

C. S. T. NO 2181 DT. 26-11-58
M. G. S. T. NO 22313 DT. 1-4-70
DRUG LICENSE NO. FORM 29-B 671/M
FORM 21-B 523/M

PHONE { OFFICE 33786
RESIDENCE 664157

V. S. SRIKUMAR

IMPORTER & WHOLESALE OF ALL KINDS OF CHEMICALS, LABORATORY REAGENTS, ACIDS AND
MANUFACTURERS' AGENT

495-A, MINT STREET, MADRAS-600003

(922)

Dt. 29th April '74.

Mr. M. R. Masani,
148, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay - 1.

Dear Sir,

I am very thankful for your
letter of 24th instant and for the
good news contained therein.

I have also sent a detailed
letter to Mr. Piloo Mody, a copy of
which is enclosed for your informa-
tion.

Once again thanking you for
what you have done on behalf of the
thousands of fine workers of the
Party and with my highest regards,

Yours truly,

V. S. Srikumar
(V. S. SRIKUMAR)

Enc. 4 sheets

*Mr. Masani
to see
J. S. S.
G. S.
Sent
J. S.*

C. S. T. No. 2181
dt. 25-11-58.
M. G. S. T. No. 22313
dt. 1-4-70
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Form 20-B 671/M
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V. S. SRIKUMAR

Importer & Wholesaler of all kinds of Chemicals,
Laboratory Reagents & Acids,

Sole Agent for Southern Region : M/s. Dolder Ltd., Switzerland.

M/s. Ruhr Chemicals, Bombay-14.

M/s. Gujarat Pharmaceutical & Chemical Works, Ahmedabad-16.

495-A, MINT STREET :: MADRAS-600003.

Telephone :
Office : 33786
Resi : 664157

29th April 1974.

Mr. Piloo Mody, M.P.,
2, Lodi Estate, Cornwallis Road,
New Delhi.3.

Dear Sir,

Though I am not a member of the National General Council I saw the notice issued by the National Headquarters calling for a meeting of the National General Council on the 1st May and the subsequent letter informing the members about the postponement of the meeting. I have also followed closely the newspaper reports regarding the decision taken at a meeting of the leaders of the 7 or 8 political parties held at New Delhi recently.

In this connection as a worker of the party from its inception and as one who, subject to all my limitations, have done what I can for the party in all respects, I deem it my duty to tell you frankly and as clearly as I can, not only my personal opinion but the opinion of a majority of workers also in Tamilnadu.

I entirely agree that democratic institutions are in mortal danger of being overthrown and that a viable alternative to the ruling congress is an absolute necessity for saving democracy and the institutions

necessary for its healthy functioning. For creating an alternative to the congress party and to clear the all pervading confusion in the political and economic fields polarisation of the political elements has to take place.

In Indian conditions a purely two party system cannot be created in the near future. I feel there should be room immediately for a minimum of three and maximum of four national parties by the merger of the dozens of political groups scattered all over India, on the basis of clear cut and easily distinguishable principles and programmes.

For really democratic institutions to function successfully in any country and especially in a country like India, a national party based on the Swatantra party's principles and its liberal and pragmatic programme is a must. Communists of various hues may gang up together if they like and form a single party with the object of establishing a dictatorship^{ship} of the proletariat and for the overthrow of democratic institutions. The socialists of different grades professing faith in democratic methods but believing in the necessity for state monopoly and control of all resources may become a third national party. All communal and ultra national elements if at all they can combine may become the fourth national party.

As far as our party is concerned I have seen the resolution of the National Executive authorising you to take steps to contact leaders

of other parties etc. The decision reported to have been taken at the meeting of the leaders of the 7 or 8 parties goes beyond the authority given to you or any other authorised representative of the Swatantra party. The Executive as far as I can see, has not authorised anybody to decide and announce in the newspapers the dissolution of the party which should precede its merger with any other political group.

As you should be knowing neither the National Executive nor even the National General Council has any authority to decide on the dissolution of the Swatantra party or its merger with any other political group. This can be decided only by a National Convention.

If you agree with what I have stated in the preceding paragraphs, as I believe you would, then, the only sensible, practical and wise course would be for the national leadership to try with utmost vigour and expedition at its command for the merger of splinter groups and other parties and who have faith in the principles of the Swatantra party to merge themselves with us as the Ganatantra Parishad of Orissa and the Indian National Democratic Congress of Tamilnadu did years back. Even if you have reason to believe that such mergers with our party were not possible serious attempts should have been made to achieve the object.

