

1073

9th March 1963.

My dear Rajaji,

Thank you for your letter of March 6 forwarding copies of two letters from Belgaum.

Ranga has passed through Bombay this morning on his way to Belgaum where Raju will accompany him. They will return to Bombay on the evening of March 13. Ranga was very keen to visit Belgaum and though I did not wish him to take the trouble, I did not want to frustrate his desire for a first hand look around the constituency.

The general picture can best be seen from an excellent report I received from my friend, Colonel Malgonkar, who stood as an Independent candidate with our support against Mr. Joachim Alva in ~~Malwa~~ and did well. *Indira copy.*

Everything will depend on whether or not Katty of the Republican Party insists on standing. If he does, the matter is at an end. In this connection I sent you a telegram yesterday suggesting that you might kindly approach N. Sivaraj, President of the Republican Party asking him to help. I await your reply on that point.

In so far as the Jan Sangh is concerned, I discussed the matter with Dr. Raghuvira, their President, in Jaipur two days back and I anticipate no difficulty in that quarter.

The position of Ashok Mehta is more complicated. There are two possible seats for him to consider. The first is Farrukhabad in U.P. Unfortunately Dr. Lohia is being put up there and I cannot imagine Ashok entering that contest in such circumstances. The other seat is Belgaum. The President of the Parliamentary Board of the P.S.P., Ganga Saran Singh, tells me that the local Congress people in Maharashtra and Mysore have assured Ashok of an unopposed return and this is naturally a tempting offer. No decision has yet been taken by them and Ganga Saran Singh has promised us a clearer picture on 15th March.

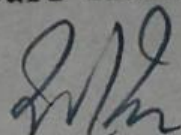
You and I had agreed that I should only stand provided -

- a) I had a straight fight against the Congress candidate
- and
- b) the position was hopeful.

I am still of the same view. If Ashok Mehta insists on standing in Belgaum, I think you will agree that I should not enter the fray. In that event, we can support the Republican candidate

who has a prima facie claim to the seat in view of their good performance last year as an Opposition candidate.

Yours sincerely,



(M.R. Masani)

Enc: 1

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