

# Swatantra Party

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Draft Minutes of Joint Meeting of the Organisation Sub-Committee and the Parliamentary Board in Madras on July 21, 1962, at 10 a.m.

## Present:

Professor N.G. Ranga (in the Chair)  
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari  
Mr. K.M. Munshi  
Mr. R.N. Singh Deo, M.L.A.  
Mr. B.D. Patel, M.L.A.  
Mr. Dabhyabhai Patel, M.P.  
Mr. P.K. Deo, M.P.  
Mr. M.R. Masani  
Mr. B. Ramachandra Reddi (by special invitation)  
Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy (by special invitation)

The minutes of the meeting of the Parliamentary Board held in Bombay on April 7 and 8, the Parliamentary Sub-Committee also on April 7, and the Organisation Sub-Committee on April 7, were duly confirmed.

Arising out of the minutes, the General Secretary reported on the decision by circular arrived at by the Parliamentary Board regarding the Panchayat elections. Mr. R.N. Singh Deo offered to give the General Secretary a copy of an offending Congress Party leaflet in Orissa and it was decided that publicity should be given to this breach of the understanding. It was suggested that the Central Office should circularise the State units asking them to furnish similar information on breaches of the understanding by members of other parties and breaches of discipline by members of our own party.

Arising out of the minutes, the position in regard to the Parliamentary by-election in Chittoor was discussed and expression was given to the need for maximum financial and other support being given to the district unit of the Party and the Party's candidate. It was decided that up to 15 jeeps belonging to the Centre now with the Bihar State Party should be made available for the by-election and that Professor Ranga should write to Dr. Basant Narain Singh, in the absence of the State President. Offers from other States of some jeeps available with them were made.

The results of the General Elections were then reviewed and an analysis of the voting figures in regard to the Party's candidates was submitted to the meeting. The analysis showed that, while about half of the Party's candidates who were defeated secured second place, roughly another half forfeited their security deposits.

A statement of accounts in regard to Central contributions for election purposes was taken into consideration. The meeting regretted to note that no accounts had yet been received by the Treasurer or the Central Office in regard to nearly half the amount of contributions. The State and Regional units concerned should be called upon to submit their accounts immediately. Similarly the President of the Himachal Pradesh unit should be requested to pay forthwith the amount outstanding to the Party in respect of purchase of microphone equipment valued at Rs.945 and to return immediately the Jeep Station Wagon which had been loaned to the Himachal unit.

A statement in regard to the Party's jeeps was then considered. It was decided that those who had not yet returned the jeeps loaned to them by the Central Office should be called upon to return them without further delay.

A note reporting on the present position in regard to the Bihar jeep credit was considered. It was decided that the balance of Rs.60,000 remaining with the Party should be paid off and that the Bank and the Insurance Company concerned should be informed of the correct position so that the Party's interests might be protected.

The General Secretary's Report on the Breaches of Discipline in connection with the General Elections was then considered.

In so far as Mr. R. Agnibhoj was concerned, it was decided that he should be directed to sit with the Party M.L.A.s in the M.P. Assembly and to function in all respects as one of the Party's members in the Assembly. No action need be taken re. the failure to account for Central Subventions sent to him.

The complaints made by Jathedar Udharn Singh Nagoke, President of the Punjab unit, Mr. P.N. Joshi, Parliamentary candidate in Karnal, and Mr. Chamanlal Narang against Mr. Dharam Singh Rath, General Secretary of the Punjab Unit, in connection with his conduct during the Karnal Parliamentary elections were taken up for consideration. The explanation submitted by Mr. Rath was also placed before the meeting. It was decided that this matter should be held over for further consideration at a later meeting of the Parliamentary Board. In the meanwhile, it was decided that Mr. Rath should be called upon immediately to return to the Central Office of the Party the Party's jeep which was still in his possession and which he had failed to return despite requests to that effect.

Arising out of this matter, the Organisation Sub-Committee, with the approval of the Parliamentary Board, decided that, for the smooth functioning of the Party's affairs in the Punjab, the *ad hoc* State Committee should be reconstituted and that two Regional Committees should be set up, one for each of the two regions into which the State had already been demarcated for administrative convenience.

