POONA decided to set up a Public Hall in the name of Savarkar in a befitting way. The admirers of Savarkar built a hall and named it Swatantryaveer Savarkar Sabha griha. Its opening ceremony was done by Dr. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar on February 19, 1958. He also unveiled a picture of Savarkar on the same day. Inaugurating the hall, Dr. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar said: “Nowadays he who calls himself a Hindu is denounced as a communalist. Savarkar is a defender of Hindus, but his opinions are not orthodox and regressive. He is a progressive Hindu. His Hindutva is not based upon the hatred of others. From this viewpoint alone Savarkar opposed the partition of the country. His object was to preserve the geographical and social unity of the nation. I believe that Savarkarian principles and his way of thinking would bring prosperity to the nation.”

About this time the Hindusahaites of Bombay formed a committee called Swatantryaveer Savarkar Amrit Mahotsav Samiti to collect funds for the propagation of Savarkar’s ideology. Its president was A. S. Bhide alias Bhide Guruji. They collected about Rs. 30,000, part of which was later spent on the service of Savarkar and on the propagation of his ideology and literature.

In May 1958 a Citizen’s Committee was formed by S. S. Mirajkar, Mayor of Greater Bombay, to celebrate the 75th birthday of Savarkar. The Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay also resolved to present an address to Savarkar on the occasion of his (Amrit Mahotsav) 75th birthday. The Bombay Municipal Corporation was in those days dominated by the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti and so the atmosphere of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay was patriotically broader and more liberal as there was a united front. The Congress leaders including Pandit Nehru had lost hold over the Bombay people.
The pictures of Gandhi and Nehru were angrily torn to pieces in those days.

Mirajkar informed Savarkar about the passing of the resolution by the Municipal Corporation and trusted Savarkar would be pleased to accept the address. In reply Savarkar said that he would gladly receive the address which was unanimously and so heartily offered by his countrymen.

On the day of the Municipal function, which was held on May 28, 1958, at Kamala Nehru Park, hundreds of people thronged the approaches leading to the Park. Vast crowds shouted full-throated slogans wishing their leader Savarkar a long life. The Mayor, Mirajkar, welcomed Savarkar and said that the country was grateful for his dauntless fight for freedom. The Mayor presented him a civic address in casket made of sandalwood. It read: “The world knows you as a poet of revolutionary realism, as a historian, as a learned critic and commentator, and as a crusader in the cause of abolition of untouchability. Your herculean efforts in the cause of freedom and the untold sufferings and sacrifice you cheerfully bore will ever remain a shining example in Indian history and will continue to inspire millions.”

Repeating to the civic reception and address, Savarkar thanked the Municipal Corporation for having given him an address in Hindi. He regretted that militarisation of the nation was neglected by the government and said that India would not be respected by other countries unless she became a strong military power. “I hope,” Savarkar said, “that India will be a strong power like Russia in my lifetime.” He expressed hope that the partition would be undone one day. He emphasized the unity of the country at all cost and deprecated the fissiparous tendencies. He warned against the danger of provincialism and called upon the people to consider themselves Indians first. He, however, felt that once the principle of linguistic states was accepted, there was no logic in denying the same status to Maharashtra and Gujarat. He expressed the view that Hindi had been the national language for centuries and English could never replace it.

The Committee formed under the Mayor to celebrate Savarkar’s 75th birthday consisted of eminent citizens belonging to almost all parties. The Committee presented Savarkar a purse
of Rs. 11,111 on July 5, at Cowasji Jehangir Hall in Bombay. The Mayor, Mirajkar, presided. He welcomed Savarkar and the people. To begin with, Savarkar garlanded the Mayor as he was the first citizen of Bombay and an old revolutionary and said that the Communists, Socialists and all other parties should unite in defending the country. The only important thing that happened during the past ten years was the unification of India by Sardar Patel.

The Government could have liberated Goa as they had done in case of Hyderabad. The Portuguese Government should not have been given time to make pacts with great powers. The Nagas were creating trouble in Assam with the help of Pakistan. It was wrong to say that the rising generation was aimless. They proved their courage, grit and aim in Goa.

Savarkar added that the rising generation should promise the vanishing generation that they would fight against any invading army and defend independence of the country. The idea that once the country was free the independence would go on as a matter of course was wrong. They should be always watchful and prepared. If Pakistan aided by America invaded India, India should seek help from Russia and fight Pakistan back. The Arabian Sea should be renamed Sindhu Sagar. In the end he expressed his wish that greater men than he be born in the country to make her stronger and greater and prosperous.

Earlier, B. F. Bharucha, an old Congress leader, told the citizens at the meeting that had Savarkar, to whom Tilak, Pherozshah Mehta, and Madame Cama and Gokhale looked with great expectation, been released before the advent of Gandhi, India would have made much progress.

Bharucha expressed his opinion that the Government of India should take help of Savarkar, who was loved by the Hindus and Sikhs alike, to solve the problem of the Punjab; but he feared that their hatred for Savarkar would not allow them to do so. He said it was unfortunate that no Minister was present at the function. The Congress leaders were too ungrateful to recognise the debt of gratitude they owed to Savarkar. The only reason was that Savarkar was a Maharashtrian. The black-marketeers, white-caps and illicit distillers were patriots for Congressmen. Acharya Donde said that Savarkar was the prince of revolutionaries and so it was the fitting occasion to pay
homage to the symbol of revolution. Acharya Atre said that it was most opportune that the great man was honoured in Bombay while the flag of Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti was fluttering over it. On the occasion of Savarkar's 75th birthday Sir R. P. Paranjpe, sending his blessings and warmest greetings, said in his letter to Savarkar: "Your life has been so eventful that everybody who knows you has the warmest regards for your dauntless courage and sacrifice. As a friend and former teacher of yours I wish you the best of luck in future." Three months earlier when Paranjpe had completed his 80th year Savarkar had congratulated his great teacher. Paranjpe said he prized the congratulations as it came from a patriot like Savarkar.

In almost all important towns all over India the Amrit Mahotsav of Savarkar was celebrated and numerous men of learning and patriots spoke on the occasion appreciating the mission, message and greatness of Savarkar.

As regards the change in the name of the Western Sea, Savarkar wrote to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, and to Govind Vallabhb Pant, Home Minister of India, and requested them to change the name of the Arabian Sea to Sindhu Sagar. He added that they should follow the example of Iraq which changed the name of Persian Gulf to Arab Gulf as soon as Iraq became independent. Savarkar knew it well that Nehru, who always lost territories, would not worry himself for a mere change in the name of a sea. And as expected Nehru did not even reply to Savarkar. It was a change which had something to do with a Muslim name and he must have taken fright at it. During the year 1958 Savarkar Sahitya Navaneet, a book giving the essence of nearly what Savarkar wrote up to that year was published.

Savarkar paid a two-day visit to Poona on November 6, 1958. The reports of the celebrations of his 75th birthday were fresh. So vast crowds greeted him at Poona station and it took him almost an hour to come out of the station.

Savarkar was given a reception at the Poona Nagar Vachanalaya. There he told the audience how he had ushered in a movement to purify the Marathi language and how the movement had achieved success and the principle had come to stay. He exhorted the Poona people to remove all names and symbols and statues connected with foreign rule. Kunjavihari Bhopat-
kar, who was one of the counsel of Savarkar during the Red Fort Trial, told the audience that during the Trial Savarkar received letters of sympathy from all corners of the world. When Sudhir Phadke, a famous singer of light music, sang Savarkar’s poem *To The Sea*, Savarkar was visibly moved.

In the evening the Poona Municipal Corporation gave a civic reception to Savarkar at a special function held at the foot of the Parvati Hill. The address expressed gratitude for the glorious part Savarkar played in the freedom struggle of India, appreciated Savarkar’s guidance to Subhash Bose and his contribution to the Hindu Sanghatan. In reply to the address Savarkar said that the first and foremost citizen of Poona was Shivaji. Poona produced several great men. Poona had its traditional and historic conflict with Delhi. That was why in his day also the Delhi leaders took dread at the mention of Maharashtra.

Democracy was good but at times military rule was helpful to the nation. Shivaji did not fight elections. He would never have been victorious in an election. His constitution was the Bhawani Sword, and his tiger claws. Dictatorship of a benevolent ruler was helpful and welcome to a nation when the nation was in the need of it. He had read the constitutions of all nations. He had written many books. But he believed that great men framed constitutions or changed them suitably and defined them as they liked.

He regretted that the Delhi of his day was engrossed in the festivals of dramas, films and tamashas, and the Government had neglected the problem of defence. Mere protests were worthless. That surrendering attitude would endanger the freedom of the country. People were not attracted to valour. No weekly or monthly issued any special number on military subjects and problems. The Poona Municipality should think of starting a military school. If their rulers neglected the military preparations they should be pulled down, he added.

After sending protest after protest against attacks on India, Nehru put the eastern borders in the charge of military. This was quite a sensible step Nehru took. So Savarkar was happy that at last, though inordinately late, the realisation came upon Nehru. He sent a congratulatory message to Nehru in which he said: “Hearty appreciation of and support to your courageous
step putting our eastern borders under military charge. Punitive and prohibitive military reprisals in kind and measure can alone restore our lost prestige. Let us follow up with compulsory military training of youths and repeal the Arms Act."

Savarkar supported the Communist Government of Kerala, which was facing a crisis over the enforcement of the Education Act. It aimed at annihilating the power of the Christian Missionaries by liberating education in Kerala. Savarkar issued a statement on July 6, 1959, exhorting the Hindu Sanghatanists in Kerala to render all possible support to the Communist Government led by E. M. S. Namboodripad in their struggle which they were bravely carrying on against the United Front of Christians, the Congress and the Muslim League all of whom were sworn enemies of the Hindu cause.

The Hindu Sanghatanists could not forget, Savarkar said, the religious and political persecution to which the Congress Government in Kerala led by Christians had subjected them and from which they got liberated by the advent of the Communist Government alone. He also asked the Hindu Sanghatanists to back the Communist candidates in absence of the Hindu Sabha candidates if elections were held on the enforcement of the Education Act. He advised the Communist Government not to resign under pressure of the Central Government.

V. R. Krishna Iyer, Minister for Law, Kerala Government, thanked Savarkar and said that his advice to the Communist Government asking them not to resign under pressure was sound. He added that the enforcement of the Education Act was necessary in Kerala whether the Church liked it or not.

Savarkar's policy was guided by responsive co-operation because it helped the Hindus in Kerala to get rid of the Christian domination in the education field. But he did not make it clear how it would have helped to make Hindus free in the educational field after the installation of Communist rule in Kerala. The inner soul of Savarkar that hankered after secularism must have felt glad about the liquidation of the Christian religious domination in the education field. Savarkar always told his followers that they should not be afraid of communism. They should absorb what was good in it, but keep their individuality intact. In the end, however, Nehru liquidated the
The Poona University resolved, at its meeting held on the 3rd and 4th April 1959, to confer the degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) on Savarkar in recognition of his eminent position and attainment. Savarkar could not attend the convocation held on October 4, 1959. In his address to the students Dr. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of the Republic, exhorted them to emulate the qualities of Gandhi and the patriotism of Savarkar. Sri Prakasa, Governor of Bombay and Chancellor of Poona University, declared that a Doctor of Letters was conferred on Savarkar in absentia.

