decided that the Party should concentrate its effort mainly in those areas where chances of success were reasonably fair, based on our performance in the General Elections of 1967.

Attitude to Bihar Ministry

While retaining independence of action, the Board was of the view that the Party's M.L.As in the Bihar State Assembly should not cooperate in any efforts at toppling the Ministry.

National Executive

The first of the three meetings of the National Executive was held in Cochin on January 28.

Relations with Jan Sangh

Mr. Masani and the General Secretary reported on the unsuccessful efforts they had made to secure working unity with the Jan Sangh.

The Swatantra Party's offer of a kind of joint functioning of the two parties in Parliament under one leadership and two deputy leaders was turned down by the Jan Sangh as being quite impracticable on the ground that it (the Jan Sangh) had little in common with the Swatantra Party and the two were widely separated on certain major issues which could not be shelved even temporarily. The Jan Sangh felt that any joint working would operate to its own grave disadvantage with the public.

In the light of this report the Executive therefore decided that apart from possible understandings on specific matters such as electoral adjustments, mutual support in biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha and Vidhan Parishads, the Swatantra Party could no longer hope for success in continuing its efforts to seek a closer relationship with the Jan Sangh.

Condolence

The Executive expressed its deep sense of sorrow at the untimely demise of two stalwarts of the Party and one eminent figure in public life viz.,

- (i) Col. L. Sawhney
- (ii) Mr. Charanjit Rai
- (iii) Dr. M. S. Aney

Resolutions

Resolutions on the following subjects were adopted:

- (i) Preconditions to Nationalisation
- (ii) Call to Policy Holders, Depositors and Shareholders
- (iii) Autonomy for State Enterprises

- (iv) Removal of Zonal Barriers
- (v) Prohibition of the use of Fire Arms and other Lethal Weapons by Private Organisations
- (vi) People's Committees in Kerala
(Texts attached — Annexure C)

The next meeting of the Executive was held in New Delhi on April 14. The two important and inter-connected issues before this meeting were:

- (a) the circumstances leading to the defeat of the Party's official nominee in the biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha from the Gujarat State Assembly, and
- (b) Mr. Masani's resignation from the National Executive and the Central Parliamentary Board "in atonement" for failure to honour the Party's pledge by the Party's M.L.As in Gujarat resulting in the defeat of the official nominee.

In regard to (a), the Executive decided to initiate disciplinary proceedings against the five M.L.As who had sponsored the rebel candidate Mr. U. N. Mahida and approved the disciplinary action already initiated by the President against Mr. Mahida himself.

In regard to Mr. Masani's letter of resignation, the Executive unanimously requested him to withdraw his resignation. At the same time, in view of the demand made by many members of the General Council for an emergent meeting of the Council to discuss the circumstances leading to Mr. Masani's resignation from the National Executive and Central Parliamentary Board, it was decided that a meeting of the General Council should be called to meet in Madras on Saturday and Sunday, June 1 and 2, 1968.

Action against Defectors

The Executive decided that the Party's legislators whether in Parliament or State Assembly and Councils, who defect from the Party, should be expelled from the Party. The question of readmitting them should be treated on merits whenever such a situation arose.

West Bengal

The Executive approved the Governor's action in dismissing the Communist-dominated United Front Ministry and called for mid-term elections.

Punjab

The Executive disapproved the Speaker's action in proroguing the Assembly. It demanded the dissolution of the Assembly and the ordering of fresh elections.

Rev. Martin Luther King

The Executive mourned the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King and observed a minute's silence in honour of his memory.

Resolutions

Resolutions on the following subjects were adopted:

- (i) Food Situation
- (ii) Plight of Handloom Weavers
(Texts attached — Annexure D)

The last meeting of the National Executive was held in Madras on May 31.

In the absence of Prof. N. G. Ranga, the senior Vice-President Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy presided.

Co-options to the General Council

In pursuance of the authority vested in it by the General Council, the Executive co-opted the following to the General Council:

- (i) Mr. Y. G. Gowd, M.P., (ii) Mr. Beharilal Kanaiyalal, (iii) Mr. Johnson Vallikappen, (iv) Mr. K. B. Jinaraja Hegde, (v) Mr. Rajballabh Mishra, (vi) Mr. Hansraj Pahwa and (vii) Mr. Kashinath Bahadur Pal.

Disciplinary Action

- (i) *Mr. Bhagwanjibhai Patel*

For working against the Party's candidate in the Rajkot Parliamentary Constituency in the last General Elections, the National Executive decided to debar Mr. Bhagwanjibhai Patel from holding any office whatsoever in the Party for a period of two years.

- (ii) *Mr. U. N. Mahida*

In view of the undisputed fact that Mr. U. N. Mahida stood as a candidate in the biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat in March this year in defiance of the Party's directive asking him to withdraw, the National Executive construed his action as deliberate misconduct; and in view of the undoubted gravity of his misconduct Mr. Mahida was expelled from the Party.

- (iii) *Five Gujarat MLAs*

In regard to five MLAs who were charged with having sponsored and worked actively in support of Mr. Mahida, the National Executive took the following action:

Mr. Jamubhai Bhat
Mr. Chunilal Vasave

The Executive was satisfied with the explanation submitted by these two gentlemen and decided to drop further action against them.

Thakoresaheb Chandra-sinhji Jadeja of Dhrol,
Mr. Natvarsinh Solanki,
Mr. Chandrakant Parikh.

The Executive after considering their explanations held that there was need for disciplinary action and decided that these three

gentlemen should be debarred from holding any office whatsoever, whether in the Party organisation or in the Party's Group in the State Legislature, for a period of three years.

Mr. Masani's resignation

The Executive noted with regret Mr. Masani's decision declining to withdraw his resignation from the Executive and the Central Parliamentary Board and accepted his resignation.

Resolution

A resolution on the Kutch Award was adopted.
(Text attached — Annexure E)

General Council

The General Council met in Madras on June 1 and 2. Of the 170 members, 71 were present on the first day and 73 on the second.

The first matter taken up for discussion was the circumstances leading to Mr. Masani's resignation. In this context the Council deliberated at length two resolutions.

The first, while appreciating the reasons that led to Mr. Masani's resignation, called upon the National Executive to create conditions to enable him to return to that body and the Central Parliamentary Board.

The second called for appointing a Committee to inquire into the allegations against the leadership in Gujarat and also proposed disciplinary action against Mr. C. C. Desai who, it was alleged, had admitted having worked against the official candidate.

Rajaji then addressed the meeting and said that he had, after his talks with Mr. H. M. Patel, the President of the Gujarat State Unit, been convinced that those who had worked against the official candidate, and all others concerned were genuinely repentant and therefore he was of the opinion that the action taken was adequate. He appealed for unity in the party and earnestly hoped that Mr. Masani would agree to be re-elected to the National Executive.

In the light of this appeal the Chairman asked the movers whether they desired to withdraw their resolutions. On their declining to do so, both the resolutions after discussion were put to vote and declared lost.

It was proposed that subject to Mr. Masani's consenting, he be re-elected to the National Executive. Mr. Masani declined to do so, but assured that he would continue to work for the party both in Parliament and outside.

Late Charanjit Rai

The Council observed a minute's silence in memory of the late Mr. Charanjit Rai, M.P., Joint Secretary of the Party and a member of the Council.

Vacancy in the National Executive

The General Council unanimously decided that the vacancy on the National Executive caused by Mr. Masani's resignation should not be filled.

Party's Failure in the Dausa By-Election

The following resolution seeking the appointment of an Enquiry Committee to go into the cause of the Party's failure in the Dausa by-election to Parliament was adopted by majority vote:

"The General Council has taken note with distress of the Party's failure to retain the Dausa seat in the Lok Sabha which had been won by the Party only a year back by the late Mr. Charanjit Rai. In view of the fact that this defeat is a major set back for the Party in Rajasthan and has unfortunate repercussions on the Party throughout the country and in order that appropriate lessons may be learnt and a recurrence of such incidents be avoided the Council requests the National Executive to appoint a Committee to investigate into and to report to the next meeting of the General Council on the by-election with particular reference to:

- (i) Whether it is a fact that the candidate was nominated without the prior approval of the State Parliamentary Board and the Central Parliamentary Board, and if so by whom he was nominated?
- (ii) Whether it is true that the candidate was not a member of the Party and was not prepared to become a member?
- (iii) Whether the candidate had not been elected from the same constituency in 1962 and had not completely forfeited the confidence of the constituency by his failure to function either in Parliament or in the constituency?
- (iv) Whether the campaign was conducted in an appropriate and effective manner?"

Abolition of Linguistic States

After discussing a Resolution moved by Mr. Girish Munshi demanding the abolition of Linguistic States the Council asked the National Executive to institute a careful study into the whole question and report to the next meeting of the Council.

Next National Convention

It was tentatively decided that the next National Convention should be held in the first week of October in Bhubaneswar.

Resolutions on National and International Issues

The following resolutions on national and international issues were unanimously adopted:

- (i) Growing Communist influence in Tamil Nadu among Peasants and Trade Unions
- (ii) Lawlessness in Kerala
- (iii) The Lessons of United Fronts
- (iv) The Bengal Situation
- (v) Floor Crossing
- (vi) Autonomy for Hills People of Assam
- (ii) Indians in Kenya
- (viii) Liberal Trends in Czechoslovakia
- (ix) Power Vacuum in South-East Asia

(Texts attached — Annexure F)

FOCUS ON ORISSA

Pay Commission

The Government of Orissa have reconstituted the Pay Commission set up in December 1966, with Shri Justice Abhimanyu Mishra of the Orissa High Court, as its chairman. The terms of reference remaining the same, the State Government had asked the Commission to submit its final recommendation by the end of June 1968.

State Awards for Teachers

With a view to giving public recognition to the yeoman service rendered by teachers of outstanding merit and to enhance the status and prestige of the distinguished members of the profession, the scheme of State Awards to Teachers was instituted in 1964. Continuing the tradition, the Government of Orissa selected 34 teachers, 19 from Primary Schools and 15 from Secondary Schools and the awards were given at a special function on 26 January, at Bhubaneswar.

Kudos from the press

We reproduce below excerpts from various press reports about the working of the Orissa Government:

"The Swatantra-Jan Congress coalition in Orissa is the only so-called United Front Government which is stable. The main reason for the stability is the alliance the two parties forged before the election.... chief architects of this alliance of course are Dr. H. K. Mahtab and Mr. R. N. Singh Deo who were able to anticipate the bickerings that might entail after the parties score a victory. The pre-judgement has come in good stead for the Coalition. Not only that, the smooth functioning of the coalition has put the Congress in a predicament. Driven to the opposition benches it finds itself against a formidable task to criticize most of the deeds for which it was responsible in one way or the other." (*Thought*, 20 January 1968)

"Congress President S. Nijalingappa, in his anxiety to condemn non-congress Coalition Governments declared that 'United Fronts are no rational alternatives to Congress Governments' but deliberately omitted to mention the two alternatives — both effectively functioning, one in Orissa, a Coalition, and the other in Madras, a single-party Government.

"The Orissa Coalition, headed by Saraikeela Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, fulfils all the conditions laid down by the Congress President.

"Fifty-six-year old Singh Deo is one of the most effective Chief Ministers in post-Independence India and yet makes the least noise.

"The record of sizeable achievements of the Orissa Government in the last ten months speaks volumes. The first and foremost achievement is the effective maintenance of law and order — the basis of all civilised governments. In the light of the bitter experience of the people in several States in the last few months of lawless activities and violence, the comparative quiet in Orissa stands out prominently.

"While increasing the State's food production, the Singh Deo Ministry has dynamically revised its industrial policy so as to provide sufficient incentives to new entrepreneurs to start new industries in the State.

"Corruption is another subject that has been tackled with grit and determination... it has to be borne in mind that under Biju Patnaik and his successor Biren Mitra, Orissa was the hotbed of corruption at all levels.

"The most outstanding performance of the Coalition Government was the effective manner in which it handled the post-cyclone miseries of the people." (*March of the Nation*, 3 February 1968)

"A year after the General Election, Orissa can claim the distinction of being the one non-congress State that was free of political turmoil and instability. Though the two-party coalition had a slender majority of ten, the threat of defection never posed a problem. The fact that there have been no switches in the Legislature during the year is an indication of the cohesion of the Swatantra-Jan Congress alliance ruling the State.

"The reasons for the stability.... are threefold. First no alternative political party contending for power is in sight... secondly the ruling alliance is a happy amalgam of two... groups... Thirdly this alliance has tried to harmonize its relations with the opposition by associating it with the administration... and by giving official recognition and status to the leader of the opposition.

"The administration's good record on law and order maintenance is another satisfactory feature... opposition parties did not carry their disputes... into the

streets and the ruling alliance, on its part, *resisted the temptation to incite people against the centre to cover up its own failings and frustrations.*

"....There has been a refreshing change in public life.... The administration is much cleaner. Steps have been taken against corrupt and inefficient senior officials. Party interference with the administration is minimal." (*The Hindustan Times*, 18 March 1968)

"Coalitions of diverse faiths, having so fast multiplied and disintegrated, watchful people cannot be blamed if they view them with grave misgivings and doubt the usefulness of any one combination. However there can be exceptions.

"Despite the harrowing experiences of the past few months, of ministry-making and wrecking, there still seem to be possibilities for such experiments, if like-minded and accommodating parties can come together. An example of a harmonious, purposeful team at the moment appears to be the Swatantra-Jan Sangh 'Combine' in Orissa.

"If the claims made by the Orissa Governor... in his inaugural address to the State Assembly... are substantive and an indication of the true state of affairs there, the coalition Ministry might be moving in the right direction.... He also claimed that his ministry was a 'shining example' to others....

"Assessed dispassionately, the coalition there in all probability is pursuing a progressive course.

