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25/10

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the National Executive
held at Ravindralaya, Lucknow on Saturday and Sunday,
October 7 and 8, 1972

Present

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Mr. Piloo Mody

- in the Chair

Mr. R.N. Singh Deo
Sardar Harbhajan Singh
Mr. P. K. Deo
Mr. Tribikram Tripathy
Col. H. R. Pasricha
Mr. M. R. Arya
Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann
Mr. G. B. Sukhee
Mr. Budhi Prakash
Mr. H. K. Srivastava
Mr. K. D. R. Pandey
Mr. Manu Amersey

By Special Invitation

Mr. Laxmansingh of Dungarpur
Mr. C. N. Sudhan
Mr. K. T. Joseph
Dr. Mehar Singh
Mr. Madan Singh of Danta
Mr. M. A. Hannan
Mr. Harishankar Vimal
Mr. D. K. Dhir
Mr. Baldeo Singh
Mr. R. A. Kanoujia
Mr. Yeshwant Kumar Chaudhary
Mr. Tej Narain Yadav
Mr. M.R. Singh of Bhadawar

The Executive condoled the death of Mr. Dadubhai Amin, a founder member of the Party and Vice-President of the Gujarat State Unit. The following resolution was unanimously adopted :

"This meeting of the National Executive records with sorrow the passing away of Dadubhai Amin, kisan leader, founder member of the Swatantra Party and Vice-President of the Party in Gujarat.

In his demise the kheduts of Gujarat have lost a champion and the Swatantra Party a veteran leader.

The National Executive conveys its heartfelt condolences to the family of Mr. Dadubhai Amin. "

The Executive also condoled the passing away of Smt. Bharatidevi Ranga and Mr. C. C. Desai.

Confirmation of Minutes :

The minutes of the last meeting of the National Executive held in Madras on June 23, 1972, were confirmed.

Bombay and Maharashtra

The Acting General Secretary reported that the Bombay Unit had been active in regard to exposing the unholy alliance between corrupt politicians in office and corrupt big business. He mentioned that a Corruption Cell had been set up to investigate all such cases. In pursuance of this, a morcha had been organised outside the office of the Belapur Sugar and Allied Industries Limited and the Thana Electric Company where large scale fraud was suspected. The Bombay Unit had also started Study Circles in right earnest.

Delhi

The President and General Secretary of the Delhi Unit stated that as the President of the Party, Mr. Piloo Mody lived in Delhi there had been activity, but these activities had underlined the need for funds to keep up the tempo of activity.

Mr. P. K. Deo pointed out that a greater degree of cooperation between the Delhi Unit and the Party's Group in Parliament was necessary and he offered the assistance of all Party M.P.s to address as many meetings as may be organised by the Delhi Unit.

Gujarat

As no one from Gujarat was present at the meeting, Mr. Piloo Mody and Mr. Amersey said that according to reports they had received, Party activity in that State was at a standstill. The problem to be faced in regard to this State, which at one time led the Country, was how to revive Party organisation. In this connection, the vacancy to the Lok Sabha from the Sabarkantha Parliamentary Constituency created by the death of Mr. C.C. Desai was considered. It was felt that the Party must definitely contest the seat and a suitable candidate must be found, if Mr. Manubhai Amersey declines to stand.

Himachal Pradesh

The President of the State Unit, Mr. Budhi Prakash said that due to various factors there was very little Party activity.

Haryana

Mr. M.R. Arya, Joint Secretary who had been asked to try and develop party organisation in Haryana reported that he was trying to tackle the problem districtwise and that he had been able to set up district units at Karnal and Ambala.

Kerala

Mr. C.N. Sudhan said that though renewals were good, the State Unit suffered from the fact that national leaders were not touting the State, whereas national leaders of other parties gave more attention to Kerala.

He posed the problem of what ought to be the attitude of the Party if communists were to join agitations sponsored by the Swatantra Party.

In the discussion that followed the Executive felt that while the Party's well-known position of not getting into United Fronts with the communist was still valid, one could not give up an agitation initiated by the Swatantra Party merely because the Communists chose to identify themselves with such an agitation.

Madhya Pradesh

The Acting General Secretary said that the National Headquarters was in correspondence with Mr. U. M. Trivedi in regard to developing the Party in certain districts of Madhya Pradesh.

In this context the question of contesting the vacancy to the Lok Sabha from the Jhanjgir (SC) constituency as a result of the death of the Minimata was considered. The Executive gratefully accepted Mr. P. K. Deo's offer to investigate the constituency with a view to the possibility of setting up a suitable candidate.

