

THE ELOQUENCE OF ACTION



★	YOUTH CAMPS
☺	SATSANG YATRA
☺	PEACE WORK
☸	MEDITATION CAMPS
☀	RESEARCH CENTER
☸	SOCIAL WORKERS CAMPS

COMPILED AND EDITED BY KAISER IRANI

THE ELOQUENCE OF ACTION

**Vimalaji's Work In India
From 1978 - 1988**

Compiled and Edited by Kaiser Iranl

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CONTENTS

Page

Forward

Chapters

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----------|
| I. | Pilgrimage for Freedom and Democracy | 1 - 23 |
| II. | Camps | 24 - 89 |
| III. | A Leap Into the Flames of Violence | 90 - 126 |
| IV. | Experiments In Restructuring Rural Economy | 127 - 152 |
| V. | With the Assam Movement | 153 - 168 |
| VI. | The Cause of Punjab and Punjabiya | 169 - 239 |
| VII. | Border Problem of Gujarat | 241 - 244 |
| VIII. | Gujarat Bhradari | 245 - 254 |

Pilgrimage For Freedom And Democracy

Contents

PART ONE

1. Message from Shri Ravi Shanker Maharaj
2. Pilgrimage for freedom and democracy
3. Letter to friends joining the Pilgrimage
4. Our Pilgrimage
5. Preamble
6. Lok Satsang Yatra: Talks by Vimalaji during Yatra in Gujarat and Rajasthan
7. Discussion with Sarvodaya workers in Bikaner, Rajasthan
8. Newsletter of the second phase of Lok Satsang Yatra
9. Report from Punjab

PART TWO

Resume Of The Pilgrimage

1. Gujarat
2. Rajasthan
3. Madhya Pradesh
4. Punjab
5. Himachal Pradesh
6. Haryana

**BLESSINGS FROM SRI RAVI SHANKAR
MAHARAJ**

I am very glad to learn about the project undertaken by Vimalaben and her Satsangi friends to contact the people and waken them. This work will not be limited only to Gujarat but will spread over the entire country. I humbly pray to God to help her in this noble work.

Vimalaben never lags behind on such critical occasions. She faces risks to do such jobs. My blessings are with her in this noble undertaking.

PILGRIMAGE FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY

What is satsang Parivar?

It is a loose brotherhood of individuals having faith in man and the Divine concealed in him.

Since the last fifteen years a number of religious enquirers have been living around Vimalaji in a friendly non-organizational way. They live in various states of India and are involved in their occupations. Such individuals living in India as well as in different parts of the world constitute Vimal-Satsang-Parivar.

Why do we use the term "Pilgrimage"?

The word pilgrimage indicates our faith in man as well as our attitude towards life.

It indicates that we do not claim to be leaders of the people or professional social workers. We are common citizens, dedicated to the majestic and mysterious divinity which dwells in every human form.

We strive to awaken that divine potential concealed in every human heart, through personal contact, conversation and satsang.

What do we expect of the People?

We expect:

That the people should shed away all self-pity and the sense of inferiority, which has made them passive, inert and insensitive.

That they should themselves become the creators, controllers and organisers of village life.

That they should themselves build up the rural socio-economic structures.

That they should keep a vigilance over the work of every

governmental and semi-governmental administrative unit in their respective areas.

What is implied by people?

Man is the concrete expression of people

Who are the 'people'?

They, who live in the villages, towns and cities of India.

They, who recognize their rights as electorates and voters of Indian polity.

They, who are the foundation as well as apex of the parliamentary democracy in India.

Indians have forgotten the fundamental truth that they are the PEOPLE.

Indians are not aware of the gravity of their responsibility to keep parliamentary democracy alive and to exercise their right to vote in an impartial way.

Indians have totally forgotten that the source of social injustice, economic exploitation and all political corruption is concealed in their own greediness, cowardice and selfishness.

The pilgrimage is for awakening the awareness of these simple facts.

(This matter was printed in form of a Folder and distributed door to door during the Lok Satsang Yatra)

LETTER TO FRIENDS JOINING THE PILGRIMAGE

Shivkull
Mount Abu

Dear Friends,

We are all set upon an unprecedented adventure in the lives of religious enquirers. All of you very willingly decided to join the campaign for awakening and activating the people of India.

It is only the people who are awake and alert, that can function as the supreme power holders in democracy. By the terms "awake" and "alert" we do not imply mere political consciousness, the basic need is the consciousness of the glory of being a Human being; the Human being contains the Divine potential which manifests itself through the quality of human life; truthfulness, compassion, reverence for justice and love are some of the fundamental expressions of the Divinity that man is born to represent.

Our concern is to awaken that consciousness of the Divinity. It will confer upon man a sense of decent self-respect, dignity and indispensability of individual freedom. People who lack self-respect, sense of dignity, sense of responsibility and integrity of character do not hesitate to bargain socio-economic or political rights for petty little selfish ends. Such bargaining is prevalent in every democratic or non-democratic country in the world. This fact tempts some sections of Indian society to justify the corruption, the exploitation and the chaos existing on a national scale in our country. We on the other hand feel rather strongly that the Indian people due to their exceptionally unique cultural and spiritual heritage can wipe out this psychological cancer from the body politique of our country.

Unfortunately some of our well-wishers feel that we should postpone the Pilgrimage in case it is misunderstood by the rulers that be in Delhi. I fail to understand why we should be concerned about the possible or probable reactions of the government. My concern is with the rightness and justness of our action. I am willing to face the risks if there be any. I request everyone of you to think for your own selves independently. I shall not misunderstand you if you feel obliged to drop out. Please be honest with yourself, consult your families and take the decision. Please do not force yourselves to accompany me in case you have doubts, hesitations or nervousness of any manner. Doubts destroy faith. Nervousness pollutes the quality of our words and deeds. Psychological reservations transmit a nameless weakness and paleness into words and actions. It is only those who find a smokeless flame of clarity in their hearts who should join me.

I happen to be an individual whose life has been dedicated to the Divine in Man. I have never asked anything of man or God

hence there have been neither gains nor losses in my life. Naturally those whose lives are not totally dedicated to the cause of the Divine are entitled to be cautious and circumspective about what they do. My sympathy will be with those who find themselves in such a state of mind.

I would like to assure all of you that whether you join me in the adventure of awakening the people or keep away from it, it will not affect my affection and friendship for you.

13 th January, 1980.

Vimala

OUR PILGRIMAGE

These words are addressed to every member of the group for serious contemplation and consideration. I expect everyone to implement my humble suggestions with humility, responsibility and the grace of willingness.

We shall live together and move as a family unit for about ten weeks in all. We are travelling not for personal pleasure or enjoyment but for learning to serve the fellow human beings and cleanse our hearts through that service. The cleaning of the heart creates humility, receptivity and unusual strength of integrity.

None of us has any claim or the right to expect any personal services from the local workers who will join us from time to time in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. I request each one of you not to take any personal concessions, personal gifts or presents or ask for any personal favours from individuals or institutions during the pilgrimage. I hope you have read the history of the long revolutionary march that General Mao had led before the Chinese revolution. The soldiers were forbidden to take anything from the village people. Those who would grab personal favours or gifts were exposed and punished by the leader of the group publicly. We being a group of inquirers there can not be any punishment, but the day I notice that personal concessions or favours have been asked by anyone of the group, I will be obliged to request the person to leave the group. I hope I will not be put to such an unpleasant talk by anyone of us.

The camping place will be our home for the duration that we stay there. It will be the responsibility of everyone of us to keep

the whole place clean and tidy. Cleanliness and tidyness are the primary requirements of - individual and group health. So as soon as we reach the night camping place, all of us would clean the whole - place in the first half an hour.

The necessary work will be divided and assignments will be allotted but there should be a spirit of helping one another if and when help is needed.

As regards financial management dear Kalyanbhai will take care of it with the help of Kantibhai in Gujarat, Bachubhai in Rajasthan and Jashwantbhai in Madhya Pradesh.

As regards selling of literature and folders is concerned Arvind will take care of it in Gujarat, with the help of Kantibhai. Bachubhai will take care of it in Rajasthan with the help of Sharayu, and Krantidevi will take care of it in M.P. with the help of Jaswantrao.

As regards the kitchen and meals, Suhilababhi will take care of it in Gujarat with the help of Sajjanben and Jyotsna. Sajjanben will take care of it in Rajasthan with the help of Prabha and Jyotsana. And Prabha will take care of it in M.P. with the help of Sajjanben & Jyotsnaben.

As regards preparing the weekly reports and dispatching it Shri Kalyanbhai will be in charge, he will be helped by Shri Bachubhai and Sharayu in Gujarat. Prabha will be in charge of it in Rajasthan, she will be helped by Urmila. Shri Jashwantrao will be in charge of it in M.P. and will be helped by Urmila & Jyotsana.

Kaiser will be in charge of Vimalaji's personal work, room correspondence etc.

Arvind will be in charge of fixing up personal - interviews in Gujarat. Bachubhai will fix up personal interviews in Rajasthan and Jashwantrao in M.P.

Sushilabhabhi and Sajjanben will pay special attention to Vimalaji's meals which are to be prepared according to Vaidyaji's instructions.

PREAMBLE

We represent a group of Jeevan-Sadhakas. Life is the manifestation of the Divine for us. Human beings are endowed with a power of recognition of the Divine in them and in the world around. For us the purpose of human life appears to be the unfoldment of the Divine within, in and through the actual living of individual humans and through their mutual relationship. If the life of human beings in its entirety becomes such an unfoldment of the Divine; peace, joy and fulfilment are bound to result. We are humble seekers of such a way of living.

We believe that in mutual life in society, Democracy - provides a suitable form of organization. It is the least defective form of social living, which makes it possible for every individual to blossom fully. It is evident that today in India, Democracy is in danger. All political parties and the so-called leaders of the people seem to be the least concerned about the freedom and well-being of the Indians. They appear to be only after power at any cost. They no more recognize the values for which Gandhiji and other freedom fighters stood and suffered for, till their last breaths. The very moral fibre of Indian society today, seems to have been weakened due to petty-mindedness and self-centredness of the money and power seekers. If such individuals are returned to power after the coming elections, not only political democracy but economic, social and cultural stability and freedom of the sixty three cores of Indians will come in danger.

We feel that the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of India can be saved only if democracy is saved in this election. And unless honest, selfless and broad-minded servants of the people are returned to power, there seems to be no hope for democracy in India. That is why we as Indians for Democracy feel concerned about the present elections and have come to give a call to all Indians to save democracy by voting for those who have a clean character and are capable of honest service. We belong to no political party, nor do we seek power. We have come to awaken the sense of responsibility towards social living in every common Indian. We have come to make clear to the people that unless and until they consciously responsibly and fearlessly choose their own representatives without falling a prey to money and other allurements there will be no freedom, stability, safety and all-round progress for the Indians.

The nature of our work

This message, we wish to spread among the people not through large meetings, lectures or through shouting catch-slogans. We want mutely to distribute the pamphlets among the common people. The pamphlets will make our intentions clear to them. We hope that our humble attempts will inspire them to vote for the people's candidates whose bonafides are clear. If there is a need to explain the pamphlet, we are ready to do that in our evening prayer-meetings.

If we are to work in the city area, we will like to cover the different institutions and blocks or wards in the cities. The institutions will be the following:-

1. The Educational Institutions and student Hostels.
2. Institutions for social service.
3. Women's Organizations.
4. Cultural Organizations.
5. Study circles, clubs and theatres etc.
6. Religious Institutions and Organizations.
- 7.. Youth Organizations.
8. Government Institutions
9. Assembly
10. Railway, Bus, Post and Telegraph Office.
11. Police, Home-guards and Military Centres.
12. And others.

Our expectations from you

Ours will be a small group. We will expect that in the beginning some one acquainted with the city, will accompany us while distributing the pamphlets. If the pamphlets are to be distributed and explained in the prayer-meetings some one will help us to organize such meetings. We will need a guide and a map of the city or the area concerned showings bus-routes and giving essential information.

- On behalf of friends joining the Yatra

RESUME OF VIMALA'S TALKS

(TRANSLATED AND COMPILED BY KAISER IRANI)

Lok Satsang Yatra

Synopsis of Talks given by Vimalaji from January 15th to February 17th, 1980 in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Since January 15th, 1980 we have set out on a "People's Pilgrimage" through three States of India: Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh; mainly visiting the small neglected towns. You may wonder why we have left the peace and solitude of Mount Abu to travel thus intensively for three months. For a number of years we have been observing with concern the moral fibre of the country deteriorating and in recent times it has reached such a crisis-like situation that we felt an urgent need to go among the people and share with them our concern over this crisis in character and to remind each one, of the Divinity that lies within and the purpose of life which is to awaken to that Divinity.

Though India is the largest Democracy in the world, which means we have a government of the people, by the people and for the people, there are no "people" in the true sense of the word. No one is truly expressing the complete integrated nature of man. Man in the progress of evolution has a developed mental faculty and if evolution is to progress and not regress, as is the danger now. Man has to live by his understanding.

Right now we do not have the discipline or courage to live our understanding. We think one thing, say something else and do otherwise.

These three aspects of our life are hardly ever integrated.

Every field of social and political life is ridden with corruption, injustice and anti-social behaviour. Though there may be just a few who indulge in such activities, it affects the whole society; because there are none with the courage to stand up and speak up against such anti-social behaviour. We are bowed down by fear and cowardliness and do not realise that the wrong doer alone is not a sinner but he who silently and passively observes it is also a participant in the wrong act.

In order to withstand injustice and corruption one may have to bear up and be a victim to much suffering and sacrifice. But

there is no other way. have we forgotten that it was only through such self-sacrifice and forbearance that our forefathers won us our freedom? If we cherish this freedom and want to maintain it we too must be ready to sacrifice for it.

The country right now is divided into numerous sections based on caste, class and religion etc. There is no Indian to be found anywhere. Besides dividing ourselves physically by caste and language, the psyche of the Indian is also divided. Psychologically we behave as schizophrenics. On one hand we think of ourselves as very religious and spiritually minded people, we go to temples, read the philosophers and quote the scriptures, but in our heart of hearts we are attracted to the material world and all the comforts and pleasures it has to offer. We are not willing to acknowledge or face this fact, which makes us divided within and being torn in this conflict we do not achieve anything in this world or the other. We do not have faith in God or the scriptures we quote, our real faith and security is in money and the bank balance and security it offers, again a fact we are not ready to face. The country can progress only if it takes a stand one way or the other. Either lock the temple doors, shut the books and put all your energies in attaining material goods and comforts or truly live a spiritual life and so fulfill the destiny of India of being a Beacon light for the world.

As ordinary citizens of the country what can we do? First we have to realise that we are the country and if we change, the country shall change, so we set about changing and building up our own character. Thus we provide a basis for the Divinity within to unfold. It will express itself in our acceptance of the responsibility for the welfare of our community and town. We stop waiting for others, be they social workers or the government to do things for us, but we take the initiative in our own hands and do what is necessary.

In general what are the practical steps that we can take? Recalling the life and work of Gandhi of how he revolutionised the very process of revolution itself by changing its motivation, by responding to violence with love, forgiveness and compassion. Bearing this in mind the people of goodwill in every town can get together and form a group or committee who will organise and partake in beneficial and necessary activities for the town. These activities can include activities like :

(I) Forming a Peace Force, whose work will be to withstand and rectify any injustice by:

- 1) When an incident of injustice comes to their notice the group goes as a committee to investigate and ascertain what has taken place.
- 2) They call a public meeting to notify the town members of what has taken place.
- 3) They voice their concern, dissatisfaction and denunciation of what has taken place.
- 4) They take out a procession.
- 5) They hold prayer meetings for the transformation of the wrong doers.
- 6) The members of the Peace Force are willing and ready to take all the necessary steps for the injustice to be rightened.
- 7) They also organise and give legal advice (to the needy) and legal aid (to the needy) when necessary.

(II) Forming a citizens group who will look after the welfare of the youth of the town, by:

- 1) By providing a gymnasium for the youth to exercise in.
- 2) By providing a place and instructions for the youth to learn Yoga and Pranayama.
- 3) By providing the youth who come for such instructions and exercises, with some wholesome food like milk and grams.
- 5) Providing Workshops where the youth can have the opportunity of learning a trade and earning at the same time.
- 6) Investigating and putting up small scale industries so that the youth can be gainfully employed.
- 7) By providing a place where the youth can be exposed to a pure and refined atmosphere.

(III) Forming a group for the women to work in, who will look after some of the moral issues of the town.

- 1) By organising prayer meetings.
- 2) By taking out processions and singing religious songs and chantings.
- 3) By speaking out against the habit of drinking and illicit liquor.
- 4) By giving advice and moral strength to housewives on tackling the problem of alcoholism in their homes. One advice that can be given, is that the housewife does not cook for herself or her husband the day he comes home drunk. The group helps the housewife to go through such difficult times.

(IV) Forming a citizens group who will work to educate the electorate.

- 1) By organising classes in which the people are explained what is meant by the terms: Democracy, Freedom, Secularism, Central Government, State Government, Elections, Voting - its use and misuse etc.
- 2) People will be informed about their rights as citizens in a democracy; what they can expect from the government, the municipality etc.

After the three month pilgrimage follow-up work will begin. Camps will be organised for interested workers who will meet and discuss what practical steps can be taken for the implications of their ideas and ideals.

DISCUSSION MEETING WITH SARVODAYA WORKERS ON FEBRUARY 16, 1980 IN BIKANER, RAJASTHAN DURING LOK SATSANG YATRA OF RAJASTHAN.

Question: How are we as Social Workers to save ourselves from merely following the outward form and shell of the advice and teaching of saints.

Vimala : Become Jeevan Sadhaks. Gandhiji was a Jeevan Sadhak. He gave us new socio-economic and political values. he showed them to us by living them. He often said, if independence is got through violence and dishonesty, I do not want it. Freedom got through fear is of no value. He revolutionised the classical form of revolution as promulgated by Marx and gave it a different dimension. He revolutionised the motivation of revolution and spiritualised politics and lived whatever he taught.

Works like Khadi, Gramodyoga and Harijan upliftment were the physical aspects of his work but purity in living, purity of character, attempting to live as a Sadhak was the real thrust of his life work. No emphasis has been given to this aspect of his work. The saints are like members of a large family, we should first try and understand what thier message is. The educated and enlightened citizens of the country should have clarity of thought about what needs to be done and a unity of action in carrying it out. There are dedicated workers of Gandhian thought in every corner of India, they should get together and find out where they stand and where to go from there.

To become Jeevan Sadhaks do not consider yourself as workers. Change your approach and use the work as a means of purifying the mind. Stay steady in Dharma and do your work. Work towards moksha or liberation in your social life. Workers stop being workers when they strive to be sadhaks. When a person is searching for a way of sadhana and for purity of mind and purity in living then the nature and emphasis of the work will change.

In Rajasthan there may be 1,000 to 2,000 workers. If you get them together you will find that majority of them have joined in order to get a job and not because of the spirit of social service. You may come across about 100 to 200 workers who

say that they want to be Sadhaks, that the purpose of life is moksha and that, it is the top priority in their lives. That is, people who have accepted the idea not only intellectually but also with their hearts and are ready to sacrifice for it, if necessary.

Once you find such a nucleus of people and a unit or center which is willing to accept such ideas and work with them then the question of implementation arises.

(1) A course of work for a period of one to two years will have to be drawn up.

(2) The choice of worker to join such a Course will be dependent on his own statement that his top priority in life is moksha.

(3) The education of the worker has to take place first coupled with clarification of ideas like what is understood by the terms Liberation, Sadhana, Sadhak etc.

(5) They will be given time for their work and for their sadhana, as the two will go together. The worker as a Sadhak now learns to live by his understanding. He learns to progress from living the roles of an Doer, an experiencer to an observer, until the role of the observer too disappears and he responds from the depth of inner silence such that in every action and speech of his this inner silence is expressed; and then still further to the time when he lives and responds from the state of samadhi.

(6) We do not take him away from society but try and change the direction of his outlook. With the change of outlook the nature and emphasis of his work will change. No longer will it be of major importance how much one can produce and how much one can sell, but what is of real consequence is the meaning and purpose behind Khadi endeavours, and how it is affecting the life of the worker, whether his working conditions are suitable and pleasant, whether his living standards have improved; if not, why not? What can be done for him?

(7) Once a year the person will be provided with an opportunity of going into seclusion or visiting and living for some time in a yoga center. During this time his family or other responsibilities will be looked after.

(8) We have to ascertain how far a individual is ready to change his life. How far he is ready to accept certain rules of life and living, like:

(i) Living a life of absolute honesty and integrity.

(ii) Living a life of self-reliance where there will be no hiring and keeping of servants in the centers, for the work is part of sadhana too and the other workers have become part of the family. So there is no paid worker in the center, and no employee/employer relationships and so no unions either.

(iii) The Units remain small for then they are easy to manage and do not become impersonal.

(iv) There is no talk of profit and profit incentives.

This is total revolution, this is what Gandhi and Vinoba want us to achieve. How far are the Units ready to go? Values have to be changed. If we do not want to change the values in our Centers then how will society do it? If we get one Center in each state to change its values then in 5 years the country will change. How many people are willing to take the first steps?

NEWSLETTER OF THE SECOND PHASE OF LOK SATSANG YATRA

Ganganagar
Rajasthan
30-9-80

The second phase of the Lok Satsang Yatra began at 5.00 A.M. under a clear star lit sky on 18th September, 1980 from Mount Abu. This phase of the yatra will cover places in the states of Punjab, Himachal and Haryana. This time we travel in our own vehicle, a mini-bus donated by Mukund. Along with Vimalaji will travel nine companions. There is Kalyanbhai, Bachubhai and Yeshwantrao who will help arrange the meetings and distribute the literature. Mukund who has taken two months leave from his business in New Jersey will drive the bus. Prabha and Krantidevi will look after preparation of

the meals for all of us and Prabha will be writing and sending in material for the Jeevan Yoga magazine in Gujarati. Induben and Urmilaben will help in preparing material for the Jeevan Yoga magazine in Hindi plus giving talks during the Yatra. Kaiser will help with the office work.

The first step of the trip was the longest, we travelled six hundreds kms. in thirteen hours. On the way we stopped to have our lunch which we had brought with us and for tea at a school in Jodhpur, the smaller children there wished to entertain Vimalaji with their orchestra so we had a delightful half an hour of music and dance. But we had to move on so as to reach Bikaner before it got too late. We reached around 9.00 p.m. slept there for the night and then moved on early the next morning driving another 150 kms. into the Rajasthan desert to a small town called Chattargadh where Vimalaji had been invited to hold a camp for Sarvodaya workers for five days. The theme of the camp was "From Gramdan to Gramswaraj."

Chattargadh is in the middle of desert, there is no inhabitation there except the farmers who try to till the sandy soil with water brought on bullock carts from the nearby Rajasthan Canal.

The vegetation is sparse and thorny and in the midst of this the walls of two structures had just been set up, one as a hall for the meetings and the other for Vimalaji to stay in. There were colourful tents set up for the Campers. The place where Vimalaji stayed was circular in shape, as there was no time for the roof and the windows and doors to be put in the roof was covered with canvas and jute gunny sack material was used as curtains for the windows and doors. The floor was of earth covered with carpets and it was here that Vimalaji lived for five days under the intense heat and gusty winds which often blew the roof off and brought buckets of sand with it. Vimalaji held morning meditation meetings, gave two talks during the day had a satsang meeting in the evening plus numerous interviews during the day.

The work begun by Gandhi, continued by Vinoba and J. Prakash was given another angle to it by Vimalaji who linked it with spirituality, taking it one step further. Vimalaji feels there is not much value in just raising the standard of living of the people without raising the level of consciousness at the same time. This time the workers will be committed and

dedicated not only to the work but to living as Jeewan Sadhaks. They will form Satsang Groups in every village they visit, evoking the innate faith and love lying in the heart of every villager, in Life Divine and God. And activating their own initiative to work and do things for themselves.

On the 25th Vimalaji and Prabha left for Jaipur to attend a State wide Sarvodaya conference where Vimalaji will further expand on these ideas. The rest of the group stayed on in Chaltargadh.

On the 29th Vimalaji will rejoin the group at Ganganagar and we will leave for Abhor, Punjab on the 1st October. Though a semi emergency has been declared in the country we don't think it will affect those whose work is purely spiritual in nature, so by God's Grace we will move ahead with the Yatra.

REPORT FROM PUNJAB.

The second phase of the Lok Satsang Yatra continued from Abohar, Punjab on 1st October 1980. The nine days Yatra through Punjab took us to Abohar, Bhatinda, Ferozpur, Mogha, Jullender, Amritsar, Batala, Gurdaspur and Pathankot. Driving through Punjab one could see why it was the richest province in the country. Blessed by the waters of five rivers the fields were lush green as far as the eye could see and the people looked well fed and healthy. In the midst of this plenty and material prosperity one was saddened to learn that the people of Punjab imbibe the largest quantity of liquor. We seem unable to learn from the lessons of the West that no amount of prosperity can bring about inner peace and happiness and so they turn to India. India the land where Yogis and saints have lived for centuries have shown us that there is a spark of Divinity within each one and the purpose of life is to realise this divinity. Once we forget this aspect of our life and cultural heritage, moral degradation is bound to set in, and in India this is what is slowly happening. It is for this reason that Vimalaji has set out on the Yatra to meet the people and share with them her thoughts and concerns over the "crisis in character" which is affecting the country.

The people have lost their sense of values, have lost respect for human life and for womenfolk and have lost their initiative to

do things by themselves. They have become cowards, easily bullied by the handful of anti-social elements. How can this situation be changed? Change of governments, ideologies and philosophies alone does not bring about any real change, the individual will have to change himself. The change has to be brought about on the individual, family and group levels.

The concerned individual who notices corruption at all layers of society and administration, has first to look to his own life. If he wishes to eliminate it from society. He has to question "Is he willing to give bribes, no matter how small? Is he willing to accept bribes? Does he purchase any smuggled goods or illicit liquor or indulge in any blackmarketing? Is he in any way contributing to the corruption in the country? Thus he must first change himself and his ways of behaviour and thus help the country.

The women too play a very important role in molding the character because of their influence over the family members, especially their husbands, sons, brothers, the menfolk who make up the working force of the country. The women can contribute and help, by for instance, taking a vow that no unearned income will be brought into their home and no money earned through immoral, unjust, illegal means will be brought into the house. If this unearned income is not made use of or appreciated by the women of the house it will be a deterrent to the men to collect money in this fashion. The wife, the mother can also refuse to use any goods that have been purchased from smugglers or in the black market. It is this unearned income that is the beginning of moral degradation. For in order to spend it people resort to gambling, drinking, immoral behaviour and purchasing smuggled goods etc. The women can also help to eliminate the scourge of drinking, by fasting and not cooking for the husband on the day he comes home drunk. Much can be achieved by the women folk but for that they must be ready to bear up with much difficulties. It is only through such courageous action that changes can be brought about. And it is only thus that the right education can be given to the child at home, they will be laying the foundation of character for the future generation.

The members of cultural, religious and educational institutions should also decide that no corrupt citizen will be invited by their institution to grace any of their functions. Instead an ordinary man known for his honesty and service

will be invited. This way the children and youth will be exposed to a new set of values of life. Now a days they find a contradiction in the behaviour of adults, who tell them to be honest but who only admire and honor the man who is wealthy and successful no matter through what means he achieved it. That is the type of person invited to their functions, thus exposing them to wrong examples. Such institutions should also decide that they will not give bribes or buy any material on the blackmarket for any of their work, thus creating a moral bulwark against such activities.

In order to overcome the fear that is overpowering and immobilising the people of India today, people of goodwill in every town will have to get together and form Groups for the protection of the individual, the poor, the womenfolk and for the protection of justice. Right now people are afraid to stand up and speak up against the anti-social elements for fear of the consequences, but they should realise that it is as much a wrong to be silent witness to a crime as to commit it, there is no difference in the two. In order to overcome this cowardliness the people will have to unite and form such Groups. Citizens should know of these Groups and feel free to come to them with their complaints of any anti-social behaviour. The members of the Group will then go to investigate the event and find out the facts. Once the facts have been ascertained and verified a public meeting will be called in the area to notify the people of the facts and the name of the person involved. The people then jointly and peacefully condemn such activities and at the same time hold a prayer meeting, to pray that the person may change his ways of behaviour.

(2) The group would also be willing to station its members in localities where crime is rampant and so instill courage in the people living there, to resist the anti-social elements.

(3) The group will organise cultural uplifting activities for the public and the youth, such as: (i) Holding processions for singing and chanting (ii) Holding Satsang Meetings (iii) Organising Study Groups (iv) Teaching the youth about India's cultural heritage and about its different religions and the lives of the various Saints and Sages of India. (v) Organising musical evenings. (vi) Providing gymnasiums and Yoga classes for the youth. Thus the physical, emotional and mental well-being of the youth is looked after. Cultural upliftment will take place providing the youth with another alternative to the movie culture that exists today.

If the people of goodwill in all the towns and cities unite in this way, if women join such Groups and together take such vows to help improve the character of their family members, then the atmosphere and character of the country will soon change. This is the only hope and the only way of action in the present times.

A trail of light

There is another aspect of the Lok Satsang Yatra that one notices wherever one goes. In Punjab we have been met in all the towns by friends of Om Prakash Tripathi. Be they workers of Sarvodaya or Servants of the People Society: most of the workers have been faithfully carrying on their work, even through the turbulent 70's and many have been to prison during the Emergency and have suffered much for the cause they believed in. But for the last four years there has been a lull in incentive and initiative. The workers seem without moorings, without direction just carrying on with the form, the outer shell of the work, but the inner spirit, the inner light which first appealed to them, which first called out to them, for which they dedicated their whole life, that seemed to have dimmed if not completely extinguished. And now for the first time after so many years of slumber, of being in a vacuum, with the visit of Vimalaji the inner light again is kindled, they hear and respond to the call anew. There is hope in the air again, hope filling the hearts making them fresh and vital again. There is hope, for they see the light, the new vision that is being presented to them. The young and the old are ready and eager to gird their loins and get back to the work of building the nation anew. But this time it will be different. This time much more is expected of them. They are expected not just to be dedicated workers but to be dedicated Jeevan sadhaks. This time the foundation is spirituality, the strength, the force is drawn from ones own Ataman, from ones faith in God, in Divinity. This time the call is to build ones own character and then the character of the nation - on Honesty, Fearlessness and Self-Reliance; and to build up the material of true manhood who can safeguard democracy in its true form of, government of the people, for the people, by the people and set an example to the rest of Asia and the world. The Call vibrates far and wide touching a cord in every heart that hears it. And so India is blessed, that once again some one is carrying on the banner, the word of awakening the people to their real nature and to the glory that is awaiting them.

RESUME OF THE PILGRIMAGE

GUJARAT

Date : 15th January to 8th February 1980

Number of Places Visited : 45

Route Taken:

Ahmedabad - Viramgram - Limbdi - Botad - Damnagar - Palitana - Mahuva - Una - Kodinar - Veraval - Keshod - Junagadh - Kutliana - Porbandar - Allabada - Jamnagar - Rajkot - Bhachau - Gandhidham - Bhadreshwar - Mandhvi - Bhuj - Bhachau - Radhanpur - Sulgam - Sanchor

Number of meetings held : 40

Number of Folders distributed : 31,000

Number of Kilometers travelled : 2,480 kms

Total number of days : 24

RAJASTHAN

Date : 8th to 29th February, 1980

Number of Places Visited : 42

Route Taken :

Sanchor - Barmer - Gunga Khoral - Jaisalmer - Pokaran - Phalodi - Gajner - Nokha - Nagaur - Merta - Beawar - Bhilwada - Chittorgadh - Neemach

Number of kilometers travelled : 1,643

Number of days : 21

MADHYA PRADESH

Date : 1st to 31st March, 1980

Number of Places visited : 47

Route Taken :

Nimach - Mandsaur - Jaora - Ratlam - Badnawaer - Ujjain - Indore - Mhow - Barawana - Khargon - Khandwa - Harda - Hoshangabad - Bhopal - Idisna - Sagar - Malhara - Chhatargadh - Panna - Chhatarpur - Tikamgarh - Datia - Gwallor - Morena - Jora - (Jaipur - Mount Abu)

Number of kilometers travelled : 1,535

Total number of days : 31

PUNJAB

Date : 1st to 9th October, 1980

Number of Places visited : 9

Route taken :

Abohar - Bhatinda - Moga - Ferozepur - Jullender - Amritsar - Batala - Gurdaspur - Pathankot

Meetings with Vimalaji : 14

Attendance : 1,745

Other meetings attended : 21

Attendance : 921

Number of kilometers travelled : 530

Total number of days : 9

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Date: 10th to 19th October, 1980

Number of places visited : 8

Route taken :

Dharmshala - Palanpur - Jogindernagar - Mandi - Sundarnagar - Bilaspur - Simla - Solan

Meetings with Vimalaji : 15

Attendance : 860

Other meetings attended : 13

Attendance : 610

Number of kilometers travelled : 418 kms

Total number of days : 9

HARYANA

Date : 20th October to 3rd November, 1980

Number of Places visited : 10

Route Taken :

Chandigarh - Ambala - Kurukshetra - Kailthal - Karnal -
Panipat - Jind - Hisar - Rohtak - Pattikalyana - (Delhi State -
Alwar - Mount Abu)

Meetings with Vimalaji : 59

Attendance : 1,020

Other meetings attended : 18

Attendance : 905

Number of Folders distributed : 1,475

Number of kilometers travelled : 590

Number of days : 14

Camps

1978 To 1988

CAMPS - 1978 & 1979

Meditation Camp:

1. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : Talks on Gyaneshwari (February 1979)

CAMPS : 1980

Meditation camps :

1. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : Sadhana camp for social workers of Rajasthan (April)
2. Himachal Pradesh : Dalhousie : Talks for enquirers (May)
3. Rajasthan : Mount Abu: Sadhana Course (August)

Gram Swaraj Camps & Yatra:-

1. Gujarat : 45 towns visited : January/February
2. Rajasthan: 42 towns visited : February
3. Madhya Pradesh : 47 towns visited : March
4. Punjab: 9 towns visited : October
5. Himachal Pradesh : 8 towns visited : October ,
6. Haryana : 10 towns visited : October/November

Camps & Meetings for peace work

1. Gujarat : Porbandar : City Padyatra (September)
2. Gujarat : Porbandar: Porbandar Taluka Yatra (December)
3. Gujarat : Porbandar : Public Meetings (December)

Camps for teachers

1. Gujarat : Jamnagar : Saurashtra womens' Conference (May)

Total number of camps in 1980

1. Meditation Camps :	3
2. Gram Swaraj Camps & Yatra :	6
3. Camps for Peace work :	3
4. Camps for teachers :	1

Total	13

REPORTS ON CAMPS IN 1980

(Prepared by Kaiser Irani)

A TYPICAL DAY ON THE PORBANDAR YATRA

The last fortnight of December, 1980 was spent in Porbandar Taluka, Gujarat.

Porbandar, the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi, is a city ridden with crime and corruption. Vimalaji was invited to Porbandar by a friend and resident to help throw some light on dealing with the problems there.

With the cooperation of 46 volunteers Vimalaji organized a Padyatra (foot pilgrimage) of 66 villages surrounding the city. Earlier in September a padyatra of the city itself had been undertaken by Vimalaji and friends.

In addition to the Padyatra some of the more distant villages were reached by Vimalaji and a group of friends by minibus.

Latest by 4 A.M. before the sunrise and the birds call or the cocks crow a few of us are up to heat the kerosene stove which

will heat the bath water. One by one everyone wakes up to bathe in turn.

The mornings are cold, for it is winter, and the Arabian Ocean is walking distance away.

Once the stove is free, the water is now heated for tea. We make 'ready tea', with milk, water, sugar, tea and spices all mixed in together.

By 6 a.m. everyone is ready, and we get into the mini bus and leave for the day's destination. The villagers with whom we met the day before are present to bid us farewell.

The road is long, narrow and straight as far as the eye can see. On one side are the beautiful blue waters, on the other radiantly green fields swaying in the wind like waves on an ocean. Soon we are at our destination. The headman of the village is there to greet us, we will make our stop at a village school building.

They offer us two office rooms, one of which is converted into an 'instant kitchen' and immediately the stove is lit and the cooking begun for Vimalaji's meal. Others go about their work. Clothes are washed. Cloth lines are tied for the clothes have to be dried before we leave. The office equipment is taken out and letters are written. Newspapers are read. Interviews are held and then there is Vimalaji's talk, attended by the villagers who are mainly farmers and fishermen.

After the talk the group is invited for lunch at the home of one of the villagers. The homes are small, just one room, clean and neatly kept. The floors and walls are covered over with a mixture of cowdung and clay, to keep them cool. We are touched by the simple and warm hospitality.

By 2 p.m. we leave, to reach the next village, where tea is already awaiting us.

Again a school building in which the talk will be held, but this time none of the villagers come into the hall, but sit outside in the courtyard and listen. We find out later it is because some of the teachers are Harijans. As a bolt it hits us These are the harsh realities of Indian life. Not much has changed, it seems, even after Gandhiji.

The communication over, we pack up the speakers, the microphone, the rugs, and get back into the bus to drive on to our next destination, the last stop for the day, and this will be our night halt.

It is a municipal office. One room is full of files, and so has to be kept locked. The other is available. The ladies will sleep there, the men elsewhere.

The varanda is converted into a kitchen. There is no washroom, so it is decided that we will have no bath the next morning, only a sponge.

The only available water is from a well nearby. The buckets are dropped in and the water is pulled up by a long rope. There is a toilet close by, and it is cleaned.

Later we are ready for supper, for the talk and for a fitful night's sleep.

The sky is clear, and ever inch is covered with stars. All is quiet. Not even a dog barks, and in the silence of the night one is aware of the land, and of how much one loves this land.