"With constructive goals in view, as Orissa has, there can still be scope for likeminded parties coming together to serve the people." (*Gujarat Herald*, 22 February 1968)

Relief to Cyclone Victims

The Government has decided to grant interest-free loans to its employees affected by the cyclone, in Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts. This has been sanctioned even for temporary employees who have rendered at least one year's service.

Call to Kisans

The Chief Minister, Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, advised the ryots of Andhra Pradesh to unite into an organisa-

tion of their own to assert their rights and secure the abolition of land revenue.

He stated this while speaking at a largely attended public meeting organised by the Andhra Pradesh Swatantra Party on 10 February in connection with the Andhra Pradesh Kisan Sammelan. He said that before independence the Congress Party used to promise that land revenue would be abolished if it came to power. But today, after 20 years of independence they had not only forgotten their promise but in certain states like Andhra they were even thinking of enhancing it on the plea that the administration could not be run without levying it. But the Orissa Government had disproved this by completely abolishing land revenue.

In a scathing attack on the five-year Plans Mr. Singh Deo said that widespread unemployment and retrenchment, particularly among the technically qualified persons was the direct result of "socialist Planning". He expressed the hope that "better sense" would prevail with the planners and rulers of India and that they would approach problems from a practical standpoint.

War on Losing State Projects

"We are taking steps to close down, wind up, liquidate or sell unproductive State enterprises" declared Mr. R. N. Singh Deo while addressing a meeting organised by the Bombay Unit of the Swatantra Party, on 26 April. He said that the State-run Corporations, panchayat and cooperative industrial units being ill-conceived and badly executed, had become a burden on the State's economy and were acting as a drag on the State finances.

The Government therefore, had appointed evaluation committees to study their working and he was expecting an interim report in a short time.

Speaking in slow, measured tones, Mr. Singh Deo minced no words in criticising the "socialistic policy" of the Centre which stood in the way of disciplining the State's finances. He bitterly complained that while the Centre did not agree to increase the State's royalty on its mineral wealth, it had actually raised the export duty on iron ore immediately after devaluation instead of passing on the benefit to the State.

Panchayat and Municipal Elections

The following victories were won by the Party's candidates in various Panchayat and local bodies' Elections:

The Party retained control over the Lunawada Nagar Panchayat in Godhra (Gujarat) by capturing 14 out of 18 seats.

In the elections to the Hathras Municipal Board (UP), the Party won seven seats and Pandit Surajbhan, President of the Party Unit has been elected Chairman of the Municipal Board, securing 14 votes. He defeated

Congress, Ram Rajya Parishad and Communist candidates.

Right in the wake of the Bhavnagar decision against the Congress, the electorate of Dhandhuka gave a thumping and bold verdict by voting in 16 Swatantra candidates for the 17 seats in the recent municipal elections. The other seat went to an independent supported by the Party. Of these, four were elected unopposed and the rest won in straight contests with the Congress.

Swatantra and Trade Unionism

We reproduce below the text of a Circular issued by the General Secretary, Mr. N. Dandeker, explaining the Party's attitude vis-a-vis trade unions and their activities within the framework of the Party's labour policy.

"The position of the Swatantra Party in regard to Trade Union Activities can be stated quite briefly as follows:

We are keenly interested in Trade Union activities, but we do not encourage *political exploitation* of Trade Unions, because it is our conviction that Trade Unions as such should have no political affiliations.

It is true that this attitude of our Party is generally regarded with either suspicion or disbelief: *suspicion*, because Trade Unionists, even the decent ones, tend to interpret this policy as being one of "keeping aloof" from labour, arising out of the supposition that we are a "richman's party" and therefore "anti-labour" and "pro-management"; and *disbelief*, because our policy does not fit in with the current notion of Trade Unionism in the country. A Party, according to the current belief, must necessarily have a "labour-arm" without which, ask our Trade Union friends, how on earth are we going to spread our message among labour and win their sympathy?

It needs patient argument to convince many Trade Unionists in India that the Swatantra Party is not only *not* anti-labour but that its policy is meant to be a pioneering effort to cleanse the labour movement of political intrusion. We have to persuade them to our conviction that the subordination of Trade Unions to political parties means the subordination of the true interests of labour to the requirements of politics and politicians.

It is therefore necessary for us to give a more positive content to our excellent labour policy. We must remember also, that although we have imposed on ourselves this self-denying ordinance, every other political party in the country (including the Jan Sangh) has organised Trade Union "fronts" which pretend to have no organisational connection with their parent political party, but which in fact subserve merely the political ends of the Parties sponsoring them.

We should therefore take active interest in "Trade Unionism" as distinct from "political" Trade Unionism. In other words, we should without attempting to dominate Trade Unions, try and propagate our policies among Trade Unions wherever and whenever possible. This can be done by:—

- (a) conducting Trade Union courses among the Party's members who, at the same time, are

either members or Office Bearers of Trade Unions;

- (b) giving representation on the Party's Committees and Councils to such of our members as are Trade Unionists, in order to enable them to explain to us the problems relating to Labour so that the Party could shape its policy from time to time in the light of such reports; and
- (c) encouraging our members in Trade Unions to propagate within their own Unions the need to "depoliticise" the Unions and to make them purely Industrially-oriented Unions.

If we can do this, patiently over the years, it may be possible for us to bring about the correct atmosphere where workers begin asserting themselves in their Trade Unions purely for advancing the legitimate interests of labour, and Political Parties find themselves with little or no influence.

Other guide lines, at the practical level of organising Independent Trade Unions (or converting existing Trade Unions into politically "independent" Unions) are outlined in the following points, viz.,

- (i) We do not like multiplicity of Trade Unions, as that merely harasses the managements without doing any good to the workers.
- (ii) But where existing Trade Unions have become close oligarchies and lost their representative character (or gone into the hands of Communists), we should encourage the formation of Independent Trade Unions, having Office-Bearers chosen by the workers from among themselves and with no outsiders.
- (iii) Even such (new) Independent Trade Unions must be properly organised and registered; and they must be sufficiently representative before they can claim "recognition" from the management.
- (iv) In no circumstances can such a Union expect the management to "take sides" in inter-Union disputes.
- (v) Where such new Independent Trade Unions claim that they represent the majority of workers, this must be *proved* in a constitutional manner (e.g. by secret ballot, if necessary), conducted by the Government Labour Officer."

We at the Central Office have a Labour Adviser (Mr. G. B. Sukhee.) If readers need further clarification, they are welcome to write to him c/o the Swatantra Party, Central Office, 143 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.

Election Petitions

A petition challenging the election of Mr. Manubhai Amersey to the Lok Sabha from Banaskantha (North Gujarat) was dismissed with costs by the Gujarat High Court. Mr. Justice Divan of the Gujarat High Court upheld the election of Mr. Piloo Mody to the Lok Sabha from Godhra.

Unfortunately, Mr. Amersey was unseated by

another petition. His appeal is now pending before the Supreme Court.

The Andhra High Court dismissed with costs an election petition filed against the President, Prof. N. G. Ranga, who was elected in a by-election to the Lok Sabha from the Srikakulam Constituency last year.

Youth Activities

Andhra Pradesh

1. On 17.12.67 a meeting of the Chirala Town Unit Swatantra Youth Forum was held where a number of Speakers took part.
2. The State Swatantra Youth Forum Executive meeting was held at Vijayawada on 7.1.68 and elected Mr. Y. Srinivasrao as Vice-President and Mr. N. Rajagopala Rao as Joint Secretary. A number of resolutions were passed.
3. The Kakinada Town Swatantra Youth Forum held its general body meeting and unanimously resolved to hold the State Swatantra Youth Forum Conference at Kakinada.

4. On 28th January, the Gudiwada Town Swatantra Youth Forum held its general body meeting and elected new office bearers.
5. The Ongole Taluka Swatantra Front Unit held its Conference at Ongole on 4.2.68.

Mysore

On 23rd December, 1967, a Swatantra Youth Wing Conference was held at Hassan with Mr. Joe Pereira in the Chair. It was resolved to enrol more members to reach a figure of 800 from the present one of 400. It was also resolved that youth should help farmers in modern farm techniques.

Kashmir

Addressing a Press Conference at Jaipur on January 20, Mr. N. Dandekar, General Secretary, said that Kashmir was an internal problem of India and after the 1965 aggression Pakistan had no *locus standi* there.

In his opinion, the problem was one to be settled between the Government of India and the people of Kashmir and in view of the fact that the last elections in Kashmir not being fair, President's Rule should be promulgated and fresh elections ordered. Sheikh Abdullah and Mizra Afzal Beg should participate in

the elections and if they gained a majority, run the Government. Even then, if they felt dissatisfied and wanted greater autonomy, they could hold talks with the Government of India.

Sheikh Abdullah was accorded a reception by the Kashmir Swatantra Forum on 25th March at Srinagar. He said he had many solutions to the Kashmir problem and his mind was not "blank". "Unless the ground is well laid out then seed could not be sown", he added.

Conveyance to Voters—

An Election Commission Notification

For the information of Office Bearers and members of Party Committees at the various levels, we reproduce below the text of a Notification issued by the Election Commission on 28th December 1967 regarding the rules concerning conveyance to voters:

"The Election Commission often receives complaints, particularly at the time of a general election or a bye-election, that some candidates resort to the practice of providing conveyance to voters for going to or from polling stations, and thereby inducing them to vote for them. The hiring or procuring, whether on payment of otherwise, of any vehicle or vessel by a

candidate or an agent or by any other person with the consent of the candidate or his election agent or the use of any such vehicle or vessel for the free conveyance of an elector other than the candidate himself, the members of his family or his agent, to or from any polling station is a corrupt practice under the Representation of the People Act, 1951. It is also an offence punishable under section 133 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees.

"The most speedy and effective way of dealing with this corrupt practice and offence would be to prosecute

the offender under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898. Any person having information regarding the illegal procuring or hiring of vehicles or vessels or illegal conveyance of voters may immediately make a complaint to the Presiding Officer to make a written complaint to the magistrate having jurisdiction; or such person may himself make the complaint to the magistrate.

"After taking this step, the illegal conveyance of voters may also be used as a ground for an election

petition against the offending candidate in due course.

"Any complaint made or grievance expressed to the Election Commission or the Returning Officer at a later stage may not be effective. All concerned are accordingly advised that for speedy and effective remedy they should launch prosecution against the offenders under the Code of Criminal Procedure in the manner detailed above especially when the relevant evidence to prove the offence is fresh and readily available."

Father Ferrer

Marching in dead silence on 13th April, a crowd estimated at more than 10,000, wended its way to the Azad Maidan, Bombay, to protest against the expulsion order served on Father Vincent Ferrer by the Government of Maharashtra. It included a number of peasants from Manmad, Nasik District, priests and nuns, men and women of all ages belonging mostly to the Catholic Community who braved the April sun for nearly two hours. This is the first time that the Catholics as a community staged a political demonstration to voice their disapproval of a Government order.

Carrying placards which read "the expulsion order is a political stunt", "we demand cancellation", "Father Ferrer is the only hope for Manmad Shetkaris", and so on, the procession culminated in a huge meeting addressed by various speakers like Mr. F. M. Pinto, Congress M.L.A., Mr. B. K. Boman-Behram, Independent M.L.A., Mrs. Qamar Ahmed, former Congress M.L.A., Prof. A. Soares and Mr. Madhu Mehta Jt. Secretary of the Maharashtra Unit of the Party. Speaker after Speaker voiced strong protest at the injustice meted out to Father Ferrer and challenged the Government to produce evidence of his "anti-national" activities and made it clear that the Government's action constituted a blot on India's fair name.

Reproduced below are excerpts of the speeches made by the various speakers:

"We consider him (Fr. Ferrer) our mother.... we beg of Government to think things over coolly and calmly and reverse this order." — P. A. More, a Manmad farmer.

"Father Ferrer's only crime is trying to help the people of Maharashtra.... The Government has blundered in taking this action...." — Dr. Simon Fernandes, Swatantra Corporator.

".... It is easy for ministers to suppress information 'in the public interest'.... When the Government takes recourse to this phrase, it invariably means that 'public interest' is non-existent.... Thousands not only love him but worship him. Therefore he has aroused the jealousy of certain vested interests.... It is monstrous that the State Government which only a few days earlier released certain individuals found guilty by three law courts in succession is victimising

this saintly man who has lived and bled for the soil of Maharashtra". — Mr. B. K. Boman Behram, Independent M.L.A.

".... Father Ferrer is a symbol of justice.... I am shocked at my Party's (the Congress) action against him.... The least the Government can do is set up a committee to investigate the matter.... we have a lot to learn from the missionaries. If the so-called Social Workers worked like them in a dedicated manner, the country would not be in such a plight." — Mrs. Qamar Ahmed, former Congress M.L.A.

"If charity is treason, if digging a well is the act of a traitor, then all of us who have ever helped our neighbours are traitors.... It (the procession) was a funeral march, for it represented the death of conscience — the burial of all that is good and decent by the expulsion of Father Ferrer." — Mr. S. Thanawalla, a prominent member of the Lion's Club.

Mr. Madhu Mehta, said angrily, "This is a fight. This is not the fight of a single community, it concerns every patriotic Indian who respects the honour of his country. For twenty years we have suffered injustice, but this action against Father Ferrer is the limit." He challenged the Government, "If he is guilty of anything, file a suit against him." "A Guest who comes to my house is my God," Mr. Mehta remarked, "but here we are rejecting this honoured guest because he had come to India and done his best to help us."

He sarcastically referred to the dual standards adopted by the Government. While the C.P.I. Chairman, Mr. S. A. Dange, had told strikers that they had no need to worry as long as there was grain in the shops and money in the coffers of the textile mills, thus inciting them to violence, he had been ignored; on the other hand, Father Ferrer was being expelled. For what and why asked Mr. Mehta, "Is it because Father Ferrer had helped the farmers and prevented them from falling into the clutches of the Communists?" "In a society where everybody wants to grab, Father Ferrer has committed the crime of wanting to give", he added.

