



swatantra party
national headquarters

sassoon building, 143, mahatma gandhi road, bombay 1.

5457
phone: 251424
grams: surajyam

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General Secretary's Circular to Lok Sabha Candidates No:2

Dear Lok Sabha Candidate:

Sub: Second instalment of speaking
points - Forthcoming
Parliamentary Elections

I hope the first set of notes sent earlier were of use to you.

Attached is the second instalment.

I look forward to receiving any material from you, which may be of use to the Party candidates.

Yours sincerely,

(R.C. Cooper)
General Secretary

Encl: •

jv/-

Present Government

The Congress Party has completely betrayed the confidence which the nation reposed in it. The country is on the brink of a state of utter lawlessness and fast approaching chaos and anarchy. Violence runs rampant in the streets of metropolitan towns, in industrial establishments and in University campuses. Large sections of the people in the country live in constant fear and terror.

Faced with the failures of a bankrupt policy, the Congress Party has taken recourse to purveying loud slogans of socialism. The ignorant masses are made to believe that the culprit was somebody else and the millennium will now commence by the magic wand of socialism. But the Congress Party has to offer the same as before—more and more taxes, spiralling prices, wide-spread unemployment, more industrial unrest, more nationalisation and inefficient wasteful public undertakings and more interference with the life of the people.

Socialism pre-supposes production in plenty and its equitable distribution. But the Government devise new impediments to production at every stage and discourage fresh investment and savings. While millions and millions go without the basic necessities of life such as nourishment, shelter, clothes, education and medical care, the Government gives top priority to the small car project and the people's television set.

While they talk of social justice in the name of the people, they conveniently forget that the inflationary rise in prices and the stagnation in production are most unjust to the poorer sections because the cut in their low living standard hurts them more.

More Savings

When savings go up taxation can come down. Instead of encouraging voluntary savings and their productive employment, the present Government has consistently tried to mop up savings by heavy taxation and then to use them in unproductive expenditure or incompetent and inefficient projects. The result has been a huge loss of national wealth. The net loss of production because of the mismanagement of the Government sector in the last 13 years, calculated on a cautious moderate scale, amounts to more than 10000 crores. We could have set up 1000 more industries with this amount.

Regional Imbalances

Between the metropolitan areas on the one hand and tribal areas on the other, there is a wide disparity of development and a difference of some centuries of civilization. Other areas vary in between. Scanty production, unemployment and low living standards are the characteristics of the backward areas.

The basic question is to increase the economic attraction of these backward regions.

Fair Deal to Workers

The past few years of Congress rule have been marked with unprecedented labour troubles - both in the private and public sectors. There is no doubt that labour in some industrial zones has become the instrument of political parties for ulterior ends. When the country is starved of steel and a number of engineering concerns have to curtail vital production for lack of raw materials, the Durgapur and Rourkela Steel Mills are beset with chronic labour troubles. Durgapur Steel Mills have been continuously incurring a loss of Rs. One Crore every month. Similar troubles have bedevilled H.M.T. and Heavy Electricals, nationalised banking and insurance, Government Airlines, Central and State Government employees and a number of private sector units.

We have to instil a sense of responsibility in industrial relationship, with healthy trade unions who will be protected against the irresponsible action of their unofficial minorities, motivated to create political leverage. We must create conditions in which the fair demands of sound trade unions are met by the management, if necessary by conciliation machinery and strikes become the means of last resort and not of first resort.

This will lead to a link between wages and productivity. A new code will establish clear rights and obligations for unions and employers. It will define what is lawful and not lawful in industrial disputes. It will lay down guide-lines for good collective agreements and standards for good management and trade union practices. It will make agreements binding on both unions and employees.

SOCIALISM :

(Bhikshu Chamanlal)

In Switzerland the difference between the lowest salary of a worker and the Swiss President is about ten times; in India it is more than a hundred times if you include the total amount spent on the President and Ministers whose bungalows alone have a market rent of Rs. 5,000.

If socialism means equal opportunities for all, you can see it in practice in Switzerland where a postman has a two-storeyed house worth Rs. 1,50,000.

There is endless talk of socialism in our country today. Let us ask ourselves, are we honest in our bold claims? Think of the shocking imbalances in the salaries of our rulers and the common man! A Minister needs a house whose market rent is Rs. 5,000 a month (This figure was given to me by the Gandhian Finance Minister himself).

An average Minister spends at least Rs. 20,000 a month, though his market value may not be Rs. 200, but in 23 years of independence we have not been able to fix fair wages for our workers in offices and industries and we are always faced with strikes resulting in heavy national loss and great hardship to the people. Why can't we fix reasonable wages for all?