CAMPS 1981

Meditation camps

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Gujarat : Nareshwar : | Meditation Camp (February) |
| 2. Rajasthan : Abu : | Satsang meetings (April) |
| 3. Punjab : Pathankot : | Jeevan Sadhana Camp for
Constructive workers of
H.P., Haryana & Punjab |
| 4. Himachal Pradesh : Dalhousie : | International Meditation
Gatherings (June) |
| 5. Gujarat : Porbandar : | Meditation Camp (July) |
| 6. Maharashtra : Lonavala : | Meditation camp
(September) |

7. West Bengal : Calcutta : Discourses on Gyaneshwari (November)

Constructive Workers Camps :

1. Gujarat : Bhavnagar : Camp for District Sarvodaya Workers (January)
2. Maharashtra : Dornbay : Meeting with Sarvodaya workers
3. Madhya Pradesh : Garoth : Lok Swaraj Camp for M.P. Sarvodaya workers (February)
4. Delhi : Non-Party Constructive Worker Get-together (March)
5. Himachal Pradesh : Dalhousie: Satsang Gatherings (May)
6. Himachal Pradesh : Dharamshala : Co-ordination committee of non-party constructive workers. (June)
7. Punjab : Dharamkot : Social workers camp (October)
8. Himachal Pradesh : Gaggal: Padyatra and meetings (October)
9. Chandigargh : Social workers camp (October)
10. Haryana : Pattikalyana : Sarvodaya workers camp at Swadhya Ashram (November)
11. Uttar Pradesh : Kanpur : Sarvodaya workers Camp (November)
12. Uttar Pradesh : Govindpur : Vanvasi Seva Ashram Camp (November)

13. Bihar : Bodh Gaya : Bihar social workers camp at Samanvaya Ashram (November)

Gram swaraj camps & talks

1. Gujarat : Mandal : Public meetings (January)
2. Gujarat : Sher : Meetings with villagers (January)
3. Rajasthan : Chattargadh : Inauguration of Krishi Go Seva Gram Swaraj Research Institute (February)
4. Gujarat : Mandal : Meetings with villagers (April)
5. Rajasthan : Chattargadh : Camp for Research Center workers (October)

Peace work camps & meetings

1. Gujarat : Porbandar: Camp for Peace center workers (January)
2. Assam: Gauhauli : Meetings with AASU leaders (January)
3. West Bengal : Calcutta : Meeting with industrialists & intelligentsia about Assam situation (January)
4. Delhi : Meeting with concerned citizens on Assam (January)
5. Gujarat : Baroda : Meeting with student leaders of anti and pro Reservation movement (February)
6. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : Meeting with students of anti-reservation movement (March)

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 7. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Meeting with political leaders and citizens on Anti Reservation movement (March) |
| 8. Gujarat : Sabarmati : | Gujarat State Level conference on Reservation issue (March) |
| 9. Gujarat : Porbandar : | Meetings in connection with Peace Center (March) |
| 10. Gujarat : Dholka : | Meetings with Hindu, Muslim leaders (July) |
| 11. Gujarat : Porbandar : | Work in connection with Peace center (July) |
| 12. Gujarat : Porbandar : | Work in connection with peace center (December) |
| 13. Assam : Gauhati : | Work in connection with problem of foreign nationals |

Youth camps

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Rajasthan : Mount abu : | Bal Mela (May) |
| 2. Himachal Pradesh : Dharmshala : | Himachal Pradesh youth camp (June) |
| 3. Gujarat : Allabada : | Gangajal Vidyapeeth youth camp (July) |
| 4. Karnataka : Bangalore : | S.N. Subbarao's youth camp (October) |

Camps for teachers

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Gujarat : Palitana : | Talks with teachers (January) |
| 2. Gujarat : Viramgam : | Meeting at Thakarbappa Chatralaya (July) |

3. Gujarat : Palanpur : Palanpur University
Teachers Yoga Seminar
(September)

Total number of camps in 1981

1. Meditation Camps :	7
2. Constructive workers camps :	13
3. Gram Swaraj Camps :	5
4. Peace work camps :	13
5. Youth camps	4
6. Camps for Teachers :	3
Total :	<u>45</u>

CAMPS 1982

Meditation Camps :

1. Gujarat : Darnagar : Meditation Camp (January)
2. Chandigargh : Meditation camp on "Total Transformation of man "
(February)
3. Uttar Pradesh : Virandawan: For social workers of U.P.
(October)
4. Bihar : Bodh Gaya : At Samanvaya Ashram
(October)
5. Bihar : Patna : At Mahila Charka Samiti
(October)
6. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : Talks on Gyaneshwari at
Mavlanker Lodge
(November)

7. Gujarat : Gopnath : Gujarat Social workers
Meditation camp
(November)

Constructive workers camps :

1. Gujarat : Bhavanagar : For Bhavnagar district
social workers (January)
2. Gujarat : Gaddadha : For Khadi and Sarvodaya
workers (January)
3. Uttar Pradesh : Varanasi : For U.P. & Bihar Sarvodaya
workers (February)
4. Uttar Pradesh : Narora : For U.P. Social workers
(February)
5. Tamil Nadu : Vinobagram : ASSEFA workers
Coimbatore District camp
(February)
6. Gujarat : Gundi : Gundi Ashram Camp
(March)
7. Tamil Nadu : Madurai : Sarvodaya workers camp
(September)
8. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : Gujarat Sarvodaya Workers
Conference (September)
9. Haryana : Pattikalyana : Haryana Sarvodaya
workers camp (September)
10. Gujarat : Thamma : Gujarat Social workers
conference (October)
11. Uttar Pradesh : Allahabad : Societ workers meeting
(October)
12. Gujarat : Valsad : Meetings with social
workers (November)
13. Gujarat : Navsari : Meetings with district social
workers (November)

14. Maharashtra : Sevagram: Sevagram Parishad
(November)

Gram Swaraj Camps

1. Rajasthan : Chattargadh: For local Social workers
(October)

Peace Work Camps

1. Gujarat : Porbandar : For Social workers
connected with Peace Center
(January)

Youth Camps:

1. Gujarat : Pavagadh : Kishore Mela (January)
2. Gujarat : Allabada : Gangajal Vidyapeeth students
camp (January)
3. Gujarat : Gopnath : Gujarat Youth Camp
(November)

Camps For Teachers:

1. Gujarat : Jamnagar : Kasturba Gandhi Mahila
Vikas Gragh (January)
2. Gujarat : Allabada : With teachers of Gangajal
Vidyapeeth (January)
3. Uttar Pradesh : Bhatparani : Talks for teachers of Madan
Mohan Malaviya Shiksha
Sansthan and teachers of
educational institutions in
the area (February)
4. Gujarat : Anand : Talks at H.M. Patel Arts
College, Vallabh Vidyanagar
(March)
5. Gujarat : Borkhadi : Talks to teachers
(November)

6. Uttar Pradesh : Gorakhpur : Gorakhpur University
address (November)
7. Uttar Pradesh : Dhatparani : Talks at Madan Mohan
Malviya Institute of
Education (November)

Total number of camps in 1982

1. Meditation Camps :	7
2. Constructive Worker Camps:	14
3. Gram Swaraj Camps :	1
4. Peace work camps :	1
5. Youth Camps :	3
6. Camps for teachers :	7
Total	<u>33</u>

REPORTS ON CAMPS IN 1982

(Prepared and edited by Kaiser Irani)

1. Darnagar: Meditation Camp : 20th to
22nd January 1982
2. Jamnagar : Meetings with teachers and
citizens
3. Porbandar : One year of Porbandar
Shanti Center
4. Chandigarh : Camp : 3rd to 7th February, 1982
5. Bhatparani : Talks to teachers & students
at educational Institute : 9th
to 12th February 1982
6. Varanasi : U.P. & Bihar Sarodaya
workers Camp 13th to 16th
February, 1982

7. South India :

Tamil Nadu Sarvodaya
workers camp 22nd March
to 27th March 1982

Damnagar - Unique Meditation Camp

A meditation camp for 175 persons was organised at Damnagar from 20th to 22nd January, 1982. This was a small taluka town and friends from the district Amreli in Saurashtra attended. It was very well organised and the hospitality of the local friends was lavish. There were 8 talks and question sessions on Meditation, a talk to the Girls High school and a cultural programme.

Most of the campers were new to the subject of meditation and hence the subject was treated in a very simple way. Listeners were very responsive. The campers also decided to publish a book of the camp talks, and some friends donated for this.

In a very unique style Vimalaji expounded how the "Indivisible, homogeneous, wholeness of life includes all the different varieties of life. She explained how the curse of fragmentation upon the human mind has created all the complications in life and how it has led to all the miseries and pain. Life is meant to be all joy. The very manifestation of life implies joy. The very word "satsang" implies to realise the divinity of life around us.

During the whole camp there was an atmosphere of joy and the campers dispersed emerged in joy.

A brief stopover at Jamnagar

Vimalaji on her way to a village university named 'Gangajal Vidyapeeth' at Allabada stopped over for a day to meet the friends of Vimala group in Jamnagar. There were a number of young and old Friends who have formed Jeevan Yoga Center there, they wanted guidance from Vimalaji in working out a constructive work programme. The friends organised a meeting in the evening which was attended by nearly 300 people.

Vimalaji spoke at length on the deteriorating situation in the country. She said darkness prevails everywhere, let us do our

best and leave the rest to the Divine. She also gave some positive guidelines to friends who wanted to work to improve the situation.

One year of Porbandar Shanti Center

Vimalaji visited Porbandar for 3 days from 28th to 30th January, 1982. The one year of the running of the Porbandar Shanti (Peace) Center was coming to an end.

The first two days were devoted to meeting the groups of active workers and also the members of the Peace Center. They reviewed the work of the year and were happy that the peace project had been 80% successful. The life in the town was getting back to normal except for a few stray incidents in the last 6 months. There was an atmosphere of freedom and peace in the town now. The project work launched in August 1980 and carried out quietly by 25 workers along with Vimalaji's visits and Meditation camp had helped a lot in improving the atmosphere. It had even influenced the neighbouring villages.

There was a feeling in the hearts of some of the local committee members that the centre should continue for another year, but after much discussion the unanimous feeling was that it need not be continued in the same way as the previous year. It was proposed that there be a committee of local friends who would plan constructive activities to keep contact with the town and the people. Three constructive fields of work were proposed.

1. Amber charka centers and training be started in the city.
 2. Cow protection and care centers be set up in two places where some land was also offered, one near Porbandar and the other in Visawada.
 3. And the work of improving the lot of primary schools be continued.
- Some of the workers from Gujarat offered to devote fixed days every month for the work.

There were two important gatherings on the 30th January Mahatma Gandhiji's Martyr's day. Vimalaji and four other friends began their fast for two days -- it was the day set aside for a nation wide fast for cow protection. Vimalaji went in the

morning to open a local center for cow protection and spoke on the sanctity and importance of the cow in life. She also showed how the Indian economy is centered around the cow. In the evening a prayer was offered at Kirti mandir in memory of Gandhi. Vimalaji spoke on the life and message of Gandhi's life.

Camp Chandigarh - 3rd to 7th February, 1982

Vimalaji was invited to Chandigarh by Satpal Grover to conduct a camp for the workers of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh to sit together and chalk out a constructive work programme. Unfortunately due to various reasons the workers did not come for the Camp, instead there were many friends who had come because of their interest in Vimalaji's spiritual teachings, so unanimously it was decided to change the topic of the camp to 'The Total Transformation Of Man'. Among the friends present was an eminent scientist, a retired director of defence, who to the delight of all would immediately grasp Vimalaji's ideas and translate them into scientific phraseology. He was also a great devotee at heart and it was beautiful to see the expression of both.

Visit to Raipur Rani - 7th February, 1982

During Vimalaji's stay at Chandigarh Vimalaji was invited by the Freedom Fighters to attend and address their yearly meeting at Raipur Rani - a historical place, for Guru Govindsing while fighting the Moguls had come to rest here. Vimalaji was accompanied by Shri Om Prakash Trikha and Shri Mulchand Jain the leading constructive workers of Haryana, by Shri Satpal Grover and Shri Banarisdas Goel the leading constructive workers of Punjab as well as Shri Ramesh Gupta leading prohibition worker from Himachal.

At the meeting Vimalaji heard a very inspiring story of the work done there for prohibition by Muni Janakvijayji, who 6 years ago organised the villagers from 12 villages in a Satyagrah. They organised prayer meetings, fasts, marches. They were terrorised, tortured and imprisoned but in the end they succeeded in closing down the liquor shops in the 12 villages, even though the liquor shops had their supporters among the police officers as well as political leaders. The women folk too took an active role in the Satyagrah. At the

place where there was a lathi charge and many were wounded, the villagers have constructed a memorial pillar, on one side of which are engraved the names of those who undertook a fast, on the other the names of those who went to jail, on the other description of the tortures they underwent and on the fourth side is a prayer to God that the villagers always remain free from all evil habits.

It is always a very inspiring event when religious persons begin to take interest in issues like prohibition and cow protection, if they continue to do so the problems of the country will be solved in to time.

Bhatparani - 9th to 12th February, 1962

From Chandigarh we travelled south east to Bhatparani, a small village deep in the interior of U.P. in Deoria district. The place had been developed by the efforts of one man - Shri Keshavchandra Mishra, who 35 years ago came as a principal of a small school there and who through the years built it up into a vast educational complex, where two generation of students from 105 neighbouring villages have studied. Vimalaji was invited to hold a camp for the students and teachers of Madan Mohan Malviya Degree College, the invitation very poetically described the event as four days of sacred offerings of knowledge.

There were three talks every day. In attendance were teachers from all the colleges and educational institutions in the neighbouring areas. All very learned, very scholarly people most of them orthodox high caste Brahmins, all very well versed in Sanskrit, Vedas and tenets of Indian cultural heritage. Quite an unique and unusual gathering of scholars all there with a question mark wanting to see what Vimalaji had to offer them. But unknowingly in no time they were won over and through out the talks the attendance kept growing. The others present were the Degree students, to the great disappointment of the younger students, who even volunteered to set up a tent in the playground so all could attend. Even then the hall was packed to capacity with over 1,500 present, others spilling out onto the lawns where loud speakers were kept.

On the closing day the principal ended his very moving speech in a novel way by saying they would not give thanks now but

their gratitude would be expressed through their actions by carrying out and fulfilling all the suggestions Vimalaji had made during her talks.

On the morning we left, the path to the gateway was lined on either side by the students who sprinkled flowers on Vimalaji as she went by, all requesting Vimalaji for a return visit.

Sarvodaya Workers Camp - Varanasi, 13th to 16th February, 1982

Vimalaji was invited to conduct a camp for constructive workers at Varanasi from 13th to 16th February, 1982. One hundred and one workers attended the Camp, they were representatives of the U.P. and Bihar Sarvodaya Mandal and the Khadi Gramodyog Samiti. Acharya Rammurti presided over the gathering. The main participants in the discussion were Shri Ramachandra Rahi from U.P. and Shri Tripurari Sharan from Bihar and Shri Dhwarchoji Prasad Sahu, the grand old man of the Khadi world.

Points of Discussion

1. Unless the main tenets of Gram Swaraj are fulfilled the work of Lok Swaraj cannot be done.
2. In U.P. and Bihar terrorism has spread to the villages. People are as much afraid and terrorised by the violence of the anti-social elements as they are by the atrocities of the police and government officers.
3. Casteism had never been so ugly or been provoked in such a cruel way as it is today in Bihar. Its hold and merciless use is milder in U.P. So those who want to do the work of Gram Swaraj will have to teach the villagers how they can combat these two ills of casteism and terrorism peacefully. If the workers can do this the villagers will listen to them, they being in no state to listen to any other talk.

Policy of work

1. Separate constructive activities of the U.P. and Bihar workers will continue, so too will their joint ventures.
2. In those districts where intensive work is planned the two

states will cooperate with each other whenever it is felt necessary.

3. The workers of both the states will organise self education and training camps, just like the camp held at Varanasi.

4. There will be a get together of the workers of the two states twice a year, to take stock of the work done and to take stock of the situation.

5. Vimalaji has promised to attend one of those camps every year to give guidance.

In U.P. Bundel Khand and Chambalghati are fields for intensive work.

In Bihar, Nalanda, Mushari and Patna are intensive work areas.

1. A Peoples' March from Nalanda to Daud Nagar (on the banks of Shaonabhadra) will be organised in March, 1982.

2. Gram Shanti Senik Dal - A village peace force will be organised. Recruitment of Peace Force Volunteers has already started in Bihar.

3. A Training Camp in the rudimentaries will be organised in March for the Peace Workers. It will be conducted by Shri Amarnath.

Joint Programme of U.P. and Bihar.

1. A Peoples' March from Chauri Choura to Champaran will be organised jointly in March, 1982.

2. The cooperation of Malaviya Sansthan, Bhatparani, (District Deoria) will be sought for this purpose. Acharya Rammurti will shortly visit the institution and request Shri Keshavchandra Mishra to cooperate with the project.

VIMALAJI'S VISIT TO SOUTH INDIA, MARCH 22ND TO 27TH, 1982

Vimalaji was invited to conduct a Sarvodaya Workers' camp in Tamilnadu. The invitation was extended on behalf of Tamilnadu Sarvodaya Mandal. The location was Vinoba Gram in Coimbatore District. This land was donated in Bhoodan during Vimalaji's Padayatra twentyfive years ago.

Some years ago Sarva Seva Sangh founded an association called ASSEFA to cultivate the land in Gramdani villages. Sarva Seva Farms exist in various states of India. Tamilnadu has 10 to 12 such farms. Friends of Sarvodaya in Germany offered to found a special trust and conduct projects for the reclamation of land and rehabilitation of people in Gramdani villages. There are 10 projects under the Meyer Trust. Vinoba Gram happens to be one of them.

Vinoba Gram is run by Mr. Jayachandran a young man under thirty. He has a team of enthusiastic educated youths to assist him. The ten Meyer Trust farms work under the able guidance of Mr. Balkrishnan a person of great faith, wisdom and practical skill. He has his team of youths who manage the Meyer Trust Farms in various districts of Tamilnadu. Meyer Trust has founded fortytwo Balwadis - Pre-primary schools. Forty teachers from these schools participated in the Camp. All were women teachers. Meyer Trust is going to found another twentytwo Balwadis in the violence infested areas of Tamilnadu.

The little village of Vinoba Gram is inhabited by 82 families, half of whom are tribals from the hills nearby. The tribal people so far have been used only to the work of wood cutting, they would cut wood from the hills and sell it in the nearby market and so make their living that way; so it was quite a challenge for Shri Balkrishna and friends to educate them to live on the farms and learn to cultivate them. However they are doing very well and each year the harvest yields more and they hope that in the five years to return the loan they have received. The whole countryside has changed in the last three years since they have been working there and instead of barren dry fields there are now flowing green fields of sugarcane and ragi and plot upon plot of banana and coconut plantations. ASSEFA has 12 farms in Tamilnadu. Workers and organizers from those farms also participated in the camp. Besides these

there were senior colleagues of Sri S. Jagannathan, like S.D. Ramachandran and Sri Natarjan in the camp. The camp was from 22nd to 27th March and every day Vimalaji gave two talks. The topics taken up by Vimalaji were questions raised by Shri Jagannathan, like "where was the country going to?", "what was the future of the Sarvodaya movement?". Plus there were question and answer sessions touching on various subjects like corruption, dowry-abolition, cow protection, Gram Swaraj.

Besides-the talks, at the request of Shri Natrajan there were meditation meetings held in the morning and evenings. Though the meetings were not a part of the Camp schedule, all the 90 campers participated and as all were interested in the subject they requested Vimalaji to hold a special camp for meditation in Tamilnadu.

During our stay there we celebrated the Telegu New Year and Vimalaji invited all the children living in Vinoba Gram to come to the center and have lunch on that day. One could see what a big occasion it was for them and how happy they were to share their meal with the Campers. The night before, the villagers got together and held a cultural evening for Vimalaji and the campers. There was tribal dancing and a play enacted with beautiful colourful costumes from Mahabharata, accompanied by music provided by the local musicians.

Vinobagram is situated on the foothills of the mystically blue Nilgiri mountains and on the last day all the campers planted a palm tree in the fields. It was a beautiful sight to see all the campers with sapling palm trees in their hands winding their way to the fields singing hymns as they went.

All the campers were very pleased with the camp and have requested Vimalaji to return soon. Shri Jagannathan and Shri Natrajan have discussed the matter with Vimalaji and it was decided to hold a bigger camp in Madurai in September, 1982. About one hundred and fifty social workers and non political workers will attend that camp.

CAMPS - 1983

Meditation Camps

1. Himachal Pradesh : Dalhousie : Talks for Sadnakas (June)
- 2 Chandigarh : Meditation camp and talks on Gyaneshwari (August)
3. West Bengal : Calcutta : Talks (October)
4. Gujarat : Gopaldham : Meditation Camp (November)
5. Maharashtra : Lonavia : Maharashtra Meditation Camp (December)
6. Tamil Nadu : Kanyakumari : Meditation camp for Tamil Nadu Sarvodaya Workers (December)
7. West Bengal : Calcutta : Meditation Camp (December)

Constructive Workers Camps

1. Bihar : Khadigam : Bihar Social workers Camp (March)
2. Uttar Pradesh : AGRA : U.P. Sarvodaya Sammelain (March)
3. Chandigarh : Discussion on national integration (March)
4. Punjab : Amritsar : Punjab workers camp (April)
5. Punjab : Patiala : Punjab workers camp (April)
6. Maharashtra : Chinchin : Social workers gathering (April)
- 7 Himachal Pradesh : Dalhousie : Swaraj Sangam Meetings (June)
8. Jammu & Kashmir : Srinagar : Meeting with social workers (August)

9. Haryana : Panipat : Haryana Khadi workers camp (August)
10. Uttar Pradesh : Shukratal : Sarvodaya Muzaffarpur district workers camp (September)
11. Bihar : PATNA : Talks at Mahila Charkha Samiti on J.P.Narayan birth anniversary and meetings with Sarvodaya workers (October)
12. Bihar : Bhagalpur : For Bihar social workers of Khadi Ashram, Bihar Sarvodaya Mandal, and Peace Force (October)
13. Bihar : Bodh Gaya : Samanvaya Ashram camp for workers from Samanvaya Vidyapeeth (Rural Education Institute) & Vikas Mandal (October)
14. Gujarat : Anera : For Gujarat social workers (October)
15. Gujarat : Matar : For Kheda District workers (November)
16. Maharashtra : Sevagram : International Sarvodaya Sammelan (November)
17. Tamil Nadu : Kanyakumari : Sarvodaya Workers Camp (December)

Gramswaraj Camps & Talks

1. Rajasthan : Chhattargadh : For Research Center workers and trainees (August)
2. Gujarat : Gopaldham : For Research Center workers (November)
3. Gujarat : Mandal : For local workers (November)

Youth Camps

1. Uttar Pradesh : Gorakhpur : Gorakhpur university
National Service Scheme Camp
(October)
2. Gujarat : Alibada : At Gangajal Vidyapeeth
(November)

Camps For Teachers

1. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : Gujarat Teachers Conference
(April)
2. Uttar Pradesh : Gorakhpur : Gorakhpur University
talks (September)
3. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : Convention address at Gujarat
Vidyapeeth (October)
4. Bihar : Bhagalpur : Talk at department of
Gandhian studies at Bhagalpur
University (October)

Total Number Of Camps In 1983

1. Meditation Camps :	7
2. Constructive workers camps :	17
3. Gramswaraj Camps :	3
4. Youth Camps :	2
5. Camps for teachers :	4

Total	33

REPORTS OF CAMPS IN 1983

(Prepared and edited by Kaiser Irani)

1. Panipat : Khadi workers camp : 13th to 25th August
2. Chandigarh : Talks on Gyaneshwari : 16th to 20th August
3. Chhattargadh : Camp for Research center trainees 21st to 28th August
4. Shukratal : Talks on Sarvodaya : 24th to 28th September
5. Gokakhpur : Gorakhpur University camp 1st to 5th October
6. Patna : Talks on J.P. Anniversary 7th to 11th October
7. Bodh Gaya : Samanvaya Ashram Camp 12th to 16th October
8. Bhagalpur : Bhagalpur Camp : 20th to 24th October
9. Lonavala : Meditation camp - December
10. Kanyakumari : Meditation Camp : December
11. Calcutta : Meditation camp - December

VIMALAJI'S VISIT TO PANIPAT - CHANDIGARGH - CHHATTARGADH 13th to 28th August, 1983

August 13th to 15th - Panipat

Khadi workers camp at Khadi Ashram, Panipat (Haryana) organised by the founder and manager of the biggest Khadi institution in Punjab & Haryana. 450 workers from four states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal and U.P. attended the camp, including the eldest and topmost workers in the Gandhian field. There were 5 meetings. The sincerity, and receptivity and eagerness of the whole environment of the camp was

astonishing and were reminiscent of the days of the great Bhudan movement meetings. Vimalaji gave discussions about Gandhian economy, and the philosophy behind Khadi.

August 16th to 20th, 1983 - Chandigarh

Vimalaji gave nine discourses about the relevance of prayer and meditation in daily life and urgency of self discovery. These discourses were held at the morning prayer meetings and explanations of the XII chapter of Gyaneshwari Gita were held at the evening meetings. About 250 attended - citizens from various sections of society and religions and Gandhian workers attended. The meetings were held at the Gandhi memorial foundation hall.

August 21 to 28th - Chhattargadh

Chhattargadh is deep in the interior of Rajasthan in district Bikaner where a center for research in village self sufficiency has been set up. The center is running training courses for workers preparing them to take democracy to the villages and reconstruction of the village in economic, social and political fields. The meetings were held at the centre including prayer meetings and meetings with workers, trainees and organisers of the center. Four public meetings were held at four villages in the interior.

VIMALAJI'S DIARY

From September 24th to October 24th, 1983

September 24th to 28th

Sarvodaya Workers camp at Shukralal, Dist. Muzaffarpur, U.P. morning prayer & meditation meetings - 5

Other talks : 5 Question & Answer Sessions : 5

Subject of talks "

1. Sarvodaya 2. Samyoga - Spiritual implications of both. 3. "Lokatantra " - Democracy 4. "Sampurna Kranti" Total

Revolution 5. Science & Spirituality

Organiser : Saint Kalyandeoji Maharaj. Age 110 years old
 Founder of 110 Educational Institutions in Western U.P.
 Haryana and Punjab and the state Sarvodaya Mandal, U.P.
participants : 60 and 50 locals, total 110.

One meeting with : The executive committee of U.P. Sarvodaya
 Mandal.

Interviews with :

Baba Lachmandas, Amarnath & Tejsinghi, Ramachandra
 Rahi, Krishnakumariji and 7 women workers, Saint Shri
 Kalyandeoji and omkarji.

The Agricultural Minister, Shri Yashpal Singh came for the
 concluding session and admonished the organisers for
 inviting government officers and ministers in religious
 conventions and camps. He said "Are not religious and
 spiritual teachers greater than the political leaders and
 government officers ?" 28th night - reached Delhi.

29th morning - meeting with Shri Radhakrishna Bajaj
 evening - meeting with Shri Sevakramji and main
 members of Servants of People Society.

30th afternoon - Reached Gorakhpur, U.P.

October 1st to 5th

National Service Scheme camp organised by N.S.S Dept. of
 Gorakhpur University.

Participants : 100 (50 young men & 50 young women)

Meetings :

On 1st October : Inauguration of the camp by
 Vimalaji presided by Dr. B.M. Shukla,
 vice chancellor of the University

On 2nd October : Gandhi Birthday celebrations in the
 camp, by the citizens of Gorakhpur and
 by local Gandhi Ashram

On 3rd October: Talk with campers on Cultural Revolution. Talk on spirituality & science together with Dr. Sampoorna Singh, expert authority on physics. He gave a talk in the Dept. of Physics at Gorakhpur University, presided by Dr. Banerjee, the head of the department.

Talk with women workers about womens' contribution to social and cultural revolution, badly needed in present situation.

On 4 th October : Talk with campers on Democracy. Talk with campers on love and service of land Inauguration of Sarvodaya Workers Meet. Talk with campers - concluding speech.

On 5th October : Concluding presidential speech in Sarvodaya workers meet

Total interviews : Seven

October 7th to 11th

At Patna, Bihar, at the home of Jay Prakash Narayan. Death and birth anniversaries (8th and 11th) of Jai Prakash Narayan total meetings - 10

Total interviews - 5 with groups and one with a great scholar and Sarvodaya thinker, Pt. Raninandan Mishra

October 12th to 16th

At Bodh Gaya - Samanvaya Ashram Camp

Participants 40, workers from Samanvaya Vidyapeeth (Rural educational Institute) and Samanvaya Vikas Mandal and Ashram (One of the main six ashrams founded by Vinobaji).

Meetings : 12 to 14th : 2 meetings daily with campers
4 meetings with steering committee of coming Sarvodaya convention

- 5th October :** 1 meeting with campers.
1 meeting with the trustees of Ashram. Visit to Bhikshuk Jayanjagatji (Chairman of the Buddhist Temple)
- 6th October :** Visit to a village educational institute - founded and managed by the ashram.

Interviews : 9, including one with a group of German - American - Canadian young men and women staying at the ashram as friends and helpers of Gandhian Philosophy and Sarvodaya Movement.

October 17th

Travelling to Ahmedabad via Delhi

October 18th

Convocation address at Gujarat Vidyapeeth (University) Ahmedabad

Interviews : 8

October 19th

Travelling to Bhagalpur via Delhi

October 20th to 24th

Bhagalpur Camp (Bihar) Organised by Khadi Ashram, Bihar Sarvodaya Mandal, Bhagalpur University and Peace Force - Bihar

Participants : Above 400, of which 300 were participants of a Peace Force coming on foot as part of a Peace March through 20 districts of Bihar State, and 100 local workers.

Meetings :

- 21st :** 3 with campers
1 Public meeting at University in the Dept. of Gandhian studies

- 22nd :** 3 with campers
- 23rd :** 2 with campers
1 public meeting addressing a rally
- 24th :** With campers, concluding speech.

Interviews : 3 personal interviews, plus time spent with Acharya Rammurtiji the leading Sarvodaya worker in Bihar and with different groups of workers (campers) from 6 districts of Bihar about concentrated active work.

THREE MEDITATION CAMPS

Vimalaji's first meditation camp in the state of Maharashtra was held at Lonavala, not far from Bombay. Talks were given in Marathi language, Vimalaji's native tongue, and the camp was a great success.

From Bombay, Vimalaji and a group of about ten friends flew south to the Southern most point of India - Kanyakumari. This is a place of pilgrimage, as it was here, legend tells us that the Goddess Parvati spent many years in prayer and penance here to obtain the blessing of Lord Shiva. And in modern times, Swami Vivekananda spent months here meditating, after the death of Sri Ramakrishna, and it was here that he received inspiration and decided to start the Ramkrishna Mission.

Vimalaji and the group of friends went to Kanyakumari to spend some time in meditation. When the Sarvodaya workers in Tamil Nadu discovered she would visit their state they requested a meditation camp.

Campers, Vimalaji and friends stayed at the Vivekananda center. The Vivekananda Center was sponsoring a Yoga camp at the same time and requested vimalaji to speak to the campers. Besides the talks Vimalaji visited the nearby Khadi centers and an orphanage. What had begun as a trip for meditation became a crushingly busy period. Vimalaji accepted an invitation to visit the south again, where there will be camps in both Tamil Nadu and Kerala state.

rom the South Vimalaji flew to Calcutta for the first meditation camp to be held in West Bengal. The camp was held on the banks of the sacred river Ganga, overlooking the temple grounds where Shri Ramakrishna had lived and taught, and from where Swami Vivekananda had begun his travels. Vimalaji began her talks there with the words:

"We are on the banks of Ganga. I can see Dakshineswar temple on the other side. One kilometer away is Belur Math (the temple monastery). It is such a joy to be here, near Ganga, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda ! From Kanyakumari to here has been a pilgrimage."

CAMPS - 1984

Meditation Camps

- Rajasthan : Mount Abu : Satsang - meetings (January)
- N. Bihar : Darbanga : Meditation camp : professors, doctors, lawyers, college students participated (February)
- Karnataka : Vishwanedam : Self education camp for Karnataka state Sarvodaya workers and intelligentsia (August)
- Uttar Pradesh : Kanauj : Kanauj Sheeber (October)
- Gujarat : Koba : Talks with enquirers (November)
- W. Bengal : Calcutta : Talks (December)

Constructive workers camps

- Uttar Pradesh : Lucknow : At Gandhi Ashram for U.P. Sarvodaya workers (February)
- Uttar Pradesh : Govindpur : At Vanvasi Seva Ashram for representatives from 150 neighbouring villages (February)

3. Uttar Pradesh : Sevapuri : Gandhian social workers and Sarvodaya workers camp (February)
4. Bihar : Janakpur Road -Sitamandi : Shanti Sena Camp on Indo-Nepal border (February)
5. Rajasthan : Khomele : Camp for Sarvodaya workers
6. Tamil Nadu : Vinobagram : Coimbatore District : Camp for Sarvodaya and Khadi workers (August)
7. Tamil Nadu : Kalupatti : At Gandhi Ashram for teacher of Gramodyog work and leaders o Gram Sabhas
8. Tamil Nadu : Sethur : Tanjoor District : For Sarva Seva Farm workers and Sarvodaya workers (August)
9. Kerala : Trivandrum : Public talk at Gandhi Peace Foundation (August)
10. Kerala : Neyyar Dam : For workers of Gandhi Peace Foundation, Gandhi Samarak Niddni, Khadi Gramodyoga and Sarvodaya Mandal of South Kerala (August)
11. Kerala : Calicut : For workers of North Kerala and Public talks (August)
12. Chandigarh : Camp for Social workers (October)
13. Delhi : For constructive workers (October)
14. Rajasthan : Jaipur : Talks for social workers (October)
15. Bihar : Gaya : For Gaya District workers (October)
16. Bihar : Muzzaffarpur : For Sarvodaya workers (October)

Camps

17. Gujarat : Mehesana : For local workers (November)
18. Haryana : Panipat : For Haryana Sarvodaya & Khadi workers (December)
19. Uttar Pradesh : Fatehpur : For U.P. Sarvodaya and Khadi workers and for Shanti Senaks (December)

Peace Work Camps and Meetings

1. Punjab : Chandigarh : Public meetings on Punjab problem - 3 (September)
2. Punjab : Pathankot : Meetings with members and supporters of Prasthan Ashram
3. Punjab : Amritsar : Meetings with :
1. Head Priest of Akal Takht
 2. Sant Bhasingh
 3. Secretary of Khalsa Diwan
 4. Sardar Mubark Singh of Janata Party
 5. Sardar Khushpal Singh of Guru Nanak Dev University
 6. Durga Mandir Trustees
 7. D.A.V College Teachers
 8. Khadi workers
 9. Merchants' Association members
4. Punjab : Patli : Meetings with :
1. Nirankaris
 2. Akali Dal workers
 3. Janata Party workers
 4. Khadi workers
 5. Congress (I) workers
 6. Lawyers
 7. Doctors
5. Punjab : Moga : Meetings with :
1. Freedom Fighters
 2. College teachers and students
 3. Representatives of all political parties
 4. Representatives of Hindu Suraksha Samiti

6. Punjab:Kote-Mohammud-Khan:Prayer meetings
7. Punjab : Fategrah : Meetings with cross section of public
8. Punjab : Dhudike : Prayer Meetings (September)
9. Punjab : Hoshiarpur :
1. Prayer meetings
2. Public meeting
10. Punjab : Pattala : Meeting with representatives of all political parties, Sikh and Hindu communities, Hindu Suraksha Samiti and angry Sikh youths
11. Punjab : Sangrur : Meetings with representative of all sections of society, of all political parties and all communities
12. Punjab : Khanna : Meetings with representatives of all communities, of all political parties, of Hindu Suraksha Samiti of angry Sikh youths (September)
13. Punjab : Ludhlana : Meetings with representatives of all sections of society.
14. Punjab : Adampur : Prayer meeting and meeting with cross section of public
15. Punjab : Chandigarh : Prayer meeting (October
Public meeting)
16. Punjab : Moga : Inauguration of convention of Punjab Insani Biradari (December)
- 17 Punjab : Hoshiarpur : Meetings with cross section of public (December)
18. Punjab : Ludhlana : Meetings of intelligentsia (December)
19. Punjab: Chandigarh : Group meeting at Gandhi Samarak Bhawan (December)

Youth camps

1. N. Bihar : Janakpur Road : Youth camp of Shanti Sainiks (February)
2. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : Satsang and talks for the youth living in Abu (July)
3. Tamil Nadu : Madurai : Seminar on Science & Spirituality at Madurai Kamraj University
4. Delhi : Orientation camp for students from all over India volunteering to work in Punjab (October)
5. Gujarat : Rajkot : Saurashtra University youth Camp (November)

Total Number of camps in 1984

1. Meditation Camps . . .	6
2. Constructive workers Camps :	19
3. Peace work camps & Meetings :	19
4. Youth Camps :	5
Total	49

REPORTS ON THE CAMPS IN 1984

(Prepared and edited by Kaiser Irani)

1. Vimalaji on her travels in February 1984
2. Special Satsang for the youth - Mount Abu June/July
3. Vimalaji's tour of three Southern States 4th to 29th August
4. Vimalaji's visit to Haryana : 16th to 18th December

5. Vimalaji's visit to Punjab : 19th to 26th December
6. Vimalaji's visit to Uttar Pradesh : 27th December to 3rd January

VIMALAJI ON HER TRAVELS IN FEBRUARY, 1984

The month of February was extremely hectic and involved much travelling. There was a state level conference of constructive social workers. Seven hundred persons representing one hundred Gandhian social service institutions participated in the convention on 8th and 9th February.

From 11th to 15th I was at Vanvasi Seva Ashram at Govindpur, a small village in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh. The project there is called the Agrindus Center, implying a agro-based industrial project. It was launched in 1987. Sri Premabhai and his wife Dr. Ragini are the rallying points for a team of 200 workers who serve nearly 400 villages around the Govindpur center.

Each village has a village council, a village court, a village defence corps. There are village grain banks, communally owned stores, spinning and weaving centres. The aim is to release the rural sector from the economic colonialism of the highly industrialized urban sector. The aim is to restructure the whole rural economy.

Representatives from 150 villages had come for a four day self-education camp. We would spend the mornings in meditation and discussions about religious enquiry. In the afternoon the key representatives (those who lead projects in 25 villages) would submit questions, problems and comments about their practical work. After supper, I would sum up the discussions, and address the campers.

From 16th to 19th February I was at Sevapuri, a small village 45 kms from Varanasi. One hundred and fifty Gandhian social workers/Sarvodaya workers had gathered for a four day self-education camp we followed the same schedule that had been chalked out for the Govindpur camp.

We had unusually heavy rains in both places. Winter and rains together had converted camp life into quite an ordeal. The roof of the simple village conference hall would leak and I would get sprinkled by rainwater all over the body. I would have to compete with the thundering rains in order to reach my audience. The microphone would carry the background music of rain drops along with my words. It was great fun.

From Varanasi - I travelled five hours by train and another five hours by car to reach Darbhanga in North Bihar, the site of the next camp. This was an urban meditation camp from the 21st to the 25th February. Campers were an educated lot: professors from university, doctors of medicine, lawyers, collage students, writers and poets.

I think there were 125 in all, about 25 women and 100 men.

This was the first meditation camp ever held in those remote parts of North Bihar. The theme was new to the people. They were probably taken aback by the words: "Meditation is a new dimension of life and living. It is not a psycho-physical activity"

We proceeded to Janakpur road on the 25th. This is the last village on the Indo-Nepal border. I was actually 10 kms away from the land of Nepal. One had visited Nepal quite a few times, and it is difficult not to fall in love with that charming land and its still more charming people.

This was a camp of Shanti Sainiks, or village defence forces. We were in the midst of a nasty cold wave, but 110 youths, bubbling with vitality, went through the daily schedule in an open pandal, in an indescribably joyous mood. There were yoga classes, peace marches with songs, discussion meetings, and what have you. Hindu and Muslim youths lived together, and marched together singing in tune that they wanted to live as unlabeled human beings. The feedback from the young friends vitalized us all.

On the 26th began the long journey back to Abu. We drove for 4 hours and boarded a train at Patna at 8 P.M. We reached Delhi at 1 P.M. the next day, and boarded another train at 6 P.M. reaching Mount Abu on the 1st of March at 9 a.m.

SPECIAL SATSANG FOR THE YOUTH - MOUNT ABU

This year 1984 Vimalaji was not able to spend the summer months at her Himalayan retreat in Dalhousie due to the troubled conditions in Punjab. It was the first time in about 12 years that Vimalaji has spent the summer here. It was a special delight for the youngsters living in Abu who could never accompany her to Dalhousie due to conflict with their school schedule.

And so the month's Satsang was especially devoted to them. Vimalaji gave a series of talks introducing the young people to what it means to become a Jeevan Sadhak. The adults were requested to only attend as witnesses, all questions would come only from the youngsters.

Step by step Vimalaji explained to them in very simple and picturesque language what a life of Yoga means: She introduced them:

To their Life Companions: FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING.

To their best friend : DISCIPLINE and

To their worst enemy : INDISCIPLINE

Vimalaji showed them how the foundation was to be laid for spiritual enquiry, translating the ancient Indian wisdom and rules of Yoga into simple and endearing terms, filling the young hearts with the fire of inspiration.

At the end of the day the girls would write down what they had understood of the talks and give their little notebooks to Vimalaji, which she would read and then write down her comments.

The last day of the Satsang gathering was on Guru Purnima a very auspicious day for all enquiries in India, which falls on the full moon day in the month of July.

VIMALAJI'S TOUR OF THREE SOUTHERN STATES FROM AUGUST 4th to 29th, 1984

KERALA, AUGUST 4TH TO 10TH

August 4th - Trivandrum

A Public talk attended by the intelligentsia of Trivandrum was held at Gandhi Peace Foundation. Over 100 people attended. It was presided over by Sri Ramachandranji, the grand old Gandhian of the South now over 80 years old. In his introductory talk he mentioned how he found Vimalaji to be a unique person, it was not possible to classify her and there were no compartments into which you could put her. He also told the audience about the new English periodical that Vimalaji brings out called *The Invincible* and said that Vimalaji herself is a symbol of that invincibility. He also requested that it be made available for public circulation and not kept just for private circulation.

In Vimalaji's talk she mentioned that it was 25 years ago that she had visited the state of Kerala. In the Bhoodan days she had marched from Kanyakumari in the south to Palghat in the north and at that time she remembers how the minds of the people were full of dreams of building up India in the lines of the Sarvodaya philosophy. Now she was returning to the state when the country is passing through its darkest period of history. "We have strayed away from the teachings of Gandhi and we will have to go back to them. The human race has experimented with the four powers - the power of politics, the power of arms and ammunition, the power of money and the power of thought (indoctrination of ideals) but they have failed us. Now we have to turn to the power of the atman. The soul force has to be brought into play in our daily lives. Spirituality denotes a science form of life. Science and spirituality are going to be integrated and a new of life and a new human being will evolve in India before the end of the century and through India throughout the world. There will be only one religion, the essence of which will be human values and reciprocity."

