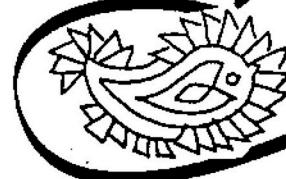


Sahaja Newsletter



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OCTOBER 2ND '92.

Recollections of part of a discussion on how best to spread Sahaja Yoga at Bundilla 1992.

In the winter months of 1991 a number of people travelled to Dubbo on four occasions to give programmes. Dubbo is a very nice rural town about six hours drive from Sydney, and except for the first programme, we travelled to and from Dubbo in the one day. That meant a very long day of 12 hours driving.

The people of Dubbo are much more open and less disaffected than those in larger cities. Handbilling was a real pleasure with people very graciously accepting or refusing the leaflets.

The programmes did not attract a lot of people although five people attended all programmes and were (and still are) very keen. However we found that the distance involved was too great to continue travelling backwards and forwards, and so support for these people has been limited.

Follow up support is very important, especially where there are no established Sahaja Yogis living in the area as in the case of Dubbo. It seems that a better way of conducting programmes in outlying areas is to take the "leap-frog" approach. This would involve establishing programmes and people in areas close to existing centres first, and then moving out to the next place, establishing it before moving even further. An example of this is the Blue Mountains which with support from Sydney, could be a base for establishing programmes in Bathurst. Once Bathurst is established it can link in with and support/gain support from people already in Orange. Wellington would be the next step, then Dubbo. This way, support is offered up the line all the way through, and draws on a much larger resource.

The time spent going to Dubbo last year was certainly not wasted. Those involved enjoyed themselves immensely, and will not forget eating meals under street lights in a freezing park with the lights of a nice warm restaurant beckoning. Or the absolutely brilliant sunrises as we crossed the Blue Mountains. Or lazing in the sun on the river banks before the programme.

***** PERHAPS ITS TIME NOW TO START THINKING ABOUT *****
COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AGAIN

Joe Salomon

NAVARATRI HAVAN

This Saturday commencing at 4.30 pm there will be a Havan at Burwood. After the Havan there will be Bhajans and dancing. Please bring your own dinner and drinks.



INDIA TOUR RAFFLE

Last week the raffle was drawn and announced. The winner is Susi Hutchens who lives at Bland Street ashram. Susi has not been on Tour before and is looking forward to the trip. (Susi's ticket was purchased by a Raki brother who gave it to her for a birthday present!) Well done Susi. Thank you Brisbane for co-ordinating such a collective event.



EDITORS NOTE

OH NO! ITS HAPPENED AGAIN. BEFORE EVERYONE STARTS GETTING TOO UPSET OVER THIS MINOR MATTER WE OWN UP!. SEVERAL MONTHS AGO WE PRINTED "ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S LETTER TO HIS SON'S TEACHER." WE MISSED THE PRINT ERROR OF "CUDDLE" FOR "CODDLE". LAST WEEK WE REPRINTED THE LETTER AND GUESS WHAT? ... WE "CUDDLED" HIM AGAIN.

• LIFE'S LITTLE INSTRUCTION BOOK •

188 . Become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know.

Village Pharmacy

The neem tree yields products from pesticides to soap

Among the first leaves to sprout on branches laid bare by the lethal chemical cloud that encircled Union Carbide's pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, were those on a tall spreading tree that is a relative of the mahogany. The resilience of the neem tree, as it is called, may have come as no surprise to Indian farmers, homemakers and folk healers, who have known of its remarkable properties for centuries. Its leaves are placed in books, beds or grain bins to discourage insects. They are used in a tea as an antimalarial agent. The tree is also ideal for use as firewood and for making soap, oils for lamps or lubricants to grease cart wheels. Documentation of the diverse attributes of what one monograph labeled "the cornucopia tree" has begun to pile up.

The earliest scientific reports, appearing in the 1920s, were published outside the normal purview of Western researchers. But interest began to build in 1959, when a German entomologist, Heinrich Schmutterer, noticed that neem trees remained unconsumed by a locust plague in the Sudan. Since then, hundreds of researchers from all over the world have launched studies on the neem and have occasionally even met at international conferences whose topic is dedicated to this versatile tree.