Orissa

The President of the State Unit, Mr. P. K. Deo, said that with the PSP's merger with the ruling Congress and the CPI towing the Congress Party line, the only opposition left in Orissa was the Swatantra Party. He pointed out the various problems facing the Orissa Unit of the Party and sought the assistance of the President and the Honorary Treasurer in securing advertisements for the two dailies run by the Party, viz., Swarajya and Kosala.

Mr. P. K. Deo pointed out the fact that despite being helped the labour front in Orissa was unable to stand on its own feet. Mr. Sukhee however pointed out that this was not entirely correct. Intervening Mr. Piloo Mody suggested that Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, Mr. P. K. Deo, Mr. Manubhai Amersey and Mr. Sukhee should meet separately and discuss this matter further.

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo, Leader of the Opposition in the Orissa Assembly, pointed out that the situation in Orissa was fast deteriorating, what with the rising prices, the agitation over land ceilings, discontent among the services and the frustration of educated youth. He said that the Party Unit had started taking steps to strengthen itself and as a first step a training camp for Party workers throughout the State was planned very shortly at Bolangir. He himself was undertaking a tour programme beginning with Sambalpur.

In this connection, the question of putting up a suitable candidate to oppose Smt. Nandini Satpathy's effort to get elected to the State Assembly was discussed. The Executive was of the view that no effort should be spared in ensuring that a good Swatantra candidate was set up in case she decides to contest from a constituency where the Party's organisation was fairly strong. If she decided to contest elsewhere then the Party should ensure that a commonly agreed candidate was set up and that the Party's leadership in the State actively campaigned for such a commonly accepted candidate.

Punjab

Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann, President of the State Unit said that hitherto the Party had always functioned as an appendage of the Akali Dal. In the present context it was extremely difficult to organise the Party on its own free of the Akali Dal. However he said that he would do his best.

Dr. Mehar Singh, Vice-President of the State Unit said that whatever may be said about the other parts of the Punjab so far as Amritsar District was concerned, he had kept the Party alive and it was known in the Punjab that there was a Swatantra Party functioning in Amritsar.

Rajasthan

Maharawal Laxmansingh of Dungarpur said that though the Party Unit was not very active at the moment he saw no difficulty in raising the membership by five to six thousand particularly in view of the fact that the magic of the ruling Party was vanishing. Prices were rising and large parts of the State were in the grip of drought, and the dissatisfaction among students.

Mr. Madan Singh of Danta personally saw no problem in enrolling a large number of workers. He pleaded for reduction in the membership fees. He also felt that State Units should not depend on the Centre for financial help.

Mysore

In the absence of any representative from Mysore, the Acting General Secretary Mr. Manubhai Amersey reported that Mr. Ganapaiah and Mr. Ghorpade had when they met him recently in Bangalore said that they had every intention of stepping up Party activity. They had taken a leading part in the formation of the Farmers Federation of India whose inaugural Convention was held in Bangalore on October 1.

Mr. Amersey personally felt that the Mysore Unit was in good hands and that very soon Mr. Ghorpade would take up active organisational steps to develop the Party in the State.

Tamil Nadu

Both Mr. Piloo Mody and Mr. Manu Amersey reported that Party activity in Tamil Nadu was lively. They had recently attended a series of successful conferences arranged by the Madras District unit. Communications received from Dr. Hande the State General Secretary indicate that he has been touring several districts setting up Party units and activating the Party generally. Though only a handful in the State Assembly, the Party's MLAs led by Dr. Hande had acquitted themselves creditably. A Motion of No-Confidence moved by Dr. Hande received considerably publicity. The State Unit and the Coimbatore District Unit actively participated in the farmers agitation in Coimbatore. Over two hundred farmer-members of the Party courted arrest during the agitation.

U.P.

The State General Secretary, Mr. H. K. Srivastava reviewing the earlier situation of the Party in the State said that the party was in poor shape because of ineffective leadership in the past. He said that the present office bearers and in particular the new State President Mr. Harbhajan Singh were active in developing the Party in the various districts. He himself had been touring various parts of the State.

West Bengal

Mr. M. A. Hannan felt that the present climate was suitable for the development of the Party. He wanted a State Ad Hoc Committee to be set up as soon as possible and funds made available to enable the State Unit to organise the Party.

Summing up the discussion the President Mr. Piloo Mody said that the reports conclusively indicated the poor state of party organisation.

This did not mean that the situation was hopeless. He was clear in his mind that the Swatantra Party had come to stay because there was no other alternative to dictatorship in this country.

