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Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Central
Parliamentary Board held at 2-30 P.M. on
Saturday, February 26 and Sunday, February 27,
1966 at Kalki Bldgs., Madras.

Present: Prof. N.G.Ranga (in the Chair)
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Mr. R.N.Singh Deo
Mr. B.P.Singh
Mr. G.Latchanna
Mr. M.R.Masani
Mr. Dabhyabhai V. Patel } By Special invitation
Mr. N.Dandekar

The Minutes of the last meeting held in New Delhi on October 31, 1965, were confirmed. Arising out of the Minutes, the General Secretary, reported on the visit to Ahmedabad by Prof. Ranga, Mr. Dandekar and himself. Also arising out of the Minutes, the Government's decision to postpone the Orissa Assembly General Elections to coincide with the General Elections was conveyed to members present as also the fact that the Party's group in Parliament would oppose a Bill that is likely to come up before Parliament seeking postponement of the elections in Orissa.

The Meeting then considered recommendations in regard to candidatures to the Biennial Elections to the Rajya Sabha and Vidhan Parishads from State Units:

Andhra

The State President, Mr. G. Latchanna, was given the discretion in the absence of Party candidates to both the Rajya Sabha and the State Council, to support appropriate candidates.

Bihar

Mr. Budhan Rai Verma was nominated as the Party's candidate to the Vidhan Parishad from the Local Authorities constituency of Shahabad district.

Madras

Permission was given for Mr. G.K.Sunderam to be set up as the Party's candidate either to the Rajya Sabha or the State Council as may be considered suitable by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari.

In regard to the candidate to the State Council from the Local Authorities Constituency of Trichy district, the Board authorised Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and Mr. G.K.Sunderam to nominate either Mr. C. Muthuswamy or Mr. Subbaiah Chettiar.

Mysore

Mr. P.H.Krishna Rao was nominated as the Party's candidate to the State Council from the Graduates' constituency of Mysore.

In regard to the Rajya Sabha, in the absence of a Party candidate, members of the Party in the State Legislature were given freedom to vote for candidate of their choice excepting Communists.

Punjab

Sardar Basant Singh was given permission to file his nomination to the Rajya Sabha from the Punjab State Assembly if he considered it desirable to do so.

Orissa

Mr. Lok Nath Mishra was nominated as the Party's candidate, subject to its being made clear to him that his nomination is on the basis of his assurance that he will put in much more organisational work for the Party in Orissa from now on till the General Elections. The Central Parliamentary Board also made it clear that no other member of the Party should stand for election to the Rajya Sabha from Orissa. The allocation of second preference votes available with the Party was left to the discretion of the President of the State Unit.

Rajasthan

In view of the understanding with the Jan Sangh, it was agreed that no candidate should be nominated for the Rajya Sabha. The General Secretary's action in permitting Thakur Mandhata Singh to put in his nomination for the by-election to the Rajya Sabha caused by the resignation of the Maharaja of Jaipur was approved.

U.P.

The recommendations of the State Parliamentary Board were placed before the meeting. The President of the State Unit, Mr. B.P. Singh, also gave his report and views. After considerable discussion, the Board regretted its inability to accept the recommendation of the State Parliamentary Board and took the following decisions: (1) The Party's Group in the U.P. Assembly should sponsor the candidature of Mr. J.B. Kripalani. (2) No other member of the Party should stand for election to the Rajya Sabha. No member of the Party should stand for election to the Vidhan Parishad.

The reasons why the Board found itself unable to agree to the recommendations of the State Parliamentary Board are the eminent position enjoyed by Mr. Kripalani in the public life of the country and his long record of service and the desirability of his continued presence in Parliament; and the desirability of not disturbing the arrangement that exists with the Jan Sangh, even if there had been a unilateral modification of the arrangement on their part, in the light of the need for goodwill and amity between opposition parties and in the context of the desirability of changing the Congress Governments at the Centre and in the States.

The recommendation of Mr. Raghubir Saran Srivastava as the Party's candidate to the Vidhan Parishad from the Baharaich Local Authorities Constituency was approved, subject to it being made clear to him that the Party would not be in a position to give any financial assistance whatsoever.

Gujarat

The recommendation of the State Unit Parliamentary Board was placed before the meeting. Communications received from the Kutch District Committee, Mr. Maganlal B. Joshi and Mr. H.N. Kothari, the Party's MLA from Kutch and others were also placed before the meeting. A communication from Dr. Anantani to Prof. Banga was also placed before the Board. Certain correspondence between Mr. & Mrs. Dahyabhai Patel and the President & General Secretary of the Party was reported to the Board. After considerable discussion, it was decided that Dr. Biharlal

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Anuntani should be nominated for this election because of his record of service to the Party and in particular in the development of the Party's work in Kutch. The meeting noted that the State Parliamentary Board had recommended Mrs. Phamumati D. Patel for nomination as one of the Party's prospective candidates to the Lok Sabha from Gujarat next year.

