

Vedic Village

Number 16

Review



His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder Acharya International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Vedic Village Review

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Please take out a subscription if you wish to continue receiving VVR, or we will assume you do not. Back Issues are \$2.50 each. We request you to mail or call us with names and addresses of devotees who may like to receive a complimentary issue of Vedic Village Review or Vedic River Devotional Supplies flyers. ISKCON World Review will not report on New Jaipur nor print our ads for Vedic River Devotional Supplies. We therefore depend on our readers to help us find persons who might like to be on our mailing list.

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*Srila Prabhupada, letter to Nityananda dasa, 3/16/77: "The New Talavan-Review and brochures are both very nicely done and I thank you for them...Please go on very enthusiastically developing your farming community."



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Editorial Policy

VEDIC VILLAGE REVIEW is meant to promote a better understanding of issues and philosophy vital to Vaishnavas and their preaching work. We apologize for our errors and we hope to continue with the blessings of devotees, open to review from all quarters. Although we may unintentionally upset some by addressing sensitive issues, it is better to generate debate and an exchange of views than to be silent. Complacent and dull-headed we will not be. We want to spark healthy discussion and analysis of topics for the advancement of Srila Prabhupada's mission. We beg pardon for any offenses that may be made in this effort. We invite response to our articles, as we have an open editorial policy. We do reserve the right to edit letters and articles for brevity and conciseness, taking care to preserve the spirit of the opinion. So please, participate in this forum by writing us today!

VVR is printed by NEW JAIPUR PRESS, and attempts to promote the development of "Vedic villages" around the world as the foundation of a new Vedic civilization. God-centered, rural devotional communities such as New Jaipur, Mississippi, are the hope of the future during the Golden Age. These villages will be based on the teachings of Lord Krishna, Lord Chaitanya and His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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EDITORIAL

Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained

by Nityananda das

Since time immemorial, there has been an ongoing struggle between the devotees and the demons, the devas and the asuras. From 1985 through 1988, New Jaipur suffered from severe legal attacks incident to the Robin George case. The anti-cultists claimed that the fledgling community of the Old South Vedic Society was in fact a phony front corporation hiding the personal assets of Nico Kuyt, a defendant in the California case. Huge legal fees were incurred and an expensive settlement was made three days prior to a trial in which we could expect little justice. A small town in Mississippi was no place to expect a fair trial, considering the southern Baptist and redneck atmosphere. Subsequent to that settlement, we thought we had cleared our last hurdle, and we proceeded to expand New Jaipur in a big way.

By 1991 New Jaipur had grown to 45 devotees. The gurukula had 15 students and four teachers. Govinda's Health Foods was doing well and we had two grand antique stores on Natchez's antique row. The Vedic Cultural Museum at Gloucester introduced 5000 people a year to transcendental philosophy and Srila Prabhupada's association. Life estates were granted, the oxen were being trained and worked, eight books had been published. New Jaipur was a thriving Prabhupada Center, preaching actively in many directions. Varnashrama dharma was seen manifesting at last, and the enthusiasm and expectations for New Jaipur was great, both in and out of the project. We were prepared to spend our lives in New Jaipur to fulfill Srila Prabhupada's mission.

But, alas, our enemies thought they had found a flaw which they could exploit to destroy New Jaipur. There was a suspicion that "drug paraphernalia" was being sold in New Jaipur.

On March 1, 1991, deputies from seven different federal, state and local agencies performed a coordinated and complex raid of New Jaipur, hitting seven locations simultaneously. No drugs were found (much to their disappointment). Doors were broken down and every dwelling searched painstakingly. Agents at Cedars and Lagonia (the farm) concluded that a church and school were the basis of the New Jaipur community. Agents raiding Govinda's Health Foods (downtown) found nothing of interest. At Gloucester, personal records and a computer used for book editing were seized. In the rear of the antique stores was the Vedic River warehouse, where the Vedic River devotional supplies and literature was stacked next to incense, novelties and the "drug paraphernalia." Various scales, cigarette papers, military surplus gasmasks, jewelry safe-cans and coin envelopes were confiscated by US Customs (deemed illegal), as well as computers, a truck, cash and files.

The next week, the local assistant District Attorney seized

the antique stores, with offices and Vedic River warehouse, claiming these buildings were the seat of a drug paraphernalia business. A few days later, the Gloucester Vedic Cultural Museum was also seized. We have not been able to care for the Deities of Gour Nitai or Srila Prabhupada since four months ago. Personal items in Gloucester and the antique shops were not released. Consignment antiques were not released. The other properties, namely Govinda's Health Foods and the farm of 200 acres, were not physically seized, but notice was given by the state that they intended to forfeit them at a special hearing on July 22.

We attempted to reason with the government, but to no avail. Their dictate was to surrender all our properties. They are threatening felony charges as well. Not certain of the outcome of the property forfeiture claims by the state, we would not put more money into the mortgages as they became delinquent. Gloucester was to be auctioned on the courthouse steps June 28. Old South Vedic Society filed for bankruptcy protection, Chapter 11, at 4:30 p.m., June 27. Only 3 weeks more would have got us to the hearing, at which time we are hopeful of regaining clear title to our properties. Witnesses and evidence are now being assembled to present our defense: that no drug paraphernalia was found at any of the society properties, and the entire matter was one of religious persecution. The judge and district attorney have made clear their goal: "We don't want Hare Krishnas in our town."

A few weeks after the initial raids, at the height of uncertainty, intimidation and fear of further harassment, the devotees in New Jaipur decided to leave their beloved dream and project. One by one, they departed, mostly to the Gainesville farm area. The cows were sent to Florida, lest they be seized and slaughtered. The gurukula classrooms are empty and silent, the Deities cared for by one last remaining devotee on a minimal schedule. The antique stores are dark, with posters on the windows, "SEIZED".

Various options are being considered for the future of the Old South Vedic Society. We may make another go of it in Mississippi, but, frankly, the prejudice and good old boy politics in small town Mississippi may be fatal for unwanted cults like the Hare Krishnas. Trying to incorporate lessons from the experience in Mississippi, the Old South Vedic Society may move elsewhere and set up new programs for the preaching of Srila Prabhupada's mission. But wherever we go, the theme will be: keep Srila Prabhupada in the center and realize varnashrama dharma.

Why did this happen to New Jaipur?

Some say it is a reaction to the offenses committed by VVR and its editors; that the criticism of ISKCON, the GBC and the present guru system caused the destruction of New Jaipur. But government harassment in England, India, Argentina and many other places could not be explained in this way, and perhaps whenever there is bold preaching, the forces of opposition will step forward.

Some say that certain GBC members have employed tantric yogis to curse New Jaipur. At the 1991 Mayapur GBC meet-

ings it was a major topic of discussion among the GBC elite: the use of "Vaisnava" tantric yoga and rituals for expelling poisons and ghosts from the body and mind.

Some say that we can always expect to be put into difficulty for our own purification and advancement; it is simply Krishna's mercy. Attachments certainly were cut and realizations certainly were many.

Some say that the planets had positioned in such a manner causing influences which resulted in what occurred. Even for a devotee, it is extremely difficult to change the influences of negative planetary alignments. A devotee, however, turns to Krishna whenever difficulties arise, thus progressing in spiritual life.

Nevertheless, New Jaipur will reappear again, soon and somewhere, as a rural devotional community, dedicated to Srila Prabhupada and His teachings. We apologize for the delay in the VVR, but all subscriptions will be honored by the proper number of issues, which will henceforward come out irregularly rather than quarterly.

Please continue to send your letters, articles, donations, subscriptions and Vedic River Devotional Supplies orders to our Mississippi address in the front cover. Hare Krsna.

AN APOLOGY

by Jayadvaita Swami

Editor in Chief BTG

(This appeared in the premier BTG)

In the difficult times after Srila Prabhupada departed this world, misunderstandings arose on a crucial issue: Who would be the next spiritual master? Srila Prabhupada had clearly taught that he wanted all his disciples to follow his teachings, teach them to others, and thus become spiritual masters.

But by the influence of maya, illusion, a different idea soon evolved—that Srila Prabhupada had appointed eleven "pure devotees" to serve as the gurus after him. These eleven, the idea went, should each serve as the spiritual master for a specific geographical "zone" of the world. This zonal guru system, as it came to be called, prevailed in ISKCON for about ten years, until its falseness became clear and an ever-growing reform movement overthrew it and reasserted Srila Prabhupada's original instructions. In 1986, ISKCON's Governing Body Commission formally dismantled the system.

In the years till then, Back to Godhead sometimes reflected and supported the erroneous zonal guru system. Here, therefore, we wish to admit this mistake. I was managing editor for some of those years. And Satsvarupa Dasa Goswami was editor in chief. He joins with me in apologizing to our readers for BTG's conformity to the "zonal guru" error. In particular,

we express our heartfelt apologies for contributing to the hurts and wrongs devotees endured when ISKCON diverged from Srila Prabhupada's instructions.

