Chapter 25

Old Age

Savarkar was now seventy years old. The story of Savarkar was the history of resistance, strife, struggle, sufferings and sacrifices for the cause of political, social and economic emancipation of India. His was a political career extended over fifty long years. How many of his great contemporaries could see pioneers from Ranade to philosophers like M. N. Roy, could strive for independence of India and yet have the good fortune to see the sun of freedom rise over India? An active political leader who either saw, talked or discussed politics with thinkers from Ranade to Roy, leaders from Surendranath to Subhas, from liberator Tilak to fighter Achyutrao Patwardhan. No other life on the political stage of India was marked by so many vicissitudes, punctuated with raging storms and lightning and tantalized with gaping gallows. This was a political life chequered with romantic threads of sufferings and was fringed with sacrifices. Woven with recollections of the sea and the steamer, it was interspersed with hell-like prison life and was lined with historic arrests, trials and releases. Even one single incident from the matchless drama of Savarkar’s life was long, charming and thrilling enough to provide the span for a play of immortal fame.

From his early youth to the evening of his life Savarkar lay bruised, bleeding, burning and bursting. The evening of life shone like a rainbow, a myriad-coloured picture. The sea is never tired of rivers. So was Savarkar never tired of sufferings and services. Perhaps no other freedom movement produced such an indefatigable fighter with such an undying love for his country. Who would be prepared to undergo such unimaginable sufferings, untold sacrifices and face formidable dangers for the mere love of his country? But it was this very characteristic of the forgetful fit of the destiny of this man that though all the
while storms kept raging round him, be it rainy season or spring, yet the sun in Savarkar always broke forth.

Savarkar was a great man of mission and action. His majestic forehead at once reminded you of the forehead of Napoleon who was also a victim of the British imperialistic wrath. One look at the crown of his head and you would at once find a crown in the middle of his head bequeathed by nature herself. His face possessed the effulgent beauty of gold, his frame strength of steel, and his head was a store of the hymns of revolution. His small luring and penetrating eyes hollowed in the high cheek-bones probed into the lessons of the past and they unfailingly warned the Hindus every time against the tragedies of the present and the impending catastrophes of the future. The eyes shone like a lighthouse indicating the unfailing direction to the ship of the nation for its movements in order that the horrors of the approaching wreck might be averted.

The square jaws witnessed his suppressed thoughts, his burning mission, unfulfilled aims, unflagging industry, frustrated plans, stormy life and unexampled sacrifice. His short, proportionate handsome figure looked like an image carved out of the bones, blood and brains of the great Hindu thinkers and martyrs from Hindu History. His head bald and glistening but lined with black hair, his chest broad and invincible, his waist lion-like, his neck short, his palms small with an excellent rosy colour, his height five feet two and a half inches and his ivory-white flat feet with rosy shades; all this a marvellous creation of God and earth.

Did you hear this typical Mahratta leader at any mass meeting? Dressed in immaculate white, with a brimless black round cap on his massive head, a black umbrella in his right hand and a fresh newspaper in his left, the deep, long whiskers on the sides of his lustrous serene face and eyes encircled in gold-rimmed spectacles, Savarkar's personality was at once outstanding in any vast multitude. What a vast difference in Savarkar, the lonely giant in his solitary room and Savarkar, the leader and ruler of the masses! The orator and prophet got the upper hand and Savarkar was always a hero even to his valets!

Orators feed themselves on history. From it they derive inspiration. They draw their own conclusions from history. History develops their visions, heroes feed them on heroism
and their incomplete dreams fan their emotions. Demosthenes, Pitt, Burke, Daniel Webster, Hitler, and Churchill belonged to this type. Savarkar, too, belonged to the line of this immortal race of orators.

Whenever Savarkar entered a mass meeting, he came to the platform walking the gait of a hero; his way opening before him in an anxious sea of masses. He bowed to the masses. The masses moved with waves of emotions as if the moon were in the sky. He rose to deliver his message. He seldom came with a set speech. He usually spoke on the spur of the moment, but unfailingly reserved a certain time for a peroration. He was like quick-silver. One listened to him in pin-drop silence or missed the train of his arguments. His voice was a great asset and had a peculiar ring. His eyes glittered and glowed when he became animated.

Savarkar mercilessly overthrew the fallacies in the foggy logic of his opponents. His opponents were bewildered at the torrent of his eloquence. At every sentence you felt an opponent reeling. His speech tore the mask of shams and confronted you with naked realities. His speech had the whirl of a storm. His humour was merciless. He threw logic and reasoning at you through emotion. The audience thrilled. It clapped. It moved. His eyes flashed fire. His face glowed with the mission that burnt bright in him. The masses marked the stout heart and watched the steel frame, iron will, majestic forehead and the boundless sincerity of a personality that had heralded an era into the history of Indian political struggle and social revolution.

Savarkar’s remarkable political speeches and masterpieces were delivered before Shanivarwada, Poona, on the Ghats of Cawnpore or in Delhi. They struck his critics dumb, and cleared doubts and dusty thoughts. It was characteristic of Savarkarian speeches that they sounded as though the Muse of oratory danced, played and wept with the feelings, joys and sorrows of Savarkar! His masterpieces began with such earnest and gripping sentences in a deep sonorous voice and ended with such a dramatic touching rise and fall in his voice and moving tone that old men shed tears, youths were filled with unbearable pathos and women piteously sighed. His magnificent oratory, clear-cut thoughts and inspiring messages often sealed and
unsealed historic decisions. Before the Sholapur Conference of the Arya Samaj in 1939, he defeated and left a wreck of Gandhi's draft resolution advising the withdrawal of the Hyderabad struggle. His concluding speech at the Nagpur session of the Hindu Mahasabha delivered with a heart-force and a burning mission inspired the inter-provincialists and new-comers. Leaders like Dr. Mookerjee were magnetized during the course of one of such speeches at Calcutta. Not only leaders, lawyers and literary figures listened to him spell-bound, but foreigners also were enchanted with the magic wand of his oratory. While Savarkar was on his way to Shillong, an Englishman travelling in the same train, heard the deafening greetings of the people to Savarkar at every station. At one station the Englishman requested Savarkar through his secretary to make a short speech; for he had heard in England, he said, that Savarkar was one of the greatest orators. He heard Savarkar speak before a crowd at the next station, introduced himself to Savarkar and wishing him all success went away.

Fortunate were those who heard him speak on the 'War of Independence of 1857' after his release in 1937. Those who heard his presidential address at the Marathi Literary Conference in Bombay were lucky. Those who attended the Non-Party Conference in Bombay and Poona needed no introduction to understand why Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru came to Savarkar's chair at the time of the Bombay Non-Party Conference, thanked Savarkar from the bottom of his heart and said: "It is you who saved the Conference." Of Savarkar the Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, said that Savarkar was a man of Mission. The Sunday Standard, Bombay, described him as an orator of the first order. It added: "Few others in the whole of India can thrill and sway his listeners as this simple-looking Hindu leader can. He is an orator of the first degree; and it is a pleasure to hear him speak, his eyes flashing, his lips quivering, his weak body trembling with emotion."

India enjoyed the scintillating speeches of Srinivas Sastri, the sweet flow of Jayakar, the roarings of the tireless Satyamurthi, the powerful appeal of Maulana Azad, the high-flown emotional speeches of Devi Sarojini Naidu, the sweet seriousness of the visionary in Pandit Nehru and the chattering train of Rajaji,
but India witnessed the culmination and perfection of oratory in Savarkar, rightly called the Indian Demosthenes.

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If you want to study the history of the Indian Revolution, the history of the social revolution in Maharashtra, and the history of the literary movement launched to purge the Indian languages of foreign influence and words, and keep our lingua franca undefiled, you must study Savarkar. Modern Maharashtra did not produce a more volcanic brain than Savarkar, a leader whose outlook was absolutely rational and up-to-date. According to him, rational outlook must obtain control over the political, social and military life of India, if India is to survive the struggle for existence. Savarkar welcomed the machine age, believed in mechanized agriculture and modernized industry. He wanted India to prepare and equip herself physically, mentally, technically, mechanically and militarily, not with the object of enslaving other nations, but for liberating the enslaved peoples of the world from all kinds of shackles, superstitions and imperialism.

During the last four decades no leader waged more ruthlessly an unrelenting war against the barriers of caste system in schools and in public places, in intercaste dinners and in social intercourse, and suffered, toiled and faced dangers and dispraise and even curses than Savarkar in the annihilation of untouchability. That is why they called him a fusion of the great Mahratta leaders of modern times who heralded a new epoch in the history of India. The spirit of Nanasaheb who fought the War of Indian Independence of 1857, the sweep of Wasudeo Balwant Phadke who first raised an armed revolt in Maharashtra for the establishment of an Indian Republic, the mental force of Chiplunkar, the reformative zeal of Agarkar, the sacrifice and struggle of Tilak, the service of Gokhale and untiring work of Kelkar, all these find an echo in the alchemy of Savarkar.

Savarkar was a Hindu among the Hindus, but of the Chitor type. He was proud of his heritage and grateful to it. He found his guiding star in Lord Krishna, the glory of Hindustan. He saw in Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj the fount of inspiration. He regarded Rana Pratap as the fire of patriotism, Guru Govind Singh the sire of martyrdom, and Sadashiv Bhau the righteous
sword of Hindustan. To defend, to enliven and to raise the Hindu Nation was to him a national, patriotic, righteous, just, human and a sublime cause.

Savarkar did not hate you because you were an Englishman or a Mohammedan or a Jew! He paid glowing tributes to the skill and might of the Britishers. Savarkar was the only leader in India, who envisaged a State for the floating race of the Jews ever since 1908, and in 1923 he wrote in his famous work Hindutva that ‘if the Zionists’ dreams were realised, if Palestine became a Jewish State, it would gladden us almost as much as our Jewish friends.’¹ Since his release in 1937, he had been a staunch supporter of the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine and in 1947, no Indian leader was as happy as Savarkar except possibly Master Tara Singh to see the emergence of a Jewish State in Palestine.

As for the Parsees and Christians, Savarkar had no grudge against them. He not only appreciated their co-operation and patriotic outlook, but also cherished hopes of building with them an Indian State in which the religion, culture and language of the minorities would be preserved. He never cherished to impose disadvantages upon the non-Hindus. That is why he met and discussed problems in a frank, free and accommodating spirit with the leaders of the Parsees, the Jews and the Christians who wanted to remain in India as loyal citizens enjoying equal rights with the Hindus.