On October 8, 1959, Professor D. G. Karve, Vice-Chancellor of Poona University, Dr. R. N. Dandekar, Dr. V. R. Dhamdhere and K. H. Dhamdhere and Secretary V. H. Gole of the University of Poona came to Savarkar Sadan and presented the degree and the academic gown to Savarkar. He was happy to receive the degree and the gown, but asked the University authorities why they were not presenting a shawl in the traditional fashion instead of a gown. He said with a smile that the honour which should have been conferred upon him in his youth was given him in his old age. So the evening of his life was in a way a second youth.

Savarkar was pleased with the degree as it came with the approval of eminent men like Sir R. P. Paranjpe, his one-time teacher and Principal. He said Paranjpe did his duty in those days and he himself did his own duty of inaugurating a revolutionary party. It was the right of a youth to rebel. He hoped that India would be a great power and its valiant men would go to the Venus if other nations went to the Moon. He said that in international politics self-preservation was the predominant motive. Khrushchev praised Nehru as the bulwark of peace and America did in the same terms. They knew that Nehru, who was militarily of no consequence, felt flattered. And Nehru came to think that he was really a power in the world. So he hushed up the attacks made by Pakistan on India and gave every time a different colour to them as he wanted to pass

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1 The Kesari, 11 October 1959.
himself off as a peace-maker and a defender of humanity. The nation that was prepared for aggression survived. The nation that kept defining within itself aggressions and non-aggressions went down.

Savarkar’s old colleagues were one after another bidding farewell to the world. Niranjan Pal died on November 9, 1959, in Bombay. Savarkar wrote to his bereaved wife that he regretted the apathy and ungratefulness shown by the new generation to the demise of Niranjan Pal and added that while the death of a Congress cat or a rat was announced on the radio the demise of such a noted patriot, an artist and the son of Bepin Chandra Pal could not find a prominent notice in government-controlled means of publicity and press. He was confident that history would pay its due homage to Niranjan Pal, the youthful revolutionary missionary of Abhinava Bharat in London. In the end Savarkar said he could find no adequate words to give expression to his mournful thoughts.

In a statement issued to the press Savarkar said that his close associate and veteran fighter of the freedom movement in armed struggle against the British and a renowned cine-story writer in English and Hindi, Niranjan Pal passed away at the age of seventy in a hospital in Malad leaving behind his English wife and a son.

The president of the Gujarat Hindu Sabha, Maganlal Vyas presented Savarkar with a purse. Vyas was a fearless and trusted champion of Hindus in Gujarat and a staunch promoter of Savarkarism.

On December 21, 1959, the 50th anniversary of Kanhere’s death was being celebrated at Nasik. Savarkar called upon the youths of Maharashtra to swear by the blood of Kanhere that they would valiantly defend their country against any aggression and make it invincible. This was the only way to commemorate the memory of Kanhere, he said.

Savarkar’s health was now deteriorating. He was very weak in body. From his bed he watched the happenings and guided the nation. The Government of India decided that Gujarat and Maharashtra be two independent states. It was an outcome of great popular movements. Savarkar urged the leaders of Gujarat to change the name of Ahmedabad to its original name Karnavati, which was changed by Sultan Ahmedshah. He
also appealed to the leaders of Gujarat to change the name of the Western Sea, which washed the coast of Gujarat, to Ratnakar or Sindhu Sagar and to get rid of the disgraceful alien name Arabian Sea. He also expressed his desire that they should call their new capital, if they built one, Vallabh Nagar after the name of Vallabhbhai Patel, whose strong will and hand did so much for India.

In March 1960 Savarkar was confined to bed as piles grew very painful. Dr. Baliga was ready to operate but Savarkar declined. He was on diet for the whole month. Just then P. R. Patel, an independent Member of Parliament, moved a bill in the Lok Sabha recommending the rescission of the law under which the British Government confiscated the property of Indian patriots. The Lok Sabha passed it. The old law was repealed but it applied only to the case of Raja Mahendra Pratap. When Savarkar was asked about the restoration of property by Government to Raja Mahendra Pratap he said that he himself did not fight against the British for his personal property. He fought for the liberation of the country. The liberation of Bharat included his property. The man who was at that time owner of his house and property might enjoy it. He was happy the owner of his property was enjoying it as the President of Indian Republic enjoyed his position and power.

On April 24, 1960, L. B. Bhopatkar died. From his sick bed Savarkar said that Maharashtra lost the last of its old guard.

By now two Indian universities, Nagpur and Poona, had conferred Honorary Doctorates on Savarkar. Bombay University was at this hour awakened to its responsibility by its dutiful and patriotic members and compelled it to do at least bare justice to Savarkar if not to confer an honorary doctorate on Savarkar, who was a great literary figure and a man of high eminence in India. The University, on long discussions, rescinded on April 30, 1960, their resolution of July 1, 1911, under which Savarkar’s B.A. degree was cancelled and restored the degree of Bachelor of Arts to Savarkar. In doing so Bombay University saved itself from adverse criticism. That was all.

On the eve of the inauguration of Maharashtra on May 1, 1960, Savarkar gave a fitting message to the people of Maharashtra and the State. He expressed his desire that Maharashtra should become the sword-arm of India. He further said that
it might turn out that the Chief Minister of Maharashtra might hoist the flag of free and independent Bharat once again on Attak and become the Prime Minister of India.

A few days earlier, Yeshwantrao Chavan, Chief Minister of Bombay, who was now to become the first Chief Minister of Maharashtra, wrote a letter to Savarkar inquiring after his health. He expressed high hopes of Chavan's future and he often said that Chavan was a rising star and the proper sort of statesman with grit and realism.

Maharashtra took its place on the political map of India on May 1, 1960. The dream of a unilingual state of the Marathi-speaking people became a reality.

The fluttering of the leaves indicate the direction of the wind. During these days Savarkar had written to Balasaheb Desai, then Education Minister, that they should introduce military education in High Schools and Colleges. Desai, with the approval of Chavan, sent a scheme to the Central Government for approval, but the Nehru Government turned it down.\(^1\) Forewarned is forearmed was not the motto of the Nehru Government. Nehru based his defence on the illusive pillars of Panchsheel.

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This year Savarkar's birthday celebrations assumed a new significance as his followers, well-wishers, admirers and vast number of devotees decided to celebrate December 24, 1960, as the Mrityunjay Day, the day on which Savarkar would have completed his fifty years' transportation had he been in jail. The whole of Maharashtra was enthusiastic about it. The idea struck A. S. Bhide alias Bhide Guruji who was formerly Savarkar's Secretary.

Savarkar was very weak and had no strength to receive the greetings of the people. On the eve of his birthday he therefore declared that he would not be able to see anybody on the day. He, however, gave a message to the youth of the country that they should make India a matchless country in respect of military power. People celebrated his birthday with great enthusiasm and even in the Andamans people garlanded Savarkar's picture in the cell wherein Savarkar had been caged for

\(^1\) The \textit{Maharatta}, 29 May 1965.
eleven years. Pyare Mohan, a Municipal employee in the Andamans, exhibited proudly a note-book presented to him by Savarkar at the time of his departure from the Andamans. M. V. Rajwade, who was at this time Commissioner of the Andamans, took much interest in commemorating the memory of Savarkar’s stay in the cellular jail.

About this time R. K. Nagarkar, Savarkar’s devotee and confidant, made a present of Savarkar’s books to President Dr. Rajendra Prasad. The President expressed his desire that all the books of Savarkar should be translated into Hindi. He also made kind inquiries about Savarkar’s health. Previously there was another confidant by name G. B. Parmekar. But he dropped out after the Red Fort Trial.

Savarkar congratulated Yeshwantrao Chavan on his conferring the poet-laureateship of Maharashtra on Poet Yashwant and on his starting a military school at Satara. He also congratulated the Maharashtra Government on its inaugurating Marathi as the medium of its administration. He coined two Marathi words, doordarshan for television and doormudrak for teleprinter.

V. B. Gogate asked the Government some questions regarding the restoration of Savarkar’s confiscated property, but Chavan replied that it was in the possession of a third party. Thereupon some people said that if there was a will, there was a way. The lands of the farmers of Bardoli were confiscated and sold to a Parsi zamindar. But these were restored to the original owners. It might be that Yeshwantrao Chavan was helpless at the stiff attitude the Nehru Government had adopted towards Savarkar’s case.

On the eve of the Mrityunjay Day celebrations several institutions, Municipalities and District Boards passed resolutions expressing their good wishes and grateful homage and requesting Government to restore Savarkar’s property. Some public meetings expressed their desire that Government should confer Bharat Ratna on Savarkar. Some said that it was no use describing a lion as a lion. A lion is a lion by birth. So the Government of India should confer the title ‘Savarkar’ on future victorious sons of India.

At Calcutta the Mrityunjay Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm. The special feature of the programme was a drama
in Bengali Savarkar the Volcano written by Manuj Chandra Sarbadhikari. It was staged by the film-star Premanshu Basu and his party and the meeting was presided over by the famous revolutionary leader Lokanath Bal and was addressed by revolutionaries like Abirath Chandra Bhattacharya and Bhupendra-nath Basu.

On the morning of December 24, 1960, vast crowds gathered at Savarkar Sadan and stood in a long queue for hours together shouting jays to Mrityunjay Savarkar and that Savarkar must give them darshan. Savarkar stood in the balcony of his house and received the greetings of the people. A group of women felicitated him in the traditional fashion. He then came downstairs and people went in one by one. People showered garlands, flowers and sweatmeats on him. In the evening a meeting was held at Shivaji Park under the presidentship of Acharya Donde. He said Savarkar was a unique fusion of emotion and reason. As long as there was an intelligent society Savarkar’s name would be immortal. Acharya Atre said that Savarkar was an oracle. At another meeting Bhide Guruji said that to praise Savarkar was to hold candle to the sun. At the Delhi meeting Hiren Mukerjee, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Bishanchandra, Pandit Brijnarain and Pandit Brajesh spoke and passed a resolution denouncing the radio authorities for not taking note of Savarkar’s Mrityunjay Day. Whatever the opinions of the radio authorities, they were afraid of the reactions of their Delhi bosses. So they were culpably silent on this great historical event.

Rajagopalachari, paying tributes to Savarkar, said on this occasion: “Veer Savarkar is one of the heroes of India’s struggle against British and he will ever be held in esteem and loved by us all, as an abhiratha in the long battle for freedom.”

Hundreds of newspapers brought out special numbers which unanimously said that Savarkar was the symbol of patriotism and sacrifice. He was the Ganga deeply flowing with heroism, patriotism and sacrifice. He was the image of oratory and liberty. There was only one Lokamanya and that was Tilak: there was only one Swatantryaveer, hero of independence, and that was Savarkar. Someone compared him to Prometheus Fire, the fire with which Prometheus quickened into life his clay images.
At this time in an interview Savarkar said that it was foolish to ask the question: After Nehru, what? No one was indispensable. It was sheer madness to imagine for a moment that the country would go to pieces after Nehru. A country that produced Chandragupta, Vikramaditya, Shalivahana, Chanakya and Shivaji would never be politically bankrupt. Nehru was Bajirao II. Any man with ordinary common sense would have done less harm to the country than Nehru had done.