August 5th to 7th - Neyyar Dam

The camp at Neyyar Dam was attended by workers of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, Gandhi Samarak Nidhi, Khadi

Gramodyog and Sarvodaya Mandal of all the districts of Southern Kerala.

130 campers attended.

Total of 3 talks and 2 questions and answer meetings.

A boat ride on the river of the Dam was also arranged.

August 7th - Trivandrum.

Rajanamma and her 3 friends - a close associate of Vinobhaji's who has an Ashram close to Trivandrum came to meet Vimalaji.

Interview for a local newspaper.

August 8th to 10th - Calicut

Vimalaji stayed at Sri Shamji Sunderdas residence at Gandhi Ashram in Calicut, the meetings were held at Gandhi Peace Foundation Center. About 70 workers from the North of Kerala state had come to attend. The subject of the talks at both Neyya Dam and Calicut was on Gandhian Philosophy and Gram Swaraj Abhtyan.

Total of 3 talks and 2 question and answer meetings were held. On 9th August there was a Public meeting held in the evening at Gandhi Peace Foundation Center in Calicut in memory of Quit India Day. The meeting was attended by the public and press were also present. It was presided over by the president of Gandhi Peace Foundation Sri Jannadan Pillai and the translation was done by the president of the Sarvodaya Mandal Sri Gopinathji.

At the talk Vimalaji said "what we need today is pennance and renunciation to build up the nation, we have to sacrifice again for the country. Against the current of selfishness and indulgence that is sweeping the country we have to create a counter current of sacrificing for the motherland. At the time of independence we were asking the British to quit India now we will have to ask the government to quit politicizing the consciousness of the people. Politisation of the minds of the people is taking place now in our country, this has to be

stopped. We have to cultivate the political consciousness of the people but in a refined way not in the way it is being done today.

2. We have to tell the political parties to quit exploiting the educational institutions. We have to ask the politicians to remain in their own fields and quit poisoning the minds of our children.

3. We have to ask them to quit the Religious Institutions.

4. And the villagers have to be activated and mobilised so they can boycott the sale of all mill made cloth and factory made goods in their villages, so that cottage industries, the source of their employment and livelihood can be brought back to the villages.

5. Let the lawyers get together and attack the evils which are eating into the vitals of judiciary, which is the foundation of democracy. The judges are bought and sold and have to be committed to the ruling party, let them get together and ask the government to quit interfering with their work. The judiciary is losing its freedom. It is the life line of democracy and if it gets strangled it will lead to be a authoritarian government. There is no national leader now to stand up for national causes, but democracy is government of the people, by the people for the people so let the people themselves get together and keep it alive.

AUGUST 11TH TO 21ST - TAMIL NADU

August 11th to 13th - Vinobanagar at Koduval, Coimbatore District

There was camp here for Sarvodaya Sangh and Khadi workers of Coimbatore District. About 150 workers were present also about 75 women workers attended. The talks were on Khadi, Sarvodaya philosophy and Gram Swaraj.

There were morning and evening meditation sessions during which Vimalaji on meditation, and there were talks on Gram Swaraj in the morning sessions and afternoon sessions were kept aside of questions and answers.

Total number of talks 6

Total number of question & answer sessions 2

13th August

Vimalaji went for tour of Vinobanagar complex in the morning and paid a visit to the Tripura Khadi Center near by. Left for Madurai in the afternoon, on the way stopped to meet Shri. Kallan a veteran Sarvodaya worker and also stopped at Gandhi Rural University near Madurai.

14th August - Madurai

Full day Seminar at the Madurai kamaraj University organised by the Gandhian Department on Science and Spirituality. Vimalaji gave her talk in the morning and went again in the afternoon to answer questions and gave the concluding talk. About 75 students and professors attended the seminar.

15th to 17th August - Kalupatti - Gandhi Ashram

Camp at Kalupatti where Gandhi Ashram has been founded since 1940. Present were inmates of the Ashram, teachers and instructors of the different departments of Gramodyog work carried on by the Ashram, plus Gram Sabha leaders of the area. About 100 campers were present.

There were morning and evening prayers, sitting in silence and talk by Vimalaji on meditation. Plus the morning talk and the afternoon question and answer sessions.

Total number of talks : 9

Total number of question & answer session : 3

17th August

After the last talk in the afternoon, Vimalaji was taken around to see all the Ashram activities by the secretary K. Munlandi she saw the workshops of carpentry, leather making, match making, khadi spinning and weaving, and made paper, pottery, soap making, bakery. Many young students come from the villages near by to learn to weave and become instructors for setting up such spinning units. Even the

Tanning and Leather goods manufacture units takes trainees from all over the country, supplying them with boarding and lodging while they are under training.

At T. Kallupatti also is a special shrine where Gandhiji's ashes have been buried. Gandhiji's follower the renowned economist Kumarappa had spent many years in his later life at the Ashram.

18th to 21st August - Sethur - Sarva Seva Farm

There was a Sarvodaya workers camp at Sethur, south of Madurai at a Sarva Seva Farm. The land is Bhoodan land and the Sarvodaya workers have adopted 20 villages nearby where they have helped establish Gram Sabhas and organised cooperative farming. The campsite was a 6 acre experimental farm with grain storage facilities for the farmers and a center for selling quality seeds. There were also many Gramodyog industries carried on there like oil pressing, making of paper, also a school was being run.

There were morning and evening prayers, sitting in silence and Vimalaji would give a talk on meditation during the morning session. Every morning there was a talk by Vimalaji and in the afternoon there was question and answer sessions. Jaganathanji and Krishnama also gave talks during the camp.

About 100 workers had come for the camp plus about 15 lady social workers, many from Tanjoor district.

Total of 8 talks given by Vimalaji

Total of 2 question & answer sessions.

22ND TO 29TH AUGUST - KARNATAKA

23rd to 27th August - Vishwaneedam Self Education Camp

About 30 campers from all over Karnataka had come for the camp. This was heterogeneous group of Sarvodaya workers, lawyers, politicians.

There was morning meditation during which Vimalaji would speak on meditation and there was the morning talk and afternoon question and answer session. Many friends from Bangalore would also come for the day to attend the talks. Vishwaneedam is located on about 300 acres of land half and hour drive from Bangalore city which was given to Vinobaji and which he named the nest of the universe hoping it would become international Sarvodaya center and the center for the four southern states. Right now it is being managed by the Bajaj Trust which also runs a dairy there.

Total of 10 talks by Vimalaji

Total of 5 question and answer sessions

28th August - Bangalore

Went for lunch to Bharat Shah's house. Listened to recitation of Atma Siddhi path.

There was a public talk organised by the Gandhi Peace Foundation presided over by Shri. Ajut Patwardan. About 100 people from Bangalore city attended.

Sri Achut Patwardan in his introductory talk said we meet at a time of perplexity and what better fortune than to have a person of insight than my friend Vimala amongst us."

Vimalaji in her talk pointed out that for her Gandhiji was not only a political leader but also a Jeevan Sadhak. The spiritual message of Gandhi has the solid foundation of faith in God and trust in man. He believed in the oneness of life and that relationships were the opportunities to discover the truth. He had come to revolutionize the motivating forces of human life in the economic, political and social fields. One cannot

understand the contribution of Gandhiji unless one understands the contribution of Marx, Lenin and Mao before him. They all had very noble ideas but the motivating forces that they used to obtain their ideals were ones of hatred, envy, violence and Gandhiji introduced the motivating forces of truth, love and Non violence in order to bring about economic, political and social change.

After the talk Vimalaji spent some time with Sri Achutji.

The night was spent at Vallabh Niketan the Ashram Mahadevi Tai has started for elderly people in Bangalore.

29th August - Bangalore

Attended morning prayers at Vallabh Niketan. Went for lunch to Sri Jains house. Present were Achutji and Mahadevi Tai. Left by 4:00 pm train for Nagpur.

Total number of camps in the south	6
Total number of public meetings	3
Total number of University seminars	1
Total number of talks :	39
Total number of question & answer sessions:	16

VIMALAJI'S VISIT TO THE STATES OF HARYANA, PUNJAB & UTTAR PRADESH IN DECEMBER, 1984

(Prepared and edited by Kaiser Irani)

Vimalaji returned to Abu in the first week of November 1984 after four months of continuous travelling. The continuous travelling through the different states under all kinds of weather conditions - sometimes wet & damp, sometimes cold & dry, sometimes hot & humid. Under all kinds of travelling conditions - sometimes by train, by car, by bus by rickshaw -

always accompanied by dust and dirt. And under all kinds of living conditions - sometimes a rest house, sometimes a room in a friend's house, sometimes luxury suites, sometimes just a verander. All had their toll on the body and on return to Abu, Vimalaji had bad attack of cold and bronchitis, such that Vimalaji had to cancel her two programmes in Bombay and Calcutta in the first half of December. And though not fully recovered Vimalaji set out on the 14th December to fulfill her other engagements.

Haryana : 16th - 18th December

We left at 9 pm on the 14th for Abu Road. The winter had set in and the nights were cold. The train was an hour late so we had to wait on the open platform for two hours. We reached Delhi the next evening and Shri Somdutt Vidyalkar the head of the Khadi Ashram at Panipat was at the station to receive us. He had invited Vimalaji to hold a camp for Khadi workers of the states of Haryana, Punjab & Himachal Pradesh at Panipat. It was a two hours drive from the station to the Ashram. The camp was for 3 days and 130 workers from the 3 states had come. Vimalaji gave talks in the morning and answered questions in the afternoons.

In the talks Vimalaji stressed that we must not forget that Khadi is not a textile industry. It is not only a piece of handwoven cloth. It is a symbol of a new society. How can this new society be brought about? Let the whole brotherhood of Gandhian workers, now working in different fields like Harijan Sevan, Go Raksha, Khadi, Prohibition etc come together and take out a yatra (pilgrimage) through the villages. We have to explain to the villagers.

1. The thoughts of Gandhi and Vinoba. The whole philosophy behind Khadi.
2. The necessity of changing the present political situation.
3. That poverty and exploitation is not their destiny. It is not caused by God but by man. The religious teachers have crippled their minds with such beliefs. They have to be explained that they are human beings and if they get up and

get together they can change the situation.

4. That we brought independence to this country for the people of the villages not only for the city dwellers, where it seems to have got stuck.
5. We have explain to them how the city dwellers have looted them, how they have taken away their employment - all the village industries and handicrafts. And how due to this the spinner, the weaver, the cobbler, the potter, the oil presser, the rice husker are all without jobs.
6. We have to explain to them the necessity of boycotting the goods made in the factories and to start producing them again in the villages.
7. We have to explain to them the need to be free of the caste system.
8. And to be free of the dependency on the police force and the law courts.
9. For this the villages will have to organise their Gram Sabhas (Village governments), and form their own peace force and have their own peoples' courts.
10. And we will have to educate them in the process of putting up their own peoples' candidates, who will be elected by them for the parliament.

The socio-economic revolution has to come through the exercise of the peoples' power. And we Gandhian workers have to take to the path of service and not that of power and politics. To take the path of service we need to have faith in the principles behind the work. Faith which never makes one impatient or dispondent. Faith which gives one strength to repeatedly explain till the people understand.

PUNJAB : 19th to 26th December:

1. After the three days camp was over at Panipat we left on the 19th by train for Ludhiana in Punjab. There we were met by Shri goel the veteran Sarvodaya worker of Punjab InsanI biradari was to be held. At the end of Vimalaji's tour of Punjab in October she had suggested to the peace loving, national

minded friends in Punjab to organise *Insani Biradari*. The idea behind it was that *Insani Biradari* would be a cultural and non political brotherhood. Its purpose to awaken a sense of responsibility among the people towards maintaining the unity and integrity of the country as a whole and of Punjab in particular.

2. To create a peoples' cultural front in order to give correct perspective of the problems confronting India.

3. To re-establish moral values and inculcate among the people a respect for democratic institutions and the willingness to operate them properly.

Vimalaji hoped that this cultural brotherhood would persuade the people to realise that violence as a way of living destroys the very fabric of democracy. A democratic set up will not sustain onslaughts of frequent violence and destruction of human life as well as national property. This brotherhood will organise *Lok Shakti* (peoples' power) for combating the triple evil of cowardice, corruption and criminality prevalent in our social life.

Vimalaji said she sees the decline of the existing political parties and feels apprehensive that there will be a nationwide political vacuum, unless the people organise themselves and take care of the democratic institutions as early as possible. The people have to resist the policy of divide and destroy of the governments that be. This can be accomplished by mass contacts, seminars, self education camps and utilising the services of newspapers, radio and other media. The people of Punjab have survived in spite of the political parties and their manpower. They have a rich heritage of the teachings of the Gurus. They should go back to the teachings of the Gurus, the Gita, the Upanishads and the Vedas. It will make them shed all fear and help them stand up like men to resist any and every injustice and exploitation imposed upon them by whom so ever and from which so ever quarter. People will have to organise themselves on a non-political and cultural basis and create an alternative culture suitable to both secularism and democracy. It will be a culture of mutual respect, cooperation and compassion.

The members of *Insani Biradari* recognise every human being as our brother and sister and a fellow citizen of the country. We

recognise our responsibility to live and let live the fellow beings, without strangling the cultural identity of our group, big or small. We recognise that violence cannot be the way of life. Arson, loot, murders and mutual butchering is not the way of sharing life as human beings on this planet. Therefore Insani Biradari condemns the cult of violence, who so ever follows it.

Vimalaji said she visualised Insani Biradari having its units at the district level and persuading the educated adults to meet the village people and explain to them the necessity of such a cultural front for liberating themselves from the shackles of exploitation and authoritarianism of the political parties and the religious priests, alike.

The conference was held at the Freedom Fighters hall in Moga and was a great success. Over 70 people of both Hindu and Sikh communities attended. The delegates were invited one day to have lunch at the Gurdwara and the next day at the Temple, enhancing the spirit of brotherhood and unity of the Convention.

At the Convention friends who wished to actively participate in the work gave in their names and it was decided that the head quarters of Insani Biradari would be at Moga and they would begin the work of enrolment of members and would work at organising district units so that they could reach the 12 districts of Punjab.

On the 23rd we left in the morning by car for Hoshiarpur.

It was an overnight halt at the same host's place Vimalaji had been to during her previous trip, so Vimalaji was familiar with the place and the host was delighted to meet Vimalaji again. In the evening a group of over 40 people had gathered and Vimalaji spoke to them about the objects of Insani Biradari. The ideas were well received and friends there decided to start a Unit in Hoshiarpur.

We left the next morning for Ludhiana. Here we were guest of Mr. Sharma who besides being an industrialist spent most of his time doing philanthropic work. He took us to see the old peoples' home his organisation Nishkam Seva (Service without expectations) had opened and the different training

schools they had for women. That evening friends gathered at his house and there were discussions on the problems of Punjab.

On the 25th morning we left for Chandigarh by car, where we were to spend two days. During all this time Vimalaji had not completely recovered from her cough. So she used these two days to rest and take some treatment. We were staying at the Gandhi Smarak Bhawan where our old friend Shri Jaswantrao who had spent some years at Abu was the head, so it was very much like being at home. There was a public meeting held at Gandhi Smarak Bhawan on the 26th evening and that night we were to leave for Fatehpur in Uttar Pradesh state. The train was at 1 am at night, so instead of waiting at the station friends drove us to the earlier station from where the train originated - about an hour's drive from Chandigarh, thus we were able to get into the compartment and retire early for the night.

**UTTAR PRADESH:
27TH DECEMBER 1984 TO 6TH JANUARY, 1985**

Fatehpur: 27th December 1984 to 2nd January 1985

At Fatehpur station we were met by Sarvodaya friends. Vimalaji recalled having visited Fatehpur about 25 years back and having given talks to tens of thousands of people there during the Bhoodan days. Over 100 Sarvodaya and Khadi workers and members of the Shanti Senas from Fatehpur District had come for the Camp.

In 1980 when Vimalaji first set out on the Lok Satsang Yatra through the eight northern states, and heard from the people how corruption and violence were spreading everywhere, Vimalaji had urged the people of goodwill to get together and stand up for their moral values. The corruption was spreading because the people of goodwill were not united and were not actively resisting it. She had suggested that young men of the village and towns should get together and form a Peace Force. A Peace Force which would defend the Community not with arms and ammunitions but with the power of love, compassion and prayers. As members of the peace force they would be trained in the art of remaining peaceful in the moment of provocation and would be willing to sacrifice their lives in saving that of others.

The seeds of these ideas were planted then and Sarvodaya workers in all the different states started putting them into practice. For this one week the Shanti Senaks or Peace Workers of Fatehpur District had come together for the Shanti Senak Camp, the first in UP. Also present was Acharya Rammurtiji a veteran Sarvodaya worker who had for the last three years taken up this work in Bihar state and had by now trained 3000 peace workers. Together with Vimalaji's talks there were daily talks by Rammurtiji who shared his knowledge and experience with the campers.

At Fatehpur we were staying about 1/2 km away from the camp site. Vimalaji would walk over in the morning and afternoon for the talks. Though it was the winter season occasional showers were not unexpected and there were days when it just poured. The talks were under a cloth tent so when the rains came, makeshift sitting arrangements were made in the veranders with all the campers happily squeezing into the small space giving full attention to the talks inspite of the rain pouring outside. Some days it would not rain but the wind roared and the whole tent would sway and all the poles would sway and as the talks continued campers would take down the photos behind the speakers incase they fell in the wind. Daily there was an early meditation session during which Vimalaji spoke on meditation and morning talks and afternoon question and answer meetings, plus many interviews and meetings as workers from all over the state and other states had come to meet Vimalaji.

During the talks Vimalaji dealt with the question raised by the campers: how total revolution could take place through spirituality. She reminded them that Shanti Senaks are workers who want to bring about change in society in a peaceful way. But even working in a peaceful way one needs energy. Right now the world is ruled by the power of money, arms and ammunitions and they have enormous strength. Shanti Senaks also need strength but their strength will come from the Soul Force not by depending on money and arms.

Shanti Senaka need to educate themselves to become fit instruments for the expression of this Soul Force. A strength which gives peace and not excitement, which gives strength not to kill but to die, which gives strength to bear other peoples faults.

This strength is got through faith in God. If they have faith then they will know that the world is not an illusion but the body of the Divine. Then they will see the universe as an expression the Divine, they will live being aware of this Divinity. And then there will be joy in serving others, for they will see the Divine everywhere.

This strength is got through trust in man. Do we have trust in man's capacity to understand? If there is divinity in everyone then there is the faculty to understand. The faculty to understand is the essence of Divinity. If we have trust in that then our means will be one of understanding, of explaining. We will be ready to keep repeatedly explaining till the other understands. Because we have faith in man we will have immense patience. And we will have the firm conviction that no matter what the behaviour of the other person we will not leave the path of truth and non violence.

This strength is got through a pure life. The Shanti Senaks are soldiers of truth and honesty and upholders of gram swaraj, and in order to do the work we have to educate ourselves and learn to control the mind, the speech and the body. A Shanti Senak has to be a very balanced person in all fields of life. First the habits of the body have to be improved. He has to maintain his time for eating and sleeping. Physical purity will be attained through disciplined and rhythmic behaviour.

Those who have to explain to the people their thoughts through speech need to have self control of speech. And self control of speech is brought about in the way we share out understanding of truth with others. There are two ways of saying the same thing, one is to put the emphasis on one's own understanding, one's own ego and the other is to humbly share the truth. Truth cannot be enforced on anyone it can only be shared. Truth is a sharp sword it will do its own work you do not need to add your own sharpness to it. Also the Shanti Senak will have to decide not to tell lies but to be completely honest in speech.

It is important to have pure minds to bring about change in society in a peaceful way. If there is no peace in the minds of Shanti Senaks they cannot work for peace. A mind riddled with anger, envy greed, inferiority-superiority complex cannot work for peace. The Shanti senaks will cultivate the inner qualities and energies of humility, patience and love.

This strength is got spending time in silence. It is not possible for the energy to be awoken without giving time for it, without educating oneself. When one gives time one sits quietly, on a regular basis - morning and evening and watches.

If we look without self defence then the observation will purify us. As with pure food there is purification of the body, so too with observation there is purification of the mind.

The results of the observation will be noticed in your perception - there will be a steadiness. Then you will be able to listen to others without reaction.

This observation gives one an immense energy which is very necessary in the life of a Shanti Senak.

If one continues observing without reacting, judging, defending then the conditionings which are not unending, being created by man having come become quiet and then what is before one is silence - an immense source of energy and strength.

The second thing that Shanti Senaks have to understand is that the fruits of our actions are not 100% dependent upon us. If we do not get what we want, when we want it, the way we want it, we get disappointed. But Shanti Senaks have to learn not to look for the fruits of their actions. They should question to see if the motive behind doing the work was pure - that is all that should concern them. Then whatever the fruits, let us accept it wholeheartedly without excitement or depression. Together with making an effort one has to learn to surrender.

The Shanti Senaks will decide to do special work in the fields of:

1. Bringing Gram Swaraj to the villages.
2. Which involves educating the villagers to boycott those items which can be made in the villages but are now made in the cities. They will also help the reproduce them villages to open village shops.
3. They will work for a clean town and will take help of the educated citizens like the doctors and teachers in educating the people.

4. They will call the villagers together for *statsang* and sing *bajaans* and make those songs popular which emphasise the unity of all religions. They can take out a procession once a week through the village singing songs and saying prayers from all religious scriptures.
5. They will educate the people to be free of the caste feeling.
6. They will educate the villagers in setting up voters' council and putting up their own chosen candidates for the elections.
7. They will help the villagers to organise their own *gram sabhas* (village governments) and train their own peace force and have their own people's courts.

It is necessary to have training camps once a year for the Shanti Senaks who will study in-depth the teachings of Gandhiji and Vinobaji and all Gandhiji's writings on Gram Swaraj. Gram Swaraj is not yet a movement but the situation is very right and ripe for it. Those who are ready to commit themselves for five years should get together and understand the total picture of the work so they can have clarity of thought.

Sultanpur Gosh- 3rd January, 1965

On the third morning we left for a village close by called Sultanpur Gosh where a meeting was organised for Shanti Senaks of the surrounding area. Most of the campers also came for this meeting. The villagers all came for the Meeting in Groups from their respective villages and those who were Shanti Senaks had saffron coloured scarves tied round their necks and orange bands on their arms. Also those villages which had organised *gram sabhas* in their villages came with their banners proclaiming proudly to all that their village had Peoples' Government and was managing its own affairs.

At the meeting many workers spoke of their experiences. There were reports of cooperation by the police too, who often guided villagers to them for assistance. Acharya Ranimurtiji in his talk suggested that there should be a special unit of peace

workers who will be ready for immediate action no matter what time of the day or night they may be called upon. (2) That even the youngsters should be taken as members hence giving them the right education from childhood and directing their energies in constructive outlets. (3) That the women should not be excluded from membership. In fact he urged the women to join as Shanti Senaks. In response many women volunteered to join and they came up to the stage where Vimalaji pinned on their badges and arm bands and welcomed them as co-workers.

We drove back to Fatehpur got all our luggage and left that evening by road for Lucknow nearly a three hour drive from there.

Camps 1985

Meditation Camp

1. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : Talks on Gyaneshwari
(February)
2. West Bengal : Calcutta : Talks (December)

Constructive Workers Camps

1. Uttar Pradesh : Lucknow : For U.P. Sarvodaya
workers (January)
2. Bihar : Patna : For Bihar Social workers
(November)
3. Maharashtra : Sevagram : Sarvodaya conference
(December)

Gramswaraj Camps

1. Gujarat : Gopaldham : Camp for Gujarat Social
workers (December)

Youth Camps:

1. Gujarat : Gopaldham : Gujarat Youth Camp
(December)

Camps for teachers

1. Uttar Pradesh : Bhatparani : Madan Malviya Shiksha
Sansthan (November)

Total Number of Camps In 1985

1. Meditation camps :	2
2. Constructive workers camps :	3
3. Gramswaraj Camps	1
4. Youth camps :	1
5. Camps for teachers	1

Total:	6

A REPORT OF CAMP HELD IN 1985

LUCKNOW : 4th to 6th January, 1985

At Lucknow there was a camp for Sarvodaya and Khadi workers from the state of Uttar Pradesh. We were living in the guest room in the Gandhi Bhawan grounds - a large complex of Khadi and cottage industries in the heart of the city. There were morning prayer meetings after which Vimalaji would give a talk on meditation, there were also morning talks and in the afternoon question and answer sessions with Vimalaji and the campers. On the first and last day there were public talks where the intelligentsia of the city attended and many lawyers, teachers, professors, vice chancellors met Vimalaji afterwards and expressed their appreciation on the new light thrown on Gandhi's philosophy.

There was also a talk organised for the women workers. At the talk Vimalaji requested the women of India to do three things for the next 5-10 years.

1. To teach their children that first and foremost they are human beings. And every human being has innate religious instincts which one has to abide by. And it is only secondarily that one is a member of a particular religion or citizen of a particular country.

2. They need to see that no lies are told to the children and that the children tell no lies. Telling lies is destructive to society and to man. The mother should give the cultural to our children, to our citizens. If this culture education is given to them at home than human beings will be born and they will have the strength to stand up to any dishonesty in society.

3. The wife should be ready to take the stand that no black money, no unearned income, no income made through dishonest means will be allowed into the house, even if it means living a very simple life. This is the way to end corruption. The family will be the nucleus for total revolution. The key for total revolution is the family, the head is the mother-not the institutions. She should be able to say: I don't want the conveniences brought with unearned income.

The women make up half the population of the country. They should awaken and arise to remove corruption first from the home and then automatically it will be removed from social life. Let them light the lamp of honesty in each home. This is the way she can serve humanity.

4. Today the women are taking up jobs, I also request that when they go to their jobs they do not begin to imitate the male characteristics. Let them take instead their innate qualities of self-sacrifice, forbearance, tolerance, compassion, tenderness and motherliness to their jobs. There is a divine grace in it, why are we ashamed of it, why do we forget it? Once the woman goes to her job she starts imitating the male and trying to pick up pseudo masculine attitudes and approaches. The women should work to strengthen the mother energy. If these qualities are lost in the house then how will they be found in socio-economic-political life?

On 6th evening we left by train for Delhi. At Delhi station we were met (The next morning) by friends who brought hot coffee and meals for the day's journey. We reached Abu Road station early the next morning. Friends had come down from the Mount to receive Vimalaji and had already reserved a cab for us so we were able to leave immediately for Abu, where Vimalaji would have some rest before the three week programme of talks on Gyaneshwari were to begin.

CAMPS 1986

Meditation Camps

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Maharashtra : Nasik : | By Sarda Charitable Trust (January) |
| 2. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : | Talks on Gyaneshwari (February) |
| 3. Maharashtra : Mahableshwar : | Maharashtra Meditation Camp (February) |
| 4. Maharashtra : Bombay : | Talks on Gita (February) |
| 5. West Bengal : Calcutta : | Talks (November) |
| 6. Gujarat : Bhavnagar : | Talks on Gyaneshwari (December) |

Constructive Workers Camps :

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Delhi : | Gandhi Peace Foundation Lecture on India and Her Mission (January) |
| 2. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Ahmedabad District Gujarat Biradari Convention (January) |
| 3. Gujarat : Kutch : | Tour of Border Areas of Gujarat State (January) |

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 4. Gujarat : Mehsena : | Mehsena, Sabarkanta and Gandhinagar District Gujarat Biradari Conference (February) |
| 5. Gujarat : Ajol : | Gujarat Biradari conference at Sanskara Tirth (February) |
| 6. Gujarat : Anera : | Gujarat Biradari conference at Vishva Mangalam (February) |
| 7. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Annual Gujarat Biradari convention (August) |
| 8. Delhi : | National Convention on Punjab (December) |

Gramswaraj Camps

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Gujarat : Gopaldham : | Camps for workers of research center and social workers of Gujarat (December) |
|--------------------------|---|

Peace Work - Camps & meetings

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Vidyarti Parishad (January) |
| 2. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Meeting with Adivasi & Harijan leaders (February) |

Youth Camps

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | All India Students Conference (January) |
| 2. Gujarat : Gopaldham : | Youth Camp (December) |

Camps for Teachers

1. Tamil Nadu : Ooty : Al Blue mountain School (September)

Total number of camps in 1986

1. Meditation Camps :	6
2. Constructive Workers Camps :	8
3. Gramswaraj Camps :	1
4. Peace Work Camps :	2
5. Youth Camps :	2
6. Camps for teachers :	1
	20
	20

CAMPS 1987

Meditation Camps

1. Maharashtra : Mahableshwar : Maharashtra Meditation Camp (January)

Constructive Workers Camps

1. Bihar : Patna
2. Bihar : Hazaribagh
3. Bihar : Raachi
4. Bihar Bokara
5. Bihar : Dhanbad
6. Bihar : Tatanagar

Meetings with social workers and local people (February)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 7. Gujarat : Godhra | For social workers
(February) |
| 8. Gujarat : Ahmedabad | Gujarat Biradari
Meeting (July) |
| 9. Gujarat : Jamnagar | Gujarat Biradari
Annual Convention
(August) |
| 10. Gujarat : Kutch | For local social
workers
(November) |
| 11. Gujarat : Radhanpur | For local social
workers
(November) |
| 12. Uttar Pradesh : Balla : | U.P. & Bihar Sarvodaya
Workers Camp
(November) |
| 13. Madhya Pradesh : Jhansi : | Sarvodaya workers camp
(November) |
| 14. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Constructive Workers '
water conference "
(November) |
| 15. Gujarat : Bhavnagar : | For Gujarat social
workers (December) |
| 16. Gujarat : Rajkot : | For Gujarat social
workers (December) |

Gramswaraj Camps

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Gujarat : Gopaldham : | For workers and students
of Research Center (July) |
|--------------------------|---|

Youth Camps

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Maharashtra : Mahableswar : | Maharashtra Youth
camp (February) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

2. Gujarat : Gopaldham : Gujarat Youth Camp
(December)
3. Gujarat : Madhavpur : Youth Camp (December)

Camps For Teachers

1. Gujarat : Ajol : At Sanskara Tirth
(February)
2. Gujarat : Jannagar : Kasturba Mahila Vikas
Gragh (October)
3. Uttar Pradesh:Bhatparani: Madan Mohan Malivya
Education Institute
(November)

Total Number of Camps in 1987

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| 1. Meditation Camps : | 1 |
| 2. Constructive workers Camps : | 16 |
| 3. Gramswaraj Camps : | 1 |
| 4. Youth Camps : | 3 |
| 5. Camps for teachers : | 3 |

24

CAMPS 1988

Meditation Camps

1. Maharashtra : Mahableswar :Maharashtra : Meditation
camp (January)
2. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : Talks for enquirers (May)

3. Himachal Pradesh : Dalhousie : Satsang sessions
(September)
4. Orissa : Bhubaneswar : International
Colloquium On The
Future of Humanity
(November)

Constructive Workers Camps

1. Rajasthan Mount Abu : Meeting with
constructive
workers (February)
2. Gujarat : Sola : Meeting with Gujarat
Biradart workers (March)
3. Gujarat : Veddehi : Social workers camp
(March)
4. Gujarat : Rajkot : Gujarat Biradart meeting
5. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : Meetings with constr-
uctive workers
(September)
6. Delhi : Inauguration session of
National Panel of
concerned citizens
(October)
7. Gujarat : Sabarmati : Conference of Gandhian
workers and thinkers
(November)
8. Gujarat : Baroda : Gujarat Biradart Annual
convention (November)
9. Gujarat : Kasana : At Mhedraj Seva Mandal
on the responsibility of
the electorate in a
parliamentary
Democracy (December)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 10. Gujarat : Ratanpur : | At Lokniketan Gram Vidyapeeth for Political workers on the political crisis in India (December) |
| 11. Gujarat : Gundi : | Meetings for non-party concerned citizens of Gujarat state (December) |
| 12. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Meetings of non-party concerned citizens of Gujarat |

Youth Camps

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Maharashtra : Shivapur : | Maharashtra Youth Camp (January) |
| 2. Rajasthan : Mount Abu: | For student-trainees of Gopaldham Research Center (January) |
| 3. Gujarat : Rajkot : | Saurashtra, Kutch Youth Get-together (July) |
| 4. Gujarat : Ahmedabad : | Gujarat Youth Get-together (September) |
| 5. Rajasthan : Mount Abu : | Gujarat State youth Camp (December) |

Total Number of Camps in 1968

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Meditation Camps : | 4 |
| 2. Constructive workers camps & meetings : | 12 |
| 3. Youth camps : | 5 |
| | 21 |

FROM VIMALAJI'S MAILBAG

Dear Friends,

It is nearly 11 weeks since my return to India from Europe, within two weeks of arrival, we left for Dalhousie - the serenely beautiful Himalayan resort. It was mid September generally September and October are extremely pleasant and healthful months in the Himalayas. This year proved to be an exception for the whole Himalayan region. Throughout the four weeks that we spent at Dalhousie, we were faced with torrential rains, terrifying hailstorms, snowfall and lightnings. The confrontation was quite an experience.

In spite of all this about 15 enquirers would join us for meditation and Discussions for about three weeks. Friends from USA, Italy, West Germany England and Norway were present and participated with great zest. It is needless to mention that Indian friends were present throughout the duration.

A group of non-party political thinkers gathered together at Delhi on 20th October to explore the possibility of organising a national panel of such citizens to function as a corrective moral force for the ruling party as well as the Opposition Parties. In order to secure a healthy functioning of parliamentary democracy, it seems vitally necessary to organise "THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE" through a group of nationally accepted thinkers and Social workers.

Vimala spent a week at Mt Abu and left for a three week tour, on the 1st November. She presided over Gujarat State convention of Gandhian thinkers and workers at Ahmedabad on 2nd and 3rd November. Then she left for Bhubaneshwar - Orissa on the North Eastern Coast of India. An International Colloquium on "The Future of - humanity" was organised by J Krishnamurti Society of Orissa. It is a small group working independently of K. Foundation. It organizes seminars in different parts of India to discuss the challenges facing humanity, in the light of J Krishnamurti's teachings.

Vimala joined her colleagues in Gujarat to celebrate the 4th Annual Gathering of "BIRADARI" a loose brotherhood of social activists, on the 11th and spent the next two days with them

By 15th she was in a remote village in North Gujarat to address an electorate convention. She spoke about the responsibility of the electorate and their role in a parliamentary democracy.

By 19th she was in a famous educational institute also in North Gujarat. Political workers and members of Gujarat State Legislature had assembled there to listen to V on a significant issue of political crisis in India. After spending three days with the workers, teachers of the institute and religious enquirers, with whom V discussed education as the only way out of the cultural crisis facing India, she returned to Mount Abu on the 21st.

The trip to Sri Lanka had to be cancelled second time in the last two years due to the turbulent state of affairs. It seems that as the elections in Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka have taken place relatively peacefully, the Indian Peace Keeping Force would return to India soon.

V intends to spend the next two months mostly at Mount Abu to catch up with accumulated office work. She would conduct, though a fourth Camp of selected 50 young men and women from Gujarat during her stay.

V sends her Christmas Greetings to all her friends in various countries of the world.

Mount Abu

23 rd November, 1968.

1978 to 1988
TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMPS

1. Maharashtra :	14
2. Gujarat :	92
3. Rajasthan :	20
4. Punjab :	21
5. Himachal Pradesh :	10
6. Haryana :	5
7. Uttar Pradesh :	22
8. Madhya Pradesh :	3
9. Bihar :	20
10. Bengal :	7
11. Assam :	2
12. Orissa :	1
13. Delhi :	7
14. Chandigarh :	8
15. Tamilnadu :	9
16. Karnataka :	2
17. Kerala :	3
18. Jammu & Kashmir :	1
Total	217

**A Leap Into The
Flames Of Violence**

A LEAP INTO THE FLAMES OF VIOLENCE

Contents

Part One : Porbandar

1. Dada Dharmadhikari's blessings
2. Reflections on the subject of Porbandar - 1980
3. Report on Porbandar Peace Mission - 1980
4. Report from Porbandar Peace Center : May 1981
5. Report on Porbandar - July 1981

Part Two: Dholka

1. Observations on the Hindu-Muslim Problem in Dholka, Dhoraji and other places in Gujarat.
2. Case Report on Dholka

Part Three : Ahmedabad

1. Report on Vimalaji's visit to disturbed areas in Ahmedabad: 20th August, 1985
2. Report of Vimalaji's visit to disturbed areas in Ahmedabad : 21st August, 1985

PART ONE - PORBANDER

DADA DHARMADHIKARI'S BLESSING

You have taken in hand a work programme for Porbandar. Knowing about it the heart is overwhelmed with joy and overflowing with fulfilment. You have made me extremely happy. For many days it has been my wish that somebody take up a work programme to counteract the anti-social elements. For the last two to three years I have in every speech of mine, given special emphasis on this subject. If I had strength in my body I would have joined your undertaking. But now only the restlessness of the heart remains.

Uptil now the honour of the citizens was in the hands of the policeman. That is why he has been depending upon arms. Due to this very reason the citizen has been controlled by the gangsters and their weapons. As long as freedom is dependent on arms, that is, we are dependent for protection on the policemen, until then democracy is a myth and the vote is an article for trade. Religion is also dependent on arms. It does not have it's independent prestige. Strictly speaking, if one wants to halt the rampant anti-social elements then it is the task of the citizen alone. But that job has been considered the duty of the king or the soldier. This then means that the freedom of the citizen is not in his own hands.

Today there is friction between the town dwellers and the policemen or between the town dwellers and the criminal element in the town or village. In one way it is easy to have an encounter with the policeman but to have an encounter with the violence of the criminal, that is a very difficult job. You are going to do that courageous job. My heart overflows with admiration for you.

Disarmament has been forced upon the country. That is why there is both the desire and the fear of weapons. Until this fear of arms is not eradicated the emergence of true non-violence cannot take place. Because even for peaceful resistance, bravery not depending on arms is inevitable. By your efforts the seeds of courage will be sown in the minds of men. These

days all your activities are an expression of applied spirituality. At such times I am reminded greatly of Mudula Saraben. There was only one such woman like her. Now by your efforts and experiments 'Stree-Shakti' will be awakened. In Allahabad there are the Golandi sisters, in them I have seen this courage. Here in Bombay there is our Jaswantibhen Shah who is very strong but her neighbours are afraid of the anti-social elements and oppose her so she gets isolated and has to take the help of the police. Even then there is a graceful nobility in her strength.

Among the Saints there is Sant Balaji of Gujarat who is conducting such experiments with great faith and in a scientific manner.

Very speedy progress towards disarmament is possible in Europe and America through the efforts of the peace loving citizens there. Because they have with understanding abandoned the use of weapons. In their hearts there has been born a strong dislike towards war. That is why their love for peace is honest and firm as a rock. Our approach is more scientific but has not been implemented in our daily living.

16th July, 1980.

REFLECTIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF PORBANDAR

It was June 1980. We were in Dalhousie then. State elections were being held in the country. In the sequel of the elections and on account of them, murders were being committed and these murders were being silently accepted by the masses. More importance seem to be given to the death of a dog or a cat, to the death of a fly or a fish than to the murder and death of a human life. The atrocities committed against women is a ugly prevalence in the Indian society. The harsh behaviour of the mother and father towards their maiden daughter, the lordship of the husband over his wife and the inborn acceptance of the husband beating his wife, are modes of behaviour to be seen at all layers of the family life in this society. It can be understood then why those unfortunate people who indulge in crime or those who lose their sense of

humanity in the intoxication of liquor commit outrage against women whenever they find the opportunity. But when one hears of how in schools and universities the pupils and the teachers themselves ill treat the students and even go to the extent of committing outrage against them; how the police instead of protecting the public become aggressors themselves- this shows the great extent of the moral decline in the country.

There was a storm of anguish and pain overflowing in the mind when a letter came from a friend in Porbandar. In the letter he wrote: 'Please come to Porbandar'. In this city the people are panic stricken. The anti-social element seems to have terrorised the whole city. In the hometown of Bapu all this cannot be endured. If you come, you can show us the way out'.

I wrote a letter to the very wise and learned person of Junagadh district, engaged in social work Shri Ratubhai Adani and said: 'I would think it highly improper to step into your sphere without first informing you and obtaining your consent. Gangsterism, larceny, bloodshed and homicide together with the fear in the minds of the people is a humanitarian issue. It is a cultural question that has to be solved. In this issue, if you are willing to take up the responsibility yourself then the question of my going to Porbandar does not arise. If you do not wish to do anything about it then I keep the hope that I will receive your cooperation and support from the spiritual standpoint in whatever I am doing. Together with my letter Shri Balubhai Valdia, the social worker from Jamnagar who was in Dalhousie at that time also wrote a letter to Shri Ratubhai.

