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To Prosperity Through Freedom

The Statement of Policy

India is a great country. Its people are a great people. We believe that it has a great future. In order that this greatness may be effectively and fully realised, the country must have a government capable of evoking the best that is in the people.

Today, twelve years after the attainment of national independence, the lot of the common man has scarcely improved. Our people still lack a sufficiency of food, of shelter and of clothing. Poverty is the lot of far too many. Prices are soaring. Cities are overcrowded; slums abound; people sleep on the pavements. The position of the middle class is more precarious than ever. A sense of frustration is becoming universal.

These past twelve years have seen a steady deterioration of the national fibre, due to the placing at a discount of the inherent qualities of fortitude, courage and industry and a subordination of these to the decrees of a small group of politicians who have been able to exercise an excessive authority irresponsive to public opinion by banking on the past services of the Indian National Congress.

The people, who keenly desired to have good government, have watched with resentment the growing maladministration, partisanship and corruption

in the country, the manoeuvres and intrigues of those in power, their indifference to grievances, the destruction of social bonds by thoughtless social legislation and the neglect of the religious spirit which inspires selfless conduct, the increase in crime and the deterioration of law and order in various parts of the country. At the same time, they have heard with growing cynicism the incessant preaching of austerity and selfless service by those who disregard them in the administration, resulting in general demoralisation. To this sapping of the national moral fibre must be added the recent humiliation of submission to foreign occupation of part of our soil.

The members of the ruling party, many of whom are conscious of the failure of their government's basic policies and of the need for a change, are unable to give expression to their feelings due to misguided loyalty, careerism and hero-worship. Parties that adhere to various Statist programmes in the field of socio-economic policy, playing on the same theme with slight variations, have in effect become mere satellites of the ruling party.

The time has come for India to face the challenge of this unfortunate situation. It is in this context that the Swatantra Party has come forward to provide the nation with a clear-cut alternative way of life and government.

Common Aspirations

Certain objectives and aspirations are common to all of us who loyally accept the Constitution of the Republic and the processes of parliamentary democracy. This area of agreement covers the aim of a fuller and richer life for the people through the development of agricultural and industrial production. It also covers the equitable sharing of the benefits of this increased production. A further point of agreement is the need speedily to improve the lot of our people consistent with the maintenance of basic human freedoms. Inherent in this is also the need for a measure of planning on the part of public authorities and economic institutions without taking away the rights inherent in parliamentary democracy and in the concept of individual liberty.

It is agreed that there should be equality of opportunity for all without distinction of religion, caste, occupation or political affiliation, while those who are working under handicaps, such as Harijans, Adibasis and other Backward Classes should be protected and helped so that they may speedily raise themselves to a better condition.

The Swatantra Party shares in these aspirations and is wedded to the pursuit of these objectives as much as any other party. Where we part company from the party now in office is over the method of achieving these accepted goals.

The Current Pattern

Judging from the policies and pronouncements of the ruling party, its basic philosophy is a fundamentalist belief that the State or Government is the main instrument of economic and social advance; that, in consequence, basic industries should be owned by, and strategic points of economic vantage must be in the occupation of, the State; that the State sector of the economy must constantly grow until, in the end, the free sector is reduced to inconsequential proportions; that the peasantry must somehow be persuaded to extinguish themselves in big cooperative or collective farms; that the lion's share of capital investment must go into heavy industries; that, while this process is in train, the people must be denied their reasonable consumption needs; and that, to secure these ends, Parliament should be subordinated to the party in power and the party itself to the decisions taken by a coterie of planners directed by a group of powerful party bosses.

While it is probably true that a large number of members of the ruling party do not subscribe to this philosophy, the fact of the matter remains that their opposition is not expressed or is ineffective and the aims which are actually being furthered are those outlined above. It is because of this that the establishment of the Swatantra Party became inevitable.

The Swatantra Party rejects the approach outlined above which has been taken from the methodology of totalitarian planning. It is not in accordance with the national genius of our people and the aspirations which they have deeply cherished. The Swatantra Party believes that totalitarian planning and democratic ways are incompatible and that to sacrifice the free way of life is to adopt psychologically and socially wrong means to serve an end very doubtful of being attained.

Every developing economy has a basic choice to make whether it will develop through a regimented system or through a free one. That choice cannot be postponed nor can it be evaded. A collectivised economy cannot coexist for long with political democracy.

