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Dandekar to act as interim chief

By A Staff Reporter

The General Council of the Swatantra Party on Sunday accepted the resignation of Mr. M. R. Masani, the party president, and appointed Mr. N. Dandekar, one of the vice-presidents, to officiate as president till new office-bearers were elected in September.

Dr. R. C. Cooper, general secretary of the party, briefing the press at the conclusion of the General Council session in Bombay, said that the majority of the members felt that the party debacle in the Lok Sabha election was not the responsibility of Mr. Masani alone but of the party as a whole but Mr. Masani was firm on his decision that it was in the interest of both the party and the country that he should resign.

The Council recorded its deep sense of gratitude to the outgoing president for his services to the party first from December 1959 to 1967-end and as its general secretary and subsequently as its president from January 1970. Had he not resigned, his term of office was to last till December 1971.

In his resignation letter of April 2, which was released to the press on Sunday, Mr. Masani said:

Responsibility

"It is a sound principle of administration, whether in military, civil, business or political life that, when a disaster overtakes a country, army or organisation, the man at the helm of affairs should take the responsibility for the debacle and hand over office to someone who may bring fresh ideas to the task and a new and open mind to bear on the problem."

"It is only thus that countries and institutions that are defeated are able to resuscitate themselves and rise again." "The principles to which I have referred admits of no exceptions and I believe that the step I am taking will be in the interest of the party."

"It has become a habit in our country to make excuses for hanging on to office, whether in Government or elsewhere. I would like that, by accepting my resignation, our party at least should help in providing an example to the contrary."

The Council was happy to note that Mr. Masani would continue to propagate the party policies and give it the benefit of his counsel.

Personal