May Lord Krsna henceforward keep us straight on the path of Krsna consciousness, as Srila Prabhupada taught it. Hare Krsna.

ANONYMOUS COMMENTS:

It is always commendable to apologize in public when one realizes an error has been committed. Yet, why is it coming five years after the GBC supposedly dismantled the zonal acharya system? If the GBC and BTG were capable of aggressively (to say the least) propagating a ten year "mistake", then why should we now have faith that their current, in-vogue policies are any more perfect? The history of policy and philosophy adjustments and tamperings have been numerous in the last 14 years: our heads are left spinning. How can we trust ISKCON's official current guru system, considering their ten year goof? It is also pitiful that such a serious deviation effecting so many devotees receives such a brief "brush-off". This apology seems more of a gloss-over, as we all know that several zonal gurus are still maintaining zonal acharya practices in their "zones".

How about an HONEST, IN-DEPTH EXPLANATION, detailing the hows, whys and future prevention of this colossal ten year hoax? Where has the GBC or BTG detailed and rectified their huge error? And why do they refuse to allow open discussions on past mistakes, current deviations and philosophical debate on their policies? To keep straight on the path of Krsna consciousness will require more openness and coming clean by the past perpetrators of the zonal acharya hoax than the above paltry apology, and then the worldwide body of devotees will want a period of open analysis, discussion and research to arrive at a NON-CHEATING CONSENSUS for the future of ISKCON.

Why Interfaith?

ISN'T VISHNU SUPREME?

Kirtanananda Swami Speaks:

How can we say we're interfaith and still say Vishnu is supreme? Interfaith means that first of all, you have faith. If you don't have faith, you don't have interfaith. What is that faith? Well, we can say that it is faith in what is. God is what is. God is perfect and everything He does is perfect. That conviction is found in every tradition. That is the basis of interfaith.

Interfaith means to have faith that I am not this body. I am spirit soul, part and parcel of the Supreme Spirit Soul. That Supreme may be called by different names. He may be worshipped by different rituals or practices, but He is One. He is the Whole. Krishna says in the fourth chapter of Gita:

"When you have thus learned the truth, you will know that all living beings are My parts and parcels, they are in Me, they are mine." [BG 4.34]

The truth IS there is only One. We are all a part of One. We may be infinitesimal, but we are a part, and we can never rest until we work consciously and harmoniously with the Whole.

Individuality, sectarianism, is fine when performed harmoniously for the enjoyment of the whole. We don't advise anyone to give up his religious practice. We also don't advise anyone to create a hodge-podge, a little bit from this religion, a little bit from that religion.

What we do say is—let's all become perfect in our practice. Christians should become perfect Christians. Muslims should become perfect Muslims, Hindus perfect Hindus, Buddhists perfect Buddhists—we should all become perfect.

When we connect with the Whole, we become perfect. The perfection is not ours. The perfection is the Whole. The Whole is perfect, always was perfect, can never be anything but perfect. "I am that I am." That is the statement of the Absolute. There is nothing to be added, nothing to be taken away. Therefore, the ultimate truth is surrender to what is. Surrender to God. He is what is.

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender to Me. I will deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear." [Bhagavad-Gita 18.66]

COMMENTS FROM VVR:

We invite our readers to examine the philosophical content of the above statements and submit their comments. Put aside your Sufi and pick up your Alan Watts again! He is what is!?!

ROVING REPORTER:

VVR HEARS FROM CANADA

Statements From Gopala Krsna Maharaja

He says the ritvik theory is bogus. Regarding the initiation of Prabhupada dasa (reported in an earlier VVR as a 1985 GBC ritvik initiation), GKM initiated on behalf of Srila Prabhupada and ISKCON because that is the etiquette. Srila Prabhupada also said he was initiating on behalf of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta.

GKM said he was present when Satsvarupa asked Srila Prabhupada about whose disciples would they be when they initiated, and Prabhupada said, "theirs."

GKM said the ritvik idea is an excuse not to follow any spiritual authority, meaning that if we don't have a spiritual master to personally instruct us, the tendency is to fall away from Krishna consciousness.



He said it is only in North America that the ritvik theory is still thought about according to GKM. In Europe, everyone's forgotten about it.

He said reinitiation is not compulsory but depends on the individual, although the tendency is for the disciple to not follow strictly if he doesn't have a "current link."

He said the ritvik theory is unprecedented in our sampradaya.

WHAT IS A GURU?

Shastric Quotes

compiled by Mahesh Raja, England

"Information of that kingdom of light can be attained through the mercy of a self-realized soul. One also has to get rid of all material desires. As soon as one frees himself from material desires and associates with a liberated person, the path back home, back to Godhead is clear." [Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.29]

"Krsna says, unless one is a tattva-darsinah there is no use to take instruction from him—useless!" [Tape 75-089 VRN; also, p.180 Vol. 17 SP Conv. "seen"]

"The spiritual master is addressed as "Prabhupada" because he is a completely self-realized soul." [SB 4.23.18]

"A real preacher cannot be bogus; he must first of all realize Lord Vishnu as He is. As confirmed in Bhagavad-gita (4.34), "Upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah: One who has seen the truth can impart knowledge." The word tattva-darsi refers to one who has perfectly realized the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such a person can become a guru and propound Vaisnava philosophy all over the world. The paragon of bona fide preachers and guru is King Pratiha(???) [S.B. 5.15.4]

"Unless one is properly trained by a mahat, a mahatma or unalloyed devotee of the Lord, there is no possibility of one's

It is obviously clear that to deliver himself (not to speak of delivering others), one must be on the brahma-bhuta stage (liberated) -self-realized! Now, if he has actually seen Krsna face to face, tattva-darsinah (Bhagavad-gita 4-34), that means he knows his relationship with Krsna and only on that stage. "One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna." [B.G. 4-9] So delivering oneself is not so cheap! This is confirmed in Nectar of Devotion, Preface, page xvii: "Real self-realization and realization of Krsna go together simultaneously. For example, seeing oneself in the morning means seeing the sunrise also; without seeing the sunshine no one can see himself. Similarly, unless one has realized Krsna, there is no question of self-realization."

Ksiyante casya karmani drsta evatmanisvare: "The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees self as master." [S.B. 1.2.21]

"Because the bound cannot help the bound, the rescuer must be liberated. Therefore, only Lord Krsna, or His bonafide representative the Spiritual Master, can release the conditioned soul." [B.G. 7-14 Purport]

The attempt to give transcendental knowledge to another when he himself is infected with demoniac (asura) quality is crazy! First consider what Srila Prabhupada has said. "One who knows his relationship with God he is called daiva, and one who does not know is just like animal, they are called asura." [Srila Prabhupada Festivals, page 252]. This is confirmed in Bhagavad-gita: "*mayayapahria jnana asuram bhavam asritah*: Whose knowledge (of relationship with Krsna) is stolen by illusion and who partake the nature of demons." [B.G. 7.15] (Also see Srimad Bhagavatam 6.7.15 Purport and Chaitanya Charitamrta Adi Text 46 Purport.)

In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.17.27, the spiritual master is also called acarya: "*Acaryam mam vijaniyan*: The Supreme Personality of Godhead says that one should respect the Spiritual Master, accepting him as the Lord Himself." Here Srila Prabhupada clearly equates Acarya with Spiritual Master so who is going to say we can now elect acaryas! See the Gaudiya Math failure! Also, in Nectar of Instruction, Ch 5, Srila Prabhupada clearly says, "Therefore a disciple should be very careful to accept an uttama-adhikari as a spiritual master." Therefore, if one disobeys Srila Prabhupada, his chanting of the Holy Name is offensive, and where is his progress? "Satisfaction of the self-realized spiritual master is the secret of advancement in spiritual life." [B.G. 4.34 Purport] The idea of expelling and intimidation of devotees is a policy of Ravana (literally, one who makes others cry). Demoniac! Let us cooperate to make Srila Prabhupada pleased by distributing his books, basing our evidence on discussion on Siddhantha, guru, sadhu, sastra. "Books are the basis." Srila Prabhupada Ki Jaya!

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare

CURRENT LINK BUNK

by Urdhvaga dasa

I would like to reply to Bhakticharu Swami's "Guru-Asraya" paper. This paper is severely lacking because it not only falls short of describing "guru-tattva," but mainly deals with "forced" reinitiation; already refuted in VVR #10. I will not go into detail because the "guru-asraya" paper has already been very scholarly refuted by different devotees; but I wonder why BCS hardly mentions Srila Prabhupada, who is not only the example of the perfect guru, but also the diksha and siksha guru of so many devotees? The essential point in the "guru-asraya" paper is completely avoided by BCS, namely that any devotee can accept Srila Prabhupada as his siksha-guru and follow him directly through his vani [books]. Did BCS avoid this because Srila Prabhupada has gone back to Godhead now and we need a new guru as the "current link" to explain to us what Srila Prabhupada really means to say regarding guru-tattva as described in Srimad Bhagavatam? Or how do we understand the following statement in the "guru-asraya" paper: "In order to receive the real message of Srimad Bhagavatam, one should approach the current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession."

