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OFFICE MEMO

From : Mr. P.B. Meckoni

To : Mr. M.R. Masani

Date : April 5, 1968

Subject

Almost all the newspapers of Gujarat have carried reports about your resignation from the National Executive and the Central Parliamentary Board. I have to inform you that your press statement about the resignation has been objectively reported and thus there is no cause for any misunderstanding in the mind of the public.

Editorials:

The editorials in various papers of Gujarat have been true to the political leanings of the editors. However the Janmabhoomi of Bombay in its editorial has praised you, Mr. Bhaikakak and Mr. Jaideepsinhji for tendering your resignations saying that this was the best course for the leaders of a responsible political party. The Janmabhoomi goes on to say that the leaders at the State and the Central level had no alternative except to fulfill the past promises given by the State and the Central Party, to Mr. Babubhai Vaidya. The editorial goes on to say that though the atmosphere in the Gujarat Swatantra Party has become muddy, the name of the party has not become mud, and the editorial concludes that any leaders of a responsible political party should act accordingly, but whether the leaders of any other political party have the courage to do so.

The various editorials in the Gujarat papers have tried to twist the fact of the promise being given as a deal behind the back of the local leaders and they have specifically made Mr. Masani as a target of their criticism saying that the "god" staying in Delhi did not fully understand the strong feelings of the majority of the party's M.L.As and thus your resignation along with Bhaikaka's and Mr. Jaideepsinhji's resignation has been dubbed

as a political stunt and your statement and Bhaikaka's has been compared to the shedding of crocodile tears.

Bhailalbhai Patel:

Speaking to newsmen after the results of the Rajya Sabha elections were declared, Bhaikaka had said that he has resigned as the leader of the Opposition because the results have shown that the majority of the party members in the Assembly have no confidence in him.

Similarly, Mr. Jaideepsinhji has also expressed the same views. Bhailalbhai has stated that because Mr. Vaidya was ~~not~~ the Party's official candidate, vote against Mr. Vaidya amounted to a rebellion of the Party's members. Mr. Bhailalbhai continues that the promise given to Mr. Vaidya was given with the consent of the 26 M.L.As and that the promise was confirmed by the Central Party. He continues that because that promise could not be fulfilled now, no one will trust the party in future and anyone who does so will be a fool. Mr. Bhailalbhai Patel concludes that it was a matter of gratification that like the State leaders the Central Parliamentary Board has also kept its promise given to Mr. Vaidya.

Mr. H.M. Patel:

In the same press conference (29.3.68) Mr. H.M. Patel has said that when the promise was given to Mr. Vaidya, the party's position was such that unless they had the support of the independent progressive group, it would have become impossible for Dr. B. Antani to be elected to the Rajya Sabha last time. He continues that people will come and people will go but the party would remain and therefore the past promises of the party have to be fulfilled by those who have joined the party later on. Thus even though at the present moment the majority of our members were opposed to Mr. Vaidya, the office bearers have stuck to the promise given to Mr. Vaidya.

discipline
Mr. H.M. Patel continues that those who have signed Mr. Mahida's nomination papers have broken the Party's promise and that it was for the Party to decide what steps should be taken against them. He goes on to say that it is true that there was a crisis now in the Party, but we should all behave in such a way that people could put their trust in the Party again.

Mr. Jaideepsinhji:

Mr. Jaideepsinhji addressing the same press conference said the results have shown a lack of confidence by the members in the leadership but now it is for the Central Party to decide what action could be taken against the rebels. He concluded his statement saying that though he has resigned from the leadership of the Party, he has not resigned his seat from the Assembly.

Mr. Pravinsinhi Solanki:

Mr. Pravinsinhi Solanki addressing the same press conference has said that at first it seemed that Mr. Vaidya would win but the results have shown that it was not to be. Mr. Pravinsinhji said that he would have also resigned from the Party just like Bhaikaka and Mr. Jaideepsinhji if he was the leader of the Party.

Mr. Piloo Mody:

Mr. Piloo Mody said that this was a complicated matter, and one can only guess why the majority have voted against the Party's official candidate. They tried to persuade Mr. Mahida to withdraw but he said that because he (Mahida) had the support of the majority he would not withdraw until they told him to do so. Mr. Piloo Mody said that he too felt that Mr. Mahida had the support of the majority.

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