Helping to move the tree beyond folk nostrum status is a recent report from the National Research Council (NRC) entitled "Neem: A Tree for Solving Global Problems." This overview of existing re-

search calls for more controlled investigations to prove what are still, in many cases, anecdotal claims about the tree. "We're saying it may solve these problems but not until a lot of science is carried out," asserts Eugene B. Shultz, Jr., a Washington University professor of engineering and policy, who chaired the NRC panel.

Neem is achieving acceptance by the West. The first neem-based commercial product has reached the market in the U.S. Neem extracts act against more than 200 arthropod marauders, including Mediterranean fruit flies, houseflies, fleas, head lice, Gypsy moths, the Colorado potato beetle, boll weevils and cockroaches. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has studied the tree since the early 1970s, and W. R. Grace & Company bought the rights to market a neem pesticide.

Grace has Environmental Protection Agency approval to market neem extract, which it sells as a pesticide to home gardeners as Bioneem and to greenhouses as Margosan-O. Grace is also seeking agency approval for use of the pesticide on food crops. One likely target would be the sweet-potato whitefly that has been decimating food crops in California.

Azadirachtin, neem's most active compound, bears a distant chemical resemblance to steroids and either repels pests or prevents their larvae from molting into pupae. Although it may take weeks to kill the pests, the substance does not commit "ecocide" in the process. Birds and bats eat neem fruits routinely, and neem leaves have been added to grain stores in India to keep weevils out. According to various research reports compiled by the NRC, neem's complex chemical makeup, consisting of more than 20 compounds, reduces the likelihood that insects will develop resistance.



NEEM TREES help with reforestation in Thailand. The tree bears flowers with a honey scent and fruits that resemble olives (above). Photos: W. R. Grace

For now, W. R. Grace depends on a far-flung network, which sometimes begins with poor villagers in India who gather neem fruits that have fallen from trees lining the roadside to provide shade from the harsh sun. Because the trees take several years to mature and the tropics are a long way from the chemical maker's pilot plant in Maryland, neem extract will remain more costly than synthetic pesticides. With "green" products all the rage, though, Grace has had no trouble marketing its product. "If I had a little more, I could sell more," says F. Peter Boer, Grace's chief technical officer.

Less certain are neem's medicinal benefits. Thousand-year-old Sanskrit medical literature praises the tree called the *arishtha*, the Sanskrit word for reliever of sickness. Scientific evidence is more sketchy. Neem oil is reported to combat salmonella and staphylococci, and pastes are applied to the skin of victims of chicken pox and warts. Africans and south Asians scrub teeth and gums with neem sticks, which have been found to kill oral bacteria.

For centuries, neem leaf extracts have been ingested as an antidote for malaria. The most provocative claim, because it could presage a potentially affordable means of population control, is for neem oil's contraceptive properties. The oil has shown some promise as a spermicide and as a temporary means of blocking fertility in both men and women. The NRC concludes that controlled research is needed in every one of these areas before the neem can live up to its moniker: "the village pharmacy."

The most enthusiastic advocate of the neem at the NRC is Noel D. Vietmeyer, a program officer, who is described by one agency official as the "obscure plants and animals guru." During his 20-year tenure working for NRC's Board of Science and Technology for International Development, which tries to identify underexploited plants and animals, Vietmeyer has shepherded reviews of the jojoba, the amaranth and other supposed miracle plants. He even flirts with the expression "wonder plant" in the foreword to the neem report. But, he insists: "I've never come across a plant with the breadth of potential the neem has."

Even if pesticides from the neem do not prove a match for the other staples of agribusiness, spreading the word about the tree may help small farmers in tropical countries. "The neem tree brings pesticides within the reach of even the poorest people," Vietmeyer says. "People who couldn't conceive of purchasing pesticides can have a neem tree in their backyard." —Gary Stix

Toothpaste gets the brush-off

WHEN Michael Bland grabbed a packet of bicarbonate of soda from the bathroom cupboard to clean his teeth this morning, it wasn't because he was fumbling in bleary-eyed, sleepy confusion. Brushing his teeth with bicarb is a regular habit.

Mr Bland was in fact very much awake, his skin tingling, because he'd already splashed his face with a thin solution of bicarb and water. And before he left his Darlinghurst flat for work, Mr Bland quickly wiped the bathroom basin and scrubbed the toilet with that efficient cleaner — bicarb.