Today is the 8th of August and upto now I have not received a reply to my letter. On the 8th of July on returning to Ahmedabad I had a talk with Sarvodaya friends of Gujarat and Saurashtra. Among those companions present were: Shri Amulakhbhai Khimani, Meera Bhatt, Manubhai Majumdar, Shri Dhirubhai and Jagdishbhai. I appealed to them that if the Gujarat Shanti Seva Mandal took up the work in Porbandar then I with my friends would give them our full support. From their talk it came to my understanding that Sarva Seva Sangh had entrusted the work of Shanti Seva to Shri Vinobaji, because there is a strong difference of opinion among the colleagues over the question of not casting votes. This left me

with no other option but to move ahead according to my understanding. By our goodluck Shri Amulakbhai Khimant from the start and until the end has assured me of his support. The Sarvodaya workers assured me of their cooperation in their individual capacities. Shri Balkrishna Vaidya and Shri Keshubhai Vallya had already promised me of their cooperation.

I felt it essential to visit Porbandar to get first hand knowledge of the problem and to comprehend it totally.

First Step: August 16th, 17th & 18th, 1980

In the form of First Step, it was decided to meet the well known and neutral citizens of Porbandar city. With me will be:

- 1: Shri Amulakbhai
- 2: Shri Mulshankarbhai
- 3: Dr. Dwarkadasbhai Joshi
- 4: Shri Karsandash Vachani
- 5: Shri Mohanbhai Mandliya
- 6: Shri Kalyanbhai Shah
- 7: Smt. Prabhaben Merchant

Second Step: September 7th to 14th, 1980

Sitting in Abu and thinking of the work to be done in the Second Step in Porbandar, it seems to me that a Padyatra of the city is necessary. For seven days through all the sections of the city we will take out processions, hold meditation meetings, personal interviews and have public satsang meetings. This seems to us necessary to remove the atmosphere of fear in the city. For this Padyatra we intend to invite the youth of the city, the women from the various institutions, volunteers from the Porbandar area, social workers and Sarvodaya workers from the Junagadh district.

In this 'Week of Fearlessness' it is our hope that trust in God or Atman will be awakened in the people. It will be necessary for the people to unite and so peacefully awaken the energy and strength of a united people. Then only will the unruly activities of the anti-social elements be held in check. It is my hope that the love of truth will be awakened in the people. Without the awakening of the inner strength of Atman the problem cannot be dealt with adequately. It is our hope to arouse this inner intelligence.

Third Step: December 15th to 30th, 1980

If the other two steps are successfully completed without too much difficulty then we will undertake the Third Step in December from the 15th to the 30th. Then it seems necessary to undertake a Padyatra of Porbandar Taluka.. The length of the Taluka from North to South is 90 kms. and the width from East to West is 29 kms. This is what I have read. I will myself undertake the Padyatra from North to South and will have atleast twentyfive volunteers accompanying me. The larger area of the width which my group is unable to cover will be visited by 2 to 3 smaller groups. This is how we visualise it.

1. Kutliyana Girls School
2. Jodiya Girls school
3. Jamnagar Mahila Vikas Gruha
4. Jamnagar Jeevan Yoga Center

The brothers and sisters from these institutions say it will be convenient for them and have expressed their interest in joining the Padyatra of the Taluka, we have faith that the sisters of the Porbander Kaanyagurukul and women from other institutions will as it is convenient to them give their support.

We are thinking of holding a three day-self-education camp in Porbander before the start of the padyatra. We are also thinking of convening a Womens' Taluka convention at the end of the padyatra. Only after having discussions with the elders and neutral citizens of Porbander known to me, will we be able to make any final decisions on these plans.

I had sent this format of proposed work in Porbander to Shri Dada Dharmadhikari for his information. Together with his blessings whatever comments he had on the subject I have included here. Also included are his thoughts on the various problems and conditions of the country.

Vimala

REPORT ON PORBANDAR PEACE MISSION

Porbandar the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi is a city today ridden, with crime, homicide and larceny. The two fishing communities Kharva's and Mehr's which make up most of the population of the city have become rich overnight, since the time Fisheries was made into an Industry by the Government. Not knowing what to do with their new found wealth and leisure, they have taken to smuggling, gambling, bootlegging and all the crimes that go with that style of living. This has affected the life of the city. The people are afraid, they are afraid of being robbed, of being killed, they are afraid to go out in the evenings, they are afraid for the safety of their children. The shopkeepers are also afraid to keep their shops open, the doctors are afraid to keep their dispensaries open or to make night calls. Fear has enveloped and immobilised the city and its residents. The situation is further aggravated by the politicians exploiting this animosity between the two communities for their own personal gains.

A resident of Porbandar invited Vimalaji to visit the city to throw some light on solving the problems there. Vimalaji first visited Porbandar in late August and met with the concerned non-aligned citizens there to discuss what could be done. On the second visit in early September, Vimalaji together with 75 friends and volunteers from different institutions like Sarvodya, Sant Balaji, Jamnagar Mahila Mandal, Lok Bharati Mandal, etc. undertook work for the Porbandar Peace Mission.

Work initiated in Porbandar

Since the work was to have its foundation in spirituality and the principles of Love, Friendship and Cooperation, all actions were undertaken to awaken these principles in the hearts of the people.

(1) Processions were taken out every morning, through the different residential areas in the city, singing and chanting Bhajans and dhuns.

(2) Door to door personal contact took place between the people and the volunteers, who also distributed pamphlets and explained the work being done.

(3) Meetings for women were held every afternoon, for that one week.

(4) A public Satsang Meeting was held every evening.

Affects of the work

(1) People were first taken by surprise and disbelief at this peaceful demonstration of fearlessness. They slowly came out of their homes and joined in the meetings such that for the last meeting there were 1,500 people present.

(2) Committees were formed for follow up work.

(3) A Padyatra of the Taluka and its 77 villages was planned for the last fortnight in December. Vimalaji and other friends will participate in it.

Vimalaji's message to the people

(1) Let us be free from Fear

(2) Let us make the city a fearless place to live in.

(3) Let us have faith in the Divinity within each one, nobody is bad from birth.

(4) In the last 30 years it is the people who are responsible for the rise of the anti-social elements. We give them importance, and prestige in society by bowing to them, going to them for favours, inviting them to grace all our social and educational functions, and by quietly acquiescing to and accepting all the injustices and crimes they commit.

If we want to stop this spread of corruption:

(1) Everyone should stop bringing in and purchasing smuggled goods even if they are available cheaper in the market.

(2) Let the police and officers not accept any bribes to help continue such corrupt businesses. And let them not ask for bribes or harass the merchants for monthly instalments.

(3) Let the politicians not interfere with the work of the administrative, judiciary and police department.

(4) Let women, teachers, students and non-party citizens form in their own wards committees to protect themselves. Let there be formed Volunteer Peace Corps to oppose all injustice in an organised way. So the people become independent. There is no other way.

Special appeal was made to the women folk.

- (1) That in their homes they do not permit the husband or son to bring in smuggled goods.
- (2) That they question the husband and son about any additional income that comes into the house
- (3) That they fast and do not cook a meal for the husband the day he comes home drunk.

It is hoped that the people of goodwill and the educational, cultural and religious institutions will get together and create an atmosphere that will again arouse and awaken in the people their faith in God and human values.

REPORT FROM PORBANDAR PEACE CENTER - 1981

1. A workshop for Amber Spinning Wheels has been opened on behalf of Saurashtra Constructive Work Committee. The Committee has sanctioned 100 Amber Spinning Wheels out of which 50 are already utilised. Special training is being imparted to women. There was one month training camp in which 25 women participated, they were given stipend during the training course. Three women have become regular spinners. Each one of them has now started earning Rs 3/- per day.

2. Mr Chelbhai Shukla personally visited the Peace Center and the villages around in order to start Khadi Production

Centers in the area. It has been decided to start 2 Centers immediately - one in Bhada and one in Mitrana Two youths from these two villages have been sent to Rajkot for the necessary training. The Block Development Officer has assured the Peace Center of their full cooperation on behalf of the Small Farmers Development Scheme of the Gujarat Government. A Center for Khadi Production was inaugurated at Katvana on 13th June.

3. A study Circle has been started on the first floor of the Porbandar Khadi Store. The Study Circle meets every Sunday to study and discuss specific themes. The number of attendance is increasing steadily.

4. From 15th to 22nd May Mr D Mataleya from Jamnagar and Miss Sharda from Jodhya conducted prayer meetings and satsang in different wards of Porbandar city. Response was more than encouraging.

5. Mr L Davada and Mr H Patel of the Peace Center attended the Meditation Camp in Mount Abu conducted by Vimalaji. The Camp was specially meant to explain the significance of Peace Work and the necessity of creating a spiritual foundation for social service.

6. Shri Amulkbhai Khemani spent the first week of June at the Peace Center and organised the implementation of Khadi Spinning and Production Centers. Mr N Bhatt has been given the charge of inspecting the Production Centers.

7. The Executive Committee of the Porbandar Peace Centre met on 8th June to take stock of the work done in the last six months. Fifteen members attended the meeting besides the dignitaries like Shri Amulakbhai Khemani, Shri Balkrishna Vaidya, Shri D Matalaya.

8. The Committee has expressed its deep concern for anti social activities that are still going on in the city, though there have not been murders in the last five months there have been incidents of kidnapping, threatening and incidents of looting trucks carrying consumer goods.

The city feels much relief, citizens have become comparatively bold and fearless, they are getting organised to resist the activities of the anti social elements, with or even without the help of the police.

9. Smt Vimalaji will visit Porbandar in July and spend a week there from 20th to 27th. The purpose is to meet leading citizens of the city and the Taluka. There will be a five days Self Education Camp.

REPORT ON PORBANDAR

*Self education camp in Porbandar
from 19th July to 25th July 1981*

Meeting on 25 th July

On the 25th of July there was a meeting with the inner circle of workers interested and involved in the Porbander Peace Project. Altogether ten people were present. They were asked to give a review of the work done so far, their assessment of the work plus suggestions for the future work. Those present were: 1. Balubhai Vaidya, 2. Shri Amulak Khimani, 3. Shri Dulerai Malalla, 4. Shri Mathurdasji, 5. Shri Karsan Vachani, 6. Shri Hirjibhai, 7. Shri Leladharji, 8. Shri K T Shah, 9. Shri. B C Sularai, 10. Shri Navalbhai and Smt Vimalaji.

Summary of their observations

1. The situation has quietened down in the last six months though some under currents of tensions are still there.
2. An MLA was kidnapped but he was released after some hours due to some compromises and adjustments that he gave in to.
3. Fear prevails in the business community and among the middle class inspite of the prevailing peace.
4. Some of the reasons for the tensions are stray incidents like the demanding of money from shopkeepers by anti-social elements and eve-teasing of women.
5. There is peace among the Kharwa (sailor) community.
6. There is peace among the Meher (farmer) community also.

7. The Government and the Public got active for some time but afterwards lapsed into inaction.
8. The public were afraid of venturing into the Kharwa area after nightfall but now they visit that area fearlessly.
9. People appreciate the significance of the work that the Shanti Kendra is doing.

Recommendations

- (1) To activate the people: School buildings and religious places should be protected from misuse.
- (2) To work out a programme with a wider gamut and to take up some burning issue which will capture the hearts of the people.
- (3) To explore the possibility of making item (1) a wider issue.

State of Municipal School in Porbandar

- (1) There are 24 primary schools in Porbandar but out of these, four buildings have been damaged. There are eight high schools and some of their buildings have also been damaged.
- (2) Right now after school hours, school buildings are being used for boot legging activities, for gambling, for immoral traffic, premises are being misused as public latrines. Materials and equipment of the schools are being stolen, even doors and windows are stolen.
- (3) School buildings are in very poor repairs no maintenance is done. No drinking water facilities are provided for the children, and no latrines are provided for their use either.

It was decided to investigate more thoroughly the real state of affairs of all the schools in Porbandar and based on that information to explore the possibility of launching a programme for the protection and purification of schools and religious institutions.

Religious institutions are also being misused. There are

known to be some religious institutions where charas, ganja, bhang, are sold. Young people are made preys for addiction.

Also materials are being stolen from these institutions.

TALK GIVEN BY VIMALAJI

Until June 1980 I had never even thought of coming to Porbandar. Vidyachandra Rughani kept writing and telling me of the very bad state of affairs in the city, the numerous murders committed and other forms of anti social behaviour and in June he wrote and invited me to visit the city and help solve its problems. Before my visit there were impressions in the mind that Porbandar was filled with sophisticated gangsters and anti-social elements and one had to work to free the city of them. I decided first to study the situation first hand and then to experiment to solve the problem in a non violent way with the cooperation of friends if any came forward. When I came in August and stayed with Vidyachandra Rughani and met the people I still had the impression that there were two main groups in conflict with each other, the Kharwas and the Mehers and that the political parties were behind them and thus the situation was made a bit more complicated.

The question was, what should we do? We decided to take out a padyatra of the city. Balubhai and Amulakbhai were ready to join and so were the Gujarat Sarvodaya workers and members of the Shanti Sena. The main thought then was that the atmosphere of crime and homicide should be removed. But after the five day padyatra of the city we realised that the police, the government officials, leading members of society and the business community were all involved. So instead of just two communities being involved there was now the whole cross section of society involved. We realised then that only if the public opinion consolidates and thereby creates a moral pressure on the public servants can some change be brought about. What was needed was a spiritual foundation and there was necessity for uniting the people's force.

In December 1980 we had a padyatra of the Taluka. It was to

show the people how a sadhaka acts and works. With humility and freedom of all ambitions of personal and political power and from the wish to change the political power structure. Shri Mathurdasji, Shri Navalji, Shri Balubhai Vaidya, Shri Amulak Khumani all stood up and offered their cooperation, which was for us an indication of God's hand in assisting the work. From the Taluka padyatra we discovered that the corruption had not reached the villages. Their main problem was unemployment and we can help them through setting up new Khadi centers. After December we decided to help in that respect!

Today the main illness in the country is lack of faith in God and hence in any moral values, but handful of us having faith decided to start on that basis. It was felt if two workers were found who would be ready to stay on in Porbandar and do the work, the work could move forward, they would be helped by visiting friends. Hirjibhai and Leladharbhai volunteered to stay in Porbandar for atleast one year. So we opened and started the work of the Porbandar Peace Center, in January 1981. People got to know of the work of the Peace Center and slowly our bonafides have been established. The workers have not been mistreated in any way nor have they been subject to any threats of violence, which in itself is no small achievement. The citizens of Porbandar themselves have not yet taken up the initiative, so for the time, the work will have to be done with the help of five to ten visiting friends. The work of non violence moves slowly but surely, without any outward show. Putting our trust in God we walk ahead with purity of mind, heart and speech, laying emphasis on purity of means.

Now after six months we have to activate and unite the people by taking up causes which will bring the people together. Can we start the work on the basis that the purity of the religious and educational institutions should be maintained. It is necessary to work out such an action programme to unite the peoples' force and keep it together. It is very important to take up some such project. If we do not, the cynicism and bitterness in the people will increase and the people will feel more dejected and depressed. The people now do not have any trust that any work can be done upholding moral values and principles, and you have to show the people concrete results, they are no longer satisfied with mere words. This way they will regain faith in themselves and the purity of means.

Since last year the situation is more serious in the country, for the Prime Minister has lost control over her ministers, she does not trust her ministers and calls upon their secretaries to obtain information. So the ministers too are isolated. How can anyone govern if you have no trust on your own staff members? So the strength to rule of the center and the state governments has been reduced, the main reason for that being the kind of means that are being used these days to win elections. Under such circumstances it is urgently necessary that the people unite and use their united strength to solve the social problems.

Outline for future work

Shri Matalyaji suggested that there be a month long project of purification, which will include prayer, silence, fasting with the specific purpose in mind of purifying the city atmosphere. Together it was decided to take up the project of purifying the schools and religious institutions. For the schools are being misused after school hours and used as places for storing and distributing liquor, for gambling, for traffic in immoral acts. The schools are in disrepair, and no drinking water facilities are available for the children nor are any latrines provided for their use. Religious institutions are also being used for selling drugs.

During the month of purification the participants will visit everyday one primary school and conduct the morning prayer with the children and spend some time with them. In the evenings they will organise and hold public prayer meetings. It is hoped in this way to bring the attention to the public of the existing state of affairs in these sacred institutions.

Vimalaji suggested that after the month of purification the participants should be ready to picket the schools where the liquor is being stored and sold, this step is vitally necessary for the work to move one step forward.

The chain fasting begins

One month long chain fasts began on 6th August, under the guidance of leading Sarvodaya Worker of Gujarat Shri Amulakrai Khimani, and for the remaining three weeks friends have volunteered from Jamnagar, Bhavnagar, Rajkot

and Junagadh districts. The local workers of Peace Committee will contribute their bit in the last week.

Between the 6th and 14th of August there will be morning prayer meetings at six different primary schools in various parts of Porbandar. The evening prayer meetings will be held at eight different localities of Porbandar.

Amulakbhai writes to Vimalaji that every day the response is getting better and better.

PART TWO - DHOLKA
OBSERVATIONS ON THE HINDU-MUSLIM
PROBLEM IN DHOLKA, DHORAJI AND OTHER
PLACES IN GUJARAT

It seems to me that communal disturbances will be a regular feature of our national life as long as we do not develop a civic consciousness and look upon ourselves primarily as Indian citizens. It will be a common feature of national life as long as all political parties do not pledge themselves to the task of educating the people into the fundamentals of democracy and secularism. The political parties will have to pledge themselves also for not provoking or exploiting deep rooted communal prejudices for winning elections or retaining captured political power.

In other words the communal problem is essentially one arising out of cultural immaturity. It cannot be eradicated through legislation alone. I have told the leaders of both the Hindu and Muslim communities in Dholka that constructive efforts to build up the emotional integrity would be launched only after the verdict in the case, now pending in the Courts, has been reached.

Vimala

CASE REPORT ON DHOLKA

The background of our involvement

On 7th May, 1981 Arvind Merchant a old friend of Vimalaji's and student of Krishnamurti came to speak to Vimalaji about the problem in Dholka, along with him were: 1. A lawyer and, a staunch Gandhian worker and close associate of the Sant Balji Group; 2. A Doctor and 3. A businessman. This was the first delegation. The initiative was taken by Arvind Merchant. He being a non party man they all met at his house and acting as a guide he participated in a Local Citizens Peace Committee.

Case History of Dholka - As reported by the delegation

Dholka has a population of 47,000 of which 15,000 are Muslims. The two communities have always lived in harmony, intermingling freely amongst each other. There have been no incidents of riots or communal violence involving the two communities. The Muslims have always voted in-block for the Congress and when the Congress split in 1969 they have voted in-lock for Congress(I).

The Muslims have been trying for some time to create trouble and arouse anti-communal feelings.

In February, 1981 a candidate for Municipality presidentship Shri Rana was killed.

In March 1981, there was a murder committed of a Muslim youth working in oil pressing. The youth was known to be a ruffian keeping bad company. His father feels the murder was committed by his associates and not by any Hindu. He has given a written statement to that affect to the police.

In the third week of March the Muslim community got together and decided to give the incident a anti-communal form. On the 26th March they announced from the Masjid: "Islam is in danger. God is great" and went to the theatre when the second show was running and collected the Muslims in the audience. After the show was over and the audience was leaving the theatre they killed three hindu youths, the fourth youth got a bad wound on his shoulder and chest. The three youths were accompanied by their wives.

A Citizens Peace Committee was formed on the 27th March. The Government declared curfew so that the people would not collect together. The Citizens' Committee contained the violent elements among the Hindus and tried to maintain peace and went and met the Muslims. The police and CID came and prepared case reports. In May four Muslims were arrested. The Muslims collected funds and donated a car for their use. Dholka Taluka Muslims organised a big meeting and in May one delegation or the other would go to Gandhinagar to meet the politicians and give an impression that the Muslims in Dholka were not safe.

In May and June small cases of unrest have taken place amongst the two communities like throwing stones at each others. Attempts have been made to buy the witnesses and get them to change the statements given to the police.

Several attempts have been made to bring about peace and an early settlement among the communities. Ministers, Government officials and Sarvodaya workers have visited the place. The Muslims say they will publicly apologise for what has happened only if the Hindus withdraw the case. The Hindus say the Muslim community knows who had committed the murders and are shielding them. Only when all the criminals are punished will they come to a settlement with the Muslim community. The Muslims try to point out that this is proof of the uncompromising attitude of the Hindus and hints at the involvement of the RSS elements. The police tried to round up the members of the peace committee but on being satisfied with the clarifications given dropped the arrests.

On 12th July Vimalaji met with Jagdish Shah and Kantibhai Shah in Baroda and discussed the Dholka issue, as Vimalaji was invited to visit Dholka on 14th July. Jagdish Shah said that the Hindu community should accept the apology for this time. Kantibhai Shah felt that the guilty persons must be punished, before any attempts for settlement and peace are made.

On the 13th July Arvindbhai Merchant, Shri Fasquirchand, Shri Amubhai Shah and Shri Dhirubhai Desai came to meet Vimalaji. It appeared that the Muslim community was eagerly waiting for Vimalaji's visit but the BJP and JP were not eager to meet for they were afraid that Vimalaji was coming to persuade them to come to an early settlement. Amubhai feels that the Muslims are part of the country and up to now have never publicly apologised so that in itself is a great step and Hindus should be satisfied with that offer. Dhirubhai has tried to make it clear that Vimalaji was visiting to obtain first hand information on the situation there. But the witnesses for the case are also afraid that if Vimalaji makes the people come to a settlement their life may be in danger, for right now they have the protection of the whole Hindu community behind them and so can fearlessly give evidence. Faquirchand says until the case is over we will not take any action. Arvindbhai says communalism is a wrong attitude to harbour and that we

should not come to any decisions based on communalism. It is sowing the seeds of violence. In the name of defence the Hindus are doing it and the Muslims in the name of aggression. The coming generation will have to bear the brunt of that. What we cannot and would not wish to do on the national level we should not do on the state level either.

Vimalaji's Visit to Dholka, 14th July

The party which visited Dholka consisted of Shri K T Shah, Dhirubhai Desai, Mheroonben Nisa, Padmaben Bhavsar from Ahmedabad, Shri karamatali Salyad from Mehamadabad, Jagdish Shah from Baroda. They reached Dholka at 9.15 am.

First Session: For 2 hours from 10.00 am to 12.00 Noon

The first session was with Muslim leaders. Twentyone Muslim leaders participated inspite of it being Ramzan days. Among those present were: 1. Karimkhan, his cousin, 2. Delawar Khan, 3. The lawyer pleading the case for the four Muslims who have been arrested 4. Shri Sattar Sheth, the Chief spokesman and leading member of the Congress(I) 5. Shri Taher Ali Sheth 6. Shri Mohammed Khan, President of the Muslim Community 7. Three Gentlemen from the Vora Community 8. Two representatives from the Anjuman-a-Islam; 9. Two representatives of the Jamayat-e-Islam 10. Four Youth Leaders of the Muslim Community.

Main Points of the Meeting

1. In the hundred year history of Dholka there has never been any violence between Hindus and Muslims.
2. Even today there is no fight between the two.
3. In the last few years a few Hindu families have come from outside Dholka and they are the main cause of the trouble.
4. In what way? In the last 50 to 60 years the Dholka Muslims have not given their vote to anyone else by the Congress. In 1969 when the Congress split they have been with Indra Gandhi. The Opposition have been trying to break their solid vote, they tried in 1977 and in 1981 another attempt was made

to break the Muslim vote, but the Muslims set up two Muslim candidates in the two opposing parties, that is the Congress(I) and Jaya Gurudeva's Durdarshi Party and so safeguarded their position - this way the Muslims stayed together though the BJP tried hard to break the Muslim vote. So they feel the issue is not communal but it is political.

5. On the 26th March the Murder of a Muslim Youth working in an oil press mill was committed around 9.00 p.m. The murder of the three Hindu youths was committed around 11.00 pm. That the murder of the youths was done by Muslims is true and the Muslim community is sorry for it. If the murder of the Muslim youth had not taken place the Muslim boys would not have killed the three Hindu youths. It was merely to scare the Hindus. The boys who are caught are very rich so there is no need to collect funds for them.

6. Every year money is collected at Ramazan and this year the money has been used to buy an ambulance. There are two hospitals in Dholka and they do not have an ambulance and even if they did, they would not use it for the Muslims, so the Muslim community would like to look after themselves especially with this tense situation now prevailing in Dholka.

7. They have been four times to Gandhinagar to meet with Prabhodh Raval and have complained that the Hindus have started a non cooperation movement and are boycotting the Muslim owned shops and theatres, but they have not been helped as they feel the officials are afraid of the Hindus.

8. The Hindus took out a 10,000 strong Rath Yatra, they have never done it before so it seems it was to scare the Muslim community.

9. Registered letters have been sent to Madhavsinh Solanki but there have been no replies and they want to see him but were not able to do so.

10. If the Hindus are ready to forgive and forget they are ready to give an assurance that such an incident will not be repeated in Dholka. But the Hindus are not ready for peace or to come to any settlement, and the Muslims will not go begging. The Muslim community repents for what has happened but if the Hindus do not believe the repentance is genuine then they can do what they want and the Muslim will see what they can do.

Vimalaji's Questions

1. Why did you not give a written complaint?
2. Why did you not go through all the legal & constitutional means?
3. Did you go to see your MLA.

Conclusion

The Muslim community has lost trust and confidence in the Hindu community of Dholka and in all Hindu Government officials.

Second Session

Lunch with ten friends among whom were Shri Arvindbhai Merchant, Shri Champakbhai Mistry, Smt Padmaben Bhavsar, Shri Jagdishbhai Shah, Shri Kalyanbhai Shah, plus two locals and Vimalaji.

Third Session: Between 1.00 PM to 2.15 PM

Those present were: 1. Jagdishbhai Shah; 2. Faquirchandbhai; 3. Harishing Chawda, Senior most citizen of Dholka 4. Bupendrasingh Chudasama, BJP, 5. Shri Thakar, Janata Party Secretary 6. Jeswantbhai Shah also senior citizen of Dholka in his early seventies 7. Smt Ranjanben Shah, Municipal Chairman; 8. Smt Jayaben Salla, Principal of the Girls High School 9. Dr Rashmiben and 10. her husband.

1. They spoke about the Case and about the three Hindu and four Muslims that are arrested. The Muslims tried to intimidate, threaten and offer bribes to the witnesses. They have given the names of the Muslims who tried to do all this.
2. Jayantbhai Shah, the lawyer was physically threatened.
3. They spoke about what way arms are being collected and where they are collected, the police have been informed about it.

4. The Muslims are threatening that after Ramazan is over they will not be satisfied with killing only three Hindus.
5. They tried to rape a girl on 7th July but her screams saved her. she is a graduate and comes of a good family and so is not ready to give evidence though she recognised some of the culprits.
6. On the 9th July another educated women who is M.Comp and B.Ed was assaulted. They got away with her money.
7. The Hindus thus feel that all the talk of repentance is not genuine.
8. In the last 40 to 50 years there have been no quarrels between the two communities.
9. It is true the Hindu community has been boycotting the Muslim merchants but it is only those whom they suspect as the murderers.
10. In fact it is the Muslims who boycott the Hindu theatres, they stand outside and if any Muslim is seen going to the theatre he is fined Rs 51/-.
11. The Hindus do not want to make up until the case is over. After that they will see.

Fourth Session: From 2.15 PM to 4.30 PM.

There were about 50 Hindus present, they pointed out that they are not ready to speak to the Muslims until after the case is over. Vimalaji said we want communal harmony and peace, that is why she has come and not to pressurise the Hindus to make up.

Vimalaji was informed that the Muslim community has divided itself into 4 groups. To approach the Government 2. To Speak and negotiate with the peace making committees; 3. To collect arms and; 4. To collect people for violence and murder. The Muslims make the same allegations against Hindus. The Hindus and Muslims have no trust in each other. The situation is explosive.

Vimalaji has visited Dholka after ten years and on her visit 110 leading members of both communities met her.

PART THREE - AHMEDABAD

REPORT ON VIMALAJI'S VISIT TO DISTURBED AREAS IN AHMEDABAD

DATE: 20th August, 1965

TIME: 6.30 PM to 9.30 PM

AREA: Bhanderi Pole

MEETING PLACE: Dhanushdhari Mata mandir

Friends accompanying Vimalaji

1. Sri Krishnavadan Shah, 2. Sri Dalubhai Valdia, 3. Sri Nandubhai, 4. Sri Bansibhai, 5. Sri Matayaji, 6. Sri Ambubhai, 7. Sri Kalyanbhai, 8. Sri Navinbhai and Raniaben Jhaveri 9 Deepikaben & Mrudula ben.

Background Information

1. Vimalaji visited that part of Bhanderi Pole which is predominately a Hindu locality, surrounded by Muslim communities.
2. Slowly through the years the Muslims have been buying over Hindu property and hence their presence is growing in the area.
3. The two communities are separated from each other in many places only by a common wall or common terrace and all the roofs are joined.
4. During the disturbances this common boundary was used as the place from the which throwing of bombs and shooting would take place, hence people living on the boundary line suffered the most.

***Damage was done to life and property in the Pole,
By using the following means:***

1. Kerosene was poured in through windows, and then alighted petrol bombs were thrown in, setting the house on fire.
2. Acid bombs were thrown.
3. Glass and stones were thrown
4. Petrol bombs which burst and sprayed out pieces of metal on by-standers were thrown.

***Persons who died in Bhanderi Pole
during the disturbance***

1. Police Inspector Rana Saheb
2. Kanubhai Khatri
3. Ashwin Gandhi
4. Girish Modi
5. Suryakanthbhai

VIMALAJI'S TOUR OF THE LOCALITY

Vimalaji was met by the residents of the pole and taken around to see all the damage done and to meet those wounded and to pay condolence to the bereaved.

The main houses visited were:

1. Houses which were looted and robbed of everything.
2. Houses where kerosene bombs were thrown and set ablaze
3. Houses where the fighting took place.
4. Places where acid bombs and glass were thrown.
5. Houses where individuals had met their death.
6. The house on the roof top of which Rana Saheb met his death

7. Houses were due to fear, residents had walled in all the windows.

Meeting held for residents of the Pole at Dhanusdhar Mata's Mandir

Present: About 60 women and 40 men.

The residents of the Pole were invited to express their feelings and share them with the congregation after the Prathna. Those who spoke were:

1. Rasikbhai

(a) The locality around Bhindari Pole has been slowly getting converted into a Muslim locality with Hindus selling their homes and moving to safer locality.

(b) The disturbances began from 18th March and reached its peak on 8th May when the clashes continued all day and at 1:20 pm on 8th all lights were cut off and the pole was attacked from all four sides. They attacked with stones, acid and private shooting.

(c) Many like Ranasaheb, Ashwin Gandhi, Kanubhai Khatri have died in these clashes.

(d) Many have been wounded, some have lost their eyes, some their limbs, due to bomb explosions.

(e) A youth Girish Modi lost his life when he went out with his Muslim friends to eat pan, they lured him to their locality and then cut him up.

Request:

(1) We request that the governments makes some arrangement for our security so that we do not have to leave this area and sell out to the Muslims as others. Hindus have had to leave their homes due to fear for their life.

(2) We request that the Government takes proper measures to uphold the laws it makes, like the law that one area cannot be bought over by one community. Laws are made but not maintained.

Kanubhai Modi

We would like to know what you have heard during your visits to the Muslim localities.

Lady from Rajasthan

- (a) We are living in constant terror.
- (b) The Police come and pick up our children in the middle of the night and we have to go to the police station at 1 and 2 in the night and try and get them released.

Karubhai

- (a) The public does not know the real facts and causes for the disturbances.
- (b) No party person has come to our locality to see the damage done or to speak to us and find out the conditions we are living under today.
- (c) The atmosphere is not improving but deteriorating every day.
- (d) We live in fear, we do not wish to fight, but to protect ourselves it has become inevitable.
- (e) Many of our youth have died or been injured
- (f) On 8th May if it had not been for the efforts and bravery of Ranasaheb there would have been a blood bath here.
- (g) We are afraid that like in some other areas, the Hindu families here will be forced to sell out to the Muslims, who will then take over complete control of the area.
- (h) And we have seen that the police cannot do anything in areas ruled by the Muslims.

Urmilaben

- (a) On 8th July there were terrible clashes between the two communities and that was after having come to an

agreement. In spite of the agreement the Muslims started the attack at 7.30 pm with private firing and throwing of bombs, that it was difficult to survive.

- (b) Even now it is difficulty for us to walk on the streets for the Muslims harass us and use abusive speech.
- (c) We who are poor where can we go?

Rajubhai Rawal

- (a) Please request the Government to ensure that the homes vacated by Hindus are not bought over by Muslims and vice versa.
- (b) We have heard how the Muslims have taken over whole areas, we are believers in non violence and live that way and they have taken advantage of this.
- (c) In the last conflict arms have been caught which are made overseas. They should not be allowed to keep arms, and they even had a mini canon in their possession, can you imagine the damage that would have been done if they were able to use it?
- (d) How did they obtain this cannon? It seems that Government officials are involved in supplying the arms.
- (e) And those guilty who should be caught are free.
- (f) The people who create the disturbance are still roaming in the streets.
- (g) Even today if our youths go to their locality they are caught and beaten up. We have even heard that Ranasaheb's killers are moving about in Government vehicles.
- (h) We have never mistreated the Muslims living here and yet during the disturbances even they threw bombs at us.
- (i) The muslims are different to us in nature, they do not even mind killing their own father to sit on the throne. Hindus believe in living in peace and harmony.

(j) The anti-social elements and goondas are free to use the places of worship. The police do not enter the mosques and they hide and manufacture arms there.

(k) It is necessary to keep special watch over their religious places.

(l) Even they make use of the loud speaker system of the mosques to broadcast codes. And on one occasion after they had made such announcement over the speakers they attacked simultaneously from all sides.

(m) We request that the electricity and the telephones be reconnected.

(n) When we go with this request to the offices of the respective departments they demand large bribes from us.

Demands made by the residents of Bhanderi Pole

1. The convicts that are still at large be caught and punished
2. Special watch be maintained on places of worship.
3. That the Hindu houses are not bought over by the Muslims and the Muslim houses are not bought over by the Hindus.
4. That electricity be re-connected in the Pole
5. That a public telephone be installed in the pole
6. That help be given to those whose houses have been destroyed or looted.
7. That entry routes which divide the two communities be sealed.

VIMALAJI'S TALK TO THE RESIDENTS OF BHANDERI POLE

Brothers and Sisters I have taken a tour of your pole and seen what destruction has been committed and met those who have been wounded and heard about those who have been killed.

I have also visited the Muslims and heard their stories and seen the destruction done in their locality. They also feel that injustice has been done to them. Stones have been thrown, houses have been burnt and relatives killed. They tell me that the anti-social elements came from outside, that they were not able to resist them, and they admit, that it was their weakness. Otherwise they say the two communities have lived in peace and friendship.

The sad fact is that this country has forgotten God and its religion. We should admit to ourselves that we have made money our god, and that too "unearned money". There may be a few smugglers in our society but compared to them the number of people who buy from the smugglers is much greater. The smugglers we consider as thieves but what about those who buy from them, are they not as much a party to the crime? We create these anti social elements in our own homes what has happened in Ahmedabad in the last 4 to 5 months have their roots elsewhere in the moral degradation of the people.

The women folk can play a key role in building up once more the character of this nation. The women folk should insist that no unearned income be brought into the houses, that no smuggled or stolen goods be purchased. They should be ready to do with less but not give into the temptation of an easy life at the cost of moral values. This is the only solution to corruption, though it is a long term work.

And as for the immediate steps I will see to it that your requests and demands reach the government officials and Inspector of Police Riberia. -

Also another step we have taken to try and relieve the present crisis is to start an non-political organisation called Gujarat Biradart, and one of the projects that Gujarat Biradart will be taking up is to open a Shanti Anushtan Center in Ahmedabad city. It will work towards bringing about peace and harmony again in the city among the different communities. Our country is multi-lingual, multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural, and we have to learn to live together with a feeling of belonging to one another inspite of maintaining our cultural differences. We have to learn not to be afraid of anyone or to threaten anyone.

The Hindu Community is weak because we are divided into so many castes, that is why nobody is afraid of us inspite of Hindus being in the majority. We are not a compact unit, the Hindu society must learn to become united. We have to build up a nation. We have to work for national unity, humanism and one religion. We have to be ready to die for our moral values and not bend down and give in.

Vimalaji ended by reciting a mantra from the Vedas.

REPORT OF VIMALAJI'S VISIT TO DISTURBED AREAS IN AHMEDABAD

Date : 21st August, 1985.

Time : 3.00 to 5.30 P.M.

Area : Bakarali Pole, near Panchpatti & Kalupur Tower off Relief Road.

Meeting Place : Sri Mohinbhai Sadeshwala's ancestral home.

Friends accompanying Vimalaji:

1. Krishnavadan Shah; 2. Nehru Neesa 3. Nandubhai 4. Bansibhai 5. Padmaben 6. Deepika & Mrudula 7. Jehtalalkaka Shrimall 8. Veenubhai

Present during discussions : About 30 women and 30 men

Background Information:

1. Vimalaji met with those people of Bakarali poie who belonged to the Muslim community.
2. The discussions took place in the vacant house of Mohinbhai. Seven generations have lived in the house but now due to the disturbances they have vacated it and locked it up.
3. In the past the Hindu and Muslim communities have lived there very peacefully in friendship.

4. The last time when there were very bad riots throughout the city not one stone was thrown in this mullah. The people were very neighbourly then. However now the Hindu community living in adjacent homes were forced to vacate their homes and move to refugee camps while the anti-social elements took over and created the mischief.

Discussion that took place:

1. Mehnoodbhat:

We have lived in continuous tension for the last 3 months. We have had no sleep during the night or day.

2. Mohinbati:

What were the cause of the communal riots? How was it that there was no mention of them in the papers till June 22nd though they had been going on in the city since April 22nd?

b. Why is it that all Muslims are suspects in India?

c. Why is it that continuously we are told go to Pakistan?

Our children do not have any affinity towards Pakistan. For them India is their only home. They have no other heroes except the same heroes as other Indian youth. And infact many of the new generation are not even aware of the fact that Pakistan has been a part of Indian. They think it is a separate country and has always been so.

d. The educated Hindus over the age of 60 are aware of the great role Muslims played in winning independence for India.

e. The other thing we should realise is that religion cannot be the basis of any country it has to be cultural affinity and I feel closer to the Gujarati Hindus than the Pakistani Muslims.

Rabbiaben Mansurt:

a. We are living in constant fear, even now we are afraid that they may come through the verander into our homes.

b. Four houses in this mullah have been robbed. They cleaned the houses out completely, they took away all our cloths, gold, money, fans, radio, goats.

c. They threw kerosene and put the houses on fire

Roshanben Yacubhai Mansori:

a. They entered the houses by breaking the door from behind they robbed everything in the house.

b. It is not possible for us to stay in the house any longer because it has been so badly broken in. We have vacated it and kept it locked.

Rusidaben:

a. We have no wish to leave the country and go to Pakistan . Is not this mother earth also for the Muslims ?

b. If people keep repeating that Muslims are a useless lot what kind of effect is it going to have on our children, will it not spoil their minds and make them believe that they are not worthy?

c. We want to live in friendship with the Hindus.

d. Only if you stop this separatist trend will India remain one.

Mrs. Chandiwala:

a. Muslims are regarded as second class citizens. We are not even permitted to say we are Indians.

VIMALAJI'S RESPONSE TO WHAT SHE HAD HEARD.

Vimalaji gave a brief history of her life since 1952 to 1963 when she worked in the Dhoodan movement and after till 1978 when she was busy giving talks through out the world on the possibilities of research in the dimension of human consciousness. In 1978 at Jal Prakash's request Vimalaji started taking an active part in working for Gram Swaraj.

Vimalaji described the work she is involved in - the holding of meditation camps and camps for youth where she stresses the need for becoming a human being. One can belong to different religions, it can be our way towards a personal contact with the

Divine but that is in our private life, as members of society we have to live and inter-act as human beings.