The Mrityunjay celebrations came to an end on January 15, 1961, at Poona. There was a mammoth meeting to celebrate the event. President Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan, Yeshwantrao Chavan, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, and several other eminent men had sent messages of good wishes. Senapati Bapat, who presided over the function, said that his leader was Savarkar and he obeyed his orders. S. M. Joshi, India's eminent socialist leader, said that in his youth he was inspired by Savarkar's call for absolute political independence of India and he had issued a statement in those days saying that the spirit of Savarkar was not dead. Savarkar's thinking had profound impact on millions of his countrymen. He was the first leader to give India the message of freedom. With equal force and fearlessness he attacked the social ills. Joshi added that none acted up to the principles of great men. Nobody followed Gandhi either. So there was an atmosphere of despondency.

Savarkar was garlanded profusely and the garlands contained saffron coloured flowers. He was presented with a purse also. The mammoth meeting prepared itself to hear Savarkar. Sitting on a chair he began his speech. He said that he was too weak to speak. If he continued for some minutes it gave rise to colic. Upon this a wave of sadness passed over the mammoth crowds. Gradually then the mist disappeared and the sun in Savarkar shone brilliantly. He said that achievement of Independence was the happiest moment in the life of the nation and the rising generation, and above all the happiest moment in his life. He did not wish to regain his confiscated property or to be adorned with Bharat Ratna. If they elected him President he would make India within two years stronger and mightier than the Russia of Khrushchev and take out the shoe to the world as did Khrushchev. He said military power
was the only criterion of the greatness of a nation. He would prefer Hitler to the Democracy that was cowardly and yielding to every aggressor. He said India should modernise the armed forces and invent newer and more destructive weapons of warfare—a hydrogen bomb. Even a model democracy would fall and crumble down if it lacked the strength of the army.

Savarkar called upon the youths to join the N.C.C. as exhorted by Yeshwantrao Chavan, Chief Minister of Maharashtra. As long as Nehru did not object to that training, Chavan should go on enthusing the people with military spirit. Chavan was a brave Maratha and so he desired that Maharashtrians should again shine gloriously in the history of India as a great martial race. Savarkar said that he was appealing to Maharashtrians because they could galvanise the whole nation with their martial spirit. China could not march her armies against Formosa, or Macao. Poor miserable Nehru, he was completely hypnotised by Chou En-lai because he spoke of high sounding principles of world peace and co-existence. If Nehru was not aware of the fact that China was building military highways and railways he was unfit to be a Prime Minister. If he knew, he was guilty of holding the information from the nation. He should have sent our armies forthwith and protected our borders. So long the world was aggressive, India must also be aggressive.

The Naga hostilities would have been wiped out within a week had not Nehru ordered the army to receive bullets instead of shooting the rebels. When Nehru openly declared in Parliament that he would not wage war at any cost, it was an open invitation to our enemies. The only thing our Government was capable of was protest notes, strong, stronger and strongest! India failed to give the lead to Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. They reluctantly turned to China. He added that India should raise military potential along with the economic development and meet the challenge of the enemy on his ground.

In the end Savarkar appealed to Maharashtrian youths that they should be the sword-arm of the nation and if at all they possessed atom bombs, the whole world should rest assured that they would be dropped on the enemies of India and so long they continued to be her enemies. This was the last public speech of Savarkar.

*Thus Spake the Prophet*, pp. 11-26.
The liberation of Goa was drawing nearer. The inner struggle in Goa and outer pressure were mounting and people were fighting. All Indian leaders were of the opinion that the freedom of India would not be complete till Goa became part and parcel of India. Just at the time of the liberation of Goa some Brahmins, who were performing some sacrifice in Bombay, went to Savarkar for a message. Thereupon Savarkar asked them why they were sitting on grass with crossed legs and feasting while the goddess of battle was performing a fierce sacrifice in Goa. They should go to Goa and fight sword in hand while killing the enemies of India. If they did so they would secure the merit of Sahasrachandi. People had forced a war on the Indian Government and it speedily liberated Goa on December 20, 1961. When the Indian forces marched into Goa Savarkar hoisted the Republic Flag on his house. Goa was liberated after about 450 years. A thorn in the side of India that had caused so much distress was at last removed.

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Savarkar was confined to bed. He refused interviews and refused to have correspondence also with anybody. Yet he was invited to bless on April 5, 1962, the inauguration of the memorial which was raised to the memory of Dr. K. B. Hedgewar, the founder of the R.S.S. In his letter of 16th March 1962, M. S. Golwalkar, Chief of the R.S.S., said that it was the desire of them all that Savarkar should attend the function and bless it as Savarkar had a high regard for Dr. Hedgewar who had his blessings also in his great work. Golwalkar added that he himself had the rare fortune of being worthy of his esteem. So he was pressing the invitation on him. He prayed God that He would enable him to undertake the journey and to attend the function. Illness had crippled Savarkar. So he declined. He however sent a message to Golwalkar in which he said that they should go forward with the work and should not feel any regrets for the absence of one like him for whom it made no difference whether he was in this world or not.

Sri Prakasa, Governor of Bombay, paid a visit to Savarkar Sadan on April 15, 1962, and made kind inquiries after his health. His father Dr. Bhagwandas was a friend of Babarao Savarkar. Sri Prakasa thought that it would be proper on his
part to pay him a visit before he relinquished his charge the next day. They discussed all sorts of problems for an hour and a half.

On the eve of his 80th birthday Savarkar issued an advance statement requesting his followers and well-wishers not to press their greetings on him personally as it was quite impossible for him to see them either individually or collectively. In deference to his wishes no visitor was allowed to see him. His grateful thanks were conveyed to his well-wishers through his personal secretary. He was feeling very weak and was unable to move without help in the house. Telegrams and letters poured in Savarkar Sadan expressing gratitude to and long life for Savarkar. Alamgir, one of the leading Marathi weeklies, said that there was increase in the pension of the retired President, but men like Savarkar whose efforts resulted in installing the President in his Gadi were treated with indifference in this land.

Acharya Donde wrote to Savarkar that his whole life was a great work on patriotism and it should be studied by all. What people like him thought in their student days about him still made them happy and proud of those recollections. Donde said he was confident that Savarkar's name would be immortal in the history of India.

Just then the trouble with China over the border issue was developing fast into a crisis. Chinese duplicity and deceit which had been going on since April 1954 proved to be beyond the high moral principles of Nehru's Panchsheel. Mao, who believed that there was no third road and neutrality was merely a camouflage, had no faith in the high-flown principles of the Panchsheel. China had a border dispute with India, but Nehru chose to remain silent on it although the Chinese were creating trouble intermittently and occupying the border region of India. Nehru was living in the paradise of the Panchsheel as he signed Panchsheel declarations with China, Indonesia, North Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Egypt, Cambodia, Soviet Russia, Poland, Laos and Nepal.

From the beginning of the Bandung Conference of 1955 Mao's suave tactics had begun to eclipse Nehru's prestige in Asia. Mao shrewdly and sedulously made treaty with Indonesia in 1955, with Nepal in April 1960, with Afghanistan in August 1960, with
Burma in January 1960 and an agreement with Pakistan in May 1962 and thus isolated India.

Nehru thought that the Communist China would not attack India because he was more inclined to communist countries than to Western democracies. Before Nehru’s committing to agreement on Tibet in April 1954, the Secretary-General of External Affairs, Girja Shankar Bajpai, had urged him to secure recognition by China of the McMohan Line. Nehru had also rebuffed military advisors who tried to warn him against China. In July 1962, Krishna Menon, the then Defence Minister of India, had dismissed the possibility of war with China.

In the Lok Sabha Nehru declared in August 1962 that it was quite absurd to talk of China invading India. Strengthening of the military defences was therefore treated with contempt. Menon was more inclined to receive military aid from communist countries rather than democracies. Leaders like Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Republic, speaking at a meeting of the Gandhi Peace Foundation on June 16, 1962, had expressed his sacred desire that India should disarm unilaterally. At that meeting Jayaprakash said that India should not use atomic energy for military purposes. Acharya Kriplani and Rajaji also made speeches at the meeting. In reply to them Nehru said it was not possible for a nation to live without the army. Yet Nehru’s policy lacked political realism. His credulity about China’s policy and his negligence towards military preparations made India quite vulnerable.

And when a third World War was likely to break out over Cuba between the United States and Russia, Chinese troops attacked on October 20, 1964, along the McMohan Line and in Ladakh Savarkar’s prophecy came true. Because of the wilful and tragic blunders of Nehru the ill-equipped Indian forces, although they fought bravely, had to retreat and the whole nation was humiliated. Britain and the United States ran to the succour of India. The pillars of Panchsheel were swept away by the onrush of the Chinese forces. On the night of November 20, China unilaterally announced cease-fire abruptly and India stood humiliated.

When the war came on, the visionary in Nehru was awakened

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* The *Times of India*, 19 June 1962.*
to reality and he admitted that India had been "out of touch with reality in the modern world and living in an artificial atmosphere of our own creation. We have been shocked out of it, all of us whether it is the government or the people, some might have felt it less and some more". None should forget that the pronoun 'we' included Nehru alone, who, "being out of touch with reality in the modern world and living in the artificial atmosphere of 'his' own creation," was responsible for the tragedy of India. And the better the man, the greater the tragedy! Nehru proved to be Chamberlain II as foretold by Dr. Ambedkar and brought on disaster as foretold by Savarkar. Nehru tried to appease the people by demoting Krishna Menon and promoting Yeshwantrao Chavan.

Two years earlier Chavan with his political realism had proposed a scheme for the introduction of compulsory military training in high schools and colleges, but the Nehru Government had turned it down. Savarkar had been warning since the day of independence to militarise the northern borders and to strengthen the military and modernise it. He also advised the Government to introduce military training in colleges and high schools and to give top priority to military preparations. But he was decried as a warmonger by the peace-mongers who relied more on high-flown principles and bogus peace and neglected the defence. Savarkar had said that if Ashok Chakra could not transform itself into a Sudarshan Chakra in times of danger it would lie in the dust and his words came true with a vengeance.

Savarkar had been confined to bed for almost the whole year. He watched with anguish the helplessness of the Indian army. The Indian soldiers bravely faced the Chinese forces but were outnumbered and overpowered. This sorrow weighed too heavily on his heart. Helpless as he was he wept bitterly on December 14, 1962, for over an hour or so. In his life-time his son had never seen him weeping before. His warnings went unheard and the country ruefully paid the price for it.

In the 1st week of April 1963 the second part of his Marathi book Saha Soneri Pane (Six Golden Pages) from the history of Bharat was published. The book contains Savarkar's mellowed
thoughts on Indian history. It claims to have established some new points and provides a new interpretation of historic events from the viewpoint of his theory of Hindu Nation. In his extreme old age harassed by a chain of illness he devoted whenever possible some time to reading the material, writing, correcting, revising and pruning the manuscript and completed the book after six years.