Here I reproduce some monthly salaries for men and women workers in different jobs fixed by the Government of Switzerland. These are maximum salary figures. One Swiss franc equals two rupees

Swiss francs

	Men	Women
Skilled workers	2,063	1,439
Paper industry	2,144	1,406
Chemical industry	2,376	1,704
Book printers	2,059	1,417
Textile industry	2,016	1,464
Shoe making	1,835	1,262
Rubber industry	2,071	1,110
Metal workers	1,981	1,393
Match industry	1,988	1,380
Jewellery industry	2,076	1,450
Electricity and gas	2,179	1,464
Trading houses	2,012	1,455
Bank	2,213	1,744
Private insurance companies	1,997	1,479
Milk and cheese	1,970	1,276
Secretaries		2,000

Monthly salaries (Maximum)

Swiss francs

Private school primary teachers	1,800
Transport industry	1,615
Cigarette industry	1,706
Railway staff (1st class)	2,228
Railway staff (2nd class)	1,809
Medical doctor	2,800
Unskilled railway worker	1,412
Technician in chemical industry	2,338
Shop assistant	1,748
Teachers in State school - up to	2,000

In India we have been talking and talking insincerely of a socialistic pattern, living in royal palaces with miserably paid brigades of all kinds of servants, chaprasis, jamadars, bearers, boys and khansamas, but Switzerland truly practises the socialistic pattern, where a sweeper gets a salary of 200 American dollars and lives in a four-room house furnished with a home-laundry, radio, refrigerator and cooking range, whether it is a sweeper or a cook, a porter or postman they enjoy all comforts of modern society because there is dignity of labour. I have some friends among railway porters, policemen and post office workers. They all have one or two bank accounts. How many workers in India have such opportunities?

Extracts from the Indian Express, January 14, 1971

Production is the best solution to eradicate poverty and employment the best system of wealth distribution.

This was stated by Mr. Piloo Mody, Swatantra leader, while speaking on "What my party stands for" under the auspices of the Government Law College Students' Union in Bombay on Wednesday.

The kind of socialism practised in the country had bred inflation, monopolies and perfers transfer of incomes, he said and pleaded for rational and purposeful participation in the democratic processes by the intelligentsia.

Extracts from the Indian Express, January 14, 1971

ANSWERS NEEDED

Behind the usual verbiage of political election are the ifs, and perhaps, the buts. In the coming mid-term elections, however, the issues even if cloudy are likely to be more precise, Mrs. Indira Gandhi must explain what exactly she means by 'progressive' which is the label she attaches to her own miscellaneous followers, and what she understands by 'reactionary,' which is the name she has affixed to her opponents.

En route to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' conference in Singapore the British Prime Minister, Mr. Edward Heath, has released in New Delhi what looks like a calculated time-bomb. Hitherto our own Prime Minister has been active in concentrating the Indian people's attention on the developing Anglo-American naval presence in the Indian Ocean, but one has heard very little of the Russian presence. According to Mr. Heath, Soviet naval power in the Indian Ocean has increased, is increasing and does not look like diminishing. The British Prime Minister is quoted as saying that Russia has achieved in five years what its former rulers could not achieve in one hundred and fifty years.

We in India have heard singularly little about this. In the days of the British Raj from Curzon to Linlithgow the threat to India from the Russians was through the Khyber Pass, which led the British to neglect India's eastern frontiers during the Second World War, when the Japanese in the 1940's threatened and to an extent percolated through these frontiers. Is the Indian Ocean today to be equally our blind eye, hypersensitive to Anglo-American intentions but insensitive to Soviet thrusts and excursions? This is the sixty-thousand-dollar question or, if one prefers to put it in another way, the sixty-thousand-rouble question.

It would be interesting and instructive to know what our own Prime Minister's reaction is to the query posed by the British Prime Minister. Are we in favour of the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean and against the Anglo-American presence in the same area? Mrs. Gandhi must give a categorical answer to this question.

To my mind, we do not want either the Americans, the British or the Russians to dominate the Indian Ocean. It does not mean that we in India exercise any monopoly over it. But our interest in the Indian Ocean is both geographical and historical, geographical in the sense that its situation gives it a naval and military significance which we understand and appreciate, and historical because we have lived alongside this Ocean for many centuries. It is part of us.

Where India is heading for it is difficult to say. Mrs. Gandhi must get her signals clear and straight. Is she for Russia in the Indian Ocean but not for America or Britain?