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FUNCTIONING OF ORGANISERS IN PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES

by

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Parliamentary Constituencies with an average of 3 to 4 lakh votes require to be organised at higher and lower levels, in detail and in general strategy. It will be the task of Organisers to organise in detail, over and extended period of time. A framework for their activities will not only guide them but also set a minimum. This framework can be envisaged in four parts.

The first part is INFORMATION in respect of each polling station on the political map. According as the position is disclosed to be favourable or not, the candidate and Party will be able to distribute their attention.

The Information will be assembled in ledgers for each Assembly Constituency, with a separate page for each polling station. It will consist in answers to the following questions:

1. Number of voters in the Polling Station. (If the figure is not available from the new voters list, those from the old one may be given, with space left for the new figures when available.)
2. The number of votes polled by different candidates. (If the figures cannot be obtained from the District or State returning officers, they are available in a Government publication which each State Organisation can buy and make available.)
3. The approximate distribution of voters between important castes and religions.
4. Names of important leaders and their party affiliations if any. Names of those who led the voters for each candidate to the polling booths may also be given.
5. Name of the Party Worker, who must be enrolled when the village is visited.
6. Names of members of the Polling Circle Committee. There may be one member for each 50 voters, approximately, one page of the voters list.
7. Problems and projects of the village which have been neglected, particularly in respect of schools, hospitals, roads, reservoirs, wells, post offices.
8. Remarks of Party visitors on what remains to be done.

The second part of the duties of the Organiser is ORGANISATION.

1. The Party worker must be made to feel his importance. He should be supplied with the Party flag, which he may be persuaded to display over his house. He should be supplied with literature of the party. He may be given the voters list of the polling circle. He may also be authorised to address the District office about any matter.

2. The members of the Polling circle Committee may be given button badges of the party. They should also have the sheet of the voters list so that they may nurse the voters mentioned in it. They may be invited to meet frequently at the house of the Party worker and in any case for one monthly meeting. They may be encouraged to report on the climate of opinion of the voters in their charge.

3. The Party workers should court the leaders of the village and supply them with information about the party. Their objections to the party may be met and reported when necessary. Their grievances, if any should be studied and reported to the district office where necessary.

4. The problems and projects of the village are important because attention to them will convince the voters of the capacity of the party. The Party worker should therefore record or collect petitions for transmission to the District party office. The District Office will have a printed form to submit the petitions to the authorities concerned, with the request that the action taken may be reported within three months, failing which the Party will take other action. Such submissions should be signed by the Secretary of the District Party and when of special importance by the President.

5. The Party worker will organise meetings in the polling circle to which party workers and sympathisers of the neighbouring circles may be invited. The Assembly and Parliamentary candidates should also be asked to attend at least one meeting in each circle. They may take the opportunity to visit village leaders on the occasion and as many other voters as are on their way because personal contact has the effect of creating obligations.

6. The Party worker will report the activities of other parties, so as to invite the necessary counter action. The Organiser will forward such report to the District Office with an indication of action which remains to be taken.

The third part of the duties of the Organiser is the PROJECTION of the Party and the Candidates. This is not an easy task and for the greater part the Organiser and Workers will have to work as agents of those above them. The Projection will have to be with reference to the interests of the main classes of the voters and will have to be kept up to date with the march of events and conditions. The Projection of the Party will be first with reference to the principles of the Party and how they have been verified by the mistakes of the ruling party. The Central Party Office should be able to make a brochure available about this which the State Offices can translate for general issue. Secondly the projection should relate to local interests and conditions, of the principal classes of the voters.

The Projection of the Candidate is important because, with the general disillusionment of the Party system, the public is disposed to vote more on the merits of the candidate. The Projections, however, has to be done tactfully, first by the contact of the candidate with as many voters as possible, second by the expression by others of his merits, third by his services, not only in the past but currently on the needs of the villages as pressed by the Party before appropriate authorities, fourth by public speeches at frequent intervals.

The means for Projection are:

1. A newspaper, in the local language, which may be a monthly to begin with, reproducing Swarajya and other Swatantra papers. The paper will expose the Congress and Communist policies for the injury

they do to various classes. A free copy will be sent to all Village workers, who may circulate it to influential persons. Other free copies may be sent to headmasters of schools, public libraries and panchayats. As the election approaches, the paper may be made a Weekly and may be sent to all influential persons in the locality. If funds permit, one issue, containing the appeal of the party and the candidate with opinions of important persons on the candidate and with directions in respect of polling, particularly how to avoid the tricks of the Congress, may be sent to households of all voters. For a four page issue, the cost of postage will be Rs.2,000 and of printing Rs.3,000.

The monthly issue of the paper should contain directions to Village workers and Committee, programmes of the Organiser and Candidate and news of the achievement of the workers and Committees of different villages.

2. A Jeep or car with loudspeaker to enable the candidate to speak at fairs and other meetings. The loudspeaker always collects an audience and can be used in villages with a general licence.

3. Workers may be encouraged to hold meetings of their own using the text of the newspaper for their speeches.

4. The Organiser should arrange that the Candidate participates in local functions at schools, panchyats and colleges. The Congress has just resolved to appeal to the youth of the country. The Party can only do so indirectly by informing the students about their conditions in other countries, which by implication they have lost by Congress policies in this country.

5. The Organiser should arrange that the Candidate meets all influential persons. Even if they belong to other parties they are softened by the courtesy shown to them.

The fourth part of the duty of the Organiser is to prepare for the Election.