Of course, one has to understand the message of the Bhagavatam through the person bhagavata. That is why Srila Prabhupada wrote his own purports. Our Srimad Bhagavatam is unique because the verses of the Bhagavatam are directly complemented with the purports of Srila Prabhupada who is the bonafide maha bhagavata; therefore, the book Bhagavata and the person Bhagavata are combined in Srila Prabhupada's Srimad Bhagavatam. Therefore, there is no need for a third party, "the current ISKCON links" to [mis]interpret what Srila Prabhupada really means to say. Why is it that Srila Prabhupada's books are no longer able to communicate directly with his readers? Aren't they the Law books for the next 10,000 years? Otherwise, what is the use of our mass book distribution if Srila Prabhupada is no longer directly available through his books, but only through the interpretation of current links? Srila Prabhupada himself said in his last words: "There is nothing new to be said. Whatever I had to say, I have already said in my books. Now you must try to understand them and continue with your endeavors. Whether I am present or not present doesn't matter. I'll always be with you in that way." [quoted from BTG, Vol. 13, 1-2]

But BCS concludes his paper as follows: "Now that Srila Prabhupada is no longer physically present, those who truly take shelter of him are those who take shelter of his servants."

BCS's "current link" philosophy in support of our new ISKCON "acaryas" with a "less than liberated guru thesis"

and "minimum qualification theory" is completely nonsensical in any context and is not confirmed by shastra and is a negation of Srila Prabhupada's presence in his "vani". It is simply the same old bogus philosophy which has caused so much chaos in our movement. These philosophical papers are sastra-ninda, or a twisting of the Vedic philosophy, to suit self-motivated ends. What TKG did on the gross platform (perverting the guru system), BCS is doing on the subtle platform (perverting the philosophy). That BCS has more philosophical misconceptions than TKG can be seen by the fact that he has become the judge, jury and executioner, i.e., he has already proclaimed himself as guru, sastra and sadhu by speculating on and misinterpreting the guru-tattva issue in his "guru-asraya" paper; by comparing the VVR editors to the Kesi demon; and by twisting sastra and preaching bogus philosophy in support of "current links" with a "minimum qualification theory".

BENELUX Silenced

A Letter From Purnatattva Dasa

Last year, we sent you a copy of a letter from the Benelux letter dated January 17, 1990 in connection with the ritvik acarya system and the reinitiation matter. After some time we took the whole issue again into consideration and came to the conclusion that in our passion and ignorance we had not approached the matter in a mature way. Actually, it was all a little gross. But out of your kindness and spirit (enthusiasm), you had published the letter in your magazine and it was widely spread.

So from out of the Benelux we wrote again a letter to the GBC, this time excusing ourselves for our neophyte approach of voicing our doubts or disagreements into criticism instead of questions. So I would also like to inform you of this letter, which is submitted herewith.

November 23, 1990

Dear Maharajas and Prabhus,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada. We would like to approach the assembly of Vaisnavas in connection to the letter (dated 1-17-90), which was sent by the devotees of the Benelux Yatra to the GBC Body. We hereby sincerely apologize to all who felt offended by the contents of that letter, and we also apologize for the fact that it took so long for us to write this letter of apology. It was not our intention to criticize any individual, but rather we were

trying to reveal our feelings about so many things that had happened over the years. However we understand that this letter (of 1-17-90) was not written in the proper mood. The situation in ISKCON at that moment was very tense, especially in relation with the whole VVR issue. We are now aware that we made a mistake in writing such a letter, and we certainly should not have sent it as an open letter to the VVR.

Kali always tries to destroy the cooperative spirit that lives amongst the devotees. The above-said letter was not inspiring towards a progressive ISKCON spirit of love and trust. We hope that we have learned by now to express ourselves in a more mature and positive manner.

We hope that the assembled Vaisnava Body will accept our apology and dandavats, knowing that without the mercy of the Vaisnavas we are lame, deaf and dumb, and can do nothing substantial for the progress of Krishna consciousness in the world. Hoping that the Vaisnavas accept our regrets and allow us to be instrumental in the hands of Srila Prabhupada and the Lord, for the welfare of humanity, we again beg your forgiveness. Without the mercy, forgiveness and tolerance of the Vaisnavas no one can progress on the path back home, back to Godhead.

Your servants,

Hrdis Caitanya dasa, Temple president,
Radhadesh

Brahmarata dasa, Former Temple
President, Amsterdam

Madana Gopala dasa, Temple Presi-
dent, The Hague

Purna Tattva dasa, Temple President,
Antwerp



VEDIC CULTURAL MUSEUM

BEFORE SEIZURE

COMMENTS, VVR:

A devotee should always try to take the humble approach. Yet, we need never submit to untruth and error, as we have for many years with GBC policies. The difficulty is to hold a different view without committing offense. May we practice that art and uphold both ideals of humility and non-compromise.

TKG Quote of the Century Excerpt From Letter to Gauridas Pandit, August 9, 1987

"I realize that the entire initiation issue has been fraught with problems and has not been a clear issue. Therefore I believe that by discussions, matters can become clarified, and I would therefore encourage you to write me further in this regard."

COMMENTS:

Not a clear issue? By discussions, clarifications? Fraught with problems? My, my, how his tune has changed from 1987 to present! TKG insists today that the initiation issue IS and always was clear as a bell, that no further discussion is necessary, and that all problems have long ago been solved. This is another example of flip-flopping to suit the immediate needs without honest regard for the truth.

R.I.P. GBC ?

by Karnamrita das

One cannot fail to be saddened by the demise of one's spiritual brothers, nor by the demise of an institution our father meant to foster and nourish all of his children. We are not immune to the grief that afflicts most of the disciples of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada who have witnessed the slow death of ISKCON's GBC. For all reasonable purposes, the GBC has surely given up the ghost, for it commands real respect only from those who are too simple-hearted to truly comprehend the living legacy of Srila Prabhupada, our living guru, and are too over-awed by threats of hellfire to admit to the grave discrepancies in their leaders that they surely must detect in their heart of hearts. The GBC has, moreover, deviated sufficiently from the proper siddhanta of our sampradaya to make one doubt whether it has become disconnected from the Chaitanya tree.

The disease that ultimately consumed the GBC began with the intoxication of illusory grandeur when the guru board, with the connivance of the GBC, decided it was the appointed inheritor of Srila Prabhupada's spiritual authority. Their unguarded hearts became so full of glee at their good fortune, upon receiving the imagined preceptorial mantle, that they mistook their glee for spiritual bliss! In order to maintain themselves in a constant state of such inebriation, the "New Gurus" and their GBC confederates willingly quaffed one apasiddhantic poison after another as they attempted to rationalize their shortcomings. Their vision being already bedimmed by the deluding dream of world domination and the glow of pride in their being as good as God, they habitually practiced deceit so as to maintain the status quo.

First they deceived us into believing that eleven of them had been appointed successor acaryas by Srila Prabhupada. When some among them proved not to be the pure devotees they happily let us believe they were, they practiced a new kind of deceit, encouraging us to believe that liberated souls,

even up to the gopis of Vrindavan, sometimes fall prey to the polluting influence of the material energy! When the behavior of apostate gurus proved so transparently abominable that they could no longer maintain their supremacy in the eyes of their elder Godbrothers, they encouraged them to drink the same poisons they had drunk, thus swelling their ranks and effectively silencing dissent. By the clever device of pretending to be on the side of reform, they converted almost every member of the GBC into ersatz gurus. Just as vampires turn their victims into vampires and thereby increase the number of living dead, the remaining "acaryas" transmitted the disease of wanting to be guru to practically the entire GBC.

As one who contracts hydrophobia is terrified by the sight of water, so any dissent that might arise is viewed by the GBC with horror. Being left with but one means of self-defense, they continue to resort to the tactic of creating and propagating frightening heresies. As such, they are no longer the GBC that Srila Prabhupada desired, for he wanted the GBC to guide the society, not tyrannize it. He wanted the GBC to inspire the society, not mislead it. And, regrettably, as was the case in the heyday of Zonal Acaryaism, the mass of devotees, fearful of committing mortal offense, cannot see the truth of things and believes the GBC to be alive and well.

