

DIVYA VANI
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Monthly:

25th May, 1968

DIVYA VANI

(DIVINE VOICE)

Editor:

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

Phone: 3 6 2 3 3

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(Continued on 3rd cover page)

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AN ENGLISH MONTHLY

Devoted to Avatar Meher Baba & His Work

Editor:

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

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AN APPEAL

The Annual Subscription for 'DIVYA VANI' for the year commencing from July '67 to June '68, which is payable in advance, is yet to be received from many of our dear subscribers. We would, therefore, request them all to kindly send the amounts due, immediately, and enable us to continue to serve them in Beloved Baba's Cause.

—*Editor and Publisher*
'DIVYA VANI'



Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, M.P., at the feet of
Avatar Meher Baba

Life Circular No. 69

Issued: 15th May, 1968

· From His very deep and strict Seclusion Avatar Meher Baba directs me to send to all His lovers and workers His following messages:—

- (1) "I know how you feel. I know your love, I know the agony of your longing to see me. I know what I am doing and what I have to do. I know when the time will be right for you to see me, and at that time I will call you. Until that time comes, until I announce that I will see my lovers, I want you all to be patient, to wait with complete trust in my word, with complete faith in my Love for you, with complete obedience to my wishes. *Until I announce that I will give my darshan to my lovers, none of you must try to come, none of you must ask to come, none of you must come.* Whether I am at Guruprasad or at Meherazad, you will receive my announcement through a circular; and until such a circular is sent out you must all wait in perfect obedience to my wish. I am happy with your love for me which makes you proclaim to the world my Message of Love and Truth. I am happy with your obedience which has helped me in my work for the universe. I am with you, I give my Love to you."
- (2) "My lovers and workers should, within their conscience, abide by the laws of their country."
- (3) "My lovers and workers must never allow political motives or their political views or their business interests to enter into their work of spreading my message of Love and Truth."

- (4) "My lovers and workers should earn their livelihoods as honestly as the times and conditions permit, and they must never contribute to my Cause money that has not been earned according to the deepest level of their moral sense and judgment."
- (5) "I want all my lovers to continue reciting the Parvardigar Prayer and the Prayer of Repentance every day till the 9th of July 1968. On the 10th of July, the 43rd anniversary of my Silence, I want all my lovers to observe complete silence for twenty-four hours, from midnight of 9th July to midnight of 10th July 1968."

Please note that Baba has given *no option of a fast* for those who may find it Impractical to observe silence.. None must write for further clarification concerning it.

Moreover, Baba desires the present restriction on correspondence to continue as now and be *more strictly observed*. The "more strictly" applies mainly to those who have been increasingly forgetful of the restriction and have lapsed into pre-restriction letter writing.

Kindly circulate *early* the above messages of Avatar Meher Baba to all concerned in your sphere of work.

King's Road
Ahmednagar
Maharashtra, India.

Adi K. Irani
Disciple & Secretary
Avatar Meher Baba

GURUPRASAD NEWS

From ONE OF THE MANDALI

12th May, 1968

The month of May has come. Into the world of Baba-lovers it has come with a gale of promise, stirring hope in all hearts. bringing to the surface the question in all minds:

Will Baba see His lovers after 21st May? Only Baba has the answer. And Baba, the Beloved, the All Knowing, Infinitely Knowing, the Knower of all minds and hearts, gives this message to all His lovers:

"I know how you feel. I know your love. I know the agony of your longing to see me. I know what I am doing and what I have to do. I know when the time will be right for you to see me, and at that time I will call you. Until that time comes, until I announce that I will see my lovers, I want you all to be patient, to wait with complete trust in my word, with complete faith in my Love for you, with complete obedience to my wishes. *Until I announce that I will give my darshan to my lovers, none of you must try to come, none of you must ask to come, none of you must come.* Whether I am at Guruprasad or at Meherazad, you will receive my announcement through a circular; and until such a circular is sent out you must all wait in perfect obedience to my wish.

"I am happy with your love for me which makes you proclaim to the world my message of Love and Truth. I am happy with your obedience which has helped me in my work for the universe. I am with you, I give my Love to you."

More and more we hear of lovers who travel about from place to place, often in groups, telling all men about God on earth, giving His Message to the masses. And we see the Beloved's smile reflected in their love-efforts as long as they

are kept unclouded by the breath of disobedience. Never must the lovers be so busy telling the people about Baba, that they can fail to listen to what Baba tells them! This is not impossible, for in love we are children and Baba tells us that Love is no child's play. Take the instance of a group in India's northern province—some two dozen lovers, mostly new ones, who came to Poona with the determination to have Baba's darshan in spite of Baba repeatedly saying that none must come. Their longing to see Him moved them to 'demand' His darshan by staging a silent rally outside the gates of Guruprasad! It fell to the lot of Poona veterans to convince them that this was not love's way, that we who are given the grace to love Him cannot ask for the right to disobey. When at last they left to continue their tour of spreading Baba's Message they were no doubt sadder at heart, but infinitely wiser we hope!

"Obedience is a gift from Master to man." It is the means we are given to express our love, the means by which our love may be tested and strengthened. A line from one of Baba's favourite ghazals says: "Every step I take in Your Love, is a test of my love for You." Obedience is a flight of steps that alone lead to His Darshan, steps that we must climb of our own effort. But He is always beside us, holding our hand, helping us on to Himself.

In the West there are countless new lovers of Baba, men and women who have given Him their love and their obedience, who have yet to see Him and who silently long to see Him. Sometimes this longing escapes in words, touching the hearts of those who catch it. When a new young lover wrote of separation's pain and his longing to see beloved Baba, it moved Francis to write to him in reply, a beautiful reply which I quote here in part:

"We all, dear Bob, are in the same boat. We have entangled ourselves with a Beloved we cannot measure—who is the Ocean of our dropness: a Beloved whom we cannot

see—who is the sun of our match-flames; a Beloved whom we cannot feel—whatever our hands touch is not Him.

"Those of us who live with Him are no better off than those who, because of His order, live away. No doubt you think that we are immeasurably more fortunate than you: you have not yet even seen Him physically, while we see Him every day. But we do not see Him whom we desire to see. We are as far away from Him as you are; our separation is as vast as yours.

"The only way out of our plight is to become perfect in waiting. Let others become perfect in whatever quality they wish; let us become perfect in waiting until our Beloved has the Whim to end our separation. And, in the meanwhile, busy ourselves in His service, telling all we can about the fact of His being here, about the fact that He loves us more than we can ever love ourselves.

"Wait, and work. Wait in obedience to His word and will; work because one has to fill in the days of waiting. Obedience is greater than love. So beloved Baba has told us over and over again."

We will be at Guruprasad for eleven days longer than our usual limit of stay, for Baba has decided to leave Poona for Meherazad on the 12th of July. The favourable weather in Poona has helped to make Baba's work easier. Even April, our hottest month, has been cool and pleasant for the most part. Perhaps the weather has also contributed toward His health which has kept well on the whole, despite the familiar fluctuations. Now we see Him looking so well and radiant, moving with such a swift stride that the mandali have a hard time keeping up with Him. Now we see Him weighed down and so infinitely tired, that they move along at snail's pace to keep in step with Him. Baba tells us that these ups and downs in His physical health are caused by the shifting pressures of His universal work.

As I sit typing on the palatial verandah of Guruprasad, I can see a fraction of the city's life coursing along the Bund Road a little distance from where we are. There is the ceaseless criss-cross of pedestrians, cyclists, buses, cars, taxis, scooters, jingling horse carriages, rumbling bullock cart, peddlers' hand carts, droning auto-rickshaws (which we call bumble-bees), backfiring motorcycles, and trucks and lorries that thunder by them all. This current of movement and sound sweeping past us all day, is a storm when compared with the stillness which abides within Guruprasad: no visitor steps in, none of us who are with Baba step out; absolute quiet is maintained during the hours when Baba does His work in the solitude of His room, so that we practically speak in whispers and move about on tiptoe. No matter how loud the cacophony of traffic from the road, the roar of a plane overhead, the piercing cheep-cheep of sparrows right at His door, the least sound from any of us near His room would disturb Baba in His work. The quiet prevailing in Guruprasad is a continuation from Meherazad. Thus in effect, except for the change of environment, we are still at Meherazad! A letter I wrote shortly before we came to Poona, tells how it was at Meherazad: "While I'm writing this Beloved Baba is sitting in the Hall, alone, for the special work He does every morning and afternoon, when we must not make the least noise. During these hours of utter quiet it is startling to hear a crow caw, or the sudden rattling of a window when the wind comes up. To walk on the gravel paths by the Hall is like walking on eggshells; and a sneeze from dear old Baidul is a threat to the sound barrier at any time, he is made to sit a good distance away under the mango tree. While we go about our daily chores 'fast fast' as usual, we are constantly reminding one another "softly, softly". And when these soundless sessions are over and we are again with Baba, another kind of quiet is maintained: no correspondence can be read to Him, no questions asked, no argument or excuses offered in carrying out the smallest of His day to day orders,

(Continued on Page 40)

* THE GIVE-AND-TAKE OF IMPRESSIONS

by MEHER BABA

INFLUENCE OF MOTIVE IN CATCHING IMPRESSIONS

The give-and-take of *Sanskaras* or impressions is constantly going on in the play of life. Where there is mutuality, there is this give-and-take, but it is not a mechanical process. The same action can create different impressions, according to the motive, which inspires that action. A man, who out of the motive of doing good to another person, gives him food or clothes at once catches his good impressions. The man who slanders another person with an evil motive or steals his things at once catches his evil impressions. Killing an animal for sport or pleasure or food means catching all its bad impressions since the motive is selfish. But no such bad impressions are caught from snakes and germs and the like which are a danger to humanity, when they are killed out of philanthropic motives and only when absolutely necessary. Such killing, where it is not a duty, will certainly create binding impressions.

EXCHANGE OF IMPRESSIONS

Conversations, cinema, books, radio, meetings, travels, crowds and so on are various mediums through which there is give-and-take of diverse types of impressions on a stupendous scale. In short, the cycle of impressions is interminable except when the aspirant slowly and patiently takes to the uphill emancipatory spiritual path under the guidance of a Truth-realised Master and with his blessings.

* From "Sparks of The Truth from Dissertations of Meher Baba" Version by Dr. Chakradhar D. Deshmukh, M.A., Ph.D. (London.)

LATENCY OF IMPRESSIONS IN SLEEP

The impressions in the Ego-minds of all whether gross, subtle or mental are largely similar. But their colours are different and of innumerable variety according to the spiritual position of different individuals. Consciousness gets committed to some illusion or another owing to these mental impressions, which are ever active, in spite of the daily respite of dream and sleep. The gross consciousness of the physical body gets dissolved in the *dream-State* of the subtle body; and the dream-state, in its turn, gets dissolved in the *sleep state* of the mental body. But *this daily dissolution of illusion is temporary*. After some time, the impressions again begin to prick and clamour, "Spend us! Spend us!" Thus, unconsciousness is again brought back to its gross illusion.

UNIVERSAL DISSOLUTION

If the whole world were to go to sleep, it would be the great dissolution of the entire world. All the individuals would recede into their mental bodies and be absorbed in utter oblivion for some time until they re-enter the panorama of the three-fold world in a new cycle of existence. The impressions of the unrealised individuals remain exactly the same even during this universal dissolution, which takes place by the Divine Will. And in the new cycle they take up their evolution where they had left it. Universal dissolution is not without some purpose. The usual theories of evolution, advanced by scientists are based only on intellectual data. They never do justice to God's hand in the game.

