

Shri Guruji

and

The Christian Missions

By the time the British returned home abandoning their Indian rule in 1947, Shri Guruji - M. S. Golwalkar - the chief of the R. S. S. had already made his debut on the national scene as one of the nation builders. Partition and freedom had arrived together and the question of religion had played havoc with the freedom of the country. Hindu society was under siege. Hostile elements within the country had posed a greater menace to national security than aggressors from outside. Threat of internal subversion appeared acute and real. Of late Christianity had been a powerful political irritant and a disruptive force. It had posed serious threat and danger to the safety, security and freedom of India. The country was confronted with a painful and complicated dilemma since the Christian church in India was controlled, directed and financed from outside. Guruji was watchful. The views of Guruji should be studied by anyone anywhere, who cares about India's national past, national identity and national prospects.

A Hindu view of Christianity-

India is an ancient nation and during the course of its mighty long history, numerous religious beliefs were propounded and numerous religious practices were evolved. Hinduism is the name of a confederation of all these religious beliefs. It is not a religion in the sense that Islam and Christianity are understood. Certainly Guruji's connotation of the word Hindu is national and not religious. He was fully familiar with the nature and character of the Hindus.

Hindus are proud to have in their midst any number of faiths, beliefs, sects and religions. They do not only just tolerate but also appreciate their existence. A Hindu does not visualize God as a Christian God or a Muslim God. To a Hindu, God is God pure and simple. He also does not distinguish ideas of God as true or false adopting one particular idea as the standard for the human race. Therefore people professing various religions are abounding in this country and Hindus take pride in it. Guruji believed not only in universal toleration but accepted all religions as true. He was proud that he belonged to a nation, which has, during different stages of history, sheltered the persecuted, and refugees of all religions and of all nations of the world.

If any of our countrymen wanted to practice a particular religious faith and if there was no scope for it, Guruji would have felt that the country has grown poorer that much. It was not true that Guruji was against any religion. It was equally untrue that he was against Christianity.

To Guruji there is much to admire in Christianity - the life story of Jesus Christ, sayings of the prophets, educative parables and moral ideas represented therein. But despite all this he was unable to identify himself with orthodox Christianity and the Church. So whenever Christianity challenged Hinduism, he drew a sharp distinction between the sectarianism and dogmatism of Christianity and the spirit of the teachings of the Christ. It is a line that separates Christ from Christians. The Holy Bible and Jesus Christ were held in high reverence by him but the activities carried on by the Churches in His name were looked upon with suspicion. In fact no pious Hindu had anything against Christian religion as such,

"The Hindus won't even think in their dreams to eliminate the Christians. If they wanted that they would have very easily finished them, when they landed on this country. If they (Christians) in spite of containing them to educating, doing medical services and doing such humanitarian and compassioned works, use these services to convert the people, I will certainly ask them to leave this place (country). "(1)

Neither the RSS (Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh) nor any other Hindu Organization had anything against Christian brethren or against Christian faith but certainly against all

de-Hinduisation. But never did our forefathers anticipate that the religions that were greeted with a cordial welcome would one day throw a mortal challenge to the unity, integrity and happiness of this country.

The challenge of the Christian church

A challenge was hurled at the Hindu people when highest church authorities exhorted their followers to plant the Cross in the Asian continent in the Third Christian millennium. The church dreamt of reaping “a rich harvest of souls in Asia”. Remove the tapestry of language, it simply meant to convert and Christianize the country.

The Christian church has a long self-proclaimed policy of conversion. The history of Christianity is an unbroken record of atrocities against Hindus in its quest for new recruits to their gospel. Foreign missionaries and even the Pope had come to promote the cause of Catholicism, which meant the conversion of Hindus. The Christian missionaries stick to their basic dogma of One True God to be the only saviour, which Hindus should accept or be made to accept. Guruji embarked upon a holy mission in defense of Hindu Dharma and the Hindu people. He spent no end of his breath and energy to demolish the dogma of Christianity and resist the methods of the missionaries.

