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Swatantra joins alliance

MADRAS, January 8.

THE Swatantra Party this evening decided to join the front formed by the Congress (O), Jana Sangh and SSP.

A resolution adopted unanimously by the national executive of the party said that the party had come to this decision "in the light of the clear assurance given by Mr. S. Nijalingappa, Congress (O) President, at a press conference in Bombay on January 5 that no communist party would be allowed to associate with the front."

The resolution said the party decided to join the front in view of the "totality of the circumstances, including the threat to the Constitution and the imminent danger to vital national interests, which require a change of government through the impending general election."

The resolution, however, recorded

Mr. Masani, while briefing newsmen, hoped that the other parties in the front would reconsider their stand and agree to adopt a minimum programme.

Asked how it would be possible for the front to form a government without a common programme, Mr. Masani asserted that the front would be able to give a stable government as in West Germany where different parties with varying ideologies had joined to form the government.

Asked about the proposed alliance of the SSP, one of the partners in the front, with the communists in some areas, Mr. Masani said, "I hope Mr. Nijalingappa will take up the matter with the SSP. There are also many members even in the Congress (O) who oppose such an alliance."

He added "I hope Mr. Nijalingappa will not go back on his assurance as the Communist Party is not a democratic party."

Mr. Masani said he was sure they would be able to "cross the bridge when we come to it."—P.T.I.

BROADCAST ISSUE

Mr. Masani said he would write to the Election Commissioner urging him to reconsider the latest stand on providing broadcasting time over All India Radio to political parties.

He said the national executive of the party took note of the latest statement of the Election Commissioner that the proposal for allocation of time over AIR to parties might not be possible in the absence of unanimity among the parties.

His party, he said, felt that the commissioner's earlier proposal was a "fair one" and had accepted it. The Congress (O) and Jana Sangh also had accepted it. Only the Congress

its sense of "deep disappointment at the abandonment of the effort at establishing a democratic alliance or front with a common programme based on the AICC resolution of June 28, 1970."

"The president of the party (Mr. Masani) was fully justified in asking

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He said the national executive of his party would meet here again tomorrow morning to discuss the party's election manifesto. The central parliamentary board would meet in the afternoon to consider the regional units' recommendations on the party candidates for the poll.

The executive today ratified the decision to postpone the party convention scheduled this month-end to a later date.

The convention would not be held till after the mid-term poll, Mr. Masani said.

Mr. Masani said he would contest from the Rajkot constituency.—P.T.I.

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