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RE-DEDICATION

AUGUST 15, 1959

[An address delivered by Shri K. M. Munshi at the Flag Salutation Ceremony held by the Swatantra Party]

We are here this morning to celebrate the 15th of August and revive the memories of the great day in 1947 when freedom came to us.

Then our Motherland, after centuries of enslavement, shook off her shackles and acquired the strength which she never had before. Then our people, so far fragmented by parochial loyalties, became united in a common purpose to found a free and democratic State with plenary powers, pledged to the paramount human values of freedom, equality and human dignity.

Many things have happened since then, both inside and outside India, which threaten the free life of our people. It is, therefore, essential that we, who lately banded ourselves in the Swatantra Party, should re-dedicate ourselves to those great values which underlie our national existence and on which the future of our people depend.

Freedom is easy to attain, very difficult to preserve unless we are very vigilant. Similarly, equality is easy to preach, very difficult to translate in life when higher standards of life are held up day after day by some leaders of the country as the be-all and end-all of life.

Human dignity founded on moral and spiritual values is easy to talk about, but difficult even to keep before our eyes—in this age, when the minds of men are increasingly being pervaded by utilitarian ideas; when there is a tendency to judge every one and everything from a hedonistic point of view; when fraud and force, on a global scale, have the sanction of missiles behind them; when rulers of men, in their arrogance, disregard religion and scoff at God.

We of the Swatantra Party, led by Rajaji, the *Bhishma Pitamaha* of modern India, have dedicated ourselves to fight against all attempts at crippling or crushing our freedom; to work for equality and social justice, and to fight for human dignity which is sought to be destroyed under a hundred pretexts—under the slogan of socialism, under the guise of co-operation, under the cloak of welfare, or under the specious plea of materialistic interpretation of life.

We are a new party which has come into existence under the urge of a mighty sense of frustration in the country. We have only recently formulated the broad basic principles which bring us together. We do not know what future may have in store for us. However, we have not the arrogance of godless men. In all humility, therefore, and with trust in God, we have to learn how to dedicate ourselves to the great causes for which we stand.

What do we stand for?

We stand for Gandhian democracy : faith in the people and the efficacy of truth and non-violence: insistence on the purity of means as much as in the usefulness of the end : maximum of individual initiative and minimum State compulsion consistent with the security of the State : maintenance of moral and spiritual values as integral part of political and economic advancement.

Standing for the principles defined in the preamble of the Constitution, we, in defence of the dignity of the individual, are determined to oppose totalitarianism in any shape or form.

We stand for a firm legal order as enshrined in the Constitution framed by the People of India assembled in the Constituent Assembly, 1950, and for all freedoms, principles and implications underlying it, and stand determined to resist the attempts already made or which are being made to distort them.

We stand for restoring efficiency and incorruptibility in the administration which has been deteriorating and are

determined to oppose the extension of bureaucratic control over increasing areas of life.

While we stand for the increase in the self-employed sector, we pledge ourselves to stand against all trends which go to make the State the largest or the sole employer with the aid of a self-increasing and self-generating bureaucracy.

We stand for a rural structure mainly based on family farming, which alone provides stability and vitality to the nation.

We stand against the introduction of State-sponsored, State-directed and State-patronised co-operative farming by whatever name called. We are pledged to resist the use of legislative, political, official or economic coercion or favoured treatment to induce the farmers to give up family farming.

We stand for a national development programme which gives first priority to increased food production by mobilising all resources of the country to help family farming.

We stand for a sound money policy, thrift in public expenditure and economic freedom which, while it regulates economic enterprises only in the broad interests of the nation, does not hamper their growth or development by expropriatory or oppressive fiscal measures.

We stand against the systematic interference by the Government with processes of production and distribution aimed at acquiring totalitarian control over people's life.

We stand for an economic programme which moves within certain well-defined limits of:

- (1) securing of social justice and equality of opportunity for all;
- (2) fulfilling the basic needs of the people, viz. food, water, housing and clothing, as the first charge on the State; and
- (3) providing adequate safeguards for the protection of labour and against unreasonable profits, prices and dividends.

We stand for fostering and stimulating private sector within these well-defined limits, to be supplemented by public sector only in cases of heavy industries, national services and new enterprises beyond the reach of the private enterprise.

We stand for harmonising all conflicting interests in society by peaceful democratic methods through mutual understanding: interests of labour and capital; of the rich and the poor, of one community against another, or of one region against another.

We stand for economic justice as proclaimed in the constitution and against exploitation of man by man.

We stand for the elimination of the conflict between employer and employee, by promoting a spirit of understanding of mutual obligation and ~~and~~ trust.

We stand for the rule of law, independent judiciary and the full play of the powers of judicial review given to the Courts by the Constitution.

While we stand for material advance in every direction, we, realising the dangers of a materialistic philosophy of life, stand firm in our resistance to all attempts to undermine and uproot the basic moral and spiritual values of our heritage which form the source of our people's strength and vitality. And we stand for a pattern of life which, while it adopts the latest knowledge and technique of modern science, remains firmly implanted in such values.

In all matters we are determined to keep before us the teachings of Gandhiji, maintaining faith in the efficacy of truth and non-violence; in the unity, role and mission of our ancient nation; in 'the just and right use of the property by those who have it', striving through selfless work and 'putting the loyalty to the country as subordinate only to the law of God.'

To these aims we must dedicate ourselves, determined on one course: To go back to Gandhiji.