What can be done to revive the GBC? Is it beyond hope, as many good devotees believe? What is clear is that it takes great power to raise the dead. We fear that those who have succumbed to the desire to be guru may never be raised up;

at any rate, their tendency to cheat make them too dangerous to be in a position of such responsibility. Suggestions made of late that all those who were GBC's prior to 1987 should resign, is far more sensible than it may have seemed at first. To tell the truth, it seems to us that we have taken the same path as the Gaudiya Matha and that the guru-disciple relationship in ISKCON has become one of the blind leading the blind. Let any Godbrother who has the courage to admit that he cannot guarantee that he will be liberated from the shackles of death, let alone liberate others, resign from the GBC along with the handful of men who have given them support and encouragement. There are plenty of devotees that have been driven out of the movement, or who are laboring unnoticed within, who could take up the responsibility in their stead. We have overestimated the inability of the general mass of devotees to function without the constant meddling of the GBC. Let the GBC be reconstituted, we say, such that it acts in a supervisory capacity, as Srila Prabhupada wished, and not as a substitute for individual initiative.

Let the GBC be reconstituted as a predominantly



brahminical body and let it settle all outstanding philosophical questions without delay. Let dissent be answered with civilized debate rather than affront and hurtful retaliation. Let the reborn GBC recognize that the worship of Krishna is the prime necessity and the differences of philosophical opinion must be tolerated if there is truly to be unity in diversity. This suggestion is not made with any personal animosity toward any member of the GBC, nor with any hidden motive to achieve personal fame or power, but rather with the sole desire of seeing a GBC with which all followers of Srila Prabhupada are happy to co-operate. Is the GBC dead? Long live the GBC!

The Power of the Pure Devotee

by Karnamrita das

It has been supposed, perhaps as a result of the vapuvada, that departed spiritual masters cannot interact with non-liberated devotees. Those who advocate this view blame this inability upon the non-liberated neophyte, who cannot truly detect the spiritual strata, but by inference they also deny such liberated soul the power to make themselves known to the bound souls. In order to counter this thesis, let us begin by citing the words of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, and his essay, 'Be Humbler Than a Blade of Grass:'

"My Gurudeva is graciously present in...different forms...The gurus who have in their nature the protecting power of the Divinity, are always present in different forms and figures to bestow their mercies upon me. All of them are specific manifestations of Sri Guru who confers spiritual knowledge...Sri Guru is that Entity who reveals himself to the view of enlightened souls in a variety of ways."

This is the proper understanding of the bona fide, or the sad-guru, that, being a manifestation of Krishna, he is capable of appearing before the sincere disciple in a variety of forms, forms which may bear no apparent resemblance to the form of the guru whom one has consciously accepted as such. That is to say, the Sri Guru of the foregoing passage is not confined to one bodily manifestation. At least, on the basis of the above, it must be admitted that he can give direction through a variety of media. Thus Srila Prabhupada has stated that the guru is one, and that there is no difference between the various gurus to various persons. The real guru of a Vaisnava may teach him through any channel he wishes, that is his power. Dattatreya happily received instruction through a dog, a mountain and so forth. And, nearer to our perceived reality, Srila Prabhupada



took instruction from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati through the agency of his Godbrother, B.P. Keshava Maharaja, who urged him to take sannyasa. Due to our lack of advancement we may not always be aware that our spiritual master is giving us direction in this way, and may even disregard such instruction on that account, but we are still capable of direct sensory perception of such siksha when it is given to us. Srila Prabhupada, moreover, has repeatedly told us that he is present in his books, a fact that is bound to be disbelieved by those who like to make distinctions, based of their material conditioning, between the various facets of spiritual existence, such as Lord Krishna and His transcendental form, the guru and his teachings, etc.

This avenue of discussion is undoubtedly difficult for many of us to comprehend. The manifestation of guru in a multitude of forms, such as animals, inanimate entities, books and so forth, is something the neophyte cannot harmonize with any experience he has had in the material universe, and is thus accepted by him only as theoretical possibility.

An example of the inconceivable power of the pure devotee is found in the Brihad Bhagavatamrita of Srila Sanatana Goswami which should convince the most skeptical that his horizons of comprehension have been set too near with respect to the liberated souls:

"I stood at the gate of Vaikuntha and watched those devotees of the Lord going in...some of them were holding golden umbrellas and others chamaras and various items for the worship of the Lord. Others, being intoxicated by drinking the nectar of devotion, were running madly to enter in...And I saw

some of them approaching with their associates in great pomp and glory...Some came apparently in the company of their followers in a regal manner and with abundant paraphernalia, but when they reached the gate, they withdrew all these associate within themselves and entered alone!...Yet others were continually changing their forms as they approached, and each new form shone more gloriously than the preceding form...All the inhabitants of Vaikuntha are equally endowed with the same divine characteristics.”[Brihad Bhag. Vaikunthana-ma]

This passage clearly shows that the pure devotees are able to expand themselves into different, independently acting forms at will, and to withdraw such expansions within themselves at will. They are able to change their forms as they wish also. Such information is corroborated in other transcendental books, and there is no reason to suppose such powers are limited to those Vaishnavas who reside in the spiritual sky. Indeed, according to Srila Sanatana Goswami, acaryas like Narada Muni have expansions in both the material and spiritual worlds, almost like the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna does. Who, then, are the vapuvadis to attempt to limit the sad-guru by reason of their parochial, material experiences and how can it be said that one cannot approach a mahajana, like Srila Prabhupada, except through the agency of an embodied jiva, even if he is not liberated?

One should never underestimate the power of the mahabhagavata Vaishnava, for such a being has the characteristics we inherit from Lord Sri Krishna developed to the fullest degree. Just consider the following:

“One who worships Me (Krishna) in My atomic form pervading all subtle elements, fixing his mind on that alone, obtains the mystic perfection called anima. One who absorbs his mind in the form of the mahat-tattva and thus meditates upon Me as the Supreme Soul of the total material existence achieves the mystic perfection called mahima. I exist within everything and I am therefore the essence of the atomic constituents of material elements. By attaching his mind to Me in this form, the yogi may achieve the perfection called laghima, by which he realizes the subtle atomic substance of time. Fixing his mind completely upon Me within the element of false ego generated from the mode of goodness, the yogi obtains the power of mystic acquisition (prapti), by which he becomes the proprietor of the senses of all living entities. He obtains such perfection because his mind is absorbed in Me.”



VARUNI DASI AND JAMAICAN COCONUT

(Bhag. 11.15.10-13)

These verses illustrate that even partial realization of the Supreme Godhead results in the attainment of the mystic perfections, which enable the successful yogi to perform extraordinary feats like creating a universe (by way of example, Visvamitra easily manufactured a replica of the heavenly planets in the southern stellar hemisphere long before he attained complete perfection). Since the maha-bhagavata, who has complete realization of Krishna, automatically attains such inconceivable power even in the material universe, why should we think his power limited by his quitting its dark and limiting confines? Is it really likely that he becomes impotent upon his entering the Spiritual Sky? Is it probable that he becomes so shackled by the para-sakti that he can no more wield the sort of power he obtained within the limited mundane sky? It seems most improbable to the writer that the aprakata guru is incapable of communicating with his follower given the evidence regarding his supramundane power.

Where is evidence found that substantiates the suggestion that the nitya-lilaprasishtha guru can only act and communicate in such a fashion that is undetectable by any souls but perfected one? It is our contention that Srila Prabhupada, the mahabhagavata-guru par excellence, is not in the least incapable of making his will known to us at any time or in any clime: it is merely that we must be receptive to his instruction.

We increasingly hear it suggested that in their tending to deny the pure devotee the kind of power hinted

at in the foregoing passages, the leaders of the Krishna consciousness movement have greatly diminished the status of Srila Prabhupada and those liberated paramahansas that precede him in our parampara. Prominent GBC men, for example, have suggested that Srila Prabhupada was incapable of instituting any truly novel spiritual practices or procedures. According to their judgment, the acharya is confined within bounds beyond which he could not venture in his attempt to spread and sustain Krishna consciousness, even if he wished. They forget, perhaps, that Govinda dared to step over the transcendental body of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in order to serve Him, that the gopis of Vrindavan were happy to risk perdition in order to deliver their footdust for curing Krishna's headache, that the acaryas in our line have dared to make all manner of adjustments to the parameters of standard spiritual practice in order to facilitate the salvation of the fallen souls. Sriman Mahaprabhu Himself commented that: “Both the

Supreme Personality of Godhead and Isvara Puri are completely independent. Therefore, the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Isvara Puri are not subject to any Vedic rules and regulations." [Cc. Madhya-lila 10.137] We prefer the verdict of the Lord to that of the doubters in our midst, and believe the pure devotee, the mahabhagavata, capable of guiding us and enriching us even if he is apparently separated from us by incalculable distances of time and space. It seems, sadly, that in the physical absence of Srila Prabhupada we have lost much of our faith in the power of the pure devotee. And for that the whole world and every creature in it is the poorer.