The General Secretary reported on his correspondence with the Election Commission regarding continued recognition of the Swatantra Party in Bihar and his action was approved.

The General Secretary reported on his correspondence and discussions with the S.S.P. and the Joint Secretary on his discussion with certain leaders of the Jan Sangh. The ground rules mentioned in the notes of discussion in respect of the discussions were generally approved as the basis for further action.

It was further decided that an effort should be made to go beyond mere electoral understandings, by inviting the other democratic opposition parties to a joint session of the Central Parliamentary Boards of their Parties to meet some time in Delhi during the current session of Parliament at which time the possibilities of promoting an understanding for the next general elections might be explored. It was decided that the President and the General Secretary should address a letter on these lines to the President and General Secretaries of those Parties and Groups concerned. In the event of this effort failing, the Party should continue its effort to arrive at electoral understandings with other democratic Opposition parties and groups at the national level.

The General Secretary then reported on the measure of assistance that had been found possible to give to the State units for organisational and agitational purposes and also reviewed the position in the constituencies where prospective Parliamentary candidates had been nominated. Statements on these subjects were placed before the meeting. The General Secretary and the Joint Secretary reported on their meetings with prospective Parliamentary candidates in Andhra and Orissa respectively, in order to create a better awareness on their part to the need for more intensive work and their further obligations in that connection. Similarly arrangements to meet prospective Parliamentary candidates in U.P., Gujarat and elsewhere would be undertaken.

Prospective
The Board decided that from now State Parliamentary Boards should make recommendations in respect of both ~~prospective~~ Parliamentary candidates and as many Assembly candidates as possible within their Parliamentary constituencies at the same time in view of the rapid onset of the General Elections. The General Secretary reported that if funds permitted, some modest assistance may also be given to Assembly candidates who do not form part of a Parliament constituency which the Party proposes to contest.

It was agreed that members of the Party should oppose the move to postpone by-elections from now to the General Election in 1967 since such a postponement is not only a denial of the citizens' rights but also because by-elections provide a valuable opportunity to evaluate public opinion and ascertain political trends.

The General Secretary reported on his correspondence with the Gujarat State President in regard to a statement in the Press regarding Mr. H.A. Patel. The position taken by the General Secretary was approved.

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It was decided that the Central Parliamentary Board should meet again on Sunday, 15th May, in Bombay and this should be followed by the National Executive and the General Council on that day and on the 16th and 17th May.

On hearing the news of Mr. V.D.Savarkar's passing away, the Board stood in silence for a minute and recorded its sorrow on the passing away of this historic figure in the nation's history.

The meeting then adjourned till 9 a.m. the following day.

The adjourned meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board met at 9 a.m. on Sunday, the 27th February, 1966.

Present

Prof. N.G.Ranga (in the Chair)
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Mr. R.N.Singh Deo
Mr. B.L.Singh
Mr. G.Latchanna
Mr. M.R.Masani
Mr. Dabhyabhai V. Patel } By special invitation.
Mr. N. Dandekar

The following resolutions on the need to terminate the national Emergency and the setting up of a caretaker Government prior to the elections were adopted unanimously:

1. The Swatantra Party is not satisfied with the Executive promises of using the D.I.R. so as not to affect the elections or economic affairs. The Party is firmly of the view that the proclamation of Emergency should be withdrawn at once.
2. The Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party is strongly of the opinion that the State Governments should resign at least three months before the date of the Elections and Governors should administer the States in order to infuse confidence in the fair conduct of the General Elections in which the Party in power would otherwise have considerably undue advantage as Government and semi-Government organisations are under the control of the ruling party and as has been seen during the last three General Elections.

The Parliamentary Board is also of the view that political parties should adopt a Code of Conduct on the lines suggested by the Election Commission prior to the 1962 elections, with representative implementation committees to check abuses during elections and by-elections. ✓

The Board then considered recommendations of prospective Parliamentary candidatures received from State units and nominated the following as the Party's prospective candidates:

Mysore

Hassan Parliamentary constituency - Mr. Nugehalli Shivappa. The approval of this nomination is subject to another attempt being made to persuade Mr. N.K.Ganapaiah who has done valuable work in Hassan district to stand. If the effort fails, Mr. Shivappa's nomination should be confirmed.

West Bengal

Malda Parliamentary Constituency - Mr. Atul Chandra Kumar.
The General Secretary and Mr. C.R.Irani were authorised to approve of this proposal on their being satisfied that it would be in the Party's interests.