Bicarb represents a back-to-basics approach to consumerism that Mr Bland wants everyone to adopt before it's too late. He believes that many common household cleaning products are not only unnecessary, but an outright offence; they should not be entering the plumbing system, which ultimately discharges into the ecological system.

"Regular cleansers contain detergents and bleach, and the less we use of them the better off we are. It's bizarre



Michael Bland gives his teeth the bicarb treatment.

how many things [household cleaners] there are around. When I was a kid there would only be a handful of products available in a supermarket to help you keep your house in good order and clean and tidy. Now there are aisles and aisles of it.

Mr Bland, 40, is a Canadian-born journalist who works as a Greenpeace researcher and campaigner. His project areas are the Antarctic, ozone-depleting substances and the green-

house effect. Needless to say, he stopped using aerosol products at home a long time ago.

Bicarb as a teeth cleaner and facial scrub are personal choices. It makes his teeth whiter and feel cleaner, he says. A face splash with bicarb once a week makes him feel fantastic, and is decidedly cheaper than the cosmetic facial scrubs. Some of Mr Bland's friends are already bicarb converts; he's working on the rest.

The humble bicarb certainly offers value for money. Suggestions for use on a packet of Harper's Bi-Carbonate of Soda include: ridding onion smell from hands; cleaning silver, the oven or a battery terminal; preserving the colour of cooked green vegetables; treating bee stings, sunburn and carpet stains; a substitute for eggs in fruitcake; and a form of children's play clay. The 500 gram packet costs 99c.

□ ANN ARNOLD

Picture by PALANI MOHAN

SHRI VISHNUMAYA PUJA
(Calin Costian - USA - 29/9/92)

Dear brothers and sisters,

Here is an account of Shri Vishnumaya puja, held on September 19 in Pennsylvania, US.

We started arriving on Friday night to the beautiful surroundings of Shawnee Inn, which was to host the puja. It had rained a bit, but the evening was clear. When Mother arrived, though, after midnight, very powerful lightnings of Shri Vishnumaya announced Her, and as soon as She entered the house, the sky was clear again.

Next day the puja started sometime around noon. Our attention was not good (also due to the fact that so many of us were meeting after a long time and had many things to share) and we were suddenly announced that the puja was to start immediately. This sweet play of our Divine Mother cleared our attention and prepared us for the puja. Gregoire gave a short introductory talk since there were some yogis who had never attended a puja before, and afterwards, while we were singing "Binati Suniye" and "Mahamaya Mahakali Jay Sherawali" Shri Mataji arrived. The talk was long and covered many topics, of which I will try to remember some.

- First Mother talked about the seeking of Americans and how they were deceived by the false gurus because they could understand only money. She said that Shri Krishna is Kubera (the Lord of wealth) as well as He is Yama (the Lord of death). But She said that the Mahalakshmi principle, the seeking on the central path, has definitely started in America.

She talked about Vishnumaya and Her tremendous powers. Shri Vishnumaya is present in all five elements, has absolute control over them and can enter into anything. The burning forests, earthquakes, typhoons, etc. are created by Her (entering into fire, earth, water, etc.). She can burn absolutely everything. As an example Shri Mataji gave the typhoon which attacked Kauai, where there is a Swayambhu of Shiva and people there are making money out of it. The big wave was initially directed towards Hawaii, but afterwards it suddenly turned to Kauai and nobody could explain why; it was all Shri Vishnumaya's work.

- Then She talked about guilt which is the main cause of left Vishuddhi problems, and which affects very much the Western world. She said that many people are feeling guilty about small small things. For instance, if you spill some coffee, you will feel guilty for the rest of your life. "But coffee is to be spilled, after all!" Then She talked about another kind of people who have a left Vishuddhi so full that it becomes completely numbed (numbing also the whole left side - actually left Vishuddhi problems are responsible for all our left side problems), and these people cannot feel anything - they don't feel at all they are doing something wrong ("So, what's wrong?").