Totalitarian economies rely for increasing capital investment on crippling taxation and savings forced out of the people by the ruthless cutting down of the daily necessities of life. In a free economy, the State does not usurp total control over raw materials, manufacture, distribution and consumption to impose its will. Regimented economies lead to the flogging of machinery and equipment and the reluctance of individuals to work for long periods under conditions of stress devoid of human dignity. The overhead expenditures for constant supervision are uneconomic and increase considerably the cost of production. Further, totalitarian production, not being responsive to consumer demand, is inferior in its quality. The increase in national

production brought about in this manner in no way improves the standard of living.

In India, where the ruling party has foresworn on the one hand a free market economy and on the other hand is not qualified for a totalitarian dictatorship, there is the danger of falling between two stools. The government has not adequate control over the allocation of resources. Government has, therefore, little control over savings, yet it aims to operate Soviet type planning. In the grip of such a dilemma arising out of its own confused thinking, the government has launched on a policy of extensive borrowing at home and abroad, of excessive taxation, and, through sheer desperation, of misuse of its currency printing presses. In its efforts at pursuing pseudo-socialist policies, the government has had to expand controls and increase non-productive expenditure. It has gone on an orgy of borrowing, mortgaging the country's future. It has taken over business concerns in spite of its inability to manage them efficiently and economically in order to exploit them for revenue purposes regardless of the consequent rise in the cost of living.

These measures have acted as deterrents to saving, investment and production, whether in agriculture or in industry. The availability of credit to agriculture has been impaired, efficient and thrifty farmers have been deterred from sinking capital in their land and have, on the contrary, been impelled to resort to precautionary fragmentation of larger holdings to escape the threatened legislation for "ceilings". As a result, agricultural output has been retarded instead of being increased.

Industry has been subjected to a wide range of governmental interference and regulation. If, despite governmental policies, industrial output has somewhat risen, it is due to the vitality of the productive forces of the Indian people. In conditions of import restrictions and a large protected market, almost any output would sell and bring returns regardless of economy and of the interests of the consumer. Figures of *per capita* income during the past three years present a picture of virtual stagnation.

Equally unfortunate have been the social effects of governmental policies. Owing to the rise in prices, agriculturists, wage earners and fixed income groups are adversely affected. Inflation inevitably produces a regressive and an anti-social shift in the distribution of the national income. Social injustice also results from controls, particularly from exchange controls and import restrictions which have resulted in undisclosed monopolies and have been rightly described as the worst form of disorder.

The benefit of the price gaps resulting from controls accrues to people in the upper income groups, persons with political influence, unscrupulous officials and others obtaining illegal payments for procuring the issue of

import licences, traffickers in licences and smugglers. The resources of the State are directed into futile administrative and policing expenditure, while the law of diminishing returns is set in motion by excessive taxation.

The misguided activities of the government in the field of finance, currency, import restrictions, international payments and controls result in a pattern of distribution of the national income which is worse than before Independence.

The grinding effect of these combined pressures of stagnant income, rise in prices and excessive taxation has been particularly heavy on the middle classes which depend predominantly on fixed incomes. The middle classes, the backbone of society, are being victimised in the process.

The concentration of economic and political power in the hands of the State proceeds apace. This concentration is more dangerous than any other. The tyranny of the State, which is a total tyranny, is the biggest single threat to freedom.

The moral standards of the nation are simultaneously being undermined. Controls create scarcity in the market and give rise to corruption. Respect for law is being undermined.

The record of State Corporation and enterprises in India is evidence of the failure of the policy of nationalisation and of the incompetence of the government to run business and industrial undertakings. Such enterprises have, with exceptions, been marked by a wasteful use of resources, an unwillingness to take risks and quick decisions, red tape, a disregard of costs, and rigidity of action.

The cumulative effect of these policies has been to create an all pervading sense of uncertainty leading to the drying up of initiative and enterprise in farms, shops and factories alike.

Statism is threatening many other spheres of life. In matters of education, independent experiments are being stifled by rigid educational codes. Text books are sought to be nationalised, introducing an element of indoctrination. Universities are losing academic independence.

In the name of secularism and by refusing grants in aid, institutions, despite the Fundamental Rights, are discouraged from giving religious education. Gifts to religious institutions are taxed. Attempts are made to convert religious orders into official parasites. Trust funds or funds appertaining to religious trusts are diverted to secular uses. In the name of saving religious institutions from maladministration, they are being placed under the control and direction of government.

All India Radio, which is a State monopoly, and the official censorship of films tend to permit only conformist talks and monitored expression,

whether political or other. Documentaries, officially sponsored, focus attention on ministers and encourage hero-worship. Official patronage or fear of government is sought to be used to influence the Press which, it must be said to its credit, has so far preserved its independence with commendable tenacity.

