

4451

15th July 1961.

PERSONAL.

My dear Rajaji,

I am very sorry for the delay in replying to your letter of the 15th May which Minoo Masani handed to me on my return from Europe and America earlier this month. I much appreciate the trouble you have taken in writing to me so fully.

2. My colleagues and I have been following with interest and sympathy your efforts at building a new democratic Party in the country as an essential element in the effective working of our Parliamentary democracy.

3. We have also realised the imperative need to ensure that the Communist Party is not the only effective alternative to the Congress Party and that India's political life develops in a truly democratic way around two main opposing Parties, neither of which would be to the extreme Left or the extreme Right. This, in our view, is the sine-qua-non for the survival of democracy in India and indeed throughout the world where today the struggle between Communist and Free Societies is being fought out. As a first step towards this goal in India, it is essential, in our view, to ensure that a liberal or conservative democratic party should displace the Communist Party as the second largest Party in Parliament.

4. Coming to the main question that you have raised of the provision of funds for the coming elections, I appreciate the arguments you have advanced and I am glad to be able to tell you that we in Tatas have come to the decision, based on the views expressed above, to support financially the election efforts of the Swatantra Party as well as those of the Congress. Although it may appear to some that the support of two

opposing parties is likely to be self-defeating. we feel that in the special circumstances in which we find ourselves in India there is every justification for our supporting both Parties; the Congress because of its past achievement in the struggle for independence and its strength and stabilising influence on the political life of the country., and the Swatantra Party for the reasons mentioned earlier. I realise that you may not agree with this contention, but I hope you will understand our motives.

5. In line with this decision, we shall, in due course, make specific recommendations to the Boards of our various Companies. I am sure you will understand that it would be improper for me to anticipate the decision of the Boards of Directors in the matter of the extent of support we are able to give to the Swatantra Party. I hope, however, that it will be fairly substantial. I shall inform you of the figure as soon as possible, but as we also wish to give the shareholders of our various Companies an opportunity to express their views on the subject, this will have to wait until after the various annual general meetings have been held, which will be by about the beginning of September.

6. I hope that your health is standing up to the heavy burden you have chosen to carry at an age when most people look to a peaceful retirement, particularly after such a long and active life as yours has been.

With kindest regards and wishing you all success in your great endeavour,

Yours sincerely
Ed. J. R. D. Tata
(J. R. D. Tata)

Shri C. Rajagopalachari,
60, Baziullah Road,
Tyagarayanagar,
Madras 17.