If the first step suggested by me is out of the question

as far as we are concerned it would be necessary for the leadership to sell effectively our party's principles and programme to the leaders of the 7 or 8 groups who met at Delhi recently.

Even granting that this was tried and did not succeed the next step should have been for the leaders to sit together and agree on ~~the~~ a set of principles in the first instance and on a common pragmatic programme which should combine most of the principles of the Swatantra party and many elements of its programme. Only after such an agreement had been reached the joint decision to merge should be announced. But unfortunately, perhaps from the publicity point of view, leaders have made the announcement prematurely and caused a lot of damage to the Swatantra party and also perhaps jeopardised the very merger of which the leaders have evidently set their hearts so much.

Of the 7 parties none excepting the Swatantra is National either organisationally or from the point of view of its principles and programme. The B.K.D. is influential only in U.P. and Pragati in Orissa. These two can be considered as state parties only; the rest are all confined to small areas in their own states and hence not of much consequence.

Granting that you are able to carry the party with ~~party~~ you

into the merger I am sure that you will agree with me that even the contemplated new party will not be a viable alternative to the Ruling Congress since practically excepting in the states of U.P., Orissa and Bihar, there will be no more accretion to the strength the Swatantra party is having in other states.

The contemplated new party can become viable alternative and even an immediate danger to the monopoly of the power of the Ruling Congress only if the Congress (O) and Jan Sangh can be persuaded to join the new party. At present this seems to be out of the question. Hence I may I suggest that the only result of the hasty announcement made from Delhi will be that the National Swatantra Party will cease to exist if you are able to convince the workers at a National Convention about the utility of the contemplated step and this would be a great loss to the country because the only party which has been preaching sensible economic programme and insisting on rectitude and honesty in public life will cease to exist and we will be betraying the confidence of the late lamented leader, Rajaji? To make matters worse you will be considered the instrument for the dissolution of the Swatantra party within 18 months of Rajaji's departure from this planet.

Granting that you are fully convinced that the dissolution is necessary to make the other 7 parties agree to the formation of a new political party still I maintain that the announcement should not have been made so prematurely as the Swatantra party alone is having units in as many as 16 states in the Indian Union. The National Headquarters should have prepared the workers for this shocking news by discussing alternatives with them from the constituency level upwards so that they may after careful consideration feel that national leadership has not imposed a "fait accompli" on them and that the decision has been taken after observing all the processes of a democratic institution.

Even now I think it is not late for you and the national leaders to meet the leaders of the other parties and try to evolve a set of principles in which most of the principles of the Swatantra party will find a place and formulate a pragmatic programme which can be implemented within a specified time and which will attract the attention of the people of this country.

I would also request you to consider the quality of leadership of the other parties or groups with which the merger is contemplated. Neither Mr. Bijou Patnaik nor Mr. Charan Singh nor even Raj Narain can bring any reputation for honesty, integrity or sane and balanced

thinking. Their record is something of which any honest Indian will not be proud of. By joining this type of leaders the Swatantra party will be losing its well deserved reputation for clear thinking and the honesty and integrity of its leadership and its rank and file. Some of the leaders of the Congress(0) like Mr.Moraraji Desai and Mr.Hintendra Desai, Mr.Virendra Patel have much better reputation even if we leave out Mr.Kamaraj from our calculation. It would have been much better if our leadership had agreed for a federal type of set up including Congress(0) even if Jan Sangh was not prepared to come into this arrangement. This federal set up would have given time and opportunity to all the party organisations and leaders to know each other and gain the confidence of each other by working closely to achieve the common objects of the contemplated federal organisations.

I am very much afraid that if the national leadership does not attempt to sell the idea of merger on the basis of a specific set of principles and programme, the majority of the Swatantra workers will disown the leadership and go their own way. The non-political organisation set up by ^{Mr} Jayaprakash Narain is attracting the attention of the students. If the merger of the Swatantra party as contemplated

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at present is pushed through most of the finer elements of the Swatantra party is likely to join ^{Mr}/Jayaprakash Narain's ¹movement. I will not be surprised if some of the members of the small legislature party of Tamilnadu desert the new party contemplated by the Delhi conference.

I hope you will give due consideration to what ~~is~~ is stated above and send me your considered reply.

Thanking you and with highest regards,

Yours truly,


(V.S. Srikumar).

c.c: Mr. Madhu Mehta, National Hd. Qrs., All India Swatantra Party.

✓ c.c: \$ Mr. M.R. Masani, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay.

c.c: Mr. G.K. Sundaram, "Russakondalu", Circuithouse Rd., Coimbatore.

c.8: Dr. M. Santosham, 66, Egmore High Rd., Madras.8.