- Then Shri Mataji spoke about the two main causes of left Vishuddhi problems:

- first is the Muladhara (and through it, the left side), because Shri Vishnumaya is a virgin. Shri Mother said that virginity is usually understood as referring to women only, but it applies to the men as well. Shri Vishnumaya triggers the left side diseases, and She also cures them.

- second is the ego (and the whole right side) which, when it is too big, is put into left Vishuddhi. Also, having all the time attention on money gives this kind of problems. Mother said that some people have developed such an insensitivity in the left Vishuddhi (by putting there the ego) that they can feel Shri Vishnumaya there as an electric shock (acting essentially as the lightning).

We shouldn't say "sorry", but face it, see that we have done a mistake, and say "all right, next time I'll watch and I won't do it." The mantra "Mother, I am not guilty" is one of the most powerful mantras for the whole western world. We should say it to the sea, to the forests, to the whole nature (Mother emphasized this a couple of times) and then everything will be all right (even ecological problems): "Mother, we are not guilty".

She said: you'll be surprised, if you stop feeling guilty (by constantly facing yourself) than you won't commit any mistakes anymore. Because the big storehouse which is in the left Vishuddhi will shrink and in that little space you cannot put any guilt anymore, it's too small. So if you stop feeling guilty, you also stop making mistakes automatically.

Shri Mataji talked then about the brother-sister relationship which is so wonderful in Sahaja Yoga, and about the roots of the rakhi tie. Alexander the Great conquered a part of India but was defeated by a king and put in jail. Then, as it happened to be the rakhi day, since Alexander had married an Indian woman, she sent a rakhi tie to the king, who accepted it with joy. Then he asked who is his rakhi sister, and finding out that it was Alexander's wife, he said "My God, what horrible thing have I done! How could I put Alexander in jail? He's my brother in law!"

So he went and immediately freed Alexander with all due apologies. So this Alexander couldn't understand what was going on! And he thought that if these strange people would free such a horrible enemy like him only because of a small piece of string - what kind of people are they and what powers must they have? - so he ran away with all his army - it was too much for him!

There were many more things said in the puja which I can't remember, all I remember is that it was wonderful! The puja itself was quite short (Mother also said She hoped we were not hungry - we had skipped lunch - which had been a wonderful exercise for our sleeping Guru principle) and in the evening (I forgot, there were also many beautiful gifts that Mother received from various centers not only from North America), there was an extremely beautiful recital of Debu Chaudhuri and a young but very good tabla player, who were much praised by Shri Mataji and gave us an evening full of delight and oneness. Late at night, after the recital, there was an entertaining program organized by the American yogis, with many beautiful Indian dances (some preceded by explanations concerning the gestures of the Deities depicted in the dance - very very nice and interesting) and new songs. The most beautiful I think was an Indian dance performed by Purnima, Steve Kirby's little daughter, who was like a shining moving gem. At some point, the whole electricity went off (lights, music), and the little girl remained perfectly still, not moving an inch, not even turning her eyes, till the lights and music came back. Shri Mataji was delighted with her and at the end hugged her and kissed her very joyfully.

The evening ended with a beautiful slide and music show about Shri Krishna, modern times, and Shri Mataji. Next day, we waved Mother off as She Left for New York to take the plane to Italy.

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P.S. Another recollection of Mother's visit in Cincinnati - one of the most wonderful things that happened: as we had announced the mayor that a very important personality will come to Cincinnati and give a public program on September 10, he gave disposition that an official of the mairie would come and greet Shri Mataji at the airport. 'By chance', that person wasn't able to come, and then the mayor who didn't want his left Vishuddhi to swell, said that he is very sorry but instead he will proclaim Thursday, September 10, 1992, as

"SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI DAY"

Jay Jay Jay Shri Mataji!!! We composed quickly a one page text for the proclamation (after a certain given model), which afterwards was a bit modified into an even more beautiful version by... the mayor's secretary! who liked it very much. (We were thinking that if we say too much about Shri Mataji, they won't accept it; but the secretary said that there's room to say even more and be more precise!). The time was very short (this was a last minute decision) but the timing was perfect, the proclamation was printed and made its way to the program, where it was read by Bala after Shri Mataji came on the stage (before the talk), for the great delight of everybody. [If you would like to have the text, please let me know and I'll broadcast it.]