REORIENTATION

When the world is put to sleep in respect to all its current ideas, theories, beliefs, ideals and models of individual and collective life, it is easier for the world to *change its direction of search and fulfilment in the next cycle of creation*. It has to start where it left off but it can have reorientation in a new direction from the place where things had previously stopped. This means that in the new cycle of existence, the

ideas theories, beliefs, ideals and modes of individual and collective life begin to develop entirely on new lines according to what has been *planned by the Truth-realised Masters*. The old modes disappear yielding place to those new ones. The Masters plan not only for humanity in general, but also for the New-Circle-To-Be, for which the seeds are sown hundreds of years before the time when they actually manifest themselves.

PROCESS OF PHYSICAL INCARNATION

The physical body is nothing but the gross form of impressions. The mental impression in the mind of the *male* parent first takes a subtle form, which then is released in the gross form of mating. The mass of *Sanskaras* or impressions thus released ultimately reaches the mind of the *female* parent; and it is from the mind of the female parent that the process of *physical incarnation* starts. The soul, which is awaiting reincarnation in the gross body, can descend only if, during the process of *sanskritic or impressional exchange* between the male and the female, their minds have come as near to stopping as possible. The physical body is produced by the working of many impressions and is the result of their very *embodiment*. It is, therefore, no wonder that it has a tendency to bind the soul which inhabits it. Love for the physical body is only a form of deep ignorance. The swine take delight in the refuse—so do the ignorant ones take delight in the body.

USE OF THE BODY

From the spiritual point of view, there is nothing more pitiable than slavish submission to the desires and demands of the physical body. Because of its incessant claims to the attention of the mind, the physical body often becomes a hindrance to real life; it is something like a cage to the soul. *But the soul cannot find its real freedom by putting an end to the physical body. The physical body itself has to be intelligently used and made to subserve spiritual ends.* What is the use of a body which resists the dictates of the mind? It is no use clinging to the comforts of the body which one day must be given up. It is only an instrument; and one should take maximum work from it.

CONTAGION OF IMPRESSIONS

Impressions are contagious. Eating meat is prohibited in many spiritual disciplines because therein the person catches the impressions of the animal, thus rendering himself more susceptible to lust and anger. Sometimes, innumerable strong impressions are transmitted through the mere touch of the physical body of another person. A gross body, even a corpse, can quickly impart numberless impressions to the person who touches it.

IMPRESSIONS—BINDING AND EMANCIPATORY

Sex-contact outside wedlock is the worst form of exposure to heavy and binding impressions of lust. In wedlock, the impressions exchanged are much lighter and less binding. *But just as bad and binding impressions can be caught from others, good and emancipatory impressions can also be caught from others.* Food or eatables, prepared or given by others, bring their *sanskaras* with them. The 'Prasad' (some sweet or fruit or drink), given as a vehicle of grace distributed by saints and Masters, gives to the recipient spiritual and emancipatory impressions. The custom of touching the feet of the Master with the head is based upon the fact that the spiritual and emancipatory impressions from the Master thereby go to the very mind-heart of the recipient in a fraction of a second.

DYNAMIC IMPRESSION OF FAITH AND LOVE

The Truth-Realised Master transmits dynamic impressions of faith and love for God through appropriate spiritual experience. Faith of any kind is, in a way, ultimately based upon intellect. There can be no faith without some form of intellectual conviction, which again is founded in experience. Many people say that they believe in God or that they have faith in Him; but though they say this out of conventional fear of God, what they say is far from being true. If they really believe in God, their actions would be different from what they are. They fear God as something unknown, a power which they have been taught to respect and obey

through tradition and mythology. They fear him as one who is supposed to give due rewards to the virtuous and punishments to the wicked. But neither their fear nor their beliefs are deep-rooted or sincere.

EXPULSION OF FEAR

If their belief in God were sincere, they would forthwith start in right earnest to find out what God is. They would want to have God and realise Him, and all their actions would be entirely different. And if they were really to take God seriously and want to know what He is, their very first glimpse of divinity would disarm them of all their unjustified fear. It would reveal to them that God is Love and that his plan for all including themselves, is to raise them to the highest pinnacle of perfection and bliss, of which the earthly pleasures and even the happiness and joys of the subtle and mental worlds are but faint and poor shadows.

I-AM-GOD-STATE

The very first descent of divinity into the heart awakens love for God. And *when love for God comes, fear for God disappears*. Love for God removes all fear and prepares the aspirant to be lost in Him. The intensity of the love of the aspirants unites them with God. They thus eventually get the supreme 'I-Am-God-State'. Those, who persist till the end, get there. Those who get there are however very few, though many, without getting there feel tempted to claim that they are God. *To be an honest atheist is no fraud. But to claim that one is God before attaining real unity with Him, is definitely a fraud.*

THE TWO

There are two who do not have any use for religion: the materialist and the one who is Self-realised. There are two who are indifferent to money: the brute and the one who is Self-realised. There are two who are free from lust: the child and the one who has attained Truth. Though the Truth-realised person is, in the above respects, *like the materialist, the*

brute and the child, he stands completely apart from all these, he has attained unity with the infinite existence of God, while the others have not.

INCOMMUNICABILITY OF THE VAST CONSCIOUSNESS

The Master at will enjoys the *Madhur Bhava*, i.e., the sweet mood of *Love*, where duality is illumined by the realisation of the immensity of the One in the duality, or the *Maha Bhava* or the *vast consciousness* of unlimited *oneness*, which has no room at all for any apprehension of manyness. *Maha Bhava* or the vast consciousness of unlimited oneness is much rarer than *Madhur Bhava*. But the Master can enjoy it even when he is engaged in acts like eating, talking and so on. *Madhur Bhava* can be communicated by imparting suitable spiritual impressions to the disciple. But *Maha Bhava* which is essentially *beyond all impressions*, is *incommunicable*. In the ripeness of time, it *dawns from within*.



"I veil Myself from man by his own curtain of ignorance, and manifest My Glory to a few. My present Avataric Form is the last Incarnation of this cycle of time, hence My Manifestation will be the greatest. When I break My Silence, the impact of My Love will be universal and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it."

“
,”

— Avatar Meher Baba

The clock strikes twelve

By G. V. Brahmayya Naidu,
Masulipatnam.

In this dark night, the year Plavanga had to shed its cloak and merge in Kilaka.

I was looking blank at the inevitability of its passing.
The clock had commenced striking twelve; one, two, three

The wick of righteousness shed again its dim-light on the untidy sands of time.

The Master's incoming was visibly seen in His singular foot-prints left behind the way He covered from God to Man. The slumberous earth was again awake to His Call.

But..... the "I" in me has been passing through a dream in a dream in a drowsy state of impressioned consciousness.

The unceasing clock again struck: four, five, six, one after another.

In the flood light descended on me, I collected my shattered bits of consciousness to hear His clarion call. I thought I stood before Him to receive His grace. The light in its flash dinned it into me that, with suppliant knee, I was mistaking every drop for the ocean. I begged for help. The light twinkled and told me in thunderous Silence that I was in a dream in a dream and that in His infinite kindness He has descended to awaken me. I bestirred myself in anguish and pain and found myself on His glorious feet in a pool of tears. I was inclined to surrender. The flood light that descended on me, mercilessly, rolled me, with all my impressioned consciousness in its mighty and inexorable stream, gave me different shapes and opened new vistas for me to

realise Him through His work. I was active, extending myself to a circumference nowhere. I was feeling that I was moving from nothing to everything, with only my Master blessing me, standing out of me. But lo! The light shrieked and yelled to drown the "I" in me in itself or to work for self-effacement to remain as dust at His feet. I was flabbergasted. I reeled and dazed. It looked as if I was everything and nothing! In a flash I felt, I alone was!

The clock had again struck, seven, eight, nine!

The Light had twinkled to roar that I was still in a dream and that the Light and I were only in illusion. Fear seized me that time was running out. I wept bitter tears in my dream that I was not yet awakened. At long last the Master's call to love, obedience, and surrender had seeped into the collected bits of my impressed consciousness. I looked in.

I realised that I was wrong when I said that my quest was at an end. My mind has not yet been wiped out; and my love and obedience consequently stand questionable.

I prayed and prayed at my helplessness!
 The "I" has metamorphosed itself into His instrument.
 The Light has shown the path to tread unerringly.
 With half-opened eyes I have seen that the Light is He.
 Oh! My Master's Kindness!
 The clock hurriedly struck, ten, eleven, twelve!

The heart is filled with Master's assurance: *"I have come not to teach, but to awaken..... come all unto Me.."*

Words slipped out of me *"Namo Meher Deva", "Namo Meher Deva", "Namo Meher Deva".*

BABA AND 'MAN AND HIS WORLD'*

by CATHERINE (Cay) Draper, Montreal

"Is there anything else you'd like to see?" I asked Kitty Davy on the partly dredged, partly filled St. Lawrence River site for Expo' 67 one bleak January afternoon in 1965, when she was on one of her semi-annual visits to her two nieces in Montreal. We had driven from Montreal Island to St. Helen's Island to look at Notre Dame Island which was then being man-made. Kitty had told us about Baba's booth at the New York World's Fair the summer before.

"I think not, thank you," she replied.

"What sort of booth are you planning for Expo?"

"We're not planning one, Cay. We haven't thought about it. We'll be at the New York World's Fair again this summer."

"But I thought you were planning something for Expo. I thought you *wanted* to see the site."

"No."

"Well, where did that idea come from, then? It's because of that we're here."

"I know. I've been very interested."

* The title of a book by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, "Man and His World" was the basic theme for Expo '67, the World's Fair held in Montreal in 1967 to celebrate Canada's Centennial.

At the end of Kitty's September visit to Montreal, I drove her back to New York, met Fred and Ella Winterfeldt, Jane Barry Haynes, Margaret Craske, the Agostinis, and other Baba followers who gave me practical insights into the booth business and took me to see Baba's lovely corner at the Fair. Then, to partly compensate for the cancelled trip to India to see Baba, I went to Meher Centre, Myrtle Beach, for the first time, to spend Christmas there. But nothing was said about Expo.

The following May—when Kitty again visited Montreal the newspapers were full of accounts about nations planning to exhibit at Expo and, when I showed her a clipping about the India Pavilion, she urged me to make enquiries before more time passed. After telling her my findings, she suggested I tell Baba about them by writing to Adi K., Baba's disciple and secretary in India. My letter was on the same flight to Bombay as was Mr. P. K. Pannikar, India's Director of Exhibitions, the man I was to contact should Baba let me approach the India Pavilion. Strangely, the Montreal papers reported days later that Mr. Pannikar had died hours after his arrival in New Delhi about the same time my letter would have reached Ahmednagar.

Adi replied masterfully to my letter on June 11th: "The thought of the Canadian Exposition and the India Pavilion and display of our books and dissemination of Baba's revelations are really exciting and useful; but we know it takes a tremendous amount of total labour, expense, time and energy to put through the whole project. I know so far as organizing, attending, displaying and talking to visitors is concerned is possible with enthusiastic application of a team of Baba lovers. But where the expense part of it is concerned, becomes difficult and very difficult. It all depends on how you could all manage Your letter was read to beloved Baba and He wants me to send you and Stella

Dufresne* His Love Blessing." Unlike His instructions for the New York Fair, Baba was letting us seek space in a national pavilion in India's. This was the green light.

