

Swatantra Party

CENTRAL OFFICE

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BOMBAY 1.

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ORGANISATION SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, AT 9 A.M. AT 40, CANNING LANE, NEW DELHI.

A meeting of the Organisation Sub-Committee was held on Wednesday, November 7, at 9.30 a.m. at 40, Canning Lane, New Delhi.

Present:

Prof. N.G. Ranga - in the Chair
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Mr. K.M. Munshi
Mr. S.K.D. Paliwal
Mr. M.R. Masani

The minutes of the last meeting held in Madras on July 21 and 22 were confirmed.

Trade Union Work:

The report of the meeting of Trade Union workers of the Party held in Bombay on July 28 and 29 (Annexure A) was considered. The holding of the meeting and the recommendations were welcomed and it was decided that, as advised by the meeting, a Labour Advisory Sub-Committee should be formed with the General Secretary as Chairman and the following members:

Mr. G. Latchanna, M.L.A.	...	Andhra
Mr. V.N. Raghavan	...	Bangalore (Mysore)
Mr. A.P. Das	...	Roukela (Orissa)
Mr. Subramanian	...	Pollachi (Madras)

The recommendation that a full-time Labour organiser should be appointed in Central Office was held over for consideration later.

Party Organisation in Bihar:

It was decided that no action be taken in regard to the developments in connection with the Madras resolution on Party organisation in Bihar until the President of the State Unit had returned to India and had communicated with the Party. Another meeting of the Organisation Sub-Committee should thereafter be called in Madras as early as possible, at which developments arising out of the resolution of July 22 up to that date would be reviewed.

Bihar Jeep Credit:

The General Secretary reported on the correspondence between Thakur Bateshwar Singh on behalf of Mr. Kamakhya Narain Singh of Ramgarh on the one hand and the Central Office, in consultation with Mr. K.M. Munshi, on the other in regard to the jeep bank credit. The action taken was approved and it was decided that necessary steps should be taken to safeguard the Party's interests against the attempt being made to involve the Party in Shri Kamakhya Narain Singh's transaction with the Bank.

Party Organisation in the Punjab:

The General Secretary reported on developments in connection with the Madras decision on party organisation in the Punjab. It was decided that no action be taken till the next meeting of the Central Organising Committee.

Party Organisation:

A note embodying the General Secretary's proposals in regard to Party organisation (Annexure B) was considered. After a certain amount of discussion, further consideration of the proposals was postponed till the next meeting of the Central Organising Committee.

Enrolment of Members:

Progress made with the enrolment of members and the question of holding elections to various Party's Committees were considered. In this connection, communications received from Rajasthan, Mysore and other units drawing attention to unsatisfactory enrolment and the need for prolonging the process were considered. The diversion of effort from the defence of the country which would also be involved in a series of elections was also considered. In these circumstances, it was decided that enrolment of members should proceed and that no programme for election of local, State or National organs of the Party should be fixed for the present.

Reorganisation of State Units:

In view, however, of the need to gear the party organisation to its tasks, it was felt that State Executive Committees should be reconstituted in order to bring in fresh blood and secure the maximum possible efficiency.

In order that this may be done, each State Unit should be requested to submit to the Central Office the names of 50 members of the Party in the State, which should constitute a panel from which the new Executive Committee and its office-bearers may be drawn.

On the receipt of these lists, which should reach the Central Office not later than 15th December, 1962, the General Secretary or some other representative of the Centre may meet the present State office-bearers and the fifty members of each State Unit and, at such meeting, proposals for a new State Executive and its office-bearers should be formulated. These should be placed before the next meeting of the Central Organising Committee for its approval.

The President and General Secretary were authorised to fix the date of the next meeting of the Central Organising Committee as early as possible, in the light of the progress made with the proposals for reconstitution referred to above.

The meeting then terminated.

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GRAMS: SURAJYAM



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Minutes of the meeting of Trade Union Workers
belonging to the Swatantra Party held in
Bombay on July 28 and 29, 1962.