But as Savarkar rightly suspected the separatist tendencies and extra-territorial ambition of the Muslims, he was not prepared to give them an inch more than they democratically deserved, and for this outspokenness he was called a communalist by those who were pro-Muslim. However, events proved now the correctness of Savarkar’s stand and the futility and falsity of the appeasing policy of the pro-Muslim patriots who claimed the appellation nationalists for themselves.

It was, however, a fact that Savarkar was an echo of the unjustly suppressed, exploited and disturbed soul of the Hindus. His soul was synchronized with the sorrows and joys of Hindudom, the Hindu world. Whenever something harmed or jeopardized the interests, property, honour and lives of the

¹ Savarkar, Hindutva, p. 112.
Hindus, he grew restless. So perennial was his love for the Hindus, so eternal was his hope of their great future and the role of the Hindus in the building of the peace and prosperity of the world, that he was infuriated whenever he heard that the Hindus were suppressed and their just rights denied; and when that feeling was on him, he showed signs of a violent dislike for those who trampled upon Hindu rights, oppressed them and made aggressions on them.

Savarkar waged war since his early youth. His war was against those who trampled upon the just and fundamental rights of the Hindus in their Homeland. His war was against those who defaced and disgraced humanity in this land. His was the war of a Nation against all intruders, disruptive men and bogus World Federalists whose practice was divorced from their professions and whose actions led to the break-up of the solidarity and the integrity of Hindustan. And therefore Savarkar was a terror to tyrants, a foe to injustice, an antidote to anti-nationalists and an unforgiving critic of the pro-Muslim politicians in India. To him a disruptive patriot or a Pakistani Hindu was synonymous with a pretender or a traitor respectively and literally. Savarkar was opposed to Pakistanis as heat is to cold. His political philosophy was as different from Gandhism as chalk from charcoal. He wanted a place for the Hindus on the map of the world as Bharat or Hindustan and so he said that Hindustan belonged to the Hindus. What was wrong in it? Could the Hindus rightfully say that Britain, Germany or Turkistan belonged to them?

Savarkar was an electric powerhouse. None could touch it. His conversational gift was nothing less than dictatorial, but tinged with utmost rationalism. To begin with, he would patiently listen to you with some pertinent queries and then would do most of the talking. Looking to the force of his arguments, logic and reasoning, some said he was vain and egoistic. But the fact was that by temperament he was assertive, unyielding and dictatorial due to a feeling of superiority complex and overestimation of himself, a belief in the rightness and justice of his cause and due to his strong convictions and mellowed thoughts. And strong personalities are always so. Bernard Shaw once silenced his critics who charged him with vanity and egoism. He told his critics that had any of them
gone through the trials and hardships which he himself had undergone, he would have been hundred times more vain and egoistic than Shāw himself. One-tenth of Savarkar’s trials, tribulations and talents, and the critics would have been ten times more egoistic and vain than Savarkar.

Savarkar’s logic was curt, his humour caustic and his whipping electric. He was a stern mouth-stopper. During his Chief Ministership Fazlul Huq boasted that the Muslims were tigers and lions and they would harass the Hindus. Savarkar hit him back: “The history of creation proves that it is men who have reclaimed the earth and lions and tigers had to retire to the obscurity of the forest. We Hindus are men. One man with a whip in his hand controls scores of lions and tigers in a circus and these beasts obey wonderfully well.” The same Muslim leader said that Malabar was a part of Arabia. Savarkar pulled him up by replying that if it was so, then Arabia must be annexed to India! To the Pakistanis and their supporters who said that because in some provinces the Muslims were in a majority, they wanted Pakistan, Savarkar replied with equal ruthlessness that because in Hindustan the Hindus were in a majority, Hindustan belonged to the Hindus.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad said during the Bihar Sharif riot days that he advised the Hindus as his own people. Savarkar asked Dr. Rajendra Prasad as to when he had deserted his Indian Nationalism and condescended to call only the Hindus his own people. A wordy Socialist once asked Savarkar whether he had read Lenin. The upstart was silenced by Savarkar with one stroke: “Had Lenin read Savarkar?” Not that he had neglected literature on Communism. The author has seen some books on the subject in Savarkar’s small personal library read, underlined and with remarks made in the margin by Savarkar at the proper places, especially on books by Lenin and Trotsky. Savarkar read many books on the subject before his release and he often directed his men to buy the latest books on Socialism. But what he hated most was blind babbling of foreign phrases and blind worship which totally disregarded the conditions, traditions and the history of our country.

Savarkar was a unique combination of a dreamer and a doer, a prophet and a warrior, a realist and a revolutionary all in one man. In him you will find a Washington who unsheathed
his sword for freedom; a Thomas Paine who wielded an inspiring pen, and a Mazzini who ushered in a revolutionary epoch and started the war of Independence. Soaringly imaginative yet severely logical, erudite yet perspicuous, Savarkar was not merely a great writer, but a very great one. Describing Savarkar's place in the domain of literature, one of Gandhi's Maharashtrian biographers wrote: "It is admitted on all hands, including his political opponents, that Mr. Savarkar is a rare genius. He is a pen of fire. He wields pen and pistol alike. Patriotism and Poetry run through the veins of his literature. England may be proud of her statesmen writers like Morley and MacDonald and Russia may well boast of Tolstoy and Gorky; but India surpasses all these countries in having Mr. Savarkar who is a writer, a statesman and a warrior. His pen would have shaken the world from its bottom but for the narrow scope of the Marathi language, through which mother tongue he masterly expresses himself."

In India Savarkar as an author was a class by himself, for Savarkar wrote in blood lines with his blood and the bones of martyrs. It is the characteristic of all immortal authors that they cannot write in artificial pruned lines with their stomach at ease, for there is no halfway house for positive personalities. Savarkar's writings raise a storm of emotions and shake your intellect. His pen arouses fierce hatred and fierce loyalties. You feel a storm has passed over you or some power has dashed against you. All his writings, both poetry and prose, preach resistance to tyranny, inspire you with courage and direct your energies towards the liberation of mankind from all bondages. Savarkar was a great poet, a poet of great, grand and epic poetry. His poetry was logic on fire, as all great poetry is, and satisfied the intellect and emotions of the reader. His epic genius gave the people high ideals, his great pen infused an irresistible spirit of independence into the people, his supreme courage and unparalleled sacrifice aroused their patriotic feelings, his words made them feel the spirit of nationality and realize the solidarity of the nation. Savarkar educated the illiterate, motivated the educated and activated the learned.

Savarkar was a great social reformer. Neither talkative nor

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fashionable reformers could measure Savarkar's worth and work in purging the society pitilessly and fearlessly of its ills, ignorance and superstitions. According to him science was the real religion of man in this material world. In the light kindled by the cotton wicks only the darkness of poverty, slavery and famine would be seen. If at all the dust from the feet of any man was to be borne on the forehead, it should be from the feet of man who produced wealth by his toil for the society. The society lived on the toils of such men. Dust from the feet of the idle hypocrite, who passed for a saint, should not be borne. If at all pollution was caused by the touch of any man it was this man who lived in society as a parasite, he exhorted.

Many were a bell-ringer to social revolution, a few worked actually in the field, but few had the unfailing courage and the genius of a practical social reformer. A social reformer requires a certain amount of courage, conviction and a stout but elastic heart to achieve his goal. And Savarkar's courage and heart had well shaken the world. His strong conviction, dauntless courage, endless faith, enduring capacity for work, unremitting industry, untiring energy, invincible determination and a volcanic pen belonged to the type of men like Luther, Knox, Mazzini, Rousseau, Voltaire and Carlyle, who represent the moral force of the world and stamp their mind upon their age.

But the outstanding characteristic of Savarkar was that he was a great iconoclast, one of the greatest idol-breakers Asia has ever produced. A strong will, a volcanic pen, a powerful hammer, a fiery heart, a scathing contempt for hypocrisy, Savarkar was a born iconoclast, who despised and scorned hypocrisy in religion, society, and politics. He did not strut off as an agent of God descended down to herald a new era, nor did he pretend to possess an inner voice. His was the voice of reason and science. Therefore he ruthlessly routed and pitilessly hammered out all kinds of superstitions, bondages, sanctimonious hypocrisy in society, in religion and in politics. From bigoted Sanatanists to bogus saints, dead or alive, none escaped the strokes of his hammer! He possessed all the attributes, tests and elements of greatness. According to Dr. Ambedkar, a Great Man is he who acts as the scourge and scavenger of society. Savarkar was a really Great Man, who was motivated by the
dynamics of a social purpose and acted as the scourge and scavenger of Society.

Savarkar was a hero at many points. The hero as poet in Savarkar was extolled to the skies in Maharashtra; the hero as a man of letters, he was claimed to be an immortal author by litterateurs; the hero as patriot in Savarkar was deified all over India; but the hero as revolutionary prophet in Savarkar was not appreciated by many outside his party. The business of a prophet is to see and teach. A prophet possesses three main qualities. They are insight, courage and sincerity. As to courage and sincerity, Savarkar’s name is now a legend. Savarkar proved the unfailingness of his insight on several occasions. Savarkar predicted as early as 1925 that the separation of Sind from Bombay Province for appeasing the Muslim mind would be a disastrous precedent, would destroy the Sind Hindus and would pique the appetite of the anti-national Muslims. In 1938 he declared to the surprise of the whole nation that the Congress led by Gandhi would betray the nation and would destroy the unity of India by conceding Pakistan. In 1940 he warned the Assam Hindus that if they did not check the Muslim influx into Assam, Assam would meet the fate of Sind and Bengal. Congressmen then laughed at him. However, in 1947 they owned his prophecy, for Assam was almost tagged to Pakistan, but was fortunately saved through the vigilance of the leaders who at last realized the danger after the frantic and hoarse cry of Savarkar. The warning sounded about the fate of Kashmir in 1938 went unheard and the Kashmir Hindus paid for it and ultimately Hindus all over Hindustan had to pay crores of rupees and pour their blood for defending Kashmir against the onslaughts of the Pakistanis. Did not the Nizam, too, suffer the fate as predicted by Savarkar?

When World War II broke out and Russia joined it, Savarkar at once remarked that the crafty Britain had saved her throat, and now she would swallow the whole of Africa. At the time of the battle of Stalingrad, Savarkar said that if Japan failed to attack Russia from the Eastern side, both Germany and Japan would lose the war and Japan would have to pay for her folly in the long run. What actually did happen is too well known to be recounted.

Men of prophetic vision never try to please the masses. They
aim at guiding them. They always look to the larger interests of the people, not only of their own generation, but of future generations as well. So they are many a time not as popular as they should be. They never pander to popularity, nor do they sacrifice their conscience for success. The masses do not understand the prophetic visions of these men because what these prophets see is beyond their horizon.