That July, I went to Meher Centre again where Jane .. who had led the New York Fair project answered every question I could think of about running a booth, e.g., costs, building materials, decor, man-power, insurance. etc. Then, one day, in the quiet charm of her home, she left me the many, many letters Baba followers had sent to support the New York Fair booth. Their expressions of love impressed me at first, then moved me to tears. Finally, after reading nearly 100 of them, they stiffened my will to get the job done in Montreal.

Home again, I found that Mr. Pannikar's successor at the India Pavilion had not been named yet. So, Florence Wong .. and I reviewed the information I had collected to date, formulated ideas, and listed pavilions I could approach. In the next few weeks, I contacted Man and the Earth, Man and Energy, and Man the Creator theme pavilions, the International Organizations section, the Canadian Pavilion, Sermons from Science and others, with negative results. Finally, fed up with waiting for the India Pavilion's new Exhibitions Director to be appointed, I phoned their delegation's head man to ask for an appointment.

"What do you wish to see me about?" asked Mr. K. S. Luthra, Under Secretary to the Government of India and representative of the Commissioner General of India for Expo '67.

* A Baba lover who used to live in New York but who now resides in her native Montreal where, with a severe case of angina, she cares for her long-retired husband.

** Another Montrealer who was interested in Baba.

"Space in your Pavilion for Meher Baba," I said.

"I've heard of him. I've read his book... the one with his picture on the cover."

It sounded like the parting of the Red Sea waters! But then Mr. Luthra added that all space in the Pavilion had been taken for months. Hearing my disappointment, he suggested I write to officials in New Delhi. The letter read: "So our great Master, Meher Baba, might be represented among the religions and nations of the world at Expo '67, I spoke with your able representative, Mr. K. S. Luthra, to see if friends and I could rent 500-600 square feet in your Pavilion. To my astonishment and disappointment, he advised that all your space was taken long ago. He kindly gave me your address, however, that I might express this disappointment to you, as well as the wish that even a niche for Baba might be found under your roof ... a site which The Beloved has already approved."

On August 31st, I visited Mr. Luthra in his downtown city office for the first time. A grey-haired, bespectacled, very vigorous man, he showed keen interest in two things: Adi's June 11th letter approving space in the India Pavilion and Dr. C. D. Deshmukh's story, *Sri Upasni Maharaj, Part II*, which appeared in the same issue of *The Awakener* as Kitty's lively account of the New York booth. Mr. Luthra took these, a photo of the New York booth Jane had given me "in case", and a copy of the Universal Message to send that day with his own letter to India.

Mr. Luthra sent his reply to me October 14th: "As explained to you verbally (on the telephone), we have already finalized the theme display in the India Pavilion and it would not be possible at this stage to alter the arrangements. We therefore regret our inability to accede to your request. It is presumed that you will appreciate our difficulty in good spirits."

Running out of ideas about probable locations by this time, I began to approach improbable ones and, on January 11th, wrote the Canadian Interfaith Conference, Ottawa, to see if Baba might be represented in their year-long centennial project. A subsequent letter to their charming chairman, Mr. Lavy Becker, in Montreal, brought this reply: "I've read the pamphlet* on Meher Baba. Valid as his thinking is, it does not represent a religion with a following but rather a person with a philosophy or faith. As such, Meher Baba does not fit into the Inter faith program."

Then it happened... though, in view of Mr. Luthra's October 14th letter, I can't, for the life of me, recall why. As a very last chance, he must have suggested I call him every two weeks to find when the new Exhibitions Director would come to Montreal from New Delhi to get an appointment with him. But whatever the reason, I did just that and, on January 26th, 1967, wrote to Adi: "Following yesterday's long-awaited meeting with Mr. Raghbir Dayal—head of the India Pavilion** just arrived from New Delhi—I now have firm news. On a no cost basis, we may have a small space in the India Pavilion where we can display Baba's literature (but no photographs or other material such as those used in New York). We *cannot* get paid space in the India Pavilion and by now, I believe that all other possibilities connected with Expo or other Centennial projects across Canada have been exhausted so that no paid space can be obtained anywhere. Mr. Dayal and his representative in Montreal, Mr. Luthra, advised that the whole of the India Pavilion will be 'an integrated exhibit'. Rates are \$100 per square foot. In addition to cultural and commercial sections, there will be a 'beautiful' spiritual section (size and plan not yet defined) which will contain the books and literature on some 20 spiritual leaders and publishers. Baba's disciples will not be permitted to attend their display. Instead, the India Pavilion's own attendants will be on hand in the spiritual section—most if not

* The Universal Message.

** Actually, Mr. Dayal was the Commissioner General of India for Expo '67.

all of the time If Baba favours these conditions, the first thing we must do—and soon because Expo opens in late April—is send samples of our literature to Mr. D. N Chopra, Deputy Director of Exhibitions, Ministry of Commerce, Udyog-Bhawan, New Delhi. I'm sure you will join me in my great relief and joy that, at last, I may be of direct service to Baba."

Adi's reply of February 17th concluded with: "the gist of your letter of January 26th was read to beloved Baba." Adi had already sent 24 Baba books to Mr. Chopra and asked Mr. W. D. Kain "working in the New Delhi Secretariat, a longtime Baba lover, to see Mr. Chopra and, if possible, use his good offices for the books being approved."

The following cable from Ahmednagar came March 2nd:
YOUR LETTER 18th FEBRUARY RECEIVED I AM HAPPY WITH ALL YOUR EFFORTS TO SPREAD MY MESSAGE THROUGH THE EXPO I GIVE MY LOVE BLESSING TO YOU AND TO ALL WHO ARE HELPING YOU TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE—MEHER BABA.

A few days later, Adi's March 1st letter arrived: "You will be glad to hear that today I heard from Mr. Kain that as a result of approach made to the Commerce Ministry, Mr. Chopra has agreed to the display of dear Baba's literature at Montreal and has promised to write to those concerned. This is fine news, indeed." It was true that the Ministry had agreed to display Baba's *books*, but we still had to get word about the *Universal Message*. Expo was to open April 27th.

While awaiting further news from Adi, Elizabeth Patterson, Kitty, Jane, Stella and I decided 20,000 English and 10,000 French Messages would probably "do" for the summer; that, to meet a legal Expo requirement, we would have to get 10,000 French Messages printed as none were left over from the New York Fair; that to start, anyway, 20,000 new book lists would have to be printed, too; and that Kecha

and Henry Kashouty* would ship English Messages to Montreal as required. Jane obtained printing estimates in Charleton, South Carolina, as I did in Montreal; Elizabeth prepared a new booklist; Stella made minor revisions in the translation of the French Message; Kitty and Jane agreed to seek the \$600 we then knew was required; on March 31st, the Kashoutys shipped 3,000 Messages to the Winterfeldts in New York who relayed them to Expo; Toni Roothbert made explanatory phone calls; and Kitty, Ivy Duce, and the Kashoutys shipped the dozen or so Baba books decided upon for the display. On April 2nd, Mr. Luthra arranged, at my request, to have a staff member escort me past Expo guards through the mud, snow and ice to the India Pavilion so I could see where the spiritual section was to be. The guide took me around the large, modern building, but when I saw men sawing and hammering, and carpets still unrolled against the walls, I wondered how it could be ready on time. Introduced to the Pavilion's debonair designer just then, I asked him where the spiritual section was to be.

"Spiritual section?"

"Yes. The section where the spiritual books will be."

"Books?"

"Yes," I half-shouted. "The place where books by Indian spiritual leaders will be!"

"I know nothing about them," he said.

About twenty hours passed before I could reach Mr. Luthra by telephone. Flat out himself with so much to do, he had overlooked (when I called him the previous time) the fact that the book section was about the last item to be placed in the Pavilion and hadn't been built yet. But always a gentleman, he apologized profusely and reassured me the section would be built.

* Baba followers in Hampton, Virginia.

Then, on April 4th, Adi's long awaited cable arrived: CHOPRA ASSURES MESSAGE WILL SHORTLY BE SENT TO MONTREAL STOP ACCOMMODATE ALL PUBLICATIONS IN EXPOSITION. Kitty and Jane wrote to a few Baba followers individually and Kitty wrote to group heads in New York, Schenectady and Miami quoting Adi as follows: "You, Kitty, can ask for contributions from those who can afford and who happily wish to contribute toward printing and shipping Universal Messages in two languages, English and French". The Montreal printer went ahead.

On April 27th I wrote to Elikit and Jane: "Officials estimate that one billion people will watch celebrities open Expo tonight. They are using satellites. of course, while 32 TV cameras will be spotted over the site all summer to watch heads of 71 States visit, etc, If Baba wanted a world stage on which to manifest, this one would be hard to beat. Expo *really* opens tomorrow when Baba's French and English Messages will be there. The batch the Winterfeldts kindly relayed April 5th reached here only April 26th (through no fault of theirs) and is being cleared through customs today. It will be delivered to Expo after midnight tonight. The French batch, stuffed with the new booklists, will be delivered after midnight tonight, too. So we made it. Baba's in business at the Fair."* ... Tuesday was Passover holiday at the Jewish General Hospital where I work (fulltime), so I went to the India Pavilion and found it 95% finished like the

* Actually, the Messages reached the Pavilion four days later for, once Expo was opened, trucks carrying exhibits and supplies to all pavilions, concessions, etc. were permitted on the island site only between midnight and 8 a.m. This ruling plus a stiff entrance fee—caught many shippers and truckers unaware. It was a good couple of days before local shippers compared notes and resigned themselves to the fee, and before local truckers lined up adequate night shifts.

lists. On our way out of the building that evening, we put stacks of Messages on "Baba's" counter and watched. Stella wrote Kitty next day: "In no time at all, they disappeared like butter in the frying pan, that 10,000 a week is no exaggeration."

Meantime, Jane and I checked prices for printing another 100,000 Messages (50,000 French and 50,000 English) which, at the rate of 10,000 a week, we knew could be distributed over the rest of Expo; the Kashoutys shipped more Messages—as they did another four times over the next weeks; and Kitty and Jane bravely agreed to try to raise the required \$1200. Wrote Kitty: "Ruth White came to the rescue and donated \$650—half the amount needed... And with the balance left over from the first printing and a few contributions from both new and old contributors, we managed. Over 100 contributors in the United States and Canada gave generously and spontaneously towards the project." Our Montreal printer went ahead with the reprint.

* * *

Once Baba's Messages and books were in the Pavilion, its staff took over their storage and distribution and my function changed. Mr. Luthra gave us free space for 20,000 Messages in four locked storage rooms already crammed with lumber, boxes, desks, chairs, silks, teas and decorations. Then, under the supervision of Mr. Samtani, Mr. Luthra's handsome assistant, a shy Canadian-French boy carried 1,500 Messages upstairs every day to the Pavilion's main floor and gave them to the hostesses at the assigned distribution points.

At first, the Messages were placed at the Information Desk just inside the front door of the Pavilion where they remained until that last long weekend in May—a holiday weekend for both Canadians and Americans—when nearly half a million visitors swarmed over Expo. But the crowds entering the Pavilion were so large that the Messages created

a bottleneck and had to be moved to the next room and placed on the glass showcase in which books about Baba, Nehru, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and others were displayed. That, too, was a good spot as part of India's history was exhibited in that large, lovely room, and film screenings were held there every hour. Beautiful books about India's culture and heritage, and records of her ancient and modern music were on sale at the counter right next to "Baba's". Thoughtful people browsed there and I watched, several times, as a young man or woman stood, elbows propped on the counter, and read a Universal Message with concentration. Then, when this room was taken over to celebrate the centennial of Mahatma Gandhi's birth, both counters and their contents were moved to their final site the place beside the entrance to the Pavilion's smart restaurant and the exit from the main building where visitors' "passports" were stamped. As the Pavilion's floor plan had been meticulously designed so all visitors would walk by all exhibits on the main floor, Baba's Messages and books were in prime locations all summer. If some Baba followers exploring the Pavilion failed to find them, it was because our daily quota of 1,500 Messages did not last long in the presence of the 28,000 persons who filed through the building every day.* For persons arriving an hour or two after the day's supply had been put out, there was simply nothing left to see.