Present:

Mr. M.R.Masani (in the Chair)

Mr. V.N.Raghavan	- Aircraft Employees Union, Bangalore.
G. Narsing Rao	- Road, Railway and Brick Workers Unions.
Ban Singh	- Kanpur.
S.N. Panda	- North Orissa Workers Union (Quarries Section), Rourkela.
K.A. Divecha	- Machine Tools and Engineering Workers Union, Bombay.
N.K.Jagtap	- Bombay.
B.S.Pati	- North Orissa Workers Union(Mines section), Rourkela.
Hanumantha Rao	- Paschim Banga Pradesh Bhatkal Mazdoor Union, Calcutta.
A.P.Das	- North Orissa Workers Union, Rourkela.
T.B. Row	- The Breaker and Clay Workers Union,Secunderabad.
Kamal Bansi	- I.N.T.U.C., Kanpur.
Joy Mathew	- Kottayam.
J.P. Kuriyan	- Plantation Factory Workers Union (Observer)
Mathai Manjuran	- Cochín Port Workers Union.
Anand A Gaonkar	- Petroleum Employees Union, INTUC, Bombay.
A.R. Mishra	- Baghmār Colliery Mazdoor Sangh.
S.S. Sinha	- Baghmār Colliery Mazdoor Sangh, Jharia.
D. Amat	- North Orissa Workers Union, Rourkela.
V. Subramanian	- Bank Employees Union, Pollachi.
Brijnandan Singh	- Patna.
J.B. Manker	- United Steel Workers of Bhilai.
I.S. Bhargava	- Jaipur.
Madhu N. Mehta	- Institute of Workers Education.
Amar Nath	- Delhi.
Chamanlal Narang	- Ambala.
V.B. Karnik	- Observer, Bombay.

Mr. Masani welcomed the Trade Union workers who were members or friends of the Party and who had come from various parts of the country. He explained the purpose of the meeting, which was to discuss the labour policy and activities in this field by the Swatantra Party. He stated that there was a general feeling that there had not been enough interest on the part of the leadership in Labour and not enough attention was being given to Trade Union work. He suggested that the meeting should discuss the subject in two parts:

- i. The labour policy of the Party.
- ii. Activities of members in the Trade Union movement.

Mr. Masani clarified at the outset that the policy of the Party was against the setting up of Swatantra dominated Unions or a T.U.C. He then called upon those present to give their own views on the subject

All those present were then invited to share their experience and made their suggestions for the consideration of the meeting. A long discussion took place in which the following participated:-

Mr. V.N. Raghavan
Mr. A.B. Das
Mr. Subramanian
Mr. J.B. Manker
Mr. Brij Nandan Singh
Mr. S.B. Sinha
Mr. Anand Gaonkar
Mr. Ramalal Kamalvanshi
Mr. T.B. Row
Mr. Hanumantha Rao
Mr. B.S. Pati.

The meeting then adjourned till the next day and decided to meet at 9 a.m.

The adjourned meeting of trade union workers met again at 9 a.m. on July 29.

After considerable discussion and in the light of the points of view given expression to the previous day, the meeting reiterated the Party's stand that members of the Party should help the workers to organise Trade Unions controlled and managed by themselves in a spirit of service rather than of leadership. It was felt that the Party should seek to educate workers about the evils of political exploitation and domination which are so widely rampant in the Trade Union movement in India today.

The Conference endorsed the Party's policy not to seek to establish yet another Central Organisation of Trade Unions inspired or dominated by the Party and advised that members of the Party should seek to establish or develop independent Trade Unions unaffiliated to one or the other of the existing politics-ridden Trade union federations. Members of the Swatantra Party should carry on their political propaganda among the working classes in the name of the Party, while those functioning in Trade Unions should devote themselves to represent only the economic grievances of the workers concerned.

