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For favour of publication
on the morning of May 15.

Bombay, May 14.

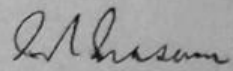
That there was an unpublished decision not to take serious disciplinary action, such as expulsion, against those called on by the National Executive of the Swatantra Party at its recent meeting in Delhi to explain their conduct in connection with the elections to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat is disclosed in the letter written by Mr. M. R. Masani, Deputy Leader of the Swatantra Party in Parliament, to Mr. Dandekar, General Secretary, declining to withdraw his resignation from the Party's National Executive. Mr. Dandekar's letter of April 22 and Mr. Masani's letter to Mr. Dandekar of May 13 were released to the press today.

Describing the published version of the Committee's decision as "eye wash", Mr. Masani goes on to point out that the Committee had failed to take notice of the failure of duty on the part of the President and General Secretary of the Gujarat State unit and the action of certain members of Parliament, including a member of the National Executive, who had gone all the way from Delhi to Ahmedabad to canvass against the Party's candidate. "The Committee has", says Mr. Masani's letter, "purported to court martial the corporals while turning a blind eye to the colonels and captains involved." "Quite apart from the failure to take an ethical stand", continues the letter, "the attempt to turn a blind eye to what has happened is somewhat ostrich-like in that it shows a lack of political acumen in what is needed to restore the shattered image of the Party in the eyes of the people of Gujarat. I hope we are not going to develop the same cynicism about the sanctity of the Party's pledged word and the same contempt for the electorate which the Congress Party have been showing, with results with which we are all familiar."

"I am sure you appreciate", continues the letter, "that, if our democratic Constitution is wrecked and the country turns to some form of authoritarianism, there will be very little scope left for the Swatantra Party or any other Party in the country. Therefore, it is more than ever necessary that all of us should put the country before Party."

The letter records Mr. Masani's belief that he could do more for the Party by staying outside the National Executive and devoting himself to constructive work such as the training of workers, campaigning for the Party's candidates and spreading the Party's principles in Parliament and outside.

"If and when the Party realises the need for an acceptance of ethical and disciplined functioning," concludes the letter, "when it agrees that the means must be as clean as the ends, that it is quality and not quantity that counts and that people have a right to be told the truth, I shall be ready to respond to its call to share responsibility for guiding its work and organisation."


(M. R. Masani)