Throwing an open challenge to the Government, Mr. Mehta said "If the expulsion order is not withdrawn, I shall consider it my duty and privilege to

offer Father Ferrer the hospitality of my humble home."

On April 18, Mr. Piloo Mody, M.P., Mr. N. K. Somani M.P. along with Mr. Erasmus de Sequeira, M.P., met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and sought her intervention to stay the deportation order.

In a press release, issued by the Parliamentary office of the Swatantra Party, after the meeting, it was stated that Father Ferrer had recently asked for Indian citizenship and requested the Prime Minister "to use her good offices". If there were any charges against him, they might be thoroughly investigated but not dealt with in such arbitrary fashion, it added.

The Central Office circulated to State Units copies of correspondence between the General Secretary Mr. Dandekar and Dr. S. P. Singh, a member of the Party in Patna. The latter had in his letter questioned the wisdom of the Swatantra Party's Parliamentary Group opposing the Maharashtra Government's order, deporting Fr. Ferrer by refusing to renew his visa. He argued that unless the Centre and State Governments had some positive information regarding the "undesirable activities" of Father Ferrer, they would not have taken such a step. Dr. Singh was of the view that by opposing the Government's move, the Party was not helping the cause of "national solidarity".

In his reply Mr. Dandekar stated:

"The facts are totally contrary to the picture of him painted by the Government of Maharashtra. He has actually done more selfless service by way of solid constructive work for the peasants among whom he lives and works than anything which the Government or any other individual in that region has even attempted. His work is more solidly Gandhian and on the lines preached by Vinoba Bhave than any similar work claimed to have been done by many so-called, but loud-mouthed, "Sarvodaya" workers. And he does not believe in converting anyone to Christianity.

"To defend such a man and to stand up for his rights to be allowed to continue serving the *very poor* peasants was an honourable duty of those, like us, who believe in the principles of our Party.

"He has requested, and we have urged, that there should be a public inquiry concerning the allegations made against him in which, he said, he would not seek to defend himself but would prefer to let the facts speak. The Government of Maharashtra has not taken up the challenge."

All this brings us to ask the eagerly awaited question. Who is Fr. Ferrer and why is he being deported?

Father Vincent Ferrer, a Spanish Missionary who came to India more than a decade ago, is the person who has wrought a miracle of change in Manmad.

Barcelona-born Fr. Ferrer, 47, the second of four children, dropped out of law school in 1945 to join the Society of Jesus. He came out to India in 1951, while still a Jesuit Seminarian. After his ordination, seven years later, he was sent to Manmad, a small

town, 185 miles, N.E. of Bombay, with a population of about 39,000. Manmad's only importance is its Railway junction, the majority of the population being made up of petty traders, farmers and money lenders.

He saw the farmer eking out his living from the rolling barren land, watered by a bare 16" rainfall, and automatically came into the clutches of the conscienceless money lender. The Governmental machinery was riddled with red tape and corruption. Irrigation was practically non-existent, wells there hardly were, fertilizers unknown. Into this hell-pit stepped Fr. Vincent Ferrer to change the face of Manmad and the hearts of men.

He worked and toiled, over the years silently and efficiently. Schools were opened, books and clothes were distributed free. With an initial sum of Rs. 50,000 raised at charity shows, he advanced it as loans, interest-free and contract-free, to farmers to dig wells, instal pumps, buy seeds and fertilisers. The only condition he laid was that one-third of the produce should be given back which in turn would be used to help other farmers. Thus arose the nucleus of the Maharashtra Shetkari Seva mandal. And what are the notable achievements of this mandal? Facts given below speak for themselves:

1. 5000 acres ploughed by tractors;
2. 5,000,000 kilos of improved seed and 2,500 tons of fertiliser distributed to farmers;
3. 1,000 wells dug, most of them fitted with pumps;
4. 10,000 acres of wasteland turned into irrigated farms;
5. A school for 1,500 children with provision for 800 boarders; and
6. Hundreds of acres released from mortgage.

For these activities Fr. Ferrer has been dubbed as an 'anti-national', 'spy' and so on and so forth.

Prominent weeklies of Bombay interviewed him and what they could find out about him was his transparent sincerity, his dedication to the people of Manmad, and not even a shred of evidence to show that he had anything to do with the least stink of 'anti-national' activities.

"Give us back our Saviour", was the pleading of a 108-year old woman from Manmad. "To get a loan of Rs. 500 from the Government, I have to distribute Rs. 250 as bribes and even then there is no guarantee that it will come in time. On the other hand I got Rs. 5000 from Fr. Ferrer without as much as signing a paper". These are the words of a farmer from Manmad.

Six leading journalists from Bombay visited Manmad and have given a clean chit to Fr. Ferrer.

Not a single reason advanced by the Government so far justifies the refusal to let Fr. Ferrer stay on and continue his work. The labels "anti-national" and "undesirable" are too vague to merit even a second look. When we shy from labelling and throwing out avowed "anti-nationals" owing allegiance to Moscow and Peking, even when pro-Mao slogans are raised at

public meetings, what right have we to ask a person who has offered satisfactory reasons acceptable to all sane and logical-minded people, for the charges against him, to go away from his work. Whatever "foreign money" has come to him has come with the full knowledge of the Union Government and not "sneaked" in as is done by Moscow or Peking Patriots. Even the charge of conversion has fallen off like water from a duck's back. How Fr. Ferrer's agricultural activities will constitute a threat to the MIG factory at Ozar is still a mystery. A humble question: Was there an MIG factory in 1958 when Fr. Ferrer came to Manmad?

As we go to Press, Newspapers announce that the Government of India are sending Father Ferrer out of India on a short holiday, and that he shall be permitted to return and work in some other State in India but not in Maharashtra.

In this connection, readers would be interested to know that Mr. Jaideepsinhji of Baria, leader of the Party's Group in the Gujarat State Assembly has extended an invitation to Father Ferrer to work amongst the Adivasis in Panchmahals District in Gujarat.

National Integration Council

The Party's President, Prof. N. G. Ranga, declined the Prime Minister's invitation to attend the recently concluded deliberations of the National Integration Council in Srinagar. He has explained that he has done so as it was the Party's view that this body ought not to be a sort of "official" organ of the Government, nor

should its meetings be convened by the Government. It should be a non-official body composed of all elements in national life instead of being dominated by the Congress Party or the Government.

The Central Parliamentary Board's views on this subject are published elsewhere in this issue.

Banks and Social Control

Inaugurating the All-India Bank Depositor's Association, Calcutta, on 26th February, Mr. M. R. Masani criticized the Bill for Social Control of Banks as designed to give total power over banking to a set of political bosses of the Congress Party "instead of serving the national economy".

He said that the Bill would destroy public confidence in banking, liquidate fundamental rights of the shareholders and neglect the interests of the depositors. There was no public demand for nationalisation of banks or social control. It was only "a set of demi-Gods" in the Congress Party "who wanted to acquire dictatorial power over banking", he added.

Earlier Mr. D. N. Patodia, MP, President of the Association said that the various changes introduced in the banking laws gave rise to grave apprehensions. He called for the appointment of a high-power com-

mission to go into the banking system to determine whether there was any need for such a change.

Addressing College students on 28th February, at Poona Mr. N. Dandekar said that the charges levelled against commercial banks that they have not played their part in financing agriculture and small-scale industries were irrelevant and untrue.

He said that the banks could not undertake the responsibility on a vast scale so long as agriculture continued to be subsistence agriculture. The banks were the trustees of the depositors' money and they could not afford to risk their money by lending to uneconomic units. The growth of monopoly and concentration of power was the result of the licensing policies of the Government and not of the lending policies of banks, he declared.

Company Contributions to Political Parties

The Official Bill to ban contributions by Companies to political parties introduced in the Lok Sabha should be normally welcomed as the first step towards a cleaner public life. However, an academic analysis of the present bill cannot hide the immorality of the Government's present move. It is particularly open to objection on the ground that while the Party in Power, the Congress, thrives on its permit-licence 'racket', it is endeavouring to bar opposition parties from receiving any help from companies.

A ban of such a nature was recommended by the Santhanam Commission but by a strange quirk of fate, the Union Government has come forward only now to provide for such a ban. The Opposition Parties, in the Lok Sabha, had long before the submission of the Santhanam Report, demanded such a ban, and at that time the Congress opposed such a move. Was it because at that time the Congress was the largest beneficiary of such contributions, the opposition parties getting probably what could be described in common

parlance "chicken-feed". Following the reduction in strength of the Congress in 1962, and the emergence of the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh in sizeable numbers, the approach of companies to political parties appeared to have undergone a change. Many big business houses began to be more favourable to non-Congress groups and as usual the Congress started mounting the oft-repeated clichés of the corrupting effect of such donations. How the Congress went about 'in broad daylight' extorting donations is too obvious to make any comments.

Hence it is all the more necessary for the Opposition

Parties to insist on two points before the proposed bill is taken up for debate:

- (1) The election costs of parties and candidates must be reduced by the State taking over all such expenses as could be legitimately done and relieve the Parties and candidates of a large part of the expenditure they now bear.
- (2) A clear and immediate reorganization of the permit—licence raj so that all power exercised by the Central and State Governments over the Companies, directly or indirectly, be transferred to a completely autonomous and non-political body.

Swatantra and the "Approach" to Planning

Invited to attend a meeting to consider an "Approach to the Fourth Five-Year Plan," Prof. N. G. Ranga, the Party's Chairman, has written to the Prime Minister declining to participate in it, as no useful purpose will be served in taking part in the discussions until the Government shows signs of an open mind on planning.

Excerpts of his letter are reproduced below:

1. "...we are not opposed to planning as such but we are definitely of opinion that the concept... is overdone by Government by making planning an instrument of all kinds of controls, licences and permits which are the bane of our political and economic life.
2. ".....This year we have had a bumper crop and if there was any time when the Food Zones could have been abolished.... it is this year.... It is the fundamental policy of the Swatantra Party that there is no need for Food Zones and that they should be abolished as early as possible.... Another typical example of mismanagement through control is in sugar.... the shortsighted policy of.... controls.... has led to serious shortages....
3. "As regards imports and exports, there is again unnecessary emphasis on controls.... Moreover export promotion and export controls are contradictory terms.... overall any export is healthy and should be encouraged.... we should learn from the experience of.... Ireland.... Taiwan.... and even.... Pakistan, where because of adoption of wiser

economic policies, the rate of growth has been higher....

4. "We in the Swatantra Party believe that there is hardly any need for industrial licensing in the conditions of today. We consider that industrial licensing and quotas should be completely abolished. Even if it is felt that some kind of licensing is necessary it is our fundamental policy that such licensing should be done by.... a quasi-judicial body or authority.... independent of executive influence.... unless Government is prepared to accept this principle, it is no use our taking part in any discussions on plan policy.
5. "We believe that public sector may be necessary where private enterprise is not possible. But the policy of the present Government is to go into the public sector indiscriminately.... So long as this policy is not changed, it is futile to expect any return or resources from the public sector and any plan based on such mobilisation.... is only a paper plan devised to mislead the public....
6. "The whole momentum of this approach to the Fourth Plan is no different from the earlier plans.... As you know, so far, our plans have been "Need-Based" whereas they should have been "Resource-based."

"Therefore, we can't take any responsibility as a Party in whatever Government proposes to do by way of new projects, additional taxation, public debt and inflation."

The Communist Threat to Indian Democracy

(Extracts from Mr. N. Dandekar's Presidential Address to the Kerala State Convention of the Party at Palai, March 30)

We of the Swatantra Party, believe in a middle-of-the-road liberal philosophy. This means we eschew all kinds of agitational activities which may endanger the maintenance of law and order. We firmly believe in the supremacy of Parliamentary institutions and

the Rule of Law. We do not believe in taking resort to cheap emotional appeals of any kind. Our appeal is to reason based on the right of personal freedom, individual liberty, and freedom of conscience; and these in turn are grounded firmly in our faith in parliamentary democracy as embodied in our constitution. We believe that the State exists only for the individual, and not the individual for the State. We reject all

philosophies that preach class warfare and the setting up of man against man. We equally reject party dictatorship. We shall uphold *dharma* aloft to the bitter end.

What is the situation in Kerala today? How does the situation in Kerala look to me, sitting in Bombay or Delhi? I can answer that quite simply. It reminds me vividly of West Bengal. To explain this it is not necessary to enter into any lengthy narration of the events in Bengal since the last General Elections. It would be enough if I explained why we supported the proclamation of Presidential Rule in West Bengal.

We supported the proclamation because it marked the end of a chaotic abuse and subversion of Parliamentary institutions in Bengal during the preceding twelve months. The unfortunate people of Bengal had to suffer the terrible consequences of sustained attempts by the Communists towards deliberate and calculated subversion of internal law and order, designed to facilitate the forcible takeover of West Bengal by the Communists with the aid of foreign powers, just as in Vietnam. Worse still was the spectacle of their non-Communist partners in the so-called United Front Government tacitly accepting these subversive activities of the communists by supine acquiescence. Such is the fatal fascination of the *Mohini* of power that even professedly democratic Parties were willing to risk their own future existence in West Bengal by overlooking the very determined attempts of the Communists to subvert democracy itself.

There was one man there who could have ended that chaos without the need for a Presidential takeover,—the unfortunate, but tragic Mr. Ajoy Mukherjee. But he did not have the courage to proclaim what he had put down in writing as something of which he was personally convinced. He did not have the courage of his convictions to carry out his expressed intention of not continuing as Chief Minister. I shall narrate one or two extracts from the letter in which he so graphically referred to the nefarious activities of the Communist Parties which dominated the United Front Government, of which he was then the unfortunate Chief Minister. This is what he wrote:

"From the activities and professions of these parties, it is quite evident that they do not believe in parliamentary democracy and their main aim is to strengthen their own parties by taking advantage of ministership and Assembly membership."

