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General Secretary's Letter No. 296

March 14, 1973

Dear Friend,

At its meeting in New Delhi on February 18, the National Executive reviewed the Party's policy concerning elections at the ground level such as block and panchayat elections and considered matters concerning Party organisation.

Panchayat Elections

As far back as June 1965, the National Executive had given permission to Party Units to participate, if they so desired, in gram panchayat elections on the Party's label. The meeting of the Executive last month felt that it was now time to take a more positive decision.

The Executive has therefore called upon the Party's Units in the various States and Regions to contest whenever and wherever possible elections at the village panchayat, block, taluka and municipal levels.

The primary reason for this decision, if I may explain, is the realisation that if we are to succeed in elections at the Assembly and the Parliamentary levels we can do so only if we have a strong base at the panchayat, taluka and municipal levels. What better way can there be than to contest elections at these levels and in the process build up the Party's machine which will stand us in good stead during elections to the State Assembly and Parliament. Please therefore give instructions to your units at the district and taluka/assembly levels to consider seriously the possibility of contesting such elections as and when they occur.

Party Organisation :

The Executive continued the discussion begun in Lucknow last October to devise ways and means of strengthening the structures of Party organisation. The President, Mr. Piloo Mody, had devised a proforma to enable the National Headquarters to receive information and deal directly with District Units in so far as organisational matters like enrolment data, distribution of literature and news concerning Party activity, were concerned. This had become necessary particularly because of the difficulties State Offices were facing due to inadequate staff facilities. Due to this, instructions and suggestions issued by the National Headquarters from time to time got held up at the State Office level without percolating to the Party Units at the District and Constituency levels.

This suggestion of the National Headquarters would :

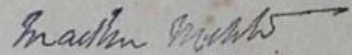
- (a) help State Offices reduce routine administrative burden so as to enable them to give greater attention to more important aspects of party activity, and enable
 - (b) direct communication with the National Headquarters which would serve as an encouragement to active units who would feel that their work was being recognised and spur them on to greater effort.
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It was finally decided that --

- (a) the National Headquarters would go ahead with the above arrangements in the case of unorganised States and Regions (viz. states where no elected Committees are functioning) and
- (b) in the case of the better Organised States the National Headquarters would, before proceeding with the arrangement consult the State Units concerned in regard to this matter.

We would like to take this opportunity of reassuring our organised States that copies of all such correspondence between us and the district units and vice-versa will be sent to them for their information and record.

Yours truly,



(Madhu Mehta)
General Secretary