2. Throughout Bihar state units, of Peoples' Peace Force have been formed. In Bihar the law and order mechanism has broken down so the people get together and form Units of soldiers of peace to safeguard their community through non violent means.

3. In 3 districts of U.P. units of Shanti Senaks have been formed.

4. In Punjab we have established the Punjab Insani Biradari.

The work in Punjab began in 1980 with visit to the border districts and then again in 1984 a tour of the affected areas was taken with a view of talking to the people and explaining to them the dangers of fighting with each other due to governmental instigation.

5. In May I met with the elders of Gujarat like Babubhai Jasubhai, Ratubhai Adani, Manubhai Pancholi and all felt that something should be done. But as in Punjab before launching Punjab Insani Biradari I went on tour to get first hand information of the situation. In Gujarat from 17th July to 30th July I took a tour of the terror-stricken areas. Since 17th August I have been meeting the people, and on 25th we will be launching Gujarat Biradari.

I have faith in God and trust in human beings and do not believe that they really wish to fight with one another, they would rather live in peace. They are not able to do it mainly because of poverty, starvation and unemployment that exists in the country today. In a state like Bihar nearly 93% of the population live under the poverty line. It is very easy then to make use of these starving millions and instigate them to fight with one another, to purchase their votes. This is the root cause of all violence in the country. It is also cause of the violence in Punjab. We may be under the impression that Punjab is a rich state but there are thousands of unemployed educated youth and they are easy prey to the propaganda of violence and easy money.

I am not a person belonging to any political party or working

for any government agency. I have travelled throughout the country meeting the people and one has seen how the people have been divided, how differences of caste, class and religion are emphasised and people who once were living in harmony and friendship are now instigated to fight with each other. People do not split up on their own.

Ours is a multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-cultural country and no one community has the right to say India belongs to them alone. We have to teach our children to live together with a feeling of belonging to one nation.

Independence has not reached the countryside as yet for the villages are still poor and live in starvation. We have to motivate the youth to dedicate their lives for the upliftment of the poor of this country, to be willing to sacrifice a life of luxury and comfort to work for the rural poor to work for Gram Swaraj.

Secondly the people have to become united and unitedly withstand any efforts to divide them and instigate them to fight each other. The peoples' energy is not united hence the government is taking more and more control of their lives and entering into every field of their lives. Stateism is not democracy. If we become one we will not need to bend before anyone.

The danger to the unity of the country is not from any external force but the danger to disintegration of the country lies within. If our hearts are broken and bitter and if we are divided then we will be destroyed.

Experiments In Restructuring Rural Economy

The rural centers are now managed entirely by the local workers and local khandi gramodyoga institutes. Vimalaji guided them for a period of six years each and left them to the local initiative and management.

EXPERIMENTS IN RESTRUCTURING RURAL ECONOMY

Contents

Part One : Modernisation through Gram Swaraj

1. New man, New village, New Society
2. From Gramdan to Gram Swaraj
3. Integrated Rural Development

Part Two : Chhatargadh Research Center - 1980

1. Village self-reliance research center
2. Project Chhatargadh

Part Three : Mandal Project - 1981

1. Mandal experiment

Part Four : Gopaldham Research Center - 1983

1. Gopaldham - A new educational project in Gujarat.

Experiments in Restructuring Rural economy

PART ONE : MODERNISATION THROUGH GRAMSWARAJ

NEW MAN, NEW VILLAGE, NEW SOCIETY

Become a New Human Being :

Though we live in human bodies we do not behave as human beings. Having a human body is a great privilege and a great responsibility. The responsibility of every human being is to act with full understanding and if the understanding is not there we should put in all our effort to gain it. Action out of understanding means action that is fearless. It is the religious duty of every human being to live according to his understanding.

It is also the duty of every human being to look after the body by providing it with food, clothing and shelter, because we are human beings living in society and not like the animals living in jungles. Besides that one has to keep the body healthy and clean, to educate the intellect and to keep the heart fearless. Those who pamper the body begin to demand a life of comfort and security. When one runs after comfort and security one is every ready to compromise with truth, justice and religion. A mind habituated to telling lies will always be in a state of fear. And a coward cannot help being aggressive and arrogant. Either he is aggressive or he is easily cowed down. People who are cowardly and easily dominated by others are as anti-social and dangerous as those who dominate over them. Under the cover of weakness they escape from every responsibility and live under the garb of their alleged incapability.

Let there be a new birth in you through fearlessness. Humaneness is the content of living and the country today is lacking in humanness. Friends, become new human beings.

New village:

Let each citizen in the country determine to create a new village. This country of ours has vast acres of fertile and productive land, there are innumerable rivers and many forests are still in existence. We must endeavor to create employment in these fields. In the villages cottage and village industries should be established to supplement agriculture.

Taking a job is not the only way of earning money. If the village youth would decide to work in the villages and for the upliftment of the villages instead of running to the cities and hankering after jobs, exploitation of the villages will be ended. The youth of the village could create schemes for providing portable water for every village. The latrine, bathroom and facilities for washing clothes need to be provided in every village, plus education for the villagers to keep the villages clean, beautiful and tidy.

An Ideal village would be one which has good harvest, which has village industries to convert the raw materials into finished products, where the cows and bullocks are well looked after, where trees are grown and cared for, where the people are healthy and clean and where electricity, fuel and fertilisers are made from Gobar and gas plants. Such a village will be a vital and rich unit of the country.

In addition to economic stability and orderliness each village should be provided with a place for exercise such as gymnasiums and places for yoga. One needs to create strong, sturdy and fearless men and women in the villages who could fearlessly resist any spread of violence in their villages or provocation of any communal or religious sentiments.

It is necessary for us to change our attitudes towards the villages, we should understand the truth that the whole village is a family, and the prestige of the village is our prestige. That the development of the village means the development of our children and grandchildren and that the security of the family is assured if there is peace in the village.

An appeal to the educated youth:

I would like to make an appeal to the youth of our villages who have agricultural land that they return to the villages. Let them gather together their friends and make a firm resolve to create a new village and a new society. Let the youth after acquiring an education return to the villages and create development centers at the taluka level, form study groups, form debating societies and open laboratories for utilising electricity, nuclear energy, solar energy etc. This way they will help to inspire constructive and creative work at the same time.

In the true sense, this is an opportune time for implementation of Gram Swarajya. total revolution is impossible without Gram Swarajya. Political independence is impossible without economic self reliance. Dependence is the root cause of all misery. The glory of man is inherent in his effort for independence.

Man and Nature:

We must realise the fact that we have to live with nature which is not created by man. It has been in existence since eternity so our behavior towards the nature, the birds, the animals should be one of respect, reverence and love. Animals and birds are not our enemies or our slaves but our companions, we have to learn the art of associating with them.

Man turns to machines to help him when animal or man power do not serve the purpose. yet it must not be forgotten that the machine can never be superior to man or animal. Machine can never be a companion to man. Infact man loses his sensitvity by spending more time with machines, he becomes harsh and loses interest in life. A society which exists without the warmth of love and the capacity to love will be more oriented towards arms. And the human being loses all self initiative and turns to the state to provide for all his needs. He begins to believe that the police, the soldier, the state are his saviours. The people are reduced to the pitiable condition of becoming dependent on the state even for their peace and social security.

The producer has been reduced to nothing by the misuse of machines, he has only remained a "consumer". The art of production is destroyed because there is no love for productive effort. People have become dependent on either the state or private industrialist for all their needs. How can the people talk about freedom of the individual, power of the people or democracy when they have been subjected to centralized economy? Consciously or unconsciously people are destroying their political freedom by looking to the state for all their needs. In a society where people are not mentally independent or self-reliant in economic life or living in mutual love and friendship, to talk about socialism, communism and Sarvodaya would only be utopian. The need of the time is that we create a new social order. When there is a new man, when

there is creation of new life in the villages we will be able to create a new society. Then only will the dreams of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Gandhi materialise.

Freedom from Leaders :

For the last innumerable centuries this country has produced gems of men. Great men have lived and worked in all fields of life. Patriots who loved the country more than their lives, their families have been born in this land. Lovers of mankind who have felt fulfilled just in the service of mankind, in the service of the divinity existing in man. The service of mankind has meant more to them than even their own liberation, such men have trodden this earth. Lovers of man who had visions of one Indian family, one human family and who felt rewarded for their efforts in being able to serve, such men have lived their lives here. Great sadhaks have lived with an intense desire to see that every man and woman of Bharat can supply for their needs of food, shelter and clothing with self respect, who are willing to serve for hundreds of lives till the work is done, such beings have illumined this country. Great souls who considered the use of politics and political power for individual self interest as in have graced the social fibre with their own lives of self restraint. Because of this background the people await eagerly even today for the appearance for a national leader, a great souls who would work as a uniting force for the whole nation.

This hope will only be proper if we do our duty well, if we protect our values of life and if we are conscious about the existence of divinity. When a man starts living with faith, he does not need outer help. He becomes self reliant when he draws his strength from his atman. Such a self reliant individual does not waste time waiting for a leader. In such a society made up of such individuals the leadership becomes decentralised and there is not much difference between a common man and great souls. Then the level of life is one of morality and nobility.

TALKS GIVEN AT CHHATARGADH, "FROM GRAMDAN TO GRAM SWARAJ"

BY VIMALAJI

(Translated and Edited by Kaiser Irani)

It is necessary for all of us at this time to refresh our memories of the history behind the movement started by Gandhi and later carried on by Vinoba, and the philosophy they developed by living it through the sweat the blood of their lives. Thus their philosophy will stand true through the ages. Gandhi, after due consideration realised that the real heart of the country was in the villages and if one wanted to change the country one started from the soil, from the farm and the farmers. Before Gandhi there have been many revolutions attempted in the world, some successful and some unsuccessful, but from all of them he noticed that changing of political power does not bring about a change in the human being. Gandhi tried to change the whole motivation of revolution. The emphasis was not on the end but on the means of appealing to the non-violence in the heart of every human being. And Vinoba after him appealed to the compassion and sense of justice in the heart of every human being and so helped to distribute the land to the poor. The spark of Divinity in every human heart was appealed to, the work began from Faith in that and it got its strength from that too. And so the Bhoodan movement was a success not so much for the land it distributed but for its unique approach.

The times have changed now and our ways and methods too will have to change to keep pace with the changing times. In the past the villagers have been encouraged to develop a psychology of dependency, and so stretch out their hands for alms or services, which the workers would go and offer them, together with that was the attitude of criticism and complaining that the government is not doing anything for them. Now the attitude and approach of the worker will have to change towards the villager. He no longer goes to give but to encourage the villagers to get together and find out for themselves what they need and what they can do together to elevate their present conditions. So he helps to instil self-reliance and draw out the initiative of the villager. It is not sufficient to raise the standard of living of the people but it is the crying need of the times and of the country to raise the level of consciousness of the people. For this task the cadre of workers will have to be different, they will have to have a

different basis. They will have to be dedicated Jeevan Sadhaks and the foundation will be spirituality.

For this purpose workers will be given special training for atleast one year to prepare them for this kind of work and centers like the one in Chhatargadh will have to be opened in every state to provide a place for such training. And a Fund will have to be created to look after the expenses of the workers. The needs of the workers will be met by the center paying him half in the form of cash and the other half in the form of a means of livelihood to members of his family. The tendencies and aptitudes of the family members are studied and they are provided with the training and equipment through which they can earn their own living, like training the child in a skill in the Ashram Workshop. It is these trained and skilled members of the families that will be entrusted with work of the Ashram or Center requiring that skill. Like somebody good at carpentry will be asked to make cupboards for the Ashram if needed, and even if the goods are not needed by the center they will be bought by them and then marketed. In this way the village people can also come and see and learn from them. Thus the worker and his family members will not be mere passive recipients.

The education of the workers at the center will be on different lines.

- (1) There will be the study of the different revolutions of the world and the historical impact they had
- (2) They will be the study of the teachings of Gandhi, Vinoba, Schumacher etc.
- (3) There will be a study of the cultural heritage of India
- (4) And a comparative study of the different religions of the world.
- (5) Plus a study of the life of the saints who have lived and moved in and around that particular area in which the center is located
- (6) There will be a study of Ayurveda and
- (7) Study of Yoga

- (8) Self-education to live as a Jeewan Sadhak, incorporating spirituality and meditation in their life style.

The attitude of the worker will have to change from that of being a doer and a server to that of a Sadhak who does the work for the love of it and not for the result. His life and character will be moulded on truth and purity. He will have to look at his life very closely and question every aspect of it to see that there is no contradiction in what he says and what he does, to see if he lives his understanding in his daily life. For if he wants to remove hate, corruption, exploitation, misuse of power in society, he will first have to remove it from his own life and behaviour. Does he exploit any of his family members? Though he lives a simple life himself does he invest any unfulfilled ambitions in his family members? If he wants to remove unemployment is he willing only to wear clothes spun from khadi or handloom? Thus in order to become a vehicle for change the worker has to bring change into his own life, his life style, his actions, his eating, dressing habits etc. There has to be a unity and a harmony in what he says and what he does.

For the first four months the worker will stay at the Center for his intensive training programme after that for two months he will go out to the neighbouring towns to see the conditions there, and later still he will go and stay in the neighbouring towns and so get to know the people and form a rapport with them. So first he starts by spending seven days at the Center, then five, then four and then three, the remaining days of the week being spent in the villages.

As far as possible the worker will take along with him his wife or other older female members of his family. This way they can approach the women of the villages and help to uplift and improve their way of living. For the women can speak about the different ways of improving the standard of cleanliness, health problems, bringing up children, suggest ways for improving the kitchen like introducing smokeless stoves or Muggan stoves into the villages.

The worker will not be affiliated to any party or group, nor will he have any likes and dislikes, preferences or prejudices obvious or hidden.

Nature of work in the villages

When the worker goes to the villages what will he do?

(1) He will build satsang Mandals. Why? Because the foundation of the work is based on spirituality, on evoking the strength of the Atman in each one, on building up the character of the people, on appealing to innate Divinity within each one. It will first be necessary to create an atmosphere in the village so that they will listen and understand what you wish to convey. For this purpose small plays will have to be written and enacted for the villagers, poems and songs written for them, and some literature in simple language which can be read out to them. This will help to make the villagers receptive to the ideas behind the formation of Satsang Mandals.

(2) He will awaken the initiative of the villagers. to do things for themselves. The worker goes to the village with the attitude of a co-operator and not as a server or a doer. He sits down with the villagers and together they find out what their needs are and how they can be met.

They together think out and discover what projects need to be undertaken to fulfil these needs, and they will work together on the projects. The workers thus arouses the initiative of the people helping them to become self-reliant in time.

The worker will also be well informed about what schemes and plans are available and provided for by the central and state governments for the betterment of the village and for the development of agriculture and irrigation. To gather this information a team of experts and lawyers will go for a few weeks to Delhi and Jaipur, stay there and make a study of what is available for them in terms of aids, grants, plans etc.

(3) It is necessary to link agriculture with cow protection. Though we are not against science and its achievements we do not think it is proper to join two contradictory aspects. Instead we accept the fact that tilling the earth will be done with the help of cows or camels alone and not machines, exceptions can be made where the land is very arid.

(b) No synthetic manure or fertilisers will be used.

(c) For the protection of cows and raising their quality there will be created Go Sadans in every village area

(d) Special efforts will be made to improve their breed.

(e) It will protect cows from being slaughtered.

(f) It will look after old, useless and ill cows.

(g) It will help to re-establish the cow as a unit of and member of the family. So there is love and respect of the cow as a family member, a rekindling of the Indian heritage and attitude towards the cow.

(h) Cows will not be given artificial food and injection or used as a commodity for trade and earning money alone. Big Daries will not be built, as they are disrespectful to the cows and to the farmers. For here the farmer loses touch with his animal, the live link is lost and the cow becomes a mere commodity for trade. Also the milk which should be used by the farmer and his family and by other members of the village is instead sent away to the cities and so the villagers are deprived of their nutrition.

(4) Go Gas Plants will also be created. Thus fulfilling some of the energy needs of the village, like use for light, cooking, operating simple power looms, water pumps etc.

(5) Raw materials will be processed in the villages.

A study will be made of the raw materials available in the area and small scale industries will be set up to process the raw materials. The villagers will be given the necessary training to run these industries themselves. This will give more employment in the village and the villagers will not be deprived of their raw materials nor will they have to pay a higher price for the finished goods as they now have to do.

(b) In Producing the goods the sight will always be kept on the needs of the village and the villagers and to see that these needs are first met and not aiming to produce for the city or for foreign markets.

(c) Also the villagers will get together and fix the prices for

their goods, for the raw materials and for the finished products, the prices will not be dictated to them by the city merchants. They will get their strength through unity.

(d) Khadi Production will continue as before in the villages but with an eye to satisfy the needs of the villager, the kind of cloth he needs and can afford will be produced first.

(e) Changes will be made to more sophisticated machinery only after taking into account if it affects the employment level. Importance will be given to providing employment rather than fancy equipment.

(7) Family Hostels will be set up for the youth of the villages.

A great harm is done by uprooting the youth of the village and taking them away from their background and sending them to the bigger towns and cities for education. This cultural uprooting is unnecessary. The present educational systems are cultural slaughter houses for mass scale production and the student is left without any faith in God or Atman and is sapped of all vitality of mind and body.

(b) The family hostels can be opened in every area for the education of the children of the villages. The number of children living in the hostels would not be more than ten to fifteen.

(c) The age group of the children would be between 10-20 years.

(d) Fees can be paid in kind, that is in goods and in service done by the students for the Hostel.

(e) The hostels will have their own vegetable gardens and keep their own cows.

(f) The hostels will have or be affiliated to the village workshops, where the youth will be trained in a skill and will also be able to earn at the same time, and so have additional talents when they go back to their village.

(g) The hostels will be run in the spirit of Gurukuls. The children will be taught Yoga and will do gymnastics.

(h) The Hostel will maintain a good library and the students will be taught about their Indian Heritage, the different religions of the country, and will sit together in silence and participate in morning and evening prayers. The overall development of the student will be aimed at, together with character building and development of a national consciousness.

(8) Study Groups will be formed in every village where the volunteers who conduct the studies will take up topics like

(a) The philosophies and meaning of different systems of government like Socialism, Communism, Democracy.

(b) The election system and the meaning behind the vote.

(c) Comparative study of the different religions.

(d) Indian cultural heritage

An awareness of the role women play in society and the family. Efforts will be made to again awaken in the people the respect for women and the vision of looking at women as a mother figure.

This is some of the kind of work envisioned that can be done in the villages. The workers who go to the villages will have to make efforts to work on small projects with the villagers to show them how they can work together in co-operation and so develop their confidence in themselves.

It is easy to arouse Lok Shakti but difficult to keep it together. It is easy because the truth spoken by the Saints for centuries in this land lies deep within the heart of the people but it is difficult to keep it together because of the restlessness that is in the country caused by the pangs of starvation of the hungry multitude. It creates a restlessness in the psyche of the country and unless this is quietened the country can never be at peace. So the workers have first to work at eradication of hunger and unemployment from their area. Poverty will be dealt with later.

Another reason for not being able to hold the Lok Shakti together is the demon of caste and communalism which

divides the people. That too has to leave the minds of the people and it can only be done through the spiritual approach to life and satsang meetings.

So the aim of the worker when he goes to do work in the villages is:

- (1) To lay a spiritual foundation as the basis of all work.
- (2) To raise the level of consciousness of the people
- (3) To help build the character of the people.
- (4) To make the villagers self-reliant, taking the initiative into their own hands and doing whatever work is necessary by themselves.

The workers are merely co-operators, helpers and vehicles for carrying the ideas of saints and others like Gandhi and Vinoba.

The motivation force of the work will be Truth, Love and Cooperation.

If the light burns here in Bikaner Zilla it is for the whole country. It is when the many small lights are lit that we celebrate Deepwall.

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Eighty percent of Indian population lives in the villages. The development of the country implies the development of the villages and the rural population. Agriculture is the backbone of our economy. Rural prosperity is the master key to national prosperity.

Message of Bhoodan and Gramdan

Villagisation of Land

Means of production must belong to the producer

Radical land-legislation, abolition of absentee ownership of the land are the pre-requirements of any development plan.

Water resources

Drinking water, decentralised irrigation schemes, conservation of rain water, individual underground tanks; water reservoirs for the cattle. All this is another pre-requirement for any and every development scheme.

Cattle protection

Bullocks, asses, horses, camels and even He-buffalos are partners in agricultural production. Schemes for the rearing of cattle, their upgrading etc. are vitally necessary.

Sheep, goat, camel, yak etc are partners in rural economy. They are partners in production. Their proper care and upbringing deserve priority.

Manure

A national consensus must be urgently evolved for the use of organic manure. A country with 680 million population should become self-sufficient in manure in no time.

Agro-centred cottage industries - Appropriate technology**Orchards**

1. Tinned fruit
2. Fruit juices
3. Jams & pickles

Soap Making ;

Carpet Making;

Spinning and weaving of cloth

and

Leather works;

Matches;

Vegetable gardens

1. Dehydrated vegetables
2. Soup packets, vegetable juices
3. pickles

Carpentry;

Oil-pressing

Indigenous Energy Resources

Solar energy;

Gobar Gas plants Bio-gas Plants.

Solar cooker;

Solar Heater

Instruments of production

Renewal of traditional implements

New instruments of decentralised industries

With the help of intermediary technology proper implements should be prepared in the Village Workshops.

They should be created with the help of village artisans and craftsmen.

Their servicing must be done in the villages.

Self-sufficiency in fuel i.e. electricity, could be created through Gobar Gas, Bio-Gas and Solar Energy.

Cottage-Industry - implements should be owned by the individual.

Village-Industry: implements should be owned by the village community.

Production would be primarily for local consumption. Secondly for exchange with the neighbouring villages and lastly for exporting to the urban areas through cooperative societies.

Banks:

State banks for giving loan in cash and kind.

Grain banks to be owned by the village community for depositing surplus grains.

Seed banks for depositing seeds.

The banks should hold classes to teach banking, accounting to the village youth.

There should be Gram Bhandars to sell village produce and for teaching principles of economy to the village youth.

Health Centres

Health Centres should be created to teach:

- 1) Yogasanas, Pranayama and gymnastics
- 2) Health centres should organize demonstrative classes in Naturopathy
- 3) Ayurved chikitsalayas for out-door and in-door patients
- 4) Surgical ward as well as maternity ward, veterinary clinic for the cattle
- 5) Classes should be organized for proper and balanced nutrition.

PART TWO: CHHATARGADH RESEARCH CENTER

VILLAGE SELF-RELIANCE RESEARCH CENTRE

Chhatargadh is a village about 60 kms from Bikaner located in the midst of the Rajasthan desert where for the third year in succession there has been no rain. The main wealth of the region is livestock of cattle and sheep, but due to water scarcity the cattle are dying fast and the farmers have started migrating in search of water. In the midst of this desert region stands the Chhatargadh, Village Self-Reliance Research Center opened in April 1981 under the guidance of Vimalaji.

In February 1980 when Vimalaji first visited Chhatargadh, Sohanlal Modi requested Vimalaji to give guidelines for setting up a Research Center to train and educate a new cadre of social workers who will approach the work with the attitude of Jeevan Sadhaks. In October 1980 when Vimalaji again visited, a few guidelines were spelled out, the main among them being:

1. The work will have a spiritual foundation.
2. The workers who go to the villages and will start Satsang Mandals.
3. Their main aim will be to make the villagers self-reliant, self-sufficient, taking their own initiative in solving their needs and problems.
4. Attempts will first be made to eradicate unemployment, hunger and water shortage.
5. Raw materials of the village will not be exported to the cities but small-scale industries will be set up by the villagers to process and produce their own goods.
6. Study groups will be set up for the villagers, women and youth.

Within a year on the barren sands of the Rajasthan desert has blossomed a small community. A few structures have already come up, they are small cozy huts with thatched roofs built at minimal cost. The center has 1,300 acres of land of which 300 acres is irrigated with water from the Rajasthan Canal which

flows alongside the center. There is a Go Seva Center which has 1,400 cows under its care, and a center producing cattle feed. Working with the basic guidelines, the center is setting up workshops which can train the villagers in different skills. The Satsang Mandals in the different villages will choose batches of five villagers at a time and send them for training. Once they come to the center, after seeing the different workshops the village youth will decide which skill he would like to get an indepth training in, so that once trained he can return to his village and open his own small scale industry. The center will help him in expertise in setting up the small scale industry and will also help in providing knowhow as to how to approach the government for financing.

The different workshops and projects the Center will have are:

1. An Oil Press Mill.
2. Flour Mill (both operated on gobar gas)
3. Spinning of Wool.
4. Operation of hostery machines.
5. Carpet Weaving in wool.
6. Spinning in cotton.
7. Weaving of cotton carpets.
8. Rope making, from the grass that grows wild here.
9. Making of cane furniture from the same grass.
10. Carpentry
11. Training in setting up go bar gas plants, as well as bio-gas plants.

Together with this the training and education of the workers who have dedicated atleast five years of their life to this work will go on. The curriculum besides other topics will include study of the different systems of government, study of the different religions of the country. Plus the process of training, educating and purifying oneself to live in the attitude of a Jeevan Sadhak.

PROJECT CHHATARGADH **(District : Bikaner Rajasthan)**

It was during Lok Satsang Yatra of 1980 that a project for Chhatargadh was envisaged. Sri Solanki Lal Modi who was President of Go Seva Sangh in Rajasthan invited Vimalajee on the site of Chhatargadh where Rajasthan's longest canal was passing nearby. Sitting in a very small peculiar cone shaped hut this project was proposed. Vimalajee asked Modijee that if he accepts to stay for 5 years on that site and take up the work proposed, she would give a month every year for the planning

and guidance of the project. It was a real challenge to think of working on 2000 acres of desert land on the kind of project that he proposed. The challenge was accepted heartily and taken up in right spirit.

Accordingly when Punjab-Himachal Haryana Yatra was planned Modjee and friends organised a 7 days' camp on the site. All the leading workers of Rajasthan - from the time of Gandhijee and Vinobajee as well as workers inspired by J.P.were present. They listened in rapt attention to what Vimalajee saw and conveyed in her beautiful talks of the dream of bringing Swarajya - to the villages of India - Ramrajya, Gram Swarajya and Total Revolution. The total effect of this camp was the founding of Krishi Go Seva - Gram Swarajya Shudha Sansthan. The plan project was blessed by stalwarts like Shri Gokulbhai Bhatt and Sri Radhakrishna Dajaj.

Inspired by this, Shri Sohan Lal Modi and Shri Bhanvar Lal Kothari took up the work of providing a building Complex consisting of a big hall with a seating capacity for 500 people, two cottages for invitee speakers six cone shaped cottages for the workers and a suitable kitchen along with a dining hall. The construction of all these buildings has been completed.

The inauguration of the above building complex and a course for five trainees was to be done in February-March 1981 by Vimalajee but because of her indisposition this was done by Puja Dada Dharmadhikari.

50 workers from surrounding 50 villages came to attend the Camp. Puja Dada spoke and discussed for 11 days on the subject of Gramswarajya and inspired the trainees with his revolutionary insight. These were excellent talks. A book is to be published of the same. Dr. Induben Tikekar spoke for 3 weeks and gave talks on the spiritual foundation of the workers life. They were based on the Upanishads, Srimad Bhagawat and Shrimad Bhagwad Gita. Dr. Banwarilal Choudhari having experimented for many years in the field of "Gopalan" spoke on Go Seva - Gosanvardhan and Goraksha. Sri Niranjan Acharya conducted classes on Asanas and Pranayana study both in theory and practice. There was field work every day. Sri Jaswantral and Bachubhai Sutaria representing Vimalajee were coordinators on her behalf.

The workers and campers were taken round some of the villages for on the spot study and contact for 7 days, towards the close of that Camp.

Thus a project is already in progress for rural reconstruction work in a desert land of 2000 acres. In addition to the farming activity a dairy farm for 1000 milch cows has been established. It is also planned to settle retired workers with their families there. Arrangements have also been made to hold training camps of 3/4 months duration for speedy and effective execution of this project.

Bachubhai Sutaria

PART THREE: MANDAL PROJECT:

MANDAL EXPERIMENT

Sample of follow up work undertaken as a result of Vinalajif's Lok Satsang Yatra.

MANDAL : A small town 90 kms. from Ahmedabad city surrounded by five villages of Sher, Raklana, Dhedhwara, Mithapur and Sadra with a combined population of 4,000. The vegetation is semi-desert, very hot in the summer with a great scarcity of water even for drinking purposes. Agriculture is completely dependent on the rains. Cotton is the main crop and some cereals are grown.

The main source of employment is agriculture, either working in the fields or separating the cotton from the cotton seeds, but since there is only one crop, for 6 months of the year there is no work for the people.

The work undertaken by friends of Vinal Satsang Parish:

(1) Activating the peoples' initiative by setting up citizens groups who will take up the work of village upliftment and will act as a bridge between the villagers and the Taluka, district and government agencies for implementing projects envisioned in the 6th Plan.

(2) By making available for the people expert advice for agriculture, cottage industries and small scale industries.

(3) By arranging tours to see other centers of cottage and small scale industries.

(4) By helping the local committees to organise and hold prayer meetings, to work in co-operation with each other and settle any disputes among themselves.

(5) Organising young men and womens' associations.

(6) Visiting all the villages and sitting together with the villagers and ascertaining the different needs. For example in Sher village there is a Talao (water bed) but due to the weak

embankment which breaks every year no water is collected there. The government has earmarked Rs. 72,000/- for the project so the group members met the authorities to urge them to start the work immediately. Also in Vasnagam where anti social behaviour was rampant the citizens got together and formed a peace force as a result of which 50% of the problems have been solved.

(7) Work on digging wells, providing drinking water, building water retention units, building all weather approach roads and providing electricity to the area are all required and slowly the work is being attempted.

Visits - The group: Vimal Satsang Parivar visited all the villages and met the people there. Some villages were found to be receptive to aims and objects of the project. In the case of others it is felt that receptivity will grow as they observe the progress of work.

Main problems common to all these villages are, lack of water for drinking and agriculture, approach roads, all weather transport, electricity and under-employment.

Authorities at district and taluka levels have been approached for hastening the implementation of certain projects taken up in the Sixth plan and taking up ancillary work. The response is encouraging. Our group is headed by Swami Ramanand Tirth who has worked in this area for the last 25 year and enjoys very good respect from the villagers.

We are also grateful to Shri Vadilal lalubhai Mehta, an industrialist of Ahmedabad who has very kindly consented to be our adviser.

PART FOUR: GOPALDHAM RESEARCH CENTER A NEW EDUCATIONAL PROJECT IN GUJARAT

Maybe those who are aware of the work inspired by Vimalaji have heard about this new project. Gopaldham is an independent village educational centre in Gujarat State. The Gandhi Village Upliftment Trust of Ghadhada, Gujarat has undertaken the Project. An advisory board consisting of seven life long devoted workers has been formed. This Center has 50 acres of land.

Vimalaji visited Gopaldham in November 1982 and blessed the idea of this project. On 18th April 1983 it was formally inaugurated. The word "Gopal" is another name for Lord Krishna, and "Dham" is dwelling place. "Gopal" also means one who looks after the cows. So in April they began with a shed and a water well. The shed accomodated 25 cows and a small windmill was set up to draw water from the well.

The work of cultivation has started. They have dug 3 water wells and put up 3 windmills, a guest house for Vimalaji and friends who come to participate in the work of the project, an office and library, 4 huts for the families living there and looking after the estate, 4 huts for the assistants, a kitchen and a dinning hall and a good size hall (30' x 80') for the spinners and weavers have been built.

In November 1983, a meditation camp was organised. Two special dormitories and a big pandal (tent) were erected. About 100 persons were accomodated in these structures. Common conveniences were provided, 3 regular bath rooms and 11 lavatories were provided. The camp was for 5 days, friends from all over Gujarat had come to be with Vimalaji during the duration of the camp. During that time Vimalaji also inaugurated a small school located in two rooms of a house lent by a friend who had a farm nearby.

Twenty young persons who are qualified graduates will be taken up as trainees. They will be trained for a year in field subjects like ; 1. Farming and cultivation of land. 2. Looking after and caring for the cows. 3. Energy resources - a. Wind mill, b. Sun cooker and driers, c. Solar energy, d. Bio-gas. 4.

Medical centre, 5. Library and Reading room, 6. Khadi work - Hand spinning & weaving. Thus a new thriving centre for education in village upliftment on the lines suggested by Mahatma Gandhi has begun working.

The educational centre having been inspired by Vimalaji, it was suggested in her initial message that the fight for real freedom is not over. India has become politically free but the independent village as a unit of democracy is yet to be achieved. Gandhiji brought to us a new vision of decentralised power of the people in small units like in a village, and decentralised economy of the village and structuring the social life in villages on the basis of "small is beautiful". Thus a new man is yet to be born. A real new society is yet to be born. A real new society is yet to be formed.

Gandhiji was a spiritual inquirer and his life was an experiment of Truth. His colleagues also gave their life in sacrifice and such experiments went on. Thus those who want to devote their life to this kind of work and experiment in living as a spiritual inquirer will be trained and educated along those lines in such training centers. Gopaldham is a center experimenting on the above lines

Bachubhai Sutarai

With The Assam Movement.

WITH THE ASSAM MOVEMENT

Contents

**Vimalaji's Visit To Assam
(16 th to 26 th January, 1981)**

1. First Session - Meeting with Sarvodaya workers
2. Scond Session - Meelng at Sarania Ashram, Gauhati
3. Third Session - Discussion with All Assam Freedom Fighters Association
4. Fourth Session - Meeting at Dudhnoi Dak Bunglow
5. Fifth Session - Meeting at Mankachar on border of Assam and Bangladesh
6. Sixth Session - In camera meeting with AAGSP representatives
7. Seventh Session

VIMALAJI'S VISIT TO ASSAM (16th to 26th January, 1981)

First Session - 16th January, 1981

Place : Sarania Ashram - Gauhati

Attendance : 18 Sarvodaya workers and Sarvodaya Friends.

Time : 3.30 P.M. to 5.30 P.M.

Shri. Dwarika Baruah initiated the discussion :

The movement in Assam has the co-operation of women to a very great extent. According to the government, of India the border between India and Bangladesh is sealed but it is not so. Assam's people want Vimalaji's suggestion and guidance - The movement cannot and shall not be suppressed by the government's repressive measures.

Shri Rajnikant Chakravorty was the second speaker.

In last 16 months approximately 400 people have died and a large number have been injured although the official figure is much less. This movement is neither political, secessionist nor a Hindu-Muslim conflict. AASU is totally a non-political organisation whereas AAGSP has in its fold people with political affiliations. He was glad that Vimalaji has become a member of the standing committee of the National Convention for Assam Movement headed by Shri Jainendra Kumar Jain. He was hurt by the misreporting done by few Sarvodaya Workers accusing the movement of being secessionist and communalist - The name of Shri R.K. Patil was mentioned in this regard.

Shri Ravindra Upadhaya was the third speaker:

He is here since 1964 and has almost become an Assamese - The demands are simple: Detection, deletion of names from the electoral rolls and deportation - The Government is trying to break the movement by forming and supporting a group called AAMSU - The government can use force for law and order but should not indulge in violence - In spite of the Government's

provocation the students have remained peaceful - Many foreigners have been included in the voter's list - The mistake was detected at the time of a parliamentary by-election in 1978 - Shri Shakhdar has also admitted this fact. The foreigners have been given franchise by the Congress Party to get the Muslim votes all over India. The whole movement has been mishandled by the Government. If the government wants to the problem can be solved immediately. People all over Assam have been waiting for Vimalaji's visit - People from Dibrugarh are especially keen on her visit there.

Vimalaji spoke of the background of her visit.

For the last one year she has been perturbed by the situation in the country. She visited seven northern states including Gujarat to make an on the spot study. She had been studying the Assam problem from a distance. Assam problem is not limited to the state of Assam only but is a national problem.

Uptill now she has tried to reach the people through Sarvodaya press service which serves about 95 newspapers and periodicals thus bringing an awareness of the Assam problem to the people throughout the country. She further stated that she would like to meet Sarvodaya workers, Student Leaders, Representatives of different associations to explore the possibilities of finding a solution to this movement.

Vimalaji wanted to know the veracity of few reports on Assam Movement :-

1. Agreement on 1971 as the base year for detection and deportation of infiltrators (1971 to 1981).
2. 1951 to 1961 infiltrators shall not be deported but detected and dis-franchised.

She wanted the Political, Economic and Cultural aspects of the movement to be studied. Regarding this she asked for co-operation from everybody and was prepared to travel wherever necessary.

Shri Ram Bahadur Roy the next speaker said that Government alleges that due to outside pressure the AASU leaders...back out at the last moment from the negotiations on flimsy grounds. Why has AASU not clarified this till now?

Bengalis residing in Assam joined this movement in the beginning but gradually drifted away. Why? His opinion is that AASU does not guarantee the security of the genuine refugees.

Smt. Hema Bharali then stated certain plain facts about the movement :-

Government is using repressive measures to demoralise the people although the students are very calm and non-violent - Detection of infiltrators is very difficult. Actual news do not get published due to strict censorship.

Conclusion:-

The people of Assam want the government to do the detection of infiltrators first taking 1951 as the base year. Then they may implement the consensus of deporting those who have come after 1971. AASU and people are afraid that if the 1971 consensus is implemented first then detection of infiltrators from 1951 onwards will not be taken up for they do not have full confidence in the government.

Second Session - 17th January, 1981

Place : Saranja Ashram

Time : 9.30 A.M.

Discussions with Shri R.N. Singh, a businessman and Smt. Hema Bharali, Sarvodaya Worker.

AASU should be persuaded to go to the negotiating table without waiting for a formal invitation from the Government. The Government does not seem to have any genuine intentions of solving this problem as they are more interested in getting votes from the foreigners. Mrs. Gandhi does not seem to be keen on solving this problem immediately and even if she wants she is unable to take proper steps for lack of trust in her lieutenants. People here have more faith in AASU than other groups because of its non-political nature. But AASU lacks self

confidence as the leaders are not mature enough to deal with seasoned politicians.

Infiltration into Assam is still going on today because the border is open and thus the minority population keeps on increasing. There are mobile vans across the border to teach the infiltrators Assamese language, so that they can mix with the crowd once they are inside Assam. But there is a clear distinction between the Muslims of Assam and the infiltrators. For ages the Muslims and Hindus of Assam have been living very amicably unlike in other States. The silent invasion seems to be taking place with proper pre-planning. The economic problems have also aggravated.

Time : 5.00 P.M.

Discussions with Shri Girdharilal Saraf, a businessman: (He repeated the same points as discussed in the morning and added a few more).

The problem of Assam has to be studied in depth. The root of the problem should be uprooted. Due to presence of anti-social elements and vested interests this massive movement does not get its share of results.

Third Session - 18th January, 1981

Place : Sarania Ashram - Gauhati

Time : 9.00 A.M. to 10.30 A.M.

Shri. P.M. Sharma, Shri P.C. Sharma and Shri Loknath Bharali were the main speakers. The under mentioned observations were made.

Unlike other agitations womenfolk and Government have played a vital part in this movement. In last 15 months women have been lathi charged and insulted in the most degrading manner. They have confidence in National Convention for the Assam movement to find a solution. The Prime Minister should be approached and heavy pressure should be put on the Government. If the Government does not take steps soon then

AASU will start detecting on the basis of 1951 NRC. AASU has taken up peoples' cause and the whole of Assam is behind them. Time is deciding factor. People can't be expected to be patient for an indefinite period. Infiltrators of 1951-1961 can be given citizenship. 1961-1971 should be distributed all over country and those of post 1971 should be deported.

After partition, from 1947-1950, about 5 lacs refugees were rehabilitated in Assam. Refugees in Punjab side came after being given a choice of country. There was no mass scale exodus. At present there are no refugees but infiltrators only. It is a silent Invasion. Today they are coming via Kartunganj and here on the Indian side there are regular godowns for contraband goods. Infiltrators have innumerable places to go in Assam only. Letters, forged certificates have been caught. If and "Assamese" is killed then it is not in human but if a foreigner is killed then a lot of hue and cry is raised.

The game of divide and rule that the Prime Minister plays in Assam will not pay India. In Assam there never has been any distinction between Muslims and Hindus. In fact Muslims have also joined the movement. To demoralise and divide the agitators, organisations like AAMSU have been set-up. The AASU representatives were given free luxurious trip to Delhi and on their return they were caught at Gauhati station for ticketless travel.

