

Avatar Meher Baba's 41st Silence Anniversary

at Meher Spiritual Center, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, U. S. A.

BY WENDY HAYNES

Cable received by Elikit : (Elizabeth Patterson & Kitty Davy)

MY LOVE TO YOU AND ALL MY LOVERS IN MYRTLE BEACH AND AT CENTRE
GATHERED 101 PERCENT IN THE FULLNESS OF MY SILENCE

— MEHER BABA

Avatar Meher Baba has given the following message for the 41st Anniversary of His Silence:

"GOD'S FIRST WORD WAS 'WHO AM I' GOD'S LAST WORD IS 'I AM GOD'
AND THE WORD THAT I THE GOD-MAN WILL UTTER SOON WILL BE THE SOUND
OF MY INFINITE SILENCE."

About ten miles from the town of Myrtle Beach, lies one of the most beautiful places in the world—Meher Spiritual Center. Beautiful for the simple reason that it is our Beloved's Home in the West. The Center is for all those who share the most important thing in their life—their love for Meher Baba.

There are so many devoted ones who come and go throughout the year that it is wonderful to pause and observe them as they gather together at the Center. One such time is this "Day of Silence", July 10th, 1966. So many came, by bus, car, train and plane. The Center was all hustle and bustle—the atmosphere was charged with love for the Beloved. Baba's Elizabeth, as always, supervised all the preparations with her usual devotion and care. Kitty and Jane were seen scurrying here and there and everywhere with suspicious looking bundles in their arms, which of course turned out to be supplies and linens for all the cabins. The phone was to be heard ringing constantly. Dates were changed, families enlarged and new arrivals announced every day. Kitty's remarkable vitality was in full force as she juggled rooms, cabins and spaces for the visitors. Every nook and corner was used, including the Coop and 'Happy Club' room (where children gather once a week); every spare bed pulled out, and finally the Center was ready to receive Baba's dear ones.

Work on the grounds was also intensive. Frank Eaton, the Center's dedicated caretaker, along with his assistant George Anderson, were to be seen clearing, trimming, working constantly. To relieve the congestion in the main kitchen, two new porches with their own kitchens had been added to both the Lantern and the Twin Cabins. What a help these new additions turned out to be!

One by one, two by two, the lovers of Baba arrived (some a week ahead) happy and content to be at the Center. Those who had not booked well in advance were in for disappointment, as were

Darwin and Jeanne Shaw, who rang up a few days ahead only to find that no space was left. Virginia Rudd and her son along with their friends from New Jersey, took rooms in a nearby hotel and came to the Center daily. Dear Bernice Ivory and her family had to wait six hours for a bus from New York as it was the fourth of July weekend and the terminals as well as the train stations were packed full. Yet in spite of the difficult trip the five arrived with beaming faces (the fifth being their young friend Gregory).

Many had a long wait: Ruth Ringer from New York and her friend Hattie, and Mary Andriani, all of whom arrived that same weekend. Others from afar were Maya Andrau from Woodstock, N.Y., also John Bass, Sunny Parsons, Nancy Merwan; Walter Overcarsh drove down from Charlotte, North Carolina and Dr. & Mrs. Sessions from Charleston, South Carolina. And of course from New York, Margaret Craske, who is always with us for the day of Silence. Eileen, Joulia and Edith were already at the Center at this time. The dear DeLongs came up from Florida to be at Baba's Center; and we all loved seeing Filis Frederick who came, though only for a short while, after giving lectures with her Baba slides in New York and Washington. The changes in the Center made Filis reminisce about the times she had spent here in the early days in 1945, when the Center consisted of only two or three cabins in an undeveloped wilderness by Long Lake.

It was so wonderful to see everyone, especially those who had not been able to come to the Center before. Among the newcomers were Steve and Barbara Durkee and their adorable three-year-old daughter Dakota; and I mustn't forget Carlos, their big collie dog. Speaking of dogs, a newcomer joined the party; he was a little mutt who with a determined air announced his arrival with a loud bark! He then commenced to make himself right at home, which he did by munching happily on a cushion from the main porch, jumping up and down all over everyone and making friends with all; especially with the Hernandez family: Ralph, Stella and their little son Norman for they took the happy dog back to Florida after the day of Silence when no one came to claim him. One could certainly say that with the small children and the dogs, everything was most lively. Sometimes the activity was so great that some compared it to Sahavas time.

It was also the first visit to the Center for Robert Dreyfuss, the young man who had hitch-hiked to India to see Baba not knowing that the December '65 Sahavas had been cancelled. Robert has since joined Allan Cohen, Rick Chapman and others in an anti-LSD campaign at Baba's direction. One disappointment at the last moment was to hear that Dadi, Eruch's cousin from Poona, would not be able to be with us as anticipated, due to college work. We had so hoped to hear him talk of Baba and his early experiences in India.