Occasionally, special events interrupted the routine. India's President, Dr. Zakir Hussain, visited Expo the last week in June when State receptions were held in the Pavilion and certain sections were sealed off from the public. Fashion shows were held there sometimes, too, when the Pavilion's hostesses left their usual posts a few afternoons and evenings to model Indian saris and exquisite silks. And Baba's dozen books were rotated with a dozen books by

* Six days before Expo was closed, Mr. Samtani advised that five million people had entered the India Pavilion during the Fair's previous 179 days.

other spiritual leaders so Baba's weren't always in sight. But over the Expo season, all members of the India Pavilion's staff—the tall, vivacious Mr. Dayal who had long since returned to India, Mr. Luthra, genial Mr. Chopra who had arrived from New Delhi, Mr. Samtani, the men who worked in the storage rooms, the dozen or so men and women in the Pavilion and downtown city offices, the several hostesses, and the Canadian-French youth—invariably showed me every possible courtesy in the most business-like way. This was true with every contact I made with them since that first phone call to Mr. Luthra in August, 1966, right through the 40 times I visited the Pavilion and asked Mr. Samtani to interrupt his work to unlock the storeroom so I could see how many Messages had been distributed since my last visit, through my countless phone calls to see if the various local and long distance shipments had arrived or if the broker's invoices were correct, right to the end of Expo when the Pavilion shipped Baba's books to its downtown office where I was permitted to go with my car to pick them up.

Was ever help so well tailored to a project's needs?

All I did through all this period was lumber down to Expo on Montreal buses, walk through the Place d'Accueil—the Place of Welcome—down the steps to Expo buses or the Express and streak across the Cite du Havre, the breathtaking St. Lawrence, St. Helen's Island to Ile Notre Dame—all the while grinning happily to myself as I felt, with increasing intensity, the great warmth and pleasure of Baba's presence at my right side. This was true of most of my Expo trips even though most were made in the company of a friend. But the crowds on the buses were a Godsend for, while they didn't separate my friend and I, they did make conversation difficult so we went mostly in silence.

Then, disembarked on Ile Notre Dame, I usually strolled towards Czechoslovakia, crossed a footbridge to Cuba, turned left at Germany, walked by the tulips, then the snapdragon, then the asters to India. After looking at Baba's counter and

talking with the hostesses on duty, I went downstairs to the Pavilion's office to meet Mr. Samtani and visit the storeroom. One time, as we walked and talked our way out of his office, we encountered two small Indian children at the foot of the stairs. Somehow they had crawled down them and become lost. But even if they had known where they were, one child was too small to climb back. So Mr. Samtani, without interrupting either his conversation or stride, picked up the smaller child, hoisted him over his head, climbed the steps, and put him down gently at the top.

* * *

On July 24th, I wrote to Mani, Baba's sister and disciple in Ahmednagar, to report that 85,000 Universal Messages had been taken at the fair's halfway mark. She replied July 31st in her lovely way: "Of all the variety of colourful and magnificent pictures we have seen of the Expo, you can imagine how thrilled we were to see the little picture you enclosed in your letter—like suddenly spotting a dear friend in a crowd. It has given form to our imagining of you dear ones going into the India Pavilion to tend to the heart of Expo... It's thrilling to read all the contents and enclosures of your letters to me and dear Stella's to Adi. Now we begin to hear His Silence in so many ways, in so many places, as Baba said would happen as the time for His Manifestation drew close... and this is all but the beginning, the whisper. Adi is writing to Mr. Luthra a real nice letter of appreciation."

Adi's letter must have reached Mr. Luthra in early August for about then I met Mr. Luthra striding out of his office and, as soon as he saw me, a big smile crossed his face.

"People have complained to me about the leaflets," he said. "They say we're giving out religious propaganda."

"Oh?" I asked, as my heart sank. The hostesses had told me about this and because of it, had put away the Messages temporarily at least three or four times.

"Yes. They spoke to Mr. Dayal about it, too. But we just said in each case: 'Read the pamphlet. If you find something objectionable about it, tell us.' No one did." Mr. Luthra looked at me closely and started to laugh. I started to laugh too—with relief, first... then at the humour of this distinguished one-upmanship.

On August 10th, our Montreal printer—who had stored the 100,000 Messages he had printed for us and trucked them free to the India Pavilion in batches of 20,000—shipped the fourth batch, and I went to Vermont on my two weeks' vacation. The fifth batch went to the Pavilion on Labour Day weekend (early September) right after my return. Then, on the biting cold Thursday evening just before Expo closed, I put out Baba's last 2,000 Messages myself. Returning Sunday morning, October 29th—as did another half million Montrealers to bid Expo "adieu"—not one Universal Message was left. 175,000 of them (115,000 English and 60,000 French) had been taken over six months.

By the time Expo had ended, Ivy Duce had received about five follow-up enquiries, I had received nine, and Kitty wrote: ".. since May last the letters pour in for more information, books, etc. So Expo '67 must have something to do with the increase. During the New York Fair, there were not as many enquiries by letter as we had expected. After the Fair, however, numerous ones surprisingly came from everywhere .. But we need never ask about results. Baba has said: 'Do what you can and leave the results to Me. I will do My work in My own way.'

"One thing we know," continued Kitty, "and this is very important: Baba has been made very pleased and very happy with all those who worked and contributed individually and collectively to bring Baba's Message of Love and Truth to Expo '67 ... What is Love in its highest form? Baba has given us the answer: 'To please Him who is God in human form.'"

LETTERS TO BRO. ADI K. IRANI

From Dr. ALLAN Y. COHEN, U.S.A.

April 14, 1968
Easter

Dear Adi,

Thanks to you and Eruch in forwarding correspondence to and from Richard Alpert, I shall be writing him soon and hope for his quick realization of Who the *Only One* is.

This letter is a report of Baba-Work activities from Mehermas 1 December through March 5th. In looking over records, it seems that a definite shift in orientation has taken place. It wasn't too long ago that we seemed busy at work "drumming up" opportunities for talks and radio-TV appearances to spread Baba's Name and Message: we were delighted and joyful at the ease with which the Beloved opened up doors. Now, He has opened so many doors that much of our work involves keeping up with contacts which have mushroomed and maneuvering for time to fill requests and take advantage of opportunities. It is a benevolent frustration.

From the time of my last report, California public Baba-Work has offered many kinds of outlets. (Of course, there have been countless informal opportunities which His Love has allowed—the hitchhiker who sees a Baba card and asks with great interest "Are you a follower of Meher Baba?" ... the counselee selected "randomly" by the front office who comes to me deeply concerned with spiritual matters... the New York cab driver receiving a "Don't worry, be happy" card as a bonus tip asking "Who is this?" ... "God in human form" the three minute conversation with Swiss friends

of Boston Baba-lovers ... "Ah yes, I know of Meher Baba; I heard of him in Zurich; tell me more about him," ad infinitum.)

The colleges continue to be a constant source of interest in consciousness. Early in January, I spoke at Stanford to a Meher Baba League sponsored meeting to 50 or so (and was spontaneously invited to participate on a drug panel just previous to the Baba talk and film showing). Later that month occurred the "three-speaker experiment" which Rick reported on, and another talk to about 175 students at Berkeley on "Spirituality". In February, (through the efforts of Vicky Wells, a student newly attracted to the Beloved), I went down to the University at Santa Cruz, where I spoke to 70 interested students on the "Psychology of Mystical Experience". Through another contact, Vicky managed to convince the editor of the Journal of Psychedelic Drugs to publish much of "God in a Pill". Later that month, about 200 teenagers gathered at Diablo Valley College to hear a talk mostly about drugs.

Church groups have made many requests for talks about drugs and have particularly appropriate audiences in which to introduce spiritual themes. Fascinating also is the wide diversity of denominations that have been introduced to Baba and His Message and Metaphysics. I participated in talks on drugs and mysticism at a Presbyterian Church, a Mormon youth group, the Newman Club (a Catholic organisation), a Christian college group, a gathering of Episcopal seminarians, as well as doing a sermon (on "applied mysticism") to 250 Unitarian Church members. One of the most interesting sessions was a talk to Hillel Foundation (the Jewish student group), where my primary talk was on drugs, but where every question in the question/answer period was asked about Baba and His Ideas. Another amusing part of the evening occurred when the student cantor (who had a large part in the religious service which preceded my talk) had to seek out volunteers to do reading parts of the service.

Out of the 40 or so people milling around, he walked up to four people to fill slots for four parts of service. Three of those people were David Kershaw, Winifred Kershaw and Carol-Leigh Jensen—the only other Baba-lovers there; unbeknownst to the rabbi, the service was "Baba-packed".

Local media opportunities have included a two hour show on KSRO (Santa Rosa) set up by dear Aneece and Selma, a two hour show with Rick exclusively on Baba (KPFA—Northern California) and a local TV interview show done with Winifred. The latter included a good exposure of Baba's Universal Message photo via the latest poster and much more emphasis on Baba than the show's format predicted.

In late December, a columnist for the Los Angeles Times (Art Seidenbaum) visited me and wrote a story about me called "Go-Clean Guru," introducing me as "Berkeley's Guru of the Turned-Off Set" (a smile and slight shudder at the title). Anyway, this article was published in March 10th issue of West Magazine (I think Filis sent one to Meherazad) and has led to many other opportunities, including at least four inquiries from book publishers—one about a book specifically on Baba. Incidentally, I and a school director named Peter Marin have contracted to write a book called "A Parent's Guide to Drugs".

All the above occurred before March 1. After the powerful and love-ly Baba Birthday Celebration on the 25th, a new exposure explosion manifested. On Feb. 28th, I flew down to Los Angeles for a talk to Mt. San Antonio College on the 29th called "Perspective on Consciousness". The main talk was attended by about 300; but later, outdoors, 175 came to a workshop in which Baba-in-the students asked very key questions about Him and mysticism. Something clearly occurred there because some of the more affected students have asked Filis to come out and speak to them specifically on Baba and mysticism. The next day was rather remarkable—Early in the afternoon, I appeared on the Stan Bohrman TV Show for one half hour; it was a very relaxed and warm exchange supposedly

about drugs. However, in one major section of the show, Stan showed the latest poster (with the Universal Message photo) in full view of the cameras and verbally admired Baba's face and philosophy. The co-host of the show entered into the dialogue, in effect demurring from Stan's enthusiasm about Baba because she was a Christian. Well, that couldn't have been a better taking-off point for me to talk about the Oneness of the Avatar and Baba's return as the Christ.

I quickly packed and flew to Kansas City, Missouri, arriving at the KHB radio studios exactly one minute (what Baba timing) before the "Nightbeat Show" went on. This three hour interview show with Walt Bodine was set up by Sherry Newell, a Baba lover from nearby Pittsburg, Kansas, and featured 1½ hours on Baba and His Truth. Bodine was very sympathetic and moved. Also, a friend of his just happened to drop into the studio—an NBC news reporter from Chicago, who gave me several good leads for possible media appearances there. Before flying off to Kansas State University, I had an opportunity to visit with Andi Means and Lynn Lowery, who came up from Stephens College.