The Railways and P & T. are dominated by Bengali Hindus since pre-independence. Violent activities can be indulged in by the Bengali Hindus. Hindu and Muslim infiltrators cannot see eye to eye with each other.

Previously the infiltration was for economic reasons but now it appears to be political. Pre - 1961 infiltrators came to the camps as flood affected people. Instead of going back they stayed. Later on Politicians encouraged this infiltration, got their names enlisted in electoral rolls to get votes. The BSF is not at all effective in catching the infiltrators. In 1977 the BSF officially caught only one person whereas the Assam batallion caught approx. 3000.

Vimalaji left Gauhati for tour of the border areas of Assam and Bangladesh.

Fourth Session - 19th January, 1981

Place : Dak Bungalow, Dudhnoi, about 100 kms. from Gauhati.

Time : 4.45 p.m.

Meeting with Shri Hakim Rabha, Local Ex-MLA for 15 years.

The following points were mentioned :

One Bangladeshi national is a member of the local gram panchayat. Approx. 80% of the population of Dudhnoi are infiltrators.

Assamese members of political parties encourage infiltration. They do not want a solution. The poor people and the poor leaders have been suppressed by the rich leaders. Money has played a big role in this. This infiltration has been carrying on for last 20 years.

Leftist people in Assam, mostly Bengalis are happy as there is a leftist Government in Tripura and West Bengal. Bengalis want a great Bengal, joining West Bengal, Bangladesh and Assam. If this takes places, then the Bengali Hindus and Hindu Assamese together will be in majority.

During the youth meeting in Tejpur on the 16th & 17th January, 1981. Youth Leaders from other North Eastern States urged the AASU leaders to forget non-violence, as the Indian Government does not lend their ears without violent pressure. They invited the AASU leaders to join them to take arms and fight together. AASU declined the offer, but for how long can they remain patient.

Fifth Session - 20th January, 1981

Place : Mankachar, about 260 kms. from Gauhati. It is on the border of Assam and Bangladesh.

Time : 5.45 p.m.

Meeting with few college teachers and Government officials. Their observations and points are as follows:

There are 15 members in the Gram Sabha who are elected from a population of the panchayat. There are 40-43 Gram Panchayats in the Mankachar district. The Chairman is elected directly from the total population of Mankachar district. Out of 15 members 4 are Hindus and rest are all Muslims. The Chairman is also Muslim.

From the very beginning the common dialect has been Bengali and there are 40% Hindu Bengalis and 60% Muslim Bengalis in the Mankachar district.

Sealing of the border and setting up no man's land is not practically feasible as the financial implications are too high. Even then barbed wire fencing can be done. Infiltration also takes place via the river. The BSF is not properly equipped to effectively patrol the border. Moreover, there is no public co-operation which is very essential in detecting foreigners. The Bangladesh Border Security patrols the border towns once in 15 or 30 days but they get very good public co-operation hence the infiltration problem is not there. Nevertheless, in Mankachar smuggling is more of a problem than infiltration. The Muslim population has been there from partition times. There were about 1 lakh refugees from Bangladesh in 1971 in Mankachar only.

Few instances of infiltration were also narrated.

One Hindu Bengali came in 1961. In 1964-65 he got his firm registered in his and his brother's name. He got a radio licence in his brother's name. But his brother came very recently. He cannot be deported as his name has been there from before he came.

One boy who spent his student life in Dacca has also come here recently. He has recorded songs in Bangladesh and has sung on Bangladesh Radio. But his name has been there in the census since his birth and consequently has been included in the electoral rolls, as his father came to India long before he did. They all agree that the issue raised by AASU is legitimate and that detection and deletion should take place as soon as possible. Economic problems have also been aggravated due to the 16 months long movement.

Sixth Session - 21st January, 1981

Place : Sarania Ashram

Time : 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

A meeting was held in camera with few representatives of AAGSP. The important points discussed were as follows:-

According to AAGSP the Government of India has behaved not only indecently but also inhumanly with the leaders and workers of the movement as well as with the people of Assam in the last 15 months.

The Government looks upon the leaders of the movement practically as enemies. The Government is in a combatting mood rather than in a mood to listen to our plea and understand our sorrow.

The Union Home Ministry did not forward a copy of Shri Zail Singh's statement on the floor of Parliament on 24th December, 1980. The Home Minister was found indulging in lies and falsehoods during the talks in Delhi as well as Gauhati. Unless we get a written record of his statement in parliament from his Ministry, we will not go to Delhi.

As long as the Government of India do not accept NRC of 1951 as their basis for detecting foreigners, any talks ever held would be meaningless. We shall not compromise on the issue of NRC. We are glad that the people of India have woken up from their slumber and realised that the people of Assam are fighting for a National cause and not a regional, communal and separatist issue.

We can assure you that the movement has not used any foreign aid and promise you that it shall never use it.

Meeting with Shri Jatin Goswami of All Assam Gen Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) and Vimalaji.

V: What would make you resume talks with the Government?

J: An invitation written in black and white.

V: Was not an invitation extended to you on 24th December, 1980 from the floor of the Parliament?

J: We do not know if it had been extended. The Home Minister never sent us a copy of his statement.

V: The movement leaders want NRC of 1951 and the electoral rolls as the basis for detection of the infiltrators. But the Government suggests other relevant documents and international commitments as the basis. Is there no area of agreement between both of you?

J: None at all if NRC of 1951 is not accepted as the basis.

V: Can I assure the people of India that the movement has been and is financed by the people of Assam and North East region only? That it has never been financed by foreign money or powers?

J: We do not only assure you that no foreign money has been used by us upto now but we also promise that it shall never be used. We are a part of India and want to remain so, but if the Government suspects us and treats us like an unwanted child, then we will be compelled to fight to earn our rightful and lawful place within the Indian territory. We are dubbed as secessionists. We are dubbed as communalists. We are treated as if we are enemies of the Government of India. Do you expect us to go through this humiliation unnecessarily? The Government of India have no difficulty in accepting our demands of identification of the infiltrators on the basis of NRC of 1951. Their difficulty is political. The ruling party would lose power as soon as the detection process begins. Party politics and power politics is more important to them than the national integrity. Look at the CRP atrocities. Peaceful satyagrahs have been lathi charged and beaten mercilessly. 15 youths have lost their lives. Tell the Government that all efforts at crushing the movement and terrorising the people, will end in throwing Assam into the hands of extremists and protagonists of violent methods.

Seventh Session 21st January, 1981

Place : Sarania Ashram

Time : 8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

Meeting with the following persons was held :- Dr. D. Thakur, Smt. B. Thakur, Smt. Lily Mazumdar Baruah, Shri Gajen Sharma, Shri Drawik Baruah, and Shri Tarun Basumatari.

The following points were discussed :-

Sarvodaya movement has failed Gandhi and Gandhian teachings. Though the movement was conducted on Gandhian lines, Sarvodaya workers did not come forward to fight shoulder to shoulder and help us.

We were compelled to work on Gandhian lines because we have seen how in Nagaland and Manipur violence by the Government has over powered the violence of the people. We took to non-violence without having had a disciplined life and deep study of the teachings of Gandhi. We have learnt in last 15 months that violence cannot be a mere strategy, it a revolutionary discipline of total life.

Persons with such discipline should come to Assam and conduct study camps for our workers.

The issue of NRC is relevant to the whole of India. If you can mobilise public opinion and persuade the people to bring a non-violent pressure upon the Government of India to look into NRC of every state and bring it upto date then you would render strategical help to the movement.

Smt. Lily Mazumdar Baruah made a special plea that Vimalaji should tour all over Assam and meet the womenfolk, console them for their loss and encourage them for further work.

Shri. Gajen Sharma of ABVP observed that:-

1. The leaders of AASU keep things rather secret and do not share with anyone. We have been supporting their cause but they have never taken us in confidence.
2. We have been offering them our platform in every state of India for campaigning their cause but they have consistently refused.
3. They have refused help from each and every political party in Assam.

4. They travel alone in batches of 2 or 3 and meet people without any previous propaganda. Therefore, they cannot influence people or create an atmosphere. For the first time they participated in a conference held in Delhi which was organised by us. At last they have given in.

Eighth Session - 22nd January, 1981

Place : Sarania Ashram

Time : 3.00 P.M. to 4.00 p.m.

Meeting with an eminent lawyer of Assam. The following observations were made:

NRC is the only authentic document as per the constitution hence the question of cut off year does not arise. The Government emphasises other relevant documents besides NRC. by other documents the Government means the electoral rolls of other years or land documents but these are not authentic for legal process.

The teleprinter messages of the Press go via Calcutta and there all the news is held up only selected and distorted picture of the Assam situation is published across the country. We are not secessionist or communal.

If the 1961-71 infiltrators are distributed all over the country and given citizenship then there is a fear that they might come back to Assam. At that stage no one can stop them. What safeguards are there for this?

The Government could be compelled by a court to discharge its obligations if the Government does not do so on its own. A case could be prepared in consultation with eminent jurist and filed in the Supreme court. This cannot be done by the movement people or any individual Assamese as the expenditure involved is quite high and in Assam the people are not poor but at the same time not very affluent also.

He repeatedly asked Vimalaji to think on terms of mobilising the Sarvodaya workers and guiding them properly for they could do a lot to strengthen the movement. They can put across to the country a correct picture of the Assam situation. He observed that the Sarvodaya workers who have been passive for the last 15 months can play a very vital part in this movement.

Meeting with the representatives of All Assam Students Union (AASU)

Duration: Approx. 45 minutes

The following persons were present:-

1. Shri Prafulla Mahanta, President, AASU
2. Shri Bhirgu Phukan, General Secretary, AASU and their colleagues.
3. Miss Hema Bharali
4. Shri K.T.Shah

Review of the conversation is as under:-

P: You have met various people and seen the borders. What is your impression of the movement?

V: I have been struck by the nature of the movement. That there should be a people's movement led by youths in Assam based on Gandhi's philosophy is an event of tremendous historical significance. The non-party, non-political approach to the issue of foreign Nationals is the second meaningful factor for the future of the country. Would you like to tell me something or shall I ask you questions?

P: Please do.

V: The government of India spokesmen claim that they have accepted practically all your demands. Is it true? If it is not true then which of the demands have been accepted and which of them not accepted?

P: We do not know if any of our demands have been accepted by the Government. We wrote letter to the Union Home Minister asking which of the conditions they have accepted. (They showed me copies of the letters written by them) But we have received no reply upto now. On the other hand they claim that they have started deportation of those who came after 1971. We do not know on what basis the Foreign Nationals have been detected by them.

V: The Prime Minister said the other day in Ahmedabad that the attitude of the Assam movement leaders is very "rigid". What do you think makes her give such a statement?

B: Our attitude is not rigid. The attitude of the Government is rigid. They do not want to accept NRC of 1951 or the electoral rolls of 1952 as the basis for detection. Government of India claims that they have been deporting Foreign Nationals time and again. We also have documents proving that they have handled cases of infiltrators on the basis of NRC of 1951. (He showed me copies of Government documents of 1964 & 1967 where cases were decided on the basis of NRC of 1951). If they could accept NRC of 1951 as the basis for detection in 1964 & 1967. What prevents them to accept it today?

V: The Prime Minister and the Home Minister claim that an open invitation for talks has been extended to you from the floor of the Parliament on 24th December 1980 and yet the students refuse to resume talks. Is it true?

P: We have will not received any copy of the statement made by the Home Minister in parliament. What does an open invitation mean? They will have to send us a letter informing us of the dates and timing for the talks to be held. Uptil now we have not received any such letter. So where does the question of accepting or refusing arise?

B: If they put a condition that talks would be resumed if and when we accept tripartite talks, we will not accept a conditional invitation.

V: Would you co-operate with the Government of India in the process of detecting the infiltrators if they accept NRC of 1951 as the basis for detection?

P: We have already informed the Government about 4 months ago that the movement would be suspended as soon as the formula for detection is agreed upon. We would surely co-operate with the Government in the process of detection.

B: We never received any reply to our letters nor any acknowledgement of our offer.

AASU'S letter to Home Minister

Gauhati, November 14 - the All Assam Students' Union today released the text of the letter sent to the Union Home Minister on November 13th in reply to the latter's communication of October 12.

It said, "We find it difficult to accept your contention that we have chosen to remain adamant. In the last meeting at Delhi we were the first to invite you to Assam for any further talks on the foreign national problem. We, therefore, hope that our proposal will be accepted by you.

" We shall be happy if you kindly spell out which concrete measures have been initiated to implement the demands contained in our memorandum to the Prime Minister submitted on February 2, 1980.

The last 33 year's history of neglect and apathy to which the indigenous people of Assam have been subjected to, has taught us not to be satisfied with mere assurance of the Central Government. Only yesterday the Prime Minister mentioned the Assam problem in the NIC meeting and said that any solution must not harm the minorities. Will you kindly explain to the people of Assam how detection of Foreigners should in any way cause anxiety to the Indian minorities living in Assam? We have been suggesting detection of Foreigners on the basis of 1951 NRC, only to avoid harassment to any genuine Indian irrespective of religion. On the other hand, in the last Delhi meeting you suggested that the "displaced persons" should be given special treatment, implying thereby that religion should be a factor in the detection process. We are all opposed to it. If the Central Government adopts such an attitude, the unity of the different sections of Indians residing in Assam will be jeopardised. We can never allow such a situation to develop. The detection process, therefore, must be on the basis of the constitutional provisions and the 1951 N.R.C.

"We hope you will come to Assam and announce a solution satisfactory to the people of Assam. Unless the Central Government comes forward, Assam shall continue to suffer."

The letter was signed by Sri Bhriku Kumar Phukan, General Secretary of the AASU.

**The Cause Of
Punjab And Punjabyat**

THE CAUSE OF PUNJAB AND PUNJABIYAT

Contents

PART ONE - 1984

1.	Observations on Punjab	136.1984
2.	Letter to a prominent social worker	197.1984
3.	Punjab - A national problem	267.1984
4.	The Punjab work begins	5.9.1984
5.	K. T. Shah sees the Governor	7.9.1984
6.	Meeting with Giani Kripal Singh	168.1984
7.	Why did I visit Punjab ?	239.1984
8.	Report on the Pilgrimage through Punjab	6.10.1984
9.	Resume of the Punjab visit	
10.	Letter to I.K. Gujral	4.10.1984
11.	Letter to Governor of Punjab	5.10.1984
12.	Letter to Home Minister	9.10.1984
13.	Punjab Insani Biradari	
14.	Letter to Governor of Punjab	25.12.1984

PART TWO - 1985

1.	Letter to Mr. Longowal and Mr. Badal	175.1985
2.	Letter Prime Minister	185.1985
3.	Letter to Sri Mulchand Jain	186.1985
4.	Meeting of Insani Biradari	266.1985
5.	Letter to Sri Goel	6.7.1985
6.	Letter to Lt. Gen Aurora	7.7.1985
7.	Letter to Sri R.K. Patil	10.7.1985
8.	Resolution passed by P. I. B. E. C.	4.8.1985

PART THREE - 1986

1.	Message to Punjab	4.2.1986
2.	Letter to Friends	25.9.1986
3.	Our stand on Punjab	28.10.1986

PART FOUR - 1987

1.	Letter to Shri S. Grover	5.3.1987
2.	Letter to Shri A.B. Vajpaee	7.3.1987
3.	Letter to Shri Radhakrishnan	7.3.1987
4.	Letter to Shri S. Grover	13.5.1987
5.	Letter to Shri S. Grover	3.6.1987
6.	Letter to Shri S. Grover	14.6.1987

PART FIVE - 1988

1.	Open Letter to P.M. & President of India	24.1.1988
2.	Please Mr. President	24.2.1988
3.	Letter to Shri S. Grover	28.2.1988
4.	Letter to Shri S. Grover	20.3.1988

OBSERVATIONS ON PUNJAB

India won independence in 1947. The constitution conferred nationhood and a democratic set-up. We the people gave unto ourselves a secular statehood. All this was a great adventure though a praiseworthy one.

We did not educate the masses of India as to the implications of either the parliamentary democracy or secularism.

1. The Indian people suffer from a caste-ridden psyche as well as from Sectarianism and communalism in social life. Hence the eruptions of caste-violence, communal violence throughout the country. What has happened in Punjab is an acute and aggressive explosion of that unhealthy and perverted psyche.

2. Democracy has degenerated into nobocracy. Mobs and gangs with their power of sheer members, muscle and money power control, regulate and even direct the present day politics.

3. Sant Bhindranwale rallied round himself the disgruntled, unemployed, uneducated or little educated Sikh youth. He filled their hearts with the dreams of an Independent Sikh State or Khalistan. He had all the necessary glamour provided to him by his patrons, to attract the raw youth. The wealthy Sikhs living abroad provided him all the necessary money-power. He used the smugglers, the anti-social elements for getting the arms through neighboring countries. All this provided a dramatic, thrilling and sensational atmosphere. The adventurous young blood got fascinated. They needed something to which they could dedicate their lives.

The neighboring country must have gladly helped and supported the cause, for its own purpose.

The economic factor has played an important part. Indian society is still a feudal society to a great extent. Feudalists always take shelter behind religious institutions and organisations. They patronise saints and gurus, temples and Maths and secure their own continuity and security through the patronage.

Indian politics revolves around personalities. From

centralisation of power we have moved to the era of personalisation of power. Punjab politics has been a glaring example of clash between political rivals and the extent of devastation such rivalry can cause. We cannot rule out another important factor. What is the role of the central government in relation to the state governments? How power should be shared by both of them.

The Genesis of Sikh Problem

1. The Genesis of Sikh problem in British rule.
2. Anti Brahminism among the rural and urban labour class. Its development all over India.
3. In Punjab, Haryana it took the form of Jatts against Brahmins due to Jatts being agriculturalists and the Brahmins in the ruling party.
4. Exodus of Punjabis, most of whom were Sikhs to Great Britain, Canada, United States and South East Asian countries.
 - a. The consequent prosperity, trickling down in Punjab.
5. Akali Dal? It's politics and leadership from 1952 (Master Tarasingh) to 1972.
6. The authoritarian politics of Congress(I). Emergency in 1975 and its effect on the Sikh psychology.
7. The launching of Khalsa state, Khalistan Movement by Jagdish Singh Chauhan, Amriksingh Sandhu in 1973. Books and pamphlets published since then.
8. The closer ties between Akali Dal and Bharatiya Janata Party as well as all opposition parties from 1975 onwards. Alliance of Akali Dal with BJP in 1975.
9. Shri Zail Singh and Mrs Gandhi brought up Bhindranwale to break the alliance and become a competitor with the Akali Dal. Bhindranwale a religious person, a simple villager, talented speaker and a fanatic got all the money and legal help from Mrs Gandhi between 1977 and 1980. In fact Congress(I) created a hero out of Bhindranwale and built up the Khalistan Movement.

10. In 1980 Congress(I) was returned to power. The Khalistan boys wanted all the promises given to them fulfilled. They were asked to keep quiet. They were asked to leave the country offering substantial financial help. The boys had tasted power they refused to leave.

11. Anandpur Sahib Resolution was taken up as a weapon by Bhindranwale. He started military training camps for his followers in 1980. He hated Mrs Gandhi's hypocrisy and decided to fight it out.

12. Sikhs's abroad got a new religious leader with the potential to political power and started pouring money, gold, diamond, modern weapons of all sorts and volunteers for Khalistan. A Cabinet was formed, a flag was created, Khalistan notes were printed as well as passports.

13. By 1982 Bhindranwale had thousands of young people around him. He taught them fanaticism, arrogance, hatred and violence. Kill anyone and everyone who writes or speaks against Khalistan. Steal machinery, loot money from wherever you can.

14. 1982 - They murdered Lal Jagat Narayan - fearless editor of a national Punjabi paper. They killed Baba Gurubachan Singh in Delhi - the Nirankari gurus.

15. Because of the large dedicated following of Bhindranwale he captured power in SGPC as well as Akali Dal. They frustrated every agreement between the Government of India and the Akali Dal.

16. By 1983 it was evident that nothing less than a separate Sikh nation would satisfy Bhindranwale and his followers. Akali Dal leadership was helpless before this emerging youth power.

17. On the other hand Akali Dal as well as the Sikh community began to feel proud of Bhindranwale as he stood up as an equal against the seemingly invincible Mrs Gandhi. It gave them a sense of power and pride.

18. The Indian Prime Minister did not know what to do with this strange factor, with the strange dynamism of personal

loyalty and violence. They wasted time in fruitless negotiations with the Akali Dal while Khalistan group went on enlarging itself and becoming more and more powerful.

19. It is not a Punjab problem. It is a Sikh problem. Down with political hypocrisy.

LETTER WRITTEN TO A PROMINENT SOCIAL WORKER IN J & K STATE

My Dear Brother:

A basketful of thanks for your kind and detailed letter dated 16.7.84. It gives me a correct picture of the history of the Sikh sect as well as the present situation in that community. I am extremely grateful to you for such a prompt reply with objective analysis and observations.

The Union Government has failed miserably in finding out political solutions for political problems in Assam, Punjab and now Kashmir. Perhaps it is more or less so about the whole country. Military action has not solved the problem of foreign nationals in Assam. It is not going to solve the problem in Punjab, much less in Kashmir. The Sikh leaders will have to reconsider the whole issue of Sikh Identity, Sikh Nation and Khalistan etc. If the Sikh community scattered all over India is willing to go through a Referendum on Khalistan-- I for one might seriously think over the matter. I would then demand systematic population exchange prior to the creation of Khalistan.

We have inherited a multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural character as a nation. For 720 million people it is a painful growth towards a secular democratic polity. Leadership based on Casteism and Communalism has had its day. It shall soon disappear from the national stage. This is my faith and hope.

What can you and I as citizens of the Indian polity do to help the people in Punjab and in the North in general? Sarvodaya or no Sarvodaya: the people must be helped to the correct perspective, correct analysis and solutions.

I am deeply concerned about the happenings in Kashmir! It is the limit of constitutional indecency, vulgarity and cruelty!

I am keeping well and hope the same with your family and self.

Please do keep me posted about your observations about Punjab. They will be a great help to me.

19th July, 1984
Mount Abu

With best respects,

Vimala

PUNJAB - A NATIONAL PROBLEM

One feels rather surprised and sad to read the reports of the speeches made in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha by the new Home Minister as well as the Prime Minister.

There seems to be either confusion about the nature of the Punjab problem or a willful effort to hide the facts from both the houses of Parliament and the people at large.

Till a few days back, the government was convinced that there were only a handful misguided youths that had taken to terrorism. The Government had kept on negotiations with the Akalis even up to May 1984. Obviously the Akalis were not identified then with the Foreign Forces or even with the terrorists, by the Government. But now we are to understand from the speeches of the Home Minister and the Prime Minister, that the whole Punjab problem is a creation of some foreign powers that are jealous of India and her progress; that are jealous of India's leadership of the third world countries. Those countries found their allies in the Indian Sikhs living abroad. Those rich Sikhs created all the trouble, terrorism contaminated and corrupted the police force in Punjab. It is the foreign powers that corrupted the BSF, the Intelligence forces and infiltrated even into the army. We are to understand that all this conspiracy began in 1981 and culminated in the terrorists occupying the Golden Temple Complex. How could poor Government know all this till the operation Blue Star brought things into open? Poor Government of India depended upon the Akali leaders ! And they kept on denying that there

THE PUNJAB WORK BEGINS

September 5, 1984

Place Lajpat Bhavan, New Dehli

Meeting organised by Servants of People Society

Participants.

1. Shri Sevakramji
2. Shri S D Sharma
3. Shri Satya Paul Grover
4. Mool Chand Goyal
5. Col J C Khanna
6. Shri Kuldip Nayar
7. Shri I K Gujral
8. Mrs Gujral
9. Shri Sardar Darbara Singh

Important Points

According to Kuldip Nayar and I K Gujral :

(1) The Sikh Community is hurt beyond words, hurt by their own mistakes resulting in Guilty Conscience; hurt by the Government policy of Divide and destroy.

(2) The Blue Star operation has disturbed the Sikh Community emotionally to such an extent that they are suffering from blind rage. They have lost the patience to exercise reason and discuss their problems with those who hold different views than theirs.

(3) We will have to win them back through affection and create a sense of belonging. They have lost a sense of belonging to India.

(4) The P M does not know how to stoop to conquer. The Kar Seva through Santa Singh through Sharbat Khalsa and banning the World Sikh Meet indicate an attitude of confrontation rather than express strength.

Points by Sardar Darbara Singh

1. The problem is too complex for any simplification. It is as much economic as it is politic religious..
2. The feudal element always takes shelter behind the facade of religion. Akali Dal is dominated by feudal landlords, who have been exploiting low caste people, specially the Harijans. They started creating their own saints or glorifying illiterate mediocre Sants. Longowal is not a Saint. No member of SGPC or Akali Dal can be called a real saint.
3. Giani Zail Singh created a saint out of Bhindranwale to counter the Akali saints.
4. I had pointed it out to the P.M. that the process would boomerang upon the Congress(I), if Bhindranwale and Akali Dal get together.
5. All the Harijan and low caste Sikhs rallied round Bhindranwale gradually they captured Akali Dal and rendered Longowal, Tohra and others absolutely helpless. Thus the poor wanted to take revenge on the feudal elements.
6. The feudal element wants to play upon the religious orthodoxy and obstinacy, to which people are prone.
7. Unless the SGPC and Akali Dal promise Government of India as well as the people of India that Gurudwara shall not be used for political purposes or for collecting arms and ammunition or as hideouts for smugglers and terrorists, no negotiations would be possible.
8. The Golden Temple was converted by Bhindranwale for many immoral acts. I can bring before you the women victims and the doctors who had treated them.

September 6, 1984.

Place : Gandhi Samarak Bhavan, Chandigarh

Participants:

were any criminals or terrorists in the golden Temple Complex !. The Government had to rely upon the Akali Dal though the whole of India knew that the facts were otherwise!.

Should we admire the patience of the Government of India with the Akali Dal or should we see through the game of self-defence and understand that the undue emphasis on 'Foreign' powers is only skilful self defence ! Should we understand that the Government was busy calculating matters and marking time to take steps that would prove beneficial to the ruling party. That it was convenient to wait till matters went beyond the control of Akali Dal and SGPC and then step in as the saviour ! The Government wants to claim that by sending the army they have saved the whole country from being fragmented ! They surely have courage to make such claims !.

The gist of the whole thing is as follows:

1. The Government could not make up its mind when to take action as it could not decide whether the movement in Punjab was a local one or was instigated, financed and organised by 'foreign forces'. By the time they made up their mind that it was too late the situation was beyond political negotiation. Hence the military action. The Government would like to get the military out of Punjab without losing face and without endangering the law and order situation.

Unfortunately it cannot do so. The Hindu Sikh reactions have suffered a great blow during the last four years.

2. Army operation has 'offended' the Sikh community.
3. It has widened the gulf between communities.
4. The emboldened terrorists are lying in wait to retaliate and strike at the Government and people as soon as the army leaves Punjab.
5. The Punjab Police and Intelligence Service must have been demoralised by the exposure of their leniency towards Bhindranwale group.

Hence a non-governmental and a non-political approach to the whole problem is vitally necessary. It is a national problem and a cultural one and has to be taken up as such

1. Shri Jaswant Rai
2. Shri Baktawar Singh
3. Prof. Ram Singh
4. Advocate Jagannath Sharma
5. Shri Sharda
6. Dr Sampoorna Singh

Important Points:

1. The Punjab situation is a creation of the political parties including the Ruling Party.
2. Corruption among the political parties, leaders and workers including Giani Zail Singh.
3. Corruption and greed of money in the bureaucracy the police services, people at large.
4. Religious fundamentalism which has gradually gripped the psyche of all sections of society.
5. The fundamentalism has created mutual fear and distrust.

K T Shah meets the Governor

I and Dr Sampoorna Singh went to see the Governor Sr K T Satarawala at 5.00 P.M.

He was kind enough to enquire whether there was any difficulty. I said: "there is no difficulty and no problem. Only I have come to visit you on a courtesy call. I am here for last two days and as you were away, I could not meet you earlier".

I introduced Dr Sampoorna Singh to him, as our host and said that he had been working in the Defence Laboratory Research Department at Jodhpur. He was retired now and a colleague of ours also interested in the spiritual path.

Then I spoke to him about Vimalaji and give him her resume brochure, and also a small booklet, which is an introduction to Dr Singh's book. I also gave him details about Vimalaji's Meditation Camps and explained to him how due to her

sensitivity she was very much concerned about the Punjab problem and as such we have come here.

From here we will go to Pathankot on 9th where we will be for three days. Then we will visit Amritsar for five days. Thereafter we shall go to Hoshiarpur and from there we shall return here.

After visiting the various places and meeting with the cross sections of the people we would see whether something definite could be done. And we would like to meet and apprise you of our observations and proposed actions if any. Thereafter we shall proceed to do the work.

He was happy. He said that the problem besides being political and economic has also an emotional content. It is complex. The outer indications are that the situation is coming to normalcy. Indications like night travelling, plying of night buses, late evening shows, the Ludhiana cycle industry coming back to normal production and distribution etc. He took Dr Sampoorna Singh's card and gave it to his ADC so that any call to see him could be immediately responded to.

He also said: "after going round I would be glad to know your first hand observations which you would be knowing better than I do. I could not see many people".

Dr Sampoorna Singh also told him about the long and short term approach and also about his books.

VIMALAJI'S MEETING WITH GIANI KRIPAL SINGH AND SARDAR BHAN SINGH SECRETARY AKALI DAL

The meeting with Giani Kripal Singh, Head Priest of Akali Takht, Sardar Bhan Singh Hoh Secretary Akali Dal, and Dalbir Singh an Industrialist. The Head Granthi in Harmander Sahib joined afterwards.

The meeting took place at Giani Kripal Singh's residence at 5 PM on 16th September, 1984.

Vimalaji was accompanied by Kishore Sant, Kartar Singh, Kalyanbhai, Chhotabhai and Satpalji Grover.

At the appointed time Gianji came from outside and welcomed all.

Vimalaji explained the reason for her coming to Punjab and requested Gianji to make known his views about how to bring about a solution to the Punjab tangle as it stood presently.

Gianji started by saying that it was better to meet and tell Indiraji who has set the whole thing on fire.

Later, he narrated the events of Operation Blue Star. That was started on an auspicious day when thousands of persons came for worship.

The massacre that ensued as a result of "operation" ran into more than a thousand, 1100 men, 200 women, and about 20 children. One child of 20 days was also shot dead. This massacre without giving warning to the pilgrims to get out was very much resented to by each and every Sikh whether he belonged to one sect or the other.

Unless the Golden Temple is cleared of military, the sentiment shall not get diluted. Our demands are: (1) withdrawal of military from Golden temple; (2) Throwing open the Temple for the whole day; (3) Santa Singh should be removed from Kar Seva; and (4) Handing over the Temple to S.G.P.C.

Hindu Sikh Relations

Hindus and Sikhs are living side by side for years together and there is no alienation there. He gave an incident of his neighbour who had gone to some other place, was told that if any difficulty come to him, he (Kripal Singh) would be the first person to die before anything happens to him. This set right the fear. And the neighbour had returned and was living normally.

The Hindu and Sikh traders and others are living side by side and no cause has arisen anywhere. In villages especially, they live like brothers. But a word of caution was also there. If some effort is made by people like you to integrate and sustain that integrity, nobody would be able to divide the two communities.

Outside Hand

Pakistan at the instance of U.S.A. is doing this mischief in the garb of terrorists, in order to destabilise the state and create tension. We have nothing to do with this.

Dalbir Singh added he met the P. M. only two days back. He had pointed out that the Batala incident was created by Pakistani extremists, to which she replied that it was a possibility. She also said winding up the discussions that some mistakes could have been committed by the Government.

Fear of Hindus

The fear in the hearts of Hindus prior to third June was tremendous. And the Army operation came to them as a relief, but when they celebrated it, the sense of joy hurt the Sikh feelings. On the next day of Batala incident, when "Punjab Bandh" was there, Hindu shops were closed but Sikh shops were open in Amritsar. This shows the alienation of feelings. This has to be curbed in both the communities.

Khalistan

At present there is no question of secession or Khalistan, but if the Government continues with their same attitude, the younger generation could be attracted though they do not realise its consequences. The Government intentionally allowed the weapons to Bhindranwale's men into the Golden Temple Complex. The slogan of "Khalistan Zindabad" is out of resentment to this policy.

The settlement arrived at between the military and S. G. P. C. and Akali Dal for the withdrawal of the Army from G.T. was turned down by higher authorities overnight and Santa Singh was seated there for "Kar Seva".

To a pointed question put by someone whether this Kar Seva would be accepted. Everybody pointed out to the Head Priest who was non committed. But he said five crores of Rs are spent on that and it would be madness to demolish and do it again. He will have to explain to the people.

The military people had also got corrupted within these three months and incidents of corruption were cited.

Bahen lastly said, "Had J P been there nothing of this sort would have happened". Everybody expressed that feeling with a great sigh, that he is no more. All were joyful to utter the name of that great Sant and told Vimalaji that as JPs representative, do whatever you could for the cause.

Dalbir Singh gave a copy of a memorandum to be given to the P.M.

The meeting concluded at 6.15 PM

WHY DID I VISIT PUNJAB?

My love for Punjab dawned upon me back in the fifties. Sant Vinobaji's Bhoodan Movement brought me to Punjab in 1954 for the first time. Between 1954 and 1960 I visited Punjab a number of times and toured throughout the land in the company of late Lala Achinram, Bhimsen Sachchar, Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, Dr. Rainrakha and many others. We had visited villages and townships; we had organised youth camps and had addressed colleges and public meetings. Happy were those days of meetings the proverbially generous and hospitable people of Punjab. Happy were those days of enjoying the vital, vigorous and robust culture of this land.

I revisited Punjab in 1980. This time I travelled with nine companions in a Mini Bus and visited the border districts that is, Firozpur, Gurdaspur and Amritsar. One heard the word 'Khalistan' as one travelled through places like Batala, Gurudaspur and Amritsar. When one discussed the matter with the people in Jullandhar, Ludhiana and Hoshiarpur, people laughed it out.

In 1981 began the long negotiations between the Government and the Akali Dal and one waited through the painful years of 1982 and 1983 to see the Union Government take a firm stand and declare its final decision about the economic and political demands raised by the Akali Dal. It was no use visiting Punjab while the Government was negotiating.

Then started the looting, murdering spree. Then began the days of terror and blood-shed. One watched helplessly how the civic administration collapsed. One watched the security forces being rendered ineffective in controlling the terrorists. The rule of parallel government of Sant Bhindranwale and his power over the services of the Government was also an unbelievable episode. We hoped that the 'operation' would ease the situation. But it did not. The army occupied the Golden Temple and spread out over Punjab for 'Flushing Out' operation. When one noticed that even after a couple of months of military occupation there was neither peace nor amity, one decided to visit people and **probe into their minds**.

Thus I came to Chandigarh on 6th September 1984 and started the pilgrimage. Help of innumerable persons enabled me to conduct the trip and the discussions. People helped in every possible way. I am grateful to one and all.

In Chandigarh, Vimalaji was offered hospitality of Dr Sampoorina Singh, an old friend, it was a great help to have such a place to go to during her stay in Punjab.

Early in September, Mr K T Shah went to see the Governor of Punjab, advising him of Vimalaji's programme, and arranging for her to meet with him at the end of her tour.

From Chandigarh, together with veteran Sarvodaya workers of Punjab like Sri Banarasidas Goyal and Sri Satyapal Grewar, Vimalaji toured some of the worse affected towns. There is her own account of these travels through the villages and towns of Punjab.

On September 9th we reached Pathankot after six hours of bus journey. We stayed at Prasthan Ashram for the next three days, participating in Vinoba Jayanti celebrations, as well as many discussions with groups of Hindus and Sikhs.

We reached Amritsar on the evening of the 12th and stayed until the 16th. We had visitors from 9.00 am until 6.00 pm, and had free and frank discussions with leaders of Janata Party, Akali Lal, and Congress(I), with professors from Khalsa University and DAV college, with leaders of the Executive Committee of Durgyana Mandir, Jathedar of Akali Takht, Head Granthi and Sardar Turan Singh. We also visited the Golden Temple.

On the morning of September 17th we left for Patti. There we had visitors at the Guest Room of the Khadi Bandar, in groups of staunch Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims, leaders of Nirahankaris, leaders of Congress(I), and leading members of the Bar.

After lunch we reached Kot Mahomadkhan. Here as well as at Patti, the atmosphere was very tense. On our way our car was checked by the military and the Central Reserve Police. They even opened the bonnet of the car and checked. In the evening, twenty persons came to see us.

In Patti and Kot Mahomadkhan there are eighty Sikh families and ten Hindu families and assassinations of Hindus in both the villages have terrorised the minds of Hindus.

On the 18th we reached Moga. Here the killings of Sikhs had taken place. Visitors came from 9.00 A.M. until 2.00 P.M. including leaders from both communities, advocates, doctors, professors and representatives of political parties. In the afternoon, visitors continued to come from 4.00 P.M. until 9.00 P.M.

The Chief of CID came and saw me. A group of ten persons from "Freedom Fighters Association" also came to meet.

"From Moga we went to Fatehganj on the 19th. A meeting was held where 25 Hindus and 35 Sikhs were present. In the afternoon we returned to Moga for a talk in the Ayurvedic College which was followed by more visitors in the evening.

We left for Dhudike on the morning of the 20th. The meeting here took place in the presence of military and CRP officers. In spite of that, the Hindus and Sikhs expressed their views quite frankly. As the meeting went on, we were joined by even more C. R. P. and military officers.

The same evening, we arrived at Hoshiarpur. The first people we met there were a group of 25 Khadi workers.

The next morning was full of visitors and in the evening there was a meeting for some 300 invited guests. Army officers were also present.

"The next morning was full of visitors, and in the evening

there was a meeting for some 300 invited guests. Army officers were also present".

"On the morning of September 22nd, we visited Sadhu Ashram of Vishweneranand Vishwa Bandhu. Then we spoke with visitors until 2.00 P.M. We started for Chandigarh in a taxi at 3.00 P.M. and arrived at 6.30 P.M. Again the journey will begin on the 26th September.

REPORT ON THE PILGRIMAGE THROUGH PUNJAB

26TH SEPTEMBER TO 6TH OCTOBER 1984

(Prepared by Kaiser Irani)

We left Chandigarh on 26th September at 7.30 A.M. with us were Dr Sampoorna Singh and Sri Jashwantraji of the Gandhi Peace Foundation. We reached PATIALA, where Shri Goyal had arranged for Vimalaji to meet with concerned citizens.

People started coming by noon, and it was not until 2.30 P.M. that Vimalaji had at her first meal of the day - boiled Mung beans were prepared in one corner of the room that friends had provided for the night.

Again people came to meet and talk and we were invited to dinner by friends. At 6.00 P.M. we got into two cycle rickshaws and went to their place, where we found others waiting to talk with Vimalaji, to pour out their hearts and share their misery and pain with her.

Early the next morning we left in a taxi, drinking a glass of milk for breakfast, and reached our next destination. Here we stayed at the Khadi Center and after a short rest Vimalaji was taken to the Khadi Bhavan in the town. All through the morning, prominent citizens and ordinary individuals came to meet, to talk, to share their experiences and thoughts on what could be done to bring back harmony.

Vimalaji returned to the Center for lunch had and a short rest, after which she went back into the town. There was a meeting arranged with Khadi workers. After the meeting, around 6.00

P.M. a Sarvodaya friend requested that Vimalaji visit a town close by, where a number of female Jain monks wished to meet her.

When we reached the town of DHURI we found a power failure, so under candle light the meeting took place. The monks were very happy to have the opportunity to meet and speak with Vimalaji. They sang bjaans for her.

The next morning we set out for the town of KHANNA. On the way we had two punctures and when we stopped at a small village for repairs, a group of farmers gathered and shared with Vimalaji their feelings about the present situation.

As soon as we got to Khanna we were met by a party of friends who had been waiting on the highway to welcome Vimalaji. Vimalaji met with visitors in the house of an old friend of Shri Goyal. There were too many visitors for the living room so groups of people would be waiting in other rooms and outside in the court yard.

Vimalaji listened patiently to group after group, silently absorbing all they had to say, all their anger, pain and sorrow.

The next day we left for LUDHIANA. Here we were first met by one of the veteran freedom fighters of Punjab, and then we went to a friend's house, where people started coming to speak with Vimalaji. In the evening Vimalaji went to the local Congress(I) Party Office to meet with workers there and to meet with their President. The Harijan workers described to Vimalaji the situation as they saw it.