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The shades of prison life dominated the citizen Savarkar, and affected to a great degree the politician Savarkar too. Those shades and shadows often obscured his social intercourse with his partymen and public men. Moody and erratic, he could not create a certain warmth that was needed in a party chief towards his colleagues, party men and followers. For the consolidation and success of a political party, the wings of the soft heart of the party chief must reach at least the connecting hooks in the link. The chief must be cordial enough to enquire about the difficulties of his lieutenants and arrange to help them so as to enable them to devote their best to the cause and service of the people. Except the rare names of Ranade, Tilak and Gandhi, no other party chief could bring himself to this much-needed accommodating frame of mind. Tilak ran to distant places even for settling the marriage of a daughter of his disciple, or could advise a farmer in the matter of his legal problems even from Mandalay Prison. Gandhi could tear out his heart, what of purse, to soothe the grief and troubles of his party leaders.

But the case of Savarkar, the political leader, was quite different. He could not respond to the enthusiasm or warmth of other leaders, who sought his interviews or valuable guidance, or those who even passed valuable information on to him secretly. The fate of interviewers and foreign visitors was no better. The glamour of the furniture of Jinnah, the warmth and hospitality of the special guest-house of Tilak for political leaders and eminent guests, the living interest and paternal inquiries of Gandhi into the personal affairs of his lieutenants, and Pandit Nehru’s abiding hospitality to foreigners, or friendly invitations for dinners to eminent men, admirers, or party leaders, or a casual invitation to his inter-provincial visitors or
an appreciative call to the pressmen, all these could not impress Savarkar, the political leader. Cynically disinterested, he did not feel any inward urge for these things.

Savarkar's ideas and beliefs of patriotic duties and national obligations were purely and supremely patriotic and selfless. His motto was duty irrespective of any consideration of fruit. And this was the noble motto of all those early selfless revolutionaries. Savarkar expected every Indian to do his duty by his Motherland who pined for freedom. This highly cold and disinterested mental make-up came in the way of the modern set-up of propaganda, which depends upon much give and take. This adversely affected the destiny of the party and his leadership.

But in spite of such restricted sense of warmth in the social intercourse and lack of sympathy for his party men, lieutenants and followers, due to the legacy of his long prison life and shattered health, and stingy nature, Savarkar gained the devotion of hundreds of youths who were prepared to lay down their lives for his principles. This was due to Savarkar's unrivalled genius, selfless patriotism, unparalleled sacrifice and dynamic, mighty and mesmeric personality.

So, lonely and restless, Savarkar breathed flames of undying faith in spite of an unsympathetic and unsound constitution that had withstood unimaginable horrors, terrors and tortures of the Andamans. "A long exile in the Andamans wrecked his health early in life, and it is amazing how he has regathered his strength and carried on so long in public life," remarked the National Herald while commenting on the retirement of Savarkar in 1943. So much unsound was his constitution that sleep was always forced on him by means of bromide. Writing about the lonely and restless Savarkar, a writer in the Hindusthan Times, Delhi, described Savarkar as an ascetic and inward looking man who in his youth almost set the Thames on fire, and observed: "Savarkar is strange. He may not glitter. His attitude may not please you. He is mesmeric with a capacity to infuse in an observer a sense of cold aloofness." For almost thirteen years he was companionless and was forced to gulp down jail food with cruel punctuality, at the same place and the same quality and kind of food prepared with the matchless prison skill and medical care. This made him what he was
in his old age. His isolation was partly due to circumstances and partly due to his temperament. He lived alone. That giants must live apart and kings have no company was true, literally true of Savarkar.

Savarkar, the promoter of science and secularism and advocate of modernism, lived a very simple life. Wonderstruck at the homely and rough simplicity of his little house known as Savarkar Sadan, once Srinivas Sastri asked: "Savarkar, is this the house you live in?" "Yes," replied Savarkar. "Why, is this not more comfortable than the cell in the Andamans?" And Sastri was struck with a strange emotion. After much consideration and many visits of world-famous men to his house, there were slight additions, which he would call considerable, to the equipment and establishment of his house by way of furniture. It was a plain middle-class life of complacent contentment, which yearned not for what it did not have.

Savarkar had no friends. Almost all his brilliant colleagues of early days perished in foreign lands; others were by now dead and gone. His new colleagues and co-workers could not understand exactly what he was. Even older politicians like Dr. Moonje talked with Savarkar with due care and awe and none tried to be familiar with him. As to the relations, there were few who ventured to be on visiting terms with the family and none lived with him. It is generally the case with all revolutionary leaders that they live almost estranged and segregated from their friends and families as the circumstances and nature of their work demand. In normal course none would be willing to cast in one's lot with a revolutionary and that too a revolutionary leader, and incur the displeasure of the authorities. And Savarkar was such a name! Terrific, towering, volcanic, panoramic, mesmeric and historic! What of living and staying with the person, the fire, those who have played with the name quailed and were haunted throughout their lives and it sat upon their chest like nightmare! Because of ever-attending dangers Savarkar stayed alone with his small family consisting of his wife and only son and sometimes his married daughter on a visit to her father. His brother Dr. N. D. Savarkar resided with his family in the same locality. Savarkar was blessed with a wife of a great Aryan type representative of the traditional loyalty and endless devotion that stood the long
period of 18 years full of trials and sufferings. Sober, deep, obedient and enduring, she was a prudent housewife and a noble soul. The household affairs were smooth and regular. There was no question of choosing food or eatables. Simple food and fruit, bare necessities and no waste was the rule of the kitchen. The kitchen was not bothered about the likes and dislikes. No complaints, no worries whether some vegetables had less salt or more of spices. Often bhajis and curds and at times icecream and shrikhand were welcome. That a man should not be addicted to anything, but should be accustomed to many things was the rule. During a railway journey, he would take fried fish, eggs-curry and seldom mutton, but no smoking. He had sometimes taken wine during his London days and in his old age sometimes a peg of whisky after his seventy just to keep up stamina and keep off cold. Savarkar did not like a hot meal; almost cold eatables he relished which one might call a legacy of the Andamans.

When Savarkar was in a happy mood, he might indistinctly hum to himself a line or two from his poems. In a happy mood and when alone, he would stretch his legs a little, give a gentle push to his cap if it is on, and hum a tune. Chocolates and Jintan were relished by him. Snuff was his companion; scent his abiding luxury. His one hobby was gardening and the poet was seen in communion with plants and flowers. Regular light physical exercise in the evening was a habit. He had no love for music. For art he had respect. When in jail he had three companions to give him comfort. The Bible, the Sedition Committee Report which he jokingly called his governmental biography and the Patanjalayogashastra.

Grief, pain, worries and anger he would not give expression to. Neither would joy giggle over his face. When in anger he sometimes tore papers to pieces. Those who served him observed precision in details, for his cross-examinations were testing and inseparable and to some extent worrying, even the slightest deviation being immediately detected. None could hide facts from the penetrating and searching eyes. It was true that he was not easy of access. You had to fix up an appointment beforehand. Strict adherence to this rule saved him much harassment, but also estranged many. Travellers, business magnates, eminent leaders and even princes had to go back
because they did not fix up the interviews beforehand. If a person came to Bombay on some business and came to Savarkar Sadan in his hurry to leave Bombay, Savarkar would not see him even if he had time to do so. So many gave up visiting Savarkar the leader and stopped courting insult at his door. And yet Savarkar proudly styled himself an organiser of the Hindus. A great liberal luminary once rightly remarked that it was easy to see the King Emperor or the Viceroy but not Savarkar.

The house of the great Tilak was always open even to a poor shepherd but the house of Savarkar was closed even to statesmen and his partymen. His former colleague Mirza Abbas wanted to see him when he came to Bombay. Senapati Bapat requested Savarkar to allow him to visit Savarkar Sadan. But Savarkar frankly refused to see him. Ram Hari, who on his release from the cellular jail, recited Savarkar's Marathi poems to his brother, saw Savarkar once when he came to Bombay. Savarkar's watchman turned him out when he came a second time. One of martyr Kanhere's old relatives came to pay him respects. He was driven out. His admirers and devotees like Seth Gulabchand Hirachand, Bhalji Penedharkar, an eminent figure in the Cinema world of Maharashtra, P. B. Bhave, a leading figure in the literary field of Maharashtra, and many other such admirers were sent back. The great Hindusabha leader Bhai Parmananda also was once sent back while some women visitors had free access. This unfortunate diversion consumed much of his energy and time.

Savarkar's handwriting was small, slanting and spread over every corner by and by. As with time so with paper. He used it sparingly. No letter would be ready for being posted unless the important lines therein were underlined. One might love to see him reading a newspaper. He held the newspaper in the left hand and, lifting his spectacles a little with his right thumb, he went on reading and commenting briefly.

Savarkar got up at about seven in the morning. His breakfast consisted of eggs and tea. Then he perused newspapers, attended to his correspondence, and gave interviews to his visitors between 9 a.m. and 11-30 a.m. About noon he took his bath and then meal in the kitchen almost all by himself. Between the meal and the bath he would often sit like a Yogin
for an hour or so as if in a trance which he called concentration of mind. At such a time his food would become cold, his wife waiting silently in the kitchen. At noon he had siesta. In the evening came the reading of important letters to be replied, detailed reading of newspapers and select books. After tea and a talk with female visitors, if any, he went downstairs for a stroll in his garden with some gardener’s tools accompanied by the watchman who assisted him. Then followed the daily regular physical exercise. After supper he devoted generally an hour or so to important office work and retired with some regular dose of medicine.

After the Red Fort Trial the correspondence decreased. There was no regular office. The bodyguard Appa Kasar and the personal secretary Gajananrao Damle, after their release from detention for over two years, were unceremoniously asked to care for themselves. Thereafter Bal Savarkar, editor of the *Hindu* Weekly, Bal Jere and N. M. Datar rendered him in their own way devotional service.

One point more and quite interesting. As was typical of revolutionary leaders, Savarkar talked very slowly about his personal and home matters. To him secrets were treasures. He was too great a veteran revolutionary leader. None could screw out from him what Dr. Schatt, the German Finance Wizard, told him on the eve of the outbreak of World War II, nor the source he received the letters of Ras Behari Bose from Japan during the course of World War II, nor the full details of his meeting with Subhas Bose.