In order to enable the Swatantra Party to rebuild its organisation and fulfil its task he had in mind certain drastic changes that he wished to place before the Executive for its consideration, viz.;

- (a) the Party's Statement of Policy though an excellent document went above the heads of most people. It had to be modified in terms of reality. He was already working on such a modified version and would get it ready for discussion at the next meeting of the Executive.
- (b) Most State Offices of the Party did not function. There were several reasons for this; one of the main reasons was that the system of Party elections followed by our party had resulted in placing in office persons who were interested in positions but did no work thus blocking the path of those who wished to work.
- (c) There was too much absenteeism at meetings of Committees and Councils. Giving an example, Mr. Mody said that in the present meeting of the National Executive as many as 21 of the 34 members had for some excuse or the other absented themselves. This was so at all committees from the Primary level upwards.
- (d) There was lack of money. One heard the constant refrain from State Units that once they were given money they would activate the Party. But most people who complained about lack of money made no effort themselves to collect even five rupees for the Party. Lack of money resulted in State offices ceasing to function. This in turn resulted in State Units becoming inactive. Units at the district and primary levels in turn stopped functioning, due to absence of directive and guidance from the State Office.

Mr. Piloo Mody's solution to get out of this impasse was to permit the National Headquarters to deal directly with district units for administrative purposes. The National Headquarters would issue forms, workers cards and guidance from time to time, in regard to organisational matters. Copies of correspondence between district units and the National Headquarters would be sent to the State Office so that they were kept informed. The National Headquarters would also try to generate a spirit of competition among the district units in regard to enrolment, party activity etc.

On the other hand, the legitimate sphere of activity of State Units was politics. Therefore so far as political activity was concerned, State Units and their Executives would be left free to take up such political action as was necessary. In other words, autonomy largely in political matters but centralised administration.

Maharawal Laxman Singh of Dungarpur, Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann and Dr. Mohar Singh welcomed Mr. Piloo Mody's suggestions.

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo felt that the suggestions involved amendments to the Party's Constitution. He agreed with Mr. Piloo Mody that the present procedures were cumbersome.

Mr. Singh Deo agreed to the Executive's request to him to prepare a note on those aspects of election procedures that needed changes so

that it could be simplified and amendments to relevant provisions in the Party constitution so as to enable active workers to man committees at various levels.

Mr. P. K. Deo suggested that among the amendments to the Constitution should be a new provision for requisitioning of meetings. Mr. R. N. Singh Deo said that the direct election of the General Secretary and the Joint Secretaries was also responsible as it did not always contribute to homogeneity. To resolve this difficulty he suggested that the proposed amendments to the Constitution should contain certain provisions empowering the President to nominate certain office bearers and a certain percentage of the members of the Executive.

Col. Pasricha cautioned against any hasty action and desired that Mr. Piloo Mody's suggestions and Mr. Singh Deo's note be circulated to State Units and members of the General Council for their comments.

Mr. M. R. Arya felt that the scheme outlined by Mr. Piloo Mody would not work because the real problem was of a lack of interest on the part of the Party's leadership and rank and file at district levels. He pointed out his own experience as Joint Secretary and said that though he had translated and issued to district units circulars that were issued by the National Headquarters some of which called for action and report there was hardly any response.

Mr. Budhi Prakash felt that the Hindi version of Mr. Arya's circulars did not receive any response from district units in Himachal Pradesh because his (Mr. Arya's) Hindi was highly Sanskritised.

Intervening in the discussion Mr. Piloo Mody felt that there was a certain amount of misunderstanding in regard to the scope of his suggestions. He therefore read out the note he had prepared entitled "How To Start A Party Unit" copy attached (Annexure B). Mr. G. B. Sukhee said that there was nothing wrong with the present system. The Joint Secretaries had been allotted different regions of the country to work. Evidently they had not done enough to activate the Party activities in States entrusted to their care.

Mr. R. N. Singh Deo pointed out that Mr. Piloo Mody's suggestions related to two basic issues viz., empowering the Centre to nominate convenors where no party organisation existed and the other to activate Party units.

Another matter that was creating confusion was the provision in the Constitution differentiating between workers and members. This too needed to be looked into.

Col. Pasricha kindly agreed to the request made by the Executive to attempt a simplification of the membership provisions in the Constitution and to devise a new membership form.

The meeting then rose for the day.

October 8

The National Executive resumed its deliberations at 10:30 am.

Present :

Mr. Piloo Mody .. in the Chair

Sardar Harbhajans Singh

Mr. P. K. Deo

Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann

(contd.)

