

SWATANTRA PARTY
COORG UNIT

Shakthi Press Building,
MERCARA P.O.
North Coorg
Mysore State

28 MARCH 1971

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Sri. N.K. Ganapaiah,
President,
Swatantra Party - Mysore State,
Harley Estate,
SAKLESHPUR P. O.

Dear Sri. Ganapaiah,

I am extremely grateful to you for having taken all the trouble to have come over to Coorg yesterday and met some of us at Sri. Manjanathayya's residence at Suntikoppa.

We were all so keen to meet you after this most unusual election pattern that has evolved in this 5th Election to the Parliament. The landslide victory of Srimathi Indira Gandhi has left both the people and the politicians wondering whether it was a swing or was it a swindle ?

I share your disappointment at the extremely poor performance of our candidates to the Lok Sabha in Mysore State. My reactions are mixed. Firstly, I am fully convinced, the defeat that we suffered is nothing to do either with the principles or with the programme of the Party. To that extent, I am relieved. The defeat could be largely attributed to two factors; (a) due to a wrong and in some cases distorted image of the Party in the minds of the public (b) lack of a strong organization at the grass root level. It is mainly this reason which has been the cause of our total defeat in the State, for which we cannot blame anyone but ourselves and this has hurt me the most.

I have all along been emphasizing our organizational weakness and in this connection, I draw your attention to my letter dated 9-7-1970 which I circulated to all the concerned District, State and National Leaders, where I have at great length tried to emphasize the importance of a strong organization at the grass root level and our organizational lapses. Even now it is not late. I am sure, very soon, we will be called upon to face additional responsibilities and people will look up to us for guidance and help when the people will realise that the promises made during the election by Srimathi Indira Gandhi and her power loving defectors were nothing but election slogans with the sole object of winning the election only.

It is no use trying to apportion the blame at this stage to the partners of the Front or to that matter of fact to any one. We have to squarely face the situation and take the entire blame upon ourselves. I am of the firm opinion that the Party must not only continue but we will have to stand on our own legs and fight the election on our colours only.

We will have to take immediate steps to improve the image of our Party at all levels, in order to create a mass appeal without giving up our principles. It is only the emphasis that will have to be shifted and not the principles.

Few of my friends and myself are of the opinion, the need of the hour is not only to go into the reasons that gave Srimathi Indira Gandhi this most unusual landslide victory but also to build the Swatantra Party into a strong, dynamic political force which should be capable of championing

the aspirations of the common man and when called upon by the people, the Swatantra Party should be in a position to replace the Congress and the Communist.

With this in view, I am writing to you separately my reactions pertaining to the future of the Swatantra Party, for your consideration and if it meets with your approval, we then could meet some of our State and National Leaders and see what they have to say in the matter. The National Executive is due to meet sometime in April '71 and if you could use your good offices and see that it is held at Madras sometime after the 15th of April, my friends and myself along with you could meet them there and discuss the matter in detail.

In the meantime, I would also be sending a copy of this letter to various State and National Leaders so that when we meet them, they would be in a position to discuss the matter from all aspects.

'JAI SWATANTRA'

Yours sincerely,

sd/-

RAJKUMAR R. GHORPADE

President.

SWATANTRA PARTY
Coorg Unit

Shakthi Press Building,
MERCARA P.O.
N. Coorg,
Mysore State.

28 MARCH 1971

For the last one year, as you know, I have been taking active interest in not only organizing the Swatantra Party in the District of Coorg (Mysore State) but also trying to understand the various problems of the common man and his reactions to the Swatantra Party.

While I reconfirm what I said in my letter dated 9-7-1970, I am now convinced that if the Swatantra Party is to emerge as a dynamic force capable of championing the aspirations of the common man and also emerge as an alternate to the Congress and the Communist, we will have to give the people, a People's Programme which could be understood, appreciated and looked forward to by 90% of our population. Secondly, we will have to build a strong organization capable of carrying the People's programme to their doorsteps and in the process build a healthy organization at all levels capable of withstanding the strongest political gale.