The church has discovered that Hinduism is full of faults. The fiction of a degenerated India and debased Hinduism seems to be the life- blood of the Christian Church and they have no intention of parting with it. They have never made any secret of their conviction and also have never lost any opportunity to proclaim openly that theirs is the only true religion and as such superior to that of others. In fact they derive their right to convert precisely from this religious conviction that they are commanded by their Prophets to save the souls of others who have been the victims of other false religions. That is why they honestly believe that means of conversion, fair or foul, do not matter. It also explains why they do not hesitate to denigrate Hindu gods and goddesses in the filthiest of language.

The bloody history of the church in America, Africa and Asia is an open-book and is well known. In Bharat, the Goa Inquisition was probably the worst resulting the torture and murder of thousands of Hindus and the destruction of many Hindu temples for several decades. It is the Indian version of the genocide of Native Americans. The Christian church is not prepared to disown their ugly past so that a process of reconciliation could be initiated. Not only that, even the arch murderers are glorified as saints! How can the Hindu be persuaded to embrace the most inveterate enemy and thus endanger his own existence?

It is a mortal challenge. It seeks to destroy the natural right of the Hindu people to live with their religion, culture and civilization. It aims at the destruction of the religious diversity flourishing in this country.

Guruji's concept of religious integration -

The Hindu concept of unity or integration is harmony, and certainly not uniformity. One can be Hindu by nationality and at the same time be a Sanatani, Arya Samaji, Muslim, Christian, Sikh or Buddhist. In Guruji's Hinduism there is enough room for Jesus, as there is for Mohammed, Zoraster and Moses. He would have been shocked if anybody suggested anything less than equal right to Muslims or Christians. He considered it as un-Hindu to discriminate between any two persons just on the basis of religious faith. He put it thus:

"The non- Hindu who lives here has a Rashtra Dharma (National responsibility) a Samaj-Dharma (duty to society), a Kula dharma (duty to ancestors). Only in his Vyakti Dharma (Personal Faith) he can choose any path, which satisfies his spiritual urge:

If even after fulfilling all those various duties in social life, somebody says that he has studied Quran Sharif or the Bible and that way of worship strikes a sympathetic chord in his heart, and that he can better pray through that with devotion, we have absolutely no objection".

(2)

To a question whether he approves tolerating Islam and Christianity, Guruji replied that he not only tolerated them but respected them. To him Indian Christians were none other than the Christianized section of the Hindu Society, nothing more, nothing less. If and when they maintain that they are Christians first and Indians next, the missionaries come in conflict with their loyalty to the nation. The Christians living in non- Christian countries including India are torn between these two loyalties. Their Political loyalties and social outlook are all shaped more by it than by anything else. That explains why conversion of a man to Christianity is not just a change in the form of worship but also a change in the priority of loyalties.

Common Emotion and Common Ancestors -

Guruji was emphatic that Christians should also share the 'common emotion' with the rest of the country about the nation. What is that 'Common emotion' - that common basis on which all can come together? Guruji maintained that in the first place a feeling of burning devotion to the land which from times immemorial has been regarded as the

sacred motherland, in the second place the feeling of fellowship, of common fraternity born out of the realization that we are the children of that one great common mother and in the third place, an intense awareness of a common current of national life, born out of a common culture and heritage common history and traditions, of common ideals and aspirations, this trinity of values or, in a word Hindu nationalism, formed the bedrock of our national edifice.

Some Muslims say that Rustom is their national hero. But Rustom was a Persian hero. He has nothing to do with them. He was born long before Islam. If he could be considered a hero by the Muslims, why not Sri Rama? I say, why don't you accept this history?

"Pakistan celebrated the 5,000th birth anniversary of Panini who was born in that part which is now in what is called Pakistan. If Pakistan can claim Panini as one of their great forefathers, why should not our local Hindu Muslims, (I call them "Hindu Muslims"), say that Panini, Vyasa, Valmiki, Rama and Krishna are all their great ancestors?" (3)

There are so many people in the Hindu Dharma who do not believe in the Divine Incarnation of Rama and Krishna. But they believe that they are great personalities, worthy of emulation. So how does it matter if Muslims and Christians do not believe that God incarnated himself? Why should they not consider such personalities as their national heroes?