"This is being done in a planned, well thought out manner. In the name of 'Gana Committees', intimidation, assaults and raids are being organised in different areas to create a reign of terror...."

This is what Mr. Mukerjee had to say on the internal state of law and disorder. The close parallel here with the "People's Committees" recently set up in the Villages of Kerala is significant and will, I feel sure, not pass unnoticed. Mr. Mukherjee then went on to add:

"But attempts are being made to bring about a far

more serious calamity. The Left Communists are pro-China; they want to enact a bloody revolution with the help of China. Brisk preparations are going on for this. If a bloody chaos begins in West Bengal with China's help perhaps for 10 or 20 years, Assam, Manipur, Tripura and parts of Bihar and Orissa will become the play field of the latest lethal weapons of foreign powers. Things have gone to such an extreme that in the heart of West Bengal boys and girls are shouting slogans in Chinese 'Mao Tse-Tung, Lal salaam; Lal Chin, Lal Salaam.'

Mr. Ajoy Mukherjee ended his letter on this very clear note:

"This Left Communist Party and its associated parties should not be allowed another day's opportunity to bring ruin to the country through their membership of the Cabinet. Keeping this in mind I am compelled to resign as Chief Minister with a very heavy heart."

But alas, he did not have the courage of his convictions. He did not resign.

From this chaos, West Bengal was rescued by two brave men,—one was the Governor and the other was Dr. P. C. Ghosh. But in the end these men were defeated in the task, not by the deliberate efforts of the Parties in the United Front to foment a near rebellion during the months of December, January and February, but by the criminal refusal of the Congress Party to shoulder the responsibility of constitutional Government until it was too late. The two sinister men in that episode were Mr. Atulya Ghosh and Mr. Ashu Ghosh; and these gentlemen were assisted by the perverse rulings of the Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly.

The Proclamation of Presidential Rule in West Bengal has for the moment saved that State from being subverted by the Communists, whom I have no hesitation in describing as the principal enemies of Democracy and therefore of the independence of our motherland, for their loyalties lie elsewhere. The Communists' snare of United Fronts should now be known for what it is by all intelligent and discerning people. What happened in many of the States of Eastern Europe which are now all communist? How *did* they go communist? They went communist thanks to the treacherous tactics of the "United Front". In fact it was there that the Communists perfected this device into a fine art. It is really quite a simple procedure. If the Communist are in a "United Front" Government with four other parties, then they would first join with three of them to liquidate the fourth; when the fourth was eliminated, they would join with two of the remainder to eliminate the third; and so on, until only the Communists were left to rule the roost.

It is perhaps our good fortune that such a United Front Government, with a preponderance of communists, ruled in only one or two States of the Indian Union. I shudder to think what would have been the

fate of our country if this had happened in Delhi. Possibly I would have been among the first few to be liquidated outright. For the truth is that the Communists, once in power, or in office, will never readily part with it. Secondly, once in power they will not tolerate for long the sharing of power, or even prospects of power, with any non-communist democratic parties. (During the short period they were partners in the coalition in West Bengal, many honest and devoted socialist workers have been murdered; and non-Communist Trade Unions were sabotaged.) Thirdly, they will unhesitatingly use the mechanisms of constitutional democracy to destroy both democracy and the constitution. Fourthly, where they cannot quite succeed by these methods they will not hesitate to precipitate a civil war with the aid of foreign powers. Thanks to the action of the Governor and of Dr. P. C. Ghosh, West Bengal was prevented from becoming another Vietnam.

In Parliament, I called for a ban on *both* Communist Parties. To me the description of the Left Communist and Right Communist Party makes no sense whatever. It is a distinction without a difference. They are birds of the same feather, with merely a difference of strategy, on the one hand, and the source of taking orders from two different world capitals, on the other; —Moscow, for the Right Communists; and Peking for the Left Communists. Knowing full well their role in attempting to destroy the fabric of democracy in West Bengal, does it make sense to make available once again the processes of democracy to these Parties whose very objectives is the destruction of democratic institutions? Are we so blind? Do we not know what they stand for? Do we not know what they have actually done in furtherance of what they stand for? Have they not, over and over again, abused the judiciary in this country, by saying that the Constitution was all wrong and the judiciary was functioning perversely. Only quite recently there was the famous contempt of court judgment against the present Chief Minister of Kerala, Mr. Namboodripad. Therefore, in the national interest, what else is there to do but to call for the banning of the two communist parties?

And this brings me to Kerala. When some years ago, in their flush of victory in Kerala, the Communists (at that time there were no 'left' and 'right' communists) blatantly and overtly violated all canons of democratic Government and attempted to subvert every institution deserving of their attention, they did all this in such an open manner that the people rose in revolt and we witnessed that magnificent liberation struggle called the 'Vimochana Samara' to throw the Communists out of office. Since then Mr. Namboodripad has learnt his lesson well. He has realised the folly of overt action. Perhaps he felt that the people of Kerala were not ripe for open subversion, and therefore his tactics has to shift from overt disruption to covert subversion; and that is exactly what has been happening in Kerala in recent months as I view it from the distance of Bombay or Delhi. But, however con-

cealed, subversion *does* erupt now and then through the surface into the open. Take that incident which occurred as far back as on August 8 last year when Mr. P. R. Kurup, the Socialist Irrigation Minister of Kerala, was himself surrounded in his car and would have been severely manhandled but for the timely assistance of some of his friends who came to his rescue. This is what Mr. Kurup told the pressmen at Calicut on August 10:

"I want to ask the Minister in charge of the Home Department what kind of instructions he had issued to the policemen secretly to deal with trouble makers." (*Hindu*, August 11, 1967)

The same report stated that even while Mr. Kurup's car was being surrounded, he found policemen looking on, standing helpless, without intervening.

Mr. Kurup belongs to the S.S.P. and he told the *Hindu* Correspondent that he found from the newspapers that other non-marxist Ministers had also the same kind of experience at the hands of some Communist-led students. Mr. Kurup charged the police with adopting an attitude of unlawful inactivity during gheraos and stated that if this should continue it would result in complete breakdown of law and order in the State.

The unhelpful "non-aligned" attitude of the police was mostly due to the support given to gheraos by the Communist parties in the Kerala Government. In an excellent editorial on 12th August the *Hindu* observed:

"The conclusion becomes inescapable that wherever the Communists, Marxist or otherwise,—dominate the Government the proneness of section of the public to violence and disorder gets a fillip thanks to the prolonged vacillation in taking firm action against law-breakers, as in the early stages of the Naxalbari insurgeance and the notorious gheraos in the Calcutta factories."

Lest the people of India feel disposed to minimise all this which happened seven months ago in the belief that things have improved since, they need only recall the terrible events which occurred quite recently at the Gwalior Rayon factory in Mavoor and the Hydrel Project in Idiki. The police and the Government did precisely nothing to protect the life, liberty or property of the persons subjected to a more complete and vicious Gherao than so far known even in West Bengal; and it required the intervention of the Kerala High Court to direct the police to do their duty at Mavoor, while the future at Idiki remains shrouded in grave uncertainties. The law abiding public have not yet realised the plain truth that, unfortunately, gheraos and the like are perfectly "legitimate" under the Communist order of things. This was stated explicitly not only by the former Minister of Labour in Bengal Mr. Subodh Banerji, but also by the Labour Minister in Kerala Mr. Mathai Manjuran, who is not

even a member of the Communist Party. Thus West Bengal is being repeated in Kerala.

When the National Executive of the Swatantra Party met in Cochin late in January, its attention was drawn to a dangerous piece of legislation then contemplated by the Communist led Government in Kerala I refer to the proposal to constitute the "Civil Supplies Popular Committee", which is a cover name for the well known "People's Committees" of the Communists. We then unanimously adopted a resolution condemning this blatant attempt at subverting the Rule of Law and trampling upon the fundamental rights of the citizens and called upon the people of Kerala to rise to defeat this move which it described as an incipient attempt to establish widespread Communist tyranny in the State. I was glad to be told that this dreadful specimen of anti-people legislation has not yet been enacted.

But I am also told that in many places such Committees have already been formed; and that regardless of the absence of any legal sanctions, some of them had already taken the law into their own hands and seized foodgrains from the farmers or the public. It is also reported that paddy growers in some parts harvested their crops in haste for fear of being deprived of the fruits of their labours by these and other anti-social elements. In other words, the Communist "Goon Squads" are already at work.

And there is now the Gopal Sena, named I suppose after our illustrious friend Mr. A. K. Gopalan! What is this Gopal Sena? Who it is directed against? There can be only one answer: the Gopal Sena is to be the para-military arm of the Communist Party in Kerala. They are Kerala's Vietcong. The *Hindustan Times* of March 26 reports:

"Although the activities of the Gopal Sena have been repeatedly brought to the Kerala Government's notice, no satisfactory explanation from it has come so far. The centre has information that the Gopal Sena has some 15,000 volunteers. It has regular officers. The volunteers are trained by ex-servicemen and N.C.C. Cadets belonging to the Communist-dominated students' Federation.

The State Government has not put any curbs on its activities nor has it prevented it from interfering with law and order."

So, where do we go from there?

That democracy—constitutional parliamentary democracy—is in grave danger in India through Kerala, as it was through West Bengal, there can be little doubt. There can be no doubt, too, that the way out does not lie through the growth of communal parties. Their philosophies are as retrograde, if that were possible, as the now thoroughly discredited doctrines of Communism. The expression "secular democracy" is meaningless to them. They live in the past and seek to restore the purely communal predominance of one commun-

ity or the other, reducing all the rest to the status of second grade citizens. And they preach their doctrines of communal disharmony, if not hatred, secretly in the raw, and publicly under the garb of preservation and fostering of cultural autonomy, reformation and freedom.

But the greater tragedy, perhaps, is the dangerous indeed suicidal flirting by various brands of socialist parties in Kerala, as in West Bengal, with the Communists. With the result, for example, that we have the strange spectacle of the Socialist Parties and their leaders like Mr. Madhu Limaye ranting loudly against the admittedly unpalatable Kutch Award while silently tolerating the treacherous collaboration of their Left Communists partners in United Fronts with their Chinese counterparts, and of the Right Communists with their Russian Counterparts.

There remain the two wings of the Congress Party in Kerala, the Indian National Congress and the Kerala Congress. Of the former, one cannot expect much by way of positive action to combat the communist menace. They continue to fiddle, while Kerala burns. Of the Kerala Congress, one had hoped a great deal; but its leaders are too busy, trying to do a deal with the National Congress, to have the courage to lead their followers away from the discredited socialistic and statist doctrines of the Congress party into the fresh air of individual freedom and free enterprise as the only ground on which to base solid economic and social progress. Brought up in the traditional clap-trap of the "Socialistic pattern of Society", buttressed by a regime of "Controls, licences, permits and quotas" on the one hand, and financed by "deficit financing unlimited" on the other, the invigorating air of individual liberty and free enterprise (subject only to restraints against the excesses of both) is too heady for them. They are frightened to opt for freedom.

And so I come to the Swatantra Party. If politics in general is the "last refuge", as it is said, "for scoundrels", the Swatantra Party is the only refuge for the honest freedom loving politician. Our party is a comparative new-comer to the political scene in Kerala. Nevertheless it is the Swatantra Party's plain duty in this State to educate the people as best as it can concerning the dangers to democracy from Communist rule. Kerala has the highest rate of literacy in India; but it has not been possible to find employment for all of its educated people. Naturally, this has led to frustration, and Communism thrives on frustrations. It is my firm belief that my Kerala colleagues will give the first priority to this job of educating the people not only about the evils of Communism but also about the fact that the achievement of Communism, far from ending their frustrations, will only accentuate them. The only way out of frustration is to follow the path of vigorous individual enterprise, the philosophy of Swatantra, where the future of the people is in their own hands unhindered by excessive State interference,

direction and control. It is easy but fatal to depend upon the State for everything. It is also easy to adopt an agitational approach and secure temporary loyalties. But this is not in the nation's interest nor in the interest of Kerala. Let me repeat that the road to prosperity lies through individual freedom and endeavour, not through slavery to the State.

In this endeavour to educate the people and to free them from the deathly embrace of both Communism and Communalism, we shall be happy to work together with other like minded parties, provided that fundamentally they believe in a democratic State. But we shall not accept any compromise with the enemies of constitutional parliamentary democracy.

The Railway Accidents Enquiry Committee

A high-powered Committee headed by Mr. K. N. Wanchoo, a former Chief Justice of India, has been set up to "look into the causes of the recent trend of railway accidents, resulting in some cases in heavy loss of life." Besides Mr. Wanchoo, the Committee will

consist of Mr. M. R. Masani, Mr S. R. Vasavada, labour leader, Mr. F. C. Badhwar, formerly of the Railway Board and Mr. P. B. Aibara, Commissioner of Railway Safety.

The Role of Speakers and Governors

Below is reproduced the text of the resolution adopted by the Conference of Presiding Officers on 7th April which readers of the Newsletter might find interesting.

