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Hindu-Christian Dialogue in the Making in Australia

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IT WOULD NOT be an exaggeration to say at the outset that Hindu-Christian dialogue is still in its infancy in Australia when compared, for instance, to Buddhist-Christian, Jewish-Christian, Muslim-Christian, and even Muslim-Jewish dialogue. However, there have been some developments in recent times and there is something of a history, albeit discontinuous, of Hindu-Christian encounters in Australia.

I. The professional Hindu diaspora

Although the first Hindu labourers were brought to Australia by the British in the 19th century, it wasn't until the mid-1960s that the "White Australia" policy was officially disbanded, although reservations about admitting people with "different standards of living, tradition and culture" persisted. Church leaders seemed ambivalent about the issue; some defended the change in deference to the responsibility good Christians have towards people of other (poorer) regions, others opposed the changes for the instability this could bring about. However, a more relaxed immigration system facilitated the arrival of professionals, such as doctors, engineers, teachers and technicians, from India. By 1966 there were 4411 Indians and between 1966 and 1971 a total of 6418 "ethnic Indians" were approved for entry, bringing the total Indian population in Australia by the end of 1971 close to 11,000; Sri Lankan migration also increased among both its ethnic groups – Sinhalese and Tamil Hindus. This trend continued as employment and educational opportunities attracted more and

more urban, educated, upwardly-mobile middle-class migrants (increasingly the dominant cluster in a liberalizing Australia). By 1981 the native Indian population increased three-fold, with further intakes from Malaysia, Fiji, Mauritius, East and South Africa, and New Zealand.

On specifically Hindu migration, clearer figures emerge from the 1986 census, which identifies 21,500 Hindus (but this includes a variety of Western-based neo-Hindu followers of gurus, yoga schools, Meher Baba devotees, Hare Krishnas, and so on). At a conservative estimate there would have been 20,500 Hindus of non-Australian ancestry (regardless of birthplace). The break-down of overseas Hindus by country of birth (with presumed Indian ancestry) is given as follows: India 35.7%; Fiji 21.5%; Sri Lanka 11.0%; Malaysia 7.1%, U.K. 4.3%, South Africa 3.8%, New Zealand 2.5%, other 14.1% (this would comprise Hindus from other states of Africa, Southeast Asia, North America, Europe and the Arab regions). 74% of overseas-born Hindus arrived between 1967 and 1976. Among Australian-born Hindus 28% indicated Indian ancestry, 25% reported British ancestry, 12.2% Australian ancestry, and the rest other ancestry; 300 Aboriginal people identified themselves as of Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish religion¹. Two-fifth of employed Hindus were professionals or para-professionals. A higher percentage of Hindus (alongside Jews) earn an annual income in excess of \$32,000, which places Hindus (and Sri Lankan Buddhists) in the most affluent group of all South Asian

migrants.

By 1991 the Hindu population reached a record 43,580 (declared Hindus). This figure, again, includes people of European descent who have converted to one or other sect or guru-based popular following (such as Vedanta, Hare Krishna); but at the same time it does not include South Asians who are either too shy to disclose their religion, or whose identification by sect-names may not have registered adequately under "Hinduism", and those who, like the Sufis, follow a syncretic religion (although Baha'i does record some 7,500 followers). In any event, with recent additions and adjustments, it would be safe to say that presently there are close to 45,000 Hindus Australia-wide. But this is a small percent-age in comparison to the Christian population of Australia, which is over 7 million. The statistical likelihood of a Christian meeting a Hindu is 1,000 to 1, although this would be higher in inner urban areas.

Neo-Hindu Groups

In the 1960s and 1970s, like in other parts of the Western world, an assortment of gurus, swamis, babas and yoga teachers visited Australia. The Sufi-Hindu "Avatar", Meher Baba, would be among the earliest of such visitors. Each attracted a following of some sort or another, and most of the disciples came from Christian or Jewish backgrounds. The encounter with a tradition from the East in one form or another inevitably created an ambience or occasion for discussing within family and peer-group circles the appeal and conflicts roused by the teachings. It was not unusual for the odd Australian or European migrant to forfeit the Christian faith and adopt in a serious way the life-style of a Hindu monk. One such noted personality was a Polish man who called himself Mauni Sadhu (Paul Brunton's counterpart in Australia). He remains an icon in some "New Age" spiritual circles.