According to our ways of religious belief and philosophy a Muslim or a Christian is as good as a Hindu. It is not the Hindu alone who will reach the ultimate Godhead. Everyone has the right to follow his path according to his own persuasion. Gururji further said:

Let me give you the instance of the previous Shankaracharya of the Shringeri Math, His Holiness Shri. Chandrasekhara Bharati Swamiji. An American approached him to be

converted to Hinduism. Swamiji asked him the reason. The American replied that he was not satisfied with Christianity, that it left his spiritual longing unquenched. The Acharya asked him:

"Have you honestly practiced Christianity? Try it first. If it does not satisfy you, then come to

me. That is our attitude. Ours is a non-proselytizing Dharma. In almost all cases, proselytization is motivated by political or some such gain. We reject it. We reject it we say: This is the plain truth, if you choose, follow it". (4)

A Confession by the Mission-

The institution of Indian Christians Mission, FOIM, published a collection of Papers from Church wherein a frank confession was made in this matter. They confess: -

“However, due to historical and socio - political factors, the call to conversion and baptism has been problematic in the Indian context.

We Christians ourselves must bear a part of the responsibility for this. The Christian attack on the indigenous religions of India from a position of colonial power was understandably seen by many as a threat to their identity and even their very existence. The continued impression that Christianity is a foreign religion in India also has much to do with the colonial legacy and the reluctance of Christians to look positively on the tradition and culture of India”. (5)

The Indian Christians are almost all converts. They might have changed their religion but not their ancestors. As Guruji would say:

“My point is very simple. If Iranian Muslims can look upon a pre Islamic figure like Rustom as their hero, why can't the Indian Muslims and Indian Christians as well accept Rama as their hero? Why, even Muslims in Indonesia look upon Rama as their greatest hero! “. (6)

The Christians must realize that we are one people and it is the same blood that courses through our veins. They are not Arabs, Italians, French, Dutch or the English. They are only Indian converts. The Hindu suspects the Christian because his loyalty to the nation, national heritage and ancestors has come under cloud.

The grievance of Guruji was also the grievance of Prime Minister Pandit Nehru in the context of Muslims. In his convocation Address to Aligarh's staff and students in 1948 Nehru said:

I have said that I am proud of our inheritance and our ancestors who gave an intellectual and cultural pre-eminence to India. How do you feel about this past? Do you feel that you are also sharers in it and inheritors of it and proud of something that belongs to you as much as to me? Or do you feel alien to it and pass it by without understanding it or feeling that we are the trustees and inheritors of this vast treasure? (7)

Having posed this question to the Aligarh alumni Pandit Nehru proceeded:

“You are Muslims and I am a Hindu. We may adhere to different religious faiths or even to none but that does not take away from that cultural inheritance that is yours as well as mine “. (8)

The main reason why there is Hindu-Christian tension in India is that the Indian Christian is yet to identify himself fully with India, its people and culture. Let the Indian Christian feel and say that this is his own country and all these are his people and the problem will cease to exist. It is a matter of changing psychology. The problem can be solved by the Indian Christian just by owning this country and its ancient culture. After all, Indian history did not begin with Vasco-da-Gama.

For A Harmonious National Life -

Guruji was not prepared to accept the mere accident of birth as adequate to earn the nationhood of the country without any reference to their mental attitude and mind-set. In expounding his concept of nationalism Guruji preferred to accept ground realities unlike the modern day secularist who preferred convenient illusions.

It is not true that Guruji was intolerant of any religion. It is equally untrue that he was hostile to the Christian missionaries in India. The criterion he prescribed for promoting a harmonious national life was both patriotic and practical.