This Conference of Presiding Officers held at New Delhi on the 6th and 7th April 1968,

Reviewing the recent political developments in the States of West Bengal and the Punjab leading to constitutional deadlock which made it impossible for the Legislatures to function;

Noting that the situation that arose in the aforesaid States is of an all-India character and may arise in future in any other part of the country;

Feeling that these developments could not be considered in isolation divorced from the political conditions that emerged after the Fourth General Election and which still continue;

Observing that the executive authority was exercised in a manner that was not always in keeping with the constitutional propriety so as to inspire confidence in the people;

Considering that the nature of political struggle for power and its impact on the Presiding Officers could not altogether be ignored;

Is of Opinion—

- (a) that it is imperative to view the problems in an integrated manner so as to cover the whole range of relationship, as envisaged by the Constitution, between the Governor and the Council of Ministers, the President and the Governors, the Governors and the Presiding Officers, Presiding Officers and the Chief Ministers, and the Presiding Officers and the Houses;
- (b) that the lasting solutions to these problems can be discovered only if a binding code of conduct is evolved to govern the relationship between the Executive and the Legislature so as to ensure the independence of the Presiding Officers;

Expresses its deep sense of gratitude to Dr. N. Sanjiva

Reddy, Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman of the Conference, who took prompt initiative in calling an emergent session of the Conference and provided guidelines in his opening Address;

Agrees generally with the approach envisaged in the Address of the Chairman;

Considers that it is the duty of the Presiding Officers to allow the Houses to function in spite of any obstruction and further that the Rules of Procedure of the Houses of Legislatures may be so amended as to provide that a Resolution for the removal of a Presiding Officer from his office shall be brought before the House, notwithstanding an order of adjournment made by a Presiding Officer contrary to the rules;

Appeals to all Members of Legislatures and more particularly to all the Political Parties—

- (a) to take effective steps to stop defections which are used as a weapon to topple Governments and to bring about stability in Legislatures to help in their smooth functioning; and
- (b) to ensure that due respect and cooperation are extended to the Presiding Officers and notices of removal of Presiding Officers from office are not tabled without due deliberation and adequate grounds;

Requests the Government of India to take urgent and suitable steps to evolve conventions in regard to the powers of Governors to summon or prorogue the Legislatures and to dismiss Ministries in the light of the following observations:—

- (a) That a Governor shall summon or prorogue the Legislature on the advice of the Chief Minister. A convention shall be developed that the Chief Minister may fix the dates of summoning and prorogation after consulting the Presiding

Officer concerned. The Governor may suggest an alternative date but it shall be left to the Chief Minister or the Cabinet to revise their decision or not. Where, however, there is undue delay in summoning a Legislative Assembly and the majority of members of the Legislative Assembly desire to discuss a motion of no confidence in a Ministry and make a request to that effect in writing to the Chief Minister, the Chief Minister shall advise the Governor to summon the Assembly within a week of such request.

- (b) The question whether a Chief Minister has lost the confidence of the Assembly shall, at all times, be decided in the Assembly; and

Earnestly desires that keeping in view the need of self-introspection and the objective assessment of the situation, the Governments both at the Centre and in the States, the Political Parties, and the Members of Legislatures may take all the necessary steps in regard to all the matters referred to above with a view to strengthening the democratic institutions in the country.

Debate

DEFECTIONS

(To the views expressed in this column on "floor crossing" we now bring you a note on "Defections" submitted to the Party's Group in Parliament by Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy, MP, Mr. Piloo Mody, MP, and Raja Venkatappa Naik, MP.)

"We would begin by objecting to the term "defection" because not all changes of party allegiance in between elections are unjustified. Changes of party allegiance would be a more comprehensive term including justifiable and unjustifiable changes.

The following considerations would determine our views on this matter:

1. Only changes of party allegiance in between general elections based on principles are justified. The party to which the legislator should refuse to accept him if he comes for any reasons, then because he adopts its programmes signified to it in writing. To test his bona fides he should be kept on probation for one year at least being given no party office in the parliamentary group and not till after he has worked for the new party in the legislature and in the country.

If large groups want to secede from one political party to another, with a view to form a ministry, they should announce their new policies and programmes and the Governor in calling them to form a ministry should insist on their putting forward such new programmes.

2. It must be remembered that the legislator is bound first and foremost to his constituency. He owes his loyalty to his constituents. His party loyalty comes only after his parliamentary loyalty to his constituents for it is they who have elected him to the legislature. It is therefore they who have the right to call him to account for any change in his political attitude. It is they that must take the initiative in calling him to account or to support him or ask him to resign. In the general passive condition of our electorates, it is only political parties that oppose this change of party of a legislator that could organise opposition to him. They or the constituents on their own initiative could

send protest to the legislator, organise meetings against him in the constituency, making it hot for him when he visits the constituency or in other ways show that he is not wanted any longer as their representative. Recall only in this manner is admissible. A legal or constitutional provision for recall would make any change in the party allegiance impossible in view of the costliness of elections. Changes of party allegiance should not be made inordinately difficult. Incidentally the voluntary move on the part of parties or constituents to consider and judge the representative's change of party would contribute to the political education of the constituents.

3. With regard to Independents from whom recruits are made to new parties or groups on the morrow of elections it would be neither possible nor politic to ban them. A candidate for election in a free country has a right to stand as candidate in an election without belonging to any party and to continue to do so after election. Independents can only be discouraged. In the legislature they should not be recognised as a group entitled to sitting together or to claim right of representation or election to committees as a group. Each independent should be treated as an independent by himself and on his own individual merits. On the other hand independents should be encouraged to join one political Party or the other, an incentive being given to them by giving them special opportunities for speaking, membership of party committees, etc. soon after joining.

4. Little or nothing can be done by law and legislature to prohibit undesirable changes of party. It can be done only by convention. And it is the ruling party that is called upon to take the initiative in establishing and strengthening such conventions. They should discourage and refuse to profit by changes of particular allegiance. They should refuse ministership or other offices or membership of party committees or parliamentary committees in the legislature. High standards should be set by the ruling party, to be followed by other parties, and still earlier in the career of legislators at the time of their selection as candidates for election. Not solely the number of votes

they can muster for the Government, not communal or regional influences, but preponderantly their competence for office should be the governing consideration. These other considerations will encourage "defection" because candidates chosen for office will try to get into office for what they can get out of it

and this prospect will encourage the unjustifiable kind of changes of party allegiance known popularly as "defections".

An all-round raising of standard and conduct in public life will include and bring about an improvement of conduct regarding changes of party allegiance."

NEWS FROM STATE UNITS

ANDHRA

Mr. Y. G. Gowd, M.P. and President of the Kurnool District Unit toured villages of Alur Taluk during the month of December 1967 and made the following observations:

1. Various crops like "Mungari", "Lakshmi Cotton", "Groundnut" have failed almost in many villages.
2. Stored water has been nearly exhausted and wells in some villages have dried up.
3. Fodder has become scarce.
4. People are migrating to other states in search of employment.
5. The ryots are dissatisfied about the additional assessment enacted by the Government. They have represented (to Mr. Gowd) that they are not in a position to pay the present land revenue on account of drought while notices have already been served on them.

Mr. Gowd therefore appealed to the Government to start immediately relief works, to prepare a plan to provide drinking water and to provide employment by excavation of T.B.P. High Level Canal.

The Executive Committee of A.P. Unit met at Vijayawada on January 9, and passed a resolution charging the State Government with identifying the Administration with the party in power; for using Government machinery for running the Congress Party conference at Hyderabad.

By another resolution it advised the peasants not to be perturbed by the notices served on them by revenue authorities but file objections before the Tehsildars concerned.

It also passed resolutions on the following:

1. Objecting to the policy of the Government to collect contributions for the construction of state projects.
2. Grave concern at Government taking over land from the peasants without paying compensation and the inordinate delay in fixing the same. The Central Government should revise the Land Acquisition Act to protect the rights of peasants.
3. The State and Central Governments should fix the floor prices of agricultural commodities and allocate revolving funds to stabilise prices.
4. Opposition to revision of the Sales Tax.
5. Protest against the procurement directly from the

peasants despite earlier assurances of the C.M.; opposition to the zonal system and urging the removal of all kinds of restrictions on movement of grains and to call for tenders if it was necessary to build up buffer stocks, as has been done by the Orissa Government.

6. To implement the Mitra Committee proposals.
7. To revise the minimum wages of agricultural workers.
8. To lift the controls on sugar.

Mr. G. Latchanna, MLA and President of the State Unit was in the Chair.

Speaking to newsmen at Vijayawada on January 21, Prof. N. G. Ranga, made a plea for stoppage of procurement in Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam districts from the so-called surplus producers and declaration of a moratorium in all cases of debts by the peasants. He suggested that the Government should open fair price shops, repair tanks and attempt to enlist support of the UNICEF and CARE to secure food supplies to the needy and get them distributed through social welfare organizations like the Ramakrishna Mission instead of through cooperatives.

He requested the State Government to employ the services of the retrenched engineers in making surveys and preparing estimates of minor and medium irrigation projects. He called the retrenchment a "miserable epitaph" for the planned economy enforced during the last few years.

The Executive Committee of Kurnool District Swatantra Party met on 3rd February, and discussed at length the resignation of Mr. M. R. Masani from the National Executive and Central Parliamentary Board. It resolved to request the National Executive to persuade Mr. Masani not to press his resignation.

The Yemmiganur Unit met on 2nd February, and congratulated Prof. N. G. Ranga at his success in the hearing of the election petition against him. It also resolved to request the National Executive to take necessary steps to persuade Mr. M. R. Masani to reconsider his resignation.

The Andhra Pradesh Swatantra Party has in a news item dated 8-5-68 stated that a Swatantra-Sevak-cum-Political School will be conducted from 3rd to 12th June to train 100 students at Kankatapalem, 8 miles from Bapatla.

"Lectures will be delivered by prominent Central

and State Leaders on the Party's principles, ideology, political and economic programmes; the Constitution, Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles and their working; and several other subjects.

The General Council of the State Unit met on 21st May with Mr. G. Latchanna, the President, in the Chair.

Prof. N. G. Ranga, Chairman, All-India Swatantra Party, addressing the meeting, emphasised the need for strengthening the organisation on sound lines in all districts. He analysed the gains made by the Party because of the political alliances in the recent Rajya Sabha elections.

The Committee wanted the party units to see to it that as many energetic youth as possible attend the summer training camp to be conducted at Kankatapalam.

The following Resolutions were passed:

- (1) Expressing grief over the deaths of Mr. L. Subbarao, Mr. N. Penchalayya, MLA, from Cuddapah, Mr. K. Kakulaswamy and the victims of the Gopavarapugudem marriage pandal tragedy.
- (2) The State Government should direct the Backward Classes Commission to prepare a list of backward classes in conformity with the criteria laid down in Art. 341 and 15(4) of the Constitution, instead of determining new criteria to define backwardness.

BIHAR

Extracts from a Resolution adopted at an extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of the Swatantra Unit at Ranchi on 22nd February.

"...place on record its deep sense of sorrow... at the sudden demise of Mr. H. K. Sahey, (the President of the Unit) who by his untiring efforts and valuable advice led the party in old times and made it effective...."

A report from Purnea States that Mr. S. K. Jha, district leader, commenced an indefinite fast on 10.5.68 before the Ashram where Acharya Vinobha Bhave was staying demanding suspension of bhoodan, Gramdan, prakhand-dan and zila dan stating that these are "nothing but Communism in another form".

Mr. Yeshwant Kumar Choudhary, M.L.A. the Party's representative on the co-ordination Committee of the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal of Bihar, has resigned from it. In a press interview Mr. Choudhary said that the "co-ordination Committee had become a farce as it worked under the direction of two ministers", one of whom belonged to the Communist Party and the other to the Loktantrik Congress Dal.

BOMBAY

The Swatantra Unit, Bombay, according to a report dated 14th January, expressed its concern at the

Government trying to shift the residents of Janata Colony, Mankhurd.

"The Republic is in danger, threatened from many quarters, both external and internal, and it is time for the common people of India to rally to its defence", declared Mr. Masani, while addressing a meeting of the Lions Clubs' members of Bombay on 26th January.

Calling on those present to renew their pledge of loyalty to the Republic and the constitution, he said that the responsibility of the individual citizen for the country's current state of affairs should not be minimised, though politicians might be taking the country to ruin. Vigilance was the eternal price of liberty and this price had to be paid for the maintenance of freedom, he added.

He referred to the external threat to the country's security posed by the unrelenting hostility of China. He listed the internal threats as coming from economic collapse, moral degeneration and corruption, violence and disorder, the communists threats of subversion and the irresponsibility of politicians in general.

He deplored the fact that members of the business community were particularly guilty of neglect. They must organise and assert themselves, he said.

Forty-six candidates of the Bombay Unit took a pledge on 8th March to keep politics out of the Municipal elections if they were elected. Mr. Murarji Vaidya, President of the Unit, while administering the pledge reminded the candidates that their sole business in the Corporation would be to work on civic affairs "and nothing else."

Entering for the first time in the civic elections the candidates included lawyers, accountants, journalists, traders, factory workers, medical practitioners and educationists. Mr. Nana Chudasama, Joint Secretary, explained to reporters that the Party had laid great stress on the average age and discipline before choosing the candidates. Unfortunately of the candidates set up only one, Dr. Simon Fernandes, was successful.

The formation of a Bureau of Public Grievances has been outlined by Dr. R. C. Cooper, Vice-President of the Bombay Branch, vide his letter dated 19th April addressed to Party workers. Below is reproduced extracts from that letter:

"In the first instance, we have decided to deal with all complaints from the public of Greater Bombay about the following matters:

1. Complaints against Central Government.
2. Complaints against the State Government.
3. Civic and Municipal Complaints.
4. Other Complaints.

After due consideration of the matter, I have decided to write this letter to active workers of the Swatantra Party in Bombay laying down the procedure which we would like to following in this connection.

- (i) It is suggested that you, as an active worker of the Party, will entertain complaints from mem-

bers of the public preferably from the ward or area to which you belong.