Thus Statism is seeking directly or indirectly to absorb many activities which in a free society should be the concern of the people.

Our Way

The Swatantra Party places faith in the Indian people—in their intelligence, initiative and enterprise. It has faith in the God-given strength in each individual. It believes that, by harnessing these attributes and combining them with the aspirations of the people, a fuller and richer life can result more quickly and without the tensions and strains that other methods involve. The initiative, enlightened self-interest and urge to self-expression of the individual citizen should be mobilised for the good of the community. "We cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they can do for themselves". The Party believes that, in a free society, those moral and material values which are the basis of a good life can best be produced by the people themselves.

Increased production is the result of sustained individual effort and economic surpluses derived from savings where individuals produce more than they consume. This process is dependent on the individual being encouraged to pursue his vocation urged by his own talent and interest.

The Party considers self-employed citizens to be the most valuable members of the community and will therefore do all it can to safeguard the rights and freedoms of the peasant-proprietor, the artisan, the shop-keeper and the professional man.

No system has yet been devised which gives a nation an opportunity to improve its material environment without detriment to the sense of liberty as fully as do the laws of a free society, where the consumer is the arbiter of the pattern of production, the worker has the right to choose his job and, when dissatisfied, to deny his labour, the investor is entitled to consume or to save and determine the field of his investment, and the producer to choose his vocation. This way of life was guaranteed to the citizen by the Constitution in the Fundamental Rights which include the three human freedoms, namely, the freedom to choose one's occupation; secondly, to pursue it without restraint within the limits of the Rule of Law; and lastly, to dispose of one's income between spending and saving.

A basic human trait is the sense of property. On this, along with its corollaries of competition, natural rewards for effort and natural penalties

for sloth, and the tremendous incentive that goes with the assurance that the citizen is guaranteed the full enjoyment of the results of his exertions, must necessarily be based on our economic system.

The Party does not stand for what is known as *laissez faire*. It stands for free endeavour regulated by such State action as may be necessary for preventing and punishing anti-social activities and for the protection of the weaker but useful elements of society. The role of the State is a vital one of creating and sustaining an environment in which the genius of the people can fulfil itself. In pursuit of this end, the Party stands for maximum freedom for the individual and minimum interference by the State.

It is a role of the State to foster a sense of moral obligation and to encourage the pride, satisfaction and fulfilment felt by individuals in serving others—a heritage of our social and religious traditions—without taking over the management of their lives. The business of the State is not business, but government.

Energy results from differentials in level as much in the moral and economic fields as in the field of physical dynamics. We must, at the lower levels, strengthen the urge to improve one's lot, and at the other, encourage the sentiment of solidarity and the readiness to share one's possessions. These two urges are a feature of a healthy society. While there should be a constant movement upwards and downwards as a result of free will, State compulsion towards levelling tends to atrophy the spirit of enterprise at one end and to freeze that of compassion at the other. The Party, therefore, adheres to the principle of Trusteeship enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi. It stands for a system of free enterprise restrained as well as enriched and reinforced by a sense of social obligation.

While the Swatantra Party rejects outright the current pattern of centralised and top-heavy planning based on totalitarian programmes, it is not opposed to planning as such. Planning must, however, be carried on within the limits of the Constitution without relaxing the care for freedom guaranteed in it. Above all, it must know where to stop.

The Party is opposed to the domination of a purely materialistic philosophy of life which thinks only in terms of economic standards without reference to the content or quality of man's life. The Party believes, that, while every step should be taken to achieve material advance, equal if not greater attention is necessary to develop those spiritual values which have been the source of the vitality of our people. It will do all it can to foster and strengthen those spiritual values which are part of our culture and tradition.

In pursuance of its fundamental principles, the Swatantra Party will make no discrimination against benefactions and charitable endowments

made by donors and testators for the benefit of any community or communities of their choice but will encourage the spirit of giving for the benefit of the less privileged when the giving is either in general terms or for particular communities or for particular purposes. The Party hopes that ultimately all the underprivileged will thus be covered if free choice is given rather than by insistence on all or nothing.

Needs of the Common Man

The Swatantra Party holds that the first duty of a government is to meet the common man's needs of food, clothing, housing and water in adequate measure.

The Swatantra Party holds that self-sufficiency in food and raw materials is the first condition of the economy of a country like ours. Food being the principal item in the common man's budget, the production of food should be the first concern of the State. The ruling party has completely failed in this primary duty. Self-sufficiency in food production has been sacrificed to spectacular attempts to achieve long-term projects. Essential needs like fertiliser, seed and water have not been made available to the peasant in adequate measure.

