



swatantra party

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Text of resolutions adopted by the Central Parliamentary Board at

New Delhi on 7th November

CHANDA COMMITTEE REPORT

As far back as May 1966 the General Council of the Swatantra Party had welcomed the recommendation of the Chanda Committee that All India Radio and TV Services be placed in the hands of autonomous bodies and had requested Government to give effect to the recommendations as early as possible and in particular before the General Elections of 1967.

The Party's Election Manifesto for 1967 reiterated the Party's opposition to all attempts at the establishment of monopoly or official control over the various media of mass communication.

The Government of India's announcement last month, after prevaricating for over four years, of their rejection of the recommendation of the Chanda Committee to convert All India Radio into an autonomous corporation deserves to be condemned. The argument advanced by the Minister for Information & Broadcasting that Govt. had come to the conclusion that in the present political situation it would not be proper to convert All India Radio into a corporation is wholly untenable. So is their view that the Chanda Committee had dealt with this important question "in a perfunctory manner".

While the Swatantra Party has for many years now publicly criticised the misuse of All India Radio, this medium of mass communication has since the Congress split and the ascendancy of the Government led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi been made on the one hand a forum for disseminating biased and lopsided information and on the other to provide a forum for the Ruling Congress and its friends to indulge in unabashed propaganda.

In the Party's view it is precisely because of the present political situation that it is essential to ensure the impartiality of AIR.

Control of AIR in the light of the transistor revolution particularly in the countryside is an advantage that should not be the monopoly of any single party or person, the desire for which the Party suspects is the real reason for the rejection of the Chanda Committee's recommendation.

The Central Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party denounces the decision of the Government and reiterates the demand which is **almost** unanimous that Radio and Television be freed from Government control and placed under the control of autonomous corporations. It calls upon the Party's members in Parliament to raise a discussion of this matter in both Houses during the forthcoming Session.

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GUJARAT DEVELOPMENTS

After considering the situation in Gujarat arising out of the defection from the Party of certain MLAs, including the former leader of the Party in the State Assembly, the Central Parliamentary Board denounces the defectors for not keeping faith with the electorate and the Party and congratulates all those MLAs who have remained loyal to the Party despite pressures of various kinds brought to bear on them.

2. The Board notes that among the reasons given by the defectors for leaving the Party was their dissatisfaction with the decision of the National Executive taken at its meeting in Madras on July 20 that the freedom of action given to them to overthrow the Hitendra Desai Ministry was withdrawn and all attempts at toppling were banned.

3. In this context, it is amusing that a large majority of those very defectors, along with the two MPs who were expelled from the Swatantra Party for gross indiscipline and disloyalty to the Party have been welcomed with open arms by the very Party whom the defectors were engaged in toppling only a few months earlier. In this connection, the Swatantra Party takes a serious view of this unfriendly act of the Gujarat Congress (O) and the Congress Parliamentary Party in taking into their Party defectors and expelled MPs from the Swatantra Party while discussions are still proceeding at the national level on the basis of the AICC(O) call on June 28 for a consolidation of nationalist and democratic forces. The Board expresses deep sense of disappointment with this action of the Congress (O) which is in cynical disregard of all values of decent public life. The General Secretary was requested to convey the Board's views to the General Secretary of the Congress (O).

4. The Board is left, in the face of these developments in Gujarat, with no other alternative but to call upon the Swatantra Party in the Gujarat Assembly to continue to play its legitimate role as the leading Opposition Party in the State Assembly by functioning as vigilant critics of the policies of the Gujarat Government and by moving cut motions, motions of censure, adjournment motions and the like which are a part of Parliamentary procedure and putting forward the Party's position on relevant issues on the floor of the Assembly.

5. The Party calls upon the electorate of Gujarat, particularly in those constituencies from which the defectors were elected, to express their displeasure over their representatives having broken faith with them and to see that all defectors get the treatment they deserve at the next election in the event of any or all of them being foolhardy enough to venture to face the electorate again.

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