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Savarkar was majestic in his misery and serene in his sorrows. He clung to the state of his things with the pride of a king. Where politics and policy were concerned, money meant little or nothing, his ideal everything. Savarkar would not march with anybody and everybody, he is a kingly Kuber or a moneyed Mahatma. Men of mission never rotate around others like satellites. They are creators of dynasties and makers of kings and kingdoms. They never sacrifice their conscience for worldly success; nor do they care for a passing phase of life, of fame and of happiness. So was Savarkar. What position Savarkar could not have achieved which eminent Liberals, moderate
politicians and opportunist leaders could achieve? Was there any talent superior to Savarkar in the first Cabinet of Free India in intellect, in sacrifice, in mental and oratorical powers, in patriotic service, in intellectual honesty and political strategy? Where his lieutenant leader, Dr. Mookerjee, could ascend with his blessing and without compromising principles, he could have easily walked into such positions. But Savarkar did not compromise his conscience for the success of personal gains and cheap popularity. He sacrificed all the great honour that could have easily fawned at his feet, or else “our dream of an Indian Republic with Vinayak Damodar Savarkar as its first President” would have been realized.

But life for a cause, for a faith and not for power, Savarkar loved most. That life might be surrounded by a storm, or a volcano or the gallows. For, to refuse to betray one’s conscience to the last, in spite of a general defeat and humiliation and stand for a fight against the world, bearing a cheerful face and the cross of sacrifice as freely as the sunflower gives its bosom to the rays of the sun, was the creed of Savarkar. Savarkar was a patriot, who fought losing battles and had the spirit of martyrs who faced defeats and death amidst the shouts of enemies. Naturally, to Savarkar the greatest sacrifice a man could make in his life was that of cheap fame. Times without number he told his co-workers, his lieutenants and followers in Hindu Mahasabha that those who had people’s welfare at heart should never pander to popularity. Kant also said the same thing. He said: “Seek not the favour of the multitude, for it is seldom got by honest and lawful means.” And although Savarkar pitilessly hammered the so-called gods, godmen and superstitions out of the temples of society, religion and politics, his popularity was tremendous, extraordinary and abiding.

He was one of the very few Indian leaders who were presented hundreds of civic addresses by cities, towns and villages throughout India, and whose marble statues and pictures were unveiled at public places.

Countless heads bowed down before Savarkar, lakhs of believing multitudes fell at his feet with devotion in spite of his resisting unwillingness on rational grounds. Male and female

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octogenarians regarded him as an incarnation of God, the Patitpavan, and a few even breathed their last in tranquillity after having a look at his picture which they believed to be divine. In the emulation of their devotion to Savarkar many brilliant youths like Maokar of Nagpur risked their lives. Many threw out pictures of false gods and so-called godmen after a visit to Savarkar. His old colleagues and veteran public men wriggled in their death-beds awaiting his impossible Darshan—glimpse—and some died with his name on their faltering tongue and wavering lips instead of the call of Ramnam. Several revolutionaries, many patriots and some poets bore the dust from his residence on their foreheads with devotion. To thousands he was nothing less than a God. To lakhs he was an art of eloquence. To millions he was a saga of patriotism, a picture of sacrifice and to poets he was an acted epic.

Such a fiery, positive and forceful personality was bound to be brutally frank in his criticism of historic and contemporary personalities. Of Tilak he ever spoke with reverence. He had defensive love for Kelkar, reverence for Ranade, high respect for Gokhale, Nana Shankarshet, Dadabhoy Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjee, B. C. Pal, Srinivas Sastri, Sir C. P. Ramaswami, M. R. Jayakar and Vijayaraghavachariai. For Lajpat Rai, Hardayal, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Ras Behari Bose, Bhai Parmananda, and Moonje he had a deep love. He had a great regard for Subhas Bose. He described Vivekananda as a world genius, Dayananda as a Yogi, a seer and a spiritual teacher who worked like a giant for the uplift of mankind, and described Dr. Ambedkar’s towering personality, erudition and capacity to lead as an asset to the nation. He described Ramananda Chatterjee as a great patriot, who defended the legitimate rights of the Hindus and whose humanitarianism and nationalism, he said, were of the purest ray serene. When Rajaji propagated the ideal of Pakistan, Savarkar described him as a subtle mad Mulla though he had once described Rajaji as the best Chief Minister. He called Azad crafty; Pandit Nehru sincere but flamboyant. He wished well of Sardar Patel as to him the Sardar was the only man in the Congress ‘who has steered the ship of our newly born Bharatiya State clear of many a rock and shoal.’

Savarkar was Sir C. V. Raman’s bright Diamond. Millions hailed him as Swatantryaveer—the hero of Independence. To
Rajaji Savarkar was a symbol of courage, bravery, fearlessness and intense patriotism and a pioneer who strove and struggled for inflaming the aspirations of the Indian people.\textsuperscript{4} Gandhiji paid tributes to Savarkar's patriotism and fearlessness and said that sacrifice was the common bond between them.\textsuperscript{5} Jayakar said that to honour Savarkar was to honour patriotism and sacrifice. M. N. Roy described him as his inspirer and a fearless man and appreciated his sacrifice and intellectual honesty.

Srinivas Sastri hailed Savarkar as 'a great and fearless patriot and added that volumes could be written about Veer Savarkar's yeoman services in the cause of Indian freedom.' K. F. Nariman described Savarkar as a colourful, picturesque and romantic personality. Bhai Parmananda said of him that Savarkar was the fusion of Burke and Mazzini. According to S. R. Pather, Bar-at-law, South Africa, and one-time colleague of Savarkar, India owed her present advanced position to Savarkar's early struggle in the cause of freedom. To historian Dr. Pattabhi, Savarkar was one of the noble characters that devoted their life to this noble and patriotic task (emancipation of Motherland) and who worked according to their lights and according to the lights of the times for the emancipation of India. To Guy A. Aldred, editor of the \textit{Word}, Glasgow, he was a prophet, and deserved a place in the line of prophets!

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But what about the aims and ideal for which Savarkar stood and fought? Reviewing this eventful life, one finds two notes of action, which had filled the skies at the time of Savarkar's birth and boyhood, echoed through the life story of Savarkar. The rebellious force of Wasudeo Balwant, the spiritual and social renaissance set in by Dayananda on the one hand, and the wave of Hindu-Muslim riots and the consequential bifurcation in the political ideal of the Hindus and Muslims on the other. The revolutionary urge and the Hindu-Muslim problem clung to Savarkar's life throughout. Savarkar took a vow while in his teens that he would fight out the British power and make his country free, independent and great. His political ideal

\textsuperscript{4} Rajaji, Message to the \textit{Lokananya}, dated 26 June 1937.
\textsuperscript{5} Shikhare, D. N., \textit{the Chitramaya Jagat}, November 1944.
was: "India must be independent. India must be united. India must be republican. India must have one common tongue. India must have one common script. That script is Nagari; that Language is Hindi; that republic is that national form of Government in which the sovereign power—whether it be exercised by a monarch or by a President matters not much—must rest ultimately and uncompromisingly in the hands of the Indian people." This was the ideal for which the Abhinava Bharat stood. This was the ideal for which the Hindu Mahasabha stood. There is scarcely any other historic figure under the sun that has gone through such epic ordeals as Savarkar has done for fulfilling his vow.

The idea of bifurcation conceived by the historic Muslim mind and started on its foot by Sir Syed Ahmed was instinctively supported by the Muslims, was accepted by the Congress leaders and ended in the vivisection of India. As Savarkar saw independence in sight, he grew restless about the unity and integrity of India, the concept and ideal of which to men like Savarkar was noble, sublime and divine. But during the period of Savarkar's long incarceration and internment, the Gandhian lead betrayed a woeful lack of self-confidence in the conduct of the national struggle, ultimately discredited the power, prestige and patriotism of the Hindus, the national majority, undermined their confidence and mortgaged the destiny of the country to the anti-national forces. Savarkar's insight perceived this danger and he forewarned the people and applied all his energies to averting the colossal disaster which was brought on by the Gandhian lead. But with all his efforts he could not avert the vivisection of the Motherland.

The Hindu Mahasabha lacked full-time workers. The party was not well organised. The millions of people, who attended Savarkar's meetings in order to pay homage to the symbol of revolution, were wrongly considered to be in favour of his party. The party had no dailies to back up their propaganda and leaders. There were few weeklies at District places, but they also suffered for want of active support. The culpable boycott of the so-called nationalist but in fact commercialized press and the Press Agencies on Savarkar's statements and speeches was no less responsible for this fate. The news agencies that could give full and roaring publicity to Jinnah's anti-national out-
bursts, statements and speeches, suppressed intentionally the views, speeches and statements of Savarkar and whenever they broadcast them, they dropped out most pertinent criticism of the Britshers and the Congress party and his constructive and valuable advice to his countrymen. And when these fabricated extracts came down to the commercialized papers, they did the rest to Savarkar’s statements and speeches. The ignorant and superstitious masses were not knowing what was happening.

In fact, those capitalists and moneyed men who had contributed heavily to the Congress press and propaganda for years, were not now prepared to lose all investment by incurring the displeasure of the ruling party in the country.

In such a state of affairs and for want of any direct massacre on his part, Savarkar’s warnings went unheard and he lost his battle for a united Hindustan. That way his fate is no better than the fate of Burke and Demosthenes, the two great pathetic figures in the political history of the world. In his brilliant essay on Edmund Burke, John Churton Collins observed: “Both (Burke and Demosthenes) animated by the purest motives, patriots to the innermost fibre, with no thought, with no aim, but for the public good, wore out their lives in leading forlorn hopes and in fighting losing battles. Both were prophets with a curse of Cassandra upon them, to be found wiser after the event, to be believed when all was lost.” Add the third name of Savarkar to the line of these great orators and read the lines again. Telling his readers that Demosthenes saw Athens at the feet of Macedonian despot, and Burke saw England dismembered of America, Mr. Collins goes on to say: “Of the superhuman efforts made by the great Athenian to retrieve the disasters in which the neglect of his warnings had involved his countrymen, there was not one which was not thwarted either by a cruel fortune or by the perfidy and levity of those whom he was striving in their own despite to save.”

Savarkar strove his utmost to avert the greatest betrayal in Indian history and the colossal disaster, but was thwarted by the perfidy, levity and betrayal of his contemporaries. Never-

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*Twentieth Century Essays And Addresses, edited by W. A. J. Archbold, p. 175.*
theless, his failure was more glorious than the ignoble success
of his political opponents.