Vapuvada and it's Implications

by *Karnamrita dasa*

Vapuvada defined

In our attempt to better understand the truths regarding the spiritual master, we have been forced to coin the term vapuvada to describe a philosophy that has been propagated by the GBC and its spokesmen since the passing of Srila Prabhupada. The Sanskrit word vadi literally means 'one who speaks' though a more accurate translation would be 'one who advocates'. The philosophy of the vadi is his vada. Thus, in the case of mayavada the mayavadi is one who advocates the bewilderment of Brahman by the illusory energy, maya. Not that the mayavadis refer to themselves as such, rather, by inference, their dogma can be understood. The vapuvadi then is one who advocates the superiority of vapu over vani. Not that the adherents of this doctrine refer to themselves as such; rather, we can easily infer the thrust of their philosophy from their insistence upon new devotees surrendering completely to a 'living guru', from their denial that one can have a factual link with a departed acarya who one has not met in the flesh, and so on. The main tendencies of their creed can be summarized thus:

- 1) one must be connected to the sampradaya via the embodied spiritual master—if he perchance falls down that link is broken (somehow it does not seem to matter if the guru passes away, provided he is in 'good standing' at the time!)
- 2) disciples who render physical service to the body of the spiritual master are intimates of the spiritual master and have a superior ability to comprehend his teachings and intentions;
- 3) departed spiritual masters cannot interact with any but



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the most elevated souls unless one took initiation from them—even then their presence in the form of their teachings is no more appreciable than the all-pervasive presence of Paramatma.

Srila Prabhupada defines and describes the relative importance of vapu and vani thus: "I still consider His Divine Grace (Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura) to be present with me by his vani. There are two ways of association—by vani and vapu. Vani means words, and vapu means physical presence. Physical presence is sometimes appreciable and sometimes not, but vani continues to exist eternally. Therefore we must take advantage of the vani." (CC Antya Concluding Words.) There is not the least hint of vapuvada in this passage. Indeed, Srila Prabhupada extols vani as something imperishable and, moreover, as something appreciable by the faithful follower of a transcendental personality.

Srila Prabhupada reiterated this idea in a lecture delivered on the 2nd of March, 1975, as follows: "There are two words...vapu and vani. Vani means 'words' and vapu means this physical body. Vani is more important than vapu. Vapu will be finished—this is the material body—it will be finished. That is nature. If we keep to the vani, to the words of the spiritual master, then we remain very fixed up."

Real & Imagined Intimacy

Despite Srila Prabhupada often pointing to the risk arising from proximity to the spiritual master, the vapuvadis' confusion with respect to the relative importance of vapu and vani has regularly led them to confuse proximity with confidentiality. Although, to our knowledge, Srila Prabhupada never pointed out any of his students as his 'intimate' disciples, this term has been used time and again with respect to those who have rendered physical service to His Divine Grace. Despite almost all of Srila Prabhupada's personal servants exhibiting extreme signs of material inebriation and at times falling into

the most disgracefully apostate condition, a certain mystique surrounds them that would have us believe that they are especially reliable interpreters of Srila Prabhupada's latter day wishes. This misconception is the direct result of adherence to vapuvada. Srila Prabhupada has specifically rejected this claim to intimacy that has arisen from him bestowing his causeless mercy upon ordinarily or less than ordinarily advanced men. He once explained that disciples that render proximate, personal service are no less prone to fall down than those who serve from afar, and gave an enlightening analogy in that regard. He said that a mosquito sometimes alights on the lap of the king, but that does not mean he is favored by the king. Rather, the insect may be disturbing the sovereign. Because of our conditioning, we associate physical nearness with complete intimacy, but such closeness may be a disturbance to the spiritual master.

It also is seen that the spiritual master sometimes engaged materialistic men in his personal service in order to repel those who are not sufficiently enthusiastic to understand the absolute truth. Srila Gaurakisora das Babaji Maharaja stated in this connection: "Sometimes, (Vaishnavas) make a pretense of converting materialistic persons into their disciples. They seem to want to be served by them and always take their advice. Thus they keep their true natures concealed (from mundaners and doubting Thomases)". (Babaji Maharaja pg 86) Under such circumstances, the avidity of the vapuvadi for the physical nearness of the pure soul would appear to be ill-conceived and productive of little good.

Unqualified men who, because of Srila Prabhupada's mercy, have been permitted to render him personal service, have tended to adopt the aforementioned mosquito-like mentality and have capitalized upon the misconceptions inherent in vapuvada, thereby misleading many into giving them more credence than they actually deserved. That Srila Prabhupada conferred special kindness upon them is undeniable. Still, to think of such disciples as chosen by him above others, and to be given special respect, could well be considered an insult to those who sincerely worshipped the instructions of His Divine Grace, such as Jayananda Prabhu. Did Jayananda achieve perfection on account of his attending to Srila Prabhupada's physical needs, or did he do so on the strength of his successfully understanding and worshipping his vani? The latter, surely!

The Living Guru Theory

The abovementioned tendency to equate personal, physical service with favored access to the pure devotee has enabled some to speak volubly in the guru issue. Their pronounce-

ments are given extraordinary credence with respect to Srila Prabhupada's instructions on continued initiation. The concept of the living-guru is prevalent among those who make claim to special intimacy and is supported by those vapuvadis who make claims to guru-ship on the grounds of having rendered special service as preachers. They insist that one must surrender totally to a 'living' guru, and that all other Vaishnava relationships are incomplete without that embodied link. Srila Prabhupada, however, has said the 'physical touch is not necessary'. That is to say, the spiritual master can accept a disciple from afar, and bestow his blessings upon him, even if no longer physically present: "As far as my blessings are concerned, it does not require my physical presence. If you are chanting Hare Krishna there and following my instructions...then there is no question of your not receiving the blessings of Lord Chaitanya." (Letter 6-30-74)

We do not mean to imply that the physical presence of a devotee more advanced than ourself, who can guide us in the performance of our bhajana up to the limit of his experience, is neither helpful nor desirable. But Srila Prabhupada has clearly warned us against accepting a kanishtha or madhyama guru: "A neophyte Vaishnava or a Vaishnava on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples...but they cannot advance very well towards the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance." (NOI 5 purport) Thus it seems that the physical presence is helpful only up to a point.

Srila Prabhupada directly challenged the Living Guru Theory with reference to Jesus Christ and pointed out that departed gurus may be accepted as such and their teachings understood with the assistance of someone a little learned therein. We have already printed the transcript of one such conversation, but do so again for the sake of those who have forgotten or misunderstood its clear message:

Devotee: *Can one accept Jesus Christ as his spiritual master?*

Srila Prabhupada: As soon as you read the Bible that means you are following the instructions (vani) of Lord Jesus Christ. so where is the opportunity of being without a spiritual master?

Devotee: *I was referring to a living spiritual master.*

SP: (with great surprise) Living?! Living spiritual master?! The spiritual master is eternal! The spiritual master is eternal! You may accept this spiritual master or that spiritual master. That is a different thing. When you read the Bible, that means you are following the spiritual master represented by some priest or clergyman in the line of Lord Jesus Christ. So, in any case you do not have to be without a spiritual master. (Conversation, Seattle, 1968)



This exchange (which has appeared in a sanitized form in BTG) clearly demonstrates:

- 1) that one may accept a departed Vaishnava as his spiritual master;
- 2) that one need not be bereft of a qualified guru even in the physical absence of such;
- 3) that the living person from whom one takes assistance in understanding and worshipping his vani need not be either of the same stature as the guru or viewed with the same reverence as the actual guru.

This is the pure and definitive advocacy of vani over vapu.

The vapuvada is a serious deviation from standard Vaishnava siddhanta and has arisen in our society largely as a result of good men falling prey to the desire to become gurus when they have not perfected the art of being disciples.

ARE ALL GURUS FOREVER?

by Karnamrita das

In this world, the possibility of being misled, of misleading others, or of being gravely mistaken ever imperils the upward progress of the conditioned soul. This is so even in the realm of devotional service as long as one's existence remains unpurified, and nowhere more so than in the matter of guru and sishya. Thus it sometimes happens that we misapprehend the spiritual status of others, given sufficient encouragement by our peers or as the result of a lack of proper guidance and a tendency to emote, and view those who play the part convincingly to pure when they are not, or think ourselves liberated Vaishnavas and deserving the luxury of accepting disciples when we are not.

Other misapprehensions arise in consequence of these two follies: that the diksha guru is necessarily one's one and only guru, and that the diksha guru is contracted to take one back home to Godhead, and none other, for example. He is never to be given up unless he becomes irretrievably demonic and up

to that point must always be regarded as good as God. Aside from the fact that such an assumption flies the face of history, our sampradaya resting almost entirely on siksha rather than diksha, the excruciating difficulty of combining the vision of one's guru as an uttama-adhikari with constant vigilance lest he go astray is not one that has much concerned our leadership.