Our per capita consumption of cloth, which was 16.2 yards for 1958, dropped to 15.8 for 1959 as against 16.96 yards for 1938-39. The necessary steps to stimulate production in the textile and handloom industry have not been pursued with the vigour they demand.

The handloom, which plays a significant and sizable part in the supply of cloth and in national employment, has not been as adequately and effectively protected as it should be. The Swatantra Party will, in pursuance of its policy of protecting the weaker but productive sections of society, take all steps necessary effectively to protect the handloom as well as to stimulate production in textile mills.

The policy of imposing harassing restrictions pursued by the government retards the normal growth of house-building in both urban and rural areas. The Swatantra Party will initiate a big house-building scheme both in rural and suburban areas.

The ruling party has failed to provide adequate water supply. Minor irrigation works, which would provide adequate water supply for drinking, sanitation and agriculture in the rural areas, have been subordinated to a policy of putting up huge irrigation projects. At the beginning of the first Five Year Plan, only a small proportion of the urban population was served by protected water supply. In spite of the two Plans, very little has been done to secure additional supply. The position in the rural areas is much worse. The Swatantra Party will seek to remedy this.

Agriculture

The paramount need for increasing food production can best be attained through the self-employed peasant proprietor who is interested in obtaining, and equipped to obtain, the highest yield from his land.

The Party will take all steps necessary to prevent waterlogging as well as erosion, the depletion of essential organic elements and the stripping of millions of acres of forest contributing to the violence of floods. This situation calls for capital investment and for the application of modern techniques.

Collectivisation cannot solve the problem posed by the increase in population. The Indian farmer is perfectly competent to do his job. While the average size of the Indian farm is unfortunately small, it is not as small as that of the farms in Japan which produce almost the highest yield of rice per acre in the whole world. The primary problem is therefore not that of the size of the farm but of giving the peasant the facilities and assistance he needs to undertake intensive cultivation of his land. The Swatantra Party stands for giving every kind of help to the agriculturist in the form of water, fertiliser, seeds and tools.

Alongside of this, the peasant must be provided with material and psychological inducements for greater production, in particular by making it possible for him to obtain cheap credit and a remunerative and steady price for agricultural produce in parity with the price of the goods that he has to buy. The Swatantra Party takes note of the dissatisfaction amongst the rural population that adequate attention has not been paid to their needs and will endeavour to remove all impediments that stand in their way.

In the field of taxation as in that of prices the Swatantra Party stands for a fair deal to the agriculturist. Today the bulk of India's indirect taxation has to be borne by the agriculturist. He has also to pay Land Revenue, whether or not he is able to make a profit from his land. The Swatantra Party stands for a reform of the Land Revenue system and the diverse laws relating to irrigation in order to reduce the burden on the peasant and provide for suitable changes with reference to the conditions prevailing in various States including the earmarking of a part of land revenue for meeting expenditure in connection with insurance against crop failure due to uncontrollable causes. It is opposed to new levies on the peasant in the way of surcharges and 'betterment' taxes.

The ruling party, which has failed singularly to deal with the food problem, is seeking, in an effort to divert attention from the real issues, to advocate Marxist policies embodied in its Nagpur Resolution recently confirmed at its Bangalore Session. The problem of yield is not a problem to

be solved by changing ownership, and the Swatantra Party is convinced that the Nagpur policies will, if carried out, decrease food production and reduce peasant proprietors to landless serfs labouring on collective farms like those in communist countries.

The Party believes that the cooperative movement can only serve its objective to the extent that it remains a voluntary and non-official one. The Party will therefore work for freeing cooperative societies from the present practice of official control and political exploitation. Decentralisation of political power can become a reality only if such organisations as cooperative societies and village panchayats are freed from governmental control and political influences.

The Swatantra Party believes in consumer cooperative societies, co-operative banks, industrial cooperatives and multi-purpose cooperatives for the agriculturist. The Swatantra Party considers the use of the phrase 'Joint Cooperative Farming' in the Nagpur Resolution of the Congress to be calculated to mislead the people. The Nagpur Resolution envisages the pooling of land which is repugnant to the peasant's inherent sense of ownership. It will not be possible for our farmers to give up the family system and democratically and cooperatively to manage joint farms. Once the agriculturist loses his individual ownership, possession and utilisation of his farm, the free and self-respecting peasantry which is the bulwark of democracy will have gone and bureaucrats will have acquired a stranglehold on the economic, social and political life of the rural areas. The so-called right to "property" mentioned in the Resolution will become meaningless and worth no more than the scrap of paper on which it is inscribed. In point of fact, the Nagpur Resolution will replace the old zamindar with one big super zamindar, namely, the government.

