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Published by Anonymous on Jan. 01, 1990

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There are many problems in the world today, and though it seems that Hindus should not be the cause of them, we sometimes are. Historically, we have always preferred subtle and peaceful solutions to conflict and difference of opinion, our weapon being intelligence rather than force. I am reminded of the old weaver Tiruvalluvar's counsel on human relations: "Those who cannot live in harmony with the world, though they have learned many things, are still ignorant."

Many religions have not successfully blended religion and politics together. And people suffer as a result. The masses don't need to be exploited by religion. They get enough of that from other sources. They need to be helped by religion, lifted up, reminded of That which is eternal. Instead, they are often thrown into that which is political, and the struggle with the outside becomes their religion, instead of the search within.

We are talking about Ayodhya, a small place in India which is being used to gather the collective will and might of devout Hindus in a show of force that has brought much unhappiness, contention and even deaths. These scandalous activities have shocked us all. Why, at this time in the world's history when Hinduism is doing so well, when its wisdom is being called upon from every continent to guide and illumine, why do we have to utilize religious sentiments to make a political point? Didn't that same gentle weaver say, "Let a man conquer by forbearance those who in their arrogance have wronged him?" Isn't that more in line with the kindly ways of dharma? No one ever brought peace into this world by causing discord. We are not against Hindus having political clout. We will have more and more in the

century ahead. That's precisely why the wise and humane use of strength must be learned and practiced. Power never stays in the hands of those who abuse it, no matter how nobly they rationalize their abuses to themselves and others. Perhaps no one can say quite yet what the Ayodhya confrontation means and where it will lead, but we shall hear some voices in next month's issue of HINDUISM TODAY. We are calling major leaders around the world and getting their reaction to what happened in Ayodhya. Perhaps an Ayodhya will happen again, and perhaps it won't, but it is up to all Hindu to inwardly and outwardly protest what they feel is not in line with dharma. Don't you think so? Many of you reading this today have been loyal readers for many years. We would like to hear your reaction too. Please write your feelings about "What happened in Ayodhya?" We would really like to hear from you and share your thoughts with others who are wondering.

On another subject, the Africa Edition of HINDUISM TODAY will be sending out its first paper beginning with the February issue. Reverend Swami Sivanantha Navaler, the spiritual head of the Saiva Sithantha Sangam in Durban, South Africa, is owner of the franchise. Very possibly the Africa Edition may become one of our biggest. There are a lot of Hindu in Africa all eager to read what is happening in the Hindu world around them. The Reverend Swami Navaler told his followers that they must stand strong for the Hindu Dharma, and hey have done just that. The Saiva Sithantha Sangam is one of the largest institutions in Africa with twenty-five or more branches. Many swamis and teachers, all well educated in the Sanatana Dharma, untiringly serve and spread the culture and philosophy. Their missionary program extends into the homes of members, and there is something for every age group within their organization. And now they have HINDUISM TODAY. Nothing but the best for Africa's one million Hindus. They are deeply committed to Hindu Solidarity, too, as the testimonials on page 23 show. I would like to encourage you to read these and to support Africa's new edition.

Well, that is all for now. Don't forget to write and share your views on Ayodhya. Thank you in advance for your letter that we will be expecting soon.

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