March 3rd found me flying to Kansas State University and an evening dinner with school officials. At one point in what looked like a boring evening, the Cohen octopus ego quieted enough for me to reflect how every contact is important in Baba-Work, but thinking "O.K. Baba, who in this unlikely group needs to know about you and how could it possibly be brought up?" Well, soon later, a professor turned out to be interested in reincarnation, and now he and his mystically-inclined wife have the **Discourses**. On March 4th, I gave seven talks, spouting forth for about 16 hours (to around 700 students total) and did three radio shows. Also a Wichita TV station video-taped parts of my major address (I hope they got the part on Baba) for a possible network special. On the 5th, I gave four more talks and spoke to a few individuals particularly closely. It was then back to Berkeley before the two major Eastern trips. Perhaps I had best report them in a separate letter to follow soon.

Love to you and all at Guruprasad in this exciting time of the approaching Love-Manifestation of Beloved Avatar Meher Baba.

Lovingly,
Sd./ Allan

Dear Adi,

April 19, 1968

This is the second of two Baba-Work reports, covering March 6th through April 17.

The busy period started with a March 11th talk on drugs to 40 parents. On Tuesday, March 12th, I was scheduled to fly down to Los Angeles to participate on a TV panel regarding marijuana; but a further Baba-Twist was added. A little background—for a long time Rick and I had tried to get on the Les Crane Show, a nationally syndicated TV interview program from Los Angeles. Crane had the reputation of being popular, fairly "far out", and interested in mysticism. Marla Reitman, an L.A. Baba-Lover, had valiantly contacted and re-contacted Crane's producers (she knew Crane personally), but they had insisted that Crane wanted "no more programs about drugs or mysticism for months!!!" However, Monday, March 11th, I received a phone call from his producer, saying he had seen the L.A. Times Article on me and asked how I would like to be on the show there that next evening. Slightly stunned, I remarked that I was going to be there that evening anyway and inquired about the time of the taping. Sure enough, I would have 15 minutes between shows. Well, the marijuana panel felt like a preliminary—and it was. Susan Kidder drove me over to the Crane Show, where I appeared for an hour with an old "acid-head" and a William Glenness, apparently a well-known reform minister from Brooklyn, N.Y. The first half-hour was a quasi-debate and discussion about LSD. Then Crane asked me about Baba and I told how I first heard of Him. Then one of Baba's miniscule Cosmic nods made an incredible transition in the show, which was headed for the minor leagues (under the criterion of direct talk about the Beloved). The very articulate and somewhat restrained minister Glenness burst out as if he had sat on a bumble bee and exclaimed regarding the nonsense of mysticism, its impracticality, phoniness etc.! And we were off! The rest of the show was a very heated (though not hostile) exchange between us regarding mysticism and Baba. Glenness'

comments couldn't have been a better foil, enabling me to talk about Baba's Message, Silence and Avatarhood. The way it came off was very pleasing to Baba-lovers who saw the show.

I flew back that night to catch a plane to Hays, Kansas on the 13th, where, after arriving, I did a short interview on KAYS-TV. The 14th was initially spent talking to four college classes plus a major address to about 900 Hays State students. It seems appropriate to talk occasionally about mysticism and mention Baba even in the ordinary classes. My evening was supposedly free and non-scheduled; and although I had learned that Baba makes use of every moment on trips like these, it was beyond me just what could happen. Well it did. A young faculty member pursued me until I would have dinner with him. You guessed it—he and his wife (Vern and June Bacharach) were very open to hearing about Baba, and throughout the night, more and more people arrived at their house so that I talked for three or four hours on Baba and related subjects to about 30 people. Several were eager to hear and read more.

On the 15th and 16th, I was back in Kansas City, visiting with Sherry Newell and Walt Bodine, attending one party which may have cemented some Baba-contacts.

On the 17th, I flew down to Stephens College in Columbia Missouri, following closely on Rick's heels. Lynn Lowery and Andi Means had quickly set up an afternoon and evening program—talks on "Alternate methods of consciousness expansion" and "On Love" (to 150 and 80 students respectively). Again, some heart-warming contacts seemed to have been made.

After bussing back to Kansas City, I flew to Lincoln Nebraska to speak at the University of Nebraska. On the 18th I gave 3 talks including a major address; on the 19th, I talked four more times seeing about 800 students in the two days. Also that day, I did an interview on drugs for

the local educational television station. As I flew to Omaha to switch planes for New York City, I was a bit regretful that I hadn't mentioned Baba's Name on the Lincoln, since I had been able to do it very frequently in past interviews, even on drugs. But Baba foresees everything. As I stepped off the plane in Omaha, a TV crew walked up to do an interview for an even more powerful station in the area—this time the Beloved's Name did go out over the air.

On the 20th, I arrived New York and gave a talk at Farleigh-Dickinson University in New Jersey (arranged by Bruce Hoffman)—the 300 students responded warmly. Later that day Rick and I gave a talk to New York University (Rick will have reported in detail on all our joint appearances). Late that evening I did the Barry Gray syndicated radio show. On the 21st was a full day of Baba-bursting talk with Rick—including Columbia and City Colleges, the Alan Burke nationally syndicated TV show and the Caspar Citron nationally syndicated radio show. On Friday, the 22nd, I gave a talk at the United Nations School, students of which were from several countries, many the teenage children of diplomats. They seemed extraordinarily responsive and took almost 100 copies of *God in a Pill?* and the *Universal Message*. To my astonishment and delight, a 15 year old Chinese boy came up to me afterward and calmly asked if I had read *GOD SPEAKS* yet or been to the Myrtle Beach Center. He turned out to be a nephew of Joulia Mavris. Later that day I made a contact for future lectures at the New School for Social Research and that night left for Rochester, N.Y. Bad weather delayed my arrival for six hours and I could only think that Baba had benevolently rearranged Mayavic travel influences, since this was perhaps the one flight in my schedule where time was not important.

While visiting my parents and sister in Le Roy N.Y. I taped a show on drugs at radio station WBTA, Batavia, N.Y. with a college panel. The tape may be circulated to a number of college stations in Western New York State.

On the 24th of March, I boarded a plane in Rochester on my way back to Berkeley prepared for a relatively uneventful flight. Little did I realize what surprises were in store from Baba's Box of spiritual "coincidences". Minutes after we were airborne, I struck up conversation with a college girl sitting by me who eventually asked me if I knew who was on the plane. I affirmed my ignorance, and she excitedly pointed out that Bishop Fulton Sheen was sitting ten seats forward. Bishop Sheen is one of the best known and influential Catholic Bishops in the U.S.A., having been associated with humanitarian causes as well as having done many television shows which were widely circulated. Just a few days before, I had read an article on him in a national news magazine. After takeoff, I followed the inevitable internal urge to give him a Baba pamphlet or two. I walked up the aisle, introduced myself, and there began an hour's conversation till we disembarked in Chicago. We talked fervently about spirituality, mysticism, the new tenor of student interest in God, the notion of the pain and suffering of God, of daily remembrances, etc. Much of the time I was speaking of Beloved Baba's exposition of the Truth—all of which he seemed to receive very sincerely. In fact, at one point he asked, "I have 600 priests under me. What should we do to revive spirituality?" I sensed that his understanding was much more developed than church dogma, and because I felt that he loved God very much, I was doubly happy to introduce (or perhaps re-introduce) him to the Beloved. He took a *Universal Message, God in a Pill?*, a reading list and Volume I of the *Discourses* and appeared very interested in reading them. A fascinating footnote is a story I heard when I got back to California. Someone told me that 15 years or so ago, Filis Frederick sent him a photograph of Baba (presumably when Baba appeared physically younger). She was said to have received the reply "Thank you so much for the picture of our Beloved Lord." An auguring of things to come?

Still glowing from the spiritually charged contact, I almost literally "ran into" a young girl named Meg Pierce

in the huge Chicago airport. Expecting a phone call from me, she and her mother drove 90 miles from Milwaukee on the chance of connecting with me between planes. She is an ex-drug addict from Berkeley who has been drawn to the Beloved after an apparently brief exposure.

I stayed in Berkeley through March 27th; on the 27th I gave a talk to the 3,000 students of Berkeley High School. Later that morning I talked to 120 students in a "family life class". There was an amazing interest in consciousness and mysticism—most of the questions centered on these topics though the ostensible subject was drugs. Finally, I spoke to 400 students in the football field bleachers. Again their interest in meditation and mysticism was prominent. I then rushed off to the airport to fly to Boston, where I gave a talk on "Narrowing the hallucination gap" to about 150 teachers. After the talk I was interviewed by WBZ news and apparently, parts of the interview (including Baba's Name) was heard in various parts of the country. On Friday, the 29th, I did a local radio "talk" show with an old friend, Gunther Weil. The show was generally on "the new spirituality" and Baba's ideas received a satisfying amount of air time. Also on that day, a newspaper article regarding the Thursday speech appeared in a local Boston newspaper. On Saturday the 30th, I met with some of the Boston-lovers and did a radio panel on drugs (station WMEX). I was also interviewed by United Press International and they sent out a national release. The reporter said that the section on Baba had been deleted from some papers.

I returned to Berkeley on March 31st and on April 17th, on the invitation of Lester Bashara (a growing Baba-tuned minister of Religious Science), gave a talk to the national convention of Religious Science Ministers. In attendance were about 60 to 70 per cent of the 100 or so ministers of Religious Science, a pretty mystically-based orientation (based on ideas of and Ernest Holmes) for an organized church.

It was an extraordinary evening—Baba came through to their hearts visibly enough that ordinary consciousness could sense the spiritual ecstasy of the communication. They took many Universal Messages and wanted reading lists.

But perhaps the most exciting news of recent months of Baba-work in the U.S.A. cannot be reported. I have intuited two phases of His Work—one the public, the other the intimate. Media exposure, formal speeches etc. helps acquaint the country that the Avatar is here on Earth. But in those masses there are just a few really ripe souls it would seem. And it's with these individuals that a vast amount of unheralded Baba-work is being done. I continually get letters from new lovers telling of their acquaintances who, unexpectedly, have responded to Baba. And I'm sure that this is an infinitesimal sampling of what come into visibility in the U.S., not to mention what is occurring over the world. Certainly the Baba boys and girls in and around San Francisco are doing marvelous work speaking Baba's Message publicly and privately; and this is being duplicated by young people (as well as Baba-adults) all over the U.S.A. It is a communication of His Truth from person to person, heart to heart, drop-soul to drop-soul and Love to Love. It is the light in a dark sky. It is joyous to comprehend.

I hope all is well with you and the rest of the dear family around Baba, that His Love keep you happier and, happier.

Lovingly,

Sd./ ALLAN

Guruprasad News:*(Continued from page 8)*

no cause given for the least disturbance—so fragile is the container of His momentous seclusion. But strong is the love and obedience of His lovers helping to keep it intact, for Beloved Baba informs us from time to time: 'My work is being done very satisfactorily'."

The lovers in Poona have helped supremely in this, temptingly close as they are to the place where their Master resides. One of them wrote to Adi, "Just that our Beloved will be in Poona, is the greatest thing for us. We are content to breathe in the air charged with His presence and fill our lungs to bursting point!" He could have been speaking for them all, so united has been their resolve to help by not approaching Guruprasad in any manner. How the children too have been no less aware of the strict seclusion can be imagined from an amusing incident that concerns Merwan, Baba's three year old grand-nephew living in Poona. It happened a few days after we arrived at Guruprasad. Merwan was out for a walk with his daddy, Jehangir Sukhadwala, when they came across a dead crow lying on the road. Inevitably the toddler's volley of questions began: "What is this?" "A crow" said daddy. "What's the matter with it?" "It has been shot". "Why doesn't it move?" "Because it is dead and gone". "Where has it gone?" "It has gone to Baba". At this, Merwan halted in his tracks and excitedly demanded, "What?! When Baba is in Seclusion? How come a crow can go to Baba and I can't?" I'm still wondering how daddy managed to get out of that!

