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for

WHAT THE SWATANTRA PARTY STANDS FOR?

BY M. R. MASANI

"Has the Swatantra Party got the right ideas? Secondly, can it make the grade? Can it get anywhere?"

The Swatantra Party believes in limited Government. It believes that, while Government has a role in society, there is a limit beyond which Government may not function. The Bible put it by saying:

"Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God what is God's."

God, in our context, is the conscience of the individual citizen. Abraham Lincoln, said again: "Do not try to do for the people what they can do better for themselves". This is the Creed of the Swatantra Party. Finally, Mahatma Gandhi, our own great man, at whose feet some of us learnt, used to repeat over and over again the message of the Swatantra Party as it has now been developed that "that Government is best which governs the least". This involves a stress on the freedom of choice of the individual; the right to reside where you like; the right to move about freely in the country and outside; the right to carry on the vocation or profession that you choose or that you may like to change from

time to time; the right to have your own job or employment; the freedom of choice of the consumer to buy what he likes or to refuse to buy what he dislikes; the freedom of choice of the producer to work where he likes, invest his money where he wants, to take the risk that he wants to take; the right of Labour to deny its labour individually and collectively by the right to strike. The right to express oneself and to associate as one likes. Since the last few years even Trade Unions are coming to appreciate the fact that the Swatantra Party is the best friend that Labour has in this country. These are the Fundamental Rights in which we believe.

We accept the fact that, in the twentieth century, the State has a role to play. We believe that State enterprise is a contradiction in terms. The human body is a good analogy. The different organs of the body are meant for different purposes. Similarly, in a society, different functions are left to different mechanisms or organisms. A farmer can produce more food; a

joint stock corporation or a limited company can produce goods; a Government has to rule, dispense justice, protect the country, give security to its people and maintain the rule of law. It is not meant to produce either food or cosmetics or steel. The proper business of the Government is to govern, not to do business. However, we are prepared to depart from that. If a Government has decided to enter into industry, trade or commerce, let it do so. That is inherent in a mixed economy. But, it must be prepared to compete on free and equal terms with others who are also in the field. It must neither have a monopoly like the Life Insurance Corporation of India or the Indian Airlines Corporation nor should it have preferential treatment like the State Trading Corporation. To this, we are resolutely opposed. We do not believe that the Government has any right to dominate, control or load the dice against those citizens who may want to enter a field of enterprise. That is why, if we come to power, we will

not abolish the Life Insurance Corporation or the Indian Airlines Corporation but we would certainly throw the field of air transportation and life insurance open to free competition by any citizen or citizens who want to enter these fields.

We are no more opposed to planning than we are opposed to State enterprise. We are advocates of planning. But planning has become an umbrella to cover a multitude of sins. There are two kinds of planning in the world today, viz. Soviet planning which is dictatorial, and democratic planning which is called indicative planning, which has many examples like Monnet planning in France, the National Economic Development Council, called NEDDY, in England. In Holland and in Belgium and other countries like Sweden, they have their own kinds of planning. The difference between Soviet planning and democratic indicative planning is that behind one is the police power; behind the other are the suggestions which free citizens may accept or reject. There is no mechanism in France or England by which people can be forced to conform to a plan. Our pattern of planning is after the Soviet pattern. Cabinet Ministers have to cringe before the Planning Commission and for that we have the evidence of those who retire from the Cabinet from time to time. Suggestions of the Planning Commission become law, because of the Industries Control and Regulations Act and the various police powers of Government which are then harnessed to stop anyone from doing anything which the planners do not want. This is nothing but a command economy of the Soviet dictatorship and it has been bodily lifted from Moscow. The National Planning Commission is a translation of the So-

viet word "Gosplan", which means exactly that in the Russian language. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru got it from there. The Swatantra Party has stood, from the beginning, for the dissolution of the present National Planning Commission. We think it is a disaster for this country and must be wiped out as soon as possible. It may be replaced later by purely advisory bodies of experts, such as Prof. Shenoy. But they must not have the power of policy making. The job of making policy must be with the parliamentary executive responsible to parliament and the people of this country.

Certain other parties like the Jan Sangh which voted for the Five Year Plan only a few years ago, have now gradually learnt the lesson and only last month they came out for the dissolution of the Planning Commission, thus bringing their Party gradually in line with ours.

