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PRESS RELEASE.

THE RAJAJI FOUNDATION

"When I see the spreading abuses, the cant, the hypocrisies, and the general fall in moral sense at the highest levels down to the unfortunate poor, I do not feel inclined to run away from the struggle for improving things, old, weak and incapacitated though I am."

This was Rajaji on his 93rd birthday. A year later on Christmas Day, December 25, 1972, he passed away.

A giant among intellectuals and among the world's clearest thinkers Rajaji was the champion par excellence of the rights and duties of man. Throughout his life he advocated the rule of Dharma in the life of the individual and of the State.

Dharma was not a mantra that Rajaji prescribed. To him, Dharma embodied the living truth of the superiority of means over ends. "Dharma rules whether you believe in it or deny it, or take no notice of it. Dharma is nature, not dogma," he wrote in December 1962.

"The Dharma of government is to govern justly and with care for the welfare of the nation. The dharma of the opposition is to criticise the Government justly and with care. Both Government and the Opposition should fulfil their respective dharmas."

To Rajaji Dharma and Gandhiji's theory of trusteeship were one and the same. He wrote:

"Liberty is felt in the bone of every sentient civilized being. We are not wild beasts captured and ordained to live in the cages of somebody's zoo; we are free human beings living in voluntary cooperation as a nation. The system of government under which we live can make the one into the other.

"The cause of emancipation from State socialism is a great cause, not a mere political cliché. The obverse of individual freedom, viz., self control and respect for the moral laws governing social life should not, however be forgotten. The obverse of Swatantra consists of the duties that arise out of freedom and is given the name of

Dharma in the Hindu tradition; it is called the principle of trusteeship in Gandhiji's discourses. The legitimate claim to be free carries with it obligations of social justice. This should be wrought into the internal sense and conscience of the individual. Every one should consider himself a trustee of that share of God's benefits that come to him. He is a trustee for those around him and the discharge of the obligations of that trusteeship should form his spiritual happiness. It is, therefore, a way of life as much as State control is a way of slavery."

An educated and enlightened citizenry was the sine qua non of Rajaji's concept of a truly democratic system. He advised the Swatantra Party which he founded "to work to educate the electorate rather than run after the immediate pleasures of transient political power". He strongly believed that "the foundation of our independence and self respect has to be improved" through "sound education of all our population and nothing less."

Individual initiative, enterprise and energy maximising individual freedom and minimising interference by the State; fostering a sense of moral obligation in respect of legislative or other forms of compulsion; maintaining and preserving spiritual values and what is good in our culture and tradition; strict adherence by authority to the Fundamental Rights and guarantees in the Constitution as originally enacted in 1950 including the freedom of property, trade and occupation; reducing considerably the cost of public administration and giving the farmer his rightful place in the Indian sun were among the principal tenets of his political and social philosophy. Rajaji was a philosopher among politicians and a politician among philosophers.

The Rajaji Foundation has been formed to propagate his ideas. The Foundation firmly believes that his views on man, State and society have a continuing relevance today as they did when he first propounded them. The Foundation is also convinced that the best memorial would be one not of brick and mortar but in the spreading of his message of Dharma and the norms for a free, liberal society.

To this end the Foundation proposes to organise public meetings, study circles, seminars and discussions; publish pamphlets and material of relevance to developing situations from time to time and at all times to seek to keep his memory fresh in the hearts and minds of the people.

The Trustees of the Rajaji Foundation are :

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