In 1964 Swami Ranganatha, a senior monk of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Order, arrived in Australia. He wrote of his

impressions and sounded less than sanguine about the prospects of Vedanta being accepted widely in Australia³. Nevertheless, during his numerous subsequent visits Swami Ranganatha ran spiritual retreats in which a number of Christians, lay and clerical, participated. He also took active part in academic meetings of religious studies professors, and in one such meeting at Sydney University engaged in something of a heated discussion on the subject of the *Bhagavadgita* with Professor Eric Sharpe and others.

In this period also arrived Transcendental Meditation and the Hare Krishna movement, Swami Muktananda, the Divine Light order of Guru Maharaji, Rajneeshis, and spokespersons for spiritual masters such as Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Satya Sai Baba, and Swami Sivananda. Apart from the occasional formal reception extended to a middling Church figure, the gurus or leaders of these orders did not seek to engage in any kind of serious interaction with representative members of the Church. On one occasion when a discussion (to be videoed) was arranged between Swami Muktananda and a leading Catholic academic, the colourful Baba gave facile responses to questions put to him, using the occasion to preach the virtues of Siddha Yoga. What was conspicuous by its absence during the quite visible presence of these gurus and teachers was the positive gesture towards ecumenism of the kind that, for example, Swami Chidananda (the successor to Swami Sivananda) was engaged in. But Chidananda did not set foot in Australia, and his fellow gurus, such as Swami Venketesananda (who established a farm-ashram in Perth) and Swami Satyananda, were more interested in getting on with their reclusive yoga teachings. The exception to this list was Swami Saccidananda (popularly known as the "Woodstock" Guru, having appeared at that famous pop festival), who welcomed any opportunity of coming together with religious leaders of diverse persuasions and discussing issues of mutual

theological interest. During his visits to Australia he continued the northern California style ecumenical celebration of the "Light". However, during the discussions preceding one such "ecumenical offering", when a participating academic attempted to raise serious issues of significant theological concern, the Swami politely retorted that he began with the assumption that all religions are equal and one in the eyes of God. The discussion did not progress much further beyond platitudes drowned by stern silence of the panel members. (Saccidananda died last year.) Similarly, Swami Chinmayananda (who also passed away last year), was not known for his sympathies for non-Hindu religions (being a staunch supporter of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Ayodhya-Ramjanmabhoomi movement). He would happily have a Christian leader or scholar present an address at his inaugural lecture-retreats, only to dismiss the talk as soon as the visiting speaker left the room, and to sing praises of "the superior Vedanta". His one-time associate guru, Dayanand Saraswati, during his visits appeared more open to interreligious interchanges, being a more articulate and informed teacher himself.

II. The Academic Monologue

On the academic front, scholars and teachers whose primary interest has been Hinduism or comparative religion have in their own ways continued a dialogue between Hinduism and Christianity. A.L. Basham was forever enchanted with Hinduism (and once confessed, "I could almost be a Hindu"), which led him to make positive comparisons between the two traditions in his numerous lectures, as did his colleague J.T.F. Jordens. Ian Kesarcodi-Watson, who taught in La Trobe University until his death in 1974, had early on left his Baptist faith to pursue studies in Vedanta with Professor J.G. Arapura in Canada. While a vociferous defender of Hinduism, he took every opportunity to engage in serious interchanges with Christian scholars and

students on issues ranging from the alleged polytheism to the life-negating fatalism (*a la karma*) of Hinduism. In his writings too, Kesarcodi-Watson continued a form of dialogue between his former theologian-to-be self and his new-found Hindu *ātman* (which he rendered as *personhood*). Perhaps the better known of all academics in this area is Professor Eric Sharpe, who has made numerous radio broadcasts on the fruitful interactions between Hindus and Christians, whether in India's colonial past or in terms of the possibilities opening up in Australia with its increasing Hindu population. Eric Sharpe was requested to deliver the key address during the inauguration of the first Hindu temple in Australia (Sri Mandir in Sydney), in which he welcomed the contribution Hindus are well placed to make in a religious plural society which Australia now recognizably is⁴. He also welcomed the challenge of religious ecumenism in the broader sense, which his presence itself in some ways flagged. It is not apparent however that the Hindu assembly ever took up this challenge further than inviting Eric Sharpe again, or inviting some church minister to address the gathering on certain festive occasions.

