

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the National Executive of the
Swatantra Party held in Bombay on June 29, 1976.

Present:

2/28

Mr. G.K. Sundaram

- in the Chair

Mr. Jacob Cherian
Mr. Parmanand Kejriwal
Mr. Harihar 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:-

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 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 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. Bhamu Pratap Singh, Acting General Secretary of the BLD. Mr. B.P. Singh had along with this letter sent a copy of his letter to Mr. N.K. Ganapathiah as also a draft policy statement that the BLD proposed in preference to the one drafted by the Steering Committee appointed

by Jayaprakash Narayan. After considerable discussion the meeting adopted the following resolution:-

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.

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Texts of Resolutions adopted by the National Executive of the Swatantra Party at its meeting held in Bombay on Tuesday, 29th June, 1976.

Amendments to the Constitution

to the Constitution

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

particularly
those dealing
with the rights
of citizens,

In the first instance, the National Executive was of the firm view that other than amendments relating to ^{territorial matters} ~~matters like territory~~, the amendments to other provisions in the Constitution 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 a scapegoat for the failures of wrong 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. "

Point of the
minutes

Meanwhile, the Committee also decided to circulate summary of the Swaran Singh Committee's recommendation and that of the Committee appointed by Jayaprakash Narayan to members of the General Council for their comments.

Towards a Unified Opposition

to make
parliamentary
democracy
meaningful

The ~~National Executive~~ of the Swatantra Party and its leadership have over the years repeatedly underlined the importance of a viable democratic national alternative to the Ruling Party. It has therefore not merely welcomed ~~such~~ 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~~ whole heartedly welcomes the ^{recently} ~~recent~~ initiative taken by leaders of some political parties under Jayaprakash Narayan's guidance.

National having carefully
The Executive ^{formally} studied the programme of the new party carefully and while welcoming the immediate tasks of ^{the} 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 ~~violence~~ ^{and unconstitutional means} non-parliamentary method which it feels is extremely important.

The National Executive reiterates its oft-repeated position that in a free democracy ~~violence~~ ^{the} position of 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 ^{will} dissolve. This ^{Nature} the Executive feels is unfortunate, ^{that this} ^{and that} unless the other parties are committed to dissolve ^{themselves} the danger is the addition of yet another party, without any guarantee of the other ^{will be added, perhaps} dissolving.

In these 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 ~~that~~ with

(a) the programme of the new party, and

(b) an assurance that this will bring about a single non-communist ^{national} ~~democratic~~ ^{alternative} democratic party.

The meeting ^{also considered} ^{alternately} ^{draft of a} ^{proposed} ^{new Party to} ^{be called} ^{Janata Party} ^{removed from} the BLD. This draft was nearer the Swatantra position on most matters though there were certain aspects which needed clarification.

In this context the Party considered the possibility of ^{general} elections being held. The Swatantra Party is convinced that fair and free elections ^{only be possible} ~~can only be held~~ when the emergency along with the various acts it has ^{rights and} ~~endangered~~ are withdrawn, fundamental freedoms are restored and the press is free from all forms of censorship. Only then would elections be meaningful and reflect the wishes of the people. ^{The Swatantra Party is 2/16} Under the present conditions elections would be nothing short of ~~being~~ ^{fraudulent} fraudulent.

Mr. Irish Munster

~~for~~ ~~for~~ ~~for~~

Please see the enclosed
Minutes + resolutions. Once
you find them in order, we
shall have them fair typed
+ sent to Sir Kumar.

OK
G.M.

~~for~~
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