If the Swatantra Party is to make an impact on the common man as a political force, I personally think that we will have to give them a more dynamic, definite People's plan which is capable of being implemented speedily also.

A plan that will guarantee minimum living condition to the toiling millions, new hope for the self employed and a plan that will give a mass appeal, should be drawn up keeping in view some of the burning problems of the present day which affect 90% of the population, for example;

1. A detailed plan of how the Party proposes to bring down the rising prices of essential commodities.
2. A detailed plan of how the Party proposes to find productive employment to various categories of the unemployed viz. unskilled, skilled labour and graduates etc.
3. A detailed plan as to how the party would encourage the self employed and provide facilities which will help him to better his present trade speedily.
4. A detailed plan as to how the Swatantra Party would tackle the Rural Community Development programmes such as Minor Irrigation, Agricultural Development programme, marketing of agricultural produce, providing drinking water, Housing, Communication, Education, Health, Cottage Industries etc.
5. A definite programme for the labour should be spelt in clear terms. It should induce confidence among the unskilled and skilled workers that the Swatantra Party stands for their welfare and prosperity.

OR

A definite, clearly spelt out programme which could be understood by the common man as to how the Swatantra Party proposes to eradicate Poverty, solve unemployment problem, check rising prices, if it comes to power.

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This does not mean that I would like to give a go by to the industrialisation and other aspects of National Development programmes of our Party which will have to form a part of the People's Programme itself.

My idea of emphasizing certain aspects in the People's programme is just to reassure the common man in clear terms that his welfare is the prime concern of the Party. This is absolutely necessary if we are to cut ice or to make a definite impact on the common mass. Therefore, it is imperative at this stage in our national life, that we tell the common man in no uncertain terms, and in the language he understands and appreciates, that if the Swatantra Party comes to power, how it will serve his cause and fulfil his aspirations speedily.

Aspects like Democracy, Fundamental Rights, Human Rights, the Role of Judiciary, Privy Purses, Property Rights and the Rule of Law etc. should be emphasized the least or if I may say, those should become the silent feature of the Swatantra Philosophy, for the Party seems to have given an impression to all sections of the people that it is more concerned with matters of this nature rather than problems connected with the teeming millions. There is a strong feeling that during the four years' rule of the Swatantra Party in Orissa, it did not make any impact on the people, and the things that the Swatantra Party stood for or advocated were not implemented. If this impression is incorrect, it should be removed from the minds of the people and if it is a bonafide impression, we should give a serious thought to the matter, for if the Swatantra Party comes to power, it must be in a position to implement its policies and programmes. Otherwise, the people will not take us seriously in future.

If we as a political party cannot guarantee 90% of the toiling masses their minimum human needs or help them to fulfil their aspirations speedily, we as a political party will be of no consequence. Further, it will only mean, we are off the track, as we are not in a position to fulfil the aspirations of our simple, God loving, under nourished countrymen.

Now, coming to the aspect of organisation, I in my previous letter dated 9-7-1970, have emphasized at great length, the urgent need of a strong organizational machinery, if we are to carry the message of Swatantra philosophy to the doorsteps of the common man. It would not be out of place for me to say that even during this Parliamentary elections, one of the glaring causes of the extreming shocking results as far as our party is concerned in Mysore State was due to the lack of good grass root organization at the village and constituency level.

So, I once again repeat most emphatically and probably for the last time, that without a strong grass root organization, it is not only impossible to carry the message of Swatantra to the village level but a party without a strong organization will not survive for long. It is unfair to all concerned to go in this disorganized manner.

