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Swatantra Party Parliamentary Office

53 North Avenue,
New Delhi.

June 9, 1967.

Minutes of the Meeting

A meeting of the General Body of the Party in Parliament was held at 10 A.M., on Thursday, June 9, 1967 in Room No. 50, 1st Floor, Parliament House, New Delhi. The following Members attended:

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| 1. Prof. N.G. Harga | (in the Chair) |
| 2. Mr. C.C. Desai | |
| 3. Mr. J.M. Lobo Prabhu | 14. Raja Venkatappa Naik |
| 3. Mr. Y.G. Gowd | 15. Maharaja P.K. Deo |
| 5. Mr. Viren J. Shah | 16. Shri Debanand Amat |
| 6. Mr. Manubhai Amersey | 17. Mr. Direndranath Deb |
| 7. Mr. Dahyabhai Parmar | 18. Mr. K.P. Singh Deo |
| 8. Mr. Piloo Mody | 19. Mr. Charanjit Rai |
| 9. Prof. R.K. Amin | 20. Mr. D.N. Patodia |
| 10. Mr. N. Dandekar | |
| 11. Mr. K.M. Kaushik | |
| 12. Mr. M.K. Nanja Gowder | |
| 13. Mr. S. Xavier | |

It was decided that we should have a series of meetings to discuss the various demands for grants. The Members may be required to express their opinion on the various demands. Those points may be noted and circulated to all Members for their information. Such informal discussions would help the Members who might be asked to speak on a particular demand on behalf of the Party. Members are also requested to communicate to the speakers any points or suggestions that they may know, but the ultimate responsibility of what to say is that of the speaker.

It was decided that the Members were free to table cut motions reflecting local problems and also problems of national interest in regard to the various demands for grants.

Demands in respect of the Defence Ministry were discussed. Mr. N. Dandekar who was likely to be the Party's spokesman on the subject said that he would like to concentrate on organisation of the Naval Command into Eastern and Western Commands, and the developments during the last 10 years on the national and international fronts, i.e. threat to our security from China and Pakistan and also other Navies operating in the Indian Ocean. Mr. Dandekar said that he was in favour of reorganisation of the Navy in two divisions. He wanted the Navy to be strengthened by the addition of a few aircraft carriers and small vessels. As for the air force he wanted the standardised aircrafts to be used and obsolete ones discarded.

Mr. Xavier was in favour of turning Tuticcrin harbour into a naval base. According to him China was friendly to Ceylon and in 1962 Ceylon was used as a base against India. Tuticcrin was only 200 miles away from Ceylon.

Mr. Piloo Mody felt that the reorganisation of Navy would entail extra expenditure on defence. Such a suggestion would be inconsistent with our views that there was scope for economy even in the defence expenditure. Therefore, it should be made clear that additional expenditure suggested is for areas other than where the economy was being suggested by us, that is, in regard to maintenance of stores and spares, ordnance factories etc.

Mr. Piloo Mody was of the view that we should make points as regards economy etc. but should not go into the details of reorganisation of various divisions. That should be left to the defence experts. Several squadrons of the Air Force though obsolete and for which spares were not available in the international markets, spares had to be manufactured in the country at greater cost.

Mr. P.K. Deo suggested that the country should have ample safeguard from the Chinese nuclear blackmail. That according to him was possible if we get shield against nuclear attack from a friendly country. He wanted naval establishment at Port Blair to be streamlined and strengthened and turned into a base for the Eastern Command.

Mr. Lobo Prabhu agreed with Mr. Mody that there should be consistency in our approach regarding defence expenditure. If on the one hand we suggest economy in defence expenditure, we should not suggest reorganisation of navy which would entail extra expenditure. He wanted our Party spokesman to concentrate on various demands as laid down in the Demands for Grants and not make a general speech which according to him would not make much impact.

Mr. Amat wanted extra amenities to be provided to our Jawans. He wanted that they should get more salary and other similar facilities.

Prof. Ranga, winding up the discussion, said that wastage and corruption in stores and spares should be stopped at all costs which would mean at least 10 per cent economy in the defence expenditure. He wanted army to be reorganised and ordnance factories properly developed to meet our requirements.

C.C. Desai
Secretary