

Blitz 16/1/71

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Russell

MALICE IN BLUNDERLAND

'Manifarcetoes!'

SAYS A NEWS ITEM:
The national executive of the Swatantra Party accepted the AICC (O) resolution of June 28 as its Election Manifesto.

WHICH may be a good idea, so long as it does not set a trend in future election manifestos. Otherwise, it could lead to a little confusion.

CONSIDER the elections in say 1983 or 1987.

"MR. MASANI, have you decided on your election manifesto?"

"NOT yet, we are waiting for the Old Congress to frame its manifesto. As you know, the Old Congress is meeting in Rajpipla next week for this express purpose. After it has decided on its manifesto, we will meet in Madras to adopt it."

"YOU think the Old Congress manifesto will suit your party?"

"THAT depends. As you are no doubt aware, the Old Congress has not yet decided between adopting the Jan Sangh manifesto and the SSP manifesto."

"THE SSP is this year flirting with the PSP manifesto, which the Old Congress may approve of and we may not. The Jan Sangh, on the other hand, has not yet decided whether to adopt the SSP manifesto, which could be the PSP manifesto, or wait till Mr. Charan Singh decides to frame a manifesto for the BKD."

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"MR. MASANI, has your party considered adopting any other manifesto besides that of the Old Congress?"

"CERTAINLY. As the grand-grand old man of

the Swatantra Party wrote in the latest issue of the Swarajya, 'I want all the windows and all the doors of my party to be open to the winds of all the manifestos of all the parties in the country.' You can take it from me that we will consider all the manifestos before deciding on which one suits us best."

"DOES this include the CPI manifesto?"

"NOT this year. The CPI has let us know, in informal talks, that it would like to adopt the Swatantra manifesto. This, of course, depends on whether the manifesto we adopt from the Old Congress is the manifesto the Old Congress adopts from the Jan Sangh or the SSP."

"THE CPI will have nothing to do with any manifesto which is handed down by the Jan Sangh. Certain adjustments are, however, likely if the SSP adopts the Jan Sangh manifesto which the CPI will adopt as the SSP manifesto."

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"MR. MASANI, what are your views on the New Congress manifesto?"

"THE Swatantra Party's views on the New Congress manifesto will be made known to the press as soon as the New Congress manifesto is available. The last we heard was that the New Congress was waiting for the Old Congress to finalise its manifesto so that it could adopt it."

"THERE is also another view which says that the Swatantra should not depend this time on the Old Congress for its manifesto but should have a manifesto of EDWARD HEATH. The British Prime Minister has expressed a desire to adopt the Swatantra manifesto for his Conservative Party."

BY ALICE