The Swatantra Party holds that the claim of the ruling party that joint farming can be introduced on a voluntary basis is impracticable. The history of the world provides no example of peasants who own land having parted with it willingly. The Prime Minister's assurance on the floor of the Lok Sabha that no legislation will be introduced in connection with joint farming has already been violated by provisions in measures introduced in certain States by governments manned by the Congress Party. The Prime Minister's statement in Parliament that he would not scruple to discriminate against the farmer who is not willing to pool his land and use every form of administrative, legislative and economic pressure short only of turning off the supply of water to his farm shows that no reliance can be placed on these academic promises not to coerce the peasantry. The Swatantra Party warns the peasants of India against this danger to their ownership and possession of land which has come down to them from their forefathers from time

immemorial or has been acquired from their hard earned savings. The Party stands by the peasants of India in this matter and will protect them against any attempt to filch the land away from them under the beguiling slogan of 'Joint Cooperative Farming'.

The Party deprecates the attempt to misuse the concept of cooperation for advancing a system of collective farming with multiple ownership and bureaucratic management because it is calculated to confuse the minds of the people and hinder the spread of the principles of genuine cooperation. The Swatantra Party proposes to educate the people on the distinction between genuine cooperation and State-sponsored and State-controlled projects which are being presented to the people in the name of cooperation.

The Swatantra Party rejects the scheme of ceilings on land holdings as likely further to injure efficient farming and the maximisation of the movement of food grains to industrial and urban centres. This proposal is incapable of providing land to the bulk of the landless. On the contrary, the ridiculously low ceilings proposed without reference to the laws of succession threaten to reduce the rural population permanently to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Ceilings are a device calculated to weaken the political power and capacity of the peasantry. This move will soon aggravate the problem of uneconomic farms so as to prepare the ground for compulsory collectivisation.

The attempt at setting up a State monopoly of the Foodgrains Trade enunciated at Nagpur has already failed. If persisted in, it will create yet another attack not only on lakhs of shopkeepers and dealers throughout the country who are engaged in the business of warehousing and distribution but also on millions of peasants. The establishment of a State monopoly in the Foodgrains Trade would mean that the peasant will have no freedom of choice in regard to negotiating the price of his crop and will be forced to submit to the arbitrary fixing of prices by the government monopoly under political pressure and influenced by considerations of their own.

Joint Farming, State Monopoly of the Foodgrains Trade and Ceilings will accentuate rural unemployment. There is need for special efforts to rectify the increasing pressure of population on the land by providing those who are unemployed or underemployed with other gainful employment. Such employment can only be found in industry, big and small, spread over the country and manufacturing goods to meet the people's wants.

Industry and Trade

As opposed to the obsession with gigantism that dominates current governmental thinking and planning, the Swatantra Party holds with Gandhiji that a great part of the process of industrialisation must take place

in a decentralised distribution of industry throughout the countryside. While a certain amount of urbanisation and organised industry is essential, equally important is the taking of industry to the villages of India where it can operate increasingly with the aid of electric power. The Party stands for the preservation of the freedom of the small and selfemployed artisans, craftsmen and traders and will work for a decentralised distribution of industry. The Swatantra Party therefore stands for a programme of all round rapid industrialisation with a view to develop national resources and provide employment. It believes in a balanced development of capital goods industries, organised consumer goods industries and rural industries that afford supplementary employment in the processing of the products of agriculture.

While not opposed to the development of heavy and basic industries commensurate with the availability of resources, the Swatantra Party rejects the false and lopsided priority given to heavy industry to the neglect of cottage, organised and light industries producing consumer goods.

The Party believes that the free choice of the producer, the investor, the worker and the consumer must be given due place and importance. The Party believes in the incentives for higher production and expansion inherent in competitive enterprise, with adequate safeguards for the protection of labour and against unreasonable profits, prices and dividends in those cases where there is no competition or where competition is not adequate to secure the necessary corrective.

While the Party believes in a mixed economy where State and free enterprise work side by side in the service of the community, it stands for the restriction of State enterprise to such heavy industries as are necessary to supplement private enterprise in that field, such national services as railways, and the starting of new enterprises which are difficult for private capital and initiative to establish. The Party is opposed to the State entering the field of trade and disturbing free distribution and introducing controls and official management and monopoly which lead to the inefficiency, waste and corruption of an ever-expanding official army.

Wherever the State enters the field of industry or business, the Swatantra Party is of the view that it should not be given a monopolistic position but should show results facing competition on equal terms.