The Conference decided to recommend to the Central Organising Committee of the Party the establishment of a Labour Advisory Committee, which would have the following functions:-

- (a) To create greater interest within the Party on the problems and organisation of labour,
- (b) To advise the National Executive of the Party on matters concerning labour,
- (c) To gather information about the activities of members of various units of the Party in the field of labour,
- (d) To encourage and guide members of the Party in the formation and development of Trade Unions,
- (e) To organise the training of members of the Party functioning in trade unions in the principles and practice of genuine trade unionism,
- (f) To encourage members of the Party to serve the working class through the amelioration of their problems, such as housing, education and medical relief,

- (g) To act as a liaison between Trade Unions and members of the Party in Parliament and State Assemblies with a view to ensuring that their problems are ventilated and the grievances of workers are brought to the notice of the legislatures,
- (h) To prepare and publish literature explaining the Party's Statement of Policy in regard to labour with particular reference to educating workers on the desirability of eliminating political domination and exploitation and the building up of free and democratic trade unions controlled and managed by workers themselves.
- (i) It was recommended that the Labour Advisory Committee should consist of not more than fifteen members.
- (j) The meeting also decided to recommend to the Central Organising Committee that a full time organiser be appointed in the Central Office who should maintain contact with Trade Unions and members of the Party and encourage activities directed towards implementing the Party's programme.

The General Secretary of the Party assured the meeting that he would convey to the Central Organising Committee the recommendations of the Conference and expressed the hope that, as a result of their efforts, the social base of the Swatantra Party would become more broad-based and embrace a large section of industrial workers in India.

SWATANTRA PARTY

Central Organising Committee

General Secretary's proposals in regard to Party Organisation.

1. Soon after the General Elections, I had occasion in my report to the Candidates' Convention called in Bombay on April 7 and 8 to outline a brief picture of the Party as it emerged from the Elections. and to indicate some lessons which could be learnt from the experience so far gained. Since I do not wish to cover the same ground again, I append a copy of that report for reference.
2. Briefly, the position of the Party today is that it has emerged from the Elections fairly impressive in quantitative terms of representation in Parliament and the Assemblies but, when an evaluation is made in terms of the quality and standards of the Party's performance, organisation and work, the same degree of satisfaction would not be justified. It has also to be conceded that, since the Elections, the tempo of the Party's organisation and activity has been sluggish and unsatisfactory. It is not unnatural perhaps that, during the first election fought by a new political party, many things happen which ought not to happen. The result has been that the shining image of the Party which was first presented to the public in 1959 now appears somewhat tarnished. Looking back on our first three years of existence it is clear that our basic error was to try and get too big too quickly, and as a consequence to accept recruits to our ranks too indiscriminately and to put up too many candidates, not all of whom were adequately screened.
3. Now that the few months during which war-weariness might be expected to spend itself have passed, it is time to take stock, put our house in order and gear the Party for the next stride forward. It is obvious that if things have to be put right in our set up, this is the time to do it. We have four years and a half ahead of us for the 1967 elections. If we allow this opportunity to pass, the task of cutting our losses, pruning our set up and building on sounder foundations than we found possible to do in the short period that we had between our birth and the General Elections, we shall not be able to face this task later. In another year, we shall have moved out of the post-election to the pre-election stage, and then it will be too late. Hence the need for the Party to do whatever that is to be done between now and the end of 1962.
4. In the course of a talk that I was invited to give at the Harold Laski Institute of Political Science in Ahmedabad on June 26 on 'Party Politics in India', I took the liberty of thinking aloud on the preconditions to success of an Opposition party in the 1967 elections. A copy of this address is attached and I would appreciate its perusal and critical scrutiny. While what I said there did not make any specific reference to the Swatantra Party, I would in all humility urge that it has relevance for us as for any others. I am deeply convinced that, if our approach to the problems of organisation is not broadly on the lines that outlined from page 17 onwards, we shall not be able to make the grade for reasons I have explained in that talk.
5. It is gratifying to record that, at a recent Joint Meeting in Madras on July 21 and 22 of the Organisation Sub-Committee and the Parliamentary Board, certain important decisions were taken which should help to clear the air. Broadly, the organisational issue before the Party is whether it is to be a confederation of political chiefs more or less sovereign in their own State or territory, allowed a free hand to manage things as they like and given support whether they

are right or wrong or whether the Swatantra Party is to be a modern national democratic party in the sense in which a party is understood in the world's democracies. If the answer is that it should - despite the backwardness of the country and the complexity of the problems created by a predominantly illiterate electorate - be the latter, then it is obvious that there has to be a judicious combination of discipline and internal democracy. Indeed, as Mahatma Gandhi never tired of pointing out, discipline and freedom are two facets of the same thing. A brief description of such an organisational approach would be a policy of effective organisation and 'clean hands'. It is in the hope that such an approach would be broadly acceptable to the Central Organising Committee that I now venture to make certain concrete proposals designed to lay the foundations on which such a structure may be reared.

