

23rd May, 1969

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My dear Cooper,

May I, as Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Group, request you to place a certain item, now before Parliament, on the agenda of the next meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board to be held in Madras in June?

The question of raising the emoluments and perquisites of M.P.s. has been before Parliament for some time now and there is a report of a Select Committee ^{and} a Private Members' Bill pending consideration before Parliament.

This matter was discussed more than once by our Parliamentary Group and the final decision was that the Party should move an amendment at the consideration stage of Government's proposal next Session the point of which would be that, since M.Ps. should not be judges in their own cause unlike Government officers, employees and other sections of the public, an independent opinion on the proposal should be invited and all Parties and Groups in Parliament should agree to give effect to it. The person whose opinion is sought should be someone eminent and unbiased. In fact his opinion should be treated like an Award made by an arbitrator. Such a person should be selected by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Vice Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

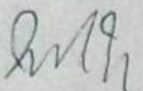
I have an uneasy feeling that, when this matter comes up during the next Session, there might be a move in certain quarters to deviate from this decision and to support the proposals for increased allowances and perquisites, along with the Congress Party. I may mention that the Socialist and Communist Parties propose to take full advantage of the situation by opposing this additional expenditure on behalf of the tax payer and the poorer sections of the community.

The way in which this matter is being handled by M.Ps. in general has caused widespread resentment and critical editorial comment. This makes me feel that the proposal adopted by our Parliamentary Group that we should press our specific approach by way of an amendment to the proposed Bill is a sound and correct one which is both in the interests of the country and would be advantageous to our Party and its reputation.

I shall be grateful if you will kindly send ^{the} minutes ^{/for} of the relevant discussions in the Parliamentary Group and convey to the Central Parliamentary Board this request that they should give a firm directing for moving an amendment on the lines we have in mind and against supporting the Government's proposal unless and until our proposal is considered and voted on by the House.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. R. C. Cooper,
Acting General Secretary,
Swatantra Party,
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mrn:rka


(M. R. MASANI)