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Cong(O) programme is Swatantra manifesto

Madras, Jan. 9 (PTI, UNI)—The national executive of the Swatantra Party today accepted the AICC(O) resolution of June 28 as its election manifesto.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Mr M. R. Masani, president of the party, said a four-member committee would draft a preamble to the manifesto highlighting some of the aspects of the AICC (O) resolution, which were of national importance. The members of the committee are: Mr Masani, Mr N. Dandekar, Mr H. M. Patel and the general secretary, Mr R. C. Cooper.

"But this preamble would be within the ambit of the programme contained in the AICC resolution," he said.

The Congress (O) resolution of June 28 had called for the consolidation of national democratic forces to repel the threat of Communist subversion and com-

munal virus and open up the path of ordered progress, resulting in a richer and better life for the people. It said that the issues which should provide a meeting ground for all democrats and patriots, were: the unity and security of India, the defence of the constitutional liberties of the people and preservation of democratic institutions; the maintenance of law and order, social and economic justice and equality of status and ensuring effective opportunity to all to earn livelihood and attain a basic minimum standard of living.

Mr Masani said the executive had decided unanimously to contest the election on the basis of the agreed programme spelt out in the AICC (O) resolution, which could also become the basis of an alternative government at the Centre.

"We are unilaterally standing by the agreed programme," he added.

Answering a question, Mr Masani said the Congress (O) was free to adopt any "other" manifesto if it wanted. "We have chosen their resolution as our manifesto." The Swatantra Party would not tell the Congress (O) what it should do.

Mr Masani said he would like more democratic parties to join the Front formed by the Congress (O), the Jan Sangh, Swatantra and the SSP, so as to make it more broad-based.

The purpose of the Front, he said, was to "deny" majority to the Prime Minister and her government. In order to "maximise the opposition to her" he would like more democratic parties to join the Front.

Mr Kamaraj, Congress (O) leader, today "wholeheartedly" welcomed the Swatantra Party's decision to join the Front.

Mr Kamaraj said he was also happy that the Swatantra party had adopted the AICC (O) resolution as its election manifesto.

P. R. S.