

Swatantra Party

CENTRAL OFFICE

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527

16th December, 1963.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S LETTER NO. 60.

Dear Friend,

As you are aware, the Swatantra Party has been trying ever since its inception to develop greater coordination and harmony with other democratic Opposition Parties in the face of the threats to which the country is exposed.

We have recently held discussions with spokesmen of certain democratic Opposition parties and there is general agreement that efforts should be made to develop closer co-operation on the following lines and you are requested to contact the President and General Secretary of State units of the Jan Sangh, Socialist Party, the Praja Socialist Party and other groups in order to ascertain to what extent they are prepared to co-operate in these directions:

- 1) There should be better and more effective liaison between the respective Groups in the State Assemblies. This could be best effected by each of the groups in question nominating one member to act as a liaison with the nominees of other groups. Such persons should meet as often as possible so that, wherever there is agreement, joint action is possible and unilateral action avoided. Where there is no agreement, each group will naturally be free to go its own way.
- 2) An attempt should be made to develop joint action on specific issues in regard to which there is agreement at State and local levels. It is suggested that those in charge of State organisations should meet to ascertain the area of agreement so that common action and agitation may be developed on such topics as defence against communist China, corruption, inflation, excessive taxation, Gold Control and the Seventeenth Amendment.

In so far as the Seventeenth Amendment is concerned, there is already a basis for agreement with likeminded parties. You therefore requested to contact your counterparts in such parties and as far as possible function jointly with them in so far as opposition to the Seventeenth Amendment is concerned. In framing the stand to be taken at such joint meetings and demonstrations, regard may be had to the fact that, while some of those concerned like ourselves have opposed legislation prescribing ceilings, other parties or groups may have supported legislation in favour of ceilings but are opposed to the Seventeenth Amendment in view of its obvious dangers. Of course, the Swatantra Party, from its own platform, will maintain its opposition to ceilings.

- 3) Discussions should commence in regard to the evolution of an electoral understanding in the General Elections of 1967 so that vested interests may not be created on all sides and timely action may be taken to facilitate such an understanding. In the meantime, there should be close liaison and contact to ensure that clash at and by-election to Parliament or State Assembly that may arise is avoided. You are urged, therefore, that, whenever there is vacancy in Parliament or State Assembly that

may arise is avoided. You are urged, therefore, that, whenever there is vacancy in Parliament or State Assembly from your State, or where a vacancy is likely to arise, you should consult the Central Office well in advance and no commitments should be made by you in respect of nominating candidates until the guidance of the O.S.C. at the Centre has been obtained. This will enable us at the Centre to put our heads together with the Central Offices of other democratic opposition parties and to determine what the right thing to do would be. Will you kindly note that, when vacancy is caused by the death, disqualification or removal of a sitting member belonging to a democratic opposition party, there should normally be no idea of our putting up a candidate. Where you feel that special circumstances would justify a departure from this course and a different decision, you are of course welcome to communicate these considerations to the Central Office in advance of any decision being taken so that we may have an opportunity to consult other opposition parties concerned in order to reach an adjustment that would be in the country's interest.

I shall be grateful if you will kindly enter into discussions with your counterparts in other democratic opposition parties at the State level and let the Central Office have a report on the progress made by you in those talks not later than 15th January 1964 so that the Party's C.O.C., General Council and the National Convention may be in a position to consider this important question when they meet in Bangalore from January 30 onwards.

Will you kindly note that there should be no newspaper publicity about the proposed discussions and that these talks should take place in a quiet and informal manner in order to avoid needless publicity and controversy?

Yours truly,

(M.R. Masani)
General Secretary.

Resolution adopted by the Third National Convention
at Bangalore

ELECTORAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Although insuperable difficulties stand in the way of all democratic opposition Parties evolving a United Front to oppose the Congress, the Swatantra Party will continue to try its utmost in all elections to secure the cooperation of other democratic Opposition Parties to avoid multilateral contests which give undue advantage to the ruling party. Such efforts should be no reason for any slackening in building up the Party's own organisation which should enjoy the highest priority among our tasks. The Swatantra Party provides today the only clear-cut and effective alternative to the present Government's policies. Its policies evoke increasing response from all sections of the people. The Convention, therefore, calls upon members of the Party to concentrate in the coming months, on hard, sustained and disciplined work inspired by devotion to the Party's philosophy and policies to spread the Party's message.