

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board held at Kalki Buildings, Madras on June 22, 1969, at 10 a.m.

Present:

543

Prof. N. G. Ranga
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy
Mr. Dahyabhai V. Patel
Mr. B.P. Singh
Mr. G. Iatchanna
Mr. H.M. Patel
Mr. N. Dandeker

- In the Chair

1. The Minutes of the meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board held in New Delhi on February 16, 1969 were confirmed.

2. Review of performance in by-elections:

The Board reviewed the performance by the Party's candidates in one by-election to the Lok Sabha and two to the State Assembly in Gujarat since the last meeting of the Board. It was noted with regret that all three which had been won in the General Elections of 1967 had now been lost.

In this connection, the attention of the Board was drawn to a statement issued by the Party's Vice-President, Dr. K.M. Munshi during the Baras-kantha parliamentary by-election giving support to Mr. S.K. Patil, the Congress candidate, even though the Party had its own candidate Mr. Manu Amersey. The Board unanimously recommended to the National Executive that Dr. Munshi's statement should be regarded as unfortunate.

3. U.P. Legislature Group Developments:

The General Secretary Mr. Dandeker and Mr. B.P. Singh reported on recent developments vis-a-vis the Party's Legislature Group in the U.P. State Assembly leading to Mr. Munshilal Chamar's election as Leader of the Party's Group in the State Assembly contrary to the advice tendered by the Board at its last meeting that Mr. B.P. Singh should be elected Leader. The Board further noted that Mr. B.P. Singh had subsequently resigned his Presidentship of the State Unit. Mr. B.P. Singh pointed out that his resignation from the Presidentship was in no way connected with the leadership of the Party's Group in the State Assembly; and that long before this question arose, he had made known his desire to relinquish the Presidentship of the State Unit.

In this connection, Mr. B.P. Singh reported on the possibility of a no-confidence motion being moved by the BKD against the Congress Government in the State and sought the Board's advice and guidance in regard to the attitude which the Party's Group in the State Assembly should take, particularly in view of the earlier decision of the Board not to participate in efforts to topple governments which were stable and which did not contain or depend upon the support of communists.

The Board agreed that in the light of the present cordial relations with the BKD and particularly the talks that were now going on between the two Parties, there was need to modify its earlier decision stated above and it was decided that the Party's Group in the State Assembly should be advised to support the BKD on such a motion of no-confidence.

4. Bihar Legislature Group Developments:

The General Secretary reported on the position taken by the Party's 3-Man Group in the State Legislature in keeping out of the Coalition Government and its Coordinating Committee but giving conditional support from outside. In view, however, of the fall of the Congress Coalition Ministry and the fact that the BKD was reported to have joined the new Ministry formed by Bholu Paswan Shastri, the Board authorised the General Secretary, Mr. Dandekar to discuss these developments with Mr. Budhan Rai Verma, the Convenor of the State Ad-Hoc Committee (who was in Madras to attend the National Executive meeting as a special invitee), and consider whether there was need to modify the Party's earlier stand by taking the same line as the BKD (Viz. to join the Ministry if invited) or whether to continue the policy of giving conditional support to Ministry from outside.

5. Raghubir Singh of Bissau:

The Board was informed that while Maharawal Laxman Singh of Dungarpur, the Leader of the Party's Group in the State Assembly, had forwarded the explanation of Thakur Raghubir Singh of Bissau as to why he resigned his seat in the Legislature without the Party's permission, he had not expressed his views concerning what action should be taken. In view of this, it was decided to hold over further consideration of this matter till the next meeting of the Board.

6. Consideration of Candidatures received from State Units:

(i) Bhiloda Assembly By-Election

The approval given to the candidature of Mr. Bhagwandas H. Joshi in the Bhiloda Assembly by-election was ratified.

(ii) Madras Legislative Council - Graduate's Constituency

The Board approved Mr. G. Narayanaswamy as the Party's candidate in the by-election to the Madras Legislature Council from the Graduates' Constituency.

(iii) Sattur Assembly by-election

The Board approved Mr. Srinivasa Naicke as the Party's candidate in the by-election to the State Assembly from Sattur.

(iv) Khetri Assembly by-election

The Board noted that the by-election caused by the resignation of Thakur Raghubir Singh of Bissau was not being contested by the Party but that we were supporting a nominee of the BKD.

7. Parliamentary Matters:

Private Members' Bill on Salaries, Allowances and other Amenities for M.Ps.

A letter on the subject from Mr. M.R. Masani, Deputy Leader of the Party's Group in the Lok Sabha had been circulated earlier to members of the Board. After discussion, the Board decided to advise the Parliamentary Group of the Party as follows, namely -

- First, to see whether the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee could be got referred to an impartial third party (e.g. a Judge of the Supreme Court) for opinion, with the tacit understanding that such impartial opinion would be ^{accepted} by the House and the Bill amended accordingly;
- Secondly, if the House did not agree to the above, to support only those provisions in the Bill which embodied the unanimous recommendations of the Joint Select Committee but not those which were merely majority recommendations, and
- Thirdly, if even this was not accepted by the Congress Party, then to abstain from voting on those recommendations which were not unanimous.

The Party's Leader in Parliament, Prof. N.G. Ranga was requested to persuade the Congress Party to our view particularly in regard to the second alternative.

8. Dissolution of the United Front in Andhra Pradesh Legislature

The Board noted that the United Democratic Front in the Andhra Legislative Assembly had been dissolved in March this year as a result of differences in regard to the attitude to be taken on the Telongana agitation. The decision to dissolve was taken unanimously by both the partners of the Front. The leader of our Party in the State Assembly, Mr. G. Latchanna, reported that subsequently two M.L.As. had joined the Party's Group as Associate Members and that the Party's Group was now only two members short for recognition as the Official Opposition.

9. Negotiations with the BKD and the Jan Sangh

The Board discussed briefly the discussions with the BKD and Jan Sangh and decided that this matter be referred to the National Executive for detailed discussion.

10. President of India

The General Secretary referred to the letter received from the Samyukta Socialist Party requesting all Opposition Parties to persuade Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan on the basis of a unanimous choice to stand as a candidate for the Office of the President of India. The Board, while unable to accept this recommendation, preferred Mr. H.N. Kunzru or Mr. K. Subba Rao (in that order). It was decided that these views be conveyed to the National Executive.

The meeting then terminated.