What with literally a hundred and one passenger buses throughout Poona carrying Baba's picture and His message given by the 'Avatar Meher Baba Poona Centre', and the Poona press coming out in a rash of Baba-news, the mandali have had to be vigilant for possible inquirers and seekers. The Marathi papers gave the two recent Circulars in complete or condensed form. "Poona Herald", the English daily, gave condensed versions and topped them with eye-catching headlines.

It gave the latest Circular declaring the continuing of Avatar Meher Baba's Seclusion until the 21st of May 1968, with the heading: CALAMITY DATE POSTPONED!— thus inadvertently conveying a sense of the Avatar's Compassion for all. On the other hand the "free Press" of Bombay, publishing the item in its 'Talk of the town' column, headlined it: COMING CATASTROPHE! Although Baba has never actually referred to the "something great" as a calamity or a catastrophe, the newspapers' interpretation is a natural one, reflecting the world's condition which not only makes it easy for people to anticipate disaster but makes it a dreaded conclusion. Knowing it is all in the hands of the Compassionate Father, whichever way we look at it we see it as nothing less than a Blessing. But no matter how it is interpreted, how far we stretch our guesses as to the form the Blessing will assume, we are bound to fall short of the mark because Baba tells us it will be something that has never happened before. As He said to His mandali a few days after we arrived here:

"That which is to happen after 21st May 1968, will be something great, something that has never happened before, something that will not happen again for billions and billions of years."

Baba further remarked that the 'something great' will happen of a sudden, not in developing stages. People will go about their daily affairs unaware till the moment of its happening.

On the morning of 20th February, the day Baba told us of His decision to continue the Seclusion till 21st May an extraordinary thing happened at Meherazad, A large monkey, black faced and long limbed, appeared as it were from nowhere and was seen sitting on the goldmohur tree by the house just as Baba entered His room on returning from the mandali. This lone monkey was obviously an exile from its tribe. At sight of it there was an excited chorus of suggestions from us women: "Shoo it away or its commotion will disturb Baba";

"leave it alone it will go away"; "give it a banana it must be hungry"; "don't go too near it's sure to attack"; "keep away or you'll frighten the poor thing". As it turned out, each suggestion was followed, beginning with the banana offering placed discreetly on the roof so as not to scare it. That didn't improve relations. 'The poor thing' gnashed its teeth and furiously shook the branches, using the same brand of contempt for all friendly moves. In the end we decided to try the "leave it alone" formula, ignoring Monkey completely. Nothing could have been worse, as we soon found out. After an hour of peaceful indifference, Monkey suddenly went mad. Leaping on to the main house, it jumped about with astounding speed and force, from roof to roof to roof, of rooms on both floors, sending tiles flying and crashing. The climax of this swift crescendo of sound and fury, came when Monkey leapt down from the topmost point of the house on to Baba's room below with a tremendous crash and impact. Baba was resting in His room at the time, and the mandali members who were with Him said they felt the ceiling would cave in! After that of course the "shoo away" operation was immediately put into effect—a fantastic chase involving more than a dozen Meherazadians waving bamboos, brooms, branches, umbrellas, round and round the compound as Monkey dodged from treetop to treetop, roof to roof. It was not far to sunset time before Monkey made up its mind to give up, making for the village of Pimpalgaon about a mile away. There, as we heard the villagers tell, it settled down quietly for over a month before vanishing as suddenly as it had appeared.

Interesting as this Monkey episode is, ordinarily it might not have been given space here. What makes it profoundly news worthy is Beloved Baba's comments after it was over. Baba said that the havoc played by the monkey on the roof of His room on the day He had decided to lengthen the Seclusion, was deeply significant to His work and that which is to happen after 21st May.

After this, it was natural for us not to dismiss as 'coincidence' a couple of incidents that made a tail piece to the Monkey chapter. One was, that just two mornings prior to our arrival in Poona a large black-faced monkey visited Baba House in Poona, the house where Baba's brother Beheram lives with his family, where Beloved Baba lived as a youth. As reported by His niece Gulnar, the monkey settled down on the roof of Baba's Room. It sat there for quite a while, seeming content and very much at home, enjoying the fruits it found on trees in the patio of the house, Then it loped off gracefully over the network of neighbouring rooftops, and has not been seen around since then. The other incident relates to the Irani New Year, 'Jamshedi Navroz', which falls on 21st March when day and night are of equal length. Signifying the season of Spring and a day of thanksgiving, Jamshedi Navroz is believed to be Persia's most ancient festival dating back to over 10,000 years, and is observed with much rejoicing in the home of every Irani. The turn of each new year is worked out with astronomical precision: the exact time it will begin to turn, the colour it will signify, the form of animal it will symbolically assume. And this year, Navroz has assumed the form of a Monkey! This is predicted to indicate a lot of world trouble and chaos in the current year.

Predictions from astrologers, clairvoyants and the like, make irresistible reading in magazines and Sunday papers everywhere. What news space is not devoted to violence and disasters, seems devoted to the predicting of worse to follow. Amid the black clouds of these many forecasts, it is refreshing to see a brilliant star heralding hope for the world, as seen through the eyes of Mir Bashir, renowned palmist of London. The 'Poona Herald' of 7th March 1968 gives Mr. Bashir's prediction under the heading: A NEW PROPHET TO COME SOON.

It goes on to say, "Mir Bashir, the internationally known palmist clairvoyant, who claims Indian princes and British politicians and other prominent people among his clientele,

has made an important announcement on the eve of a pilgrimage to Mecca. Mir Bashir said:

'While I shall devote myself to the religious significance of the haj, I am hoping that I shall experience something specially significant relating to the coming of a great personage of tremendous spiritual stature.

'For many years I have been seeing signs in the hands of countless people I have met in all parts of the world, that there will be a great awakening—a great spiritual regeneration coinciding with the appearance of this personage. I have seen the signs most often in the hands of children.'

He predicted that the arrival of the 'person' would have great global impact on people of all faiths."

Signs hidden in countless hands and revealed to countless hearts, they point to Beloved Baba's words: "The whole world will come to know who I am when I break my Silence." Baba has also said that "The fortunate ones are they who know me now, before I manifest universally." Many years ago, when His Silence was in its teens, Baba told His disciples (to the effect) that "Now I am like a Lion that is caged—people come to see it and admire it, can afford to trifle with the majesty of its power, are indifferent or ignorant of its might. But none would be left in ignorance or doubt were the lion to spring from its cage! When I come out of my Silence, my Divine Identity will be manifest to all, my Glory will reveal itself, the impact of my Love will be felt universally."

The number of 'fortunate ones' is growing every day, everywhere, along with their longing to spread His word. In U.S.A., as a letter informs us, "Beloved Baba's Message is moving like an avalanche. There are Baba Groups coming into existence everywhere, especially those formed by University students, most brilliant and loving young people who

are taking Baba spontaneously into their hearts and lives." The more His Family grows, the more frequently we receive a 'birth announcement' telling us of yet another Baba Group or Baba Centre born in some part of some country. Round the world, the rejoicers of Avatar Meher Baba's 74th Birthday represented many countries, many religions. "People of various faiths" figured conspicuously in reports from Iran, Pakistan, Africa, and Centres in other Eastern countries. In multi-religioned India they figured in celebrations everywhere. They were there among the 30,000 at Ahmednagar who took part in the six-hour procession winding through the maze of streets to the accompaniment of music, dancing and fireworks; they were there in the mammoth processions at Nagpur, Kanpur, Dehra Dun, Masulipatam, and in the more intimate ones at other places; they were there at Bombay's function presided over by a renowned cricketeer; at Poona's function presided over by the Speaker of Maharashtra's legislative assembly; at Delhi's function led by three Ministers of the Central Government. Everywhere, in gatherings and processions, at entertainments and Prayers, at bhajan-singing and feast-giving to the poor in His Name, they were there—people of various faiths, of various communities, from various walks of life, rejoicing in the birth of the birthless One. The message that Baba sent to His lovers on the Day, was:

ON THIS MY APPARENT PHYSICAL BIRTHDAY I
SEND MY HOMAGE AND OBEISANCE TO MY
LOVERS WHO LIVE FOR ME AND WOULD IF
ORDERED DIE FOR ME.

All that His lovers in the West and East put into making this Birthday an occasion 'befitting to the Avatar' could be added up to the one word: BABA. And the result, whether judged in size or form, can be simply called colossal. It certainly cannot be put into the nutshell of a letter, nor will I try. One refrain heard in most of the reports was "We

wished it would go on and on, that the Day would never end." A child was heard to ask his mother "Why can't we have Baba's Birthday every day?" Well, many lovers in India did just that. In the states of Andhra, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, a fair number of Baba's Centres publicly celebrated the Birthday for 74 days, some keeping it up for over a 100 days!

But if the universal celebrating of the 74th Birthday is properly described as gigantic, it was not a giant that sprang up overnight to honour the Occasion. It was a structure made up of 365 days and built with the love and energy of His lovers, a culmination of their labours in bearing His Message to all peoples at all times of the year. And with the impetus of the rising body of His new lovers, His Message is being borne over every land, spreading so swiftly that it is difficult to focus on any single area of progress to report on! As an impartial editor put it in a recent publication, "the world is on the threshold of a new BABA ERA".

Until some years ago, finding a mention of Baba in the press was as unexpected as coming across a daisy in a field of withered grass. Now the daisies are dotted all over the field, springing up in the toughest patches. Around this Birthday time more than a few Indian papers and magazines printed news of Baba. Those in Marathi (language of Maharashtra) covered pages with His messages, circulars, biography, articles by His lovers, and reports of His Birthday celebrations—including some of the most notably conservative papers! When I remarked to a Maharashtrian Baba-lover that this was surely a surprise, he said that the more correct word would be a 'miracle'. Birthday time is also a favourite time for His lovers to present a fresh bouquet of Baba material in various languages: books, booklets, folders, pamphlets, posters, cards. Among the rare flowers of this year's offering is 'Dari Be Sooye Abadiyyat' (Door To Eternity), an extremely well printed book published by Baba-lovers of Teheran and Shiraz, Iran. Written by Dr. Jehangir

Meherabanpur, it is the first book of its kind in Persian, giving the life and works and discourses of Meher Baba and having colour portraits of Him. Of the five thousand that were printed, the lovers sent individual copies to all the religious heads of Iran.

Throughout the vast background of India's spiritual history there have been rishis, maharishis, yogis, mahayogis, mahatmas, gurus, sants, sadhus, and the like. India still abounds with them. Like the shells swept ashore when the Tide comes in, at Avataric times they appear in profusion. A few among them are genuine. I recall how, when we were watching a conglomeration of 8,000 of them at Benares in 1939, Baba turned to us and gestured, "Of these 8,000, only 8 are real." False and real, wherever they are found, whatever their titles and claims, they are folds of the veil that help the Avatar hide Himself from us. As such, their stirring and billowing out into public prominence at the present, shows that the moment is nearing for the Avatar to emerge from behind the veil and reveal Himself. But in the meantime, lest we get involved in these folds that veil Reality, Beloved Baba again and again reminds us and warns us to keep away from any and all of them.