The next morning we went to ADAMPUR. Here we stayed at the Khadi Center and Vimalaji met with Khadi and Sarvodaya workers of Punjab. The possibility of a Gandhian Action Programme was brought up, and it was decided to call a meeting in Chandigarh of all citizens who would be interested in working in Gandhian lines to bring about peace in Punjab.

The next day we left early morning for Chandigarh and on the way we stopped for breakfast at the home of a Sikh friend of Vimalaji's. The friend's son, a college student, gave Vimalaji a gift of his most precious possession - a framed photograph of sant Guru Gobind Singh.

On the 2nd October, Gandhiji's birthday, there was a Public Meeting at Gandhi Peace Foundation in Chandigarh where Vimalaji gave a talk.

On the 3rd, a prayer meeting was held at the Khadi Bhavan, and there were interviews throughout the day.

On the 4th of October Vimalaji went to meet with the Governor of Punjab and submit to him her observations and findings from the tour. He was very grateful for her visiting and sharing with him.

On the 6th the meeting of the citizens of Punjab who wished to work for peace in a non violent way took place. It was decided to form a PUNJAB INSANI BIRADARI (Punjab People's Brotherhood).

A State Committee composed of 12 representatives of the 12 districts of Punjab was proposed. They would work out the programme for action for 1985. It was also suggested that Youth Camps should be organised to train youth as peace workers who would then go back to their Districts and work among the people. Colleges and Universities would be approached to hold lecture and discussion meetings and activities would be worked out to involve the young people in constructive work.

On the 27th of October Vimalaji met with the young people from all over India who came to Delhi for the Orientation Camp. She and other prominent thinkers gave talks to the volunteers in preparation for their work.

From 20th to 22nd December, Vimalaji is scheduled to in Moga, Punjab for a Convention on Punjab Insane Biradari. After which she will visit the towns of LUDHIANA and PATIALA to give talks at the Universities there.

THE PUNJAB VISIT

AIM : To study the situation and explore the possibility of peoples' non partisan, non sectarian action to combat the forces of violence hatred, and anarchy.

DURATION: 6th September to 4th October, 1964.

Places Visited

1. Chandigarh
2. Pathankot
3. Amritsar
4. Patli
5. Moga
6. Kote-Mohammad-Khan
7. Fategarh
8. Dhudike
9. Hoshiarpur
10. Pattala
11. Sangrur
12. Khanna
13. Ludhiana
14. Adampur

NUMBER OF PEOPLE MET: Individually or in groups : 275

Prayer Meetings Addressed:

1. Kote-Mohammad-Khan
2. Fategarh

3. Dhudike
4. Hoshiarpur
5. Adampur
6. Chandigarh

College Meeting:

1. Moga

Freedom Fighters Meeting:

1. Moga

Public Meetings:

1. Moga
2. Chandigarh - 3 meetings
3. Hoshiarpur - 1 Meeting

Accompanied By:

1. Shri. K.T.Shah of Jeevan Yoga Foundation, Gujarat
2. Sardar Bakhtavarsingh and Shri Banarasidas Goyal of Punjab Sarvodaya Mandal.
3. Shri Kishore Sant of Lok Samiti, Udaipur, Rajasthan.
4. Shri Satyapaul Grover of Servants of People Society, Delhi.

Important Interviews:

AT AMRITSAR

1. Head Priest - Akal Takht - Amritsar
2. Sant Bhausingh
3. Secretary - Khalsa Diwan

The Cause of Punjab & Punjabiyat

4. Sardar Mubark Singh - Janata Party
5. Sardar Khushpal Singh - Guru Nanak Dev University
6. Durga Mandir Trustees
7. D.A.V College Teachers
8. Khadi Workers
9. Merchants' Association Members

AT PATHANKOT

1. Prasthan Ashram - Members, supporters etc

AT PATTI

1. Nirankaris
2. Akali Dal Workers
3. Janata Party Workers
4. Khadi Workers
5. Congress (I) Workers
6. Lawyers
7. Doctors

AT MOGA, PATIALA, SANGRUR, LUDHIANA & KHANNA

1. Representatives of all sections of Society
2. Representatives of all political parties.
3. Representatives of all communities.
4. Representatives of Hindu Suraksha Samiti
5. Representatives of Angry Sikh Youths.

*Work Projects For October - November***(1) Sarvodaya Workers' Projects .**

(A) Youth Contact through selected Sarvodaya young workers from all over India.

(B) Padayatra :

1. Amritsar District - Shri Yeshpal Mittal
2. Ferozpur District - Sardar Bakhtawar Singh

Duration of both : One month each.

(C) Acharyakul - Group meetings through all the twelve districts.

LETTER TO SHRI I.K. GUJRAL

Camp Chandigarh
31th October, 1984.

Dear Shri. Gujralji

It seems vitally necessary to me that the Punjab Amity Convention as well as Punjab Aman Biradari establish a contact with the Educational Institutions in Punjab at their earliest convenience possible. The youth is the architect of the country. The future of Punjab lies in the hands of the young generation. It must have been affected rather deeply by the traumatic experiences in the last few years. It is necessary to help them to pull themselves out of the action-reaction process and focus their attention on the broader issues concerning the unity and integrity of the country, the survival of parliamentary democracy, as well as the re-establishment of human values in individual as well as collective life.

I request both the above said organisations to establish contact by organising a committee, with the 4 Universities in

Punjab and organise lecture series, symposiums or seminars on any of the following subjects. The list of the subjects is not a comprehensive one, it is indicative of what kind of themes would attract the attention of the youth as well as would have a bearing upon the present crisis in Punjab as well as the whole of India.

Subject List

1. *Why there is growing faith in violence?*
2. *Why is the youth frustrated?*
3. *The cultural heritage and cultural future of Punjab.*
4. *The economic future of Punjab.*
5. *Feudalism and Democracy.*
7. *What is man making and character building education?*
8. *What are human values?*
9. *The holistic view of life.*
10. *Dynamics of human mind.*
11. *Integration of man.*
12. *Synthesis of science & spirituality.*

It is my earnest request to the Punjab Amity Convention that a Committee be nominated for dealing with this Educational Wing of Amity work. I would like to suggest the following names for the committee.

1. Sardar Darshan Singh Malhi, 743/11B Chandigarh.
2. Sardar Kushpal Singh, Professor of Law, Gurumanak Dev University, Amritsar.
3. Sardar Teja Singh Tiwana, Professor of English Punjabi University, Patiala 147002

4. Dr. Sampurna Singh, Retired Director of Defence Research, 586/10D Chandigarh

5. Sri Satya Paul Grover, Servants of People Society, Lajpat Bhawan, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi 110 024.

Here is a list of resource persons for this work. They are known in many parts of India as competent and effective speakers.

1. Acharya Ranmurti, Shrambharati, Khadi Gram, Mongyr, Bihar 811313.

2. Shri S.N. Subbarao, Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram, P.O Jouran, Allapur, Dist. Morena, M.P.

3. Justice C.S.Dharmadhikari, Sarang House No.11 Gen. Jaganath Rao Bhosle Road, Bombay 400 021.

4. Shri Purshotam Mavlankar, Gopika Maharashtra Society, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad 380 006.

5. Dr. Arumachalam, Rural University, Gandhigram, Madurai District, Tamil Nadu.

6. Shri Govindrao Deshpande in Trusteeship Foundation, 20 Justica, 22 N. Bharucha Rd., Bombay 7

7. Shri Siddharaj Dhaddha, Chavda Rasta, Jaipur 3

8. Shri Arun Shourie

9. Shri Nani Palkhivala

10. Mr. Krishna Aiyar, Ex Justice of Supreme court.

If the Punjab Amity convention accepts this proposal they will have to implement the Project with a sense of urgency. The situation in Punjab is getting worse by the day. We are racing against time. My friends Dr. Sampurna Singh and Shri Satiypaul Grover are willing to extend their services and cooperate with the convention.

With Best Regards,

Vinaya

LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF PUNJAB

Chandigarh
5th October, 1981.

Shri. K.T.Satarawala
Governor of Punjab
Chandigarh

Dear Sir,

This is to share with you the report of my work in Punjab for the last four weeks. I came on behalf of my Sarvodaya friends in India as well as an individual who had worked in Punjab in connection with the Bhoodan Movement between 1955 and 1960.

Herewith is an issue of THE INVINCIBLE a Bi-Monthly circulated by a few friends to non-party social workers in India. This issue contains the report as well as the project of our work for the next two months.

During my tour through various parts of Punjab, I came across a number of citizens from the Hindu as well as the Sikh community who are anxious to work for the peace and amity of the region. We have decided therefore to organise Punjab-Aman-Biradari (A brotherhood for Peace & amity). The outline of the Biradari is also attached herewith.

It was brought to my notice that some prominent citizens of Punjab and Punjabis living in Delhi have already organised a Punjab Amity convention led by Mr. I.K. Gujral. A copy of letter to Shri I.K.Gujral is attached herewith. I met some members of the Convention yesterday and have suggested that we work together on a non-political cultural basis and contact the Educational institutions in Punjab. I feel a sense of urgency to contact the youth and disinfect their minds of the poison of communalism and religious fundamentalism.

May I request you to help us in our effort to establish a contact with the Universities and persuade them to organise seminars, symposiums and lecture series of the kind indicated in my letter to the Amity Convention. My esteemed colleague Dr. Sampooran Singh, retired Director, Defence Research and

Development Organisation, Ministry of Defence, would see you before we launch the project within a few weeks.

I thank you in anticipation.

With best respects,

Vimala

LETTER TO HOME MINISTER

New Delhi
9th October, 1984.

The Home Minister
Union Government of India

Dear Sir,

A deep concern for the grave situation in Punjab obliges me to take the liberty of sending a report of my study to you of the latest situation thereof. I spent one month in Punjab from 6th September to 6th October. My contact with Punjab goes back to the Bhoodan Movement of Sant Vinobaji with whom I worked for some years.

It seems vitally necessary to release the moderate leaders like Sant Longowal and Sri Prakashsingh Badal. Unless, they are released and rehabilitated as leaders of the Sikh Community it will not be possible to tackle the economic or political demands of the Punjabi people. There are no other leaders acceptable to the people except these moderates. With whom would the government negotiate if not with them? The five priests and the S.G.P.C. members do not seem to be capable of dealing with the political matters of the state.

Secondly - my tour of the three border states indicates that the extremists can get shelter in the private houses. If the security forces keep an intense vigil in Ferozpur, Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts, it might help to contain the sporadic violence.

Thirdly - there are half a million educated youth who are unemployed. Most of them belong to the rural sector. They are not interested in agricultural labour or work. They dislike small jobs. They dream of lucrative jobs carrying some status with them. Such jobs are obviously not there. Thousands among them fell victims to the glamour around Sri Bhindranwale and his promises about a prosperous Sikh State.

Unless the problems of educated unemployment is tackled, it might be nearly impossible to contain unmeaningful violence, blind rage and bitterness permeating Punjab.

With best respects,

Vimala Thakar

PUNJAB INSANI BIRADARI

Indian independence is only thirty seven years young; Independent India aspired to create a secular, democratic state and drafted a remarkably interesting constitution for the same purpose. Unfortunately the Indian psyche is not equipped to appreciate the significance and deeply revolutionary content of the words "democracy" and "secularism".

It was hoped that the political parties would educate the masses and cultivate secular-democratic consciousness among them. The masses suffering from illiteracy, starvation and innumerable inhibitions stimulated by dogmatic preachings of sectarian, religious teachers and priests, are still ignorant about their responsibilities as citizens of democratic state. The masses have been intimidated and mentally disabled by feudalist rules existing for centuries. They have not the fearlessness to exercise their constitutional rights or the moral strength to discharge their responsibilities. The result is the political chaos, corruption, lawlessness and criminalisation of social life.

The last decade has seen India growing into a nation of cowards, corrupts and criminals in socio-economic and

political fields. Hence my appeal to the people of India is to turn away from the existing political parties and their game of power politics, divisive and destructive strategies and ever growing authoritarianism. People will have to organise themselves on a non-political and cultural basis and create an alternative culture suitable to both secularism and democracy. It will be a culture of mutual respect, cooperation and compassion. I have suggested to peace loving national minded friends in Punjab to organise *Insani Biradari* for the above said objects.

Insani Biradari is being launched:

1. *To protect the unity and integrity of Punjab and through it that of India.*
2. *To create a peoples' cultural front in order to give correct perspective of the problems confronting India.*
3. *To re-establish moral values and inculcate among the people a respect for democratic institutions and the willingness to operate them properly.*

We recognise every human being as our brother and sister and a fellow citizen of the country. We recognise our responsibility to live and let live the fellow beings without strangling the cultural identity of any group - big or small. We recognise that violence cannot be the way of life. Arson, loot, murders and mutual butchering is not the way of sharing life as human beings on this planet. Therefore *Insani Biradari* condemns the cult of violence, who so ever follows it.

I visualise *Insani Biradari* having its units at the district level and persuading the educated adults to meet the village people and explain to them the necessity of such a cultural front for liberating themselves from the shackles of exploitation and authoritarianism of the political parties and the religious priests, alike.

Insani Biradari will be a cultural and non-political Brotherhood. It's purpose is to awaken a sense of responsibility among the people towards maintaining the unity and integrity of the country as a whole and of Punjab in particular.

This Cultural Brotherhood will persuade the people to realise that violence as a way of living destroys the very fabric of democracy. A democratic set-up will not sustain onslaughts of frequent violence and destruction of human life as well as national property. This Brotherhood will organise Lok Shakti for combatting the triple evil of cowardice, corruption and criminality prevalent in our social life.

I see the decline of the existing political parties and feel apprehensive that there will be a nation wide political vacuum, unless the people organise themselves and take care of the democratic institutions as early as possible. The people in Punjab as well as in every other part of the country will have to resist the policy of divide and destroy of the governments that be.

This can be accomplished by mass contacts, seminars, self-education camps and utilising the services of newspapers, radio and other media.

The people of Punjab have survived in spite of the political parties and their manoeuvrings. They have a rich heritage of the teachings of the Gurus. They should go back to the teachings of the Gurus, the Gita, the Upanishads and the Vedas. It will make them shed all fear and help them stand up like men to resist any and every injustice and exploitation imposed upon them by whom so ever and from which so ever quarter.

Once the people of Punjab learn to live as a united people, no government on the earth will be able to suppress their just demands within the frame work of Indian Constitution. Once the people of Punjab are united no "mad monk" would be able to create a cyclone of bitterness and hatred in their minds and make them witness atrocities and tortures of their fellow beings in utter callousness or fear of self extinction.

LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF PUNJAB

Chandigarh
25th December, 1984.

The Governor
The State of Punjab
Chandigarh

Dear Sir,

I returned to Punjab on 19th December to participate in a convention at Moga. It was sponsored by the Chairman of Punjab Sarvodaya Mandal - Mr. B. Goyal of Firozpur. One hundred and twentyfive persons participated out of which fiftyfive were Sikhs. Captain Ranjitsingh general secretary of district Congress was the Chairman of the reception committee. Acharya Rammurti - a great scholar and a Sarvodaya leader of long standing inaugurated the Convention.

As a result of the discussions a loose human brotherhood called "Punjab Insani Biradari" came into existence. It's aims are as follows:

- 1) To work for the unity and integrity of Punjab and India.
- 2) To work for the moral regeneration of the country.
- 3) To work for the preservation of democratic values.
- 4) To create an alternative power of Non-violence and Peace.

We got response from 6 districts in which Units were opened: 1) Firozpur 2) Faridkot 3) Bhatinda 4) Hoshiarpur 5) Patiala & 6) Ludhiana.

I visited Hoshiarpur & Ludhiana to address meetings of intelligentsia and arrived here this morning. After addressing a group meeting tomorrow at Gandhi Smarak Bhawan I shall leave for Lucknow.

I thought it proper to inform you of my activities in Punjab. Hence this letter.

With best regards,

Vimala Thakar

THE CAUSE OF PUNJAB AND PUNJABIYAT

PART TWO - 1985

LETTER TO MR. LONGOWAL & MR. BADAL

Dalhousie
17th May, 1985.

Dear Mr. Longowal & Mr. Badal, .

Though we do not know each other personally and have never met before, I take liberty of writing to you because of my deep concern for the conditions prevailing in Punjab and other parts of North India. Mr. Banarasidas Goel who brings this letter to you is an old colleague of mine from the days of Sant Vinobaji's Bhoodan Movement. Long back in the 50's I had travelled in every district of Punjab along with Lal Achinramji and late Pandit Om Prakash Trikha. That personal contact with the people of Punjab and Sikhs in particular awoke deep love and respect for this land and its people. That is why what has been happening here since 1982 has caused deep sorrow and anguish in my heart. You will hear from Mr. Goel how I travelled through the whole of Punjab in 1980 and 1984 (September and December). We formed Punjab Insani Biradari to maintain the Sikh-Hindu unity against the manouverings and conspiracies of the Ruling Party.

With this much introduction let me proceed with my special request to you both. It seems to me that the people of Punjab and the Sikh community in particular are eager to reform the structure of Center-State relationship. Shri Jai Prakash Narayan was also in favour of giving more autonomy to the State and strengthening the identity of each State and its culture. The Sikh community does not seem to favour the idea of a separate Sikh nation. There is a powerful minority which has the power of money and weapons and the momentum of hatred and bitterness, which recklessly talks about a separate Sikh nation. They have developed a cult of violence and have been releasing negative, destructive energies since the last four years.

Akali Dal is the only political party which can and should control the extremist element in the Sikh community living in Punjab as well as in other parts of India. Akali Dal is the only political party which could and should negotiate with the Government of India for the political and economic demands of Punjab.

I do hope that your resignations are a part of strategy to assemble not only the moderates in the Party but also in the whole of Punjab around you both. If it is not a part of a bigger strategy and if it implies submission to the aggressive extremist group that has put up Jogendra Singh Bhindranwale as its leader, it will result not only in a total chaos in Punjab but also in the destruction of Akali Dal which has played an important role since 1920 in the political life of the country.

I would request you not to submit or yield to the extremist element, for the sake of Punjab as well as the whole of India. If the Central Government of India and the Ruling Party have lost all credibility with the Sikh Community, would you be willing to discuss the demands with a National Panel appointed jointly by Organisations like P.U.C.L., C.F.D., Nagrik Aekta Manch, Servants of People Society, Sikh National Forum and Punjab Insani Biradari, etc.? Supposing names of persons like Shri V.M. Tarkunde, Shri Nani Palkhivala, Shri I.K. Gujral, Maj. Arjun Singh Aurora, are suggested by us, would you be inclined to accept them? If there is a possibility of you accepting the Panel we would immediately get into touch with the above mentioned Organisations, set up the Panel and persuade the Delhi Government to accept it. This implies however that both the parties, that is, the Akali Dal and the Central Government accept the decisions of the Panel provided they are not contrary to National integrity and are not against the Indian Constitution.

I have dared to write this letter after studying your communications with the people in Punjab and Delhi since your release from jail. Your statement that Akali Dal has always relied upon Lok Shakti and not upon Loha Shakti has encouraged me. Your statement that the solution to Sikh problem has to be found within the framework of Indian Constitution has made me feel that Punjab needs your leadership.

You would agree with me that the situation after the recent violence in Delhi and other Northern States has aggravated and complicated the issue. If we do not act immediately in a very daring and bold way and make it clear to the extremists that Akali Dal is against all violence and shall put it down through Peoples' Power of Peace. The sporadic violence might push us towards either Civil war in Punjab or a Guerilla Warfare on the part of the extremists with the government of India. Then the situation will be beyond the control both of the Akali Dal and the Government of India and perhaps even of the army. All of us have to put our heads together and prevent such an eventuality.

LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER

Shiv Kul
Dalhousie
16th May, 1985.

Dear Prime Minister,

Let me express heartfelt relief that the plot to assassinate you was unearthed long before your actual visit to U.S.A. May you be blessed with long life.

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Punjab Insani Biradari and myself.

The situation in Punjab is extremely explosive. The disintegration of Akali Dal as a political party has strengthened the extremist group, led by Baba Joginder Singh. Thousands of young men and women are still under the spell of Dhindranwale and the dream he had aroused of "Khalsa Raj". Though the Sikh people beyond the age of 40 see the stupidity of cherishing such a dream and are against the use of loot, arson and violence, the young people feel a sense of adventure in working for "Khalsa Raj" and in using violence as a means to obtain it.

Let us not be under an illusion that the total disintegration of Akali Dal will pave the way for a Congress (I) victory in the

State. The Ruling Party as well as the Government of India will then be left with the Sikh extremists as the sole opponents on one hand and with Hindu fundamentalists as a main obstruction on the other, in the path of national integrity and the survival of democracy.

I hope I'm wrong in my assessment of the situation, but I'm apprehensive that it is not far from a correct one. This anguish and concern embolden me to send you a copy of my latest article on Punjab.

LETTER TO SHRI. MULCHAND JAIN

Dalhousie
18 th June, 1985.

Respected Shri. Mulchandji,

I have received your kind letter dated 7-6-85. I thank you for studying the article "Act Before It Explodes" *and sending me your comment and views.

(1) The Punjab situation has undoubtedly improved in some ways since I wrote that article on 11th May. But the crisis is not yet diffused as you would like to believe. The currents and undercurrents within the Ruling Party and its Punjab Branch are the source of many complications. Let us hope that Mr. Longowal and his colleagues would survive the onslaught on them by the terrorists as well as the Punjab Congress (I) leaders.

(2) I agree with you that it would have been better if the Union Government had invited Shri Longowal and Shri Badal immediately after their release for direct talks. But it is not yet too late if the Prime Minister invites them on his return from U.S.A., a way to solve the Punjab tangle could still be arrived at. The hesitation on the part of the Union Government seems to be on account of their indecision about the army deserters as well as thousands of Sikh youths who have been arrested since June 1984. Unless the government make up their mind about

the two points as well as perhaps about punishing the culprits of November 1984 massacres it will be meaningless to hold talks with the Akali leaders.

(3) The greatest tragedy of this country has been the lack of real national opposition party. Democracy without a sound opposition party, has no reality. It is a fictitious democracy.

I am not very sure that Mrs. Gandhi's murder was planned by only a few Sikh fanatics. Nor am I so sure that it was CIA who planned it. The culprits seem to be or must be in India and Indians.

Yes, there was discrimination against Hindus even under Janata government under Mr. Badal's leadership. The Hindus in Punjab as well as those throughout the country have also not behaved in a becoming manner.

(4) It is the big farmer who in unison with the industrialist and businessmen, want to rule the country. But for the full support of the big landlords Mr. N.T. Ramarao would be nowhere. In Bihar it is the Brahmin versus Rajput. In Gujarat it is the Rajput versus Patel (Farmers mostly)

(5) I will stand by my statement that the real political combat in near future is going to be between the communalist and communist - not only in Punjab, but through the whole country. The Centrists are doomed. It would be the extreme rightists as against the extreme leftists. The former are fascists and the latter totalitarians.

(6) The government is conscious of the terrorists having links with their counterparts in Pakistan. But instead of winning them back or handling them in a skilful way, the government has tried to crush the terrorists. In that desperate action the innocents in hundreds have been and are being harassed, tortured and even killed. Whereas the real ones have escaped and do escape with the help of sympathetic government officers, security forces and so on.

(7) Exercising the Power of Peace unilaterally would become a necessity very soon. Of course one would love to see bilateral negotiations between the government and the Sikh leaders. But these will not come about unless the guilty of November massacre are punished.

(8) I did not include the Abohar Fazilka Issue as well as the canal issue on purpose. Both the issues are bound to be raised by the people of Haryana. It is for the Chandigarh people to decide whether they want to stay in Union Territory or go to Punjab.

I thank you once again for studying my article.

With best regards,

Vimala

**MEETING OF INSANI BIRADARI AT DALHOUSIE;
26th & 27th JUNE, 1983**

Names of participants:

1. Vimalaji
2. Shri Banarasidas Goel
3. Shri Jagannathji
4. Comrade Ramnathanji
5. Shri Satyapaul Grover
6. Shri. Thakar, Advocate Ferozepur Cantt.
7. Shri Savitriben
8. Prof. Ramji Singh
9. Shri Inderjit Singh
10. Shri Bairaj Puri

Report on action taken:

SHRI BANARASIDAS GOEL

1. Vimalajl's article "ACT BEFORE IT EXPLODES " *had been published in English & Punjab and distributed widely throughout Punjab, by hand and through the mail. It also had been sent to a number of newspapers for publication. Copies of the article had also been sent to all political parties, MLAs and to the prime minister and home minister.

Mr. Goel had personally gone and met Shri Badal, Giani Kripalsingji and left letter and article for Shri Longowal.

Review on the Punjab situation:

On the subject of TERRORISM:

SHRI BANARASIDAS GOEL : All the youth who are in custody now should have their cases taken up by the courts immediately and judgement should be given fast.

2. Special courts have been set up to take speedy decisions but since 90% of them are corrupt they should be abolished.

SHRI THAKAR : ADVOCATE : In order for terrorism to end, one has to work first to remove th differences from the minds of the people.

PROF : RAMJI SINGH : We can't put the responsibility of all terrorist activity on Congress (I)

2. The aim of all terrorist activity is the creation of Khalistan

3. After the Blue Star Operation the number of people demanding Khalistan increased.

4. Terrorists may be few but those who want Khalistan are in a large number.

5. Sikhs even intellectuals are not clear about the implications of Khalistan. It is an emotional response after blue star. It is very difficult to deal with this emotional response through rational means.

6. Though Akalis are not demanding Khalistan right now it could be a strategy.

Please refer to "Vimalajl on National Problems" for the article

7. There is also the problem of Sikh identity. They feel that their identity and their religion is at stake, and their honour has been hurt. For that Rajiv should go to the Golden Temple and apologise for what has been done. Bansal and Bhagal should be removed.

8. The problem also has an economic side. In the cities the Hindus are in a majority 70% as against 30% Sikhs and they are much richer, there is a great disparity in wealth among the two communities.

In the country the Sikhs are in majority, but even there, there is an economic disparity. The rich Jat farmers are 10% of the population and they support the Akali Party, those who supported Bhindranwale were from the lower economic strata of the Jat community and were mainly unemployed.

SHRI SATYAPPAUL GROVER : The Punjab situation has improved since 1984. Tension is less because of the release of Akali leaders and because of the good work that Rajiv is doing.

2. The attitude Longowal is taking has also helped ease the fear in the minds of the Hindus.

VIMALAJI : If the terrorists in Punjab only constitute a handful of the population, why have not the military, para military and the police been able to eliminate them? Does it mean that there is something wrong with the administration that they can't catch them?

On the subject of ELECTIONS IN PUNJAB

VIMALAJI: If no negotiations take place between the Akalis and the Union Government prior to the elections, it seems the Akalis may not participate in the elections.

2. If there are no elections held then people can in their individual capacity contact any one they feel necessary and talk to them about All Party Government.

SHRI BANARASIDAS GOEL : If Akalis don't come to the negotiating Table let the government take unilateral decision

2. Both parties have made good advances but there should be no further delay in solving the problems. If the demands are

conceded without any delay a conducive atmosphere will be created to solve the deadlock.

SHRI SATYAPPAUL GOVER: If the Akalis don't agree on holding the elections they won't allow them to take place.

2. It is not possible to form a coalition government because of the bitterness that now exists between the two parties.

SHIR BALRAJ PURI : The problem of Punjab cannot be solved unless there is a sharing of power.

2. There should an interim government, an All Party Government in Punjab before elections are held so there will be the sharing of power.

3. Speaking about all party government will also help the Akalis to save face and work with the opposition parties.

4. The Union government should not be involved but the sharing of power should be sorted out between the Hindu and Sikh leaders keeping in mind the demands of the Punjabi people.

5. The Akalis should not limit themselves to only Sikh membership. They must be ready to share their political power. They should be ready to make Akali Dal into Punjabi Dal

ON THE OVERALL PICTURE :

SHIR BALRAJ PURI : The Hindus in Punjab should talk about their problem in the Punjab context and not go into the national aspects of their problem. In that way they should become more parochial and articulate exactly what their problem as a minority community in Punjab are, such as their feeling of insecurity.

2. The Punjabi identity can become a common forum between Hindus and Sikhs.

3. One should investigate if it is possible to make a common Punjabi political front.

4. The Sikhs have a martyr complex and this should be touched for constructive ends. Sikhs should be invited to give up their life in defending the safety of innocent citizens. This can help to counteract terrorism.

VIMALAJI : The possibility of a dialogue seems very slim hence the necessity for unilateral action.

2. As time keeps slipping by without any concrete steps being taken the people will become frustrated.

3. Akali leaders have been released, the Prime Minister keeps talking about finding a solution and yet there is no breakthrough in sight, all this will add to the frustration.

4. The biggest obstacle in the Prime Minister's path are the members from his own party, particularly from Punjab.

5. If there are no elections and president's rule is extended, it will bring about a further sense of despair and frustration among the people, the situation will revert to the one prevailing in 1984.

YOUTH CAMPS

It has been agreed upon to hold. One youth camp in the 4 districts of Punjab where there is an Insani Biradari Center.

1. Moga Camp 3rd to 7th August
2. Sangrur Camp : First Week of September
3. Jullunder Camp : First week of September
4. Amritsar Camp: In November after Diwali

College students will be invited between the age of 17 to 19. About 50 to 100 youths will be invited ratio of Sikh and Hindu students is hoped will be 50-50.

Daily Activities :

A Project for Shramdan will be taken up, which the students will spend 1 1/2 hours daily on, and will complete by the end of the camp.

Talks will be given on:

1. Historical background of the Freedom Struggle
2. Political Education which will include topics like implications of democracy and secularism. 2. A Comparative study of socialism, communism, federalism. 3. The concept of Unity in diversity. 4. An introduction to the Constitution of India.
3. Gandhi and Sarvodaya Philosophy.
4. History of the Evolution of Punjabi culture.

Cultural evenings will be organised daily with emphasis on folk songs, dances and contemporary dramas.

BUDGET :

Present deficit of Rs. 1,500 will be wiped out when the funds of Rs. 1,600 which have been promised are collected.

Budget for April 1985 to March 1986 is estimated at Rs 12,000/- of which Rs 2,600 has already been promised.

DECISION TAKEN

It was decided to publish the article "Act Before It Explodes" *In Hindi together with a brief description of Insani Bradari and the work it has done so far.

LETTER TO SHRI B. GOEL

Dalhousie
6th July, 1985.

Dear Brother

Received you kind letter dated 2-7-1985. We have posted a letter to Kashi and another to your Firozpur address. We have

* Please refer to "Vimalalji on National Problems" for the article

sent an article on Punjab, with Sri Mittalji. Copies of the same have been sent to Sardar MubarakSing and Sri Jagannathji as well as Sri Satpalji with the request to get it published in local papers.

Insani Biradari has to spread its wings far and wide over Punjab in the next four months through youth camps and distribution of literature.

It would be a good idea to invite political party leaders to meet Acharya Rammurti at Amritsar. If you feel it necessary you can invite Shri Balraj Puri C/O J & K Affairs Committee, Jammu. He will be an asset to your work in Punjab. The time is not yet ripe to talk about Coalition Government in Punjab let the elections take place. See what happens in them. If all goes well with elections and no party emerges with clear majority the issue of coalition government would become relevant. If no elections are held and the President's Rule gets extended then also the issue would become relevant.

Sri Krishnakantji has a different approach to the whole problem. He wants it to be tackled on a cultural level. We had long sessions together. He wishes to deal with problems on a national level.

I would request you to see Sant Longowal and convey my suggestions : About 600 youths have been released from jail. Where will they go? What will they do? If they go to Gurudwaras and feed on charity, what will happen to their minds? I wonder if the Akali Dal could shoulder the responsibility of rehabilitating them emotionally and economically? It would be so helpful if youth camps could be organised for them, a new orientation be given to them! Shri P. S. Badal, Sant Longowal, major general ArjunSingh and Auroraji could immediately organise a committee to undertake this urgent task. If the youth are not rehabilitated they might turn to still more terrorism. It does not seem desirable to ask the government to do it. The dignity and honour demand that the Sikh community as a whole takes care of these precious young blood.

With kind regards,

Vimala

LETTER TO Lt. GEN. AURORA,

Dalhousie
7th July, 1985.

Dear Lt. Gen. Aurora,

I wonder if you have seen a copy of my first article on Punjab "ACT BEFORE IF EXPLODES"? I am sending herewith a copy of the second article on the Punjab situation. But this letter is intended to share with you my concern about the hundreds of youth who have been released in the last few weeks from police custody or jails.

I feel a bit concerned about the future of these youths. We do not know what they have gone through during the period of imprisonment. Perhaps they have gone through much physical suffering and mental torture. If they are left to themselves after getting released they might feel bewildered in the changed political situation or even get lost in the wilderness of extremism and terrorism.

1. It seems urgently necessary that rehabilitation camps are organised for them throughout Punjab where they are given new psychological orientation, where they have an opportunity to speak out their minds fearlessly and get an atmosphere of affection and trust.

2. One could find out how many need high school or college education and provision should be made to enable them to join the schools and colleges.

3. Those who do not need nor want to go back to colleges will have to be provided with some means of livelihood. I'm afraid that they will be looked upon as "suspects" by the government and could find it difficult to get jobs in private or public sector. So the leaders of Punjab will have to find out ways and means of employing the youth. Perhaps you could persuade the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee to finance such projects. They should have sufficient funds even to start small scale or medium scale industries for these youths.

4. Under no circumstances should the youth be entrusted to mere charity of lodging and boarding that Gurudwaras might and most probably will provide them with. Feeding on charity

ill further deprive the young people of their sense of dignity and responsibility. Moreover it will isolate them from the rest of the society.

have sent personal letter to this effect to Sant Longowalji and Sri P.S.Badal.

Vimala Thakar

LETTER TO SHRI R.K.PATIL

Dalhousie
July 10, 1985.

My dear Dada Saheb,

Your letter dated 18-6-1985 reached here on 8th July.

The unilateral action would become a necessity only if the talks between the Union Government and the Sikh leaders do not take place. Not otherwise.

The unilateral action would be based upon the results of the tripartite talks that were held with the previous Prime Minister.

It seems that the talks will not take place until all those detainees are released against whom there are no criminal charges. There are 175 boys among the 600 released up till now, who are under the age of 20. There are hundreds more behind the bars who are under the age of 20. No charges could be framed against the 600 and I am sure none could be found against most of the others who have been detained since June 1984.

I am not referring to the military deserters. They will have to be dealt with as per the military rules.

What do the Akalis want? They want the enquiry of the November massacres in various parts of North India. They want the guilty to be punished after the enquiry. I hope that you are aware of the report on the massacre, published by P.U.I. I would request you to go through it. Then you will see how

and why the guilty will not be punished!

My article "Act before It Explodes" *was written in May the situation is much changed since then. Herewith is sent a copy of my second article "What Next in Punjab?" with best regards.

COPY OF SRI R.K.PATIL'S LETTER

Nagpur
June 8, 1985.

My dear Smt. Vimala Bahen,

This is to acknowledge the pamphlet you sent to me "Act before it explodes". Your solution seems to be that through unilateral action by government, Chandigarh should be made over to Punjab and river waters dispute should be referred to supreme court. I am afraid that the is a very simple over simplification of the problem. It is difficult to say what the Akalis want now. The danger in unilateral action by the government as recommended by you is that it will serve as an instigation to other demands by the Akalis. This is my view of the situation and it is based on the history of the Sikh problem right from the year 1947. I enclose for your information an article which I have written on this subject.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY PUNJAB INSANI BIRADARI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. AT ITS MEETING ON 4-8-85 AT SATYA SAI MURLIDHAR AYURVEDIC COLLEGE MOGA.

1. This meeting of Punjab Insani Biradari Executive Committee unanimously welcome the agreement reached between the Central Government and Shiromani Akali Dal to solve the lingering Punjab crisis and appreciate the initiative taken by Shri Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister of India, courage

* Please refer to "Vimalaji" on "National Problems" for the article

of Sant Harchand Singh Logowal and selfless and sincere efforts of Shri Arjun Singh, Governor of Punjab in the larger interest of Punjab and the country and heartily congratulate them.

Punjab Insani Biradari is confident that the agreement will be implemented with same speed and spirit with which it has been reached and signed.

2. This meeting appeals to Baba Joginder Singh united Akali Dal to help in implementation of this accord in the interest of Punjab and to strengthen the unity of Punjabis for creating goodwill atmosphere for the progress and prosperity of Punjab.

3. This meeting appeals to the opposition parties of Haryana and Rajasthan to cooperate in implementation of the agreement reached between the Central Government and Shiromani Akali Dal in the same spirit in which their National leaders have approved and welcomed this agreement for restoring peace and harmony in the Border State of Punjab in the larger interest of the country.

THE CAUSE OF PUNJAB AND PUNJABIYAT

PART THREE - 1986

MESSAGE TO PUNJAB

The people of Punjab are faced with the challenge of resolving terrorism and the cult of violence. Terrorism in Punjab has roots in foreign countries and foreign culture. It has roots in unearned income and a sense of arrogance that accompanies such money. Terrorism and violence are the by-product of directionless, irresponsible attitude towards life. A terrorist can never be a Hindu or a Sikh. Terrorism and violence are anti-religious; anti-human and anti-social.

The people of Punjab will have to rally round their State Government and help it in every way to root out terrorism from the sacred soil of Punjab. Unless the people cooperate with the government and expose the terrorists, the government

will not be able to resolve the problem. Unless the political parties and leaders take a pledge not to use violence and terror against one another for petty little personal or group feuds or ambitions, the government will not be able to eliminate terrorism.

Non-party social service organizations and cultural leaders of all the communities, should travel together through each district and explain to the people the urgency of ending terrorism. Teachers and students should march through the length and breadth of Punjab and persuade the people to see the long term cultural damage being caused by violence to the minds of children and to the peace and prosperity of Punjab.

Wake up before there is blood-shed again on a large scale. Wake up, my friends, before it is too late.

Vimala Thakar

Mount Abu

February 4, 1986.

LETTER TO FRIENDS

Camp : Blaricum, Holland.

Date : 25-9-86

Dear Friends,

It seems to me that the national situation is much more grim than in 1973-74. The very survival of Democracy was then in grave danger. Jai Prakashji as an extremely alert and sensitive leader as well as a person of penetrating political vision sensed the implications of the danger. It made him travel round the country, meet the intelligentsia, organise seminars of jurists and youth conferences to create and awareness of the grave challenge. It made him launch the Total Revolution Movement and even accept the challenge thrown by Mrs. Gandhi to decide the issue through open election. It made him bring the mutually incompatible political parties like Janata Party and Bharatiya Janata Party and Socialists together as well as mutually incompatible

personalities like Mr. Morarji Desai, Mr. Jagjivan Ramji and Mr. Charan Singh. It is unwarranted to believe or imagine that J.P. was so naive as not to see the harsh realities of "opposition culture" along with the "Congress I culture". He must have felt that he had to take the risk of uniting all then available forces and avert the destruction of democracy.

The situation is worse today as opposition parties are more fragmented than before. The situation is worse as the ruling party is equally fragmented. The situation is worse because of a large number of separatist and anti-national movements. The cult of violence and organised terrorism has become immensely powerful. The state violence and terrorism are also equally if not more pronounced today. Religious fundamentalism has emerged as a power to reckon with.

But more than all these points, is the danger of a new sophisticated trend of liberalising economy and strangulating the democratic institutions i.e. the political and administrative structures. Personalization of power is at its highest. There seems to be total absence of sharing the decision making or policy making process even with the members of the Union Cabinet. Russian politics and North American Economic planning can ill go together.

There is no towering National leader like J.P., opposition parties do not seem to have learnt any lesson from 1980 fiasco. The personality clashes, the ego trips and such other trivialities reign supreme. The non-political moral force of the Sarvodaya Movement has been and is fragmented. Moreover they are unwilling to discuss political issues with a will to act upon them.

It is not easy to convene any national meet for a person like me who is person-non-grades to the political leaders or economists, journalists etc., etc.

We may invite together a few persons who are willing to participate unassumingly in a workshop provided the convenors are non-controversial individuals. Needless to say that I shall contribute my humble bit if and when such meet or workshop takes place.

I have written down some points. It is not necessary that we include all the issues raised by me. But some such fundamental issues will have to be taken up seriously, if the exercise is to be meaningful and relevant to the grave challenge we face today.

With Best Regards,

Vimala Thakar.