As for the Independence that came, it did not come as a
result of the Congress struggle alone which was fought out by
the Socialists in 1942. The final victory was won when politics
was carried into the Indian Army, when patriotism took fire in
the ranks of the Indian armed forces, when militarized Indians
thus inspired with a great ideal rose in revolt under the lead
of Ras Behari Bose and Netaji Subhas Bose. The British
Imperialists, considerably weakened by World War II, realized
that it was impossible to keep India in bondage any more for
they had no faithful army. The army, that was entrusted with
the work, had turned their guns towards their heads. The
Prime Minister of Britain, Mr. Attlee, stated before the House
of Commons on March 15, 1946, on the occasion of making a
declaration of the proposed transfer of power to India, that the
national idea had spread right through, not the least perhaps
among some of the soldiers who had done such wonderful ser-
vice in the war. Mr. Fenner Brockway, the Political Secretary
of the Independent Labour Party of England, gave three reasons
for the transfer of power by Britain to India. He said that the
Indian people were determined to achieve Independence;
secondly, there was the revolt of the Royal Indian Navy and
that the Indian forces could not be relied upon for serving
Britain’s purposes, and thirdly, Britain did not want to estrange
India which was a market and a source of foodstuffs for her.

Although Brockway did not mention directly the I.N.A.,
it was clear that the revolt in the armed forces had bent them
to the inevitable. Then who had truly worked towards that
end, the carrying of the fire of patriotism into the ranks of the
Indian army ever since 1908? And who made heroic attempts
despite the curses of the Congressmen and Congress journals to
preach militarization and impress upon patriotic youths the
importance of entering the Army, Navy and Air Forces? It
was Savarkar and Savarkar alone. At last the destined leader,
Netaji Subhas Bose, seized the opportunity, and reaped the
fruit of the pioneer efforts of Ras Behari Bose and the militariza-
tion policy of Savarkar. History will record this. Viewed in
this light Savarkar had achieved his goal. The heroic war
inaugurated by the heroes of 1857 for winning back the independence was fought out successively by the revolutionaries of Ram Singh Kukā, Wasudeo Balwant, the Abhinava Bharat, the Anushilan Samiti and other Bengali organisations, the Čhadr; by the pioneering efforts of the Liberals, the valiant fighters of the Party of Bhagat Singh, the heroic fighters and patriots in the Congress and finally by the war of Netaji Subhas Bose and the revolt of the Royal Indian Navy.
CHAPTER 26

Warning Against Aggression

On January 25, 1954, the revolutionary philosopher, M. N. Roy, passed away at his residence at Dehradun. Long before he had wound up his Radical Democratic Party and his thoughts and vision had gone beyond communism. Savarkar held him in high regard and once said that there was almost nobody in the Congress Working Committee with whom he could discuss rationalism. According to Savarkar, Roy was the only politician with whom he could hold discussions on rationalism. Roy sometimes met Savarkar at Savarkar Sadan, and light and enlightening discussions would follow. On one occasion Roy entered Savarkar Sadan eating grams. On casual enquiry Savarkar came to know that Roy was eating grams. Roy said with a laugh that even gods had eaten grams. "Surely," said Savarkar, "like gods, Roy also had undergone great sufferings and achieved godhood." He wondered Roy had at least that much Hindutva left in him! After Roy's death Savarkar said that one of the great thinkers had passed away.

Dr. Raghuvir, who was entrusted with the work of preparing a dictionary of new Hindi terms and expressions, met Savarkar at his place. Dr. Raghuvir felt encouraged by Savarkar's appreciation of his great achievement and by the frank discussion he held with Savarkar on the new terminology. About this time the President Dr. Rajendra Prasad visited the Andamans and on his rounds he saw the room in which Savarkar was caged.

In the middle of March the annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held at Hyderabad. Savarkar did not attend it although he was much pressed to do so. Savarkar's old colleague M. P. T. Acharya died at Bhatia Hospital on March 20, 1954, in a miserable condition. A great patriot and a great journalist, M. P. T. Acharya remained a political suspect all his life and had to undergo great suffering. He had met Savar-
kar at his place, but Savarkar was not moved even when he saw his former colleague in great distress. That was the bane of Savarkar's political organisation. It had not much to do with human relations.

Ever since the Peoples' Government of China came to power, its leaders decided to liberate Tibet. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said that the Indian Government was interested only in preserving its cultural and commercial relations with Tibet and told the Chinese Government that Tibet should maintain the autonomy. He, however, did not challenge or deny the suzerainty of China over Tibet.

While Nehru was explaining in the Indian Parliament the difference between the suzerainty and sovereignty and knew not from whom the Chinese were going to liberate Tibet, the Chinese armies marched into Tibet in 1950. Nehru saw the tragedy being enacted in Tibet, but could do nothing to stop the rape of Tibet by China. On the contrary he made an agreement with China in April 1954 after the goat of Tibet had been completely digested by Mao. That agreement contained principles which Nehru called 'Panchsheel'. These principles were recognition of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference, equality and mutual benefits and peaceful co-existence. When the members of Parliament referred to the 'melancholy chapter of Tibet' Nehru replied: "We put up with these things because we would be, without making any difference, merely getting into trouble." 2

Two great Indian leaders warned Nehru and the nation against the impending danger which would come on as a result of the liquidation of Tibet's independence. One was Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the other was Savarkar. With his unfailing foresight Savarkar sounded a warning to the nation in an interview which he gave to the representative of the Kesari of Poona and which appeared on January 26, 1954. "When China, without even consulting India, invaded the buffer state of Tibet, India should at once have protested and demanded the fulfilment of rights and privileges as per her agreements

1 Nehru, Jawaharlal, India's Foreign Policy (The Publications Division), p. 302.
2 Ibid., p. 304.
and pacts entered into with Tibet. But our Indian Government was not able to do any such thing. We closed our eyes in the name of world peace and co-existence and did not even raise a finger against this rape of Tibet. Neither did we help this buffer state of Tibet when her very existence was at stake. Why? The only reason that I visualise is our unpreparedness for such an eventuality and/or war."

"That is the reason why after swallowing the whole of Tibet the strong armies of China and Russia are now standing right on our borders in a state of complete preparedness and on the strength of the above, China is today openly playing the game of liquidating the remaining buffer states of Nepal and Bhutan. Not satisfied with this, China has now come out with a claim on our own territories from Gangotri right up to Badri Kedar which are rationally, traditionally, culturally and rightfully ours. We have not been able to put before her an army which can match the strength of her armies on these borders of ours even today. This is precisely the reason why China dares come forward with such an unabashed claim on our territories."

"In the very six years," Savarkar observed, "we criminally wasted, China had equipped her whole nation with most modern and up-to-date arms, and without in the least caring for the feelings and sentiments of India, had completely overrun Tibet and destroyed the only buffer state so as to strengthen her vast borders. By this act of hers, China had with one stroke came right on our borders by force and prepared the way for an open aggression against India whenever she felt like it. Britain, when she was ruling over India, had by careful planning, pacts, treaties and agreements created a chain of buffer states like Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan in order to strengthen the borders of India and to safeguard it from China and Russia. Afghanistan also acted like a buffer state on the other side. Britain had on behalf of the Government of India, directly or indirectly taken upon herself by various pacts, charters and agreements even the guarantee of continued existence of these buffer states. Immediately on attainment of independence all these rights were transferred to the independent sovereign Republic of India."

With the signing of Pakistan-America Pact India was completely encircled by her enemies and the invading armies of Pakistan were now ready on the side of the border. He also
warned the nation against the trouble of Portugal in case India was engaged in a fight with Pakistan.

Forgetting the rape of Tibet, Nehru welcomed Chou En-lai, Prime Minister of China, at Delhi on June 26, 1954, hoping that India and China would stand for peace and would live amicably together and co-operate together in the interest of peace and human advance. The slogan given to the country by Nehru was ‘Hindi-Chini bhai bhai’—Indians and Chinese were brethren.

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Asked to give his opinion on the pact, Savarkar told the reporter of the Kesari that in politics the enemy of our enemy is our best friend. Enlightened self-interest is the only touchstone on which friendship in political dealings could be tested, since there is no such thing as real and selfless friendship in the political arena. If the meeting between Chou En-lai and Nehru, he said, angered the U.S.A., Indians should not mind it as the U.S.A. did not care to pause and think that India would be dissatisfied or would feel insulted if America entered into a military pact with Pakistan. All the policies of India must be dependent on what was good or bad for India herself. If it was advantageous to India she should not in the least worry or care whether anyone felt enraged, insulted or irritated.

When questioned about the outcome of the visit of Chou En-lai, Savarkar said: “The general principles that are being propagated as fundamental in this visit are very good and sound, so far as their language is concerned. Nothing is lost in proclaiming wishes for world peace, prosperity and brotherhood. But so long as India does not have any effective practical remedy or measures to check the transgressions, such visits have no more than a formal status.”

Further, Savarkar pointed out that while crying from the house-top about these principles it was worth noting that China, by swallowing Tibet, had ruthlessly trampled those very principles of world peace, brotherhood and peaceful co-existence. That was the most funniest part of the whole deal, and it at once raised doubts in Indian mind about the bona fides of China and Chou En-lai. There was at that time a political party in Tibet aiming at independence. It was curious and in
a way most astonishing that after preying on and swallowing
the mouse of Tibet the Chinese cat was talking of going on
pilgrimage. That was exactly the role that the Chinese Premier
Chou En-lai and President Mao Tse-tung were playing.

"China, Russia, Britain or even the recently established
Pakistan," Savarkar continued, "all talk of high-sounding
principles, but they do so as a step towards diplomatic measures
to achieve their own ends, and for the success of their own
political objectives. In the present state of human relationship
it should be just so; but of all the countries India alone has
for long been in the habit of preaching sermons of high prin-
ciples to others and unilaterally bringing them into practice,
which ultimately proves disastrous to the interests of India. I
only hope that this does not happen in this case of five prin-
ciples, Panchsheel that are said to have been enunciated."

"What I feel," Savarkar observed, "is that if at all China
uses India as a spring board or a handle to push forward her
own territorial aims and interests, India should also primarily
safeguard her own interests and if these moves do not go against
her interests then alone take part in it. So long as China is
looking to her interests alone, India should also follow the same
footsteps and use the good wishes of China only in so far as
they help to push the interest of India forward. We should
believe in their good faith and good intentions as much as and
as long as they believe in ours." "One fact must be made clear
here and it is that," Savarkar concluded, "U.K., U.S.A., U.S.S.R.
and China can force India to bring into practice all these prin-
ciples because they hold the upper hand, being in possession
of atomic and nuclear weapons of warfare. But can India do
the same? Can India force these nations to see that they follow
the principles that they profess to preach? This is the most
important question. It is no use having political or diplomatic
fellow-feeling or friendship with either China or Russia on this
basis. We must immediately undertake to see that military
potential and preparedness of the Indian armed forces with
modern and most up-to-date weapons of warfare is not being
neglected and that we too can produce atomic and nuclear wea-
pons just as these nations can. If China can erect plants and
factories for the manufacture of atomic weapons of warfare in
Sinkiang and other places we should also be able to do so.
There is nothing difficult in it. Our scientists and laboratories might be able to invent and manufacture such weapons in a year or two or they might invent even more destructive ones."

