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ORGANISER

June 8, 1964.

MASANI DENIES UPADHYAYA'S CHARGE

Shri M. R. Masani, General Secretary, Swatantra Party has sent us the following statement for publication:

In your issue of 18th May, 1964, you carry a news-item from Bhilwara in which you quote Mr. Deendayal Upadhyaya, General Secretary of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, as accusing the Swatantra Party of "deliberate violation" of an electoral understanding. According to Mr. Upadhyaya, one of the conditions of the understanding between him and myself, which had been put down in writing, was that where a seat fell vacant "that party would be given a prior option to fight the by-election which had contested that particular seat in the 1962 elections." I am afraid Mr. Upadhyaya's memory has played him false. There was no such understanding. If he will refer to the memorandum agreed to between us, he will find that it says: "Where a vacancy is caused due to death, disqualification or removal of a sitting member on the other side, normally there should be no idea of putting up a rival candidate." That, as you will see, is an entirely different proposition and has no application to the case of Bhilwara. It will thus be seen that the Swatantra Party could not be guilty of violating an understanding that does not exist.

UPADHYAYA'S COMMENT

Vis-a-vis Shri Masani's statement above, BJS General Secretary Shri Upadhyaya has observed:

In spite of a general understanding between the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra Party there was a clash in the last by-election to the Lok Sabha from Bhilwara Constituency. It is futile to give any literal or legalist interpretation to words. If the parties continue to encroach upon areas where one or the other had shown some strength during the 1962 elections, it would be difficult to avoid a clash. There can be exceptions. But the Swatantra Party leaders never approached Jana Sangh to make out a case for such an exception. In fact they went their own way and then in the end wanted the Jana Sangh to submit meekly. That is not the path of understanding.