To start with, one could organize such of the States where there is a base and general sympathy for the party eg. Rajasthan, Orissa, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore, Tamil Nadu etc. In each such State, at least one dedicated full time paid organizer should be appointed. He should be given a vehicle, one or two joint organizers, a stenographer cum Office Manager so that he is a complete unit by himself. Excluding the Capital expenditure like the jeep, miko, office equipment etc. an annual expenditure of Rs. 1½ lakhs is what he may require to organize a State like Mysore which has 27 Parliamentary Constituencies. Details of the budget could be worked out. I have with me a rough estimate as to the nature of expenditure. Of course after going through a period of one year, we will be more clear on the subject.

The State organizer should preferably be the General Secretary, because such a person would be in a position to understand the problems of the Constituencies and would be in close liaison with the workers, the Youth Wing and Legislators which is absolutely necessary if a General Secretary is to be of any use to the Organization.

The National Headquarters should depute one National leader to be in charge of one State. He should visit the State at least once in three months and should tour extensively. Every time he comes down, he should tour the State for about two weeks with the State organizer, Youth organizer and State leaders in order to get first-hand information as to how the Organization is functioning and to find out the general trend of the people towards the party. This will not only give a boost to the Organization but will go a long way in understanding the problems of the State. This sort of close liaison between the State and National leaders and the concerned State will go a long way in raising finances locally for the purpose of organizational expenses and local body, Assembly and Parliamentary elections. Finally, it will go a long way in building a close liaison between the Youth workers, party workers and the National leaders which is very necessary to inculcate a sense of oneness, dedication to the cause of Swatantra and Unity, particularly these days when political morality is at its lowest.

Finally, every State must have a Swatantra supplement in the regional language so that the literate section of the public could be reached periodically without any break. The supplement will also serve as a talking point for our workers and sympathisers. There is no other media to reach so many people at regular intervals except by such a supplement. The good organizational work done by the organizers could be cemented by such a supplement. This is the least one could say of a supplement in the regional language and its far-reaching effects.

The supplement could also be published in an independent non-party weekly which is already popular in the State. The cost of the supplement could be made up by canvassing advertisements for the weekly.

In Mysore State, for example, we propose to publish a four page supplement every week in a weekly magazine and propose to meet its full cost of about Rs. 400/- per week by way of advertisements, which we propose to canvass for the weekly. The weekly being a non-political magazine, it becomes easier to get advertisements.

A trial we have given in this regard for the last five months in Coorg has proved extremely effective and popular. This method could be adopted with modifications if any, in other States, so that without much financial implications one could have a supplement in the regional language in each State. This is the only way one could educate the mass and there is no other method of keeping a close and regular contact with the literate section of the public, sympathisers and workers of the party.

In conclusion, it would not be out of place, if I say that the Swatantra Party which was founded in 1959 and inspite of the fact that we in Mysore State had sent up five MPs and about 18 MLAs in 1967 do not have a grass root organization even to this date. This I am sure, you will agree with me, is not a very happy state of affairs. It is high time that all concerned at the State and National level gave a serious thought to this state of affairs and rectified matters before it is too late.

Lastly, if the Swatantra Party is to be a living and dynamic force, capable of withstanding the strongest political gale, we will have to have at various levels of the organization eg. the unit level, District, State, General Council and the National Executive, dedicated and selected people coming from all sections of society like the small businessman, small trader, agriculturist, professionals, trade unionists, administrators etc.

In conclusion I, with a few other sincere party workers in this part of the State, strongly feel that if we, the Swatantra workers in India, are really serious about giving a clear-cut and alternate political philosophy with clarity acceptable by the populace, now is the time, when everyone of us has to give his very best to build the Party not in some selected pockets, but throughout the length and breadth of the country. We are also of definite opinion that trying to build up the party in a sporadic manner as occasions arise, will not help the systematic growth of the party. A serious thought has to be bestowed and a choice made as to whether we should wind up the party, or exist as we were existing hitherto or streamline the party for enabling a systematic development.

'JAI SWATANTRA'

RAJKUMAR R. GHORPADE.

President