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Draft Minutes of the 7th meeting of the National Executive held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 16, 17, and 18, 1971 at the Ritz Hotel, Bombay.

Present:

Mr. M.R. Masani

- in the Chair

Rajmata Gayatri Devi
Mr. R.N. Singh Deo
Mr. Dhyabhai V. Patel
Mr. N. Dandekar
Mr. N.K. Somani
Mr. Madhu Mehta
Mr. H.M. Patel
Mr. D.N. Patodia
Mr. Piloo Mody
Col. H.R. Pasricha
Mr. Y.G. Gowd
Mr. N.K. Ganapaiah
Miss Kusum Kumari Joshi
Mr. S.S. Mariswamy
Dr. H.V. Hande
Mr. G. Latchanna
Mr. Lalchand Hirachand
Mr. P.K. Deo
Mr. Budhi Prakash
Mr. Tribikram Tripathy
Dr. R.C. Cooper

- I. 1. The Minutes of the meeting of the National Executive held in Madras on January 8 and 9, 1971, were confirmed.

In his introductory remarks the President, Mr. Masani observed that the Executive was meeting under unhappy circumstances when the forces of democracy had been dealt a severe blow. The Party was facing a difficult situation in which there was need for courage to face the facts and to think with an open mind.

2. Consideration of the political situation with reference to the results of the General Elections:

The General Secretary read out a message from Rajaji (copy attached Annexure A). The President's report to members of the General Council on developments since the last meeting of the Council (Annexure B) and the statistical data on the Party's performance had earlier been circulated to members. These reports alongwith other papers formed the basis for discussion in which the following participated:

Rajmata Gayatri Devi, Mr. Madhu Mehta, Mr. Y.G. Gowd, Mr. S.S. Mariswamy, Mr. Lalchand Hirachand, Dr. H.V. Hande, Mr. R.N. Singh Deo, Mr. P.K. Deo, Mr. G. Latchanna, Mr. H.M. Patel, Mr. N. Dandekar, Mr. D.N. Patodia, Miss Kusum Kumari Joshi, Mr. Dhyabhai V. Patel, Mr. N.K. Ganapaiah, Col. H.R. Pasricha and Mr. Piloo Mody.

The consensus among members was that the following reasons would perhaps explain why the Party fared as it did in the elections:

- (1) The idea of the Alliance was a sound one. But whereas we wanted to present a strong democratic front with a common agreed programme, we actually went into the Elections without a programme and on the basis of mere electoral adjustments. Our opponents, however, were able to project us as an alliance and capitalise on it.
- (2) The members of the Alliance, however, did not always work loyally for the common candidate, very often sabotaging him and in some cases fielding competing candidates.
- (3) The last elections have taught us that in future we will have to contend with techniques successfully tried out by the Ruling Party during this election, which will be used with more telling effect in the next. Some of the more obvious methods identified were :
 - (a) a higher level of violence throughout the country
 - (b) the more blatant use of money power
 - (c) the efficient organisation of block votes, and
 - (d) the unconscionable use of Government machinery in the form All India Radio, Air Force Planes, Government servants, official vehicles and certain sectors of the "committed press". The results were not only unexpected but somewhat mysterious, particularly as it was not discernable as to how block votes were cast with an inexplicable vehemence and the lines of communication used for the purpose.
- (4) The Party will have to find ways and means of countering these practices.
- (5) One of the inferences to be drawn was that in future we may have to forswear such alliance, while leaving the States free to work out whatever electoral adjustments that may be beneficial. But basically, the Party could only prosper if it stood on its own legs.
- (6) Another point worth noting was that unfortunately the Party did not consider seriously enough and implement faithfully the Mid-Term Report published by the Party although it contained a timely warning.
- (7) However, the National Executive felt that there was no need for despondency. An Opposition is needed desperately, without which democracy cannot survive. Our principles were beyond reproach and our policies were right but they needed different dimensions to project them effectively. The best way of doing so would be through the Youth of this country.