- (ii) On receipt of such complaint, you will collect as much information and data as possible from the complainant and prepare a brief note.
- (iii) Dependent upon the nature of the complaint, if possible, you will obtain photograph of the area, if the complaint warrants such a procedure.
- (iv) You will thereafter forward the detailed note and photograph if any, in a closed cover addressed to Dr. R. C. Cooper, Vice-President, Swatantra Party, Bombay Region, Sassoon Building, 143, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.
- (v) On receipt of such complaints, they will be thoroughly processed in our office. If any further particulars are required, you and/or the Complainant will be called upon to furnish the same. If necessary, the party concerned will be granted a personal interview.
- (vi) After thorough investigation of the complaint, the matter will be immediately taken up with the appropriate authority and the result of the representation will be made known to the party concerned as early as possible."

In a press statement Mr. Madhu Mehta deprecated the "gross malpractice and mismanagement", as regards the distribution of tin sheets to Koyana quake victims.

During the ten-day BEST strike in Bombay the Party ran a number of trucks between Bombay V.T. and Museum and Churchgate and Ballard Estate and Museum. The trucks bearing the Party's flags were well-patronised. "It is a noble gesture" remarked many of the middle-class passengers who availed of it.

The Bombay Unit, in a statement issued on 20th February, resented the rise in railway fares and on 5th April a batch of members led by Mr. Madhu Mehta and Mr. Nana Chudasama squatted inside the Churchgate station to focus the attention of Western Railway authorities on the hardships to the commuters following the withdrawal of concession in quarterly season tickets.

NEW DELHI

A meeting of Party workers took place on 24th March and a resolution was passed demanding the abolition of the Metropolitan Council. It said that the Council would serve no useful purpose and was an unnecessary burden on the Delhi public.

GUJARAT

Mr. Dahyabhai Patel, leader of the party in the Rajya Sabha visited Bardoli during the end of December 1967 and met party workers. He also inaugurated the Kamrej District Swatantra Party on 25th.

On 25th December, the Gujarat State Convention

was addressed by Mr. H. M. Patel, President. Among the various problems discussed were enlarging and improving the party's organisation; a proper solution of the Narmada waters; levy on foodgrains and oil; gas prices; housing of Halpatis, a backward class; teaching of English in the Secondary schools; the grant-in-aid system; sufficiency of power; means of communication; training of skilled workers; free enterprise; and the establishment of the Rule of Law.

KERALA

Addressing a public meeting at Cochin on January 27, Prof. N. G. Ranga squarely blamed the Centre for the present food scarcity, the language muddle and the deterioration in the law and order situation in the country. He lashed out at the Centre saying that Congress misrule had brought the country to the brink of collapse, both politically and economically. He ruled out the possibility of any political party being behind the language trouble in Andhra & Mysore. His opinion was that Hindi should not be imposed on non-Hindi Speaking people.

He referred to Orissa which had completely abolished land revenue which the Communist-led U.F. Government in Kerala had failed to do during its term of Office. It had also provided an honest and impartial government.

Mr. M. R. Masani, addressing the meeting warned that the country was in danger of disruption from within and outside while the country's economy had completely collapsed due to "bad policies and plans." Added to these was moral degradation, high-placed corruption, abdication of law and order, increasing disorder and violence in every walk of life. This was, Mr. Masani said, because the Ministers who were to administer the State and maintain law and order had themselves started defying the law. The Congress Central Government had become incapable of enforcing discipline and order while the Communist Party was out to subvert the Constitution and disrupt the Republic. All democratic parties were to be blamed for the present situation, Mr. Masani added.

During the month of February, the Kottayam District Committee of the Party conducted corner meetings in the suburbs, and the spontaneous welcome which the party workers received and the rapt attention with which villagers listened, showed the disillusionment of the masses with Communist promise and Congress vauntings. The energetic District Secretary, Mr. A. V. Varkey, the untiring party worker, Mr. Dominie and the enthusiastic Mr. Vetticadan, secretary of the Agriculturists' Assn., took the Swatantra message to the people.

Cited below are summaries from important resolutions adopted at the Third State Convention held at Palai, 30th March, 1968:

1. The present U.F. Ministry in Kerala has utterly failed in keeping to its pre-election promises; in

fact, problems have been aggravated. The Communists, whether 'right' or 'left' are only interested in furthering Party interests at others' expense. The Gopala Sena, an 'unemployed' army of the the 'leftists' is being utilised to demoralise the people. The State's future depends to a large extent on Parties like the Muslim League, K.T.P., their attitude and faith in democracy and their willingness to safeguard and preserve it. It is our immediate task to support the democratic resistance against the communists in the U.F. and mobilise simultaneously public opinion against all its anti-democratic acts.

2. Party workers must be educated in day-to-day political activities.
3. Gearing up of activities both at the district and State Committee's levels.
4. This Convention views with great concern the situation arising out of the resignation of Mr. M. R. Masani from all official posts... and requests the National Executive to create circumstances to have his continued leadership for the Party.

The two-day Convention, demanded the constitution of a high-level judicial committee to enquire into the allegations of corruption made by the allies in the United Front against some of the Ministers.

In the course of a Circular to State Units conveying the decisions of the Central Parliamentary Board and National Executive meetings held at Cochin, Mr. N. Dandeker congratulated the Kerala Unit on the excellent arrangements it had made for the CPB and the National Executive meetings at Cochin held during January. He said that quite apart from the choice of venue, which was ideal, what impressed one most was the manner in which they (the Kerala Unit) utilised every member of the National Executive who attended. For instance, in addition to a very well attended public held on 27th January at Ernakulam, as many as 13 meetings were held between 7.00 P.M. and 9.30 P.M. on the 28th at various places within a radius of 75 miles from Cochin.

MADHYA PRADESH

The Ujjain District Convention of the Party was held at Mahidpur on 20th and 21st April. The Party flag was unfurled by Rao Dulesinh, a man much venerated in the area. The open session was held in the afternoon of 21st. Rajkumar Udaisinh welcomed the delegates. The opening speech was delivered by Mr. N. C. Zamindar, the Party's Secretary and the Presidential address by Mr. Kusumakar, a young editor-cum-poet of Indore. At night a largely attended public meeting was held. Kudos must go to Mr. Parulekar who helped to make the Convention, a success.

MADRAS

The 90th birthday of Rajaji was celebrated on a grand scale by the Madras District Unit. A number of public meetings were held to explain the principles and policies of the Party. On 26th December, 1967, at a special function arranged at the Children's Theatre, Mount Road, Madras 2, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan presided. It was addressed by eminent men like Dr. A. L. Mudaliar, Mr. H. V. R. Iengar, the Chief Minister, Mr. Annadurai, M/s. Karunanithi, Nedunchezhiyan, Ministers of the Madras Cabinet, Smt. Rukmani Devi and Honourable Justice Mr. H. W. Tambiah of the Ceylon Supreme Court. Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan also released on the occasion RAJAJI 89—A GARLAND OF TRIBUTES brought out by Bharathan Publications.

On January 21, the Executive adopted a resolution expressing its view that the Centre should put aside the language issue and carry on official work as it had been since 1947. Mr. Sa Ganesan, President of the State Unit presided.

Mr. S. S. Mariswamy, General Secretary reports that condolence resolutions were adopted touching the demise of Mr. C. Rai, Joint Secretary of the All-India Party, and Mr. T. Maricar, Convenor of the Pondicherry State Unit.

Speaking at a meeting at Vellore on 25th January, Mr. Mariswamy cautioned against the State Government's move to introduce Tamil as the medium of instruction in all Government Colleges from the next academic year. He stated further that if the students' agitation continued it would result in chaos ultimately leading to intervention by the Centre and installation of a "most unpopular" Presidential Rule.

Replying to a civic address presented to him by the Madras Corporation on 27th January, at the My Lady's Gardens, Rajaji cautioned the Tamilnad Youths against the destruction of public properties. It was his wish that the Union Government would realise the intensity of the anger of the youths in South on the language issue. He denied that the Madras Ministry acted on his 'advice'. Over 500 guests including the Chief Minister, Councillors, Legislators and Consular representatives attended the function.

Mr. S. S. Mariswamy addressing pressmen at Coimbatore on 2nd February, requested the students to stop their agitation, return to their classes and leave the language issue to the Government and the political leaders. He said that the Party supported the State Governments on the language issue only to the extent that it demanded continuance of English as the official language of the country.

The Executive of the Tamilnad Swatantra Unit met at Madras on 10th March. Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Mr. Mariswamy, General Secretary, said that the Executive discussed organisational matters and the language problem. A resolution adopted at the meeting expressed satisfaction and appreciation of the students for responding to the call of Rajaji, the Chief

Minister and Mr. Kamaraj. Welcoming the bilingual resolution passed by the State Assembly, it reiterated its earlier warning that substitution of Tamil for English in colleges would deprive students of opportunities of serving outside the state and the country, and prejudice their chances of higher education and research outside the country. It condemned the obstinacy of the ruling party at the Centre in forcing the official Languages Act which would surely lead to the opposite of emotional integration. It appealed to all opposition parties to carry on a peaceful and sustained agitation until such time a policy acceptable to all evolved and demanded continuance of the status quo as existed between 1947 and 1950, till then.

The State Swatantra Parliamentary Board has decided that members of the Party might contest as independents in the ensuing civic elections, in the event of an electoral pact with the DMK not materialising.

Speaking at a function organised by the *Chanakyan*, a Tamil fortnightly, at Madras on 28th May, Mr. N. Dandeker said, "we are supposed to be a party of Maharajas and capitalists but we don't have a daily to put across our policies and ideas to the people." Distributing prizes to winners of the essay competition organised by *Chanakyan*, Mr. Dandeker said that only newspapers and magazines could carry the party's policies and its achievements as it did not believe in advertising itself through violent agitations and a natural corollary by going to jail.

Mr. S. S. Mariswamy, General Secretary of the Madras Unit presided and Dr. H. V. Hande, M.L.A., Mr. Saw Ganesan, M.L.C. and Mr. Chitra Narayana-swamy, Sheriff, spoke.

"Why can't we give incentive prices to our producers" was the question posed to the Government by Mr. H. M. Patel, President of the Gujarat State Unit, at a reception accorded to him by the Andhra Chamber of Commerce, Madras, on 29th May. He accused the government of being neglectful in a direction where it cannot afford to be so and regretted that even in this year of surplus crops, movement of foodgrains was being restricted on the plea of maintaining price stability. He stated that price stability in an inflationary situation was an impossibility. "Most of our economic troubles are our own making, we are unable to get over our national shortcomings we are unwilling to face facts", he observed.

Planning in India had not been realistic and the country had become heavily indebted because of over-ambitious schemes and a mania for slogans and doctrines, declared Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, Chief Minister, Orissa, addressing the luncheon meeting of the Andhra Chamber of Commerce, at Madras, on 1st June. He was critical of the Mining and Metals Trading Corporation, the S.T.C. and other Corporations, and said that the time had come for a reappraisal of policies and the approach to planning.

He devoted a major part of his speech to the needs for developing Orissa's industrial potential. One

reason why more industries had not come up in Orissa despite its rich natural resources, Mr. Singh Deo said, was due to a suspicion that the State wanted to encourage only public sector enterprises. "I must take this opportunity of clearing up any such suspicions", he declared, "so far as we are concerned, we welcome investment from wherever it might come, whether from this country or outside."

MYSORE

The Hassan District Agriculturists' Conference was convened on 23rd December, 1967, by Mr. N. K. Ganapaiah, President, Hassan District Unit of the Party. The Revenue Minister was to have presided over the Conference but as he could not attend, Mr. B. N. Boranna Gowdh, Vice-President, Mysore State Unit, presided.

Welcoming the delegates, Mr. Ganapaiah pointed out as an example the increase by 400% in production, at the Coffee Plantation, within two decades by use of advanced techniques. He requested the Government to remove all controls and levies and ceiling limit on holdings and to allow surplus money in the hands of the farmers to improve the yields. Two members from the Agricultural University, M/s Kulkarni and Puthu-swamy Gowda spoke on the various modern farm techniques and stressed the need to cultivate hybrid varieties. Mr. Nanjunda Reddy, Assistant Director of Agriculture, spoke next and assured the farmers that care would be taken to see that good manure are supplied by the Societies.

A resolution moved from the Chair was passed deploring the failure of the State Government to make the best use of electricity generated in Shravathi, in the agricultural sector.

Resolutions were passed requesting the State Government to provide relief measures to farmers; to suspend forthwith the land assessment collection levied at a very steep rate and to collect the same at the rates prevailing three years back.

The Executive Committee of the Mysore State Unit met on February 1st and passed resolutions to the following effect:

1. Condemning the system of compulsory levy of foodgrains and the intimidations method employed.
2. Condemning the State Government for failing to provide adequate relief to those regions where crops have failed due to inadequate methods employed.
3. Demanding a judicial inquiry into the police excesses on students during the anti-Hindi agitation.
4. Opposing the move to impose Hindi on non-Hindi States and supporting the two language formula viz., regional language and English Language.

5. Condemning the postponement of Taluk Board elections indefinitely.
6. Condemning the communal riots at Chikmagalur and the authorities for not taking preventive action.
7. Demanding that the levy of sales tax on food grains and other articles of food be scrapped forthwith.

In the biennial election held from the local authorities constituency to the Mysore Legislative Council, the Swatantra candidate, Mr. B. C. Gowda, wrested the prestige seat from the Congress.

The Hassan District Unit of the Party met at Arsikere on 24th May and passed the following resolutions:

- (a) Noting with alarm the demand of the State Electricity Board calling upon irrigation pump consumers to deposit 50% of the estimated cost.
- (b) Disapproving and protesting against the State Government's decision to enhance the land revenue instead of abolishing it totally.
- (c) Disapproving of police inaction with regards to the recent disturbances at Mangalore.