6. In the advanced democracies, the balance between the autonomy of a local unit of a Party and the needs of integrated and disciplined functioning is maintained by the existence of a freely elected local executive committee on the one hand and a full-time organiser appointed by the Party headquarters on the other. In Britain, such an organiser is called the "Agent", and it is the aim of the major political parties to have such an agent in each Parliamentary constituency. Naturally, such a structure involves a large budget but the British Liberal Party's current slogan is: "The Agent more than pays for himself."

7. Since the birth of the Swatantra Party, we have been conscious of the need for the establishment of a cadre of full-time organisers who would be devoted, articulate and efficient builders of the Party organisation. Unfortunately, we did not have the necessary funds and what funds we did collect we dissipated in routine monthly subventions to State units which were eaten up in the maintenance of the State office rather than on field organisation. In some cases, though not all, these contributions proved to be a waste.

8. At its meeting in Bombay on March 15, 1962, the Central Organising Committee decided that "there should be no question of monthly subventions to State units being continued as in the past." The Central Organising Committee also decided that, as early as the financial situation made it possible, a scheme for the appointment by the Central Office of full-time regional organisers who would be posted in various States with a view to the local organisation should be placed before a meeting of the Central Organising Committee. It is in pursuance of that decision that the present scheme is being placed before the Central Organising Committee for its consideration.

9. It is proposed that we commence with the recruitment of a certain number of Organisers who would be carefully selected and properly trained. They would then be posted to appropriate States and regions by the Central Office on the basis of a set of criteria taking note of local performance, potential and needs to be worked out later. Assuming that to, start with, one such organiser is posted in each major State with a second one available for about half the number of States, we would need around 25 such organisers. As a result of discussions with colleagues from various parts of the country, it appears that the emoluments of such organisers might well range from Rs.150 to Rs.500 per month depending on experience and qualifications. In addition to this remuneration, each such organiser, if he is to be mobile, would need an allowance of about Rs.150 per month. At an average, therefore, each organiser in the field would cost Rs.375 per month, or Rs.4,500 per year. For 25 such organisers, we would need Rs.1,12,500 per year.

10. The following Budget is therefore suggested for the year 1963:

25 full-time organisers (at an average salary of Rs.225 per month plus travelling allowance of Rs.150) Rs.112,500

Central Office expenses, publicity, etc (at Rs.10,000 per month as sanctioned by the Central Organising Committee at its meeting in Bangalore on 5th February 1960) Rs. 120,000

Miscellaneous and contingencies Rs. 17,500

Rs. 250,000

Such a budget should not be beyond our capacity to meet for the year 1963 and it is suggested we plan our work in anticipation of this amount becoming available by the end of this year.

11. This, however, should only be a beginning. I have no doubt that, if the Party's organisation is put on a firm foundation and is seen to function in a dynamic effective and disciplined manner, that very achievement will enable us to raise substantially larger sums of money in the coming years. While the target of one organiser for each parliamentary constituency which is adopted by the Party may remain beyond our reach, it should be our effort to raise the number of our field workers to 100 by the time a year remains for the next General Elections.

12. Another concrete organisational step to take is the adoption of prospective candidates, constituency by constituency, commencing some time in the middle of 1963 until practically all candidates are in position well ahead of the next General Elections. Now that even the Congress Party has adopted such a plan, perhaps it will appear less revolutionary to some of us. It is proposed that this matter and the procedure to be followed re. the screening of candidates and their adoption be taken up for consideration as soon as the new National Executive comes into existence early in 1963.

M.R. Masani
(M.R. Masani)

Bombay, 17th August, 1962