“The prescription he offered had room for all minorities on condition of their whole-hearted submission to the supreme value of the nation in their lives. The nation is the vehicle of universal truth and is not an entity above them. Christians consider themselves as agents of international movement for the spread of Christianity and refuse to offer their first loyalty to the land of their birth. Till they behave as true children of the heritage and culture of their ancestors, they will remain hostile and will have to be treated as such”. (9)

The Church is not tired of claiming that they are only helping the poor, the deprived, the needy and the unattended. If the Christians had been benefactors why should such stalwarts of Indian Nationalism like Vivekananda and Gandhiji felt outraged at the missionary machinations? In fact their vilification of Hinduism is so excessive that it will leave most tolerant of the Hindus distressed. Said Gandhiji,

It pains me to have to say that the Christian Missionaries as a body, with honorable exceptions, have actively supported a system which has impoverished, enervated and demoralized a People considered to be among the gentlest and most civilized on earth”. (10)

Guruji had put his finger on this humanitarian mask of the missionaries:

“ So far as the Christians are concerned, to a superficial observer they appear not only quite harmless but as the very embodiment of sympathy and love for humanity. Their speeches abound in words like ‘Service’ and ‘human salvation’ as though they are specially deputed by the Almighty to uplift humanity! Everywhere they run schools colleges, hospitals and orphanages. The people of our country, simple and innocent as they are, are taken in by all these things. But what is the real and ulterior motive of Christians in pouring crores of rupees in all these activities?”(11)

During the course of his conversation with the editor of the Illustrated Weekly, Guruji made a candid statement -

“We have nothing against the Christians except their methods of gaining converts. When they give medicine to the sick or bread to hungry, they should not exploit the situation by propagating their religion to those people. Their only aim is to make this Country a province of the Kingdom of Christ. Towards that end they feel that every tactics however foul is fair “. (12)

A Pillar of strength to the British -

Early British conquests had resulted in the firmer establishment of Pax-Britanica. Security of the empire haunted the rulers. Christian Church was a source of hope and strength. In the words of Lord Halifax, the secretary of state:

“Every additional Christian is an additional bond of union with the Country and an additional source of strength to the empire”. (13)

In order to provide stability to the empire, the British rulers undertook various measures. Guruji said -

First and the foremost method was to multiply the number of their co-religionists whose support to the British rule would be uninterrupted. Since the British were Christians, Christianisation of the Hindus gradually became a state enterprise. Quite a few did succumb to their inducements. But by and large, the British experience was that the ordinary folk did not abandon the Faith of their ancestors. Not with standing the pangs of hunger so much so the people in the tribal area though suffering from shortage of adequate food and clothing not to speak of money display a stubborn attachment to their Faith “. (14)

In spite of the Christianisation campaign carried on by thousands of Christian Missionaries in the tribal belts for more than 150 years backed up by their own political ascendancy and by endless flow of money the experience was bitter. At every step the shoe was pinching. Guruji recollected;

“...thousands of Missionaries and crores of Rupees were poured in officials for local administration were appointed in view of their utility towards conversion and on the

recommendation of the missionaries. Preachers of other religious Faiths working in the same area were just driven out. A few Arya Samaji activists who ventured to set foot on in the same belt could not be seen again alive. They were just murdered. Similar fate including manhandling, abduction, and murder befell the Sangh workers also who had managed to setup in that area. The law of the land had chosen to maintain a story silence towards these happenings(15)

The Christians of India are converts or descendents of converts whose conversion had been secured during some period of history by force or fraud. Nobody objects to any voluntary change of faith promoted by spiritual motives, e.g. Pandita Ramabai, Rev. Tilak in Maharashtra, Brahmabandhan Upadhyaya in Bengal and Manilal Parekh in Gujarat. But conversion by persuasion is a rarity. Voluntary change of faith born out of spiritual motive does not diminish their love of the country's cultural heritage. But how are the villages converted en-mass in no time - Is there a spiritual motive at play here? Voluntary change of faith is preceded by great psychological revolution; nobody abandoned Hinduism that way.