They have managed, consciously or unconsciously, to prey upon the fear of committing mortal aparadha so as to avoid such practicalities. The absurdity of assuming two such contradictory viewpoints simultaneously, i.e. that a guru may be on the highest platform of perfect, irrevocable devotion but still be prone to precipitous falldown, has not seriously been addressed thus far. In consequence of the impossibility of maintaining such an attitude, we naturally hear questions such as these being asked: "What does one do if he accepts a devotee as his preceptor and finds in time that he is decidedly lacking in advancement? Should one avoid his company and take shelter of some other Vaishnava (such as His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada), or should he studiously avoid any such course of action, which would constitute jumping over, and seeing that his guru is irrevocably fallen avoid the ruination of his spiritual life? Is one bound to view him as an uttama-adhikari until he becomes totally asuric?"

We have already heard as much evidence from the GBC ideologists to the effect that the guru may be abandoned if he is puffed up with pride and has fallen from the path of devotion. We have also been presented with some dubious evidence to the effect that one should seek re-initiation upon rejecting such an apostate guru. We contend that such evidence is misinterpreted, especially as the GBC has sought to show that any guru that falls down becomes a backdated avaisnava or asura, a patently erroneous contention, but essential to their argument, since the scriptures only permit one to again be initiated if one finds he has surrendered to an avaisnava! Our ideologists have never dealt wholeheartedly, however, with the question of a so-called guru who is merely incompetent or pretentious. They have hardly addressed the quandary of those sishyas who, upon making some little advancement, realize their spiritual master is a dullard in philosophy, underhanded in his dealings, untruthful in speech, incapable of self-appraisal, vain, tyrannical, or what have you. Despite the 1989 GBC position paper Guru Asraya have shown that the disciple should deliberately distance himself from such an unqualified person, senior devotees (gurus in particular) publicly insist that even such a guru must be

July 30 1991 :
New Jaipur Update:
The trial was postponed to Sept.
The local gov't wants to settle the case as they fear a reversal on appeal, but everything is still in limbo for now.

regarded as an *uttama-adhikari* and surrendered to heart and soul. Indeed, their policy in this regard borders on the schizophrenic. For example, in the *Guru Asraya* paper it stated: "A spiritual master unable to take his disciple back to Godhead should responsibly advise them (sic) to take shelter under someone who can." (GA pg.3) This is the theory and one we entirely support. In practice, however, ISKCON gurus and their supporters act upon the assumption that they are all well able to take their followers back to Godhead, notwithstanding the fact that Srila Prabhupada has said that one conditioned soul cannot deliver another conditioned soul, and if by chance their disciples question their competence they sternly remind them that to disregard the spiritual master is a heinous offense that will result in their going to hell! Thus they seem unable to act upon their own advice and coerce their doubting followers into surrender by means of threats of damnation and suchlike.

To return to our theme, let us reiterate an idea expressed in the *Guru Asraya* paper, viz. that one should avoid the company of an unqualified guru and seek shelter elsewhere. (*) This is no doubt the correct conclusion, but it is one that has received practically no public endorsement whatsoever. If one finds his guru to be less than qualified—and this is sanctioned by the GBC—one should avoid his association and take shelter of a qualified preceptor. It is our contention that such a qualified spiritual master is to be found in the person of Srila Prabhupada. We do not accept the assertion that he is unavailable to those who were not initiated during his physical presences (see *The Power of the Pure Devotee* in this issue). Such an arrangement should not be entered into with unnecessary disrespect, however, and is ideally undertaken with the permission of the initiator, as pointed out by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura:

"If a person (mistakenly) accepted as a spiritual master is neither a *mayavadi* nor inimical toward the devotees nor addicted to sinful practices, he should not be abandoned simply because he is lacking in spiritual knowledge. Rather, with due respect and with his permission, another Vaishnava should be humbly accepted as guru in order to learn about the Absolute Truth." (*Jaiva Dharma* ch.20)

If, however, such an unqualified preceptor is so lacking in knowledge that he feel offended by the disillusioned disciple's request to seek shelter elsewhere, the disciple is not to be blamed. He has every right, under the circumstances, to turn for guidance to a Vaishnava who is genuinely realized and thus able to teach him properly. We have often been asked by such disillusioned devotees what they should do, given the general climate in ISKCON with respect to such matters. They often tell us that at the time of their accepting such-and-such as their spiritual master they were too immature to realize that he was not the pure devotee he was made out to be. Indeed, they have often informed us that they found so many anomalies and eccentricities in such persons' behavior that the resultant mental disturbance they experienced constituted a severe threat to their faith in the process of Krishna consciousness. We can only remind the reader of the GBC approved

conclusion, as published in the *Guru Asraya* paper, that one should be careful to distance himself from the imperfect 'guru'. Our advice to such devotees is to carefully avoid the association of the pretentious guru and absorb themselves wholeheartedly in the worship and service of Srila Prabhupada instead. Being a recognized, *uttama-adhikari* Vaishnava guru, he is the undeniable safe shelter for all souls at the present, troubled time.

(*) *There may be some error in the Guru Asraya paper in this connection. A verse and some commentary are cited with respect to avoiding the association of an incompetent guru and ascribed to Jiva Goswami, Bhakti Sandarbha 238. My edition of the Bhakti Sandarbha has no such verse or comment in the reference section.*

Two Stories

submitted by Radha Damodar das

There was once a Brahman who made his living selling Prayodjita, the methods of atoning for your sins. One day he told his five year old son to mind the shop while he went to the river. Soon the King and his entourage came in.

"So, where is your father?" said the King.

"He is not here. May I help you?" said the boy.

"Well, you are also a Brahmana", said the King. "I have committed some small indiscretions."

"What did you do?" asked the boy.

"Oh, not much," said the King. "I killed a Brahmana and a cow."

The son of the Brahmana thought for a moment and then he said, "Well, for that you have to chant the Holy Name of Rama three times."

"That's it?" said the King. "That's all?"

He gave a donation and left. Stepping out of the hut he chanted sincerely, "Rama Rama Rama!" and went away.

"Anyone come when I was away?" asked the Brahmana when he returned to his hut.

"Yes," said his son. "The King came by."

"Really?" said the Brahmana. "What did he do?"

"He killed a Brahmana and a cow," said his son.

"And what did you tell him to do for atonement?" asked the Brahmana.

"I told him to chant the Holy Name of Rama three times," replied the boy.

"What!? That is what you told him!" exclaimed the Brahmana, striking his forehead. "Why did you tell him that? My business is ruined! "Once is enough!"

Srila Prabhupada told this story:

When the King was told that the people were starving, the King said, "If they cannot work, then tell them to come here for their food."

The next day the dining hall was filled with men. "I cannot believe that there are so many lazy men," said the King. Set fire to the hall!"

Everyone ran out of the hall except for two men and one man said to the other, "It's getting a little hot on my back."

The other replied, "Just turn over on your side, then."

"These two are actually lazy men, feed them!", said the King.

Silent Chanting?

by *Harinam das*
(Hilo, HI)

Concerning the silent chanting by Chandramauli Swami, VVR 15, every disciple of Prabhupada knows that he personally instructed everyone to chant the maha mantra on japa beads audibly. Specifically, he instructed that one must not make a hissing sound but chant japa with the tongue moving and saying each syllable clearly. I have seen him chant japa in that way and have never known him to advise any other method. Also, we have all heard tapes of Prabhupada chanting japa with his disciples where the whole room is chanting quite loudly. Therefore, one should not disobey the direct orders of one's spiritual master.

In the Chaitanya Bhagavat, this very same question was put to the acharya of the holy name himself, Haridas Thakura as follows:

In the village of Harinadi, there was a wicked brahmin who upon seeing Haridas angrily said, "Oh Haridas, what is this behavior of yours? Why are you chanting the holy names out loud? Your duty is to murmur the names in your mind. What scripture advocates this loud chanting? Whose instructions on chanting Hari's names are you following? Explain this to the assembly of scholars!"

Haridas replied, "That is as far as your knowledge of the glories of the holy name goes. I'm just saying this from what I have just heard from your mouth. There is a hundred times more benefit from loud chanting and there is no flaw in it. This is confirmed in all scriptures! Listen sir to the truth in the Vedas and the Bhagavatam."

While the explanations of all the scriptures were emanating from the beautiful mouth of Haridas, he went into a state of

blissful and happy Krishna consciousness. "Listen brahmins, anyone who hears Lord Krishna's name even if he be an animal, bird, or insect, immediately goes to the abode of Vaikuntha dhama. (Oh Achuta, whoever utters Your name loudly is purified, as well as all those who hear it. You are in fact so glorious that even those who see You or are touched by Your feet are delivered. S.B. 10.34.17) The animals, birds, and insects cannot chant Lord Hari's name but simply by hearing it they are delivered! Whoever murmurs Krishna's names on his beads delivers only himself, but loud chanting is beneficial to everyone! Therefore, chant out loud and the result will be a hundred times greater. This is confirmed by all scriptures. The loud chanter gets a hundred times more benefit than the person who merely chants to himself. This is stated in the Puranas. Simply, by the loud chanting of "Govinda" all

living beings are delivered. Some living beings in subhuman species possess tongues but still they cannot say Krishna's name. By hearing, their seemingly useless life becomes fruitful. You see if there is any harm in that. Some can only nourish themselves but others can nourish thousands of others as well. You decide which of the two persons is the greatest. For this reason I am chanting loudly! (The loud chanting of Lord Hari's name is a hundred times more beneficial because not only oneself but also others are delivered through it." Brihan Naradiya Purana.)" C.B. Adi-kanda 14.260-280

It is clear that hearing and chanting is the foremost process for attaining Krishna consciousness, which is repeatedly stated in the Chaitanya Charitamrita and Srimad Bhagavatam. "Saying this, My spiritual master taught Me one verse from Srimad Bhagavatam. It is the essence of all the Bhagavatam's instructions; therefore he instructed Me this verse again and again.

