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For favour of publication

Text of Mr. M.R. Masani's letter resigning from the National Executive and Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party

2 Tughlak Road,
New Delhi 11

March 29, 1968

My dear Dandekar,

I am sure you are extremely depressed about what has happened in Ahmedabad over the elections to the Rajya Sabha. I have seen press reports of Bhailalbhai Patel and Jaideepsinghji of Baria having resigned from the Leadership and Deputy Leadership of the Party in the State Legislature on the ground that "no one will now have any faith in the Party and its promises."

As you are aware, the facts briefly are that in 1966 our Party invited the support of the Independent Progressive Group, of which Mr. Babubhai Vaidya was the Leader in the Gujarat Assembly, in order to secure the election to the Rajya Sabha of Dr. Beharilal Anantani, our Party's candidate. At that time, Jaideepsinghji of Baria, with the approval of Bhailalbhai, the Leader of the Party, and his other colleagues wanted in return to promise that Babubhai Vaidya would be our Party's candidate for the Rajya Sabha in the 1968 elections. I was then the General Secretary of our Party at the National level and Jaideepsinghji of Baria asked for my approval to this arrangement and also an assurance that I would see that the Central Parliamentary Board stood by the promise that they were giving to Babubhai Vaidya. On being assured that this arrangement would be in the interests of the Party in Gujarat, I gave an assurance that the Central Parliamentary Board would honour the arrangement in 1968. Later, when the matter came up at the Central Parliamentary Board level, you will recall that it was decided that this promise given by the Gujarat Party leaders should be honoured and the Central Parliamentary Board at its meeting in Bombay recorded that Mr. Babubhai Vaidya would be the Party's candidate for the Rajya Sabha in 1968. It is this solemn promise given by the Party that over a score of our members in the Gujarat Legislature have violated by joining hands with the Congress Party to get our Party's candidate defeated. This is unfortunately not an isolated case but one more example of how the general demoralization in the political life of the country is finding its way into our own ranks.

As one of those who had pledged the Party's word to the Independent Progressive Group and its leader, I too have a personal responsibility in the matter along with our Gujarat leaders. I feel that, as an act of atonement to those who have been let down by this breach of faith on the part of some of our colleagues and in the hope that this may stimulate the conscience of our Party, I should tender my resignation from membership of the National Executive and of the Central Parliamentary Board of the Party.

I need hardly say that, in anything you do as General Secretary of our Party to uphold its disciplined and effective functioning, you will continue to have my fullest support.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly place this letter before the next meeting of the National Executive and the Central Parliamentary Board on the 13th and 14th of April as I shall not be present at that time.

Yours sincerely,

(sd) M.R. Masani

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