

2904

SHORT REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE SWATANTRA
PARTY IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 3RD LOK SABHA

by Mr. P.K.Deo, Acting Leader.

The Lok Sabha met on the 16th of April, 1962, but I had to come to the Lok Sabha nearly after a month, i.e., on the 14th of May 1962, due to the death of my mother and a marriage in my family. Mr. C.L. Narasihma Reddy officiated as the Leader of the Swatantra Group in my absence, but during that month most of the members of the party could not take active part in the various debates, as all of them were new to this parliamentary life. Shri Reddy and Maharani Gayatri Devi had spoken in the debate on President's address and on the Budget. Shri N.R. Mahida had also spoken once on the Budget and Shri P.K. Ghosh had also spoken on a non-official Resolution.

Since my arrival there has not been a single debate where our members had not participated, rather the performance of the Swatantra Party has been quite satisfactory even according to our critics. Even in certain debates our members have done much better than the spokesman of communist party in projecting the view-point of the Swatantra Party in the Lok Sabha. I have taken part in as many as 11 debates and had spoken on -

- i) President's Address.
- ii) Demand of the Ministry of Mines and Fuel;
- iii) " " " " Food & Agriculture.
- iv) " " " " Scientific Research and cultural affairs.
- v) " " " " Law.
- vi) " " " " Steel & Heavy Industries.
- vii) " " " " Labour & Employment.
- viii) " " " " Commerce & Industry.
- ix) Finance Bill - Reading No.1
- x) " " " " 2.
- xi) University Grants Commission.

I enclose herewith my speeches for your reference. My raising the point of order in the Lok Sabha regarding the comments of the Defence Minister on the findings of the Comptroller & Auditor General created a good deal of interest inside and outside the House. The speaker has not yet given his ruling on the point of order raised. He has kept it for a future date. Let us see how long he will keep this matter in abeyance. After I moved the amendment on the Finance Bill to allow long term capital losses to be carried over for subsequent years, the Finance Minister came out with the concessions that for the Assessment Year 1962-63 the capital losses could be carried over for four years and in older cases it will be for 8 years. In the original Bill they wanted to completely scrap the provision for carrying over any capital loss for subsequent years and to be set off against capital gains. This is a definite achievement on our part. In indirect taxation my Amendment No.21 suggesting deletion of any additional excise duty on unmanufactured Tobacco was put to vote and the House was divided and we got the support of all the opposition members, though we lost by 129 to 34 votes. My other amendments regarding definition of 'Short term capital gains' and reduction in enhanced income-tax and super-tax rates and on omitting the proposed enhanced

excise duty on other consumer goods were defeated by voice vote. However, in the case of Communists' Demand not to eliminate expenditure tax from the Statute Book, we and the Jan Sangh favoured the Congress Proposal to eliminate Expenditure Tax and voted with them.

According to our strength in the Lok Sabha we have been represented in most of the Committees and our members there took usual interest in the meetings of the various committees.

As almost all the members of our Party are new some of them naturally develop cold feet in taking part in some of the debates, but it was of a temporary nature and they improved in their subsequent deliberations. It was very heartening to find that some of our back-banchers from whom we never expected any contribution showed remarkable interest in the affairs of the Lok Sabha.

The only handicap we felt throughout the Session is the lack of a Research Bureau. The Communist Party here has a Research Bureau of their own where four Research Assistants work day and night and prepare talking points for the various members. The PSP Party also have their Party Secretary who is permanently attached to their Parliamentary Office here. The Jan Sangh have their party Head Office at Delhi and they take full advantage of their Central Office. It is only we who are handicapped and deprived of such an assistance and have work more than school-students appearing in an examination. So it is strongly urged that if the Swatantra Party has to function effectively in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, we must have our own Research Bureau immediately established at Delhi. A trial may be given for a few months and I am sure it will be of immense benefit to the Members here and consequently to the Swatantra Party. Collection of the monthly subscription from the members has been very irregular. As most of the Members did not attend the Lok Sabha regularly, the contribution could not be realised. Every endeavour is being made to collect their contributions.

At the beginning we were 26 members. Then all of a sudden before my arrival Shri David Munzni left our group and sat with the independent group in their benches. Later on it was learnt that he had some differences with the Ramgarh people in Bihar. Any way, before taking any drastic action against him we want the advice of the Central Office. If we are asked to deal with him ourselves, we will ask him an explanation as to why he should not resign from the M.P. seat as he has been elected on Swatantra Party ticket and manifesto and he is sitting in the Parliament with the Independent group. If he does not resign then we will expel him.

In the meantime Mr. Yash Pal Singh M.P. from Saharanpur who defeated A.P. Jain, PCC Chief of Uttar Pradesh has joined our group as an Associate Member and is sitting with us. He says that he will be our fullfledged member from the next session after he goes to his Constituency and explain his people and get permission to be so.

P.K.DEO,
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