



A H I M S A C E N T E R

NONVIOLENCE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION

Announcement

Nonviolence and Social Change

A Dialogue and Lunch with

DWARKO SUNDRANI

July 17, 2004 (Saturday), 10:00 a.m. at Cal Poly Pomona

Blue Room, Los Olivos Commons

This Ahimsa Center Dialogue will focus on experiments in nonviolent social change and will highlight the critical link between spiritual development and socio-economic development—an idea central in the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi as well as the savant-saint Vinoba Bhave. Dwarko Sundrani will share his own insights and anecdotal stories of nonviolent transformation brought about by Vinoba Bhave, including peaceful surrender and rehabilitation of the Dacoits in the Chambal Valley of India.

About Dwarko Sundrani

Dwarko Sundrani, at age of 82, is one of the last active disciples of Mahatma Gandhi. He was born in Sindh (now in Pakistan). For many decades he worked closely with Vinoba Bhave, the spiritual successor to Gandhi. Vinoba started the land gift (*Bhudan*) program for rural India to solve the problem of the landless people, who were in bonded slavery. The movement helped distribute millions of acres of land (obtained through land gifts) to the landless laborers. Vinoba established the *Samanvaya Ashram* in the Bodh Gaya in Bihar (eastern India) and Dwarkoji was asked to be the in-charge of this Ashram in 1962.

At the Ashram, Dwarkoji launched an education program for children. The principle he adopted was “education for life, education of life, and education through life.” Education was correlated to the life-needs of rural villages. As of 2002, the school has been in continuous operation and has grown to cover 10,000 children in 167 villages. Two residential schools provide shelter, clothing, food, health care, education and loving care for 140 students. For the last 18 years, the Ashram has been also conducting very successful cataract eye operation camps. About 15,000 patients receive free eye operations each year. Local “terrorist” groups respect the social service provided by the Ashram to the villages and (diabolically) offer protection to the Ashram.

Many dignitaries and celebrities including Rev. Martin Luther King, E.F. Schumacher, Osho, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama have been benefactors, and some of them have visited the Ashram in Bodh Gaya. The Dalai Lama, when signing over a donation of half million Rupees said, “I only teach compassion; you, Dwarkoji are living compassion.”

In 1991, Dwarkoji was awarded the Bajaj International Award for Humanitarian Service.

Each year the Ashram hosts young Interns from around the world including Denmark, Japan, France, UK and USA for up to 4 months at a time. These interns learn through dialog with Dwarkoji about non-violent strategies and the role of spirituality in education and social transformation in India.

Suggested Contribution at the Door: General: \$10, K-12 Educators and Students: \$6

RSVP by July 10, 2004

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For Directions visit the Center web site :: www.csupomona.edu/ahimsacenter