Lynn and Phyllis Ott who have just moved to Myrtle Beach with their family from Woodstock, N.Y. entertained us with an unusual and enlightening program. Their theme was based on the first four states of God (taken from 'God Speaks'). Lynn presented the stages in a direct and simplified manner with large charts, while Phyllis represented the Bodhisattva figure, "one who is awaiting illumination". At the end of the interesting presentation, a surprise from Stella Hernandez in the form of a delicious cherry cobbler (sweet drink), added a delightful finishing touch. (And it disappeared rapidly!)

Thus the days passed, each one filled with something new: people talking of Baba, exchanging memories and ideas; seeing the wonderful films of Baba washing the lepers with His devoted mandali and the films of the 1958 and 1962 Sahavas, all so patiently shown by dear Fred and Ella Winterfeldt; some enjoying the Center's beautiful ocean beach where Baba walked with the mandali in the early days. And what a joy it gave everyone to look through the beautiful photographs of the Beloved in the album just sent by Mani to the Center for us all to enjoy. It is now in Baba's House along with many other Baba treasures.

A familiar sight to all was Margaret Craske, at the boat-house or on the porch surrounded by a group drinking in her many anecdotes and reminiscences of her early experiences with Baba during the years in India and elsewhere.

The night before the day of Silence Robert Dreyfuss and Allan Cohen spoke of a problem with which Baba is deeply concerned; the problem of psychedelic drugs and the effects which He says they have on those who are searching for God through indulgence in these drugs. It seemed strange to some that such a talk should take place on the eve of the "Day of Silence" but as Margaret explained it: "Inner work, outer work, everything is Baba. Today the discussion of the outer work, tomorrow the quiet, of the inner Silence. All is Baba." Baba's views on the use of drugs were clearly stated in the talk by Allan Cohen and Robert Dreyfuss. To quote Baba's words: "The experiences that drugs induce are as far removed from Reality as is a mirage from water. No matter how much you pursue the mirage, you will never quench your thirst and the search for Truth through drugs must end in disillusionment."

After this brief lecture the conversation became general. Several participated and contributed to the discussion. Among these were Steve Durkee and Henry Kashouty. Steve felt that those taking drugs today, when told that they would have a hellish experience, in doing so, would reply that life is hellish as it is and that the experience in LSD could not be worse; he added that it would take a great deal of love quality to get through to these people; the kind of love that only a Perfect Master can give. Henry's remark was, that because of the prominent campaign against LSD and the fact that youth is now looking toward spirituality, more and more people will hear Baba's words and teachings. These remarks made many stop and think of the wonderful ways Baba's Message of Love is spread in His own way and in His own time.

At the close of the meeting, Robert read aloud from the pamphlet "Excerpts of Messages by Meher Baba on His Silence". Included in the selections were the following excerpts:

"THE VERY MOMENT WHEN HE THINKS MY SPEAKING WOULD BE HEARD
UNIVERSALLY, GOD WILL MAKE ME BREAK MY SILENCE."

(Myrtle Beach, S. C. April 25, 1952).

"BE YE GUIDED BY LOVE AND TRUTH: THIS IS THE SIMPLE WAY THAT LEADS TO GOD: NOT BY THE ENDLESS MANEUVERING OF ALLURING ILLUSIONS, BUT BY LOYALTY TO THE UNCHANGEABLE TRUTH, CAN YE HOPE TO BE ESTABLISHED IN ABIDING PEACE."

"WHEN I SPEAK IT WILL ONLY BE ONE DIVINE WORD: BUT IT WILL BE THE WORD OF WORDS OR THE MANIFESTATION OF TRUTH. THIS WORD WILL HAVE TO BE HEARKENED BY THE HEART, AND NOT MERELY BY THE MIND. IT WILL GO HOME AND BRING YOU THE AWAKENING. MY LOVE AND BLESSINGS."

(Andhra Darshan Tour, Feb. & March 1954)

Baba's beautiful Arti was then played after which people lingered over coffee and buns before dispersing to their individual cabins, each holding securely in their hand a copy of the cable which Baba had sent for the forty-first anniversary of His Silence; to cherish it forever but especially for the next day, the Day of Silence.

During the preceding days there had been a great feeling of anticipation, as if waiting for the best to come last. How true that was, for the "Day of Silence" was a peaceful and loving climax. The Center was more beautiful than ever and all reveled in its beauty while rejoicing in their love for Baba remembering above all, His Love for each of us. Figures were seen slipping away quietly to the Barn where Baba has gathered us all together on so many memorable and happy occasions; or to the Lagoon Cabin where Baba's Presence is so strongly felt, as if He were sitting in that chair as He has so many times before; others making their way to the ocean to gaze at the beautiful sight before them, wishing that they could sail right over to India that very instant. There may have been those who felt a trifle irritated at the noise of the children, but even that was a good experience, for Baba loves children deeply and the little ones did know that "Mummy and Daddy mustn't talk."

Throughout the day there was an uplifting of love for the Beloved. Each felt Him close in his own way, just as each loves Him in his own way, from nine months old Christopher John to ninety-six years young Ruth White.

As beloved Baba has told us:

"EVERYTHING REAL IS GIVEN AND RECEIVED IN SILENCE"