"But so long our weak and impotent Government at the Centre does not take even one step to achieve these objectives it is no use talking of high principles and running after the mirage of world peace, peaceful co-existence, world brotherhood and prosperity, and nothing good can come out of such so-called good-will visits. High principles must have sound armed strength behind them to see that they are brought into practice by those who talk eloquently about it. Taking all these things into consideration I feel that the time has come now when the Central Government must immediately take steps to increase the armed might and the military potential of India."

Referring to the principles of Panchsheel Dr. Ambedkar said in the Rajya Sabha on August 26, 1954, that the principles were adopted without much thought on the part of Prime Minister Nehru, who, by helping the Chinese to bring their border down to the Indian border, had exposed India to aggression and the people who were in the habit of committing aggression would commit it. He added that Mao had no faith in the Panchsheel as there was no room for Panchsheel in politics and secondly not in the politics of the communist country.

And what were the consequences of Panchsheel? India unilaterally observed the Panchsheel and later China invaded India. Under the lead of Nehru India remained self-complacent and under the illusion paid heavy price for the Panchsheel which had no strength to punish the transgressor of its terms. It shows how the policy of both Savarkar and Dr. Ambedkar was full of realism, a typical characteristic of Maharashtrian leadership.

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The Hindu Sabhaites began making demonstrations in conformity with the policy laid down by their leader against the foreign Christian Missionaries. The Poona Hindu Sabhaite made demonstrations in May 1954 against the Kedgaon mission raising the slogans 'foreign missionaries should quit India'.

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Thus Spake The Prophet, pp. 1-6.
Another batch of Hindu Sabhaites was led by Bal Savarkar, Savarkar's personal secretary and editor of the Hindu weekly. Their march towards the centre of the missionary in Bassein, was greeted by the people. Several demonstrations were staged at different missionary centres in Maharashtra. H. B. Bhide played a leading part in these activities.

About this time Savarkar issued a statement encouraging the patriotic fighters who were fighting for the liberation of Diu, Daman and Goa. They should carry on the fight if they felt themselves quite prepared to do so. They should not take any notice of the elusive, selfish and arrogant proposals put forth by Britain and Portugal. The Government of India had no legal or constitutional right to hold them back. The Government should not take any part in negotiation until Portugal agreed to recognise the independence of all the Portuguese possessions in Bharat, he added.

In July and August the people of India liberated Mahe from Goa under the lead of the Mahajan Sabha. When Savarkar heard the news of the liberation of Mahe he was overjoyed at the good news. In the telegram he sent to the president of Mahajan Sabha he congratulated the fighters who liberated Mahe after a fight and put an end to the separation of three hundred years between the brothers. After some time the fighters liberated Dadra and Nagar Haveli also.

The Government of India appointed the Backward Class Commission on January 29, 1953. One of its members, N. S. Kajrolkar, wrote to Savarkar in October 1954 asking his views on the problem. Savarkar replied that untouchability must be rooted out in the following way: Abolition of untouchability should be enforced by a very ruthless law, for example, had there been as stringent and ruthless a law as was the law to effect prohibition and its enforcement would have been as rigorous as in the case of prohibition, untouchability would have been rooted out in villages also. To observe untouchability was now a crime. To refuse to give treatment of equality to the members of the Scheduled Castes should be declared by Parliament a cognizable offence. If they did so then all the states would be bound by it. The police would then be authorised to take legal action against the offenders and bring them to book. Police protection should be given to the mem-
bers of the Scheduled Castes. When such cases would be going on in courts such drastic laws would provoke some resentment, but it should be faced squarely. In a year or so such resentment would die out. He also said that the Scheduled Castes should be made aware of their rights.

The reservations and special rights which were meant for the Scheduled Castes must not be extended to the Christians and Muslims who boasted that their communities did not observe untouchability based on birth. By so declaring they had converted thousands of Scheduled Caste Hindus. They therefore should be ashamed to ask for such preferential treatment. The backward classes should be given assistance on the basis of their poverty and illiteracy. But the special privilege given to the Scheduled Castes should not be extended to any other class. The Scheduled Castes should abolish untouchability among themselves as between Mahars and Mangs and others.

On November 7, 1954, Savarkar's former colleague Niranjan Pal came to see him. After Savarkar's transportation Pal had turned a playwright. He wrote many English dramas and one scenario, the Light of Asia. There he married an English lady. He came to India in October 1929 to see his father Bepin Chandra Pal, who was very ill. He died in May 1932.

In London Niranjan Pal had achieved success as a film director and playwright. As a playwright he had gained eminence on the British stage for his plays The Goddess, What a Change and the Blue Bottle. The film The Light of Asia, of which he was a screen-play writer and director, was the first Indian film to see the light in Europe and it broke all records during its three months' run in London.

While Niranjan Pal was in London Himanshu Roy, who later became a famous film producer, came in contact with him. Pal wrote many film stories like Acchayut Kanya and produced a documentary film for Bengal Government and was for a time with the Film Advisory Board as its script-writer.

Pal paid a second visit to Savarkar in the first week of December 1954 when Savarkar expressed his desire that the detailed film version should be made of his book The Indian War of Independence—1857.

Savarkar reiterated his views on the cow. He said there should be a ban on cow-slaughter from the viewpoint of agri-
culture and economy, and even old cows should not be handed over to slaughter houses from the viewpoint of humanity. Just as it was no religion to raise the cow to the pedestal of godhood, so also it was no religion to sacrifice the cow in the name of god believing that He liked the sacrifice.

Early in the new year 1955 Savarkar blessed a marriage between a Brahmin youth named Deshpande and a Mahar girl by name Abhang. In the first week of February 1955 Savarkar visited Ratnagiri. As he was visiting the place after seventeen years thousands of people from the district gathered to give him an enthusiastic ovation. The municipality gave him an address. The main function was held at the Patit Pavan temple to celebrate its silver jubilee. The temple had attained name and fame in the history of social reforms of India. Speaking at the celebration, Savarkar exhorted the Hindus to abolish casteism and make India a powerful nation, militarily and socially.

Savarkar then paid visits to and blessed many institutions in Ratnagiri. But he specially visited the houses of his former colleagues Khatu and Malushte and others who helped to promote the revolution of social equality in Ratnagiri. The author also had a unique opportunity of welcoming Savarkar to his house in Ratnagiri, his home town. On his way back Savarkar visited Chiplun where an address was presented to him by the municipality. He made a brief halt at Guhagar where people gave him a colourful welcome celebrating his arrival by lighting lamps on either side of the road in the traditional way.

On February 7, 1955, Jamnadas Mehta died in Bombay. Savarkar had just arrived in Bombay from his tour of Ratnagiri. He grieved over the death of Jamnadas, who had been a staunch supporter and a great admirer of Savarkar all his life. He was a great parliamentarian. On one occasion he said that if Savarkar was Lord Shankar he was his Nandi and on another occasion he said that no other memorial to Gandhi should be set up as Pakistan itself was Gandhi’s real memorial.

The annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held at Gonda, but Savarkar did not attend it.

Early in August 1955, although Savarkar was ill he gave an interview to H. M. Joshi who wanted to get some points clarified relating to history of the freedom struggle. On August 21,
Savarkar attended a shuddhi function held at Kitte Bhandari Hall, Bombay, where forty Christian fishermen were reconverted to Hinduism. Shankaracharya Yogeshwarnandji presided over the function. Addressing the people who attended the function, Savarkar said that if the Hindus had attended to shuddhi earlier, there would have been no problem of Kashmir or Goa in their time. The Kashmir Muslims were the former Hindus who had been forcibly converted to Islam. They appealed to the Maharaja of Kashmir for their reconversion, but their appeal was turned down by the orthodox heads of Hinduism, although the Maharaja Hari Singh was prepared to accept them in the Hindu fold. The result was that a new Muslim problem developed in Kashmir.

Savarkar also said that if Goanese population had been entirely Hindu the Portuguese would have left India long before. If only Hindus spent as much on shuddhi as foreign missionaries spent on their conversion work, they would establish a real Hindu nation in a few years. Blessing the forty fishermen reconverted to Hinduism, he said that shuddhi was of great importance to India and he therefore wished to be reborn for carrying on the shuddhi movement. Some four months earlier about six hundred Christians were reconverted to Hinduism in Bihar. Savarkar was glad to note the invaluable work of the Arya Samaj and so he again gave an impetus to the shuddhi movement at this time.

The arrival of foreign Missionaries had annoyed the Central Government also and their policy for the time being seemed to check a further flow of foreign Missionaries into the country. But in her speech Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Health Minister of India, at a meeting of Indian Christians in New Delhi, declared that left to herself she would double the number of foreign Missionaries in the country. Her remark praising the good work done by foreign Missionaries among the Nagas and the Kushai Hills also ran counter to the view held by the Ministry concerned. Most of the political troubles in those areas including the cry for an independent Nagaland were attributable to the influence of foreign Missionaries.

Emotionally disturbed, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, an eminent disciple of Gandhi, held forth as a champion of Christian community. Naturally a sensation was caused in political quarters
by her speech when she described the policy as Hindu resurgence and complained of reconversion of Christians to Hinduism. It should be noted that when the Missionaries or Maulavis carried on the work of conversion of Hindus no great contemporary of Savarkar in the Congress ever raised his little finger against the fraudulent conversions which went against the solidarity and security of the nation. But the work of reconversion displeased and irritated the so-called nationalist leaders. This was quite clear from the outbursts of the Congress leaders like Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

In November 1955 Savarkar paid a visit to Senapati Bapat's residence to felicitate him on his birthday. He did honour to Senapati Bapat and Bapat eminently deserved it. Bapat humourously said to Savarkar that he had been to Goa in quest of Death but he could not find Him there. To go to any leader and to congratulate him or to encourage him was not a matter of practice, pleasure or pride with Savarkar. But he did this special honour to one who was his former colleague and a selfless patriot.

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The new year 1956 opened with a pressing demand for the creation of a united Maharashtra on the linguistic basis. Savarkar, who never gave emphasis on such internal problems, supported the demand for a united Maharashtra. He had also hoisted black flag on January 10, 1956, as a protest against Government which was opposing the demand made by the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti.

About this time Savarkar once again opposed the merger of Hindu Mahasabha with Jan Sangh. He warned the Hindu Sabhaite that the Hindu Mahasabha was absolutely necessary in the interest of Hindudom. There should be an organisation manned by Hindus only to represent Hindudom as a whole and to protect the interests, political, social, cultural and economic, of the Hindus. The Hindu Mahasabha should form a united front for election purposes provided those bodies did not affect any way the existence and freedom of the Hindu Mahasabha.