There are many things wrong with this kind of planning. Among them is the wrong order of priorities. The priorities of the Second, Third and now the Fourth Plans are Stalinist priorities. By that I mean that they are obsessed with heavy industry at the cost of agriculture and consumer goods. There is no change in the Fourth Plan as it was laid before the Parliament a few months ago. We shall now wait to see what new outline is placed before us in the next few days.

The whole philosophy of planning, as at present followed was laid down by none other than the Planning Minister, Mr. Asoka Mehta, when he spoke to the West Bengal Business Convention on 21st March, 1964. His latest statements show no change. Mr. Mehta clearly warned the people that there was no escape from an annual increase of a hundred crores

of rupees in taxation. The severest curbs on consumption would be necessary to ensure surpluses. The present generation, which is a bridge between the stagnant present and a bright future, would be trampled upon in the process. But that could not be helped. These are the words of Stalin applied to our Indian environment. This exactly was the Stalinist practice, with the result that this is one of the most execrated memories in recent human history.

The Swatantra Party takes an entirely different view. We see no reason for austerity. We want our people to lead a happy prosperous life.

We reacted against this Stalinist order of priorities, when Rajaji at the foundation of our Party gave us the slogan "Farm, Family and Freedom". This is the reaction of those who want to help the rural masses against the ruling classes of the cities. One of the basic facts about India today, is, and has been, now for a century, that the people of the cities have exploited the people of the villages Gandhiji, who understood this, and who was the greatest of our democrats, said with his dry humour that we of the cities will do everything for the people of the villages except to "get off their backs!" Our charge is that the Nehru Government, the Shastri Government and the Gandhi Government will not get off the backs of the peasant. The new class that has come up in Delhi, following the language of Mr. Dhillon's book, is out to squeeze the peasants dry. We want agriculture to have priority over industrialisation. We want to do justice to the rural people. In that sense, we are a peasant's party.

Unlike other opposition parties, the Swatantra Party is not either for or against devaluation. We think that to talk about being for



or against devaluation is like being for or against an operation. These are necessities that have to be forced. The question is, "Why did that operation become necessary?" There we indict the present Government for having deliberately and perversely followed policies which could not but result in devaluation. Some of us in Parliament and outside — nearly two years before this happened — had warned that unless the policies of Government were changed, devaluation would become inevitable. We were told that we were talking nonsense, but we have been indicated by what has happened. On every issue, where we have given warnings, where we have made pleas, what we have said has come true. This is something that may be remembered.

In regard to the international relations, we suffer from no sense of inferiority as most other political parties in India do. We are quite sure in our Independence. We are not frightened that the Indian people can be deprived of the Independence that we have recently gained. We are prepared to face the world on a basis of mutuality and trust. We are prepared to take foreign capital, to enter into foreign alliances without being frightened. We think that non-alignment was a "Himalayan blunder". It has resulted in the combination of Communist China and Pakistan against us. We believe that we should enter into healthy regional security alliances with our neighbours in South-East Asia.

In that regional security, India, Japan and Australia have a leading role to play. These three countries which are powerful, India, Japan and Australia, can guarantee collective security of the whole region that lies between them. This will not only make possible the containment of Chinese Commu-

nist expansionism, but also make it possible to do so without ruinous economic burdens of taxation on our people. We see nothing wrong with such an alliance being underwritten by the Democracies of the West.

We support the war in Viet Nam. We give hundred per cent support to President Lyndon Johnson in the bombing of Hanoi and Hyphong and we hope that the war in Viet Nam will be fought and won. We say this because we believe that the victory or freedom in Viet Nam is essential to the security of our own country. We believe that if Viet Nam is defeated and occupied by the Chinese satellites from North Viet Nam, soon the other countries of the region will fall; Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, will be wiped out and we shall be faced by a hostile combination of Communist China and its allies all the way from Karachi down to Singapore. The frontiers of India are not on the Himalayas alone but also along the Mekong river, and we want the frontiers of India to be defended wherever they are being attacked by the enemies of the country today. We, therefore, condemn unequivocally the stand of our present Prime Minister and Government, which gives nothing but aid and comfort to the enemies of our country.

We stand for the liberation of Tibet, we stand for the recognition of the Dalai Lama as the Head of a free Government of Tibet. We are humiliated at the mean and scurvy way in which he is being treated today, when his movements are being hampered, when his freedom of speech and expression is being restricted by our Government.

We see nothing that prevents our country from recognising the existence of a friendly State in Israel. We see nothing, that prevents us

from recognising the existence of the Republic of China based today on the Island of Taiwan. These are friendly countries whom we insult and repulse out of a misguided idea about what our interests demand.