The Party would regard such government ownership of industry as has been undertaken as only a transitional and limited device and it would not hesitate, wherever necessary, to undo such harmful measures.

In particular, the Swatantra Party will aim at reducing taxes and loans by giving up many State enterprises which are neither essential nor remunerative. This will also have the effect of reducing the present high prices

which are inflated by government levies and loans. To the extent private enterprise relieves State enterprise, the burden of finance will be properly transferred from the common people who are not qualified to bear it to the enterprising rich who are willing to bear it.

The Party is gratified to note that, even in the few months that have passed since its establishment in August 1959, trends of thought in this country and throughout the world are vindicating the policies set out in its Statement of Principles adopted on August 2 at the Preparatory Convention in Bombay. The results of the British General Election last October and the general feeling that the slogan of nationalisation had caused the socialist defeat, the breaking away of democratic elements from the Socialist Party in Japan and the jettisoning of State Socialism by the German Social Democratic Party at its special Convention during November 1959, are only some of the indications of a worldwide trend against centralised, bureaucratic State Capitalism and towards the restoration of the primacy of the laws of the free market. In particular, the Party is gratified to note in the new German Socialist Manifesto the following echo of its own thinking: "Free choice of consumer goods and services, free choice of working place, freedom for employers to exercise their initiative and free competition are essential conditions of a Social Democratic economic policy. The autonomy of trade unions and employers associations in collective bargaining is an important feature of a free society. Totalitarian control of the economy destroys freedom. The Social Democratic Party therefore favours a free market wherever free competition really exists. Where a market is dominated by individuals or groups, however, all manner of steps must be taken to protect freedom in the economic sphere. As much competition as possible — as much planning as necessary".

Labour

The Swatantra Party will insist on securing for the labouring classes a voice in the determination of national policies. The Swatantra Party will strive for the economic progress, social betterment and cultural advance of agricultural, industrial and office workers. The Swatantra Party will pay particular attention to a programme of workers' education which will instil in them a wider outlook, make them conscious of their responsibilities as well as their rights and help them to realise that they are interested not only in questions of wages and allowances, but in all matters affecting the well-being of society.

The Swatantra Party accepts the workers' right to organise themselves and through these organisations to improve the conditions of their life and work. Strong and responsible trade unions are an integral part of a demo-

cratic industrial order. Workers must be encouraged and helped to build their own unions and through them to bargain collectively with their employers regarding the terms and conditions of their employment. The Swatantra Party is not satisfied with the present position of trade unions. Most of them are managed by outsiders and many of them are playthings in the hands of political parties. The Party is keen that trade unions should grow as independent organisations of workers controlled and managed by themselves. Being opposed to the domination of trade unions by political parties, the Swatantra Party will not join the race to establish control over trade unions, though its members will be always ready to help in all possible ways.

The Swatantra Party stands for consultation and closer association between the workers and the management of industrial concerns. The Party believes that what is important in this matter is the spirit of mutual trust and cooperation and not any particular machinery. What needs to be developed is the spirit of partnership between workers and employers.

The Swatantra Party will lay emphasis on the internal settlement of disputes and will seek to reduce external interference to the barest minimum. The State should not normally interfere in industrial disputes, but should develop and keep ready machinery for conciliation and mediation to which parties in a dispute can turn in case of need. The State may also, whenever necessary, appoint courts of inquiry into the facts and merits of any dispute so that informed public opinion may exert its influence on the parties to the dispute.

Collective bargaining connotes the right to strike; if bargaining does not end in settlement, both parties should be free within the law to adopt any course of action that they think is necessary and desirable. In a free society, workers cannot be compelled to work for employers on terms and conditions that are not acceptable to them. They must have the right of individual as well as collective withdrawal of labour. It is, however, desirable in the larger interests of society to minimise, as far as possible, the resort to strikes by workers and to lockouts by employers. That objective can be achieved through the development of collective bargaining and through the acceptance of the method of voluntary arbitration for the settlement of disputes. The Swatantra Party will strive for the acceptance of these procedures by employers and employees.

The Swatantra Party stands for a good wage for a good day's work. Both the wage as well as the work should be rightly determined and provision should be made for the increase of the wage along with the increase of productivity and the prosperity of industry. Workers must be also assured safe, sanitary and pleasant conditions of work and an adequate

measure of social security through provision for sickness, unemployment and old age. It is also necessary to attend to the workers' need for housing.