ORISSA

The State Executive met at Bhubaneswar on 30th and 31st March, with Mr. R. N. Singh Deo in the Chair. Among the resolutions passed were:

1. The Sub-Committee's suggestion for amendment to the Party's constitution was to be put forward at the National Convention for consideration and approval.
2. The State Government be requested to invite suggestions from all political parties as well as individuals for formulating a policy to end monopoly in Kandu leaves trade without jeopardising the interests of the now-flourishing trade.
3. The State Government be requested to amend the

Co-operative Act suitably, in view of the alarming misuse of powers and facilities by co-operative societies; to dissolve the existing boards of directors and after three months arrange for new elections to the boards, by which period suitable publicity be given for better administration and improvement of these societies.

UTTAR PRADESH

The State Executive met on 12th May and passed a Resolution welcoming any move to forge a permanent alliance with political parties "capable" of giving the people a clean, stable and production-oriented democratic government in the State. It said that the Swatantra Party stood for "individual freedom and human dignity" and could not associate itself with any of the communist or communal parties which "tend to suppress individual rights by widening and perpetuating political and social inequalities."

Mr. N. Dandekar, the General Secretary, declared at Kanpur on 13th May, that the so-called "senas" were a "menace to the integrity of the country" and the Government should deal with them severely. He particularly referred to the Gopal Sena which was giving training to about 40,000 volunteers in guerilla warfare.

Referring to West Bengal affairs he said that there was enough proof to show that arms had been smuggled from Pakistan and China to create trouble and the only remedy lay in banning the Communist Parties and sending their leaders to jail. He justified the South Viet Nam Government getting help from the United States.

Asking about the Party's alliance with the Jan Sangh in the forthcoming UP mid-term elections, he said, "it all depends upon electoral understandings."

He made it clear that the Party would welcome alliances with every party except the Congress, the SSP and the Communists.

THE DUTY OF A GOVERNMENT

"Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties, by leaving Capital to find its own lucrative course, commodities their fair price, intelligence and industry their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment, by maintaining peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law and by observing strict economy in every department of the State. Let the Government do this: the people will assuredly do the rest".

—MACAULAY in the *Edinburgh Review* (quoted in *The Reader's Digest*, July 1966).

GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA
HOME (PUBLIC RELATIONS) DEPARTMENT

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SHRI L.K. ADVANI INAUGURATES TELEVISION CENTRE AT
SAMBALPUR

Bhubaneswar , May 1, 1978.

Shri L.K.Advani, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting inaugurated the much needed Television Centre amidst cheers yesterday at Sambalpur. Shri Advani spoke on the role of T.V. for spread of education and said that a discipline-oriented system can make education more meaningful. He expressed hope that in future such centres would be established in the other areas of the State in a phased manner.

The Chief Minister, Shri Nilamoni Routroy welcoming Shri Advani said that the opening of the TV centre at Sambalpur could be possible not only due to the efforts of the State Govt., but also, it owes much to the sincere sympathetic attitude of Shri Advani. He announced that the State Government would continue its efforts in establishing more such centres in the State. He hoped that the programmes through television will open up new horizons of learning for the people of Sambalpur District.

The entire inauguration programme followed by cultural programmes, comprising local folk dances, Odissi dance and other items was live tele-cast to 92 television points in the District through a special live tele-cast machinery which had been brought for the purpose. The 15 television points opened in the town on this occasion drew large number of city dwellers who witnessed the entire programme.

Earlier, Shri Advani laid foundation of the proposed building of the Sambalpur Kala Parisad.

Shri Advani was given a warm reception by Dr. Jhasaketan Sahoo, Minister for Urban Development and Excise, Shri Adwita Prasad Singh, Minister of State for C.D. & P.R. and other M.Ps. and M.L.As. of the local area and important personalities of Sambalpur on his arrival at the Zamadarpalli air strip.

1. S.S. PATAGUNDI

Research Scholar

Department of Political Science

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from the General Secretary's desk

"The Gujarat 'Affair' and Masani's Resignation"

Dear Friend,

Mr. Masani is an angry man and quite justifiably so. Perhaps, if I were in his place, I might have been an angrier man. So far as the main issue is concerned, there can be no two opinions about the highly principled stand he has taken. A pledge, solemnly given, had been thoughtlessly broken. That was the essence of his grief and the cause for his anger.

What was the pledge and to whom was it given?

In the biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha in 1966 our Group in the Gujarat Legislative Assembly did not have sufficient strength to secure the election of its candidate to the Rajya Sabha. Therefore it came to an understanding with a group of MLAs known as the Independent Progressive Group. The understanding was that in return for support to our candidate in 1966, the Swatantra Legislative Group would, in the next biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha in 1968, support and thus ensure the election of the leader of the Independent Progressive Group. This commitment was undertaken by the leaders of the Party in Gujarat; and it was endorsed by the Central Parliamentary Board of the Party. And in due course our nominee was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat in 1966.

Then came the General Elections and as you all know, our strength in the State Assembly increased substantially. But there were many newcomers among those elected though our strength was such that we could elect any one we chose in an election to the Rajya Sabha.

Unfortunately, in the biennial election to the Rajya Sabha in 1968, a majority of the MLAs declined to honour the commitment. Indeed, they rallied to the support of and thereby secured the election of Mr. Mahida, a member of the Party who stood for election to the Rajya Sabha in defiance of a directive from the Central Parliamentary Board conveyed to him in writing by the President of the State Unit asking him to withdraw his candidature. In the result he was elected and our Party nominee (Shri Babubhai Vaidya) was defeated.

Thus, the pledge was broken.

It is going to take us a long time to live down, this disgrace—more so, because we have time and again,

emphasised "Dharma". Why, for instance, do we as Party oppose the move to abolish Privy Purses? Surely, it is precisely because it would mean dishonouring a solemn pledge given at the national level. It is therefore ironic that we should ourselves violate what we preach to others. There can be no excuse whatsoever for the action of our MLAs in the Gujarat Assembly.

Mr. Masani has every right to be angry. I was among the first to applaud him for his instinctive action in resigning from the important positions he held in the Party in "atonement" for the sins of our colleagues in the Gujarat State Assembly.

The National Executive considered in great detail the issues involved when it met in New Delhi on April 14. It decided to serve notices on five MLAs who had sponsored the candidature of Mr. Mahida (the rebel candidate), to show cause why disciplinary action should not be taken against them. Meanwhile, our President Prof. Ranga had already suspended Mr. Mahida and served him with a similar notice. The explanation of these five MLAs, as also that of Mr. Mahida, in reply to these "show-cause" notices were considered very carefully by the Executive at its next meeting in Madras on May 31. And as you will have read elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, while two MLAs were exonerated three were debarred from holding any office whatsoever in the organisational or in the Legislative wings of the Party for a period of three years. Mr. Mahida was expelled from the Party.

It is my considered view that the disciplinary action taken by the National Executive was adequate. Mr. Masani feels that disciplinary action should also have been taken against those members of the State *leadership* who, according to him, were equally responsible. It is not in the assessment of the guilt that there is a difference of view but in regard to who should be held responsible.

At this point I cannot do better than to quote an extract of Rajaji's views on the subject (which more or less is a summary of what he said at the General Council meeting), published in his "Dear Reader" column of *Swarajya*, of June 8:

"The Gujarat Swatantra Party's President Shri H. M. Patel's report to me in a personal talk gives me the

hope that the Gujarat Swatantra Party members have buried the hatchet and are repentant. According to Shri H. M. Patel they will be loyal to the Central authority of the party and unitedly work for the advancement of the party in India. Disciplinary action has been taken against all those who defied directions which they should have obeyed. Remembering however that a political party not in office and working against heavy odds cannot afford to be over-severe, the Executive Committee had taken decisions *nem con* regarding penalties to be imposed. There was a general feeling against what was considered overmuch central domination, but now there is full realization that the pledge given to Shri Babubhai Vaidya, a non-Party candidate who definitely declined to be a Party member even after the election, should have been respected. Every experience has its value and it is hoped that the trouble that Gujarat has gone through will leave its good lessons behind. A national party that has to fight the ruling party entrenched in power cannot hope to make any headway without the minimum discipline necessary for holding together, in spite of the frictions that must arise in human affairs.

To give an unconditional pledge in 1966 for action by a party executive to be constituted two years later, and by a newly constituted body of legislators is not very wise. An unwise pledge must lead to difficulties. The pledge was not duly honoured and the persons guilty of indiscipline have been suitably dealt with. It is good to be severe but not to be excessively severe so as to drive permanent wedges into a community of persons who should ultimately work together."

I am convinced that moderation in disciplinary matters is a virtue, for no useful or salutary purpose could ever be served by wholesale slaughter of leading members in the Party. At the sort of practical level at which one has to operate in organisational matters concerning the Party, the best one can do is to keep pushing people firmly, steadily and constantly in the right direction; and if any one strays aside, to give him a sharp rap on the knuckles. To attempt anything more in an endeavour to impose puristic righteousness would almost certainly spell disaster for the Party, for we have to take human beings as they come. On that footing I have no doubt, on careful reflection, that we could not have gone beyond what was decided and was done at Madras.

Regarding Mr. Masani's decision neither to withdraw his resignation nor to accept re-election to the National Executive as suggested by me at the General Council meeting, I am truly and deeply sorry that as a leading

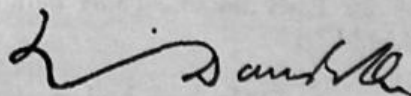
member of the Party and, in fact, as its principal ideologue, he should feel that the National Executive had not acted adequately to enable him to rejoin the team. In fairness to him, I must at the same time state that when he resigned from the Party, he had made it clear that his resignation was not conditional, in that it was independent of the kind of action that would be taken by the Party. He emphasized the fact that his resignation was in "atonement" and should be taken as justifying itself on its own merits. Be that as it may, — and the issue will, I am sure, be long debated,—I must express my sense of relief that though he has declined to be a member of the National Executive and the Central Parliamentary Board, he assured both the General Council and myself, that he would continue to work for the Party both within Parliament and outside.

We have undoubtedly encountered a serious crisis in the affairs of the Party. We have successfully overcome it; but it has left us with one major loss, which will, I feel sure, be only of temporary duration. And it has left us with many scars. But it is also necessary that we learn appropriate lessons from all this. What are these lessons? I suggest they are:—

- (1) the need for closer consultations between the organisational and legislative wings of the Party;
- (2) the need to take into confidence the Party's Legislators before taking important decisions to be implemented by them;
- (3) to ensure that long range commitments are not entered into, especially if in the interim there is going to be a change in the personnel of those who will have to implement such commitment; and lastly,
- (4) the need to scrutinise more carefully applications for candidatures before the General Elections, so as to ensure that we give the Party's nomination only to those Party Workers whose loyalty and sense of discipline have stood the test of time.

Jai Swatantra

Yours truly,



(N. Dandeker)

General Secretary

ANNEXURE A

Text of Resolutions adopted by the Central Parliamentary Board at Cochin on January 27, 1968.

(i) *Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill*

"The Central Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party, having examined the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, has come to the conclusion that the provisions of the Bill constitute an excessive measure of interference with the functioning of banking companies and give almost unlimited powers to the politicians and the bureaucrats in office to meddle in the affairs of banks and to exercise a power of patronage which would on the one hand, prevent the banks from functioning in the interest of the depositor, the shareholder and the national economy and would, on the other, open the door to massive corruption and political jobbery. The Bill will further inhibit the flow of savings into the banking system and the process of monetisation of the rural areas. The Board, therefore, calls upon the Party's Members of Parliament vigorously to oppose the Bill when it comes before the two Houses of Parliament and to seek to eliminate as much of the mischief in the Bill as may be possible, and calls upon depositors and shareholders of banks to campaign vigorously in defence of their rights."

(ii) *Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices Bill*

"The Swatantra Party has always been opposed to

monopoly, whether in the State or private sector, and would welcome the introduction of genuine and reasonable anti-monopoly legislations which would seek to prevent those concerned from exploiting a monopolistic situation. The Central Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party, having examined the Monopoly & Restrictive Trade Practices Bill now before Parliament, is alarmed at finding that the provisions of the Bill have to a large extent little to do with combating monopolies but are so designed so as to give Government all manner of arbitrary authority over all industrial and trading concerns regardless of whether or not they are monopolies. The Bill bears little resemblance to the draft legislation recommended by the Das Gupta Commission on Monopolies. If enacted in its present form, the Bill would prevent this country from enjoying the benefits of technological progress and economies of size, on the one hand, and would place everyone engaged in industry, trade or services at the mercy of the politician and bureaucrat to whose arbitrary whims and fancies the Bill provides neither a judicial nor any other check. The Board, therefore, calls upon Swatantra Members of Parliament to fight this pernicious Bill, while making it clear that the Party stands for opposition to monopoly in whatever sector it may raise its head."

ANNEXURE B

Text of Resolution adopted by the Central Parliamentary Board at New Delhi on April 13, 1968.

Insurance (Amendment) Bill

"The Central Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party having examined the Insurance (Amendment) Bill 1968, has come to the conclusion that the provisions of the Bill constitute an excessive measure of interference with the functioning of insurance companies. They can even be forcibly amalgamated or merged into the Life Insurance Corporation all in the name of "public interest". The Bill will shake the confidence

of the insuring public in insurance altogether, immensely increase the power of the politician and the bureaucrat to meddle in the affairs of insurance companies and extend a power of patronage of government that would open the door to massive inefficiency and corruption. The Board therefore calls upon the Party's Members of Parliament vigorously to oppose the Bill when it comes before the two Houses of Parliament and to seek to eliminate as much of the mischief in the Bill as may be possible, and calls upon insurance agents, and the insuring public to campaign vigorously in defence of their rights."

ANNEXURE C

Text of Resolutions adopted by the National Executive at Cochin on January 28, 1968.