The early months of 1963 witnessed Savarkar lying in his bed and requesting his doctors not to prolong his life. Man should not live longer, he said, if his ill-health made him unfit to move and work. He tried to impress this viewpoint on his doctors. In May 1963 people celebrated his birthday more enthusiastically because they now knew that his warnings had come true. In Bombay the Hindu Sabhaitees celebrated the Savarkar Week and invited General Cariappa, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, N. V. Gadgil and M. S. Golwalkar to make speeches during the militarisation week they had observed. Declining the invitation, Nehru said in his letter of April 5 to Pandit Bakhale, president of the Bombay Hindu Sabha: “I send my good wishes on the occasion of your celebrating the 81st birthday of Veer Savarkar.”

During the militarisation week specially observed on the occasion of Veer Savarkar’s 80th birthday, N. V. Gadgil, ex-minister of Central Government and ex-governor of the Punjab, made a speech eulogising the work, patriotism and sacrifice of Savarkar. The R.S.S. Chief M. S. Golwalkar in his speech on May 15 said he found the principles of nationalism scientifically explained in Savarkar’s great work Hindutva. To him it was a text-book, a scientific book.

Golwalkar also said that the book We which was read by the R.S.S. was the abridgment done by him (Golwalkar) of the work Rashtra Mimansa of Babarao Savarkar. He added that he had translated Babarao Savarkar’s book into Hindi and handed it over to a certain man. He said that it was most befitting on his part to acknowledge publicly the debt of gratitude.6

General Cariappa, who had incurred displeasure by making a speech at a club in Madras in which he was said to have paid tributes to Savarkar’s sound policy regarding the defence of

6 Tape Recorded Speech on the occasion.
India, made a very fine speech during this militarisation week in Bombay and praised Savarkar for his lead and guidance to the nation. He said Savarkar was keen on military training since his youth. Had the nation listened to him and adopted his policy of militarisation and prepared herself she would not have been placed in this predicament. General Cariappa was the first Indian Brigadier and the first Indian Commander-in-Chief. The Indian Army owed much to him for unity and discipline.

At Belgaum V. S. Khandekar, Maharashtra's eminent novelist and litterateur, said in a speech on the occasion of the celebrations of the birthday of Savarkar that Savarkar was great not only in one field but also in the fields of poetry, courage, literature and in several others. His greatness had the colours of the rainbow. They were all Lilliputians before him.

Speaking on the occasion, the silver-tongued orator Nath Pai said that Savarkar's personality was myriad-sided. His fate was no better than that of Socrates, Christ, Lincoln and Mahatma Gandhi. The Union Government should have invited him to Delhi and honoured him. But that much generosity the Union Government did not show. The nation was going after fireflies and turning its back on the sun of the nation. The nation would pay a very high price for it. With great fortitude Savarkar stood by his principles. Had there been a little departure from his ideals, he would have been the Prime Minister of India. It fell to his lot to see India divided. The defeat of the Indian Army in Nefa must have caused him great anguish and his sorrow on that account might have been greater than the sorrow of the Ministers concerned. To repay his gratitude the award of Bharat Ratna to Savarkar would be an inadequate honour. It would have been a great honour to the National Academy had it published Savarkar's literature, Nath Pai concluded.

During his stay in Bombay General Cariappa tried his best to see Savarkar. But Savarkar, for reasons known to him, declined to meet him. He wrote one or two letters to Savarkar, but Savarkar did not respond. Later he said that Cariappa was

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8 Maharashtra Times, 30 May 1963.
9 Ibid.
an experienced and expert general, but he should not have sued the Organiser.

It was an irony of fate that while the nation was celebrating his birthday Savarkar broke the thigh-bone of his left leg on the morning of May 29. He was removed to Dr. Talwalkar's clinic in consultation with Dr. R. V. Sathe and Dr. Date, heart specialist. On May 30 Dr. A. K. Talwalkar operated on the thigh. Savarkar's mind was now beyond pain and pleasure. In a light mood he joked with Pandit Bakhale. He said to him that Bakhale had concluded his birthday celebrations on the previous day and he had now commenced the journey to death. All the doctors and nurse Champutai Tendulkar served him devotionally. He recovered his health to some degree but lost for some months the use of his leg.

The day of returning home dawned. It was the new moon day. Superstition seized some of his followers who were in charge of him. Savarkar said when he should go home was the concern of the doctors and not the concern of astrologers. It pained him to see that when a Russian woman was soaring in the space and the United States and Russia were striving to land on the Moon and Mars, some of his followers were superstitiously consulting astrology about his returning home. He said it was ridiculous and irrational to do so. Nothing would happen to him even if he returned home on an astrologically inauspicious day, he added. He returned home on June 24, 1963. When after three months he could walk a little with the help of nurse and staff, his wife was taken seriously ill. He got her removed on October 16, to Dr. Talwalkar's clinic at Dadar, but he was not in a mood to see her even when she so much devotionally insisted on her bidding him farewell. Savarkar promised her through his nurse that he would go to see her at the clinic. She wriggled in her bed. He could not go to the clinic. She insisted that she should be taken back home as she preferred to die in the house by the side of her husband. At last she departed this world on November 8, 1968 at the age of seventy-six. The news of her death fell heavily on him. He calmly said that her dead body should be carried in an ambulance to the electric crematorium at Chandanwadi without making it a matter of public sorrow. He said that after his release from the Andamans she led a happy life with him for
over forty years. She had the pleasure of fondling her grand children. So her dead body should not be brought to the house. Any meeting should prove to be the last one. No use lamenting over the dead body. Her life was a success, he added. A few selected batch of persons attended the funeral. A few persons including Prof. V. G. Deshpande and A. S. Bhide spoke. The papers took note of her death with great awareness. Next day Savarkar said to Bal Savarkar that in a year or two he would have to go to the same electric crematorium.

Condolence messages came in. Several meetings were held to mourn her death. A message of condolence came from His Eminence Athenasins Joel S. Williams, Archbishop and Primate of the Indian National Church. He said: “We share your grief in this sad bereavement. The demise of Shrimati Yamunabai is the worst blow not only to you, our beloved Veer Savarkar, but it is a national calamity.”

Savarkar refused to perform any religious rites as he was not a believer in the obsequies and in oblations to the dead person through the crows. L. G. Thatte offered satyagraha at Savarkar Sadan for compelling Savarkar to perform the obsequies. He was arrested. Savarkar did not yield.

A poor widow tried to persuade Savarkar to perform the obsequies. He gently told her that the world was changing. She herself was growing hair although the shastras prohibited her from doing so. She had set aside an outworn custom. The offering of oblation to crows was likewise an ignorant and outworn tradition. It must go.

Savarkar’s son Vishwas, however, relieved himself from mental tension by silently performing the obsequies. Whether it was with his father’s knowledge or not was not known. In doing so it seemed he exercised his right. Savarkar was not against his freedom of action. Savarkar gave away some money to deserving social institutions in the name of his wife. That was his way to commemorate the deceased.

During October 1963 Savarkar told the author that Aravinda was a great philosopher. By his works he made a great contribution to philosophy. Vivekananda’s Rajyog was a masterpiece. Gandhi, with his unscientific and unscholarly mind, was the most unfit man to interpret the Geeta.

The national thinking was reassessing Gandhism and the
Indian revolution. Prof. N. S. Phadke, eminent novelist in Maharashtra, said that Savarkar had been warning since 1947 the nation that if they wished to defend the freedom of India they should stop eulogising the principle of absolute non-violence, should guard the frontiers and strengthen the military forces. Gandhism would lead India to ruination said Padmashri N. S. Phadke. 10 N. G. Goray, a prominent leader of the Praja Socialist Party and one who was noted for his political and social thinking, said at a meeting in Bombay in December 1963 that after Agarkar Savarkar gave the Hindu society proper guidance. 11 Some months earlier Mahamahopadhaya D. V. Potdar said at a symposium that whatever one’s differences with Savarkar, one should bow before him. In the prevailing conditions of the world no society or nation was taking sides with the Hindus or interested in their defence. 12 It was therefore a good thing that a heroic personage like Savarkar stood for the welfare and defence of the Hindus and that it was good that he should hail from Maharashtra.

Guy Aldred, Editor of the Word, Glasgow, who had been supporting Savarkar since 1910, died on November 4, 1963. Savarkar was grieved to hear of the death of Aldred who was the first Briton to court jail for supporting the cause of India’s freedom struggle. Savarkar said that India should be grateful to Guy Aldred for his love and support.

Just then elections were held in Goa. Goa showed its affinity with Maharashtra. The protagonists of United Goans Party dominated by Catholics were said to have shouted the slogan ‘Salazar Zindabad’. They wanted Goa to remain a separate State. Savarkar said it proved his thesis that change of religion was change of nationality. 13

Acharya P. K. Atre met Savarkar on December 20, 1963. Savarkar told him that he lost the bus for the other world. He suggestively told Atre how Dnyaneshwar, Ramdas and Tukaram ended their earthly pilgrimage after their mission was over. In the last week of December, Defence Minister, Yeshwantrao Chavan, was elected to Parliament unopposed. The whole of

10 The Navakal, Diwali Special, 1963.
11 Maharashtra Times, 30 December 1963.
Maharashtra was jubilant over the unique honour the electorate bestowed on Yeshwantrao Chavan. Savarkar was also pleased with the result and he congratulated Yeshwantrao Chavan on his unanimous election to the Lok Sabha. "In fact you represent not only the Nasik-Igatpuri electorate but also the whole of Maharashtra. It is your personal triumph," he added.

Just then N. C. Chatterji was elected to Parliament in a by-election from Bengal. Savarkar congratulated Chatterji on his success and said that the Hindus would find an indomitable advocate to defend the Hindu cause in Parliament. Savarkar said that the Hindus from East Pakistan should be allowed to come to Western Bengal and an equal number of Muslims should be sent to Eastern Pakistan even by force. Prompt reprisals, military or otherwise, should be adopted by India for every aggressive step taken by Pakistan. But when a few days later N. C. Chatterji came to see him, he saw him after sending him back once because he came to see him without an appointment, and told the Bengal leader that things would not militarily improve unless Nehru was out of power. Seeing the provocation and violence in his talk, Chatterji shuddered.

Poona University resolved about this time to set up a Veer Savarkar Military Studies Chair. A Committee was established to collect funds for it. Wishing success to the Committee, which issued a special number for the purpose, Lieut.-General Thorat said that there was a dearth of military thinkers in the country at the time and he had confidence that the study would fulfil a long-felt want. Maharashtra, on which Gandhian principles of non-violence could not have any effect, could alone think in terms of the defence of the country. The Committee donated Rs. 1,00,000 to Poona University.

The thoughts of self-immolation or surrendering the self to death were often coming into Savarkar's mind. He wanted to end his life the way Kumarila Bhatt, Ramdas, Dnyaneshwar, Eknath, Chaitanya and Tukaram did. Even he once asked his personal secretary Bal Savarkar whether he could help him to go deep into the sea. Once or twice he had cast a longing look at the sea in Bombay.

