

K.R.KOSHTI

16 Connaught Road,
POONA 1

31st July 1974

COPY

My Dear Shri Piloo Mody,

I am enclosing herein a copy of my letter dated 4th inst. for your information, in which I had welcomed the idea of a merger of 7 parties as a preferable alternative under the present circumstances.

However, after the recent reports in the press about the threatened split in the B.K.D. as well as in the Swatantra Party and postponement of a decision of merger by the B.K.D., I feel we may have to reconsider the proposal. The hurried pronouncement by the S.S.P. leader Shri Raj Narain that the main task of the B.L.D. would be to oust Mrs. Gandhi and the Congress from power. If this is the first and foremost task before the new party, then, I am afraid people will not support the new party, and the end would be as disastrous as the INDIRA HATAO slogan a few years ago.

If the new party has to be a real viable alternative to the party in power, it must present a concrete programme and make efforts to attract the people to it, not by hatred towards anyone but by a positive programme. I have gone through the draft statement of policy of the new party, which may be found quite acceptable to all the constituent parties. I have also gone through the alternate proposal of Shri M.R. Masani, but acceptance of his proposal would also mean the end of Swatantra as a political party. It is a good suggestion and can be adopted even without dissolving the Swatantra Party.

On second thought, I feel that the question of merger may be postponed to a better time, and in the meantime try to build up our own party. Whatever may be the decision arrived at at the National Convention, we should avoid a split in the party by everyone accepting the verdict of the majority, and accordingly work unitedly in NATIONAL INTEREST.

Thanking you and with best wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

C.C. for information to :-

✓ Shri M.R. Masani, Bombay

K.R.Koshti

4th July 1974

To,

The President,
Swatantra Party (Maharashtra)
BOMBAY 1

Dear Sir,

I am in due receipt of the circular of the State Council Meeting to be held on the 6th inst. at Bombay. I regret to inform you that I am not able to attend the meeting due to my continued illness since January this year. I may please therefore be granted leave of absence.

It is a pity that within a short span of 15 years, the party is at cross roads and is faced with a dilemma of "To be or not to be". It is a great regret that despite the best principles and ideology given to the party by no less a person than late Rajaji and other eminent founders of the party, it could not make much headway, and of late its fate has been on the decline. One of the reasons is lack of sincere and honest cadre of workers.

The choice before the party is either to continue its separate existence or to wind up the affairs and merge with the proposed new opposition party. It has been observed that several members are opposed to the merger, and favour the separate existence. However, looking to the political situation in the country and the present state of affairs of the party, it may not last beyond the next general elections, and is soon likely to meet its end. The second alternative of merger therefore is preferable, although the party is bound to lose its separate existence. At least we shall have the satisfaction of co-operating with other parties in the formation of a strong opposition party, which is the greatest need of the day.

How far the new party will succeed in its aims and objects cannot be visualised at this juncture. But it is a wise move and if other major parties like the Congress (O), Jansangh, and the Republican party are induced to join, the country will have a real alternative to the ruling party. It is hoped that the State Council will endorse and support the initiative and wise move taken by our President Shri Piloo Mody and his colleagues. Let us welcome an honourable end of the Swatantra Party, and out of this sacrifice, emergence of a new strong opposition party. I wish the new party every success and a long useful innings.

Yours faithfully,

- C.C. for information To:-
1. Shri Piloo Mody, New Delhi
2. Shri M.R. Masani, Bombay.

K.R.Koshti