Dr. P. C. Khankhoje, one of the former revolutionaries, was honoured by the people. Savarkar sent a message to the recep-

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4 The Mahratta, 4 March 1955.
tion committee in which he said that he joined it in honouring Dr. Khankhoje who fought rifle in hand against the British to liberate his motherland. Dr. Khankhoje, after his revolutionary career, became an authority on agriculture and acted as an adviser to the Mexico Government. In his old age he had returned to India.

Savarkar also congratulated M. S. Golwalkar, Chief of the R.S.S., on his birthday. In his telegraphic message to the reception committee he said that Golwalkar was a pillar of the Hindu nation.

The Prakash Mandal at Poona was celebrating the anniversary of Shivaji. In his message to that institution Savarkar said that India wanted Shivaji and not Buddha. It was not a question of comparison. A particular medicine was to be prescribed for a particular disease. For a serpent-bite medicine should be prescribed to counteract the poison. The danger that was threatening India required the policy, tactics and spirit of Shivaji and not the teachings of the Buddha.

Early in May 1956 Savarkar sent a message to the King of Nepal greeting His Majesty on his coronation, as king of Nepal, the only independent Hindu state in the world. These greetings, which went on for years, looked apparently a waste on His Majesty, but Savarkar did the homage as his patient, sincere duty.

It was the year of birth centenary of Lokamanya Tilak, the Father of India’s Freedom Struggle. All parties formed a reception committee at Poona and invited Savarkar to deliver the main speech at the celebrations. The centenary was celebrated throughout India. The main function at Poona was presided over by Tilak’s great lieutenant Lokanayak Madhavrao Aney. Addressing the mammoth meeting, Savarkar appealed to the youth of the nation to enter the military forces and make the country invincible from the viewpoint of defence. The dream of Tilak had been realised and it was the duty of the youth to imbibe the qualities, physical, mental and military, so that they might be able to make the independence of the country everlasting.

Savarkar further said he was glad that all the parties had

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[The Hindu (Marathi) Weekly, 14 May 1956.]

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come together to celebrate this great event. He was very happy to see the people of Maharashtra united on that golden occasion in the history of the nation. But he said that the Tilak birth centenary should have been celebrated with great pomp and pride at Delhi, the capital of India. It was unfortunate that the main function of the birth centenary of Lokmanya Tilak, whose sacrifice and ceaseless efforts were responsible for drawing near the independence of the country, was not held at Delhi. In Tilak's honour a salute of twenty-one guns should have been fired. That was the proper way to pay honour to the great maker of India, he concluded.

During the middle of the year Savarkar's wife Yamunabai had been confined to bed. She was lying in the clinic of Dr. Talwalkar at Dadar. She was brought home in the middle of October 1956. The first part of his book Saha Soneri Pane (Six Golden Pages) from the History of Bharat was published on May 10, 1956, and he was now thinking of writing the second part of the book. The first part of the book throws a flood of light on the ancient history of Bharat. Savarkar gave a new orientation and meaning to the events which hitherto several historians had not seen in the proper perspective.

On October 14, 1956, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and his followers embraced Buddhism. Savarkar, who was not so much responsive to this change, expressed his views on the event saying that the Buddhist Ambedkar was Hindu Ambedkar. He described Dr. Ambedkar's entry into the Buddhistic fold as a sure jump into the fold of Hinduism. He had embraced a non-Vedic but Indian religious system within the orbit of Hindutva. So Savarkar declared that according to him it was not a change of faith. According to his definition of a Hindu, the holy land and father land of the neo-Buddhists was India. When Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar died on December 6, 1956, Savarkar said that India had lost a really great man.

From November 10 to 12, 1956, the annual session of Hindu Mahasabha was held at Jodhpur. On persistent invitations from Mahasabha leaders Savarkar attended the session. Blessing the Hindu Mahasabha session, he said that he was on the wrong side of seventy and his health was deteriorating. He was however happy to see that the younger generation was full of enthusiasm for promoting the cause of the Hindu nation. His
comrades and he himself had fought for the independence of
the Hindu nation, for they wanted to make the Hindu nation
strong, independent and prosperous. Because he fought for the
interests of the Hindu nation he had even incurred the dis-
pleasure of the majority of the Hindus. And then in a moving
tone he said: "I am now infirm and have one foot in the grave;
If after my death you set up any memorial over my ashes and
write any epitaph I would like you to prefer 'Savarkar, the
organiser of Hindus' to 'Swatantryaveer Savarkar' on it. For
all my efforts towards independence were intended to achieve
Hindu unity and to establish a strong independent Hindu
nation. He exhorted them to carry on, like Rana Pratap, their
struggle ceaselessly for the Hindu nation.

They should Hinduisate all politics and militarise Hindudom.
It meant, he added, that they should look at politics, internal
and international, from the viewpoint of Hindu interest alone.
India recognised almost all nations in the world except Israel,
which was recognised by England, Russia, China and the U.S.A.
India was not recognising Israel because, it was said, it would
be regarded as an anti-Muslim act.

"But bear in mind," he said, "that if tomorrow there breaks
out a war between Pakistan and Bharat almost all Muslims will
be arrayed on the side of Pakistan in opposition to us and
their enemy Israel will be our only friend. Therefore, I say
that Bharat should give an unequivocal recognition to Israel.
If we desire to safeguard the independence of Bharat we should
be militarily strong." "The message of peace and Panchsheel,"
he observed, "is not adequate. Those nations which are armed
with atom and hydrogen bombs are called big nations. Russia,
who signed the Panchsheel, invaded Hungary and Nehru said
that Egypt and Russia did not consult us. Why should they
consult you? They care not a jot for your Panchsheel because
your Panchsheel consists of beads of the rosary while their Panch-
sheel consists of tanks, submarines, guns, bombers and atom
bombs. Today the nation is run by pen alone. It must be
run by the sword in the main. So my message to you, young
men, is that: Make the army and the navy and the airforce
up-to-date. If the other nations prepare hydrogen bombs you
invent oxygen bombs. Thereby you will make Bharat a strong
and prosperous nation and you will be able to live with self-
respect. Let a thousand of your fighters and airships and jets fill the sky in their flight and let your warships be ready to protect your coasts from the aggression of the enemies by sea. This is my blessing to you all.”

The year 1957 dawned and the whole nation prepared herself to pay national homage to the great heroes of the war of national independence of 1857. Savarkar was the first historian and Indian leader to give the message of those heroes to India and to turn the tide against the British, and to change the psychology of the nation. While the nation was in a mood to celebrate the centenary some Indian historians like Surendra Nath Sen and R. C. Majumdar, who lost the meaning and spirit of the epoch and had no strong wings to soar, wrote their histories of 1857 as taught by the British historians in their day. What Savarkar said of the Hindus was true also of the Indian historians. They knew not the victory even when they were victorious.

The British newspapers like the New Statesman and Nation, The Times, the Guardian, came out with special articles on 1857 and the historians agreed that the Indian view was brilliantly represented by Savarkar. They admitted that both sides were equally responsible for the massacre.

A Centenary Celebrations Committee was set up at Delhi and it invited Savarkar to deliver the main speech on the occasion. A deputation of the Celebrations Committee waited on Jawaharlal Nehru also and requested him to participate in the centenary celebrations in Delhi, at which Savarkar was the main speaker. Declining the invitation very politely, Nehru said: “Savarkar is a brave man, a hero, a great man. When I was a student in England we were inspired by his book on 1857. It is a great book which has inspired many Indians. But it is hardly history. We have differed on several problems and it would be embarrassing to him if I speak in a different tone. I have great respect for Savarkar and I would have certainly liked to meet him. But speaking on the same platform would be unjust for both of us.”

* An account given by Prof. V. G. Deshpande.
The Congress leaders were compelled to celebrate the centenary, which Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabhaites had been celebrating as anniversary of that War of Independence for years. Country-wide celebrations were planned for the 10th of May 1957 by various parties. A public meeting organised by the Congress Party was addressed on Ramlila grounds by Nehru on May 10. The Communists, the Praja Socialist Party organised mass rallies and processions in Delhi to celebrate the centenary. All-India Radio broadcast programmes commemorating the centenary on May 10 and 11.

In response to the invitation of the Centenary Celebrations Committee, Savarkar went to Delhi. This was his first public visit to Delhi after independence and the people were very enthusiastic to give him a colourful reception. Although his body aged and ravages of time were visible on his once handsome face, the revolutionary fire in his eyes glowed as brightly as before. The spirit was unbent.

On his arrival in Delhi Savarkar was taken in procession from the station to Chandni Chowk where warriors of 1857 were hanged by Britishers in those days. Savarkar devotionally placed wreaths on the posts amidst sky-rending cries of victories to the martyrs and to Savarkar by the vast crowds of people. Speaking on the occasion, Savarkar said that the war which began on the 10th May 1857 was carried on from sire to son with the spirit of the dictum 'a revolutionary war knows no truce, save liberty or death'. And it was brought to a successful end. It was now the duty of the youth to defend it against any aggression and make it militarily a first class nation. Among the nations that were coming on the horizon India was the most important of them all. The revolutionaries fought for the independence of a united India. The object remained to be fulfilled by the young generation.

Savarkar, with the revolutionaries Raja Mahendra Pratap, Ashutosh Lahiri, V. B. Gogate, Lala Hridayram of Hardinge bomb-case fame, Lala Hanumat Sahay and the mother of Bhagat Singh and the widow of Ajit Singh, was given a reception by the Celebrations Committee. The function was attended by prominent citizens of Delhi and members of Parliament. The chairman of the Centenary Celebrations Committee Lala Hansraj Gupta welcomed the guests and the citizens. Lala Hriday-
ram described how Savarkar's deeds and words echoed in those days throughout young India.

Replying to the honour done to them, Savarkar said that it was a fitting deed the Delhi people performed in celebrating the centenary of 1857. He described before the gathering how it was a war of the people and was fought in the name of religion and freedom. All revolutions whether ancient or modern were the work of a determined militant minority. Dr. Gokulchand Narang, scholar and patriot, who had witnessed the first function in 1907 in London performed by the revolutionaries of the Abhinava Bharat, said that it was Savarkar who gave that unique message of armed revolution to the nation. Savarkar impressed upon that generation that it was not enough to die for the freedom, it was necessary to kill the aggressors in defending the independence.

