



Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind

Sikh Spiritual Scientist · Teacher of Purest Spirituality

HOLIDAY LETTERS



The Life of Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind
1963 - Christmas and New Year - 1964
Greetings From the “*GLOBETROTTING*”
Thind Family

Beloved Ones:

Since we are far away from home on our houseboat, docked on the shore of Nagin Lake in the beautiful Vale of Kashmir, we find it necessary to write to you collectively this holiday season. You are so much in our hearts and minds that we feel your nearness each day as we have journeyed on our way to India since leaving our home on September 5. It is now the first week in November and we are halfway around the world awaiting a plane to take us to Amritsar, where Doctor will meet with his brothers and their families for the first time in fifty-two years. It will be a joyous reunion. We had planned to spend four months altogether in India, but present conditions here may cause us to alter our plans. We are undecided as yet to our departure date, but before leaving we hope to see the most significant places of this great subcontinent full of ancient lore, traditions, and diverse patterns of culture.

Our first stop was Honolulu, where we spent four wonderful days with our island family. Grandson John, who is now eight and a half, and Laurie, our precious granddaughter, who will be seven at the end of November, have grown beautifully. They gave us the greatest joy we've known in a very long time. We swam at Waikiki Beach and had a grand time together those four days. We also had a much needed rest in the relaxing atmosphere which certainly Honolulu provides any visitor. On the fifth day we took the plane to Kauai, the Garden Isle. It is said by many to be the most beautiful of the Hawaiian group and we agree. We found it to be naturally picturesque and truly Polynesian in every sense, untinged by commercialism as is noticed in Honolulu. Of course the capital city of our 50th state has much beauty to offer the tourist if he but seeks it as we did. While there we had the joy of being with our beloved and cherished friend of many years, Ellen Watumull, on several

occasions. Her daughter Lila Sahney, now of New Delhi, joined us for dinner one evening with a cousin from New York—they were both visiting Honolulu. Our few days in Hawaii will be long remembered by us both.

Our next stop was Japan, the country we had long waited to see.



Tokyo was busier than usual preparing for the 1964 Olympic Games. Many buildings and roads were under construction or reconstruction at the time. Although we enjoyed our tours of the capital city we were happy to leave it to see the beautiful countryside of Japan by bus. It doesn't take long for the tourist to realize that Tokyo surely is the world's largest city, with over ten million people hustling about constantly by foot or car all hours of the day and night.

One of the highlights of our Japanese tour was seeing the famous Kamakura Buddha, which impressed us tremendously with its serene countenance and grandeur of size. The Japanese are noticeably efficient and unbelievably gracious and polite. We hope they never lose their true national character and become too Westernized—the latter tendency is already too evident in the larger cities. Everywhere we went throughout Japan we saw schoolchildren of all ages on excursion, visiting their national parks and shrines, imbibing the ancient culture of their forefathers, and still at the same time progressing with modern methods of education. The eleven days we spent in Japan were most enlightening, and for much of this we are grateful to our splendid guide, Mr. Suzuki. You would have smiled to see us both trying to eat with chopsticks; we always seemed to end up using our forks. Japan's thinking seems not to be geared to its past, nor does it ignore it. It is anxious to understand it in the light of its present, so a better future may be realized. This is what makes Japan incredibly progressive.

We next visited Hong Kong, where we found the housing situation to be worse than anywhere in the world, the birth rate to be the highest, the water shortage to be perhaps the most acute, and food to be at a premium for those who cannot afford to buy—but still refugees pour into the British Crown Colony daily. It is a flourishing seaport with one of the most beautiful harbors in the world. We discovered Hong Kong to be a fascinating place, a shopper's paradise, where the Chinese way of life and an Anglo-Saxon sense of discipline are evident to the visitor. The very rich and the very poor seem almost to live side by side, remaining unaffected by one another. The courage and optimism of its inhabitants are transforming living conditions at a remarkable rate. The city's streets and brightly colored signs constitute one of the biggest markets in the world, and in spite of seeming chaos, the Hong Kong of tomorrow is taking shape. Phillip Chu, our guide, gave us excellent service and we enjoyed his friendly spirit.