Eric Sharpe's overtures need to be placed in the broader context of a legacy that has existed in Australia from the time of Charles Strong. Charles Strong was a lay preacher who became concerned that Australia should forge a religion which suited its own diversity of faiths (including that of the indigenous Australians) and its conditions in the antipodes. He thus founded the so-called "Australian Church", which, however, did not gain wide support or popularity. Funds collected for the new Church were later endowed as The Charles Strong (Australian Church) Memorial Trust, one of whose chief objectives has been to promote the study and intermingling of religions within the Australian context. Several scholars of comparative religion/philosophy have been the recipients of the Trust's Memorial Lecture scheme, including

Prof. Dr Raimon (Raimundo) Pannikar (in 1974), Eric Sharpe (on Universal Religions, 1978) and Bilimoria (for his work on Hinduism in Australia, 1986). With the support of the Trust, the theme chosen for the 1982 conference of the Australian Association for the Study of Religion was "Religious Interaction". This theme was chosen to coincide with the visit of H.H. the Dalai Lama, who presented the keynote address at the conference and participated in ecumenical gatherings organized variously by the Victoria Council of Churches. Hindu priests and representatives also participated in these meetings. The Dalai Lama encouraged dialogue and presented Buddhism to the Christian leaders present in ways less threatening than Hindu gurus had hitherto succeeded in doing. However, neither the Australian Association for the Study of Religions nor the Australia and New Zealand Theological and Seminary Association – the two academic bodies devoted to studies in religion and theology – has been in any great haste to take up the challenge of religious dialogue in all but crass academic terms⁵. Indeed, as Dr Greg Bailey has claimed in the pages of the AASR's own newslink, the study of religion – just like the entire cultural framework in which it occurs – is dominated by what he calls, "Christianist discourse"⁶. Even in the enterprise of dialogue Christianity is not able to resist casting non-Christians as "the other", "the different". Hence, since the non-Christian religions of the world or of the diverse people that make up Australia's population are not taken seriously, there is virtually no scope for either in-depth comparative studies or for the attendant dialogic encounter this calls for at the level of praxis.

On issues concerning ethics and contemporary questions like those raised at an alarming rate in bioethics (e.g. in IVF, embryo experimentation, euthanasia, genetic engineering, medical intervention, and so on), responses from across the diverse cultural and religious communities are *not* sought out by clerics and ministers (who

nevertheless readily voice their own denominational views). Rather, serious inquiries and invitations to contribute alternatively-argued perspectives come from bioethicists, philosophers and social theorists engaged in these discussions.

III. Ecumenical Movements

The potential, I believe, for an all-round dialogue that spans issues in religion, ethics, and even politics is certainly there, but it is not exploited adequately, except in sporadic spurts when the occasion is provided by the presence of foreign spiritual dignitaries, representatives or scholars. In this regard the Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions, held in Sydney in 1985, provided an interesting context for scholars and believers of different faiths to mingle, discuss and dialogue. Likewise, the international conference of the World Council of Churches, held three years ago in Canberra, brought together a range of "insiders", including Indian Christians with strong Hindu sensitivities, who battled out issues spanning the place of women in religious institutions, the fate of indigenous religions, and the environment. Among the participants was Diana Eck from Harvard, who spoke about her Pluralism Project and afterwards visited with the Hindu community in Sydney. She expressed disquiet at the difficulty one Hindu group was facing in its plans to build a temple in an area dominated by Catholics.

More significantly, the international meeting of the World Conference for Religion and Peace (WCPR), held earlier in Melbourne in 1989, drew an astounding number of people from different faiths in an ambience that can only be described as one of high-powered dialogical interaction. The late Archbishop of the Anglican Church, Rev. Dr David Penman, invited the President of the Hindu Society to be on the Organizing Committee of the conference. (Dr Penman was an advocate for an "Aussie church" that would reflect the history, hopes

