

"WITHERING TIMES"

1. Right to Kill, Privilege of the Politicians.

'My father was killed in 1981 and my sister in 1987, both of cancer caused by the radiation fall out. We stay at St. George, Utah, downwind from the Nevada Test site', one Claudin Peterson, stated to the International Court of Justice on 6th November 1995.

Nevada Test site was established in December 1950 at about 65 miles north west of Las Vegas, the globe's no. 1 gambling town. The site covers about 8,00,000 acres. A large number of ground and atmospheric nuclear tests were carried out there.

The world Health Organisation (WHO) and U. N. General Assembly has asked the imposing International Court to 'opine' on the question: Is the use or the threat of using nuclear weapons illegal?

The four major nuclear powers, America, England, France and Russia almost told the court: 'none of your business!' To kill is politicians' privilege. Judicial luminaries cannot throw their luminosity on the question of killing or being killed. If somebody's father or sister or mother or wife dies, what does it matter? A few tears, and forget. We must keep the world at "peace"! Peace by mutual threats to kill through nuclear weapons!

Counsel for U.S. enlightened the Judicial masters on the meaning of the word 'genocide'. **"Even a deliberate and illegal killing of civilians, deplorable as that would be, would not necessarily constitute genocide."**

"Man is the only animal that blushes - or needs to", Mark Twain had said.

2. Freedom of Choice - Homo or Bi-sexual?

Elton John is supposed to be great musician, one of the modern heroes of stark immorality. In 1976, he announced to a magazine that he was bi-sexual. In E Times (July 29 - August 4, he is reported to have said:

"Everyone does some experimenting but **I feel I have a right to make my own choice.** I am comfortable now with my homosexuality. I don't consider myself bisexual. I've tried it all and I've got a lot of great female friends, but if I'm to be totally truthful, I'm a homosexual man".

Homosex means sexual relationship between man and man, or woman and woman. Bisexual means a man or woman who has sexual relationships with man and woman both.

A Parsi, like Elton, has a religious freedom to choose, so says Inter-net and Irani-net current in America. (30-2).

How should the so called "Mobeds" of America deal with homosexuality, was a question raised by Edyard Kaizer in the so called "Mobeds" council there early this year.

3. America Fumbles on Smoking.

Teen age smoking is "a deadly temptation". It must be curbed. There is "an alarming rise" in the number of teen-ages and pre-teen age smokers. The youths must be protected from "seduction" of "skilled marketing campaigns aimed at their insecurities and uncertainties." "We are their parents and it is upto us to protect them."

Who said all this? **President Clinton of America** - on 10th August 1995! He ordered a new set of rules. Cigarettes should be sold only to over 18 youths after checking proof of age. No automatic push button machines; no advertisements within 1000 feet of schools and play grounds; no indirect advertisements through unrelated products like hats, T-shirts; no sponsoring of sports events or musical shows by cigarette companies; they are, on the contrary, required to finance a 150 million dollars advertising campaigns to STOP young people from smoking.

This is like calling a small town fire brigade to put out a burst volcano.

And even then manufacturers and advertisers of cigarettes are on a war path. Law suits are in the offing - not on justification of teen-age smoking, but on the questions of their "Constitutional rights."

At the same time, Clinton said, cigars or pipe tobacco was not the teenage problem. But "what about drugs," asked a simple minded Springfield tobacco farmer. Cigarette smoking causes cancer, is a duly established fact. Smokers are very likely to get heart attacks as their age advances, is also well known. But a recent (August 1995) Oxford study headed by one Richard Peto reveals that **smoking is to be blamed for the majority heart attacks under 50.**

Yet our advertisement posters meekly declare: "Smoking is injurious to health", somewhere in a dark corner, below a giggling female in not a very decent pose.

Commercialisation, hypocrisy, politics, and intellectual dishonesty are the virtues of the 20th Century Civilisation.

And news for us, the Parsis. There are quite a few "Narcotic Anonymous" meetings held in Bombay, where a good percentage of Parsi youth are desperately trying to fight against their drug habit. They had begun with simple cigar smoking.

Our religious instinct that smoking is a sin has come out to be right and realistic

4. Mother Mary and Betana, Venezuela.

So many and so much bad news! Here is one, you may like and wonder about.

In 1976, one Maria Esperansa got a vision. An apparition, which she believed to be of Mother Mary, instructed her to buy a farm in Betana, a small hill-side town in Venezuela, and let the people know the Holy Mother's message of love, peace, patience and tolerance. This was done. Today, the farm has become almost a tourist spot. Visitors are in thousands and they do see the Holy Mother. **Sometimes on a rainy night, Her golden outline would appear. Some people see an outline of a crown over the chapel there. Some see Her in a blue dress with a white mantle; some, see Her drifting across the sun. Some report that they saw the sun dancing and a cross protruding under it.**

The remarkable feature of this miracle is that several people have photographed the apparition. The pictures of chapel and a grotto there do depict a luminous glow cascading over the area.

The messages of Mother Mary first received by Mira Esperensa are available at the site. Shelly Marshall in her article on the subject in "Venture Inward" (Nov. Dec 1995), a magazine of the Edgar Cayce Foundation, describes the divine messages as under:

"The theme in her first five messages is shockingly clear-peace, love and respect for all people and nations. She tells us to "... see in each human being his or her won brother or sister. She calls for the reconciliation of the universe."

Shelly Marshall points out that the message is amazingly the same as of the Christian Saint of this century, Edgar Cayce. (18.3.1877 to 3-1-1945).

And says Mother Teresa:

"The same loving hand that had created you has created me. If He is your father, He must be my Father also.

We all belong to the same family. Hindus, Muslims and all peoples are our brothers and sisters. They too are the Children of God."

HAIL ! MOTHER MARY !

Marian apparitions have appeared very often at several places. In "Miracles, A Parascientific Enquiry into Wonderous Phenomena" by D. Scotto Rogo (Contemporary Books Inc. Chicago 1983), 13 such appearances are described - between 1531 and 1972. Most remarkable are at Fatima (Portugal) (13-5, 13-6, 13-10-1917) - first seen by Lucia dos Santos, a girl of 9 years; at Lourdes (France) (11-2, 14-2, 18-2, 25-3-1858) seen by Bernadette Soubirous a girl of 9 years; and at Zeitoun (Egypt) where the apparition was seen by thousands of people for a period of about two and a half years - April 1968 to September 1970. We have geared up Dosu Baba, our story-teller to tell us about some of these miraculous appearances.

(Parsi Pukar – DECEMBER 1995 Vol. 1; No.6)