Our travels next took us to Pnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, where we were most graciously met by our friend Captain Him Khun of the Royal Air Force. We were shown the exquisitely beautiful Royal Palace and its grounds, and every important temple and shrine which tourists should visit. We left the following morning for Siem Reap. Perhaps the most outstanding place of interest was awaiting us at the famous ruins of Angkor, where for three days we walked and climbed the gigantic structures, marveling at the tremendous impact made by the Hindu civilization and Buddhist teachings during the 10th and 11th Centuries, when the great Khmer Empire flourished. The ancient carvings show clearly inscribed the great epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, still inspiring beautiful even in their present dilapidated state. Even

though Cambodia is a very expensive country for tourists, because of the foreign exchange, we still highly recommend everyone going to Southeast Asia to visit Angkor, where we could vividly imagine the magnificence of its original being.

From Cambodia our plane flew us to Bangkok, capital of Thailand. This fascinating city is rightly called the Venice of the East. We thoroughly enjoyed our river trip; a motorboat took us through the many canals, where we viewed the authentic river life of the Thai people. The colorful floating markets and the gaily decorated shops on both sides of the canals made our excursion an unforgettable morning. Thailand is the land of temples and the yellow-clad Buddhist monks, who are seen everywhere, coming or going on foot, riding the pedi-carts, or praying in the temples. Our guides showed us the elaborate shrines of outstanding importance, and of course, the palace and grounds made famous to Westerners by the film, "The King and I". Bangkok has a distinct charm of its own-it bustles with activity. The performance of the famous Thai dancers, which we were fortunate to see the evening before we left, helped to make our visit to Bangkok one we shall always remember.

Early the next morning we left for Malaysia. We visited the three major cities of the newly federated state and we were deeply impressed by the progress this country is making. Our stay in Penang, in Kuala Lumpur and in Singapore as well had been prearranged by our beloved friend Mr. Kirpal Singh, chief engineer of Radio and T.V.-Malaysia. Several lectures were given by Dr. Thind in the three cities, where many wonderful friends were made. Seldom have we known such devotion, and how appreciative they were of Doctor's inspiring messages. The one given greatest acclaim was at the University of Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur, not only by the students but also by members of our own U.S. Embassy. In Malaysia we found people of multi-racial backgrounds living together in complete harmony. Next to Japan we found this country to be the most progressive of the Asian countries we toured.

Before reaching our destination, which of course was India, we spent a day and night in Rangoon, Burma. We were warmly welcomed, as we had been in Malaysia, with genuine devotion. A talk was given at the Sikh Temple to a full house. Doctor has been requested to return to both countries at some later date to give his full course. A visit to the Guru Nanak Free Dispensary and the Khalsa school maintained by the Sikh community was most educational and inspiring. Military dictatorship ruling Burma is nationalizing all public utilities thus killing the sense of personal and individual initiative; this nullifies human freedom in the long run.

We have given you our impression and reactions to sights, scenes, and events we encountered in the countries mentioned. In our next letter we shall continue, but for now we shall mention India briefly. A gigantic struggle to maintain the free way of life is going on here. The morale of the nation, as a whole, is high. India is determined to win against the Chinese aggressor. Many items in the Five Year Plan must be postponed because of priority given to the national defense. Our sense of appreciation for our country, America, has grown enormously as we have traveled through nearly half the area of our globe. May human dignity, freedom, and the deep-seated desire in the human heart for Godlike growth of personality grow ever more in our beloved United States, as well as throughout the world. Only free men make progress.

May you all enjoy a blessed Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Though we are far away in miles, we are one in spirit with you for the highest realization and affirmation of our Godhead in life and affairs of the human race.

Radiantly yours,

Dr. and Vivian Thind

*Your own Self
known as
Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind
Amritsar, India*