

In order to return to Delhi from the Bhakar Dam we went again by taxi, and this time the drive proved to be very exhausting. In my taxi were Ronnie Bedford and a 'minder', a senior official from the Atomic Energy Department from Bombay. At first the landscape was interesting, fields, irrigation canals dating back to the Raj, small villages, heavily overloaded and colourfully painted trucks, cows, and an occasional accident, mostly a truck on its side. But as the night came and the taxi-driver had difficulty finding his way on unknown roads, Ronnie and I became anxious to reach the Telegraph Office in Delhi to file our stories to London.

When we reached Delhi, the situation became impossible. Neither the driver nor the minder had the slightest idea of the geography of this large Capital city and we lost our way hopelessly. I then remembered the solution from one of John Steinbeck's novels *Travels with Charley*. Find a local taxi, tell him where to go and follow, naturally pay him for this service. But our minder protested, he had no expense allowance for such an unorthodox procedure. I lost my temper (A rare occasion!) and offered to pay the local taxi. Again this was not acceptable, as we were the official guests of the Department. Finally a taxi was found, the Central Telegraph Office was located and then to our hotel, the Ashoka. One or two stiff whiskeys restored good relations.

The next morning, 15 June, brought us to the last stage of the Indian Atomic Energy story—in fact it is at the first level of it—the mining of the uranium ore. This is being done at a place called Jaduguda—India's 'Uranium City', about 50 km from Jamshedpur. When we saw the uranium mine it was already producing 200 tons of ore per month which was transferred by train to Trombay for extraction and treatment. Although there is a uranium glut on the world-market, India cannot buy any because of foreign currency shortage and must therefore produce its own. When a new shaft is in operation, we were told that production would rise to 1000 tons per month.

Then, in 1965, a thousand houses had been built for the miners and their families in this desert-like area of India, where the temperature was 45 °C. The ore has a content of 0.07 percent of uranium. The new shaft will reach a depth of about 700 m and have a diameter of 5 m. Large drill bits made in England were at work sinking the shaft, when we saw this ambitious project.

It was all part of the atomic master plan, due to the genius of a physicist, Homi Bhabha, to produce electric power and a bomb, if the need arose. The plan was on a gigantic scale, and I published it in the *Daily Telegraph*.