Most of the conversions are due to threats, allurements, financial stringency, deception and persecution. The less said the better about the role the sword played. It is an ugly record. Guruji often reminded the people about the hidden agenda of the Church where in conversion aims at subversion. He recalled;

“Are we not aware of the atrocious history of the Christian missionaries, in our own country, of how they carried sword and fire in Goa and elsewhere? There is the story of “saint” Xavier who used to experience the highest joy of his life when he used to see the new converts trampling upon their former gods and goddesses razing their temples to the ground and insulting their own parents and elders who had remained Hindus “.(16)

Guruji does not want our countrymen to forget how hundreds of ancient and sacred Hindu temples including the famous one at Sabarimalai were desecrated and their idols broken by the Christian vandals and how the Memorial Tablet on the Vivekananda Rock at Kanyakumari was smashed by the same Christian fanatics not very long ago. Said he;

“Such are the men who came to us to preach that Christianity would shower peace and milk of human kindness on humanity “.(17)

Guruji would sometimes remark the oft-repeated saying; “ *There was but one true Christian, and he died on the cross*”.

Politics of Conversion

Indeed in the whole of the Christian - Hindu strained relationship there has been no greater cause of friction than the Christian campaign of conversion. What is conversion? When the one who is in an advantageous position seeks to force his concept of God and the universe on the other who is in a vulnerable position, when the one strikes at that which is deepest and precious in the heart of the other he invites resistance. A missionary brings pain and misery when he kidnaps a member of the family in the name of Christ and conversion. To the question: "Would you prevent missionaries coming to India in order to baptize?" Mahatma Gandhi was ruthless in his reply,

"If I had the power to legislate, I should certainly stop all the proselytizing. In Hindu-households, the advent of a missionary has meant the disruption of the family, coming in the wake of change of dress, manners, language, food and drink". (18)

There is something unhealthy in the whole missionary idea. To go to a people like the Hindus, a race of high culture and a long tradition of philosophical, ethical, and religious systems ante-dating Christianity and to go avowedly to save its people from damnation is certainly something grotesque! Humanitarian and philanthropic works are only excuses to enable

themselves to go near their victims and strike at the simple and trusting hearts. What Gandhiji wanted to stop viz. Conversion, has been held by the Christian Missionaries as their basic right.

Conversion is not only sanctioned and glorified by their theologies but is also practiced by their followers with earnestness. The Christians, like others, have got a right to have their own belief systems. But what right do they have to thrust them upon others? Quite a few missionaries not only justified but also recommended this crime of conversion as a basic "human right". A human right cannot be an exclusive right of a Christian but can reasonably be claimed by the Mussalman or for that matter by a Hindu also. It is not and cannot be one-way traffic. It takes the form of a game of numbers. Can this promote national harmony?

What ails the North East?

The creation of 'Nagaland' is a glaring example in point. Even Pandit Nehru accepted that the Christian missionaries engineered all open rebellion launched in the Naga Hills. The Nagas used foreign arms against Indian army and even our planes were shot down. The rebel leader of this gangsterism fled the country and he was given asylum by a noted Christian Missionary - Michael Scott - who abetted him in making various statements damaging our reputation. They started 'peace talks' and the 'peace mission' included this gentleman called Michael Scott. The dream was to convert Nagaland into an independent state ridden and dominated by the Christian. Today when a Christian

Naga comes to Shillong he says 'I am going to India' as if he is a non-Indian and Nagaland is not India. The troubles during the agitation for a separate Jharkhand, desecration of Hindu temples in Kerala including the Sabarimalai, the trouble engineered at the Vivekananda Rock memorial at Kanyakumari, the troubles of Nilakkal in Kerala, the pitched battles which the rebel Mizo fought with the Indian Army and the terrorist gangs roaming in the north-east killing and demanding ransom are all gifts of the Christian church.