When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, died on May 27, 1964, Savarkar did not issue any statement.
He was silent on the death of Nehru. Savarkar's birthday which fell next day was however not celebrated.

In August 1964 Savarkar made his Will and he bequeathed the major portion of the property to his daughter and the rest to his son Vishwas. Bal Savarkar was given the rights of publications of his books. Bal Savarkar served him with great devotion for over fifteen years. Some provision was made for the daughter of Vishwas. He also laid down some instructions regarding his funeral.

During Lal Bahadur Shastri's regime Government began reconciling to Savarkar. Although the Government spokesmen did not admit in so many words they now realised the value of Savarkar's realism and warnings. They now decided through the good offices of the Maharashtra State to give Savarkar monthly aid. Savarkar would not receive it unless they said that they were giving it in token of his patriotic services to the nation. The Maharashtra Government graciously accepted the suggestion and Savarkar received the aid from October 1964. The Government also included Savarkar's famous Marathi song *Jayostute Swatantrate*, 'Hail to thee the Goddess of Liberty', for the broadcast on Poona radio. The blackout on his name gradually disappeared.
CHAPTER 28

The Eternal Hero

In February 1965 Sukhdeo Vishnu Dayal (Bissondoyal), Minister for Local Government and Co-operative Development in Mauritius, and its Prime Minister Dr. S. Ramgoolam visited India. Dayal belonged to a family which had contributed much to the spread of Indian culture in Mauritius. He was leader of the Independent Forward Bloc. He expressed his desire to see Savarkar whose life had tremendously influenced youths like him in Mauritius and other countries in South-East Asia. He saw Savarkar on February 5, at Savarkar Sadan, Bombay. He said he had read Savarkar’s famous works *Hindutva* and *Indian War of Independence—1857*. He told that nearly 850,000 Indians in Mauritius knew Hindi and he sometimes addressed political gatherings there in Hindi. Although ill Savarkar had an interesting talk with him and expressed satisfaction over the work of Sukhdeo Dayal.¹

The aid to Savarkar by the State Government exposed some nationalist Muslims. On March 12, 1965, supplementaries were being answered in the Rajya Sabha about the relief given by the Government to Savarkar and other former freedom-fighters now in difficult circumstances. Abid Ali observed that not all of them could be said to have continued to do great service in recent years. He asked if it was not a fact that whatever Savarkar might have done in the past, the Government of Maharashtra had objected to his later activities. Opposition members and even Congress members strongly disapproved the derogatory remark made by Abid Ali.

Thereupon Jaisukhlal Hathi, Minister of State for Home Affairs, who had earlier informed the House that the Union Government had made over an *ad hoc* grant of Rs. 2,000 to Savarkar, pointed out that this was done on the recommendation of the State Government. The Chairman, Dr. Zakir Hus-

¹ The *Hindu* (Marathi) Weekly, 7 February 1965.
sain, said: "Obviously, the Maharashtra Government does not agree with Mr. Abid Ali." Mohan Dharia said that the State Government paid a monthly grant of Rs. 300 to Savarkar and added that it did regard Savarkar as a national hero. A. B. Vajpayee strongly urged that Savarkar's property confiscated during British rule should be restored to him.

I. K. Gural, who suggested the use of the term national hero in place of political sufferers, said that a Commission should be appointed to look into the problems of the national heroes. Nobody tried to hide the tail of Abid Ali's nationalism.

When these questions were asked and answered in the Rajya Sabha, the Delhi people thought that they should do their duty by their revered leader. So Kumar Narendra, who was editor of Veer Arjun, a daily in Delhi, sponsored a fund and handed over to Savarkar a cheque for Rs. 51,000 early in July 1965. Savarkar appreciated the work and devotion of the Delhi people and especially the youthful and spirited editor.

This year Savarkar's birthday was celebrated with more enthusiasm and pride. Against the background of the invasion by and defeat of Pakistan it loomed large on the horizon of India. Felicitating Savarkar, the Head of the Indian National Church, said in his letter to Savarkar: "You have been all along a great inspiration to our countrymen and we are grateful to God for having spared you in order to inspire the nation unto victory and glory. Your sacrifices and services for the freedom of our Motherland have moved so deeply as to rebuild India's independence and national church. We thank you for the light and lead your distinguished personality has given us all in the Indian national church so that we may continue the struggle for the complete freedom of Christianity and their church in India from foreign denominational administration."

In August 1965 Savarkar's illness took a serious turn. There was prolapsus of the rectum. There was swelling in the stomach. He was advised liquid diet for two weeks. The pain was unbearable. Yet he stood it with his usual fortitude; but appealed to his doctors to put an end to his life. But his family doctor Subhash Purandare would not listen to him. Like his father Dr. Vasudeo Purandare and his father's old uncle Dr. Yadnyeshwar

* The Times of India, 13 March 1965.
Purandare, the young doctor served him devotedly. Savarkar was also tired of convincing Dr. R. V. Sathe of his desire to die. He too would not agree to it. So when he came in August 1965 to examine him, he did not call him upstairs. He got annoyed and left. He had attended him devotionally for over 25 years. Next day Savarkar asked his personal secretary to call him and he examined him.

In the last week of August his condition became very serious. His illness caused anxiety to the doctors attending him. On August 28 the A.D.C. to the President, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, inquired on the telephone about the health of Savarkar and said prayers were being said for his speedy recovery. He asked the relative of Savarkar whether Savarkar was kept in touch with the daily happenings in Kashmir. The Bishop of the National Indian Church, His Eminence Williams, paid a visit to Savarkar Sadan and made anxious inquiries about the health of Savarkar. He said that prayers would be made in the national churches for his speedy recovery. P. K. Sawant, Minister for Agriculture, and the old leader K. M. Munshi and his wife visited Savarkar Sadan and made anxious inquiries. The Mayor of Bombay, M. Madhavan, paid a visit and as a special case was allowed to talk to Savarkar. Gradually he felt better in the first week of September.

By now his fears and prophecies had come true. Pakistan invaded India on September 1, 1965, although raiders had been shelling the Indian frontiers since August 5 and the Indian jawans were repelling the attacks with equal force.

But instead of offering the other cheek in Gandhian and Nehruite fashion, the nation came out to beat back the aggressor. Defence Minister, Yeshwantrao Chavan, made on September 6, 1965, an announcement to a packed Lok Sabha that the Indian Army had entered the Lahore sector in a three-pronged offensive. Savarkar always said the best way to win a war was to carry the war into the enemy's land.

Savarkar was glad and he felt better with the items of the news of victories which acted as potent medicine for his health. He congratulated the Government and Defence Minister Chavan on his courageous lead and firm policy and declared that irrespective of what anybody might say India should dash on without any hesitation. The Indian jawans, with rare daring and
bravery, exploded the myth of Pattons and F-86 Sabrejets and won victory after victory. The stain of the defeat inflicted by China and the humiliation brought on by the Kutch agreement in June 1965 was at last washed out.

India showed a unique patriotic unity. Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India, and Yeshwantrao Chavan turned a new leaf and Gen. J. N. Chaudhuri adopted marvellous technique and won two decisive battles, the battle of Assal Uttar sector and the battle of tanks in the Sialkot sector. The Indian Army destroyed to a considerable extent the war machinery of Pakistan. At last at the intervention of the United Nations a ceasefire was accepted and war came to an end.

Thousands of Indians in every state paid their grateful homage to Savarkar and said that his words of sound advice were discarded and so the nation had to pay the price for it. What he said came true. The rulers who became a little realistic and wiser became conscious of Savarkar’s realism and foresight. They whispered so but did not give expression to their grateful acknowledgement in public.

Just after the Pakistan War, General Cariappa said in a message to Krishna Bhatia for his Mrityunjaya Savarkar special issue: “Please convey to the great leader my greetings and my prayers to God to keep him in good health for many more years to serve our country as he has been doing all these years. May his selfless service to our Motherland be an inspiration to the youth of India who are the leaders of tomorrow, and may his devoted service be emulated by our youth in everything they do to make India the brightest star in the world which she can and will be if all of us serve her as true loyal Indians in the manner the great Savarkar has been doing.”

In September 1965 the third part of Savarkar’s Marathi autobiography was published under the title Shatruchya Shibirat, (In The Enemy’s Camp). The book deals with the political conditions of India and the views of his contemporaries when he went to London. As Savarkar was ill he could not complete the book. His personal secretary Bal Savarkar completed it under his directions. Late in the year 1966 the Government of Maharashtra declared a posthumous prize for the book. The main object in writing the second and the third part of the autobiography was to inform and enlighten. In these two parts
Savarkar shed no light on the inner quality of his soul or on the collusion of the inner and outer life as he had done in My Transportation.

During the last quarter of the year many persons came to visit Savarkar. M. S. Golwalkar was sent back twice, but his boundless respect for Savarkar persisted and he succeeded in seeing him. The old mother of Mohan Ranade, one of the heroes of Goa struggle, came to see Savarkar. She was sent back. She angrily said while leaving Savarkar Sadan that he should be caged in a glass cupboard and kept for darshan. Upon this some other lady said he would place a handkerchief over his face and disappoint all. So a third man suggested that the Government should arrest him and keep him on view at a public place.

People were eager for his darshan. But he would not allow them. Such was the sternness Savarkar acted with that neither the personal secretary nor his son would step in unless he was called in. Once he called Pandit Bakhale to tell him that he could not see General Cariappa. Bakhale said softly that it would have been better had he given that much time to Cariappa. After the operation on his thigh-bone, Savarkar had employed three nurses who attended on him right round the clock. He had to spend about Rs. 2,000 a month. That arrangement went on for a year or so. The chief nurse Miss Mahadwar looked after his health for a year or so.

During the year 1965 the nursing staff was reduced. But again at the end of the year special arrangement was made as the severity of the illness grew. Dr. Arvind Godbole and Dr. Subhash Purandare, in consultations with Dr. R. V. Sathe, were taking precautions. But at the end of the year 1965 Savarkar gradually gave up taking even medicine.

In the beginning of January 1966 the condition of Savarkar’s health was as before. He had given up food and medicine as he had developed digestive trouble. He could not get up without any support. He could do so with the support of a wall. He now could not stand the agonies. He desired that life should come to an end. A year earlier he had published an article in which he had given an indication of the end he visualised.

He said in the article that “those who destroy themselves
due to utter despair and distress and frustration were said to commit suicide. Those who surrender their self with a sense of fulfilment and divine satisfaction are said to have done self-immolation and self-dedication. In the ever-changing and evolving world nothing was absolutely perfect. After achieving their objects, the blessed ones surrender their souls as did Kumarila Bhatt, Chaitanya, Dnyaneshwar, Ramdas, Eknath and Tukaram."

"Even after the goal of life is relatively fulfilled and there is the feeling of blessedness the body lingers and becomes a nuisance to the self. Faced with such conditions those who end their life by entering a cave or by fasting unto death or by entering a consuming fire or by entering the sea or by yoga or samadhi are said to do self-immolation or dedication of their self, aptly singing:

Blessed am I; blessed am I.
No obligation remains for me to fulfil.
Blessed am I; blessed am I,
Whatever is to be achieved is all achieved here and now."

When Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, went to Tashkent to negotiate peace with Pakistan Savarkar said he had his fears that Shastri would be hoodwinked into taking back the Indian forces. He said that Pakistan's inhuman and barbarous acts such as kidnapping and raping Indian women would not be stopped unless Pakistan was given tit for tat. Two years earlier Savarkar had expressed his opinion that the liberal policy adopted by Shivaji in case of Muslim women was wrong as this cultured and human treatment could not evoke in those fanatics the same feelings about Hindu women. They should have been given tit for tat, he observed frankly, so that they might have realised the horrors of those brutalities! 3

On January 11, 1966, Lal Bahadur Shastri died at Tashkent. The nation sank into sorrow. Savarkar was perturbed at the pact and the loss of the advantageous positions India had gained with so much loss of blood of her dear sons. So he neither made comments nor said anything about Shastri's demise.

3 Saha Soneri Pane II, pp. 64-65.
Savarkar now retired into himself and decided to fast unto death and surrender his self. He began it on February 3, 1966. From this day he gave up taking tea and remained on water as vitamins were mixed up with his tea. Inquiries were made from all parts of the nation about his health and prayers were said at some of the famous temples and at the national church in India.

His daughter Prabhat and son-in-law Madhavrao Chiplunkar with their daughter came to Bombay. He called his daughter next day to his bed-side and said slowly and softly that man is mortal. If one felt like mourning the loss of one’s relatives a whole life would not suffice to do so. He was going the way life must ultimately go. She should not try in vain to persuade him to take tea or medicine. His resolution was irrevocable.

On February 4 the condition was the same. On February 5 there was swelling in the throat. Dr. Subhash Purandare examined him. From Bangalore Violet and Joachim Alva, both Congress M.P.s said in their telegraphic message to the ailing leader: “As the sun closes on your great patriotic career we humbly salute your unforgettable daring achievement—Swimming the ocean and regaining freedom—will long be cherished in the pages of freedom struggle. Respectful regards.”

On Sunday, February 6, the fourth day of the fast he took a little quantity of water. The swelling had subsided a little. He had no temperature. He was growing weaker. His voice was sinking. A. B. Vajpayee, M.P., M. S. Golwalkar, Narayanrao Kajrolkar, M.P., and others expressed their anxiety by telegrams. On the fourth and fifth day the condition remained the same. Hundreds of people began to rush to Savarkar Sadan every day for inquiry. On the sixth day, Sunday, February 8, Dr. R. V. Sathe and Dr. Subhash Purandare examined him. There was no improvement in the condition. Balasaheb Desai, Home Minister of Maharashtra, expressed his desire to see Savarkar, but he was told at the last moment that medical advice was against disturbing Savarkar.

On February 9 there was swelling on the feet. No temperature. He could take little water. Weakness was growing. On the next day the condition was the same. Telegrams wishing that God should save Savarkar taking their lives were sent by many devotees. On February 11 the condition was unchanged.
The next day his voice was sinking. He had no temperature. The swelling on feet looked subsided. He took some teaspoonfuls of water. But as usual he could not read all newspapers, telegrams and letters. Pandit Satawalekar, himself a centenarian, expressed by a telegram his anxiety for Savarkar's health and prayed God to save Savarkar for the nation.

On February 13 swelling on feet remained unabated. He had cramps in the stomach. He took a little water. He was fully conscious. Next day weakness grew. Swelling on feet and in throat was as before. He took only a little water. He had no temperature but he felt a little giddy at noon. All the press agencies and radio made inquiries. On February 15 the swelling in throat and on foot remained as before. No temperature. He took some teaspoonfuls of water.

Next day he had sleep. Weakness was growing. Voice began to be indistinct. Jagjivanram, famous leader, in a telegram to Savarkar said: "Much concerned about your health. Pray God early recovery." Hindusabha workers offered prayers at Shimoga. More telegrams came in. On February 17 he was terribly weak. He was unable to speak. He took a little water. No temperature. Dr. Sathe and Dr. Purandare examined him. That day he sent a telegram to Sir R. P. Paranjpe congratulating him on his 91st birthday. He said to his Guru in his telegram: "You wish to live and so you may live a long, happy and healthy life."

On February 18 he felt weaker. No temperature but swelling as before. Telegrams and trunkphone inquiries increased. Lokanayak Aney inquired about his health by a telegram. Next day the condition was unchanged. Dr. Sathe examined him at 9 p.m. and said he was sinking. In the morning he had dictated a telegram thanking Aney and asking him not to pray. All-India Radio announced that Savarkar's condition was critical.

Savarkar had a premonition that he would die on February 20, the new moon day as did his parents die on a new moon day. He was sinking but Dr. Purandare gave him Coramine and he revived. On February 21 he would not allow the doctors to step in his room although they were keeping vigil right round the clock in the adjoining room. When Dr. Sathe promised Savarkar that no medicine would be administered him
against his will, he allowed the doctors to examine him. Dr. Arvind Godbole, Dr. Subhash Purandare, Dr. Vasantrao Kale, Dr. Shrikhande, Dr. Avinash Godbole and Dr. Sharad Marathe watched him on February 21 right round the clock. They declared his condition was critical. He could not take even water. Congress leaders of Bombay visited Savarkar Sadan and made anxious inquiries.

On February 22 the condition of Savarkar continued to be critical. The Poona leaders, G. M. Nalavde, V. B. Gogate and B. D. Killekar, Mayor of Poona, visited Savarkar Sadan and made anxious inquiries. So did Acharya Atre and Adam Adil, the General Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, visited Savarkar Sadan. Acharya Atre said at Savarkar Sadan that D. R. Mankekar's Twenty-Two Fateful Days—Pakistan Cut to Size was very interesting. Bal Savarkar narrated the gist of Atre's talk to him.

Gulzarilal Nanda, Home Minister of India, sent Rs. 1,000 to the ailing Savarkar. The first instalment of that amount was paid by an assistant secretary of the Maharashtra Government on the evening of February 22. With Savarkar's approval the money was received by Savarkar's son Vishwas and the officer was asked to thank Nanda on behalf of Savarkar. In the evening some Brahmins chanted the Mrityunjaya maha mantra wishing speedy recovery of Savarkar.

On February 23 the condition remained critical. No medicine. He took a sip of water with sleeping pills. M. Madhavan, Mayor of Bombay, Dixitji Maharaj, and some leaders of Gwalior and Indore paid visits to Savarkar Sadan for inquiries. Some prayed at Poona in temples for one who was not a believer in God and prayer. Bal Savarkar read to Savarkar Mankekar's book Pakistan Cut to Size for some time in the morning. Divate, President of Bhagur Municipality, paid a visit to Savarkar Sadan.

On February 23 his barber, Sadashiv Pawar, came as usual at 10 a.m. and shaved his chin the last time. Dr. R. V. Sathe stated at night that Savarkar's condition had further deteriorated. His pulse was feeble, 50 a minute. Volume and tension were low. His blood pressure was 80/60. His mouth and tongue were dry; his right salivary gland was painful and swollen. He found it difficult to swallow. Leaders from Poona and the General
Secretary of Swatantra party Madhu Mehta came and inquired about his health.

On February 24 Bal Savarkar asked his master in the morning whether he should read Mankekar's book again. He said No. He made signs to the nurse to go out and bade farewell to Bal Savarkar and to all concerned in the words of the saint-poet Tukaram:

"We are going to our native Home
Accept our good-by,
Now there can be no give and take,
The speech itself is stopped."

The next two days he did not call his private secretary Bal Savarkar.

On February 24 the doctors' bulletin said: "The condition of Veer Savarkar is grave. There is a painful swelling on the right side of the face. He has extreme difficulty in talking. A panel of doctors is attending on him right round the clock." On February 25 the bulletin said that his condition had further deteriorated. He was having fever and cough. Swelling on the face continued. Jayantrao Tilak, Bachharaj Vyas, leader of the Jan Sangh, Dadarao Apte of Hindustan Samachar visited Savarkar Sadan.

On the night of February 25, his condition became very critical. Next day, February 26, he awoke at 8:30 a.m. Nurse cleansed his mouth. But he could not take even water. Fever was persisting. Death, whom he had challenged since his early youth and was afraid to face him, now stood at the corner of the bed. Savarkar was now happily surrendering himself to Him. He was also ashamed to sweep on him. He waited. Vishwas's daughter Vidula and his sister's daughter Madhuri were beside themselves with grief. Savarkar's daughter lay sobbing at his feet; his son and daughter-in-law Sunder both stood near the bedside speechless but full of sorrow. His son-in-law Madhavrao Chiplunkar was bewailing. At 10 a.m. Savarkar became cyanosed with shallow respiration. His radial pulse was not palpable and brachial feeble. Blood pressure was not recordable. One of his fingers was moving. Immediately the doctors applied methods of artificial respiration and cardiac massage was
given. He was given mepheneine. With this treatment he showed signs of improvement. His condition however worsened after some minutes and he could not be revived. He surrendered himself to death at 11-10 a.m. at the age of 83. A life without regrets!

The doctors said that he was a challenge to medical science. In spite of severe dehydration which could not be corrected, he had no serious complications whatsoever. He was conscious to the last hour. He never suffered the pangs of dehydration. They were surprised that he could survive for twenty-two days with little or no medicine, taking only five or six tea-spoonfuls of water every day. It was the result of the yogic powers he had attained.

* * *

The radio and trunkphones and news agencies spread the news of Savarkar's death. Thousands of people rushed to Savarkar Sadan to have a last glimpse of one of the great makers of modern India. In a supreme gesture of good will and love for the people whom he loved and served all his life, Savarkar observed in his Will which he had made in August 1964 that nobody should observe hartal or close his business to mourn over his death. This was to avoid inconvenience to the people.

Savarkar also stated in his Will that his body should be cremated in an electric crematorium without any religious ceremonies. At best Vedic hymns could be chanted at the time of cremation. He expressed his wish that shraddha or pindadan should not be performed. He further stated in his Will that his body should not be carried to the crematorium on human shoulders, or on animal-drawn vehicles. Only mechanised transport should be used to do so.

The body was kept on the ground floor of his house for public homage from 4-30 p.m. People stood in a long queue from 4-30 p.m. on Saturday, the 26th February, to 3-30 p.m. on Sunday, the 27th February 1966. More than two lakhs of people filed past the body paying their homage to the departed leader. The police arrangement was perfect and most helpful in directing the huge crowds. People stood in a queue even at the early hours of Sunday and there was no break in the line. People placed wreaths and money on his body and shed their
team at his feet. His daughter fainted, so also his former bodyguard Appa Kasar. Some bewailed loudly and bitterly. Thousands of wreaths were placed on the body of the great liberator. Chief Secretary, D. R. Pradhan, placed a wreath on behalf of the State Government. Savarkar's grandson Prafulla Chiplunkar came from Delhi by air. He was deeply grieved.

Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Congress and Opposition leaders, trade union leaders, veteran leaders of freedom struggle and other leading men in social, educational and political fields who had grown revering Savarkar as the prince of Indian Revolutionary Movement rushed to pay their homage to the departed inspirer.

Raj Bahadur, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, S. A. Dange, Chairman of the Communist Party, Dr. K. M. Munshi, George Fernandes, the Mayor M. Madhavan, Gangaram Joshi, Sheriff of Bombay, Madhu Mehta, N. G. Goray, Fr. Williams of the Indian National Church, Pratap Singh, Lata Mangeshkar, P. K. Sawant, Agriculture Minister, N. M. Tidke, Labour Minister, Madhusudan Vairale, Deputy Irrigation Minister, visited Savarkar Sadan and paid their homage to the eternal hero.

The procession started on Sunday, 27th February 1966, with about 50,000. Acharya Atre, Mayor M. Madhavan, Jayantrao Tilak, V. Shantaram, Nitya Narayan Banerjee, President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Baccharaj Vyas, President of the Jan Sangh, V. B. Gogate, leader of the Opposition in the Maharashtra Legislative Council, and B. D. Kiledar, Mayor of Poona, were slowly walking along with the procession.

A saffron-capped horse-rider took the lead. Slogans such as Savarkarji Amar Rahe and Hindu Rashtra jai were all along the route. Abhangas were sung by Snehal Bhatkar and poems of Dnyaneshwar were sung by Sudhir Phadke and Sopando Chaudhari.

The body, with its head raised, had been placed on the raised bier on the truck. The eternal hero wore his customary black cap in his eternal sleep also. His face was serene. The truck was decorated with war motifs by V. Shantaram, a leading figure in the film world of India. The procession of the torch-bearer of India's freedom wended its way through the streets carrying the mortal remains of the departed leader. Tens of
thousands of men, women and children belonging to different communities lined the route of the procession, at Ranade Road, Tilak Bridge, Parel, Lalbaug, Arthur Road, Bombay Central, Girgaon, Thakurdwar and Chandanwadi. Several thousands joined en route and it took nearly six hours to reach the crematorium at Chandanwadi, six miles away. Thousands along the entire route showered flower-petals and wreaths on the slowly moving lorry. When the procession passed by the Arthur Road Jail the prisoners shouted their homage from inside.

The mammoth procession caused considerable traffic hold-ups at many junctions. While the volunteers guided by Pandit Bakhale, Padminkar Dhamdhere, Eknath Khanolkar and L. R. Satelkar controlled the processionists, the police controlled the traffic and crowds. More than a lakh of people joined the procession. At Bombay Central, 2,000 Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh volunteers lined up the route and sounded the last post. The crowd that gathered at the electric crematorium was the biggest in recent times. Several thousand women had joined the procession.

In his funeral oration when Acharya Atre said that no minister of the State was present on the occasion to pay homage to Savarkar, one of the greatest revolutionaries produced by India, people raised shouts of ‘shame’. Nitya Narayan Banerjee, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, said that Veer Savarkar was one of the greatest sons of India whose voice had been a voice in the wilderness. He had advocated a militant approach in the solution of national problems. He urged the nation to pledge itself to work for the achievement of Savarkar’s goal. B. D. Killedar, Mayor of Poona, B. S. Vyas, President of the All-India Jan Sangh, and S. G. Sardesai, Secretary of the Maharashtra Branch of the Communist Party of India (Right), also spoke. Thus ended the earthly pilgrimage of a man whose life was an inspiration to millions of his countrymen and whose death closed one of the golden chapters of modern India.

All over India the press noted his death with celerity and paid glowing tribute to Savarkar. The Times of India, Bombay, said in its editorial: “Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was a rebel and a revolutionary till his last breath. He relished controversy which he enlivened with his glowing patriotism and sense of dedication. History will salute him as a remarkable
Indian, a man whose faith in the destiny of his country remained undiminished till the end despite so many vicissitudes. His life reads like a legend. He matched his words with deeds. That is why the British raj never took to him kindly. . . . He insistently raised his voice in favour of strong Central Government which would be able to keep divisive tendencies under check and implement national policies and programmes vigorously. Savarkar’s most noteworthy contribution to Indian political thinking was his emphasis on the defence of the country’s frontiers. Though the term he used ‘militarisation’ was not a happy one, his main concern was that India should guard against internal and external weakening. His dauntless spirit will stir generations to come."

The Free Press Journal said that Savarkar would be remembered and revered for long. The Amrita Bazar Patrika in its editorial said Savarkar passed away at a mature age leaving a trail of daring patriotic activities with the uncommon brilliance in the pages of nation’s history of freedom struggle. The Leader, Allahabad, described him as one of the outstanding leaders of India’s freedom struggle. The Tribune, Ambala, said that Savarkar appeared to be a born revolutionary. But he gave to the Hindu Mahasabha what was meant for the entire country. There was, however, no doubt about the sincerity of his stand or the honesty of his convictions. The Times, London, said in the obituary note that Savarkar was among the first and most articulators of Hindu nationalism and added that his death had been widely noted in India.

The National Herald said that Savarkar was essentially a patriotic revolutionary whose conception of Hinduism was as radically latitudinarian as Gandhi’s and as inherently rooted in a lively awareness of the need to reform, and added that though a secularist to the bone, Savarkar was concerned to impart militancy to Hinduism and because of this and his association with the Hindu Mahasabha, the communalist label stuck to him all through his life.

The Indian Nation, Patna, said that men like Savarkar were patriotism personified. The Nagpur Times said that Savarkar combined in him so many qualities that he easily stood head and shoulders above great men known to history.

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The nation’s leaders mourned Savarkar’s death. Rajaji said Savarkar was his first revolutionary idol who declared rebellion against British rule and caught the imagination of all. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan said: “A steady and sturdy worker for the Independence of our country, his career was for many youngsters a legendary one.” The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, said Savarkar’s death “removes a great figure of contemporary India.” Describing his name as a by-word for daring and patriotism, she further said that he was cast in the mould of a classic revolutionary and countless people drew inspiration from him.

S. A. Dange, Chairman of the Communist Party of India (Right), said: “The death of Veer Savarkar removes from the scene of Indian history one of the great anti-imperialist revolutionaries.” Defence Minister Yeshwantrao Chavan said that in his death the country lost an old freedom fighter who defied British rule. V. P. Naik, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, said that Savarkar was in the forefront of Indian revolutionaries who worked with the constant devotion for the freedom of the Motherland. D. B. Bandodkar, Chief Minister of Goa, said Savarkar was one of the greatest leaders whose contribution to Indian freedom had a special place in the annals of Indian history. S. M. Joshi, President of the All-India Samyukta Socialist Party, said that Savarkar inspired millions of people to work for freedom. Jan Sangh leader, Balraj Madhok, said that it was an irony that one who deserved to be the first Prime Minister of India or President of Free India had to undergo sufferings in jail even after freedom.

H. V. Pataskar, ex-Governor of Madhya Pradesh, said that India had lost her bravest son, a great literary genius, an inspiring poet and a great orator. M. S. Golwalkar, Aney, Gulzarilal Nanda, hundreds of Municipalities, some Legislative Assemblies and Councils, Zilla Parishads, some State Governments, several literary and social institutions mourned the death of Savarkar.

On February 28 Prof. Hiren Mukerjee (Communist) and U. M. Trivedi (Jan Sangh) suggested in the Lok Sabha after question hour that the House pay homage to Savarkar in recognition of his services to the nation. Hiren Mukerjee said that although Savarkar was not a member of the Lok Sabha, there should be some way in which the House should register its
feelings on the death of a great leader. Kapur Singh (Swatantra) said that while Savarkar was a great leader who had dedicated his whole life to the nation it would be difficult to draw a line in future if the House paid formal homage to Savarkar. The Speaker, Hukam Singh, agreed with Kapur Singh. If such a precedent was set, the House might expose itself to charges of discrimination. But he would convey the sentiments of the House to the bereaved family, he added.⁴

Kapur Singh and the Speaker did not tell the House whether Mahatma Gandhi and Stalin were members of the House. When C. R. Das died the Central Assembly had referred to his death.

The Secretary of the Lok Sabha wrote Vishwas Savarkar informing him that the Speaker gave on February 28, 1966, expression to the deep sense of loss occasioned by the passing away of Shri Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. The letter added that the Speaker had assured the House that its sense of deep loss and grief would be conveyed to the members of the bereaved family.

On March 4, 1966, Union Ministers, Opposition leaders, Hukum Singh, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and leaders of various political parties paid homage to Savarkar at a condolence meeting organised by the Delhi Citizen's Council. Satya Narayan Sinha, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Communications, who presided, said that Savarkar would continue to inspire the coming generations. He was a combination of many qualities besides being a social reformer. Defence Minister Chavan said that Savarkar displayed a unique combination of nationalism, bravery and social unity and said that they could not but salute him for his immense nationalism.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia said that all those who lived in India were Hindus whatever their religion. M. C. Chagla, Education Minister, said that history should be written from the point of view of the illustrious sons of India like Savarkar who was a great patriot, and added that he believed that anyone living in this country who loved and drew inspiration from the great heritage of India and was loyal to India was a Hindu. The country should not forget revolutionaries who had the same burning love for the country as Mahatma Gandhi had.

⁴ The Times of India, 1 March 1966.
Revolutionaries like Savarkar created the atmosphere which made it possible for Mahatma Gandhi to succeed. It would be unpatriotic if the people of India failed to give Savarkar a prominent place in the history of India, he concluded.

Prof. Hiren Mukerjee, while totally differing with certain views of Savarkar, praised the potent brand of nationalism that he championed. He said he was one of the architects of modern India. He infused a sense of manhood in them. It would be unfair to consider him a leader of the Hindu Mahasabha only. Hukam Singh thought that the Hinduism preached by Savarkar was all-embracing. Prakash Vir Shastri and the Hindu Mahasabha leader Nitya Narayan Banerjee spoke at the meeting.  

A resolution adopted at the above-mentioned meeting demanded that a suitable memorial to Veer Savarkar be raised and a commemorative postage stamp issued.

According to his instructions in his Will, obsequies were not performed. His ashes were immersed privately in the sea at Dadar Chowpaty by his son. Not a grain of ashes was given to anybody for public immersion or deification.

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What the *Times of India* said of Savarkar was an unalloyed truth. He was a rebel and a revolutionary to the last breath. He was the first Indian leader to give the message of absolute political independence and unity to the nation. But the tragedy of Savarkar was that although he was a secularist to the backbone, a great lover of science and a sturdy rationalist, he was cruelly represented as an orthodox leader by those who were partial to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. And Gandhi and Nehru as his disciple, who led the theocratic Khilafat Movement which bred and fomented the religious fanaticism of Indian Muslims and whose appeasing policy culminated in creating a theocratic state, Pakistan, were described as real representatives of nationalism and progress while Kemal Pasha denounced the very Khilafatists and its protagonists as the proteges of the British and castigated them openly as the breakers of Turkey nationalism.  