One of the fundamental problems before the country is that of unemployment. The Swatantra Party will devote particular attention to the opening up of new avenues of employment. The Party will endeavour to find work for all unemployed and able-bodied persons seeking it in State projects of road-making, afforestation and construction of buildings and reservoirs, as well as in private projects of housing and small industries subsidised to the extent necessary to facilitate absorption of unemployed manpower. The Party does not favour the use of machines where time is not of the essence and human labour can be employed instead.

The Party is particularly concerned about the conditions of agricultural labourers which are deplorable and it will strive to improve their conditions. The Party also believes that cultivable land still in the possession of the government awaiting development should not be reserved for joint farming but should be allowed in sizeable holdings to as many agricultural workers as possible to enable them to become self-employed peasant proprietors. The problem of the landless labourer is in many cases an aspect of the problem of unemployment. The Swatantra Party will try to help the opening of new avenues of employment.

In accordance with the economic policies for which the Swatantra Party stands, namely, the employment of the bulk of the available resources in agriculture and light industries, in both of which vast scope for expansion exists, the Indian national income should increase at a much faster rate. Maximisation of output would overcome both poverty and unemployment simultaneously. It is the Party's conviction that, if the economic policies it has put forward are accepted and vigorously pursued, they will bring prosperity and employment as no other policies can. In the last analysis, the welfare and advancement of workers are dependent upon the progress and prosperity of society as a whole.

The Constitution and the Rule of Law

The Swatantra Party holds that the foundations of a true and prosperous society were well and truly laid by the Fathers of the Constitution. The Party will work to restore to the citizen the Fundamental Rights in the form in which they were guaranteed by the Constitution as it was originally adopted. They were later whittled down by the ruling party to suit its totalitarian approach.

The Constituent Assembly while laying down the form of government made it clear that free India would be a Union of States vested with a large measure of autonomy. Contrary to this plain intention, the ruling

party has steadily drawn to the Centre increasing authority so that the States have little more than the power of Local Boards, depending upon the Centre for almost everything. The Swatantra Party will seek to correct this and restore to the States the measure of autonomy provided by the Constitution. In such a large country as ours, decentralisation of authority, which could give scope for self-government of regions without disturbing national harmony or hindering the central authority in its functions, should be the guiding principle. The Swatantra Party will seek to emphasize and spread the principles and practice of federalism and decentralisation in all spheres of public life, consistent with the Constitution.

The Swatantra Party is of the view that the ruling party has made an unconscionable use of its power to destroy or cripple property rights in the country, more particularly in regard to rural areas where the interest of the small man is concerned. The Swatantra Party will seek to rectify this misuse of power, particularly in regard to discriminatory expropriation and the fixing and payment of compensation.

Under the present regime, the Rule of Law is being undermined by a tendency among politicians in power to interfere in the judicial and administrative processes. Such interference in the normal judicial processes takes the shape of either withdrawing prosecutions or, even after the offenders are convicted, of remitting the sentences under party or group pressure. The Rule of Law should not be interfered with by politicians or by parties in power.

The concept of the socialist pattern, the content and implications of which vary from time to time as it suits the ruling party, is also having a deleterious effect on the judiciary which is sometimes persuaded to accept a "welfare" motive behind the otherwise unjustifiable actions of the government.

The Party stands for the Rule of Law and an independent judiciary. It will work for the full restoration of the powers of judicial review essential for the maintenance of the Rule of Law and it deprecates the trend in current legislation of excluding the jurisdiction of the Courts and of giving vast discretionary powers to administrative authorities and tribunals.

The Swatantra Party will also restore the supremacy of the people and Parliament by disbanding the National Planning Commission which has tended to bring into being a non-responsible super-government, and will free Cabinet Ministers and members of the Union and State governments from the extra-constitutional intervention of the National Planning Commission.

The Party believes that the appropriate organisation for planning the affairs of the nation and submitting the annual programme is the Cabinet

responsible to Parliament and the people and that, while the Government may resort to such expert assistance as it desires, there should be no other body which can influence the making of policy affecting the life of the nation.

Public Administration

The Swatantra Party will work for providing the country with the clean and good government which today is its most vital need. The Party stands for efficiency and integrity in the Services. It believes that the public services in India can be as good as in any other country. If, in spite of their hard work and loyalty, the administration is inefficient, it is because they are prevented from performing their functions in the most efficient manner by the unreasonable and politically-motivated interference in their day-to-day work by Ministers of the Union Government and State Governments and other members of the ruling party. The Swatantra Party is opposed to any form of political pressure being put on officials in the course of the fair and just discharge of their duties.

The Party believes that it is in the interest of the public services that recruitment should be restricted in the way of quantum and quality. The Congress Government's indiscriminate recruitment of a horde of six million government servants has resulted in debasing the value of the official, lowering his status and increasing public expenditure.