The Swatantra Party is sometimes called "reactionaries". I am reminded of what Mr. Winston Churchill once said: "If they indulge in stupidities and crimes and if we react, they call us reactionaries!"

The programme which the Swatantra Party of India follows and the programme of the German Social Democratic Party, one of the leading Socialist parties of the world have some parallels. You will be amazed to see in it the fact that the German Socialist Party's programme is nothing but a paraphrase of the programme of the Swatantra Party. The German Socialists, who brought out their programme a few months after ours, came to the same intelligent conclusions as ourselves because sensible people everywhere think in the same direction. We therefore, claim that we are a modern, twentieth century party of Liberation which deserves the support of young, dynamic and progressive people.

I now come to the second question. Some people say that they are with us but the poor Indian masses are so illiterate and ignorant that they do not understand us, when compared with the Communists. Therefore, we have no chance of displacing the Congress, and one must be prepared to live under the Congress Government for the rest of one's life and, if that is so, why touch one's pockets? This I may say, is the point of view of a large number of otherwise intelligent and patriotic people.

Let us consider the political condition of India, as to-day. A func-

ing opposition is the crying need. It has two roles of play. One is to be a vigilant critic of the government of the day; a role which we are performing. The other is to provide an alternative Government as and when the country goes to the polls. That function we are not performing, because no one political party today is in a position to say that it can get a majority in Delhi and displace the Congress Government. The prime need of the Indian political situation is the emergence of a Second Party, a second party to the Congress party, which can hope to defeat the Congress Party in the near future.

The country is sick and tired of the Congress Government. By and large, I think, it is correct to say that most people in India would like to see a change, but they don't see how to make it. In other words, it is time for a change.

I find that Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary has a definition of white cap whether it has originated in India or not, I do not know — but it fits in with what the white cap stands for in India. "White cap — a member of a self-constituted vigilance Committee who, under the guide of purifying the morals of the community, deals violently with persons of whom they disapprove". I think the country has had enough of the white caps, in that sense of the term. If this change cannot be brought about democratically next year, then I fear we are headed for very unpleasant and ugly times. The symptoms are very clear. What happens on the floor of Parliament is one thing. What happens in the streets of our country in the form of 'bandhs' and demonstrations is quite another.

Mr. Bhupesh Gupta (Communist) made an excellent speech. The Communist Party claims that

lying, deceit and even murder are all legitimate in the service of the cause. The reality is the violence that the Communist Party practises, not Mr. Bhupesh Gupta's pious platitude. Their method of democracy, their method of tolerating differences of opinion, which he claims exist, is to show black-flags when anyone says something which is not to their taste! The Communist Party believes that, on the day they get physical police power, they have a moral right to liquidate all opposition parties and all opposition points of view. This is something that must be remembered for this is the problem that will face this country if we do not manage democratically to change our Government.

Now, there is no reason whatsoever why this cannot be done. In March 1965, the people of Ceylon threw out a Congress-type Government led by another lady, Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike, and replaced it by a Swatantra-type Government led by my good friend, Sir Dudley Senanaike. It is a Liberal Democratic Government like the one we would provide. If the people of Ceylon could democratically displace a Marxist Government by a Liberal Government in March, 1965, I would like to know why the people of India cannot repeat this change in February 1967. We have the intelligence and the capacity to do it. The question is one of will.

This brings us to the issue of the Swatantra Party's role in helping in this historical change. Our Party's objectives for February, 1967, elections are twofold. One is to end the Congress monopoly of power in New Delhi. That can only be done if the strength of the Congress Party in the Lok Sabha can be reduced below two hundred and fifty seats, half the strength of the House. Our second objective is to carry a couple

of States. Some people tell me that we are very ambitious. But I believe that "It is not failure, but low aim, that is a crime". They are certainly not as ambitious as the targets of the Third and Fourth Plans which are incapable of achievement!

What are the qualifications of the Swatantra Party to be able to destroy the Congress majority in the Lok Sabha and to carry a couple of States including Gujarat.

The first is that we are the only party that can provide a clear-cut alternative to the philosophy and principles of the Congress Party in office, both in the domestic and international fields. The Communist and the Socialist parties are nothing but satellites of the Congress regime. They want to push the Government down into the gutter a little faster! We, on the other hand, want to reverse the engines and take the country in a diametrically opposite direction. Ours is the most revolutionary opposition. We want to scrap the entire domestic and international policy of the Congress Government.