In this connection, the Board recorded its grateful thanks to Mr. C.R.Irani who had been so helpful to the Party in that State.

U.P.

Gonda Parliamentary Constituency - Mr. K.D.R.Pande
Etawah " " - Mr. A.C.Modwel
Muradabad " " - Mr. Muzaffar Hussain, MP

In this connection, a telegram was received from Muradabad requesting that Mr. Hussein's nomination should not be accepted and should be replaced by that of another person.

After hearing the General Secretary and the State President on the circumstances which had led to Mr. Hussain's name being recommended and the fact that Mr. Hussein was a sitting Member, the Board regretted its inability to accept the change suggested in the telegram.

Rajasthan

Chitor Parliamentary Constituency - Maharawal Laxman Singh of
Dungarpur
Tonk (ST) " " - Jainarain Salodia, MLA

A recommendation in regard to the Alwar Parliamentary constituency was considered and the Board felt that the matter should be held over for further consideration by the Board.

Orissa

Dhenkanal Parliamentary constituency - Mr. K.P.Singh Deo of
Dhenkanal
Nowrangpur (ST) " " - Mr. Lachman Fajhari
Koraput (ST) " " - Mr. Dumba Soboro
Bhadrak " " - Mr. Brundaban Das

In regard to the recommendation of Mr. Nikunjan Bihari Singh as the prospective candidate from the Sambalpur Parliamentary constituency, the Board while having no objection to his name felt that the decision as to whether to nominate a candidate should be held over pending electoral adjustments with the S.S.P. in accordance with the ground rules that had been worked out between the Party's General Secretary and the General Secretary of the S.S.P. and which found general approval with the Central Parliamentary Board when it discussed this matter the previous day.

Gujarat

The recommendations of the Gujarat State Parliamentary Board in regard to the Baroda and Broach Parliamentary constituencies were placed before the Board along with all relevant correspondence from and with the Gujarat Unit, Mr. Pashabhai Patel and Mr. & Mrs. Dahyabhai V. Patel. After considerable discussion, in which Mr. Dahyabhai Patel participated, the following decisions were taken:

Baroda. Mr. Pashabhai Patel's name was acceptable but in view of the failure of the person recommended and the State President to settle on an agreed list of Assembly candidates as agreed, as also the reluctance of the candidate to agree to arbitration by the Centre in case of any differences between him and the State Parliamentary Board, the matter will have to wait till an agreed list of Assembly candidates is made available to the Central Parliamentary Board.

Broach: While the Board welcomed the nomination of Mrs. Phanumati D. Patel, it felt that in the absence of an indication of her willingness to stand from this constituency as also the need for the recommendation to be accompanied by names of Assembly candidates, a decision on this matter will have to be held over.

The Board felt that in view of the circumstances of these two cases, the procedure on which the Board had decided on the previous day, viz. that all recommendations of prospective candidates should from now on be in respect of both the Parliamentary candidate and Assembly candidates in their Parliamentary constituencies should apply to these cases.

All decisions recorded above will be operative only on the prospective Parliamentary candidate signifying in writing his willingness to stand in case he has not already done so. In this connection, the Central Office was instructed to obtain from such prospective candidates as had already been nominated in the past, letters signifying their acceptance in case they had not already been obtained.

The Board considered the question of elections to Party Committees in the context of the forthcoming General Elections. It was generally felt by members present that holding Party elections on the eve of the General Elections would mean a serious diversion from the task of preparing for 1967. It therefore decided to recommend to the National Executive and General Council of the Party that elections to Party Committees should be postponed till after the General Elections.

The Board suggested that June 30, 1967, be fixed as the last date for the enrolment of Workers Members for the purposes of Party elections.

A telegram received by Prof. Ranga from the Vice-President of the U.P. Unit, while the meeting was in session, was placed before it for its consideration. The telegram mentioned that a requisition had been received from Members of the U.P. Executive for a meeting on March 12 to consider a motion of no-confidence against Mr. B.P. Singh.

After discussion, the Board decided that Prof. Ranga should reply to the telegram he had received explaining that the State Executive is not competent to entertain or adopt a motion of no-confidence against the State President or against other Office Bearers. It should be pointed out that this precedent has been well established over a period of several years in the case of Bihar and Delhi units. Any meeting requisitioned for this purpose would be unconstitutional and would have no validity. The President should therefore call upon the requisitionists to cancel the meeting proposed for the 12th of March. In view of the meeting being ultra vires, no observer can be sent.

It further decided that appropriate guidance should be given by the General Secretary to members of the State Assembly and of the State Executive.

The meeting then terminated.