The Party is against the expansion of the bureaucratic machinery with a hierarchy of officials asked to do work which is best done by citizens and private agencies, resulting in unproductive waste of national resources. The Party reminds the people of what the Father of the Nation firmly held that "that government is best which governs the least".

The Party is of the view that, while efficiency of administration is necessary, its integrity is the very essence of good government. It will therefore endeavour to set up a supreme authority to whom an appeal can be made by individuals who suffer injustice as a result of administrative action such as cannot be remedied otherwise. There is necessity for such an authority where Party government prevails. There is precedent for it in the countries of Scandinavia where the Ombudsman is a non-party man elected by Parliament and invested with wide powers of investigation and access to official papers. He is an officer of very high status and acts on the complaint of any citizen who has a grievance and seeks justice.

Education

The Party believes that every citizen has the fundamental right to educate his children according to his choice in a free atmosphere untrammelled by official directives. The Party will work for full facilities for such

education without discrimination such as by refusing grants or putting restrictions and handicaps where religious education suitable to various denominations is given.

The Swatantra Party will encourage efficient private schools which will not only relieve the government of expenditure but set up competitive standards.

The solution of the problem of unemployment concerning the educated youth is not to reduce him to the dull and unremunerative life of an under-worked clerk in a government office, but to ensure that the quality of the education he receives facilitates his absorption in industry or trade or the professions, all of which could employ more persons than they do today if allowed to expand and prosper.

The Party takes note of the great interest shown by young persons in colleges and universities in the politics of the country and in particular in the Swatantra Party's programme. The Party is of the view that in free India, while students even before graduation should acquire some knowledge of the various trends in political thought, they should, while engaged in college life, abstain from active participation in the furtherance of any political party. Whatever other parties may be doing the Swatantra Party is of the view that there should be no encouragement given to the division of students into groups related to the political parties of the country although they may be free to express and discuss their views in their own College Unions. Students above the prescribed age are no doubt eligible for membership of the Party and are welcome if they seek it. Students may form study circles for the appreciation of political and economic problems but, in the interest of discipline, the Party is of the view that it should not encourage the formation of political groups inside universities and colleges.

National Defence

While the Party has yet to formulate its policy in regard to the various aspects of India's international relations, the aggression committed by Communist China against our country and the occupation of many thousands of square miles of Indian territory by a foreign power create a crisis in the field of national defence. The Swatantra Party urges that a firm and vigilant policy should be followed at least from now on in dealing with the Chinese Communist aggression against India. When our territorial integrity has been violated and our soil occupied by a communist power, the concept of non-alignment has little meaning. Our policy therefore now needs to be reviewed and brought into closer relation to the realities of the international situation. In the Party's view, this is not the time for ideological adventures in domestic policy. The measures necessary for ensuring the

country's security and defence include: the settlement of outstanding issues with Pakistan and serious consideration of the offer made by Pakistan for collaboration in the defence of the sub-continent; collaboration with the countries of South and South-East Asia with a view to concerted measures for the security of the region; and vigilance against infiltration and fifth column activities.

The maintenance of high morale among the officers and men of the country's Defence Services, who are a fine body of patriotic men, will be a matter of special concern to the Party. To this end, the Party will press for providing conditions which will attract the right kind of men in adequate numbers. Further, we would like to see the fighting forces equipped suitably to perform the tasks that may be entrusted to them. Finally, we recognise the importance of keeping the Services free from political influence and manipulation.

The Party with a Difference

The Swatantra Party is a Party with a difference. It believes that the present trend followed in India and elsewhere by which political parties dominate more and more the thoughts, activities and lives of their members is one that needs to be reversed. The Party holds that democracy is best served if every political party allows freedom of expression to its members on all matters falling outside the fundamental principles of the Party. The Swatantra Party therefore gives its members, whether in Parliament, legislatures or elsewhere the fullest liberty on all questions not falling within the scope of its Principles and Statement of Policy. In particular, members of the Party will, in contrast to the way in which dissenting members of certain other parties are treated, be given an opportunity to express themselves in regard to the formulation of the Party's policies.

Our Goal

And so the Swatantra Party sets out on its mission of winning for the individual citizen freedom in the context of democratic life which the struggle for national independence won for the nation. It will complete the work of training the people in and for freedom which Mahatma Gandhi had begun and which continued until the Congress became a mere political party contrary to Gandhiji's advice. The Swatantra Party is a Party that the country needs in order to fulfil its destiny—the Party of ordered progress in and through freedom.