Our second qualification is our National Democratic character. "National" in the sense that our roots are in this country. We have emerged from the struggle for independence. Everyone of our senior leaders had been to jail, I think; at least two or three times. Many of those who now talk in terms of "nationalism" were satellites or stooges of the then British Government in India, like the Communist Party. Our national democratic character is also non-denominational. There are other nationalist parties. I do not deny that. But then they are not non-denominational. We are a Party to whom religion, community, location in India are absolutely irrelevant. In our Party, members of different religions, members of different communities and faiths,

people from one extreme of India to the other, can feel equally at home. Generally in India the word "secular" is wrongly used for this. I object to my Party being called "secular". We are not secular. We believe in religion and tradition. But we are non-denominational. That is what people mean when they talk about secularism in this country. That is our second qualification.

The third qualification is our capabilities. If there is any one Party in India which can hope to defeat the Congress Party and replace it democratically, it is the Swatantra Party. I make that claim on the basis of the quality of our leadership and the strength that we have, the self-confidence that we have to replace the Congress Party. But then the defeatism of the elite, of the intelligentsia, comes in our way.

The facts are that the Swatantra Party is an agrarian, peasant's party. It is not the party of the businessman.

Most people of India do not know that we do not have any urban support. It is a pity and I deplore it. Ahmedabad is an example; Bombay is another; Calcutta is the third; Delhi is the fourth. We simply do not exist as a powerful force in any of the leading cities of India where the highest intellectuals congregate. Our only strength is in the villages. Every single member of Parliament and Assembly whom we have succeeded in electing has been elected by the votes of the farmers. There is not a single urban constituency we have carried in this whole sub-continent. The peasantry of India have had the intelligence to vote for the Swatantra Party. The city intelligentsia has not yet shown that enterprise.

When I stood in Rajkot in 1963, every single class in my constitu-

ency backed me except one. The Khedut Samaj was working for me and I owe my election targets to them. Every single trade union in Rajkot was working for me. The Railwaymen, Postmen, Government servants, Rekdiwalas all stood on my side. The shop-keepers were a hundred per cent with me. The goldsmiths were with me. But there was one class that was against me and that was the Rajkot Chamber of Commerce and its leaders. They gave their cars and money to the Congress Party. They signed an appeal against me. I am quite prepared to believe that, in the secrecy of the ballot box, their conscience might have made them to vote for me! But even after the election was over and the people of Rajkot accepted me and I announced that I was the servant of all the people of Rajkot, Congressmen included, when I tried to meet the leading businessmen of Rajkot to ask them in what way I would be of help to them, I am sorry to say that they ran away from me, they would not accept even my invitation to tea. They were too frightened to sit and talk with their duly elected Member of Parliament.

This is the attitude of a large section of businessmen to their obligation as citizens. The usual alibi given by business people for not helping us is the alibi of fear. They say: "We shall be hurt by Government; this is a vindictive Government". I wish I could accept the sincerity of this fear, not that there is anything very creditable about it. Rajaji had once given a public assurance in Jawaharlal Nehru's time that, if any businessman was ever penalised for joining the Swatantra Party or for standing for Parliament or for giving his contribution to the Swatantra Party, he (Rajaji) would go to Jawaharlal Nehru and get justice for

that man. That challenge was never accepted. No businessman has come to us and said that because of his political activity he was made to suffer. Many people come with complaints of victimisation, but they are people — far away from the Swatantra Party. I am a critic of the Government. They must have been vindictive here and there, I don't deny. But let us say in fairness to them they are not Fascists. In fact, I have a feeling that, if anyone joins the Swatantra Party, as a business man, he will probably do better for himself. Because this is a government of weak characters that favours men with courage and, if a businessman throws off fear and comes out, they will probably like to accommodate him more than their own party people.