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* Report of these speeches appeared in the *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, the *Statesman*, New Delhi, and the *Organiser*, Delhi.  
* *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 27 April 1947.
Savarkar was the first Indian leader to give India the message of secularism and modernism before the advent of Nehru and Roy on the political scene of India. But the tragedy of Savarkar was heightened by his own inner contradictions also. Though he declared that the Hindu Mahasabha was a political organisation and not a Hindu Dharma Sabha and his Hindutva included the Hindus, Sikhs and Jains, he allowed his followers to shout the slogan ‘Hindu Dharma Ki Jai’. Jinnah never allowed his followers to shout the slogan ‘Islam Zindabad’. He said he was their political leader.

Savarkar was more rational than Gandhi, Cripps, or Jayprakash Narayan and as rational as Roy and Nehru. He was an epic poet and a great rationalist. He was a great author and the Demosthenes of his age in India. His impact on Indian freedom struggle, Indian politics and history of modern India and Indian languages is profound. His Hindutva is a great contribution to Hindu thought, philosophy and history. What is more, his political realism and foresight proved to be correct and unfailing. He foretold that the political leadership of Gandhi and Nehru, which according to him lacked historical perspective, would end in dividing India on the basis of religion. His prophecy came true. He said that if once Pakistan came into being it would raise its army and always disturb the peace, industrialisation and the progress of India. It came true. He said that Mao hoodwinked Nehru over Tibet and China would pull down the pillars of Panchsheel at any moment.

And what is the history? China invaded and humiliated India. Great men are sometimes obsessed with one idea. They carry the world on to progress but they are usually men of single purpose. They are called world-betterers by some. Likewise Savarkar was obsessed, his critics say, with the idea of Hindu militarisation. He did not use the term in the sense Hitler, Stalin or Mussolini used. He was not an imperialist and therefore not a militarist in that sense. It was his sincere desire that having suffered slavery often, India should not fall a prey to any militarist and aggressive country.

Savarkar was the foremost Indian leader to welcome the machine age and he understood that economic equality and social justice were the inevitable outcome of the machine age. As regards social equality, none of his great contemporaries
except Dr. Ambedkar, not even Jawaharlal Nehru, actually fought orthodoxy with such ruthlessness as did Savarkar. He bore the brunt alone. But it was his misfortune that while he languished in jail and internment for over twenty-seven years, two generations had gone ahead with Gandhi and Nehru. It was also strange that Savarkar the rationalist and secularist advised pacts, although for election purposes, with rank reactionary parties like the Ram Rajya Parishad. The Congressmen hated the Muslim League, the Socialists detested the Muslim League, but they made pacts with that communal organisation for election purposes. This was the bane of Indian politics. Likewise, the bane of Savarkar was that he compromised with the Sanatanists and the social revolutionary in him was cabin'd.

Savarkar was dubbed a communalist because he said that the principle of one man one vote should be followed and because he opposed the Muslim Maulavis and the Christian Missionaries to convert the illiterate and ignorant and poverty-stricken Hindus. He thus gave offence to Muslims and Christians and to those who posed themselves as tolerant men and worshippers of true nationalism in spite of this gross injustice and fraud. Had Savarkar, like Gandhi, Nehru, Subhas and Roy, remained neutral in respect of the conversion of the Hindus to other faiths or remained indifferent to it he would have passed himself as a cent per cent secularist.

According to Savarkar, national freedom and security were the pre-requisites for inaugurating schemes concerning land, labour and industry. But the modern youths, the labourers and peasants did not understand why Savarkar's party remained unconcerned whenever there was unrest and agitation in respect of agrarian reform and strike in the labour area. It was not a fact that because Savarkar had thrown all his might and main for averting the national disaster, viz., the division of India, he had no time to pay attention to the labour and agrarian problems. The fact was that basically there was no urge in his ideology for economic equality and hence he never gave emphasis on solving labour and agrarian problems and also on the removal of untouchability from that point of view. The labour and land problems were coming to a head and these affected the destiny of political parties and leaders in India. Just as the labour problem affected Mazzini's leadership in his old age, so
it affected also Savarkar, the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha, although Savarkar was in favour of the mechanisation of agriculture, liquidation of landlordism, nationalisation of key industries and industrialisation of India on a broader scale. But he advocated top priority to defence and said that every other thing should be adjusted to suit it.

As regards integration with the Muslims, Savarkar said that it would come when the Muslims sincerely desired it. He was prepared to welcome and treat as brother-countryman a Muslim like Mr. M. C. Chagla who loved India nobly and was prepared to die nobly for her independence. But how many Chaglas are there among the Muslims to love and die for Bharat. Nehru said with no less concern: “We have forty million Muslims who are in India and they voted for Pakistan.”

Savarkar chose to work on a lower plane of Hindu nationalism although he admitted that Indian nationalism was a nobler ideal. But that higher plane on which Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale and Surendranath Banerji worked, was vitiated by Gandhi by introducing religious questions into politics and placating the Muslims. Can those who dubbed Savarkar a communalist because he fought for the unity and solidarity of the Hindus, honestly say that Gandhi and Nehru were also the leaders of the Indian Muslims in the accepted sense of the term?

The promoters of secularism perhaps do not know what is secularism or rather they have not taken trouble to define secularism. It is not known whether by secularism they mean religious neutrality or tolerance or impartial aid to all religions or a state separate from religion. A pure secular state exists nowhere. Gandhi, who was religious-minded, was eulogised as a promoter of secular state because he was extra tolerant to other faiths despite their wilful aggressions on Hindus and not because he was a lover of science and rational outlook. Savarkar, who struggled to defend the Hindus from aggressions and to consolidate them, was called an orthodox leader though he was godless and a lover of science and rational outlook and was not religious-minded in any form. Nehru was called an Indian secularist who never bothered about the orthodoxy of the Indian Muslims. His secularism did not bother about Mus-

*Taya Zinkin, Reporting India, p. 207.*
lim marriage laws or their inheritance laws. He dared not adopt a uniform civil code. So he also proved to be a Hindu secularist. Savarkar who wanted the Hindus to be up-to-date and modernised and to follow science and secularism was unfortunately described as a politician out of the track.

Savarkar has given a message of survival to the nation. If India wants to avoid again political extinction she must take the message seriously and should not follow the pacifism of the peace-mongers who are mortally afraid of science and physical forces. These pacifists and peace-mongers cannot arrest the course of history, the forces of the physical world and the energy of modern science and so cannot restore the world to previous patterns.

In every age man has been suffering from the fear of extinction as soon as there is an advance in the knowledge of the physical forces and science. In every age the nation that had accession to superior force defeated the nations that had not that advantage. The Iron Age Man defeated the Bronze Age Man because he discovered a superior weapon. David slew Goliath because he had a superior device. Carthage fell through failure to match Roman arms. The Persian Empire fell before Alexander because he had superior weapons.

Savarkar was the only leader in India who openly said that India should have accession to a superior device, weapon or force. The law of accession to superior force lays down that "any accession to superior force in one nation immediately sets up a reaction in other nations. In order to maintain their relative positions they must equal or surpass the superior force which has been acquired by the newly energised nation." They will preserve their political identity if they match the newly energised nation. They will decline if they fail.

Savarkar held that justice would go down if it was not backed by a superior force. A nation, however tolerant, just and co-operative would go down if it would not approximate the power of the surrounding nations. It may do so with alliances and discovery of new devices. India should believe in noble principles for the progress of humanity but keep her superior weapon ready for her own survival. This was the message of Savarkar to India.

* Ernest Cunio, Science and History, p. 213.
Savarkar was an eternal hero, one of the greatest Hindus for all times. He believed in India's aeonic enduring vitality. He represented the heroic virtue of the Hindus. He burned up warning the Hindus. He was a born Bharat Ratna and was one of the makers of modern India. Like a truly great man, he scourged the society, purged it from its social ills and tried to give a broader foundation to the society by changing the old values. He proved his claims to greatness not only by his noble aim, his untold sacrifice, his matchless courage, his burning sincerity but also by the continuity and intensity of his thoughts. The measure of a man's greatness, said Ludwig Wittgestein, would be in terms of what his work cost him. Savarkar paid heavy price for his work and mission. No modern Hindu leader loved the Hindus more intensely than Savarkar. He had dedicated all his love, pen and speech to his motherland whom he loved very dearly.

Life had been to him very thrilling. He was one of the rarest personages of India who always stood on the verge of life. He enjoyed life to the brim, receiving the salute of millions of people of three generations. Indeed he is a hero who would be saluted by every new generation.

For he was gifted with a volcanic personality and was blessed with a life full of extraordinary achievements and undying episodes. He moved among men and among his mighty contemporaries, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, M. N. Roy and Subhas Bose as a mighty mesmeric man. He was the first Indian student who was rusticated from the hostel of an institution aided by the British Government and the first Indian political leader who publicly performed a bonfire of foreign clothes. He was, as mentioned above, again the first political leader of India to daringly proclaim absolute political independence of India as her goal at a time when the mere word Raj or Swaraj spelled ruin for the speaker. Savarkar was the first Barrister, who was refused the degree on account of his political line of thought by the British Government and was the first graduate to lose the degree of an Indian University for his love for independence. Savarkar was again the first Indian leader to invest the problem of Indian Independence with international importance. He was the first Indian author,
who earned a distinction in the domain of world literature as his work was proscribed by the Governments of two countries even before it was printed or published. Savarkar was also the first rebel leader of India who refused to recognize the authority of the British Court of Law. Savarkar was the first political prisoner in the history of the world the issue of whose arrest was fought out in the International Court at the Hague. Savarkar was the first political prisoner in the political history of the world, who was sentenced to half a century’s transportation. Savarkar was the first poet in the world, who, deprived of pen and paper, composed and wrote his poems on the prison walls with thorns and pebbles, learnt by heart with Vedic tenacity more than ten thousand lines of his poetry for years till they reached his country through the mouths of others, and showed how since the dawn of humanity the great Aryas kept the sacred Vedas circulating from one generation to another by word of mouth. Indeed, the legend of the memory of Macaulay, who could repeat all Demosthenes by heart, all Milton and practically the whole of the Bible, would find a formidable rival in Savarkar.

Savarkar wanted that India should follow her bent and must represent the culture of the national majority. He wanted a place on the map of the world for the Hindus. According to Savarkar, the Republic Flag and the state symbols are Hindu. And if India becomes a mighty nation as envisaged by Savarkar, his another dream would be realised. He said some twenty-five years earlier:

“If you wish, O Hindus, to prosper as a great and glorious Hindu Nation under the sun, and you well have a claim on it, that State must be established under the Hindu Flag. This dream would be realized during this or coming generation. If it is not realized, I may be styled a day-dreamer, but if it comes true, I would stand forth as its prophet.

“I am bequeathing this legacy to you.”

If in the history of modern India there was any great leader who neither pursued fame nor followed fortune, nor individual greatness, discarding national interests, national integrity and
national honour, that great leader was Savarkar and as such he would carry influence with posterity. As he was not a party to the vivisection of India, which is a heritage of sorrow and disgrace to posterity and the greatest betrayal ever known in Indian history, Savarkar, one of the makers of modern India, would be a beacon-light of hope, guidance, inspiration and courage.