As in the market of drugs, the wares of maharishis, mahatmas and others, offer many palliatives that give one a feeling of relief from pain of material problems, that deaden one's sense of frustration or boredom. But when the momentary effect wears off, the ghosts rise again and loom bigger than ever. Only the Divine Surgeon—the God-Man, Perfect Master—can remove the root of all symptoms. The average searcher finds the sugar-coated palliatives easy to swallow—they lull him gently into the belief that they are a cure, they add to his false sense of security, they do not remove the burden that he groans under and hates to part with, and the price to his ego is cheap. Babajan, one of the five Perfect Masters who brought about the present Avatar's advent, said shortly before she dropped her body, "It is time for me to

leave now—work is over—must close shop." A devotee protested: 'Do not say that Babajan, we need you with us.' With a quizzical look Babajan said: "Nobody wants my wares—nobody can afford the price—I've turned the goods over to the Proprietor." And right now, while the Proprietor has the Shop's doors wide open for all, how many who enter can yet afford the 'price', We may yet walk in and ask the Highest of the High for material boons worthy of a ten-cent store—like walking into the biggest jewellers and asking for a packet of pins. Of course we can have our pins, for God-Shop is All-Complete and there are all things for all customers. Once in a while comes one who recognizes the Jewel and is prepared to denude himself of his 'self' for its possession, to eventually discover that it is only by the grace and mercy of the 'Shop Keeper' that he can attain the Gem of no price. How immeasurable our good fortune that the Shop Keeper of our time is Mercy Incarnate, as even His Name reveals either way we look at it: MEHER means compassion or grace; REHEM means mercy. All He asks of us is all of our imperfect love, from which may be born perfect obedience and perfect patience.

Over and over again Baba tells His lovers: I AM WITH YOU. His lovers are given the opportunity to realize this more and more, as attested by them. It is as if the farther He goes into seclusion the nearer He is to His lovers, the more they remember and feel and experience that He is with them!

One morning the mail brought a postcard from a very young Baba-lover in Jabalpur, a boy named Raju. In a laborious scrawl Raju had written in English:

Dear Baba,

on 25 Feb. I took part in your birthday celebration. I gave a small speech:—

Baba is our Father
 Baba is our Mother
 Baba is our Brother
 Baba is our Sister

BUT

Baba is my dear Friend
 because He plays with me
 He eats with me
 He sleeps with me
 He walks with me
 He always with me.

Reading my letter through I find that it is as usual a surprisingly long letter. And as usual I assure myself it is better this way, in case the next letter is much delayed or too short. For the lazy ones, however few, who might glide across the central expanse of this letter, the messages of utmost importance are placed at both ends of the letter where none can miss them.

BABA'S MESSAGE TO HIS LOVERS:

"I want all my lovers to continue reciting the Parvardigar Prayer and the Prayer of Repentance every day till the 9th of July 1968. On the 10th of July, the 43rd anniversary of my Silence, I want all my lovers to observe complete silence for twentyfour hours, from midnight of 9th July to midnight of 10th July 1968."

Please note that Baba has given *no option of a fast* for those, who may find it impractical to observe silence. His lovers know what their Beloved's wish is, and it is left to them how they can manage to carry it out. None must write concerning it to any of us here or at the Ahmednagar office.

Moreover, Baba desires the present restriction on correspondence to continue as now and be *more strictly observed*. The "more strictly" applies mainly to those of His lovers in India who have been increasingly forgetful of the restriction and have lapsed into pre-restriction letter writing.

To those who receive this letter before 19th May, I would like to make it clear that apart from the silence on 10th July the silence to be observed on Sunday the 19th of May (as per Circular sent out in March) stands good.

NEWS IN BRIEF

74th Birthday Celebrations of Avatar Meher Baba

DELHI:

Through the courtesy of Smt. Kusum Mohkam Singh, Baba lovers from Delhi marched past Delhi towards Muzaffarnagar and Saharanpur and were given a right royal reception by the Raja & Rani of Saharanpur who arranged an impressive public meeting to listen to the Avatar's call. Like the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna, lovers from Delhi and Dehra Dun converged at Saharanpur joined by Sheila Devi from Roorkee like Saraswati. The public meeting was held under the chairmanship of Shri Amar Singh Saigal, M.P., to celebrate the Avatar's 74th Birthday. This served as the prelude for the inauguration of Baba Centre at Saharanpur.

After a dip in the holy Sangam of Baba's Love, Baba lovers returned to Delhi. A special function was held in a colourfully festooned pandal devotedly planned by Shri Amar Singh Saigal, at 169 North Avenue on 16th March, 1968. The function was inaugurated by Dr. M. Chenna Reddy, Minister of Steel, Mines & Metals who said it was his good fortune to have been given the opportunity to offer his tribute in the celebration of the 74th Birthday of Avatar Meher Baba. To his experience Baba's silence seemed to speak and it was due to His Power that great and important events were going to happen. Thus observing Dr. Reddy released the Book "Sparks of the Truth from Meher Baba's Dissertations - Version by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh " and placed the same at the feet of Beloved Baba.

Garlanding Baba's picture on the stage, Shri Parimal Ghosh observed that Avatar Meher Baba came to redeem humanity and that we should live up to His teachings to

reach the goal through His Grace. Shri Prabhakar Mishra, Vice-Chancellor of the International Sanskrit University told the audience how he came in contact with Avatar Meher Baba. After prayers and reading of messages, came on the stage children depicting different religions offering homage to the Avatar in different languages and styles according to the religion represented by each of them. Prizes were awarded for their wonderful performance. This was followed by a community dinner and Qawali programme by Shafqat Rahi and Party from Saharanpur.

There was a symposium at K-72, Kirti Nagar, where questions were answered by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh regarding the philosophy and mission of Avatar Meher Baba. There was a Baba Film show and whole night vigil at E. 356 Greater Kailash, through the kindness of Dr. Deshmukh and Shri G. R. Chaurasia, There were meetings in Qazi Hauz, Defence Colony and Lajpat Nagar at which Dr. Deshmukh, Shri Amar Singh Saigal, Shri W. D. Kain and Shri Prabhakar Mishra participated by their speeches. On 17th morning Baba lovers were regaled by a Qawali Programme which was followed by a meeting in the President's Estate.

Shri & Smt. Ram Prakash Agarwal celebrated the Beloved's Birthday at 9 Curzon Road in a marvellous manner befitting the Highest of the High. Baba's life-size picture presented a glorious sight which even angels would envy. Dinner had been laid out on buffet tables and uniformed bearers waited upon the guests. Radio Artists' soft music along side wafted by the cool breeze enriched the 'rejoicing' of the Baba lovers on this occasion as contained in the Beloved's Message. Blessed indeed are they who recognise and love the Avatar in His own time.

GUJARAT: A group of Meher lovers from Bombay consisting of Shri K. V. Nene, Smt. Nene, Shri Gulabdas Panchal, Shri Kishore Mistri, Shri Ratilal Panchal, Shri Shantilal,

Shri Barve and Shri Pandhari set out on 3rd March and went to Surat and toured a number of villages in Gujarat. The first was Rander which Beloved Baba visited in 1947. The Navsari and Surat Baba lovers also joined them. The next village was Dummus where Dr. H. Bharucha exhibited a Baba film. The next programme was in Ankaleshwar where also films were repeatedly shown. The party had to take all sorts of conveyances braving many difficulties in village travels. They have covered Vishrampura, Shahpur and Santokpura, where public meetings were addressed and Baba literature freely distributed. There were Bhajans (Gazals & Qawalies) and speeches at almost all places. The party returned to Surat and on 10th March, a grand public programme was arranged by Shri Rajni Kant Engineer in the Sanatan Hall. Thousands listened to Dr. Bharucha who explained the activities of the Avatar while giving a film show. On the 11th, the group were guests of Dr. Bharucha, at Navsari at a dinner party. There was an interesting programme that night in Mandal Hall, where Bhajans, Gazals and other music items engaged the audience till prayers were sung and Arti given.

After spending a day on 12th March in the hospitable home of Baba lover Shri Kooversha Zaiwalla at Dahanu, the party returned to Bombay.

DEHRA DUN:—Meher Mahila Sankirtan Party headed by Smt, Prakashwati played a leading role in the 74th Birth day celebrations of Avatar Meher Baba. On 9-2-68 at the place of optician Mr. Khanna, the ladies witnessed some spiritual phenomena. Prakashwati, while Sankirthan was on, saw a car passing on the road, in which Baba was seated by the side of the driver. The car stopped a while in front of the hall and Baba looked up. Prakashwati ran out side to receive Him. There was neither Baba nor a car on the road. At a Sankirthan on 12-2-68, Smt. Prakashwati was Apprising the audience as to how she came under Baba's orbit of Love when flowers started dropping off Baba's Murti.. When she resumed the Sankirtan a large flower 'mala' slipped

gradually from the Murti and fell down in front of it. Everyone felt Beloved's presence and shouts of "Jai Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai" echoed and reechoed in the hall. But some ladies thought that the garland was not properly placed on the Murti forgetting the assurance given by Beloved Baba in 1953. But they soon realised their mistake when another flower 'mala' though tightly fastened fell down from the Murti. Then a number of flowers also started falling down. Miss Prabha, Khanna's daughter was decorating the Beloved's Murti and saw His face changing shape and this was followed by dropping of the flowers which she had placed. She placed them again and again they fell down.

Sankirtan was in full swing, Mrs. Khanna was looking at the Beloved's photo on the dais and Lord Krishna's pictures were placed on either side. She suddenly saw some shadow about 4" in length swiftly flowed out of Krishna's picture at the left and emerged in Baba's photo at once. Immediately she went to the adjoining room to compose herself from the excitement.

'Prabhat pheri' was a novel feature observed this year. Even rain could not prevent the lovers from their march in the mornings. When Prakashwati was laid up with hypertension, Sardarni Varinder Singh kept the ball rolling. Shri Balkishan and Shri Munshilal also helped to carry out this programme without break.

Shri Shafqat Rahi entertained Baba lovers with Qawalis with deep love for the Beloved in his heart.

In between each piece of Qawali, the Secretary of the Centre gave befitting touches on the love for the Beloved and read Baba's Birthday message—"Let my lovers rejoice....." The programme came to an end with a nice thanks giving speech by Shri Balkishan Bakshi.

MEHER DHAM:

Mrs. Balgopal Dass, Meher Kanta, Sardami Varindar Singh, Meher Kumari, Prakashwati and Mrs. Chopra all worked together enthusiastically to make the functions on 24th and 25th Feb. successful. Baba lovers from Mussoorie, Panditwari Raipur, Ranjawalla, Meher Maffi, Vikasnagar, Muzaffarnagar and Delhi came and participated in the programme. The function started at 9 A.M. on 24th Feb. with Prayers. With the start of Sankeertan, Baba started showering flowers indicating His physical presence amidst His lovers. Then came the turn of Shafqat Rahi to give out his sweet Qawalies, which had the effect of imprinting Baba's love on the innermost cores of the lovers' hearts. With a short interval Qawalies continued up to 4-30 A.M. on 25-2-'68. Shafqat's brother Ashok also showed his skill in making the sound of 'Kunghroos' by his mouth.

In a brief speech, Sri Shatrughna Kumar explained the greatness of Beloved Baba and asked every body to stick to His daaman whole-heartedly. Sri Varindar Singh gave an account of his first contact with Baba and dwelt upon His Avatarhood. Smt. Prakashwati referred to some miracles Baba lovers experienced out of faith in Him. The cry of newly born babe coming from behind the curtain manipulated by Meher Kumari was the signal for every one to step forward to have the Beloved's Darshan, Then followed dancing and rejoicing. The Bhangra was enjoyed by all.

