

"The Swatantra Party seeks no party advantage. It is interested in policies and not in personalities. It will support any patriotic government which is determined to fight the Chinese Communist aggressors till victory is won," observed Mr. Masani, General Secretary of the Swatantra Party, at a public meeting organized by the Party at the Gandhi Grounds this evening.

It was the duty of Opposition parties in a democracy, said Mr. Masani, to give the fullest support to the defence effort while reserving the right to criticise those policies of Government which came in the way of the country's defence. This distinction was particularly important when there were in office at the beginning of hostilities men whose policies had placed the country in a weak military situation and where the Government enjoyed the support of only 45 per cent of the electorate and could not speak for the country as a whole.

Mr. Masani welcomed the Prime Minister's statement that those in authority had been getting "out of touch with reality in the modern world" and expressed the hope that the necessary changes in policy would be made without further delay so that final victory may be assured. Among the measures that he listed were the following:

- (1) Sever diplomatic relations with Communist China and give an assurance that there would be no negotiations or talks till the territory of India as it was at the time of declaration of the Republic in 1950 was cleared of the invaders.
- (2) Arms, equipment and planes for our men at the front from all friendly countries. The insistence on paying for the massive assistance required was unrealistic. The acceptance of military aid was not inconsistent even with non-alignment, as shown by Yugoslavia, Egypt and Indonesia.
- (3) The adjustment of our relations with Pakistan. "In defending our Ladakh and Nefa borders against the Chinese offensive, we are also defending the borders of Pakistan. At the same time we can more easily achieve victory over the Chinese if we are assured of the goodwill of Pakistan," said Mr. Masani. The speaker hoped that the Prime Minister would take the initiative in the matter and that President Ayub would prove a far sighted statesman by assuring India that Pakistan would not take advantage of India's involvement with the Chinese and that the Indian troops deployed on Pakistani borders could be withdrawn to repel the Chinese offensive without any fear.
- (4) The isolation of the Communist Fifth Column in this country, the rejection of the hypocritical resolution of the Communist Party of India and the banning of the Communist Party of India.
- (5) A review of the foreign policy which had become obsolete so that it may be brought in line with the realities of the day.