The church was quick to recognize that separate state could be carved out by means of number. The high sounding principle of self-determination incorporated in our polity was exploited with deadliest effect. It only whetted the appetite of the headhunters. *Guruji* did not mince words when he said:

"Such is the role of the Christian gentlemen residing in our land today, out to demolish not only the religious and social fabric of our life but also to establish political domination in various pockets and if possible all over the land. Such has been, in fact their role wherever they have stepped - all under the alluring garb of bringing peace and brotherhood to mankind under the angelic wings of Jesus Christ ". (19)

Guruji considered the missionaries' overtures to teach religion to our people is like forcibly feeding the overfed.

It is this aspect of Christianity that has today come into conflict with Nationalism and has created a strong suspicion in the minds of the national societies. That explains why conversion of a man to Christianity is not just a change in the form of worship but also a change in the priority of loyalties. That again explains why Christians are looked upon by many as a potential fifth column. Dr. J. C. Kumarappa, himself a Christian, and a veteran Gandhi an economist has hit the nail on the head when he said: "The western nations have four Arms- the infantry, the navy, the air force and the church". *Guruji* describes conversion as nothing short of aggression on Hindu society.

Return of the Converts

Meanwhile it needs to be stressed that the question of return of those Hindus converted to Christianity back into the Hindu fold falls into an entirely different category. For long Hindus had developed a suicidal habit of declaring these converts as "outcastes" and the Hindu house had only 'exits' and no 'entrance'. They did not take back converts willing to return to the ancestral faith. But of late, Hindus have become alive to the dangers inherent in this one way traffic and have decided to throw open the gates of Hinduism to the lost tribes. If Christianity claims conversion as its basic right, it must give the same right to the Hindus so that they could

claim their lost brethren back. It is a homecoming not only to their original faith but also to the whole gamut of their social and cultural milieu.

As Dr. Rajendra Prasad wrote in his book 'India Divided';

"If Hindus on their side also start converting non Hindus to their faith, it is no business of the non Hindus especially if they are themselves engaged in the work of conversion, to object". (20)

Conversion — One-way traffic.

Most puzzling! How is it that this process of conversion has always been a one-way traffic all along? And this process has gone on unabated for hundreds of years? And again it has not stopped even after the country became independent? The toll it has taken is terrible.

An epic struggle had been launched by our people to free the country from *British* bondage. But besides freeing the country from the political serfdom, the leaders of our country did not think of freeing our brothers and sisters who had been kept under the religious subjugation of the Church. Though there were certain attempts in that direction they were meager and scattered. Unfortunately this trend did not develop into a vibrant national movement of freeing our kith and kin from the shackles of religious slavery. During the course of his conversation with the *Maulvis of Coimbatore* and in response to the complaint that the *Hindus* themselves are taking to converting *Muslims and Christians* those days, *Guruji* remarked:

"It is not conversion into Hinduism. It is only giving an opportunity for those who had been made to change the faith by force of circumstances in the past, to return to their ancestral faith. Is it not a fact that only a handful of Muslims (Christians) came to our country from outside? All the rest have only changed their faith for well-known reasons. Returning to one's ancestral faith is not conversion at all. It is merely homecoming". (21)

At a time when the movement for Home-Coming had not yet acquired any momentum *Mahatma Gandhi* came out with greater emphasis in its favour. *"In my opinion"* said *Gandhiji*, "they are not examples of real conversion. If a person through fear, compulsion, starvation, or for material gain or consideration, goes over to another faith, it is a misnomer to call it conversion. Most cases of mass conversion of which we have heard so much during the past two years have been, to my mind, false coins. I would therefore unhesitatingly readmit to the *Hindu* fold all such repentant without much ado". Asked whether he favoured receiving the converts back *Swami Vivekananda* said *"Certainly they can and ought to be taken "*. (22)

One wonders why *Christian* proselytization should lead to an excess of love with western countries. The converts were given not only a psychological affinity towards the western countries but were weaned away from national society. The language, the script, the dress, other modes of life, the fasts and the festivals, the names and nomenclature all

undergo a change. The demand of the Goan Catholics to adopt Roman script for Konkani in place of Devnagari is the reflection of this attitude.