The interim State Committee would consist of the members of the two interim Regional Committees. Jathedar Udharn Singh Nagoke would be the President. The other office-bearers of the State Committee would be elected by the new Committee at its first meeting with the approval of the General Secretary of the Party. The State Committee would function for all matters of common concern to the entire State including the activities of the Party's members in the State Assembly.

In the Punjabi-speaking region, the Regional Committee would consist of Jathedar Udharn Singh Nagoke as President, Sardar Pasant Singh as Secretary and three other members to be nominated by the General Secretary in consultation with the President and Secretary of the Regional Committee.

In the Hindi-speaking region, the Regional Committee would consist of Choudhary Inder Singh as Convenor, Mr. Chamanlal Narang and Mr. Dharam Singh Rath as members, with two other members to be nominated by the General Secretary in consultation with the Convenor and members of the Regional Committee.

All these Committees would function till elected committees come into existence later in accordance with the Party's Constitution.

The Report of the Committee consisting of Mr. K.M. Munshi and Sir Hosi Mody in regard to complaints preferred against Mr. Gopal Gupta, M.P., was then taken up for consideration. It was decided that the findings of the Committee that Mr. Ram Gopal Gupta attended the recount in the Gonda Parliamentary constituency as a Counting Agent of the Congress candidate and had challenged the votes of his own Party's candidate and was thus guilty of a grave breach of the Party's discipline be accepted. Similarly

the meeting accepted the finding of the Committee that the story of Mr. Gupta that he acted as he did by reason of fear of insecurity to his person was not founded on facts. The meeting appreciated the embarrassment caused to Mr. Ramgopal Gupta by the fact that the Congress candidate whom he assisted in breach of the Party's discipline was his elder brother and head of the family. In the circumstances, it was decided that a reprimand would suffice and that this should be conveyed to Mr. Gupta.

The Report of the Bihar State President on the General Elections was then taken up for consideration. It was decided that, in the light of the discussion, a formal resolution on the subject should be prepared by Mr. Munshi and placed before the meeting on the following day.

The meeting then reviewed the functioning of the Party's groups in both Houses of Parliament. It was decided that there should be no change in the nomination of office-bearers of the Party in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha for the coming session in August/September 1962.

The Acting Leader of the Party in the Lok Sabha inquired about the stand that should be taken by the Party Members in the forthcoming discussion on foreign affairs. In so far as Chinese aggression was concerned, the meeting felt that the Government's policy continued to be weak and greater firmness should be urged. The Party's Members should oppose the H.I.C. deal on the ground that the economic advantage was illusory and dependence on Soviet jet planes and spare parts at a time when we were up against Chinese communist attacks on our territory was not in the interests of the country's security. The view that it was possible to drive a wedge between the Soviets and the Chinese was not favoured and it was felt that, despite tensions, the alliance between the two governments would hold.

An inquiry made by the Acting Leader of the Party in Lok Sabha in regard to the formation of a larger Opposition bloc including Members of the Swatantra Party was then discussed. After discussion, it was decided that no such step should be taken for the present, but that the de facto liaison now in existence between the Party and certain like-minded groups and individuals should be maintained and developed and that exploratory discussions may continue in order to ensure that the fullest measure of co-operation is developed on the basis of opposition to Statism and the restoration of the Fundamental Rights embodied in the original Constitution of 1950.

The position of certain Members of the Party in the Lok Sabha who were elected on a symbol other than that of the Party was considered. It was decided that the three members of the Party from the Punjab should, if they so desired, continue to be Associate Members of the Party. If any of them wished to become full members of the party, they were welcome to do so. In either event, payment of the monthly subscription should be obligatory. The meeting accepted Mr. Yash Pal Singh M.P. as an associate member in the Lok Sabha.

A statement showing the collection of contributions from members of both Houses and the arrears outstanding was placed before the meeting. It was decided that members of the Party in both Houses should be requested to pay up the arrears and to make their monthly contributions regularly.

It was decided that the Central Office should arrange for the appointment of a Research Assistant to strengthen the office of the Parliamentary Group and that the appointment should carry a salary not exceeding Rs.500 per month. The Treasurer was requested to find the necessary finances for a period of one year commencing with the next session of Parliament.

The functioning of the Party in the various States Assemblies was then considered.

A letter and telegram received from Mr. Raghavendra Pratap Singh, leader of the Party in the U.P. Assembly were considered. The meeting decided that, in the circumstances and in the light of reasons given, direct action for which permission was sought could not be advised. The General Secretary was asked to communicate this decision and the reasons for it to Mr. Raghavendra Partap Singh.