and struggles of Australians shaped by its 140 nationalities.) Some 20 Hindu delegates came from India (including one Hindu leader from Bali). Prominent among the delegates was Acharya Sushil Kumar Jain, who, though he overtly represented the Jain tradition, is a firm supporter of the VHP. This was perhaps one of the rare such meetings and occasions for Hindu-Christian dialogue in Australia. But then that is the legacy of the WCRP which has had VHP backing since its inception (one of its former Presidents was Hindu, and Chinmayananda was in attendance at the inaugural assembly), and middle-class Hindus have a vested interest in safeguarding their current political involvement in the subcontinent. WCRP now has a permanent secretarial office in Melbourne, which is charged with organizing regular interfaith meetings and running conferences on issues such as religious pluralism, children's rights, and freedom of thought. Religious pluralism is a concern high on the agenda of WCRP, and at a recent meeting chaired by Max Charlesworth (himself a noteworthy advocate of religious interaction), Hindus and Buddhists challenged the exclusivism of the mainstream churches in Australia. The chairperson of WCRP-Australia, Bishop Michael Challen, admitted that whereas, for example, "Australia was once thought of as a Christian country, that cannot be so easily maintained". He called for a reassessment of commonly-held assumptions about the nature of the Australian community. A report read: "The interaction and discussion was fulsome and stimulating. At the end of the day participants expressed a strong desire to meet again. WCRP is planning a similar meeting in 1994"⁷. Indeed, the WCRP in collaboration with the Institute for the Religions (convened by Dr Ian Weeks in Deakin University) is coordinating an Australian-centred project on Religious Pluralism, which takes the native Aboriginal and the Asian-Pacific context of Australian belief-patterns and experiences utterly seriously. Polytheism might well be

vindicated in the end! It is likely that under the leadership of its dynamic and sensitive Australian Secretary-General, Rev. John Baldock, WCRP will create an on-going context for dialogue in which Hindus can feel comfortable to express their concerns, of theological or social kinds.

Indeed, that expression and participation is not entirely absent. The Australia-Asian Association of Victoria, under the Presidency of Sir Edward Dunlop (whose sympathies towards India date back to his war days in the Burma Trail) included in its programs an "Interfaith Religious Service", which usually took the form of an address on religious interaction. In October 1977 a Week of Prayer for World Peace was convened by one Fran Boyd, and this event with its interfaith services continues annually. From this arose the need to establish an interfaith group that would truly engage in dialogue. In the early 1980s the Inter-Theological Ecumenical Meeting Group, later named Interfaith Council, was formed in which a local Hindu lay priest, Mr Chintaman Datar, represented Hinduism. This group met regularly and organized a number of interfaith meetings and seminars as well as continuing the Week of Prayer meetings, variously held in Anglican and Uniting (a Presbyterian-Methodist amalgam) churches. The Hindu community was a little apprehensive at the overtures from predominantly Christian leaders. The fear was that this might be a pretext for conversion, until Mr Datar explained that the Christian brothers and sisters were genuinely interested in talking about mutual problems confronting religious communities in Australia. Some funding for an on-going dialogue was obtained by the Council. However, due to certain internal exigencies and differences among the committee members, especially after the Sikh representative won the ballot at a public meeting of the Council for the Presidency, the Council seemed to have lost momentum and all but ceased to function. The Hindu support for the Sikh candidate was not met

with enthusiasm by the outgoing committee, which refused to hand over the reigns to the incoming President.

Happily, the function of the Council has continued in other ways in smaller, region-based "Faith-to-Faith Dialogue" groups scattered around Melbourne. Mr Datar is actively involved in one such group. His group trains leaders to lead study circles exploring issues of particular concern to each of the religious communities involved. Mr Datar remarks, from personal family experience, that of all things intermarriage provides an inexorable context for dialogue since the tension created between the fortuitous coming together of two faiths in such a union challenges the parties and the families concerned to understand and come to terms with each other's religious orientation or background. Datar echoes a truism: *It is through dialogue that there is healing of the spiritual and cultural rifts as well.*

Over the past decade, Australia has witnessed a number of Hindu temples coming up in each of the major metropolitan areas. Some of the temples are housed in abandoned Christian churches, which itself rouses some curiosity on the part of the remaining parish. During the stone-laying and inaugural (*kumbabhiseka*) ceremonies, apart from prominent visiting swamis, high-ranking representatives of the Christian denominations and local parishes are also invited as guests. In one such recent function in the nation's capital, Canberra, the Archdeacon of the Anglican Church, Rev. David Oliphant, addressed the gathering in these sanguine terms: "I am pleased to be here. I am replacing the Bishop who was unable to come. The time is well overdue for us to listen to one another, to explore different layers of spirituality and to find and assert our common humanity." An Anglo-Australian summed up the neighbouring community's response, thus: "The Hindus I have met seem serene and gentle people. They are welcome here ... I am pleased that Canberra is finally getting a Hindu temple. The other minority religions

