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Jwach
Brahmaavidya Mandir,
P.C. PAUNAR
Dist : Wardha
Maharashtra.

13th June, 1974

Dear Shree Masani,

I happen to read your article only today on Shri Jayprakash Narayan (He speaks for India's Conscience) in the Reader's Digest issue of March 1974, which is very well written and I was happy to go through it.

I had the privilege to work with Shree Jayprakashji and have his guidance for last two decades. I was however surprised that the article makes no mention of Shree Vinobaji who initiated the Bhodan movement in 1951; Shree Jayprakashji joined it in 1953 and offered 'Jeevandan' in 1954, indicating a total acceptance on his part of Vinobaji's leadership in the matter of spiritual and social regeneration of India. Similarly it was Vinobaji who initiated the movement for inducing the dacoits in the Chambal Valley to renounce their path of violence by surrendering themselves to authorities and facing the consequences, which alone would wash away their sins and thus contribute greatly to the peace and well-being in that area. As a result twenty dacoits surrendered in 1960 and an organization named 'Chambal Ghati Shanti Samit' was set up to carry on constructive work in that area.

These twenty dacoits after their surrender were sent to prison but released after undergoing imprisonment for seven years and started leading normal lives. This set the ball rolling and other dacoits also contacted Shree Vinobaji and other Sarvodaya workers for their release and resettlement on similar lines. Shree Vinobaji directed these people to Shree Jayprakashji as he has decided not to leave his Paunar Ashram (Kshtra Sannayasa) for any work. It was then that Shree Jayprakashji took up this work and at the famous ceremony at Jaura Village he made a speech in which he stated-

that this extra -ordinary phenomenon of dacoits turning into peaceful citizens was a kind of miracle wrought by the spiritual power of Vinobaji and by the grace of God. This is a matter of record.

In the light of these facts, it was rather amazing to find no reference to Shree Vinobaji in your article at all .

I do not want to suggest that the services of Shree Jayprakashji to both these causes were less than monumental; but ~~the~~ truth and fairness demanded a reference to Shree Vinobaji on your part. I would not have ordinarily brought myself to write such a letter to you but I have heard so much from my father (P.Y.Deshpande) about you as a man of intellectual integrity and regard for truth and fairplay, irrespective of ideological consideration; I therefore thought that if I brought these matters to your notice, you would appreciate it and make the necessary amends. This, I think, is necessary because Reader's Digest is read by millions all over the world who must not be kept away from the truth of the matter.

With deep regards,

Nirmala Deshpande
(NIRMALA DESHPANDE)