A letter dated June 29, 1962, from the National Integration Council was placed before the meeting. It was decided that the matter should be taken up for consideration at a later meeting.

The meeting then adjourned till the following day.

Draft minutes of the Adjourned session of the Joint Meeting of the Organisation Sub-Committee and the Parliamentary Board in Madras on July 22nd at 9.30 a.m.

Present :

Prof. N.G.Ranga (in the chair)  
Mr. C.Rajagopalachari  
Mr. K.M.Munshi  
Mr. R.N.Singh Deo, M.L.A.  
Mr. P.K.Deo M.P.  
Mr. M.R.Masani

Mr. B. Ramachandra Reddi) By special  
Prof.M.Ruthnaswamy ) invitation

The progress made with the enrolment of the members of the Party in various States was reviewed and requests for extension of the time for enrolment received from certain States were considered. It was decided that, in response to this request, the time for enrolment may be extended upto 30th November 1962, it being made clear that this was the final date and no further extension could be considered.

The General Secretary reported on the difficulty experienced by some members of the Party in certain States in getting membership books for enrolment. It was decided that the Central Office should supply membership forms direct in appropriate cases of this nature, a proper assurance being obtained from those to whom forms were supplied that the forms would be duly returned and appropriate accounts submitted.

A suggestion received from the Mysore State unit about the creation of a category of Active Members of the Party was considered. It was decided that since this involved an amendment in the Party's Constitution, it may be considered later by the Central Organising Committee nearer the date of the next National Convention of the Party.

A letter from Mr. Natwar Singh Solanki, Organising Secretary of the Gujerat State Unit, requesting financial assistance in connection with the relief work done by the local Party in connection with a serious bus accident entailing numerous casualties was considered. While the meeting appreciated the good work done by the Gujerat colleagues, the meeting regretted that, in the absence of funds, no financial assistance could be made available by the Centre.

A proposal received from certain members of the Party in Bombay in regard to the setting up of a National Economic Advisory Council on a non-party basis was placed before the meeting. It was decided that no action should be taken in furtherance of the proposal.

Arising out of this, it was however decided that a Study Group be set up consisting of Professor M. Rathnaswamy, Sardar Bahadur Lal Singh and Mr. J.M. Lobo Prabhu and that the Study Group should seek the co-operation of Professors B.R. Shenoy and Desai of Ahmedabad University and Professor Krishnamurthy of Bijapur. The terms of reference of this committee would be to examine the predicament in which the country had been placed as a result of faulty planning on the part of the present government and to consider how the country can be helped to get out of this predicament. Such a study would be of great help to the Party in explaining to the people how it would face the situation if the people give it their confidence.

A draft resolution prepared by Mr. K.M. Munshi and revised by Rajaji arising out of the report of the Bihar State President on the General Elections and certain acts of indiscipline in that State was placed before the meeting. After discussion, the resolution with slight alterations was unanimously adopted in the form attached. (Appendix A).

In response to the feeling that publication of this resolution might have repercussions on the Chittoor bye-election, it was decided, on the General Secretary's proposal, that the resolution should be communicated to all concerned and released for publication immediately after August 25. It was agreed that the decision was final and was to be operative with immediate effect. The General Secretary was instructed that when it was released for publication it should bear the date 22nd July.

May A Sub-Committee consisting of the President, Mr. K.M. Munshi and the General Secretary was nominated to resolve any difficulties that may arise in the course of the implementation of this resolution.

Mr. K.M. Munshi then reported to the meeting on the investigation into the accounts of expenditure in certain districts of Tirhoot division in the State of Bihar and adopted the following resolution :

"By a resolution of the Parliamentary Sub- Committee a Committee was appointed consisting of Mr. K.M. Munshi and Mr. Kamakhya Narain Singh of Ramgarh to look into the matter of handling of Party finances in the districts of Darbanga, Purnea and Saharsa.

Mr. Munshi reported to the Parliamentary Board that Statements of Accounts had been received by him from Mr. Janki Nandan Singh and Mr. Purnanand Jha which appeared to be in order. In the case of Mr. Ramanugrah Jha, following the practice of the Board not to ask for accounts from candidates, there was no need to receive any statement of account from Mr. Ramanugrah Jha, who was himself a candidate.