In the light of the discussion which included matters relating to Party organisations and the views expressed by members on the need to review the Party's Statement of Policy to bring it in tune with the present requirements, the following Committee with the General Secretary, Dr. R.C. Cooper, as Convenor was appointed. The Committee was asked to submit its report by 30th June so that its report could be circulated to the Party's members and considered by the newly elected National Executive in September :

Mr. R. Ghorpade, Mr. N.K. Somani, Mr. Madhu Mehta, Dr. H.V. Hande,
Mr. Piloo Mody, Mr. Tribikram Tripathy, Mr. Debanand Amat,
Smt. Sharayu Daftary, Mr. G. Latchanna, Mr. Harbhajan Singh.

The Rajmata of Jaipur and Mr. H.M. Patel promised to recommend a name each for inclusion in the Committee in the next couple of days.

3. Mr. Masani's letter of resignation :

The Executive then took up for discussion Mr. Masani's letter to members of the General Council tendering his resignation from the Presidentship of the Party. The text of Mr. Masani's letter of resignation is attached (Annexure C).

The General Secretary conveyed Rajaji's letter to members of the National Executive and General Council requesting the General Council not to accept Mr. Masani's resignation.

Mr. Masani said that his resignation was intended to give the Party a new look and a new leadership as the present leadership had, in his view, lost credibility.

Some members expressed the feeling that it was not right for Mr. Masani to accept sole responsibility for the Party's decision to enter the four-party alliance. Members recalled that even at the meeting of the National Executive in Madras on January 8, Mr. Masani and Mr. Dandekar had recommended that the Party should not join the alliance but, at best, only seek an electoral adjustment with it. Therefore, the responsibility being that of the National Executive as a whole, Mr. Masani should not press his resignation.

However, if the General Council were to accept Mr. Masani's resignation, the Executive decided that one of the five Vice-Presidents should officiate as President pending the election of new Office Bearers and members of the National Executive. Mr. Singh Deo, Rajmata Gayatri Devi and Mr. Dhyabhai Patel pleaded inability to officiate as President. Mr. N. Dandekar therefore agreed at the National Executive's request to officiate as President making it clear that he would do so strictly on the understanding that a new President would take over in four or five months.

4. Programme for Party elections:

In the light of the feeling expressed during the discussion on Party Organisation regarding the need for fresh blood to take over the conduct of the Party, particularly in the critical months and years to come, it was decided to hold early Party elections to enable the emergence of a new leadership at all levels of the Party.

Arising from the discussion the following decision was taken unanimously :

" Taking note of the fact that reports from the State Units show that renewal of Primary membership of the Party by 31st March has been very poor and almost negligible due to the intervention of the Parliamentary elections; also taking note of the fact that the Constitution does not permit any extension of membership beyond 31st March but that Article 5(a) does permit re-enrolment of the old members as new members on payment of a subscription of Rs. 3 (or Rs.1.50 in the case of those belonging to any Scheduled Caste or Tribe or other Backward Classes); the National Executive RESOLVES that, for purposes of Party elections due later this year, the enrolment of members should conclude by 30th June, 1971.

" The National Executive further lays down the following programme for the holding of elections at the various levels so as to ensure that the new General Council meeting later this year may elect a new National Executive and Office Bearers :

"Annexures B and C

As both these annexures were circulated to members in advance of the meeting they are not enclosed with these Minutes. "

1. Last date for enrolment of new Workers and Life Workers for purposes of Party elections .. June 30
2. Last date for receipt by National Headquarters of Centre's quota of subscription and lists of Workers and Life Members .. July 15
3. Last date for completion of elections at the Primary Unit level (including election of Primary Unit representatives on the District Committees) .. July 31
4. Last date for completion of elections at the District level (including the election of District Unit representatives on the State/Regional Council) .. August 15
5. Last date for completion of elections at the State/Regional level (including the election of State/Regional Unit representatives on the General Council) .. August 31
6. Meeting of the new General Council to elect the new National Executive .. Sept. 17/18 "