Is the Congress so strong that it cannot be displaced? I would claim that the Congress is a "paper tiger". It looks very much more impressive than what it is. Let us see the facts. What is the percentage of the Indian people's support for the Congress Party? Is it a majority of 70% or 80%? The Congress Party has never received support from the majority of the Indian people ever since Independence. The highest parliamentary poll for the Congress was 48% under Nehru. In 1962, Nehru's last election, it dropped to 44.72%, or let us say 45%. In other words, the Congress is a minority party. It is the biggest of the minority parties of India. The other parties were the Communist Party with 10%, the Swatantra Party with 9% and then others with 5% or 4%. In other words, the disparity is not as wide as it looks. True, they have 365 seats in Parliament and we have got 23. But this has nothing to do with the facts, which are that they have got only 4 or 5 times as many

votes as we got in 1962, and that gap has narrowed to a great extent. I do not think that the Congress Party will get more than 40% of the popular vote in next year's parliamentary elections. I will be surprised if they get even that. Let us say they will get 40% or 39%. Now, is there any reason why such a party cannot be defeated?

The Indian Institute of Public Opinion is carrying out periodic polls of public opinion. They had one in May, this year, in cities like Bombay, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Hyderabad, metropolitan cities, the capitals of all the various States and here are the results. The Congress Party had 60% support of the urban class in January-February, 1966. In May, 1966, it had dropped to 41%. This is the steepest drop ever noticed in the history of independent India. According to the same report, the potential support of the non-leftist parties, which includes the Swatantra Party, Jan Sangh and, may be, some other groups, went up from 20% to 42%. Today the non-leftist parties have as much urban support as the Congress Party. If the Swatantra Party doubles its poll from 9% to 18% or 20%, the Congress Party would not have a majority in Parliament.

On the other hand, if because of the electoral system which exists at present, the Congress Party gets another bogus majority in 1967, what will happen to parliamentary democracy in this country? Are the Indian people, with rising prices, food shortages and hardships of every kind, going to endure for five more years a Government which 60% of the electorate has rejected? If they get 40%, the oppositions combined will get 60%. Will the Indian people tolerate a 40% Government ruling them for the next five years?

Now, you may ask why this happens? There are two reasons for this imbalance in our parliamentary democracy. The first is the party structure. We have got half a dozen parties instead of one or two. On the other hand, we have the British electoral system which does not provide for Proportional Representation. In Britain, by and large, it gives fair results, though sometimes even there there are inequities. But here we have a ridiculous situation — that 45% of the electorate get 72% of the seats in Parliament, thereby defeating the very purpose of representative government. To put it in another way, we have accepted an Anglo-Indian electoral system, while we have a Latin temperament.

This explains why we talk about electoral understandings and adjustments with other democratic opposition parties, not because we want to join hands with them, not because our differences with other democratic opposition parties have ended, but because we want to stop this distortion of the popular will which becomes a real threat to the future of our democracy.

There is one party we will not join hands with or have adjustment with even to defeat the Congress Party and that is the Communist Party or rather the two Communist parties. They are a Fifth Column either of Moscow or Peking, as the case may be. Theirs is not an Indian political party. They are a Trojan Horse of a foreign dictatorship. The second thing is that whenever the Communists come into power, they destroy democracy. The process of democracy should not be misused for the destruction of freedom. That is why we reject the Communist Parties as we reject the Congress Party.

Is there any fundamental difference between the Congress Party and the Communist Party? I would say that in India Communism has three faces viz. the Moscow, the Peking and the Kamaraj. The policies of the Congress Party prepare the ground for communism as surely as the Communist Party would like to do. They create the objective conditions, to use the Marxist phrase, first chaos and then dictatorship. They give ground to the theory of increasing misery in which the Communist Party believes. The longer the Congress Party stays in office, the more the miseries of the Indian people and the more likely the conditions in which they would listen to the Communist Party. There are people who believed that the Congress was going to change or improve early this year. You may say I was one of them. I was. I was prepared to give to the new Prime Minister a fair deal, not to join in trying to topple her Government because she started by saying and doing the right things. Unfortunately, the last few weeks have shown that that hope must now be dropped. The Prime Minister has now made it perfectly clear that she is not prepared to deviate. There was an interesting incident on the 8th of August. Look Magazine, which is a reputable one and very friendly to her family, published an exclusive interview with her. In this reputable journal she was quoted as saying that if the interests of India demand it, she would not hesitate to depart from her father's policies. I thought we were doing the right thing in giving her a long rope, in finding out whether she could serve the country. But next day came an amazing denial from her spokesman who said that she denied that she ever said any-

thing of that kind. Now, what does it mean? It means that she is horrified at this very sensible, patriotic statement that she made and she wants to repudiate it. If she repudiates it, then it follows that even if the country's interest demands it, Mrs. Gandhi will not depart from her father's policy. In which case, she is utterly unfit to be the Prime Minister of India for a single day. We have seen the abject surrender to Kossygin when she was in Moscow on Viet Nam, the mouthing of Communist jargon in the joint communique signed by the Prime Minister of India in Russia. You have seen her advocacy of a "big Plan", when it is these big plans that have got this country to bankruptcy and devaluation. All these clearly show that she is a broken reed on whom no democrat or well wisher of India can rely.