On Ramlila grounds a mammoth meeting was held on May 12, where Savarkar the scholar, historian and the hero of independence declared that the struggle of 1857 was not merely a sepoy revolt, nor was it led by a set of ex-rulers who had some personal ends to square. It was a national war for the independence of India. The question was asked whether the world should choose Buddha or war. India should be cautious and should defend her independence. The call of non-violence and peace was not a new thing to India. It had been preached to the Hindus since the Vedas, after every Vedic mantra the Hindus invoked peace. But because those mantras could not protect them they took up the arms. They should of course struggle to attain prosperity and more production, but they should not forget to prepare the nation for the defence; since for want of proper defence their plans for prosperity and more production would be of no avail. The rising generation of Hindus should invent more dreadful bombs than the atom and the hydrogen bombs and then and then alone would they be able to survive in the struggle for existence.

Russia, while pretending to count the beads of rosary of Panchsheel, was inventing destructive and dreadful weapons. It was a war waged by Subhas Bose that gave the last stroke to British rule and it collapsed. The mammoth meeting then in a solemn and devotional mood offered flower-petals and the red powder to the memory of the great heroes and warriors of 1857.
The mammoth meeting was thrilled with the message of Savarkar. This meeting was double the size Nehru addressed on the same grounds on the 10th May. They said they were fortunate in hearing Savarkar on 1857. A journalist, Kishoram Sabarval, who had escaped to Japan in 1915 as an Indian revolutionary, was overwhelmed with emotions when he saw Savarkar. He exclaimed to a fellow journalist D. B. Karnik that it was a great and unique coincidence that the centenary was celebrated at the sacred hands of Savarkar who was the first leader to impress its historical role upon its countrymen. Savarkar was, Kishoram Sabarval added, the most fortunate hero in India at the moment. And indeed Savarkar was as happy as were the Pandavas after performing the Rajasuya sacrifice.

At a press interview in Delhi, Savarkar said that all wars started through small causes. The social conditions of those days should be taken into consideration. The princely order and feudalism represented the will of the people. The French revolution had its origin in the call for bread and the 1857 started apparently through the opposition to the greased cartridges. To desire to protect religion from desecration was a good enough cause for a national uprising a hundred years before. All great revolutions had their origin in trifling things. The motive power behind the salt satyagraha was the love for independence. There was nothing wrong in the movement being laid by the princes. They should not be blamed if they fought for their kingdoms. For hundred years before they symbolised the will, aspirations and ideals of the people. People had forgotten their religious differences and fought shoulder to shoulder to drive out the British. Bahadur Shah had declared that he would welcome a confederation and abandon his power.

Savarkar was very happy that the Government and the various parties had ultimately recognised the significance of the 1857 struggle. Surendra Nath Sen, the official historian of the Government of India, wrote his history of 1857 from the point of view of the British and found heroism in the act of the most terrible and fanatical British butchers. R. C. Mujumdar, too, in

*The Kesari, 19 May 1957.*
a different way, underrated the patriotic Indian effort to restore India's sovereignty.

Savarkar's view was that it was not merely a soldier's revolt but also a peoples' war in which hundreds of thousands of people had taken part and fought. Justin MacCarthy in his History of Our Times says that the quarrel about the greased cartridges was but a chance-spark flung among all the combustible material. The mutiny was transformed into a revolutionary war . . . into a national and religious war. In his History of Indian Mutiny (Vol. II, p. 572) Charles Ball, the British historian, said that it became a rebellion of the whole people. Citing these opinions, Savarkar published on May 10, 1957, a special article* on 1857 and quoted from Charles Ball's book the last letter of Nana-asaheb to the British Commander Hope Grant. Nanaasaheb said: "What right have you to occupy India and declare me an outlaw? Who gave you right to rule over India? What! you firanghees, the kings! and we thieves in our own country!" This was Savarkar's last reply to Indian historians who had lost the spirit and significance of the war of independence of 1857.

During this visit to Delhi the Arya Samaj presented him an address in which it described Savarkar as Hinduhridaya Samrat. Replying to the address, Savarkar said that he was the real follower of the seer Dayananda as he believed in the reconversion movement. Hindus should not neglect this movement. They should do whatever was just, beneficial to the Hindu society in spite of derision. The Arya Samajists had done an exemplary work in the field of reconversion and they should carry it on despite frowns or fear.

The Maharashtra Samaj of Delhi gave a hearty welcome to Savarkar under the presidency of N. V. Gadgil. Savarkar was honoured as a valorous son of Maharashtra. Savarkar had, Gadgil said, struggled and sacrificed for decades, and although he had no governmental power, nor was any national honour done to him he showed greatness of his mind in giving a call to the youth of the nation to build it up. Savarkar was beyond a state of happiness or sorrow. The nation was in need of his blessings.

* The Mahratta, 10 May 1957.
Replying to this welcome, Savarkar said that Maharashtrian youths should enter the defence forces and do their duty by their motherland. They should serve the country with the strength and strategy which was peculiar to the Maharashtrian leadership. Their courage and bravery should be accompanied by realism and tactics.

Savarkar gave a farewell party to the leaders and workers of the Hindu Mahasabha at the Janpath hotel where he stayed. He said with a streak of light and tears in his eyes: "I know you came to Delhi all the way to see me. I am grateful to you for your abiding love and faith and devotion. I shall never forget you. During my public life of about fifty-five years, four generations worked with me. To those who accepted my leadership and regarded me with devotion I could give nothing. My followers and lieutenants are neither respected nor benefited in any way. On the contrary a life of poverty, insults and hardships is their lot. They have lost everything and what is worst, the future is filled with grim disappointments. Yet with your noble aim, unflinching courage and irrevocable faith you are determined to carry on the mission. When I see this my mind is full of hope. Remember, you have been suffering defeats, but you are really the victorious party in the land. Some of my colleagues faced gallows; others perished while struggling against British rule in foreign lands. And now you are ready to champion the cause of the Hindus bravely without regard to fruit and self. Do not betray the Hindu cause. The ultimate success is yours. I give you my blessings."

Prof. V. G. Deshpande, a fearless and youthful leader, promised Savarkar on behalf of the leaders and workers of Hindu Mahasabha that they would never desert the flag and the interest of the Hindus.

It was the desire of some persons that Savarkar should call on the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. The appointment was fixed, but Savarkar showed his disinclination to see the President, who did not invite him officially. The ruling party was not fully reconciled to him as he was their harsh critic. Govind Vallabh Pant, Home Minister of India, had informed Dr. Khare a few days earlier that it was not open to the Central Government to order the remission or cancellation of the forfeiture of Savarkar's property. Not only that, Savarkar's books
books on Savarkar were not reviewed on radio. On May 28
Savarkar's birthday was celebrated as usual all over India in
important cities and towns, but his name remained a red rag
to the then radio authorities.

The great patriot Rana breathed his last on May 26, 1957,
at Veraval in Saurashtra at the age of 87. He was the leader
to preside over the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the War of
Independence of 1857 held in London in May 1907. He was
happy to see the centenary of the War of Independence being
celebrated all over India. In his telegraphic condolence message
to Rana's son Natawarlal, Savarkar said that India lost a great
revolutionary and a patriot and a trusted colleague of his.

A few days earlier the second part of Savarkar's Marathi
autobiography was published in March 1957 under the title
Purvapithika (Antecedents). It describes the political situation
of India at the time of Savarkar's entry into Indian politics.

About this time Raja Mahendra Pratap introduced a Bill
recommending to Government to recognise the services to the
country of Savarkar, Birendra Kumar Ghose (brother of Arbindo
Ghose) and Dr. Bhupendra Nath Dutta (brother of Swami Vivekanand). The Bill proposed to pay in recognition of their
services five hundred rupees a month for life from the Govern-
ment. At the time of the introduction of the Bill in Parliament
on November 22, 1957, by Raja Mahendra Pratap, Asoke Sen,
Minister of Law and B. N. Datar, Minister in the Ministry of
Home Affairs, took objections to the introduction of the Bill on
the constitutional grounds. They said that a Bill entailing
expenditure could not be considered by the House without Presi-
dent's consent. The Deputy Speaker, Sardar Hukam Singh,
overruled the objections. Just then the Speaker came and called
upon Raja Mahendra Pratap to beg leave of the House to intro-
duce the Bill. But the motion was declared lost by 75 votes to
48 with 2 abstentions. Almost all members of the opposition
had walked out of the Lok Sabha protesting against the Govern-
ment's objections to the introduction of the Bill. The Socialist
members and some independents remained in the House.

Just then a controversy was going on in Uttar Pradesh over
the picture of Nanasaheb Peshwa, whose statue was going to be

* The Times of India, 23 November 1957.
erected by the U.P. Government. Savarkar wrote to Sampurnanand, Chief Minister of U.P., on June 7, 1957, stating that the picture they had selected for the model of the statue was not only false but fraudulent. To meet the pressing demand of the British public for the picture of Nanasaheb, Savarkar added, a picture of an Indian merchant by name Ayodhya Prasad was published in the Illustrated News of England with the connivance of that merchant’s solicitor. Sampurnanand gratefully thanked Savarkar for the picture of Nanasaheb he sent and the references.

The Union Government and State Governments officially celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 1857 struggle on August 15, 1957. In his broadcast to the nation the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, said the 1857 movement was not accidental and there was little wonder, therefore, if writers and historians had described the movement as a national War of Independence.

A Citizens’ Committee in Bombay set up to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Indian Struggle for Freedom was to celebrate the anniversary on August 15, 1957. Savarkar was elected Vice-President. Although Savarkar could not attend meetings, he was urged by Acharya Donde, Mayor of Bombay, to attend the function which Savarkar could not do as he was ill. At the celebrations held on August 15 by the Government of Bombay, Yeshwantrao Chavan, Chief Minister of Bombay, paid high tributes to Savarkar for his patriotic fight against British rule. It was well-known in Maharashtra that in his youth Yeshwantrao Chavan, like S. A. Dange and S. M. Joshi, was inspired by Savarkar’s patriotism, sacrifice and undying spirit, and he had gone all the way from Karhad to Ratnagiri to meet him.

Savarkar wrote a letter to Tarkatirth Laxmanshastri Joshi, who played a very important and enthusiastic role in the re-establishment of the image of Somnath, congratulating him on his being appointed to translate the Indian Constitution into Sanskrit. In his usual appealing and propagandist way Savarkar urged him to use the words Vidhi, Nirbandh and Dandak. In his reply to Savarkar Laxmanshastri Joshi said that he had used the two words Vidhi and Nirbandh but he could not use Dandak. The translator was not allowed much freedom. He had to use the words selected by the Committee. He said he
had used the term *Sanad*, but if Savarkar suggested him a better word he would put it before the Committee.

The Central Government and the Maharashtra Government have independently accepted the principle of coining new words. They appropriated several words from the mint of Savarkar but without acknowledging their debt. Yet Savarkar was happy with the divine joy he got through this mute success!