Also, another little recollection from Mother's leaving the airport in Cinti: She asked little Priya "Hi, how are you?" and Priya asked where is Shri Ganesha, and said she misses Shri Ganesha very much. Shri Mataji smiled and said "All right, I'll bring Him back for you". What a promise! Isn't it wonderful?

May the Eternal Child who is Shri Ganesha shine and reign over America as over the entire world forever!

P.P.S. At the Hamsa Puja in Vancouver, a week before, the song composed by Shri Mataji at Guru Puja, "Binati Suniye", was sung as aarti! (It was Mother who said that this was the aarti). At the Vishnumaya puja, both songs ("Binati Suniye" and "Sab. ko dua dena") were sung in the end.

P.P.P.S. Any news from Mother's visit on the West Coast, Hamsa Puja and L.A. program?

*** JAY SHRI MATAJI !!! ***

Much love,

Calin



450 years on, the Shroud of Turin mystery remains

By Tim Pegler

MELBOURNE - Controversy continues to surround the Turin Shroud, more than 150 years after the artefact first reached its permanent home in Italy.

And while the debate has raged for centuries across continents, a focused interest in the alleged burial wrappings of Jesus Christ can now be found within the walls of Victoria's newest university, the former Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Visiting professor at the university, Vernon Miller, is a Polaroid researcher fellow and director of the industrial-scientific department of the Brooks Institute of Photographic Arts and Sciences in Santa Barbara, California.

As a member of the first international team permitted to investigate the shroud in Turin in 1978, he is more than familiar about the arguments surrounding the origins of the enigmatic relic.

The shroud is revered as the burial wrapping of Jesus because it faintly depicts the body of a man with wounds closely matching those suffered by Christ at the crucifixion.

man mind and hand on record," he said.

As to which option he favoured, Prof. Miller was tight-lipped.

"If I could find, or someone could prove to me, it was created by this human-being I want to recognise him for what he was: a pure genius. To have done this doesn't seem possible..." he said.

The shroud was first exhibited in 1357, suffered fire damage in 1532 and was moved to its home in Turin in 1578.

However, Prof. Miller said the tests were inconclusive as they were performed on a contaminated - and possibly misleading - piece of the cloth and under questionable conditions.

"I am a firm believer in carbon dating. I believe carbon dating is a destructive process when correctly done," he said.

"I feel the testing done on this piece of material was not correct."

"My appeal would be that we get another opportunity to do the dating and if done in a more properly controlled manner then I'm really willing to accept the results."

While carbon-dating might indicate the age of the shroud, it does not answer all questions.

"Dating it to the 16th century doesn't tell me how it got there and that's what's important to me. If this was created I want the world to know who did it," he said.

If the image was created by an artist Prof. Miller is keen to pay homage to his skills.

"The Shroud of Turin is either the most awesome and instructive relic of Christ in existence or it is the most unbelievably clever product of the hu-

gas vapors that could form an image when passing through the linen. Mr. Miller favors this theory because gases could create a distortion-free aerial projection image, though it does not explain why the image is only on one side of the cloth.

* Scorching: An image is scorched on cloth, but science can detect scorching easily and no evidence of this was found on the shroud.

* Leonardo da Vinci was commissioned to create a relic and did so by etching an image into a piece of glass before allowing sunlight to shine through the image on to the linen, leaving on the picture.

However, as Mr. Miller said: "No one has the answer to this point".

At other details of the shroud, science can offer the following findings:

* The image is not water-soluble or affected by extremely high temperatures as it has survived water and fire damage.

* Image processing has shown the image to be three-dimensional.

* The shroud carries the only known image of its type in the world and cannot be replicated.

* Blood on the shroud is identical throughout and is at least primitive, if not human, blood. The main area of blood coincides with a "lance wound" inflicted by Christ.

* Scourge marks across the front and back of the body image are identical in size to a form of Roman whip displayed among relics contained in Vatican City.

* Prof. Miller said he hopes another scientific team will be granted access to the shroud in the future.

He stands by his two possible theories for the shroud and dismisses any scientific sceptic as unwilling to consider the evidence.

He also strives to avoid the awe associated with the shroud.

"If you get too spiritual you are not going to do good science because you are trying to prove a point," he said.

The mystery remains.

"The Advocate"

Monday 6/7/92