

Swatantra-Sangh move for Haryana poll pact

Hindustan Times Correspondent

New Delhi, April 14—The Swatantra Party today announced its withdrawal from the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal in Uttar Pradesh.

Party general secretary Dandekar told newsmen after a meeting of the National Executive that his party would hereafter observe strict neutrality and decide every issue on its merit, if and when a Government was formed.

On the question of who was majority in the U.P. Assembly, he refused to comment, but suggested that a way should be found by the Governor, preferably by calling the Assembly, if constitutionally possible, to determine the issue.

Asked what was the provocation for the party to quit the SVD, Mr Dandekar gave two reasons: Mr Charan Singh was no longer the Chief Minister and the Communists continued to be in the SVD.

He said it was not a personal question. Mr Charan Singh's stewardship implied certain policies which had prompted the Swatantra Party to remain in the SVD despite the presence of the Communists.

Mr Dandekar also disclosed that the possibilities of a Swatantra-Jan Sangh "understanding" in the Haryana mid-term election were being explored.

He had a meeting with the Jan Sangh general secretary, Mr S. S. Bhandari, and Mr Nanaji Deshmukh both of whom were agreeable that the two parties should avoid a class. The Jan Sangh had already announced a list of 49 candidates and the Swatantra Party had so far approved 28 candidates.

Certain readjustments would have to be made in case the two parties were to come to an electoral understanding.

The Haryana Assembly has 81 seats for which election will take place. April 17 is the last date for filing nomination papers.

Action against rebels

The discussion in the National Executive is understood to have become heated and some acrimony is also believed to have crept in when the Gujarat situation was taken up.

After nearly two hours of animated debate, it was decided by an overwhelming majority (with a lone dissenting vote) to issue "show-cause" notices to six party

members as to why disciplinary action should not be taken against them.

These six include Mr U. N. Mahidia, who defied the party directive and stood as a candidate in the biennial election to the Rajya Sabha against the official candidate, Mr Babubhai Vaidya.

The other five are: four MLAs—Mr Chandra Singh, Mr Natwar Singh Solanki, Mr Jamu Bhai Bhatt and Mr Chunnilal Vasava, who had sponsored the candidature of Mr Mahidia—and Mr Chandrakant Parikh who acted as the polling agent of the rebel candidates.

Mr Mahidia had been suspended, pending the proceedings against him. Action, if any, would be taken against the others after examining their explanations.

Mr Dandekar said in view of the fact that it could not be determined who had voted for whom, no action was being taken against the unknown erring MLAs.

Request to Masani

Without divulging the nature of the discussions, Mr Dandekar admitted that the Gujarat episode in which as many as 33 MLAs had defied the party directive, was not a solitary or isolated case. It was the climax of a certain sense of growing dissatisfaction among the party-men at the State level. There was lack of consultation with the MLAs who were required to vote for candidates in the Rajya Sabha or State Legislative Council elections. Some effective consultative machinery would have to be evolved for the purpose.

The National Executive unanimously requested Mr Masani to withdraw his resignation from the membership of the central parliamentary board and the National Executive.

The National Convention of the

Party, scheduled to be held in Bhubaneswar from May 30, has been postponed till sometime in October or November. Meanwhile, the central parliamentary board, the National Executive and the general council will meet from May 31 to June 2 in Madras.

Mr Dandekar indicated that following the resignation of Gujarat Swatantra Legislature Party leader Bhailal Bhai Patel, deputy leader Jai Deep Singh might assume the leadership of the party. The election will take place on April 21.

Kutch issue

On the Kutch issue, the National Executive permitted its members to agitate and even offer satyagraha in their individual capacity, if they so wished. The official view of the party was that the award, however unfortunate, had to be honoured in view of the country's international obligations.

The party also decided to oppose vigorously the Insurance Amendment Bill which was "most unjustified, atrocious and threatened to merge the private companies in the LIC." It called upon the clients, agents and the general public to campaign for safeguarding their rights.

By a resolution, the National Executive asked the Government of India to put pressure on the British Government to fulfil its responsibilities towards the people of Indian origin in Kenya holding British passports. Those who wanted to come to India and settle here should be accorded the necessary facilities.