– Islam, Judaism, Buddhism – are well represented here. The symbolic value alone of a temple in our capital cannot be overstated."⁸

IV. Syncretic Trialogue

But such open-minded gestures are not always forthcoming. The local Anglican minister, who was one of the valued guests at the dedication ceremony for the grand Sri Venkateswara Hindu Temple in Helensburgh (outside Sydney) in 1985, expressed an ambivalent response to the spectacle in his regular newspaper column. While pleading for even-mindedness and tolerance he nevertheless admitted being troubled by the array of granite images, idols, *dvarapalas*, demonic fiends, and their elaborate worship during the ceremony. "Idolatry" appeared to be a denigration of "... the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, four-footed beasts, and creeping things" (Romans 1.23 is cited)⁹. Gandhi's universalism, aligned with the Vedanta dictum about the one truth having various paths, is also put under scrutiny in the light of Christ's dictum: "I am the way, the truth and life, and no one comes to the Father but by me". The minister concluded his sermon by confessing that it is a difficult task indeed "to be tolerant, while at the same time holding firmly to what we believe to be true". The dialogue ended there, with a whimper as it were, only to be rescued by several letters to the editor from the local community, admonishing the minister's equation of Hinduism with idolatry. One correspondent expressed the view that in the future humanity will look to the Indian people for social change and inspiration, and that "we should be very honoured to have this small link with this (Hindu) civilization in our backyard"¹⁰. Of course, the recent turmoil in Ayodhya might dampen the enthusiasm somewhat, although at the second *kumbabhiseka* ceremony held last month [January 1994] at the same temple site, an even larger non-Hindu crowd was evident,

with people travelling from different parts of Australia to witness a colourful and moving spectacle given much coverage in the media wherever such events happened.

Perhaps the best known and most revered icon in Australia of genuine interreligious interaction is Dom Bede Griffiths. Dom Bede is more widely read and listened to in Australia than are Thomas Merton or William Johnston, for there is greater fascination with India in respect of its promising spiritual mysteries than with China or Japan. This particular predilection is related to Australia's colonial link with India and the consistent activities of theosophists, spiritualists and neo-Hindu groups over the last few decades. Dom Bede first visited in 1985 and the public lectures, seminars and interreligious meetings he held attracted large audiences. Invariably, his talks and discussions turned to the many noble virtues of Hinduism, especially in regard to the areas of individual spiritual practices, such as meditation, yoga, the *sannyasa*/contemplative life-style, as well as to the fertile input Hindu mysticism can make into current crosscultural thinking in cosmology, physics, and theology. To many admirers Dom Bede embodied the perfect blending of Eastern and Western spiritualities, and his mere presence inspired dialogue, whether carried on internally in the heart of the seeker, or externally in the confrontation of the different faiths, most especially Christianity and Hinduism. While Hindus themselves often expressed reservations about the extent to which Dom Bede represented and appropriated Hinduism in all its sophistication, complexity and contradictions, nonetheless Hindu representatives came forth to take part in whatever discussions and meetings or interfaith services were organized. Dom Bede was accompanied by Brother Amal Das, who claimed to be of mixed Syriac and Malayali-Saivite background, although he had taken initiation in the Benedictine Order under Dom Bede. Amal Das proved to be rather popular with groups like Catholics for

Peace and an informal Christian meditation collective. Retreats were organized at which Amal Das led workshops on yoga, meditation and adapted mantra recitation. The exploration of Hindu-Christian spirituality at the crossroads, highlighted in this visit, has continued throughout the country. A number of devout Christian lay and clerical members have travelled to India to spend time in Dom Bede's Shantivanam Ashram in South India (where an "Australian Hut" was sponsored from the funds collected during his visit). Before leaving Australia, Dom Bede participated in a joint *bhajan* session (sung by Hindu and Christian devotees) and Mass conducted according to the Syrian Indian rites. It was an ecumenical liturgy, the first of its kind to be held here, and it was broadcast on national television. Dom Bede expressed high hopes for this kind of interface between Hinduism and Christianity in Australia (always careful not to make direct reference to Hindus as a group)¹¹.