MEHER MAFFI:—It was here that Baba spent a good part of His New Life with His top ranking spiritual servants and the place thereby gained spiritual importance. Baba lovers from Dehra Dun proceeded by the Haridwar-Rishikesh road and reached the Centre in good time. On the dais was placed Baba's old time Alphabet Board which the Beloved gave to Sri Shatrughna Kumar, who preserved it as a sacred SOUVENIR. Though Baba discarded the use of such boards on 7-10-54, necessity arose for of its use in 1955 at a Sahavas in Ahmednagar, when with special permission of Baba

it was photographed for the benefit of Television viewers in America. Kumar also placed plaster impressions of Baba's lotus feet on the dais and 2 cups used by his family to serve coffee to the Beloved during His stay here.

After Arti, every body present received prasad of hot halwa and pakories, The lovers' bus returned to Dehra Dun amidst shouts of Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai.

ROORKEE:—On 26-2-'68 Dehra Dun lovers made their way to Roorkee Centre and were received by Miss Sheila Diwan. At the lovers' gathering, Sri Varinder Singh explained how he saw Baba in the form of Guru Nanak. Dr. Moorti then gave an interesting talk about Baba.

DAHANU:—At the sea-side out-door stage of K. L. Ponda School, Baba film was shown under the auspices of Bharat Tadgur Shilp Bhavan. Children from Primary and Secondary Schools of Christian Society & St. Mary's enjoyed the show. Then followed staging of a drama JAI MEHER by Mr. Bhau Kalchuri, M.A., Ahmednagar in which all the seven daughters of Shri Kooversha Zaiwalla took part. The chief guests Padmasri Harishchandra Gopal Patil and Dr. Mohanlal Pathak appreciated the evening's programme. Baba's Birthday message was read over.

PATHARDI:—Two thousand students of Marathi Boys and Girls School listened to the speeches of Shri V. R. Bade, Shri Khirode Guruji, Shri Khedkar Guruji on 24-2-68 morning. The evening's Bhajan Programme was at the Centre in Shri Bade's house which lasted till 5 A.M. on 25th. Baba's Prasad was distributed to thousands of people till 2 P.M.

On 1-3-'68 a special programme was arranged at Tilak Jain Vidyalaya presided over by Baba lover Shri P. F. Khilnani, Dist. & Sessions Judge, Ahmednagar. The President Shri V. R. Bade and Shri Mehendale, Headmaster spoke on Baba and His message. On 6th there was a public meeting at

market place and Shri Suganshet Kucheriya was the Chairman. Dr. Gugale and Advocates Baravkar and Khedkar and Shri V. R. Bade delivered speeches. On the 7th morning Shri Dada Patil Rajale presided over a meeting at Kasar-pimpalgaon in which Shri Khedkar, Shri Falake, Manikbai Guruji and Shri V. R. Bade also participated as speakers. The same night similar meeting was held at Malibabhulgaon where Shri Kute Guruji presided and on 8th morning at Takalimanoor Shri Shankar Maharaj presided. At this latter meeting besides others Dahi Tale, a student of 10 years spoke on Baba. On the 9th, a meeting was held at Koradgaon and the B. D. O. Shri Suryavanshi was the president. Questions put by villagers were answered by Shri V. R. Bade.

The same night Chinchapur Ijdc was the venue of Baba lovers' activity. Shri Babaji Avahad, Chairman, Health & Finance Dept., Zilla Parishad, Ahmednagar, s/w Manik Bai Guruji, Shri Suryavanshi B. D. O. and Shri V. R. Bade were the speakers on the occasion. On the 10th, similar programme was arranged at Tisgaon where Shri Jondhale, Principal of Janata Maha Vidyalaya presided.

All these meetings were attended by hundreds of villagers and students who listened to the life and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba and received prasad.

MACHILIPATNAM:—Important features that marked the celebrations at this dynamic Centre were: (1) Non-stop Nama Japa from 5 A.M. on 14-12-'67 to 5 A.M. on 25-2-'68 at Meher Villa, the residence of Shri Tadepalli Basavaiah, where the Ladies Centre is located; (2) Meher Annadana, i.e. feeding ten poor people every day at different lovers' houses or at the site of the Centre on all the 74 days. Sri Kurala Pullaiah and Sri T. Basavaiah had borne the expenses on Sundays and Fridays respectively; (3) Nagara Sankirthan from 4 A.M. to 6 A.M. every day starting from Robertsonpet; (4) Premika Sammelan every evening at lovers' houses where Sankirtan and Prayers

were held and prasad distributed after Arti. On 25th February, there was mass poor feeding and distribution of clothes to poor by Shri K. Pullaiah. Messrs. Hanumantha. Rao, A. Ramakrishna Rao were in charge of Namajapa, Annadana and Nagara Sankirtan on all days. Sri Y. Manikyala Rao (Vijayawada) inaugurated the Namajapa at 5 A.M. on 14-12-'67 at Meher Villa. On the first day, Sri M. S. R. Anjaneyulu arranged a grand procession with music and Bhajan in the evening and 15 sadhus were fed. The Programme on each day was shared by an ardent lover. On the 23rd February, Sri Basavaiah arranged a drama performance, when Smt. Rajeswari's Troupe enacted "Sakkubai" at the Baba site. On 24th and 25th Feb. B. A. Das and group gave Burrakatha performances on Baba's life and message. There was a special ladies' function at Meher Villa on the 25th, when money & clothes were presented to Meher artists and workers. Sri P. Lokanadha Rao arranged distribution of clothes etc. to members of Meher Baba Mandali along with lockets and booklets. Similar presentation programme was gone through at Sri K. Pullaiah's residence also. At 7 P.M. on the Birthday there was a grand procession, Baba's picture being placed on a decorated chariot and accompanied by Shehnai and Band.

KAKINADA:—A comprehensive programme was chalked out at this Centre for the 74th Birthday celebrations of Avatar Meher Baba. For Sankeertan and Bhajan Baba lovers Sarvasri Babji, Bhasker Rao, B. Narasimha Rao, Smt. Ammayamma, Mrs. J. V. Rao and their parties actively participated. Every day from 14-12-'67 up to 25-2-68 there was programme at individual lovers' houses and at the meetings which were all open to public, Dr. Dhanapathi Rao, Sri Bonala Venkateswarlu, Sri Y. V. Narasimha Rao, Sri E. Sathi Raju and Smt. P. Jagadamba gave inspiring talks on Baba's life and Messages. Messrs P. V. Subba Rao, K. V. Suryanarayana Murthy, C. R. Prasad of Kopparru, and P. Veera Raju of Meher Mandapeta also participated on some days.

CHITTOOR:—There was a 74 hour non-stop Divya Nama Sankeertan 'Hare Baba Hare Baba Hare Baba Meher Baba' from 3 A.M. on 22-2-68 'to 5 A.M on 25-2-68 at the Centre. Members of Mahila Vibhag—Srimathis B. Parvathamma, Ahalyabai, Saradamma Jayalakshamma, Salamma, Market Saradamma, Kantamma (Sr. & Jr) and others did yeoman service to make this programme successful. All the Bhajan Mandali members also partook in the Saukeerthan in turns and they were honoured at the end. On the 25th there was a procession of Baba (Cut-out) picture on a decorated double Bullock-cart At as many as hundred places harathi was given during the procession. Smt. Parvathamma distributed food to the poor and disabled at the Centre.

Prof V. V. Lakshmi Narasimha Rao, and Sri P, Ramlinga Reddi were the speakers of the evening at the public meeting. This was followed by a musical discourse by Harikatha Ratna B. Seshagiri Rao Bhagavatar (Kovvur). Nagara Sankeerthan is continued every day even after the 25th February.

CHALLAPALLI:—Baba Birth day festivities were conducted from 22nd to 25th February under the chairmanship of Sri S. R. Y. Ramakrishna Prasad Bahadur, who recently returned from his tour in the States, where he visited the Meher Centres at Myrtle Beach, New York, Washington etc. Sri A. Jagannadha Rao, eminent artist rendered devotional music with accompaniments. Kumari Malati and Madhavi gave melodious songs in a fine concert. Messrs P. Ramalingeswara Rao (Kovvur), and M. Buchilingappa Sastry (Vadali) delivered speeches. The President related his experiences during his American tour. There was a Harikatha performance (musical discourse) on Baba's life by Sri Telaprolu Munuswami Bhagavatar (Chittoor) and a playlet entitled "Meher Avataram" written by Sri Chaganti Subba Rao was enacted. The part played by Sri. K Ramakrishna, M.A., as Srimannarayana was notable. There was also a film show on the 24th and on the 25th several hundred poor were fed sumptuously. The festivities ended with a procession of Baba

picture accompanied with musical band and Shehnai. The Centre thus had the fortune of having different kinds of programmes on the four days of Celebrations.

ANAKAPALLI:—Sri N. V. Ramanaiah (Guntur) presented the Centre with a magnificent framed picture of Baba for the Birthday which was unveiled by Smt. B. Nagarathnam, at 5 A.M. on 25-2-'68. Poor feeding was carried out on an elaborate scale. A colourful procession of Baba's picture on Hamsa (swan) Vahanam was taken out in the principal localities of the town in the evening. The procession stopped opposite Sai Baba Temple where Arathi was given to Baba. Great enthusiasm prevailed throughout the function on an unprecedented scale.

PALAKOL:—On 25th Feb. several Baba lovers gathered in the Centre (residence of Sri Saladi Sriramamurthy). Messrs. D. Purushottam, Civil Engineer, Sugar Factory, B. Samba Sadasiva Rao, Excise Inspector, V. Mukunda Rao, Excise Sub-inspector, S. Ramanujulu Naidu, Retd. Municipal Commissioner, Kalluri Seetarama Murti, Piniseti chinna Venkateshwara Rao spoke about Beloved Baba and also their experiences. Sri Jeebu Sriramulu distributed Baba's pictures. Sri Gadey Viswanadham distributed 75 banians given by Sri Karumuri Nageswara Rao. There was poor feeding to a hundred people. In the afternoon Baba's cut-out was taken in a grand procession in which Sri C. R. Prasad of Kopparu and party sang Bhajans.

The local temple was the venue of a large public meeting in the evening presided over by Sri Atyam Narasimhamurti. Sri. V. Mukunda Rao and Sri Bhupathi Raju Lakshminarsa. Raju spoke about Baba and His message of Love and Truth.

VIJAYAWADA: On 6-3-'68 at 6 P.M, Sri A. C. S. Chari (Calcutta) addressed a meeting of Baba lovers at Meher abode and explained in Telugu as well as in English the significance of Beloved Baba's Birth day Messages.

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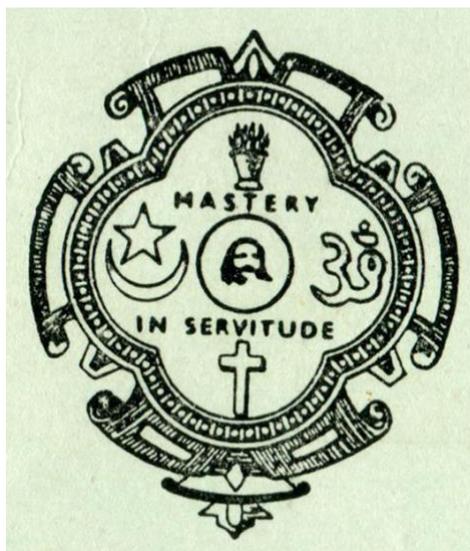
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