"When a person is actually advanced and takes pleasure in chanting the Holy Name of the Lord, who is very dear to him, he is agitated and loudly chants the Holy Name. He also laughs, cries, becomes agitated and chants just like a madman, not caring for outsiders.' I firmly believe in these words of My spiritual master and therefore I always chant the holy name of the Lord, alone and in the association of devotees. That Holy Name of Lord Krishna sometimes causes Me to chant and dance, and therefore I chant and dance. Please do not think that I intentionally do it. I do it automatically." Lord Chaitanya C.C. Adi-lila 7:93-96

The Maha mantra is not an ordinary mantra. Being Krishna Himself, it is the foremost of all mantras, and the essence of all eternal existence, transcendental knowledge, and bliss. This can be realized only through regularly hearing and chanting its transcendental sound. Whoever ignores this is

HARE KṚṢṆA
HARE KṚṢṆA
KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA
HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA
HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA
HARE HARE

either an impersonalist or a liberationist and is interpreting the Holy Name, which is one of the ten offenses to the Holy Name. Such persons value the attainment of liberation more than Krishna prema or love of God and thus they are condemned.

BIOGRAPHY CONTROVERSY CONTINUED

PART ONE: A LETTER

From Satsvarupa dasa
Goswami to Ganesh dasa,
Australia, 2.5.91:

I do not agree with your interpretation of the Srila Prabhupada Lilamrita. I have sometimes heard this criticism before. On the other hand, I have more often heard that the Prabhupada Lilamrita has done much good in spreading Srila Prabhupada's glories.

Your basic point is that some of my descriptions of Prabhupada seem to make him sound like an ordinary human being. But I have explained in several places that Srila Prabhupada is actually a nitya-siddha or liberated person, a saktayvesa-avatara and so on. And so it is not out of character for liberated souls to act in ways that are just like human beings. Even Lord Krishna acts, as Prabhupada says, like an "ordinary human being." We read in the Krishna Book how sometimes Krishna is sorry and sometimes anxious, sometimes tired and so on. You could level your same criticism that you made against me against the Krishna Book.

Prabhupada explains the behavior of the nitya-siddha as follows:

"The nitya-siddha never forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whereas the nitya-baddha is always conditioned, even before the creation. He always forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By the order of the Supreme, the nitya-siddha remains within the material world like an ordinary man, but his only business is to broadcast the glories of the Lord. All nitya-siddhas within this material world may appear to toil

like ordinary men, but they never forget their position as servants of the Lord."

Of course, it is a matter of opinion also. Descriptions of saintly persons and pure devotees in which there is almost no reference to their human activities, I find to be stilted and artificial. I find the flowery prose style that is used, for example, in the Gaudiya-math tradition, to be very inaccessible to ordinary persons. They will not say that a pure devotee caught a cold but that he "had the pastime of ecstasy of appearing to have a cold." This kind of presentation is not the way Prabhupada wrote. Prabhupada wrote in more down-to-earth, clear-cut prose. I tried to capture both the devotee audience as well as the larger audience, and it is not an easy thing.



PART TWO: AN ARTICLE VERY HUMAN?

by Riktaharsana dasa

I was very impressed by a number of points you raised to challenge the so-called GBC. Particularly, I was encouraged by Point 14, your desire to review the authenticity of the "Lilamrita". Transcendental literature is only meant to lift conditioned souls out of the material conception of life. Bona fide glorification of the Lord and His unalloyed devotee is in such literature and produces that effect. The more the reader appreciates

the actual position of Krishna and His representative, the more that reader gives up the doggish mentality of thinking himself the controller or enjoyer. If the conditioned soul is not only allowed, but even accidentally encouraged, to entertain the idea that Srila Prabhupada was only an extremely powerful or influential man, he is subtly deceived by what he reads. If a book about a pure devotee is actually transcendental, it must make the distinction between mundane men and the shaktayvesh-avatara from the very outset; that distinction cannot be mentioned incidentally. In his own writings about his own guru, Srila Prabhupada does not present mundane misconceptions about Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami. Caitanya-Charitamrita similarly pushes its reader to accept the supreme divinity and transcendence of Sri Krishna Caitanya, before any talk of pastimes. Srila Vyasadeva uses nine cantos to do the same.

tend that his initial preaching constituted "years of struggle" is to employ the same twisted logic which gave us the title concept the "Guru Reform" Notebook. To constantly refer to your own spiritual master as "Abhay Caran" makes good copy amongst the literati and people of their ilk, but it is to make offense within the circles of true Vaishnavas.

Who's ultimately responsible for this? The author gives us a clue:

"The responsibility of commissioning such a work rested with the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON. At their annual meeting in 1978, the GBC resolved that a biography of Srila Prabhupada should be written and that I would be the author." Preface pg.xi

So it's no accident that, in Volume Six of this work, Srila Prabhupada is quoted as saying, "Even I must follow the GBC." Not hard to understand what kind of effect that quote is meant to produce! Would Srila Prabhupada have followed the GBC in the spring of 1986? Would he have approved their eight to six vote (with two abstentions) which kept as guru an admitted homosexual? Would Prabhupada have followed the GBC then? Would he have "cooperated" with such a vote?

We must reject this Lilamrita because of so many contaminations within it; and we have only presented a handful of them. Material conceptions do not apply to an eternal associate of the Lord such as Srila Prabhupada. Despite this, Lilamrita weaves into its storyline a viewpoint of Prabhupada which devotees would have never accepted while he was here. If, previously, some kind of Mayavadi would have pressed a devotee to believe these kinds of views, if the devotee didn't run away, he would have blasted the offender instead.

Accepting any mundane conception of the spiritual master is dangerous. The scripture describes such misconceptions of the guru as hellish mentality. It is capable of uprooting the devotional creeper of even a staunch devotee, a nistha-bhakta. The real fixed up devotee would view mundane statements about the acarya, especially if they were printed in a book distributed to over a million people, as maha-guru-aparadha.

It's called Lilamrita, but amongst the devotees who find it flawed, many consider its shortcomings as more than simple isolated mistakes. The Bhagavatam says that the effect is always present in the cause. The book was created in order to help produce the effects which now constitute what we experience as the present corporate ISKCON institution. The book took birth during the heyday of the zonal acarya fervor. Even if we are so polite (and naive?) as to say the author's motives were subconscious, the main effect it helped to produce was rather blatant. It becomes much easier to accept an ordinary, conditioned man as a full-blown acarya as the real acarya is brought down to the level of an ordinary man. And that, in this case, being the sampradaya acarya, no less! The eleven zonal acharyas deceived themselves into thinking that they were guru despite their bad habits, offenses and deviations. The Lilamrita's mundane portrayal of Srila Prabhupada is the inevitable product of inwardly accepting such a definition of guru.

In conclusion, posing as an uttama-adhikari can never be inspired by the internal energy of the Lord, whether such posturing

was enacted individually or in unison. Instead, such cheating is a product of the illusory energy of the Lord and has now become institutionally hardened into ISKCON's foundation. The Lilamrita was an integral ingredient of that foundation's cement.

Ironically, a review was printed within the Lilamrita. It read, "It (the book) is a very human story, with a very human A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami in the center." This quote came from an influential American professor. How perfectly this statement mocks those of us who foolishly accepted it.

PART THREE: AN ARTICLE

Lilamrita Disturbance

by *Urdhvaga das*

While I have the greatest respect for Srila Satsvarupa Maharaja's personal reform (see Guru Reform Book), I am unable, however, to accept his Lilamrita which I find not only very painful to read but also very offensive and distorting.

Srila Satsvarupa wrote the Lilamrita before his personal reform took place, that means when he was still under the misconception of being a "Prabhupada-appointed successor-acarya"; which he later on admitted was an erroneous presumption only. The Lilamrita is therefore imbued with Satsvarupa's personal misconceptions and incomplete realizations; and thus cannot be an "authorized biography of Srila Prabhupada".