The Congress President has, of course, outstripped her in this drift to communism. He invited the Communists to rejoin the Congress and his lieutenant, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, went so far as to say that if the Congress Party is to lose office to any other party, he would much prefer the Communists to the Swatantra Party, thereby proving the devotion to democracy, of this gentleman.

Mr. Kamaraj Nadar recently visited Moscow and some communist countries and when the communists gave him a send off at the time of his departure, he said, that the Soviet Revolution, undoubtedly, inspired India in her struggle for freedom. This is what we may call a rewriting of the History of India. We know where Mahatma Gandhi picked up his inspiration for freedom, where we all got our love for freedom, India owed nothing to Lenin or Stalin.

Then, Mr. Kamaraj was impressed by the housing in Moscow. One aspect of Soviet life that is deplorable, shocking, is its housing. But even that impressed our Congress President! He went on to say: "On seeing your progress, we are enthused that we can make similar progress in the same way as you have done. Your planning can be a guide to our own advancement." A country like Russia's that has to go abroad and sell millions of pounds of gold to buy food for the starving people, a country that does not have consumer goods, people who do not have homes, this is the path which the Congress President holds out for the Indian people.

When Mr. Kamaraj went to Hungary, he was eager to know how the democratic process of electing members of Parliament is managed in a one party State. That, no doubt, is a preparation he is making for himself for the post 1967 period.

Is this the party that is going to protect India from communism? I ask my anti-communist friends. Is this the party on which we are going to rely to stop the Communists from taking over India?

So, I come to this conclusion that the Congress Party is disintegrating, is on its way out. It is obvious for anyone to see. The real issue is not between the Congress Party and the Communist Party. The real issue is between the Communist Party and the Swatantra Party.

Rajaji has made a appeal on Independence Day. He said: "I smell the coming storm and rain. The main difficulty is that Congress had infinite cash as against its opponents. I appeal, therefore, for offers from good and qualified men, to stand as candidates for Parliament or Assembly on the Swatantra ticket who are able to

meet their own election expenses. We are considering a plan under which we throw all caution to the wind, set up candidates in 300 to 400 Parliamentary Constituencies, and have it out with the Congress."

What is the obligation of a businessman or a patriotic Indian who sees the facts straight, I would say that in the coming months, he should do one of three things, or two of three, or all the three things. He should stand either for Parliament or Assembly and throw himself into the fray. If, for some reason, he cannot do it, let him help others to do it. There are two ways of helping. One is to give one's time, energy and intelligence, and the other is to give money.

Ours is not a closed corporation. It is not an exclusive club. Rajaji has already announced that if we come to power, we will not confine membership of the Cabinet to members of our own Party. We shall invite other people. We shall invite leading citizens, businessmen, educationists, Sarvodaya workers. We will say: Come and take your share of responsibility. We believe in a Cabinet of all talents available in the country. In the same spirit, our ranks are not closed. We shall put up any one who comes and joins us today provided that he accepts our programmes and principles.

We declare that we want to overthrow the Congress Government by the methods and the processes that our constitution has enshrined. We believe that the removal of the Congress Government is the only hope for this country. So long as the Congress Party is in office in Delhi, I see nothing but disaster for our country. Every time there is a change of Prime Minister, we allow our-

selves to hope. Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri was a very good friend of mine. We refused to support a motion of no-confidence against him. We wished him well. I went and talked to him. I pleaded with him. I gave every suggestion I could give to him. We have done the same with Mrs. Gandhi. Two months back, when she invited the Opposition Leaders, they re-

fused even to see her. Prof. Ranga and I went and sat with her for over an hour. We gave her a written memorandum. We pleaded with her. But all the time our words have fallen on deaf ears. There is a class of people who have got a vested interest in carrying on with the policies of State Capitalism and Controls. They will not give up those controls.

They will not give up their Permit-Licence-Raj because they make money out of it. They get power out of it. That class unfortunately dominates the Congress Party today. Unless and until those people, are thrown out of office, I see no hope for our country at home or abroad. That is why there is this Open Conspiracy, and I invite you all, to join it.
