

Prof. Adolfo de Obieta

Recipient of Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Promoting Gandhian Values outside India-1996

Born in Buenos Aires, 1912; a lawyer (1936) and Doctor of Law. Has also studied Philosophy and Literature. Besides his literary work (poems, short stories, essays, etc) he has written on Peace, Disarmament, International understanding, International law, Human Rights, Humanism, Ecumenism, Non-violence, Moral Objection, Racial prejudices, East-West Cultural Integration, etc.

Among the books authored by him are 'Solar Genealogy', "Terrors of the year 2000", "Alberdi and Non-violence. A precursor of Gandhi?" "Time of Prophecy", "Theory and Realization of Universality", "Time of All or Nothing". "Argentina Consciousness. An Ethical Concept of Nation".

Prof. Obieta has been a faithful and consistent practitioner of Gandhian values and ideals both in his personal as well as his public life. He considers Gandhian principals to be his guiding light. In the words of Prof J.C. Pacaginini

"In his vast work as an essayist, a poet and a thinker, Adolfo de Obieta has shown his Christian non-violent spirit, the spirit of a sensible militant of Gandhi's doctrine. He has tried to live by and transmit Gandhi's teachings. He is a seeker of Truth. And as such sought to live by the words of his master. Following his master, Adolfo de Obieta has endeavoured to perfect himself and to guide his disciples towards the same goal. He has become a master trying to transmit his "Experiments with Truth".

Prof. de Obieta is not only a preacher of the Gandhian principles of truth and non-violence but has also lived up to the image of the true Gandhian ideal. If for the more than ever relevant Gandhian ideals of truth, peace and non-violence, there is increasing appreciation and admiration in Argentina today, credit must be given to Prof. De Obieta for his tireless work and propagation of these principles as also his strength of conviction on following his chosen path unassumingly. He is called the 'Argentinean Gandhi'.

Prof. Obieta wrote a number of articles in favour of peace with Chile during the serious 1978 crisis, and formulated several non-violent proposals in face of the imminent possibility of war. He drew up the declaration "Argentine-Chilean Peace and Friendship" (5th January 1979).

He was a member of the Executive Committee to commemorate the birth of Mahatma Gandhi (September 1968). He was also a member of the Executive Committee of the Gandhi Library. He participated in a meeting on "The Rise of Violence" organized by "Sur" (1968) and in the meeting organized by the PEN Club on "Violence and Non-violence". He was also one of the foremost members of the Group of Friends of the Ark, inspired by Lanza del Vasto, Mahatma Gandhi's direct disciple.

In the field of humanism Prof. Obieta's activities include participation in "Dialogue of Cultures", a colloquium organized by the UNESCO in Buenos Aires (December 1977). He took a leading part in the movement to create a "Year of International Reconciliation" (December 1974) and visited India in 1984 at the invitation of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations.

According to Mr A.N. Ram, former Ambassador of India, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Prof. Obieta to a generation of Argentineans has virtually been a Guru, a guide, a philosopher and friend. For him Gandhian values are not meant for books and essays but meant to be practiced and propagated. He has done so through inspiring personal example, influence over his contemporaries, writings and speeches and personal conversation.