Conversion - Unconstitutional, illegal

The Church claims that the constitution has conferred on them a right to propagate, which is as good as a right to convert. Neither the Hindu Society nor the law of the land accepts that the right to propagate means right to convert. The Supreme Court is unequivocal on this. It is strange that the Christian Missionaries are even to this day carrying on a relentless battle to see that "the legal right will be to convert unrestricted". When Madhya Pradesh and Orissa Governments enacted "Freedom of Religion Act" in 1968 seeking to control certain objectionable practices of conversion, the missionaries challenged them in the courts of law. When they lost in the High Courts, they appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court upheld both the Acts as constitutional and turned down the argument of the missionaries that the "right to propagate one's religion" enshrined in the constitution implied the right to convert. In recent years there have been many attempts to prevent conversions through legislation. A number of States have passed anti conversion bills. A private member introduced one bill in parliament to oppose conversions viz. The Indian Converts Bill 1954. The first "Freedom of Religion Act was introduced in 1967. The Supreme Court Ruling- 1977 said that 'there is no

fundamental right to convert any person to one's own religion'. The second and third Freedom of Religion Act 1968 and 1978 and a few other similar Bills were introduced in various assemblies. Why such a spate of bills to prevent conversions? It is eloquent in itself. It is crystal clear that the right to convert is illegal and unconstitutional.

Church and Secularism -

Moreover it should be noted that the act of conversion to Christianity violates a basic feature of our Constitution i.e. of secularism. For Secularism has been times without number defined as Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava (attitude of equality towards all faiths) . The Christian Church has never made secret of their conviction that theirs is the only true religion and as such superior to others. Conversion is the corollary of this conviction. Can there be any doubt that this kind of religious conversion militates against the basic tenet of secularism enshrined in our Constitution?

The Christian Church will not hesitate to approve the secularist ideals. The gullible Hindu dances in delight at the response evoked by his theories of secularism. A Christian missionary talks in the loudest language about secularism because it helps his conversion and de-nationalization activities. But can he hoodwink all? Is he ready to accord equal respect to other religions and display his belief in Sarva Dharma Sama Bhav? He throws his hands up, and says, "*My religious faith does not permit it*".

According to the Church all others are “heathens” to be “saved” from “damnation” by making them believe in that “One word of that one son of that one God”. All the good and great among the holy Christians, otherwise admirable are, when it comes to the question of Church, all closed minds.

Church and Foreign Funding

It should be noted that the uninterrupted inflow of huge foreign funds to various church agencies is confirmed by the Union Home Ministry. It is at the root of all conversion activities based on inducement. It becomes the patriotic duty of every one who has the integrity of our nation at heart to plug all such surreptitious channels of funding. The annual Home Ministry Report indicates that over 80% of the voluntary organizations receiving foreign aid are in fact Christian organizations engaged in Christian religious work either directly through propagation or indirectly through social service.

The top five purposes for which huge funds are pumped into India, as per Home Ministry Report are: Health Care, Family Care, Care of orphans, Help to the poor, Construction and extension of schools and colleges.

It is interesting to note that the funds are utilized where majority population is Hindu and a large chunk has been going to the southern states.

Foreign Missionaries -

India is infested with a large number of these uninvited guests, the Michael Scotts and the Father Ferars. One need hardly emphasize public attitude towards them. They have come to India to ‘save’ the ‘heathens’ from ‘damnation’. We are to believe that they have come on a mission of mercy.

Let a missionary try to convert a single Muslim in any Islamic country, he is sure to be lynched and murdered immediately by the Muslim mobs even before the state apparatus could confiscate visas and issue orders of expulsion. Could he recruit a convert in any communist country without being caught as an ‘imperialist agent’ and sent to a labour camp? Are not certain missionaries languishing in prisons in certain Southeast Asian countries on the charge of ‘subversion’? Even Buddhist Burma has barred his entry. One does not want India to be marred with ugly events. Every child knows what reception awaits Christian Missionaries in Bangladesh. Remember how Pakistan dealt with Christians during recent past and how its blasphemy laws operate. It is time that they should not take India for granted and should return home. Christian church in India requires to be de-internationalized.