Mr. H. K. Ganapath
Mr. H. K. Srivastava
Mr. Budhi Prakash
Mr. Tribikram Tripathy
Mr. G. B. Sukhee
Col. H. R. Pasricha
Mr. K. D. R. Pandey
Mr. M. R. Arya
Mr. Manubhai Amersey

Special Invitees

Maharawal Laxman Singh of Dungarpur
Mr. M. A. Hannan
Mr. Yashwant Kumar Chaudhary
Mr. Madan Singh of Danta
Mr. K. T. Joseph
Mr. Tej Narain Yadav
Mr. Baldeo Singh
Dr. Mehar Singh
Mr. C. N. Sudhan

The Executive then took up for consideration several draft resolutions. After discussions the following resolutions were unanimously adopted in the form attached (Annexure A) viz.,

Economic Situation

Corruption

The Ruling Congress and the C.I.A.

Students Unrest

Power Shortage in Punjab and Haryana

The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

The Executive resumed at 3 pm in a joint session with the UP State Council of the Party.

Welcoming members of the State Council the President Mr. Piloo Mody said that he was initiating this experiment so that a greater degree of togetherness could be achieved between the national leadership and those in charge of the Party's units at various levels in the State.

The President of the State Unit Sardar Harbhajan Singh felt that there was no need for Party workers to feel diffident, for if with one MIA the Party could successfully get a candidate elected to the Legislative Council, he saw no reason why this could not be repeated at the organisational level provided the Party's workers worked hard and sincerely.

The meeting was then thrown open for discussion in the course of which the following members of the National Executive and the State Council participated:

National Executive

Maharawal Laxman Singh
Col. H. R. Pasricha
Mr. H. K. Ganapath
Madan Singh of Danta
Dr. Mehar Singh
Mr. M. R. Arya

U.P. State Council

Mr. Baldeo Singh
Harishanker Vimal
Harikrishna Srivastava
Dharamsheel Chaturvedi
Om Prakash Pathik
Hari Kumar Pathik

U.P. State Council

Mr. Mohammad Farooq Khan
Dr. Hanid Hussein
Capt. Umashankar Dubey
Mr. P. L. Pandey
Mr. Pyarelal
Mr. Uma Shankar Gupta
Mr. Hashmat Ali
Mr. Prem Nandan
Mr. Subhas Chandra Dubey
Mr. Dharendra Kumar Dhir
Mr. Rajendra Singh
Mr. Shiv Dutt Sharma
Mr. Ram Adhar Kanaujia
Mr. Pratap Chandra Dubey
Mr. Rajendra Singh

The meeting then terminated.

Texts of Resolutions adopted by the National Executive of the Swatantra Party at its meeting in Lucknow on October 7 and 8, 1972.

THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

On the Twenty fifth anniversary of Indian independence, the Swatantra Party congratulates the people of India, who in the face of tremendous odds, obstructed and hampered at every turn by a do-nothing, know-nothing, dishonest Congress Government, have continued to strive towards a better life.

The Government on its part has failed the people even in its mandatory activity of maintaining stable prices and law and order. It has further failed the people in the conduct of the economy through its plan priorities which have put the Congress Party above the nation and people, thereby depriving millions of people of new jobs and their basic right to work and further aggravated the situation by its mismanagement, corruption and nepotism of the Public Sector.

In the face of all this provocation the people of India have acted with great restraint and responsibility in the face of Government's callous disregard of their needs, bordering on contempt. The Government should not misinterpret the people's patience.

The Swatantra Party is one with the people in their heroic struggle to make a better life in spite of the obstructions put in their way by the Congress Government.

Therefore the Swatantra Party invites all honest, decent and hardworking people to join its ranks for a total confrontation against an oppressive and evil government.

Moved by : Piloo Mody
Seconded by : Manu Amersey

ECONOMIC SITUATION

Large parts of India are facing severe drought conditions; prices have risen 70% in the last decade; unemployment is increasing at the rate of 6,000 per day; production is at a standstill with numerous factories having idle capacity; there has, in short been an all round decline. This is the performance of the Garibi Hatao Government.

The failures of our Five Year Plans have indeed been comprehensive - they cover every aspect of our economy.

As if these were not enough, the government impelled as it would seem, by a suicide instinct is bent upon destroying agricultural production through land ceilings, compulsory procurement and the devising of various other measures that would ensure that India imported foodgrains again.

The Swatantra Party has repeatedly warned the government of the folly of adopting policies which are ideologically motivated and have no relation to the Indian genius. The Swatantra Party has been accused of not providing an alternative. Here it is :

The Swatantra Party's objective for a regeneration of the country's economy is three-fold :

- a. put a stop to rising prices,
- b. provide the kind of infra structure necessary to increase production in fields and factories, and
- c. provide gainful employment to the millions of unemployed.

