

Lt. Col. H.R. Pasricha
(Retd.)

20-B, Ganga Ram
Hospital Road,
New Delhi-60.

29th June, 1974.

Dear Mr. Madhu Mehta,

I received your National Executive Circular No. 120 dated 19th June, 1974 and returned the accompanying Post-card. While agreeing with the suggestion of one delegate for every one hundred members, I added that a maximum limit for each state (a well-established previous practice) must be fixed to avoid the suspicion that the present leadership is bent upon swamping the convention with the help of preponderatingly large number of delegates from one state.

I write this letter to you, partly, to confirm what I wrote in the Post-card, to elaborate it, too, but mainly to avoid a willful suppression of my suggestion which I would not put past the present leadership.

I regret to have to confess that I have grave doubts about the candour, rectitude and fairness of the leadership. Two small points in the summing up of General Council proceedings now issued by the office of the President confirm such doubts.

Para 5 of page 2: Swatantra Party has not yet decided to pursue the 'Two Party' idea in its present form. It should not be taken for granted. The President was merely authorised to explore the possibility, which decision at Delhi was contrived. It was obtained when most members who suspected the President's motives had left.

Para 2 page 4: The one member who was against the new Party project was the General Secretary of the Gujarat Party who unequivocally stated that majority of the members of the State Executive were against the idea.

Also the statement of Maharawal Laxman Singh that he had an open mind was deliberately left-out.

These are small points, but they indicate a tendency to twist facts to stoop low to tricks.

If a maximum limit to each state delegation is not prescribed, we shall regretfully draw the conclusion that the leadership has said good-bye to all principles of fairplay and scrupulousness and is ready to stoop to the lowest depths to contrive a decision favourable to itself.

A gentleman always plays fair. Swatantra used to be styled a Party of gentlemen. It seems now to have become a bunch of money-grabbers and job-hunters.

We all want an effective opposition to the ruling Party. We are not morons. There is no need for the President and his henchmen to labour the point ad nauseam. However, the remedy he is offering is worse than the disease. To join an unholy combine of dismal, sordid, discredited characters whom the voter will not trust is suicidal stupidity.

It is disgusting to keep on saying that we cannot and need not look into the dismal pasts of the crooks now coming together in a new rump because it is by their sordid and murky pasts that the voter is going to judge them.

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Mere protestations that they have washed themselves clean by a dip in the Ganges is not going to deceive the voter.

I cannot believe that these considerations are not known to the clique now controlling the Party. I am firmly convinced that all palaver of raising a national opposition is only camouflage. Their real aim is to destroy all opposition to Indira Congress and so facilitate the establishment of an Indira dictatorship. That, in fact, is going to be the outcome of their efforts.

Ideologically we cannot mix with rabid socialists like Raj Narain. The presence of a dyed-in-the-wool communalist like Madhok will, inevitably, drive all minorities deeper into the lap of the ruling Congress. Only a fool can dream that any Party in India can win elections without the minorities.

Perhaps, this is a reversion to the original secret resolve of early leadership of Swatantra Party, to form a pressure group and bargain with Congress for positions for themselves. Despite all protestations to the contrary, I am convinced that the present leadership has no attachment to Swatantra creed. Its aim is to help themselves.

A great and endless moan issues from the President that Swatantra Party has failed. If it failed it was because it was not lucky enough to claim a leadership it deserved. A bunch of self-seekers, blind and arrogant paranoics is all that it got-agents of unscrupulous money-bags and representatives of an effete princely order who never knew, nor learnt, what dignified princely behaviour is.

If the torch of liberty, freedom and democracy is to be kept shining in this country, then Swatantra Party must be rescued from the clutches of the harpies who are sucking its blood to destroy it.

We need a leadership that will say farewell to its own ambitions and address itself selflessly, devotedly, to the task of rebuilding the Party and lay a firm foundations for it in the hearts and minds of the people even if it takes twenty five years-a period for which the present President said to Mr. Arya he was not prepared to wait to fulfil his own ambitions.

Yours faithfully,

H. R. Pasricha
(H. R. Pasricha)

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Copy to:-

- 1- Members of the National Executive.
2. Members of the General Council.

Mr. M. R. Masani,