THE PROBLEMS WITH WHICH INDIA IS FACED

NATIONAL INTEGRITY · Territorial, Political & cultural.

It is challenged by :

- (A) Khalistan Movement and the cult of terrorism in Punjab.
- (B) Inability to implement the Assam Accord as regards Foreign Nationals and sealing of the Border.
- (C) The loopholes in Mizoram Accord. Emergence of the demands for greater Mizoram, General Amnesty & Special Status.
- (D) Gorakhaland Movement and its genesis.
- (E) Kashmir and the issue of dissolution of Legislative Assembly and fresh elections within six months.
- (F) Communal riots as well as the emergence of violence and terrorism in Gujarat.
- (G) Clandestine consolidation of Jharkhand Movement.

(2) ANTI · PEOPLE ECONOMY

India still lives in five hundred thousand villages.

Agriculture, cottage & village industries have been and shall be the sources of self-employment.

Agriculture has been callously ignored.

Cottage & village industries have been destroyed.

Villages have no drinking water and no irrigation provisions.

How to increase per capital productivity and purchasing power is the main issue.

How to introduce "Drip-Irrigation" system used in Israel is another valiant issue.

The anti-village trend of economic planning will have to be changed for Pro-Village and Pro-People emphasts.

(3) ONE CIVIL CODE

(A) The need for one common civil code in order to combat the divisive and separatist psyche of various communities.

(B) The urgent need to create a national consensus on the future of "Reservation Policy & Roaster System" in educational institutions as well as government jobs.

(4) ELECTIONAL SYSTEM

Corruption, Casteist and Communalist attitudes as well as violence at the time of setting up candidates and at polling booths is a cancerous disease to the body politic.

It is urgently needed to reform the electional system as per Tarkunde Committee's recommendations.

It is badly needed to stimulate a national will to fight the corruption, communalism, casteism and violence.

(5) CITIZENS' SECURITY FORCES

There is no choice but to build up Citizens' Security Forces throughout the country. It could be called "Peace Army".

Unless the people become activists for peace and protect person and property, the country would be torn apart by the growing cult of violence and terrorism.

OUR STAND ON PUNJAB

1. We condemn Violence
Whether it is by the people or the government
Violence shall never end violence
2. We condemn Terrorism
Whether it is by the people or the state.
Terrorism cannot be justified as a means to achieve
political or economic end.
3. A terrorist is neither a Sikh nor a Hindu
He is lost to humanity due to fanaticism.
4. We condemn centralization of political power.
Democratic society requires that the power be shared by
people from the village level to the level of federal
government.

Hence we sympathise with the demand of the Sikh
community for more autonomy to the states, through their
Anandpur Sahib resolution of 1978 and 1983.

5. We would love to see the implementation of Longowal
Accord as per the interpretation by Mr. Surjitsingh
Barnala. The central government and the government of
Punjab together must urgently implement the accord in
letter and spirit.

FOR OUR CONSIDERATION

1. The Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab should jointly condemn
Terrorism and Violence through:
 1. Joint Prayer Meetings.
 2. Joint processions and joint statements.
2. The Sikhs & Hindus in Punjab should openly boycott
terrorists non-cooperate with them individually and
collectively.
3. The people living in Punjab should cooperate with the
Punjab government in its efforts to protect law and order and
also protect the lives of people living in Punjab.

4. The Sikhs living outside Punjab but in various parts of India must openly, publicly condemn the terrorism and violence taking place in Punjab. They must actively help the Punjab government to root out terrorism from public life.

5. If the Sikh community does not exercise their influence, moral pressure upon the Sikh youth (extremists & terrorists) within a period set out after deliberations with them, the non-Sikh community will have no other choice but to declare a social boycott on them as well as carry a campaign of economic non-cooperation. May there be no need of such a drastic step. But the Hindu youth cannot be contained for a longer time, if the killings of innocent people continues unabated in Punjab.

6. We request Mr. S. N. Subbarao to organize a Youth Peace Force of at least one thousand youths from all parts of India and to arrange their batches for marching through the terror stricken areas of Punjab, singing songs of Human Brotherhood, National Unity and the teachings of Guru Granthsahib.

7. We request the government of India to convene a round table conference on Punjab at its earliest possible convenience.

Villa Era, Biellese
Italy

October 28, 1986.

THE CAUSE OF PUNJAB AND PUNABIYAT

PART FOUR - 1987

LETTER TO SHRI. SATYAPPAUL GROVER

Camp : Mount Abu
March 5, 1987.

Dear Satyapaulji,

Received your letter along with the report and a copy of your letter to Sri Baba Amte. The facts narrated in the report are disturbing but are they unexpected? What is happening in Punjab and about Punjab at the national level is more disturbing than what you noticed in your Padyatra.

The questions we must ask ourselves before we approach the people in Punjab are as follows:

- 1) Why is it that the Central Government and the Punjab Government are unable to implement the "Accord" inspite of their claims that they had made "Honest" efforts for doing so? What have been and are the factors which have prevented or prevent the implementation?
- 2) Why is it that Jodhpur detainees have still not been charge-sheeted, punished or released even after the whole of India has been pressing for it?
- 3) How could the government accept Ranganath Misra's Report which has obviously presented an incorrect assessment of the "Delhi-Riots"? Does the government think that people of Punjab and India can be deceived by such tricks? To say that the riots were neither planned nor organized is the limit of cheekiness. To blame the lower cadre of Congress (I) workers and the police for those indescribably inhuman massacres is the limit of naivishness. The government of India should once again read the book "Who is guilty?". They should once again discuss the matter seriously with Senior Citizens of India like Sri V.M. Tarkunde, Sri Soli Sorabji and other members of "CJC" who had tried their level best to attract the notice of the Misra Commission towards the reality of the situation.

4) How is it that Mr. Prakash Singh Badal and Mr. Tohra are still under arrest? How is it that they have neither been charged nor tried? To retain them in Jail without trial is a definite provocation.

5) Why was it necessary to postpone the elections in Haryana? How could any one assure the people of Punjab that the postponement is not connected with the "Punjab Accord"?

6) Why is it that inspite of all the possible support from the Central Government and the Herculean efforts of Mr. J. Riberio, the Punjab Government cannot contain the "Terrorists"? Does this indicate that the Punjab Police is reluctant to contain terrorism? Does it imply that the Punjab Police is not accountable to the Chief Minister? Does it indicate that the Punjab Police are not only conniving terrorism but have positive sympathy with the cause the terrorists are fighting for?

I am bewildered to see that the Opposition has accepted the Central Government's policy about the Punjab issue! The Prime Minister has claimed in his speech in the Lok Sabha that his government's policy has been vindicated by the unanimous support of the total opposition. One fails to understand how the Opposition has not asked the above questions of themselves or even of the Prime Minister.

The whole year of 1986 and the first two months of 1987 have witnessed lootings, murders and massacres which undoubtedly exceed those of 1982 to 1984. Not a day passes without ghastly murders of innocent persons and daring looting of banks. Arrested terrorists or murderers manage to escape from jail, police custody or during transit. Extremists manage to kill magistrates in courtrooms, priests in temples and professors in broad day light!

How long does the Indian Government want the citizens of India to remain witnesses to this phenomenon? Padayatra's and National Unity-Integrity Meetings are not going to help, who can excel the noble efforts of Sri Baba Amte? Who can excel the Punjab Action Committee and their efforts? Is it not yet evident that Punjab requires an immediate Political Solution?

Either the Government dares to implement a political solution with the help of Sri Barnala and his colleagues, with the determination to face the consequences, which cannot be worse than what is happening today, or imposes President's Rule or hands over Punjab once again to the Military. This does not mean that the Military Rule or the President's Rule are anywhere near a solution. But they might at least put an end to meaningless, shameful and ghastly murders and lootings.

With the increasing and eloquent condemnation of terrorism by the Sikhs living outside Punjab in various parts of India, it should not be difficult for the Government of India to convene a Round Table Conference and arrive at a consensus about the political solution. Given the present atmosphere in the country such a step seems feasible. It is the only choiceless dignified way to deal with the Punjab issue. All the questions mentioned in this letter could be dealt with by the Round Table Convention. As the issue has been recognized to be a national one, let the nation participate in its solution.

LETTER TO SHRI A.B. VAJPAYEE

Mount Abu
March 7, 1987.

Dear Atalji,

We have come to know each other rather well, through Sri Krishnakantji as well as Vishnu Pandya. Hence the liberty I am taking of writing to you.

I am apprehensive about the policy of the government, concerning Punjab. Punjab has been under police control since January 1986. It was once also under military control. Military and Police cannot solve political problems. To my mind Punjab needs an immediate political solution. The nation might have to prepare itself to face the consequences of the same.

Secondly it seems suicidal to demoralize the Sikh community who are still a substantial part of our combating forces. The policy about the Gorakhaland movement is also causing psychological alienation of another community who form nearly six percent of our combating forces.

I am sending herewith a copy of my letter to Sri S.P.Grover who has recently returned from a Padayatra in Punjab he was accompanied by S.N. Subbarao and 25 youth selected from various parts of India. A copy of my article on Punjab published in our bi-monthly is also attached herewith.

I hope that you will play a significant role in escalating the speed towards the political solution.

Let us hope that life will cause our meeting somewhere, sometime.

LETTER TO SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN

Mount Abu
March 7, 1987

My dear Radhakrishnan,

At last the Kudal Commission had to be wound up! You have borne the brunt of the ordeal with great courage and skill. Congratulations.

I am not at all happy the way things are shaping in Punjab and in the rest of India about Punjab. The Indian intelligentsia, the Human rights organizations and the Sikh Community cannot be way laid by Mishra Report and the National Unity Campaigns. The situation is too serious for such juvenile gimmicks.

Unfortunately the entire opposition has walked into the trap of the Indian government. Or perhaps the under-current of Hindu Supremacy-consciousness has inhibited their understanding! It seems really suicidal to allow demoralization of Sikh Community which forms twelve

percent of our combating forces. Police and Military cannot substitute political solutions. I am sending herewith a copy of my letter to S.P. Grover. Would you be kind enough to show it to Shri V.M. Tarkunde and convey my best regards to him

The progressive psychological alienation of the Gorakha Community is also a political blunder. They constitute six percent of our combating forces!

I hope Shri Tarkunde, Solt Sorabji, R R Diwakar and your kind self would play important role in impressing upon the Rajiv government the urgency of a political solution

LETTERS TO SHRI SATYAPPAUL GOVER

Camp : Dalhousie
May 13, 1987.

Dear Satyapaul,

The die has been cast. There would be President's Rule in Punjab for the next six months. So there is nothing to discuss about Punjab. I wonder if Congress (I) would win Haryana elections as the by-product of this imposition!

Let us not imagine that state violence will check or stop violence of the terrorists and extremists. It is violence provoked by an ideology and militant approach to implement it. It is not merely smugglers, bootleggers and criminals violence.

The R.L. Accord is buried. Erhad report shall see its grave in few days. The political detainees in Jodhpur or Ratpur shall remain without trial in their respective jails. More will be arrested. The cause of national integrity will never be served by Sword. Punjab needed and does need a political solution. The more we postpone the decision, the more powerful shall KFC become. The mini-civil-war shall become an open and full-fledged civil war. It could happen even before Haryana elections.

It seems that the 1984 November riot culprits will neither be charged nor punished. Why is the government of India

allowing itself in believing that the Sikh Community will forget the whole episode or that it can be appeased by other concessions to Punjab? History shall never forgive the Congress (I) government for such a grave crime of not punishing those who massacred thousands of citizens in cold blood.

Gujarat is reeling under communal riots manipulated by Politicians. Caste-riots, students' riots and every other kind of riot is manipulated to serve 'political' interests.

Camp : Dalhousie
3rd June, 1987.

Dear Satyapaulji,

Thanks for your kind letter of 6th May. So there is President's Rule in Punjab. I beg to disagree with you when you say that the solution lies with the leaders of political parties and religious leaders and not with the state government or the central government. I would not elaborate as the central government has imposed President's Rule and has promised to take care of law & order situation in Punjab. There have been 55 deaths since the imposition of the President's rule and one doesn't see any signs of the abatement of murders.

I would repeat that the problem is political rather than religious. It is our failure in finding out political solutions that has created a cult of terrorism. I refuse to blank the terrorists as criminals or smugglers. Their criminality and terrorism have a political cause behind them. Rightly or wrongly they have identified themselves with the political cause. The way the Barnala government was thrown out had no grace in it. Let us hope fervently that the President's Rule does not lead to a situation where the army intervention would become necessary and legitimate. Who would be happier than me if the common man rises up to the situation, lashes out at the political and religious leaders and operates Lok Shakti to defend himself against the injustices of the government and the violence of the extremists?

I am fully aware that my suggestion of a Referendum is not acceptable to most of my friends who feel a concern for solving the Punjab problem. And yet being a democrat, a humanitarian and a lover of freedom I stand by the proposal that was made by me some three years ago.

One would love to see that there is political and administrative decentralization. What harm is there is there is a Gorkhaland, Jharkhand or Uttarakhnad within the framework of Indian constitution? What harm is there if Sikhistan gets created within the framework of Indian constitution? How one wishes that states like U.P., Bihar, M.P. and Rajasthan are cut into smaller states. Not being a social or political leader these are observations of a lover of humanity and a citizen of the world.

Camp : Dalhousie
14th June, 1987

My dear Satyapaulji.

Hope that you have reached Delhi safely. The murder of 11 persons in Delhi, the wounding of more than 21 persons in Delhi by terrorists travelling in motor cars and using stenguns, is shocking. Equally shocking are the killings in Amritsar. There will be more killings and even massacres in the next three days, with a view to protest against the P.M.'s election speeches in Haryana. The language used in the speeches and the repeated reference to Chandigarh, water distribution and assurance of eliminating terrorism through Police Action - all is unwarranted, unstatesman like and provoking.

President's Rule is the last chance not for Punjab but for the government of India to implement a political solution. No popular government could be installed peacefully without concrete steps towards the solution. The language of package deal and the intention to use Jodhpur detainees and Badal, Tohra, Mann's detention and early trial of others arrested, is going to prove most fatal.

The government of India will not be able to buy a Sikh leader with promises, nor is the government's position so strong (morally & legally) as to enable them to bargain for law & order

In Punjab. One wishes that the government would be able to take a decision and act before Giani Zail Singh retires. A decision taken with the cooperation and sanction of a Sikh President of India would be respected by the world.

Please remember that it would be at all worth while to organise the meeting you so deeply want to, only if dear Krishna Kant and I.K. Gujral are willing to become the conveners. If they think it to be meaningful. It is no use arranging meetings if these two thinkers of vision feel that it is not relevant.

With best wishes,

Vimala Thakar

THE CAUSE OF PUNJAB AND PUNJABIYAT

PART FIVE - 1988

**AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF
INDIA AS WELL AS THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA**

Mount Abu
24 th January, 1988.

Dear Sirs,

This letter is written by a responsible citizen of India. The undersigned is a religious person and has nothing but humanitarian considerations behind taking the liberty of addressing a personal open letter to both of you.

It was on 12th May 1987, that the President's rule was imposed upon Punjab, and the Barnala Government was dismissed. It was done with desire to improve the law and order situation in Punjab. It was done with a view to contain the terrorist violence and murdering in Punjab.

It seems that the purpose has not been fulfilled in the last seven months. In spite of various intensive steps like "Combing", "Flushing out", the heinous violence continues. In spite of the official claim of having arrested thousands and killed hundreds of "terrorists" and "suspects" the violence continues. The first month of the new year has witnessed horrible escalation in the slaughtering rate. Women and children have also been murdered.

The President's Rule had given an opportunity both to the Government of India as well as the Sikh Community living in Punjab and other parts of India to evolve a political solution to the Sikh problem. The Sikh community and its leaders misused the opportunity and indulged in petty squabbles. The Government of India also went on the defensive and did not take initiative in calling a national Round Table Conference to arrive at a political solution and implement it speedily.

We have drifted backwards towards a crisis of violence in Punjab comparable to the situation in 1983-84 which had

obliged us to launch "BLUE STAR" operation. No democratic elections can be held in the present situation; nor is there any possibility of the situation calming down in the next few months. One wonders if handing over Punjab to the military would be a wise or feasible step at all.

It seems morally desirable that the Home Minister of India should resign. He should own the responsibility for the failure in resolving the Law and Order in Punjab.

A round table conference of:

1. The leaders of political parties
2. The leaders of the Sikh community living in various parts of India as well as non-Indian countries of the world.
3. The representatives of the voluntary services organisations of India
4. Representatives of: (a) Sikh council of India; (b) Punjab Action Committee; (c) People's Union for Civil Liberties; (d) Servants of People Society etc. should be urgently convened.

If the Government of India has not been able to solve the problem let it turn to the people, the ultimate political authority and consult it with genuine humility and integrity of purpose.

We the people of India must not indulge in helpless suspense or float on the whims of tide. Act we must. We are racing against time. We have lost thousands of precious human beings in the last six years. We cannot afford to lose any more.

With Profound Respects,

Vimala Thakar

PLEASE MR PRESIDENT

The President of India addressed the joint sitting of the two houses of Parliament on February 22nd. One studied the address very carefully in order to find out what the President has to say about the burning Punjab problem. This is what he

has to say as per the report in INDIAN EXPRESS of February 23rd 1988, as well as Times of India.

(1) He accused Pakistan of assisting terrorists and secessionist elements in India and of continuing its clandestine efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.

(2) In Punjab the foremost task was to crush terrorism and isolate secessionists. The challenge of terrorism was being met with determination and concerned national effort.

3) Following President's Rule, the law enforcing agencies had harnessed the resurgent will of the people of Punjab, and mounted a determined campaign against misguided anti national elements.

(4) There can and will be no compromise over the nation's integrity and unity.

(5) In the search for a non violent political solution of the problem within the framework of the constitution, the government stands ready for a dialogue with all those who eschew violence.

Thank God ! The President has noticed that there are two problems. One of combating terrorism and secessionism. The other of searching for a non-violent political solution.

The million dollar question is whether terrorism is merely a Law & Order issue or it is connected with the political issue. Does the President and his Government realise that apart from the secessionist tendency of the misguided anti-nationals assisted by Pakistan, there is a political problem that can be resolved through a non-violent political solution ? In other words there are two categories in the Sikh Community. One is the secessionist terrorist groups. The other is the non-secessionist, non-anti-national Sikh citizens in Punjab.

The Government had entered into an accord with the second group in July 1985. There were elections in September 1985. Why could not the accord get implemented till May 1987? Why could not a non-violent political solution be found during those 20 months?

Terrorism rocked Punjab in 1982. During the Bhindranwale regime from 1982 to 1984 why was not the terrorism and secessionism tackled then with a firm grip? How is it that even Blue Star Operation, Pushing Out Operation and such other measures could not put an end to terrorism? The same has happened during the President's Rule since May 1987.

Something is missing surely. Perhaps Mr President, your government has missed the real point. As long as your government does not have the moral courage:

- (1) To implement - unilaterally if needed - Longowal-Rajiv Accord in letter and spirit as early as possible.
- (2) To release the Jodhpur detenus if the Government has no evidence of their crimes.
- (3) To punish the Delhi Riots criminals of 1984.

All the talk of the government's willingness to have a dialogue, is absolutely meaningless. The ball is in your court, Mr President.

If you and your Government are convinced that the terrorists and secessionists constitute only a small group of misguided youths, if you and your government are convinced that the rest of the Sikh community is all for retaining the integrity and Unity of India, what prevents you from issuing an invitation to the leaders of that community? If the leaders refuse your invitation the onus would be on them, for the continuation of the crisis. Today the onus seems to be on your Government.

To say that no talks are possible till the violence continues is to evade the issue. The violence is connected with the political problem. It is for an ideological cause. The political solution has to precede the ending of violence. The terrorists would lose all sympathy and support, once the three points mentioned previously, are met with fearlessly.

Supposing that Pakistan is involved in this business of terrorism and anti nationalism, what are the implications? Do we imply that the Pakistan Government is involved in the process of (1) Smuggling drugs and weapons (2) Supplying professional murderers (3) Providing money to the anti-

national elements, whatever we mean by those terms ? Or do we imply that it is the smugglers and anti social elements in Pakistan who are assisting the smugglers and anti-socials in Punjab?

It is fact that some Tamils in Tamilnadu helped the LTTE groups of Sri Lanka. Does it mean that the Government of India was clandestinely helping the Tigers in Tamilnadu as well as in Sri Lanka.

Let us suppose that the Government of India has proofs that Pakistan government has been and is involved, when did the government get the proofs? Surely in 1984. How is it that we could not take care of Indo-Pakistan Border Area by handing it over to the military, say for five years, since then? Why could not we protect the most sensitive areas of Punjab from the infiltration of professional terrorists or smugglers from across the borders?

Let us face the harsh reality that the so called misguided anti national youths have the backing of silent Sikh majority. No handful misguided youths in a small twelve districts state like Punjab can continue fighting the Mighty Indian Government, its police and para military forces for years together alone as they are doing ! They are fighting for a cause. And it is KHALISTAN. It is no use shying away from the hard facts.

The demand for Khalistan is evidently a reaction to the progressive centralization and concentration of political and administrative power in the last twenty years. States are losing their autonomy and even identity. Everything is controlled and directed by Delhi Durbar. The Hyderabad conclave of opposition parties had made a powerful plea for Devolution of power some years ago. The intelligentsia has been pressing for revising the issue of Centre-State relations.

If it is necessary to make changes in the constitution in order to create a Federal Republic and enable the states to enjoy more autonomy politically, economically and socially, the amendments will have to be gone through.

Khalistan can be avoided if the constitution is changed and we become a Federal Country like U.S.A. The integrity and unity can be maintained not by brandishing military power and the

use of President's Rule and Police at the slightest provocation, but by learning to govern the people with their consent.

If the government does not learn from the experience of happenings in Punjab since 1981, Khalistan will become a De Facto reality if not De Jure. You cannot crush the modern youth force by bullets ! You cannot play around casually with the militant SIKH PSYCHOLOGY.

We feel apprehensive that dismemberment of the country is imminent if decentralisation of political power through a federal structure is not gone through. May be the country needs a fresh approach to the constitution, to the Centre States relationship to the correction of regional imbalances and such other basic issues.

Thus Mr President please do reconsider the whole Punjab problem. Sir, it is not a mere law and order problem ! It is much more intricate. The ruling party cannot afford to weigh the situation only with an eye to the party gains in future elections. The ruling party can ill afford to play the game of Divide and Destroy ! Police Raj or Military operations are no substitutes for lasting political solutions.

24 th February, 1988

Mount Abu

LETTERS TO SHRI SATYAPPAUL GROVER

Mount Abu
28 th February, 1988.

Dear Satyapaulji,

As regards Punjab, I do not think we people can do anything as

- (1) In-fighting among Akalis
- (2) In-fighting in Congress (I) workers in Punjab

- (3) **Fragmetatism** in A. I. S. S. F. and
- (4) **Factionalism** among the terrorists themselves have ruined the whole situation.

Add to it the directionless functioning of the Union Government.

When I had mentioned Referendum on Khalistan some months ago, friends had ridiculed the proposal. I see it very clearly that Khalistan would become a De facto issue in several parts of Punjab. Perhaps it is already so in a number of Gurudwaras and a number of border districts.

Believe me, the situation is beyond Mr Riberio and Mr Ray. It is the absence of political initiative that is causing the failure of Riberio-Ray team. It is the indecision of the Union Government, which is paralysing the state police force and the state bureaucracy. Where would they be if tomorrow Rajiv Government decided to hold talks with terrorists? Where would they be if suddenly elections are announced and terrorists are allowed to contest them?

Rajiv Gandhi Government and its indecision on many a fundamental issue is the real problem. It is as much a problem, if not more, as the want on horrid killings and slaughtering by the terrorists. The only way out seems to reach the President and appeal to him to Act. Rays and Riberios should function directly under him rather than under the Rajiv Gandhi Government. Let him take the initiative and call a national convention.

Vimala Thakar

Mount Abu
20 th March, 1988.

Dear Brother.

Many thanks for your kind letter dated 12.3.1988. It was very kind of you to have sent me those two cuttings. May I please request you to arrange for me to get Tribune for the month of April? Please let me know how much amount I should send to

you or to Tribune for getting it at Abu? The next six weeks are going to be very crucial for Punjab as well as for the rest of India.

Imposition of Emergency dissolution of Punjab Assembly, release and installing of Jasbir in the Akal Takht seem to be fundamentally wrong steps. Instead they could have released Tohra and Mann. They could have invited Badal, Tohra, Mann, Amrinder and Umranangal for talks. Are not these Sikh leaders more accountable to India than the four priests and the Terrorists? Some day the Government of India will have to hold talks with (1) The Akalis (2) Non-Akalis (3) Hindus. It is no use saying that the Sikhs are divided. The Government i.e. the Congress-I leaders have inherited many British characteristics. They look upon themselves as 'RULERS' of India, the Supreme Masters of the people where as in reality they are servants of the Sovereign people of India.

If the Sikh Community can understand the evil strategy, they should unite as fast as possible. Bold steps are urgently needed to put an end to the daily slaughtering of innocent citizens.

Could you not impress this truth upon persons like Umranangal, Amrinderji, Ramoovalia, Barnala, Harbhajansingh and other Sikh unity is the only way out of the present stalemate. Divided Sikhs provide the Congress-I an opportunity to maintain its hold upon Punjab. Law and Order situation is a political creation. No Ribertos and Rays will succeed in restoring Law and Order through Police Raj for another two years, unless a political solution is arrived at.

It is good news that you intend to talk with non-communal Hindus and Sikhs. It is encouraging that you plan to organise a lecture tour of eminent persons.

Why not invite 1. Shri V. M. Tarkunde, 2. Rajendra Sachchar, 3. I. K. Gujral, 4. J. S. Aurora, 5. V. P. Singh 6. Ram Jethmalani, 7. Arun Shourie, 8. Sanjiv Reddy, 9. C. Subramaniam and such celebrities of India.

Things will have to be done on a big scale to counteract the present trend of mutual condemnation and destruction.

I liked Satyapal Dang's article. As well as the editorial. Sikh National Forum, Punjab Action Committee, Khadi Samitis, Sarvodaya Mandal, Loksamiti, Lok Seva Sangh, Vice Chancellors of Universities and other voluntary service organisations could get together and sponsor the lecture tour. This is the time to make the last effort to save the unity of Punjab and that of India. This is the hour to save Punjabiya - the great Punjab culture.

The Government is the legal sovereign. But the people are the political sovereign. If and when the legal sovereign proves incapable of solving national problems, the political sovereign must assert and exercise its right of intervention.

Though I am not entitled in any way to offer proposals, I dare share my innermost observations with you in a friendly way. Please do not think that these are orders given in a spirit of authority.

Punjab and Punjabiya must be saved. Ego-clashes, personality prejudices and individual or group ambitions will have to be transcended in order to resist authoritarian tendencies and activities of both the terrorists and the ruling party of India.

Border Problem Of Gujarat

Contents

- 1. Introduction To Study Report On Indo-Pak Border Area Of Gujarat**
- 2. The Report**

Gujarat Bhradari published a detailed report on the Kutch Border Issue. It was presented to the Prime Minister and the President of India as well as the Chief Minister and the Governor of Gujarat. Readers are recommended to study the published report in order to get an idea of the exhaustive work done in regard to the problem.

Border Problem Of Gujarat.

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY REPORT OF INDO-PAK BORDER AREA OF GUJARAT

First convention of Gujarat Biradari was committed to undertake a study report on our border areas. Under the guidance and supervision of Shri Babubhai Patel and convenership of Shri Vinshnubhai Pandya a four member panel of Kalyanbhai Shah, Dr Prafull Dave, Kirti Khatri and Smt (Dr) Arta! Pandya carried out extensive journey of border areas and a clear, detailed report was penned down by veteran writer Shri Vishnubhai.

Border security is basically Central Government's onus. But people living in border areas can ill afford to overlook their own responsibility. As such, every citizen is a guard and watchdog of Indian democracy.

Gujarat Biradari submits the report before the people of Gujarat and hopes it will arrest due attention on the penetrating realities for contemplation and thought.

Vimala Thakar

STUDY REPORT ON THE INDO-PAK BORDER AREA OF GUJARAT

It was decided to study the border problems of Gujarat and publish a report on it when the first regional convention of Gujarat Biradari was held in Ahmedabad on August 25, 1985. Sri Babubhai J Patel was urged a preside over the Study Panel and he acceded to the request. Shri Vishnu Pandya agreed to take care of convenership and he drafted details of working project. Accordingly with some other members, the study-team toured border areas, met leaders of various sections the, common men and the project was launched.

Those who joined the project included Kalyanbhai Shah, Dr Prafull Dave, Chandrakant Trivedi, Prof Shallesh Tevanti,

Karsanbhai, etc. Those who helped in various ways directly and indirectly are: Balarisana Valdia, Advocate Bharat Sukhparia, K P Shah, Kirti Khatri, (Editor: Kutch Mitra), Dr Arati Pandya, Dr Pradeep Thakkar. Shri Vishnu Pandya contacted police, bureaucrats, lawyers, pressmen, state official security men etc besides political social leaders and those from the academic world, during his tour of Banaskantha.

During August 1985 to April 1986, he contacted 1300 persons and secured answers to 350 questionnaire out of 700.

17 small towns, 250 villages, some check posts, including Jaloya and Chhadbet and check posts beyond Sulgam were also visited.

The broad based study helped in having a close insight into infiltration, spying, illegal immigration, traffic in arms and narcotics, smuggling etc. Many unquotable official sources have come to help.

The report reveals that it is time for serious alarm over our border situation. Not only from security point of view but for an all round development of these areas, and for guarding the interest of our sovereignty it is imperative to focus our attention on this.

Report unfolds the threefold threats to our borders - overseas intrusion, sectarian influence and economic offenses, that pose danger to national unity and integrity. It should help in giving us necessary warning to fight these dangers.

Biradar expects the authorities and public to open their eyes, and to be ready to help.

Gujarat Biradari

Gujarat Biradari

Contents

1. The beginning of Gujarat Biradari
2. Gujarat Biradari takes off
3. Gujarat Biradari
4. Summary of work done: 1985 - 1988

THE BEGINNING OF GUJARAT BIRADARI

An unprecedented crisis overcasting the life of Gujarat for last five months held the people at ransom. It started with a peaceful anti-reservation agitation of Vali Mahamanlal and Students' Van Rachana Samiti against State Government's announcement to raise the quota of 10% for other backward classes by another 10%. The movement was spontaneous and gathered momentum.

Unheard of police atrocities on innocent men, women and children, disturbances on communal and caste basis fermented and supported by vested interests and anti-social elements, paralysed the normal life of Gujarat. Firing, willing, stabbing, arson and looting created a terror, that resulted in 213 deaths, more than 800 injured, burning and damaging of public and private properties worth crores, and putting the economic life of Gujarat to the loss of about 3500 crores of rupees.

Many citizens and organisations started relief work and tried to mediate for solution but to no avail, as both parties stood their grounds, until Amarsinh Chaudhary the now Chief Minister negotiated to a fruitful solution. The agreement had also some dissidents in the agitation camp, who conceded after getting some more assurance from the Government.

The situation is still simmering. People who have a concern for mankind are deeply worried about the amity among people, security of citizens against anti social elements and peoples' resistance to social injustices committed by the State, when the latter and police remain complacent and become partisan.

Vimalaji was in great agony and deep pain about the happenings in Gujarat. She had been to Dalhousie and deeply engaged in Punjab crisis at that time. She came to Gujarat third week of July. Several friends were asking her for guidance as to what could be done in such helpless situation. She consulted many friends, met people and went to disturbed and sensitive areas to talk to the people.

On the 27th July a Meeting of 50 to 60 people, invited from all over Gujarat was called for deliberations. Many suggestions came up and as a result it was decided to form an organisation of loose fraternity called "GUJARAT BIRADARI" under the

guidance of Vimalaji, to provide a platform for articulating the agonies of the people.

Its aims and objects are:

(1) To work in the sensitive areas for amity among communities.

(2) To publish and distribute pamphlets giving factual position.

(3) To help form (joint) centres in sensitive areas to foster peace.

(4) To make coordinated efforts for rehabilitation.

(5) To help in bringing lasting solution whenever an injustice is caused to the people by the state or vested interests.

The membership of Biradari will be open to any citizen:

(1) Who has a faith in non violent means for evolution of social conflicts.

(2) Who are not office bearers of any political party or communal organisation.

(3) Who would be prepared to devote time for the cause or who would cooperate with the cause through other means.

To start with, it has formed a State Executive Committee under the chairperson of Vimalaji with Arvind Desai and Vishnu Pandya as its conveners. It has also appointed conveners for seven districts.

1. Mr Bhalchandra Joshi for Ahmedabad
 2. Sri Govindbhai Rawal for Sabarkantha
 3. Kantibhai Sutari for Vadodra
 4. Dr Praful Dave for Jammagar
 5. Dr Anubhai Karia for Rajkot
 6. Sri Babubhai Shah for Mehsana; and
 7. Sri Kirti Pandya for Bhavnagar.
- who will form district level committees.

Gujarat Biradari is launching two programmes apart from its normal working: 1. To send a study group to border districts to have a first hand information about the smuggling of arms, drugs and other items, infiltration of foreigners etc. and to send the Report to the State and Central Governments. 2. To study and help in the formation of a State level consensus on the issue of reservation.

Over and above this, efforts are being made to create a long term Peace Centre in one of the sensitive areas. A youth wing is also being formed to assist in the Biradari's work.

Kalyanbhai Shah

GUJARAT BIRADARI TAKES OFF

Vimalaji returned to Ahmedabad on 17th August 1985 and spent 10 days in the city for the sole purpose of Gujarat Biradari's work. During those days she visited terror-stricken areas where both communities live, took a tour of the areas with the residents and listened to their sorrow and anguish laden tales. Besides the visits time was also spent meeting with the social workers and conveners of Gujarat Biradari in Ahmedabad and the different districts. Special Meetings were also held with Sri Mataliyaji who has offered to manage the Shanli Anushtan Center (Peace Center) in the heart of the city for six months to work to bring about a change in the attitude of the people towards one another.

On 25th August an Insanî Biradari Conference was organised at H K Arts College auditorium. Friends came to attend the conference from all parts of the state and from Ahmedabad city. Many came forward and voiced their support and cooperation to the Brotherhood and its work.

Gujarat Biradari has decided to take up the following Action Programme:

(1) For the next three months study seminars will be organised for all youth who have signed the membership form. They will meet on the weekends and will participate in activities like

physical culture, learning and singing of songs with national unity themes and multi religious bhajans. Plus study courses will be offered to them on subjects like Secularism, Democracy and non-violence as social alternative.

(2) The Shanti Anushtan Kendra will begin its activities from 22nd September 1985.

(3) A Gujarat Biradari newsletter will be brought out regularly.

(4) Attempts will be made to set up Gujarat Biradari Centres in all 19 districts of Gujarat.

(5) A study tour will be made of the border areas to find out the real facts about infiltration of foreigners from over the border and the massive sale of our life stock to dealers across the border.

Kaiser Irani

GUJARAT BIRADARI

If a sensitive citizens were to look at the situation in Gujarat he will be saddened to see how in all fields of life deterioration is setting in. The people are becoming demoralised. The politicians are corrupted and busy only with their pursuit for power. Elections have become a farce. Black marketing is destroying the poor. Educational structures are breaking down. Class conflicts are on the increase. Caste riots flare up at the slightest provocation. The law and order machinery is unable to cope with the situation and innocent citizens are the victims. Poverty and unemployment are on the increase. The imbalanced administrative policies are unable to provide the people with even bare essentials like drinking water or aid during draught.

Thus the rot has set into every aspect of social, economic and political life. In these circumstances what can an ordinary citizen do? Is there any way out?

Yes, there surely is. The first and most important step that every sensitive citizen can take is to awaken to the crisis facing us. Secondly, he can join hands and work together with other like minded citizens for the establishment of moral values in social, economic and political life. If people can be aroused to jointly resist and fight the corruption and social injustices much can be achieved to ameliorate the present situation.

For the purpose of awakening and uniting the energies of the people, Gujarat Bhradart (Brotherhood) has been formed, under the guidance of Vimala Thakar. Gujarat Bhradart began its work of sowing the seeds of friendship, cooperation and spirit of sharing amongst the people from 25th August, 1985. During the following twelve months it took up work in various fields like:

(1) Establishing a temporary Peace Center (for one year) in violence prone locality of Ahmedabad. The Peace center helped to bring the warring communities together, instilling in them the feeling of brotherhood and rekindling their faith in communal harmony and peaceful co-existence.

(2) A Study Team headed by Sri Babubhai Patel (former Chief Minister of Gujarat) visited the border areas with Pakistan and prepared a detail report on the problem of infiltration across the border and its affect on the economic and social life of the people.

(3) Study Courses were held for the youth to study and discuss pertinent topics like the responsibilities of a citizen, values of democracy, national integration and true religion versus dogmatism.

(4) Committees were formed to study the government policy on Reservation.

(5) Meetings with educationalists were organised to discuss the state government's policy of nationalisation of secondary schools. A manifesto was prepared opposing the move.

(6) A public meeting was organised to congratulate the people of Assam on their victory and non-violent struggle for democracy.

(7) A programme was organised for the youth to visit different villages of the state, to get first hand experience of life in the villages and their problems.

Those citizens interested in the work are invited to join Gujarat Biradari. Before joining they are requested to sign a pledge. The pledge affirms that:

1. Being a firm believer in human brotherhood I will not involve myself in any activity exploiting my fellow human beings. I will not take part in violence or instigate violence. I will not be a party to terrorism, arson, plundering or rumor mongering.

2. I believe that it is the duty of each citizen to fight corruption and to stand up for democratic rights and national integration. I am prepared to fight against all forms of injustice and all disruptive forces.

3. I affirm that all individuals irrespective of their particular religion or faith are my companions in life. I believe in living in a spirit of peace, cooperation and brotherhood with each one, thereby kindling in my small way the spirit of friendship, cooperation and sharing in social life.

To spread the message of brotherhood, Gujarat Biradari has been founded by Gujarat, Insani Biradari in Punjab. Biradari, ofcourse is not something bound by time or limited to locality but its principles are universal and wherever moral values are on the decline and anti social elements on the increase, people all over the world can get together and stand up for the principles of Biradari - Brotherhood, cooperation, sharing.

Viśhṇubhai Pandya

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE; 1985 - 1988

It was in 1985 that communal riots on unprecedented scale broke out at Ahmedabad. The State Government, the political parties and the voluntary service organisations were stunted and baffled.

I was invited by the social workers of Gujarat for discussing a way out of the cultural catastrophe. For the last seven years we have been organising youth camps in Gujarat. More than 2000 youths had participated in them.

One decided to appeal to them and launch a cultural campaign to awaken the people to the need of:

- (1) Protecting the secular character of the Indian polity
- (2) Protecting the national integrity, through stimulating national consciousness.
- (3) Building up a loose brotherhood to highlight cultural as well as socio-economic problems facing Gujarat and work out a consensus towards their resolution or dissolution through cooperative thinking, seminars, distribution of factual information about the issues and suggesting to state government as well as the central government the necessary steps that could be taken.
- (4) To arouse peoples' moral pressure and exercise it upon the ruling party as well as the opposing parties.

In the last three years district units of Biradari have come up in seven districts. In other districts the units have also come up but they are not yet active.

What has Gujarat Biradari done between 1985- 1988?

- (1) Survey of Kutch Pakistan border villages. An extensive report was published and presented to the President of India and the Prime Minister as well as the Chief Minister of Gujarat and all the members of the State Assembly.

(2) A Seminar on the Water problem. A report was published on the short term and long term remedies. The Seminar was attended by experts from the governmental and semi-governmental institutions as well as leading economists of Gujarat.

(3) A Seminar on the New Education Policy of the Central Government and the existing problems on the educational field. The report was submitted to the Government.

(4) Gujarat Biradarti established a Peace-Centre in the worst affected areas of the violence torn city in 1985 August and ran it for 12 months. It was wound up only when peace returned to Ahmedabad.

(5) Needless to mention that youth camps are organised at least thrice every year.

Dalhousie
4 th October, 1985.

Vimala

In view of the prevailing critical situation in the country and with an object of awakening the people to their sense of responsibility and their strength as well as to inspire them to discharge their duties, Vimalaben and her friends have planned a Satsang yatra. I wish them all success and send them my heartfelt best wishes.

16th September, 1979
Patna

Jai Prakash Narayan