The following Sub-Committee was nominated to take all consequential decisions in regard to various matters relating to Party Elections :

Mr. N. Dandekar	-	Acting President
Dr. R.C. Cooper	-	General Secretary
Mr. Madhu Mehta	-	Joint Secretary
Mr. N.K. Somani	-	Joint Secretary

5. Co-options to General Council:

In pursuance of the authority vested in it by the General Council, the National Executive on the recommendation of the State Units concerned nominated the following to fill vacancies in the General Council :

Gujarat

1. Mr. Navin B. Patel
2. Mr. Ramanlal Nagjibhai Patel
3. Mr. Vinubhai Kotdawala
4. Mr. Shankerlal Guru
5. Mr. Bhailal M. Patel

Mysore

1. Mr. R. Ghorpade

6. Reconstitution of the Punjab State Executive:

The President reported that in December last year he had had discussions with Mr. Nanda, Sardar Naranjan Singh Gill and Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann, the General Secretary of the Punjab Unit on the need to reconstitute the Punjab Unit so as to place it on a sound basis. At that meeting it was felt that the National Executive should be requested to dissolve the present State Executive and replace it by an Ad hoc Committee consisting of the following members :

Sardar Naranjan Singh Gill
Lt. Gen. S.D. Verma (Retd)
Sardar Bhai Gobinder Singh Sidhu
Dr. Mehar Singh
Choudhury Raghbir Singh
Mr. S. Gurbaksh Singh Bedi
Mr. S. Surjit Singh Mansahya
Seth Bhagirath Lal
Mr. S. Balwant Singh Chhatwal
Mr. H.P. Nanda (ex Officio) representing the N. Hqrs., and
Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann as Convener.

The National Executive accepted the request and approved the ad hoc Committee listed above.

7. Offers of resignation from Prof. Ranga and Mr. Harihar Patel:

The General Secretary referred to the letters he had received from Prof. Ranga and Mr. Harihar Patel, respectively, the former offering to resign from membership of the National Executive and the latter from the Joint Secretaryship of the Party. The National Executive while appreciating the sentiments which prompted Prof. Ranga and Mr. Patel, declined to accept their offer of resignation and requested them to continue till the expiry of their term of office next September.

8. The meeting then adjourned for the day.

II. The adjourned meeting of the National Executive met at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 17, 1971.

Present:

Mr. M.R. Masani - in the Chair

Rajmata Gayatri Devi
Mr. R.N. Singh Deo
Mr. Dabhyabhai V. Patel
Mr. N. Dandekar
Mr. N.K. Somani
Mr. Madhu Mehta
Mr. D.N. Patodia
Mr. Piloo Mody
Col. H.R. Pasricha
Mr. Y.G. Gowd
Mr. N.K. Gansapaliah
Miss Kusum Kumari Joshi
Mr. S.S. Mariswamy
Dr. H.V. Hande
Mr. G. Iatchanna
Mr. Lalchand Hirachand
Mr. P.K. Deo
Mr. Budhi Prakash
Mr. Tribikram Tripathy
Dr. R.C. Cooper

9. Three draft resolutions were after, discussion, recommended for adoption by the General Council (Texts attached Annexure D).

- (1) Condolence resolution on the passing away of Dr. K.M. Munshi
- (2) Subversive Activities of North Korea in Ceylon
- (3) East Bengal

10. Next National Convention:

The General Secretary reported that the National Convention scheduled for January this year had to be postponed in view of the General Elections. In the light of the Executive's decision to accelerate the Party elections, it was decided that the Convention should be held by the end of 1971 and that the fixing of the dates of the new Convention as also its venue (particularly in view of the Jaipur Rajmata's invitation at the meeting to hold the National Convention in Udaipur) should be left to the new National Executive to be elected in September this year.

