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Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Parliamentary Board held in Rajaji's Room at Kalki Office in Madras on April 23, 1963, at 4.30 p.m.

Present: Professor N.G. Ranga (in the Chair)
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Mr. Kamakhya Narain Singh
Mr. Bhailalbai D. Patel
Mr. M.R. Masani

The minutes of the last meeting held on January 12 were confirmed.

The Board then took up consideration of the Rajkot Lok Sabha by-election. Mr. Bhailalbai Patel, President of the State unit, conveyed to the Board the unanimous recommendation of the Gujarat State Committee meeting on 15th April, 1963 that Mr. Masani should be requested to be the Party's candidate in the by-election, and pressed for the Board's approval. Mr. Dayabhai Patel also gave his assessment of the situation.

Mr. Masani reported on the visit he had paid to Rajkot along with Mr. Bhailalbai Patel, Maharajkumar Himmatsingh of Kutch and Raja of Baria. The conclusion to which he came was that this was a difficult constituency and that the chances of success were somewhat slim. Mr. Masani stated that, this notwithstanding, he was prepared to leave the decision to the Parliamentary Board and would abide by it.

Mr. Masani requested, however, that beyond the kind of finance which had been mentioned by him and agreed to by the Gujarat Party's President and Committee, the Party should not look to him for help in arranging for any further financial assistance to the Gujarat Party.

At this stage the meeting adjourned.

The Parliamentary Board met again at 8.30 p.m., when there was further discussion of the position in regard to the Rajkot by-election.

The Parliamentary Board, in the light of all the circumstances, decided that Mr. Masani should be nominated as the Party's candidate, provided there was a straight fight with the Congress candidate with the sole exception of the Communist Party. Mr. B.D. Patel and the Board agreed with the request in regard to finance made by Mr. Masani that afternoon.

The Board expressed the hope that, in the light of the Congress Government's record since the last General Elections and in particular the failure of the Government in connection with the clash with Communist China, the oppressive taxation embodied in the Union and State budgets, the Gold Control Order, the Compulsory Savings law and the increasing corruption resulting from the Government's policies, the electorate would respond to the appeal of the Party and record its protest in this by-election.

The Parliamentary Board authorised the General Secretary and the State President to take all decisions and be responsible for the conduct of the campaign.

The Honorary Treasurer was authorised to remit to the Gujarat State unit any funds that may be received by him earmarked for use in the Rajkot by-election.

The Board appealed to State units and members throughout the country to give assistance by way of jeeps, microphones and otherwise.

It was decided that the decision to contest the Rajkot by-election should be released to the press that evening.

The Board also reviewed other by-elections that had taken place and those that were pending. It ratified the diversion for use in the Lok Sabha by-election from the Dohad (Reserved) constituency of a sum of Rs.5,000 which was owing to the Party by an advertiser in Baroda in the Party's souvenir for 1961 who had expressed a wish that the amount should be so utilised. The General Secretary reported that in addition he personally had managed to secure assistance to the extent of Rs.10,000 for the Dohad Parliamentary by-election, Rs.5,000 for the two Assembly by-elections in Orissa and Rs.1,000 for the Badvel by-election in Andhra.

The Board approved of the attitude by the U.P. State unit on the advice of the General Secretary that, while supporting Acharya Kripalani in Amroha and Mr. Din Dayal Upadhyaya in Jaunpur, the Party should abstain from favouring either the P.S.P. or the Socialist Party candidate in the triangular contest in Farrukhabad. In the latter constituency, the Party's members should campaign against the Congress, leaving the voter to make his choice between the two Opposition candidates.

The activities of the Party during the current session of Parliament were reviewed. It was decided that the Party's policy of giving freedom of expression and of vote to its members in matters outside the purview of the Party's Statement of Policy and Manifesto should apply to the discussion on the Official Languages Bill now before Parliament. The Board also gave guidance to Members of Parliament in regard to the attitude to be adopted when the Vivian Bose Commission Report came up for discussion.

The meeting then terminated.

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