

1164

ALL INDIA SWATANTRA PARTY
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS.
10-A, Flowers Road, M A D R A S - 8 4.

4th September 1976.

Minutes of the meeting of the National Executive of the Swatantra party
held in Bombay on J u n e 29, 1976. (*143, Mahatma Gandhi Rd).
Bombay.

Present:-

Mr.G.K.Sundaram - - - in the chair.

Mr.Jacob Cherian.
Mr.Paramanand Kejriwal.
Mr.Harihara Patel
Mr.C.N.Sudhan.

Mr.A.Duraisamy.
Mr.K.H.Subramaniam.
Mr.S.V.Raju.
Mr.Girish Munshi.

The Executive after discussing the proposed amendments to the Constitution suggested by the Ruling party adopted the following resolution:--

" The National Executive of the Swatantra party considered the amendments to the Constitution proposed by the Ruling Party. It also had before it the text of an "Interim Report" by a committee consisting of M.Ps, leaders of various political parties and other public men, set up by Sri Jayaprakash Narayan to review the working of the Indian Constitution.

In the first instance, the National Executive was of the firm view that other than amendments relating to territorial matters, the amendments to other provisions in the Constitution particularly those dealing with the rights of citizens, were wholly uncalled for.

The country's difficulties are a result of poor government and mismanagement of the economy and not the Constitution which was being made the scape-goat for the failure of wrong ~~pxi~~ policies. The National Executive therefore reiterates its confidence and faith in the Constitution as originally framed by the Constituent Assembly and pledges itself once again to restore it to its original form".

At the same time it was decided that members of the General Council should know the salient features of the proposals so as to enable them to send in their comments. The General Secretary, Mr.Girish Munshi agreed to prepare a summary of the Swaran Singh Committee Report, the Interim Report of the Committee appointed by Sri. Jayaprakash Narayan and his (Mr.Munshi's) own comments in the light of the Swatantra Party's policies.

THE NEW PARTY.

The proposed formation of a new party announced by Sri Jayaprakash Narayan and the programme in respect of which has been drafted by the Steering Committee was discussed at some length. In this connection Mr.S.V.Raju read out a letter addressed to him by Mr.Bhanu Pratap Singh, Acting General Secretary of the BLD. Mr.B.P.Singh had along with his letter sent a copy of his letter to Mr.N.K.Ganapiah as also a draft policy statement that the BLD proposed in preference to the one drafted by the Steering Committee appointed by Sri Jayaprakash Narayan. After considerable discussion the meeting adopted the following resolution:--

"The Swatantra party and its leadership have over the years repeatedly underlined the importance of a viable democratic national alternative to the Ruling party to make parliamentary democracy meaningful. It has therefore not merely welcomed such moves in the past but has actively sought to make this dream come true. The party continues to believe that there is need for the democratic opposition parties to come together and from this point of view whole heartedly welcomes the initiative recently taken by leaders of some political parties under Sri Jayaprakash Narayan's guidance.

The National Executive having carefully studied the programme of the new party and while welcoming the immediate task of formation of the new party finds itself unable to accept many of the economic solutions that have been offered.

The Executive also notes the absence of any affirmation to abjure ~~XXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXX~~

unconstitutional means. The National Executive reiterates its oft-repeated position that in a democracy the politics of extra/unconstitutional agitation can have no part.

The Executive also notes that what has been suggested is the formation of a new party without making certain that the other parties dissolve. The National Executive feels that this is unfortunate and that unless the other parties are committed to dissolve themselves the danger is yet another party will be added without any guarantee of the others dissolving.

In the circumstances while the Swatantra party will continue to support all moves towards a unified opposition it regrets its inability to respond to the call to dissolve unless it is satisfied with (a) the programme of the new party, and (b) an assurance that this will bring about a single non-communist national alternative.

In this context the party considered the possibility of General Elections being held. The Swatantra party is convinced that fair and free elections will only be possible when the emergency along with the various acts it has engendered are withdrawn, fundamental rights and freedoms are restored and the press is free from all forms of censorship. The Swatantra party is of the view that under the present conditions elections would be nothing short of fraud".

ACTIVITIES:-

The Executive felt that the emergency did not prevent the holding of study circles and group discussions for members within the premises. It was therefore decided that Party units should be requested to call regular meetings of members in small groups to discuss various matters concerning party organisation and policy.

The meeting also considered an alternate draft of a new Party to be called Janata Party received from the BLD. This draft was nearer the Swatantra position on most matters though there were certain aspects which needed clarification.

The meeting then terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

V. S. Srikumar
(V.S.Srikumar)
Joint Secretary.