(i) *Preconditions to Nationalisation*

"The National Executive of the Swatantra Party takes note of the continuing policy of the Congress Government to grab further economic power for the State under cover of slogans of "nationalisation" and "social control", using the dogma of "socialism" as

cover under which to entrench the vested interests of the Congress Party in the economy still further. The Party calls upon Swatantra Members of Parliament and units throughout the country to educate public opinion against this trend which has already caused much damage to the country's economy. In particular the Executive calls upon members of the Party to

oppose all measures of nationalisation. If any Government contemplates nationalisation of any industry or activity it should not be done until and unless an independent high level Commission of Investigation recommends it after taking evidence of all concerned."

(ii) *Call to Policy holders, Depositors and Shareholders*

"The National Executive of the Swatantra Party takes note of the increasing encroachments on the freedom of enterprise in the fields of Banking and General Insurance. While the Party will continue to do everything it can to combat needless and vexatious restrictions, it is of the view that active agitation on the part of those directly concerned is an essential element in successful resistance to these Statist trends. It, therefore, appeals to depositors and shareholders of banks and policy-holders and shareholders of general insurance enterprises to organise and agitate actively before the legislation which is sought to be enacted comes up for discussion in Parliament. It hopes that the large numbers of small people adversely affected by this legislation will appreciate the urgency of the situation and move quickly and dynamically in defence of their rights and of the effective functioning of the national economy which would otherwise be adversely affected."

(iii) *Autonomy for State Enterprises*

The National Executive of the Swatantra Party welcomes the recommendation of the Administrative Reforms Commission that State enterprises should function as autonomous concerns free from Government interference and control. It welcomes this recommendation even though it is only a halting step in the right direction which should be to hand over these uneconomic enterprises, which have already caused great loss to the taxpayers and the economy, to the public so that they may be run on business lines. The Executive notes that, true to its exploiting character, the "New Class" entrenched in the Congress Government in New Delhi are already reported to have moved to reject this modest recommendation because it would interfere with the powers of patronage and distribution of perquisites at present enjoyed by ministers, Party Bosses and senior bureaucrats. The Executive calls upon its Members of Parliament to lend support to the Administrative Reforms Commission's proposal and press for its immediate acceptance.

(iv) *Removal of Zonal Barriers*

The Swatantra Party has always been opposed to the system of zonal barriers against the free movement throughout India of foodgrains and other edible substances. Now that the shortage has been alleviated by a good crop, the last excuse for maintaining these barriers has disappeared. The National Executive of

the Swatantra Party, therefore, calls for the immediate removal of all zonal and local barriers to the free flow of foodgrains and foodstuffs throughout the country so that the farmer may get a fair price for his produce while at the same time the consumer in deficit States may be assured of his needs.

(v) *Prohibition of the Use of Firearms and Other Lethal Weapons by Private Organisations*

In recent months, there has been an eruption of various kinds of "Senas". In Kerala, the communists who are in control of the Government, are organising volunteer forces and giving them training in firearms and other lethal weapons. These senas are equivalent to the raising of private armies by political parties. The Executive is firmly of the opinion that political power in a democracy comes from the ballot box and not from the barrel of a gun. It is the ballot and not the bullet that should rule.

The National Executive expresses its alarm at such a development which, quite apart from being contrary to the very spirit of democracy is itself a danger to democratic institutions. The word "Sena" is generally reserved for the army. Its use in any other context is bound to mislead the public into believing that private armies are being allowed to develop all over the country. On the other hand, the National Executive recognises the need for political parties to have volunteer organisations which will contribute to the Party carrying on its activities peacefully in an effective and disciplined manner. Such organisations should be organised in the true spirit of non-violence and constructive service to the nation and their activities should not be shrouded in secrecy. The only legitimate instruments that such volunteer organisations should be equipped with would be the flag and the staff, the song and the slogan, the pamphlet and the petition and the like.

The National Executive therefore urges that Central and State Governments should prohibit the use of firearms and other lethal weapons by such organisations.

(vi) *People's Committees in Kerala*

The National Executive took note of the reported decision of the Kerala State Government, in defiance of the views of the Union Government to introduce in the next session of the State Assembly a Bill to give the so-called People's Committees certain statutory powers of a very wide and arbitrary character such as the right to enter and search people's homes, to procure and confiscate stocks of foodgrains and other essential commodities and to stop and search vehicles.

The Executive condemns this blatant attempt at subverting the rule of law and the fundamental rights of the citizens and hopes that the people of Kerala will rise to defeat this move which is an incipient attempt of establishing communist tyranny in the State.

ANNEXURE D

Text of Resolutions adopted by the National Executive at New Delhi on April 14, 1968.

(i) Food Situation

"This meeting of the National Executive warmly congratulates the farmers of this country for having discharged their obligation so well in making the country almost self-sufficient in foodgrains.

To ensure that the farmers were encouraged to produce the maximum next year as well, the National Executive calls for the immediate adoption by Government of the following steps:

- a) Incentive floor prices for foodgrains, and not just minimum floor prices;
- b) Removal of zonal and all other restrictions on the movement of foodgrains throughout the country;

c) Cessation of food imports;

d) Immediate and effective arrangements for the next cultivation season in regard to agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, credit, etc."

(ii) Plight of handloom weavers

"This meeting of the National Executive draws the attention of Government to the huge accumulated stocks of handloom goods resulting in growing unemployment among weavers and demands that suitable action be taken, including grant of credit facilities, to relieve the distress of weavers".

ANNEXURE E

Text of Resolution adopted by the National Executive at Madras on May 31, 1968.

Kutch Award

This meeting of the National Executive of the Swatantra Party ratifies the earlier decision of the National Executive concerning the Kutch Award,

namely, that notwithstanding the fact that it was an unfortunate Award resulting from the Government of India's acceptance of the very wide terms of reference to the Tribunal, the Award was a binding international obligation which must be accepted as such.

ANNEXURE F

Text of Resolutions adopted by the General Council at Madras on June 2, 1968.

Communist Influence and Tamil Nad Peasants and Trade Unions

The Swatantra Party notes with deep concern and anxiety the growing influence of the Communists among the peasants and in the Trade Union field in Tamil Nad, where they have fomented rural industrial unrest on an alarming scale throughout the State. The widespread strikes inspired and conducted by them in vital sectors of Industry, Transport, Banking and Insurance have done grave damage to industrial peace and prosperity in the State.

The General Council of the Swatantra Party calls upon the Government of Madras to handle the situation firmly, so as to curb the growing influence of the Communists in the political and economic life of the State.

Moved by: Dr. M. Santhosham, M.P.

Indians in Kenya

This meeting of the General Council of the Swatantra Party sympathises with the plight of Indians in Kenya and considers that it is India's duty as the mother country to stand by them and to adopt such

policies and such attitudes as would, on the one hand, raise their morale and, on the other, assist them in their efforts to settle down in U.K. or some other country and earn their livelihood with self-respect and dignity. The Council therefore urges that the Government of India should adopt a positive policy in regard to Indians in Kenya; and every effort must be made to bring pressure to bear upon both the Government of Kenya and the Government of Great Britain to deal fairly with Indians of British nationality who had settled down in Kenya. Meanwhile, those of them who wish to return to India should not be prevented from doing so.

Moved by: Mr. H. M. Patel, M.L.A.

Liberal Trends in Czechoslovakia

After the end of the Second World War, Czechoslovakia was one of several unfortunate countries in Europe to disappear behind the Iron Curtain of totalitarian Communist dictatorship supported by Russian tanks and guns. The symbol of this tyranny in recent times has now been removed by the will of the

Czechoslovakian people, and a new President has assumed office.

The Swatantra Party congratulates the people of Czechoslovakia on their courage, and hopes that the trend towards liberal policies, however slow and halting, which the new Government has introduced will be maintained in spite of the obvious attempts of the Soviet leadership to put the clock back. The Party further hopes that the example of Czechoslovakia will be emulated in Poland, East Germany, Hungary and elsewhere in the countries behind the Iron Curtain.

Moved by: Mr. Murarji J. Vaidya

Power Vacuum in South-East Asia

The British withdrawal from the Singapore base in about three years' time will create a power vacuum in South-East Asia. The Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, has made no secret of his anxiety over the consequences of this withdrawal, and he is seeking, quite rightly, a mutual security agreement to which all free countries of South-East Asia would contribute.

The Swatantra Party believes that the initiative taken by the Prime Minister of Singapore deserves every encouragement, because the defence of this region must, in the first instance, be the responsibility of the free countries of South East Asia. The lack of interest shown by the Government of India to help in meeting this obvious need is to be deplored, and the Swatantra Party hopes that even at this stage, the Government of India will resist the pressure which is undoubtedly being exercised by the Soviet Union to halt such a co-operative effort for mutual defence and security. The Party warns the Government of the dangerous implications of its shortsighted policies which will bring the threat of Chinese Communist imperialism even closer to our own doorstep.

Moved by: Mr. Dahyabhai V. Patel, M.P.

Autonomy for Hill People of Assam

This meeting of the General Council of the Swatantra Party endorses the decision of the National Executive that the Party should support the demands of the Hill people of Assam for a wide measure of autonomy.

Moved by: Mr. N. Dandekar, M.P.

Lawlessness in Kerala

The General Council of the Swatantra Party notes with anxiety the virtual breakdown of law and order in Kerala engineered by the Communists with the connivance of the State Government.

Industrial establishments have been attacked, shops have been looted and paddy in the fields has been either destroyed or forcibly taken away by lawless elements acting under the instructions of the Communists. The Kerala Bundh which was accompanied by rioting in many parts of the State, the gheraos

against the administrative staffs and terrorising of loyal workmen at the Idikki Hydro-Electric Project and the industrial plant at Mavoor, the gherao of H. H. Maharaja of Travancore in his palace and the beating up of cultivators by the Gopala Sena are some of the instances of the organised manner in which the Communists plan to bring about by widespread terror in Kerala conditions similar to those prevalent in Calcutta and Naxalbari under the United Front Government in West Bengal.

The Council urges the people of Kerala to resist such unlawful encroachments against their fundamental rights and calls upon the Government of India to take immediate steps to ensure the security of life and property in the State of Kerala.

Moved by: Mr. Sebastian Paikada

Floor Crossing

The General Council of the Swatantra Party endorses the decision of the National Executive that the Party's Legislators who defect should be expelled.

Floor crossing has assumed alarming proportions since the last General Election threatening the very foundations of the country's democratic institutions. Defections based on ideological considerations has not been unknown in the past; but what is objectionable is the fact that the recent spate of defections in a number of State Assemblies arose from opportunism of the worst kind viz., the lure of office or other benefits.

The General Council is convinced that floor crossing cannot be prevented by legal prohibition but only by healthy conventions among political parties. Here the ruling parties and groups have a special responsibility for establishing such conventions. The Swatantra Party should also eschew encouraging defections into its own ranks.

The most important such convention ought to be a determination on the part of political parties in power not to reward the defectors with Ministerships or other offices such as membership of Party Committees etc., thus making it unprofitable to those who wish to cross the floor for a *quid pro quo*.

The General Council of the Swatantra Party hopes that all the political parties in the country will place the nation before party by enforcing strict standard in respect of those with shifting loyalties based on opportunism.

Moved by: Mr. Laxmansingh of Dungarpur, M.L.A.

The Lessons of the United Front

Against the background of unstable "United Front" Governments composed of divergent and mutually warring elements, Orissa presents an outstanding example of a stable Coalition Government of like-minded parties, where the Swatantra Party and the Jana Congress agreed on a common programme in advance and offered the electorate the prospect of a

stable alternative Government led by the Swatantra Party. The experiment has proved to be a great success, thanks largely to the maturity and wisdom of the Coalition partners. The Swatantra Party compliments the Coalition Government in Orissa on their record of good Government and assures them of continued support as they grapple with the long list of problems left to them as a legacy after twenty years of Congress misrule.

The Swatantra Party believes that in the changing political situation, with the Congress monopoly of power destroyed, the Orissa example can become a precedent in the larger interests of our long-suffering people.

Moved by: Mr. V. T. Sreenivasan

Bengal Situation

West Bengal is a sensitive border State, with enormous problems which were ruthlessly exploited by the Communist-dominated Government in the nine

months of 1967 during which it was in power. During this period the internal security within this State as also the external security of India against aggression from the North-East were gravely imperilled. The imposition of President's Rule, following the magnificent "holding operation" carried out by Dr. P. C. Ghosh, has ushered in a period of relative calm and stability which is welcomed by all except only those who profit by instability and chaos.

This is not the time to subject this State once again to electioneering campaigns. In the interests of the large majority of peaceful and loyal inhabitants of West Bengal, the Swatantra Party demands the postponement of the mid-term elections. It calls upon the Central Government to recognise that the prime need in West Bengal is stable Government and that this is impossible so long as the Communist Parties are allowed the freedom to operate and to carry on their war against our democratic institutions and our free way of life.

Moved by: Mr. C. R. Irani

The Swatantra Party stands not for abstract and metaphysical or geometric freedom, but for that liberty which Edmund Bruke expounded in the following memorable words addressed to the sheriffs of Bristol, his constituency:

"Government a practical thing, made for the happiness of mankind, and not to furnish but a spectacle of uniformity to gratify the schemes of visionary politicians. The extreme of liberty (which is its abstract perfection, but its real fault) obtains nowhere and as we all know, in every point which relates either to our duties or satisfaction in life, is destructive both to virtue and enjoyment. Liberty must be limited in order to be possessed. The degree of restraint it is impossible in any case to settle precisely. But it ought to be the constant aim of every wise public counsel to find out by cautious experiment and rational cool endeavours, with how little, not how much of this restraint, the community can subsist. Liberty is a good to be improved, and not an evil to be lessened. It is not only a private blessing of the first order, but the vital spring and energy of the State itself, which has just so much life and vigour as there is liberty in it."

RAJAJI in *Swarajya*, November 18, 1961

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