11. Programme for Party Activity:

Mr. Latchanna felt that the National Executive had not given any direction in regard to a concrete programme which would enthuse the Party's workers. He felt that when he returned to Andhra he would not be able to state what specific action the Party had decided upon, particularly in the nature of changes in policy more in tune with the present times. He particularly wished the National Executive to discuss the proposals made by the Andhra State Council. In the light of Mr. Latchanna's request the Executive decided to meet again immediately after the conclusion of the General Council meeting on Sunday evening to discuss organisational activity for the next few months.

12. The meeting then adjourned for the day.

III. The adjourned meeting of the National Executive met at 5 p.m. on 18th April at the M.C. Ghia Hall, Bombay.

Present:

Mr. N. Dandekar

- in the Chair

Rajmata Gayatri Devi

Mr. R.N. Singh Deo

Mr. Dabhyabhai V. Patel

Mr. N.K. Ganapathiah

Mr. Piloo Mody

Mr. N.K. Somani

Mr. D.N. Patodia

Mr. G. Latchanna

Miss Kusum Kumari Joshi

Mr. Budhi Prakash

Mr. Tribikram Tripathy

Mr. Madhu Mehta

Mr. Y.G. Gowd

Mr. S.S. Mariswamy

Mr. H.M. Patel

Dr. R.C. Cooper

Mr. M.R. Masani

(By Special Invitation)

13. Party's Labour Policy:

Arising from a discussion in the General Council Mr. Latchanna sought a clarification in regard to the Party's attitude to Trade Union activity. While the Sub-Committee appointed to review the Party's policies and principles would inter alia consider the interpretation to be given to the Party's labour policy, it was felt that the Party's members should be permitted to occupy elective posts in trade unions, it being understood that under no circumstances

would our Party members associate with Unions dominated by the communists. The National Headquarters was requested to put out a circular accordingly.

14. Assembly Elections:

In the light of the fact that in many States, the elections to the State Assembly were likely either late this year or early the next, the National Headquarters was asked to issue a circular immediately to State Units calling upon them to provide a list of constituencies where the State Units intended setting up candidates (with particulars as to why it was felt the Party should contest these constituencies) and, as far as possible, the names and other particulars of the candidates proposed.

15. Relations with other Parties:

The Acting President drew the attention of the Executive to the fact that matters involving Party policy might soon arise, particularly in respect of Gujarat, Orissa and Mysore, especially in regard to relations with other Parties.

The Executive after discussion decided that while State Units were free to go along and work closely with the Congress (O) units in the various states, they should not associate with the Jan Sangh or the SSP without prior reference to the National Headquarters, where the Acting President and General Secretary would treat all such references strictly on merits. State Units must, however, strictly refrain from having any truck whatsoever either with the Congress (R) or with any of the Communist parties.

16. Financial Matters:

Mr. Latchanna drew attention to the fact that the Andhra Unit was finding it extremely difficult to collect funds in view of the present atmosphere arising from the results of the elections. In the context of the forthcoming Assembly elections in his State, he pleaded for central assistance not only for Assembly candidatures, but for organisational work immediately so as to undertake programmes which would enhance the Party's prospects by causing "commotion and emotion" among the people.

The General Secretary pointed out that the National Headquarters was itself facing financial difficulties and had yet to clear liabilities incurred during the elections. However, he assured Mr. Latchanna that he would do whatever he could but that meanwhile Mr. Latchanna should send the National Headquarters a detailed programme of what he wished to do in the next couple of months.

Mr. R.N. Singh Deo drew the Executive's attention to the fact that the Orissa Unit intended contesting the Mayurbhanj and Koraput Parliamentary by-elections and the Khoksara Assembly by-election. As the Orissa Unit had received very little financial aid from the National Headquarters and had consequently exhausted all its own resources in the General Elections, he requested financial assistance from the Centre.

The Treasurer, Mr. Lalchand Hirachand, stated that he would do whatever he could but explained the difficulties in the way of collecting funds as a result of the ban on contribution of funds to political parties by Joint Stock Companies.