The Parliamentary Board took note of Mr. Munshi's report and decided that, in view of the satisfactory resolution of the problem, there was no further need for the Sub-Committee consisting of Mr. Munshi and Mr. Kamakhya Narain Singh to function and the Sub-Committee is now functus officio. The accounts would be scrutinised by the Treasurer in the normal manner as in the case of other State and Regional units."

It was decided that the next meeting of the Central Organising Committee should be held in Bombay on Sunday and Monday, September 30 and October 1, 1962.

#### APPENDIX (A)

On 14th March 1962 the Organisation Sub-Committee authorised Shri Kamakhya Narain Singh, the President of the Bihar State Unit, to appoint an interim State Committee and office bearers and to reconstitute the District Committees to the extent necessary till they were replaced by duly elected committees. Pursuant to the authority given to him it is regretted that the President of the Bihar Unit has appointed a Working Committee which is open to the charge of being altogether unrepresentative of the various elements in the Party in the State.

2. Shri Kamakhya Narain Singh has circulated cyclostyled copies of a Report on the results of the General Elections in the course of which he has made highly offensive and incorrect references to the Central Organising Committee, its Parliamentary Sub-Committee and their representatives who dealt with the affairs of Bihar, and the Central Office. In the Report, the complaint is made that there was "interference" on the part of these authorities causing "disruption" in the work of the State Unit. The Report demands: "If I am to function as the Instrument of the People's Will, then I must not be fettered from above and within." Shri Kamakhya Narain concludes his Report with the following ultimatum: "If I am not allowed to work out our destiny, then this is the time someone else is put in charge of Bihar affairs and I am absolved of historic responsibilities." Had this report been available for perusal before the decision referred to above, the Committee would certainly not have taken the decision it did in view of the totally undemocratic nature of the claim made by Shri Kamakhya Narain Singh.

3. In the opinion of the Parliamentary Board and the Organisation Sub-Committee at this Joint Meeting this is a claim by the President of a State Unit to be released of restraint from above and democratic procedures within the unit. Such a claim if conceded would disrupt the integrity of the Party. This is a demand which no national democratic party can possibly accept.

This challenge to the Party's authority comes as a culmination of a series of acts in defiance of the Party's decisions extending over the past twelve months including the flouting of the Baroda Award of the Central Organising Committee which was designed to further harmonious functioning of the Party in Bihar. The attention of the Joint Meeting has also been drawn to certain more recent acts during and after the General Election campaign:

- (a) Several changes were made by the Bihar State President in the list of candidates approved by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee without its approval.
- (b) The President of the State Unit tried to get the Returning Officers in the Districts of Purnea and Darbhanga to accept as certifying authorities persons other than those approved by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee and furnished to the electoral authorities. In consequence the Central Office of the Party had to approach the Chief Electoral Officer and Returning Officers concerned in order to ensure that the certifying authorities approved by it were allowed to function on the Party's behalf.
- (c) The President of the State unit ignored the request of the Central Office addressed to State units that they should recommend the names of the Party's candidates for election to the Rajya Sabha in March 1962 for the approval of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee and nominated such candidates in Bihar without consulting the Parliamentary Sub-Committee and getting its approval.

5. The Organisation Sub-Committee with the approval of the Parliamentary Board has therefore regretfully come to the conclusion that the authority given by the

decision of the Organisation Sub-Committee on March 14, 1962 be and is hereby revoked and the Working Committee and any other committees appointed under that authority stand dissolved. The following interim Executive Committee is hereby appointed for the State of Bihar, with power to enrol members and carry on the functions of the Party in all respects until elected District Committees and a State Committee come into existence in accordance with the Party's Constitution :

|                           |                    |                  |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Mr. Kamakhya Narain Singh | -President         |                  |
| Mr. Ram Binod Singh       | }                  | -Vice Presidents |
| Mr. Jaleshwar Prasad      |                    |                  |
| Mr. J.K.P.N. Singh        |                    |                  |
| Dr. Basant Narain Singh   |                    |                  |
| Mr. Jugal Kishore Narayan |                    |                  |
| Mr. N. Baksi              | -General Secretary |                  |

6. This joint meeting appeals to all members of the Party in Bihar to give their loyal cooperation in the implementation of this resolution.

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