Dom Bede visited again, for the last time, in 1991 and again drew large audiences. Once again, the questions that came up with greater frequency from the assembly related to Dom Bede's views on rebirth, sin and karma, and predestination. Dom Bede was able to handle these questions without either giving blasphemy to the church or accepting a literal understanding of troublesome doctrines such as rebirth. His approach was to look upon rebirth as an interesting metaphor, in the light of discoveries by Rupert Sheldrake of distant field influences, and in view of the possible interpolation of rebirth as an early doctrine in some parts of the Bible or elsewhere (including Plato). He would then plead for an open mind towards such beliefs in other cultures which form a basis of moral living for a large number of people. Over a dozen cassette recordings of his lectures and dialogue sessions made during his visits are in circulation; the national radio, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, replays interviews with him at

regular intervals. One might say that Dom Bede has left behind a legacy worldwide, including in Australia, for his efforts at bridging the chasm between Hinduism and Christianity, although much more work remains to be done in the area of bringing a more historically informed, theoretically balanced and scholarly orientation to Hinduism into the discussions.

I will end this overview with an anecdotal reference to a lone pursuit by a concerned convert to Hinduism that exemplifies other kinds of efforts towards making a dent in the religious dialogue enterprise. Peter Lawry became a follower of Swami Muktananda in the early 1970s, but did not sever links with his Christian background. Eager to persuade his peers and folks to the virtues of Hinduism, or at least of the sufi-yoga path he was involved in, he enrolled to study theology in one of the leading theological colleges in Melbourne. After graduating he succeeded in gaining ordination as a minister of the Anglican Church and took charge of a parish comprising Anglo-Australians seeking an alternative life-style and semi-professionals from mostly Christian homes. Rev. Lawry gradually introduced teachings and practices from yoga-tantra and synthesized these with the regular services, sermons and activities of the parish. This has resulted in the creation of a unique syncretic congregation that appears to be as much Hindu, broadly understood, as it is Christian. Lawry's aim of providing a focal point for mediation between the two spiritual traditions to which Australians seem to be drawn appears to have paid off. The rainbow church on Panton Hill has convinced its congregation to take ideas such as karma and rebirth seriously. This experimentation might indeed constitute an exception, but it has a place in the broad Australian landscape. This may even become one significant model for Hindu-Christian interaction as both the population of Hindus increases and the dominant religious or cultural groups become more conscious of

the need to integrate with the diverse spiritual and cultural values now extant in the antipodean nation just overcoming its colonial slumber and moving towards the postmodern era.

Notes

1. "Religion in Australia 1991", census profile 2510.0 p.21, 23, Australian Bureau of Statistics.
2. (ibid, p.40)2.
3. Swami Ranganathananda, *A Pilgrim Looks at The World*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. 1977, p.75.
4. Foreword to P. Bilimoria, *Hinduism in Australia, Mandala for the Gods*. Spectrum, 1988a.
5. Although the AASR and its leading members have published essays dealing with "Religion in Multicultural Australia", the focus has largely been on initiating curriculum material or class discussions rather than on guiding actual religious interface in more concrete terms. The gauntlet thrown into the fray raising deeper questions of metaphysical and epistemological import – such as, whether religions possess "truth" in any measure; whether GOD REALLY EXISTS; whether Hindu or Christian; and whether God/Sunyata might cancel each other out entirely; have not been taken up at all. Cf. Bilimoria "A Problem for Radical (onto-theos) Pluralism", *Sophia*, vol 30, July 1991, pp.21-33.
6. "The Discourse of Christianity and the Other", *Australian Religious Studies Review*, VI, 2, July 1991, pp.61-70.
7. "Bridges of Peace", WCPR Newsletter, Melbourne, 1993.
8. Personal correspondence via Carl Vadivella Belle (who has been compiling invaluable information on Hindu activities in Australia).
9. *Northern News*, N.S.W. 9 August 1985.
10. Reported in Bilimoria, *Hinduism in Australia*, pp.131-132
11. Before leaving Australia Dom Bede had sent the writer a postnote saying: "I think we have forged a link with India". I suppose we have, or have we?