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SP
Centre
9th July, 1968

My dear Banga,

I have received your letter of 28th June.

I am afraid the report to which you refer has reached you in a garbled form. As you will see from the enclosed clipping from the Times of India, what I urged was the coming together and fusion of those opposed to communism and communalism, which is something quite different from what you were given to understand.

I think that the initiative that has come from the BKD is a good one and in the national interest. It is possible that the PSP might turn it down on the ground that it is not specifically "socialist." That need not, however, be a reason for our not making a positive response and probing into the possibilities further. I was sorry when I read press reports that you and Dandekar had turned down the BKD offer but I am glad to see from Dandekar's note of the discussion with Mr. Charan Singh, of which he has been good enough to send me a copy, that in the last para he says that "we ended by agreeing to give further thought to the three alternatives and to keep our minds open concerning all of them."

Last week, when B.P. Singh asked me to give a talk in Lucknow on "The Outlook for Democracy in India", I agreed to do so. I was in Lucknow last Sunday and took the opportunity to have a talk with Charan Singh. He evidently had been a little sore at the out-of-hand rejection of his proposal. I told him that the Swatantra Party had not even considered the matter, that these things take time and that he should not accept defeat so easily. He responded to B.P. Singh's invitation to take the Chair at my meeting which was organised by the U.P. Swatantra Party. I think the effect of my visit and of the meeting has been a helpful one.

Our U.P. members were very upset at what had happened in Delhi as reported in the press and the implications for the U.P. elections next February. As a result of the B.K.D. feeling that we had turned down their proposal, they seemed to be in no mood to join hands with our U.P. unit in the coming elections. Charan Singh has now agreed, however that they will work out an electoral understanding and I have urged that they should go beyond that and try to arrive at an agreed programme and campaign together when the time comes.

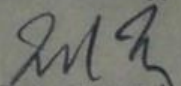
One impression that you have I would like to correct. In para 3 of your letter, you seem to think that BKD is keen to join hands with us in the U.P. elections because they have no funds and expect us to help. On the contrary, I found when I was in Lucknow that they are getting excellent response to their appeal for funds, particularly, from the peasantry, which is more than we can say for our own party. I do not think, therefore, that we need have any suspicions that they are actuated by that consideration. Actually, Charan Singh is

much keener about fusion at the Centre than in U.P.

In the last para of your letter, you are good enough to suggest that I discuss this matter with Dandekar and let you have my advice. Dandekar unfortunately has gone abroad and I have not seen him since the Madras meeting. The only advice I can give is that the door should be kept open to further discussion and that a final decision should be taken either by the General Council or the National Convention of our Party in a democratic manner.

encl.

Yours sincerely,


(M. R. MASANI)

Professor N.G.Ranga, A.P.,
Nidubrolu P.O.
Guntur Dist.

c.c. Mr. C. Rajagopachari ... with reference to Prof. Ranga's
Madras. letter to him of 2nd July

Mr. Dandekar, Bombay