The meeting then terminated.

Amesam A

A message from Rajaji to the National Executive and General Council meetings in Bombay:

Macroji Road,
Chetput,
Madras-31.

14th April, 1971

I have read the sorry tale which Sri M.R. Masani has presented to the Swatantra Party's General Council for consideration. It is the sad story of how all his attempts to bring into existence a consolidated democratic opposition to the Ruling power in New Delhi failed. Failure in any good attempts is no disgrace. The effort was our duty and the result is not our fault. The Swatantra Party's mission remains and can be summed up briefly. It is, one, to fight against the totalitarian tendencies at the top and to defend the Constitution and, two, to educate the people out of the ignorance of economic laws that rule production and out of the tendency among people educated as well as uneducated to vote for those in power irrespective of whether they deserve support or not. Both tasks are difficult but we have undertaken these difficult tasks and we must persevere undaunted to justify our existence. The Swatantra Party cannot seek to justify itself by any form of me-too-ism in the hope of acquiring power. Other parties may follow such a line. So far me-too-ism has not brought power to those who practise it. A party which is dedicated to truth and to educating the electorate cannot follow that line. It would be better to wind up, if that be the only way to maintain the Party's existence and leave the nation to learn by going through the calamities that totalitarian rule will lead to. A nation can learn through calamities, but the Swatantra Party's mission is to save the nation from such suffering.

Sd/-

C. Rajagopalachari

Draft Condolence Resolution on Dr. Munshi

This meeting of the General Council of the Swatantra Party expresses its deep sense of sorrow on the passing away of Dr. K.M. Munshi, one of the framers of India's Constitution and a great literary figure. Dr. Munshi's contribution covered a wide range of public activity ranging from Indian culture to politics. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavans all over India are standing monuments to his love of Indian culture and his efforts to revive all that is best in our cultural heritage.

As a leading member of the Swatantra Party, Dr. Munshi played a very major role in the development of the Party in its formative years.

In his death the nation and the Party has lost a pillar of strength and a patriotic son of India.

~~DRAFT~~ Resolution Adopted By the National Executive At Its
Meeting in Bombay on Friday, April 16, 1971

In view of the recent happenings in Ceylon, the Swatantra Party would like to warn the Government and peoples of India against the dubious designs and strategy of the Communist Government of North Korea and their agents. The Swatantra Party feels that maximum vigilance is necessary against the activities of North Korean diplomats and citizens in different parts of the country. In this connection, it is particularly essential to probe into the almost continuous series of full-page advertisements inserted in daily papers by the North Korean Government in large numbers during the past several months. They appear to be part of a sinister strategy which requires to be fully investigated and uprooted.

Draft resolution on Bangla Desh recommended to the General Council by the National Executive

The Swatantra Party whole-heartedly sympathises with the people of Bangla Desh in their heroic struggle. It appeals to Organisations and peoples in India to contribute generously and liberally funds and material to the Committee that has been established in Delhi to provide relief to the people of East Bengal.

The Swatantra Party expresses the hope that world opinion will be mobilised to bring about an immediate cease-fire in East Bengal to save any further loss of human life and property.

The bloodshed in East Bengal, resulting in loss of lives of a large number of people, must in the opinion of the Swatantra Party receive immediate attention of the United Nations if it is to command confidence of the world. The UN displays callousness and complete inability to prevent heavy loss of human lives. This has impaired the prestige of the United Nations and the confidence of the people in its effectiveness. This was also apparent on earlier occasions during the tragedies in Tibet, Hungary, Biafra and Czechoslovakia. In the opinion of the Swatantra Party where human tragedies are involved, immediate steps should be taken by the United Nations to move beyond the outdated plea of national sovereignty to evolve an effective machinery whereby fighting would be brought to an end.

The Swatantra Party earnestly urges the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene an emergent session of the Security Council and the General Assembly to meet and solve this urgent problem.