The steps the Swatantra Party would take to achieve the above objectives are :

- a. stopping the indiscriminate printing of currency notes,
- b. taking steps drastically to reduce administrative expenditure by reducing considerably governmental functions and curtailing bureaucracy,
- c. drastically reduce excise duties and other indirect taxes on articles of daily use by the common man, and
- d. stop pouring any more money into wasteful public sector projects which are running at a loss.

Projects of public utility would be taken on a priority basis designed to generate employment on a large scale, such as road construction housing schemes, flood protection works and projects designed to store and conserve water.

Specifically, it would attend to the following on a priority basis :

- a. a crash programme of providing drinking water to the villages by digging new wells and through government subsidised tube wells;
- b. a crash programme of housing to provide shelter to the homeless in cities, towns and villages;
- c. improve services like telegraphs, postal services and telephones;
- d. accelerate the pace of rural electrification;
- e. go for a total exploitation of water resources including small and big, as also a water grid system for India.

The above are some of the more important alternatives that the Swatantra Party offers in the place of the dogma ridden and ruinous policies of the ruling party.

CORRUPTION

Corruption which has increased steadily since Independence has now become so rampant that it has penetrated almost every sphere of governmental, semi-governmental and business activity affecting all social, economic and moral relationships. A hand has been lent to this rapid spread of corruption by Ministers brazenly accepting bribes. The Public now openly quotes the price of each Minister for favours desired.

Corruption on this widespread scale is bound to erode the very foundations of democracy and the social fabric of the country.

The only way to reduce corruption is by a sharp reduction in governmental interference in the life of the citizen and a moratorium on the proliferation of laws, regulations, rules and the public sector.

THE RULING CONGRESS AND THE C.I.A

Mr. Shanker Dayal Sharma's disclaimer that his charge of the C.I.A. influencing opposition parties is not intended to divert the people's attention from the economic plight of the nation, is hardly convincing.

The ruling party has since independence been explaining away the failure of its plans and policies by constantly searching for scapegoats. It was the administration at one time; at another time it was the vested interests and feudal order; yet another was to blame monopolists and businessmen. Apparently the ruling party has run out of domestic scapegoats and has now, in consultation with its C.P.I. allies come up with the C.I.A.

The Swatantra Party resents the Congress President's charge which has been supported by the Prime Minister, and affirms that the mood of restlessness and anger of the people is solely due to the total failure of government's policies. By making the opposition parties and the C.I.A. the scapegoats, it is only exposing its own failures and bankruptcy.

It is the job of the government to deal with subversive activities. With the enormous proliferation of our own secret services, the Swatantra Party is unable to understand why the government cannot deal with the C.I.A. instead of dragging a red herring through the sky by blaming the opposition.

STUDENTS UNREST

The unrest among students of colleges and universities throughout the country though alarming, is understandable. The step-motherly treatment of education in the Plans of government at the Centre and in the States and the continuous tinkering with curricula, syllabuses and language media has reduced the content of education to such an extent as to make our students totally unfit for any gainful vocation.

Funds earmarked for colleges and universities very often remain either unutilised or siphoned off for purposes other than those intended.

Vice-Chancellorships have become political appointments.

With a general fall in moral standards, the students take an example from their elders.

Political parties have entered the portals of colleges and universities and use them for political purposes and violent activities. Student Union elections in some cases have been contested with the same vigour, expenses and corrupt practices as if they were elections to the legislatures.

Denied a meaningful education; exploited by political parties; in the absence of adequate facilities for study and research, it is not at all surprising that the students are restive, particularly when their normal and reasonable demands for admissions, hostel and canteen facilities and medical facilities etc. are denied without investigation.

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Therefore the Swatantra Party appeals to the students to fight in a democratic way against the injustices done to them, and not indulge themselves in violent and unsocial activities, destroying public property, etc. They should adopt the method taught by Mahatma Gandhi and court arrest for fulfilment of their genuine demands.

POWER SHORTAGE IN PUNJAB AND HARYANA

This meeting of the National Executive of the Swatantra Party expresses its deep concern at the acute power shortage in the Punjab and Haryana. It urges the Central Government to treat this crisis on a national level, as had previously been done to overcome the natural calamities of drought, flood, famine etc. in Bihar, Orissa and other States. The Government should also complete its job with the Russian Government, to instal its generators purchased for this purpose some three years ago at a huge cost but which are lying idle since then.