The Harijan and the Girijan –

The tribes and the Dalits (the so called Untouchables) were looked upon by the church as 'green pastures' for conversion. Theories were propounded and arguments discovered to show how the above two are alien to the Hindu fraternity. They deliberately used the expression Adivasi for the tribes, which meant that they are the original inhabitants of India before the entry of Aryans into India. The church was bent upon establishing the tribes as a separate racial entity. Because of the geographical isolation enjoyed by the tribes, they were able to preserve their socio-religious identity, faith and practices without being assimilated. So ran the missionary argument.

Guruji rang the alarm bell. While with friends in Punjab he warned:

"We have to take special care of tribes and those who live in the hilly areas. If we persist in our attitude of indifference towards them then foreign Christian missionaries will succeed in converting them to Christianity and making them enemies of our motherland".
(23)

The church is extremely intolerant of the Hindus working among the tribal population whom they consider their natural exclusive 'Prey'. If it is entirely a matter of serving the neglected sections, the Hindu response should not have caused irritation to them. It is the fear of a merchant losing a monopoly market.

Guruji rejected all the missionary theories that sought to render tribal people alien to the Hindu society and positively maintained that they were an integral part of the Hindu social structure. 'Vanavasi' he called them, as distinct from the 'Nagarvasi'. Some called them Girijan. He pointed out how stubbornly the Vanavasis were clinging themselves to their traditions and customs and further reminded that these were the people, the forest dwellers, who lent a helping hand to the patriotic endeavors of Rana Pratap and Chatrapati Shivaji. Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram (Tribal Welfare Movement) was the instrument he forged to bring the tribes back to the main stream and uplift them.

It was maintained by the church that the Dalits were embracing Christianity to get rid of the stigma of Untouchable and acquire the status of equality. Pushed to the wall the Dalits are asserting a sense of dignity and self-respect by conversions, the missionary boasted. The Dalits had been touched by the loving service of the missionaries who treated them as equals.

Guruji dealt with the problem of untouchability in his own style, which was unique as well as effective. There was a Hindu awakening over the plight of the Dalits due to the Herculean efforts he displayed. Mammoth gatherings of Hindus and religious heads at

Prayag in 1979 and elsewhere made the historic declaration that untouchability is no part of Hindu Dharma and pronounced a new Mantra: 'Na Hindu Patito Bhavet' - a Hindu is never polluted signifying the birth of a new Smriti.

The church is found arguing and agitating to stress that the benefits available to Hindu Harijans be extended to the Christian Harijans also. Christianity was offered as a way out to the Hindu Harijans. But once they are Christianized, the old basis with its old stigma is re borrowed. It is a confession that the Hindu Harijans converted to Christianity are not benefited, their economic condition not improved, social segregation not stopped and in brief, the change of religion is not a change for better. The Christian church cannot give equality they promise at the time of enticement.

A Movement for Reclamation and Hindu Consolidation which included 'Dalits and the tribals is underway. The wave is catching up. With the Hindu, tolerance and secularism are inborn. He considers it as un-Hindu to discriminate any two persons just on the basis of religious faith. It is simple commonsense that no minority can be safe by constantly irritating its neighbouring majority. Wisdom lies in the Christian Church cultivating the goodwill of the Hindus. That is the greatest guarantee of the long-range interests of the Christians themselves. Gurujī wanted India to be a land of many religious faiths, as in the past, all equally

honoured and respected, but with one national outlook. Remember what H. C. Mookherjee, one of the prominent leaders of the Indian Christians Community said:

"We have to demonstrate by every word we utter and by every act we perform that the professing of a different religious faith has not tended in the very least to make us less Indian in our own outlook than our non-Christian brethren that we are prepared to play our part and to shoulder our share of the responsibility in every kind of work undertaken for the benefit of our country as a whole."

Did Gurujī's Prescription is in any way different from the above?