

REMINISCENCES OF AN IMMORTAL BEING

DEAR FRIENDS AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

It was about ten in the morning when my friend Edgar Brusse from EZE called me and informed me of the demise of Radhakrishnaji on Sunday the 19th June. For a moment I could not believe that the end has come so early than one would have thought. The next couple of hours, the phone in MISEREOR was kept busy and by the time I could realise, everything was over. The mortal remains of an IMMORTAL BEING were cremated and I was really cursing myself for depriving the opportunity of having a last sight of the man whom I adored to the core of my heart.

Suddenly I found myself sitting all alone in my room and the past went like a movie. It all began on the 12th February, 1984 when I had my first contacts with Late Radhakrishnaji when I came to Hyderabad to participate in the first ever meeting of the Package Partners. It was least in my dreams that I would be working so closely with him for nearly a decade sharing much of his burden of work and responsibilities. After I left the organisation which I was working, he extended his support and invited me to play a very important role of identifying the youngsters who are willing to join the fray of rural development. Since 1986, there is no going back and it is hard for me to believe that I was encouraged by him to develop my personality, intellectual calibre, organisational capacity, ideological perspective emanating from Gandhian thinking and most important of all a rare quality of carrying people with you in this struggle for justice. He did it eloquently that only a personality of

his stature could afford to do.

To me, he is one of the rarest of the rarest Gandhians who understood the pulse of the country and decided to recharge the battery of the younger generation to carry on this task of rebuilding the society from the bottom. A man who had a very passionate heart and a humorous nature to swallow even the bitter pills of the hard times with enormous amount of courage and confidence. An intellectual who has the capacity to mellow down to the very level of village level workers so that they also have an opportunity to take effective part in the entire process. The teacher in him earned accolades from one and all. He was like anyone of us around, but the greatness of this soul is that he found meaning and purpose to his life which is a great source of inspiration for many youngsters like me who now cherish to find satisfaction in serving their fellow brotheren.

On this day when you all have gathered here to remember him and pay rich tributes to this humble personality, my heart is longing to be with all of you and share these sentiments in person. Wisdom is beginning to work on me and I realised that may be in a very small and modest way that his spirit and soul has inspired me to continue the very task of cherishing his ideals for which he has given his best to me and many like me. Probably, when he has given his best to me and many like me. Probably, when this is being read to all of you, I will be in the midst of catching my next train to Munster in Germany trying to attend a meeting with a small group who are interested in the Gandhian approach to social reconstruction. In the end I feel in myself that late Radhakrishnaji ONLY LEFT

US PHYSICALLY AND HE CONTINUES TO LIVE IN EVERY HUMAN BEING WHO CAME IN CONTACT WITH HIM EVEN IF IT WERE FOR A BRIEF ASSOCIATION. To this IMMORTAL BEING I am honoured to pay humble respects to him. MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.

MAY HIS CHARISMATIC SOUL AND SPIRIT CONTINUE TO GUIDE US IN OUR EFFORTS TO CHERISH THE IDEALS OF A NEW INDIA.

Yours in Humanity,

Sd/-

HARANATH.