Besides falling short of describing a pure Mahabagavata Devotee of Lord Krishna, the Lilamrita also very badly misrepresents Srila Prabhupada by indicating that Srila Prabhupada left his movement in the care of eleven chosen "successor-acaryas". By advocating a bogus Guru-system the Lilamrita has not only heavily deviated from Srila Prabhupada's originally established ISKCON-Society but the Lilamrita is also perverting Srila Prabhupada's philosophy.

The book puts forth ideas which contradict Srila Prabhupada's statements. If one accepts the Lilamrita's conclusions, one will be forced to subtly interpret Srila Prabhupada's books in such a way that one may somehow be forced to correspond with the distorted understandings of the Lilamrita. The author quotes a mundane professor's review of his book describing it as a "very real human story." (Prof. Hopkin).

"I invite the reader to enjoy the very real human life story of Srila Prabhupada, who is known in this volume as Abhay Charan." Lilamrita 1, Intro. p. 19, by the author himself.

The Lilamrita is also written in a lowclass language because it portrays Srila Prabhupada in a very mundane way by attempting to show that Srila Prabhupada becomes fatigued, goes into ignorance, gets heartstroke, diseased, starves, suffers from old age, has imperfect senses, becomes drowsy, dozes off, made mistakes, etc. LL1, p. 286 "Bhaktivedanta Swami's neighbors observed him coming

home dead tired. He stayed around 11:00 and then became drowsy. The next morning Srila Prabhupada didn't get up. He was exhausted. It became apparent that he was over-exerting himself." LL2p. 269. SB.3.2.3 In the transcendental service there is no feeling of fatigue, because it is spiritual service and not on the bodily plane. Service on the bodily plane dwindles as the body grows older, but the spirit is never old, on the spiritual plane the service is never tiresome.

LL1,p.287 "He (Srila Prabhupada) was dangerously old and not in strong health." SB.5.4.5 Another symptom of a liberated person is vijara, which indicates that he is not subjected to the miseries of old age.

LL1,p194 "Abhay suddenly began reeling, half unconscious, overcome by the heat." BG. 6.7 "The devotee of the Lord is unaffected by the dualities of material existence, namely distress and happiness, cold and heat."

Etc., etc., etc. My list goes on for 39 pages.

If someone, in the name of glorifying His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada, also criticizes him by attributing to him such mundane qualities as destitution, insecurity, vulnerability, directionlessness, familial attachment, dependency on others, attainment of knowledge via material experiences, etc., then Srila Prabhupada's spiritual authority is brought into question. Interpreting the Vedic literature minimizes the authority of the Vedas.

Mixing the spiritual with the mundane allows the mundane to be accepted as spiritual, and the spiritual to be considered in a mundane manner. The Lilamrita is not only unbonafide and unauthorized but also very offensive because the author portrays Srila Prabhupada in such a way, that the reader might get the wrong impression of Srila Prabhupada as a mere mortal being or just another of the many Indian hippie-gurus who came to the West to save some freaked-out

Western drug-addicts.

The Lilamrita's description does not sound very glorious when it proceeds to delineate the pure devotee's activities and qualities, from its incomplete and imperfect vision, which regularly is found to contradict that of Sastra (Srimad Bhagavatam).

If the GBC has any regard for Srila Prabhupada as a "nitya-siddha" devotee, then they will declare the Lilamrita unbonafide and unauthorized and will prohibit it from being further printed.

I suggest that the Lilamrita should be immediately corrected and redone in proper manner, eliminating the completely distorted view of Srila Prabhupada presently given.

The Lilamrita also refers to the bonafide spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada as "Abhay". The authors of the Lilamrita are initiated disciples of Srila Prabhupada, but unfortunately they have the boldness to refer to their guru as "Abhay". It is no wonder that the readers of this book consider Srila Prabhupada as a "very human story". His Divine Grace always referred to his spiritual master, His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaja, in these exalted terms, even when he referred to a pastime of his spiritual master as a 6 month old child.

Perhaps the author of the Lilamrita, who has gone through the process of rectification and purification, and who is no longer under the misconception of being a chosen successor of His Divine Grace, can re-write Srila Prabhupada's Autobiography in such a way that Srila Prabhupada is portrayed properly.

However, I am in doubt that Srila Satsvarupa Maharaja is able now to correctly describe his spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, according to Sastra, in the topmost terms a nitya-siddha, mahabhagavata, liberated soul, pure devotee, fully surrendered to and dependent upon Lord Sri Krishna. Perhaps if he were to come to the above understanding, I could trust any future writing he may produce.



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LETTERS

To the Editors

From Mahadevan Iyer, Carrollton, TX

11.28.90:

Hare Krsna! Thank you for VVR 14 which, as usual, covered a lot of spiritual material in depth. I think you deserve a lot of credit and admiration for launching an almost single-handed battle against the GBC and the ISKCON as it is constituted now. I am sure you will have the unqualified support and blessings of Lord Krishna and Prabhupada for sparing no pain to expose the pseudo-gurus and their hypocrisy. We have had enough of these upstarts and it is time ISKCON finds an entirely new type and quality of leadership and principles. Please carry on this crusade and you will surely have the support of the devotees of Lord Krishna.

From Priya Bhakta das, Montreal,

12.17.90:

Victory to Srila Prabhupada who stood alone and spoke the Truth in this hellish age of untruth and hypocrisy. Those who lie and cheat are only fooling themselves in the end. Any honest God-conscious soul can see the Truth when he hears it. What more can I say? Thank you for sending me your VVR 14 even if I don't subscribe. It is only due to lack of funds.

From Gauradasa, Florida:

I could offer you some suggestions on how you could better serve ISKCON but if you won't hear from the qualified members of the GBC, then surely my comments would be disregarded and of no worth to you.

From Nancy McCauley, Brockport, NY:

I received VVR 14 -excellent as always! Your publication is such a raft of mercy! I am very interested in viewing the ritvik videos. Try as I might, I still can't see the GBC's position making any sense; there seems to be more evidence to the contrary, and the ISKCON Journal told me nothing... Please keep up your quest. Srila Prabhupada must be brought back to the forefront of ISKCON!

From Ram Gopal, Martins Ferry, OH,

12.5.90:

In S Bhag, Kapila's instructions to Devahuti and, in Canto

11, Krsna's instructions to Uddhava, the process of pranayama is described wherein inhalation, retention, and exhalation; and the opposite exhalation, retention, and inhalation are described. I also heard that S Sanatana Goswami also says that one can practice pranayama before chanting rounds. Can you fill me in on details of this breathing, especially the exhalation, retention and inhalation process.

Editor's Note: This is in reference to the type of chanting practiced in New Vrindaban. Does anyone have info on Sanatana Goswami's actual instructions in this regard?

From Vicitra-vasini dasi, Calcutta,

12.24.90:

The enclosed magazine for Jayapataka's disciples just came out. A temple president suggested I send you a copy. I took one look at the cover and immediately became indignant—how he can advertise himself as "Sri Guru"? He is personally supervising distribution of this magazine. (Be sure you see page 7, where he discusses whether or not he himself is an eternal associate of Lord Chaitanya. His answer: very vague.)

I had been staying in Mayapur with a close friend and was just told by the Council that I had to leave because I do not accept Jayapataka Swami. I had not been criticizing JPS, I was keeping quiet. I am allowed to visit for three days only from time to time. I wrote a letter to the Council apologizing for any offense I had made to JPS and asked them to reconsider their decision. Then I was questioned by Bhakta Rupa to see where I stand philosophically. Actually I felt like it was an attempt to deprogram me. He tried to get me to agree that 100% surrender must be given to diksha gurus, no matter what platform they're on. And no views ever expressed in VVR are acceptable to the ISKCON party line. Disciple is not allowed to see any discrepancies in their gurus, only certain quotes from Prabhupada are allowed, and disciple is not allowed to reject a faulty guru. I have been given no just cause for my expulsion, nor did anyone ever approach me in any sincere way to allay my doubts. Under these circumstances, I had to leave Mayapur, and now I hear that four other devotees have had the same story to tell the Calcutta TP. A false rumor is being circulated that I was too attached to JPS and that he thus rejected me.

I was told that this summer Dhruva was buying his apart-

ment in Mayapur and JPS sent Satadhanya to him saying the Council had reconsidered and didn't want to sell him the apartment because he doesn't do enough service for Mayapur. Dhruva answered that he knew the real reason was that he had distributed some VVR's and if they refused to sell him the apartment after having been promised it, he would fight them and go to the GBC and all the way to the Judicial Committee if necessary, so Mayapur backed down and sold him the apartment. What a regime!

I'm nicely situated in Calcutta now and am busy making cakes in our bakery for the Christmas rush. Next month I'm going to South India and then plan to come back to Calcutta in February, perhaps until Ratha Yatra in June.

From Dharmatma das, Jessup, GA, 12.8.90:

Recently I received VVR 14 and again was thoroughly enlivened by the contents. I am especially encouraged by the "Letters" section. I remember being at New Vrindavan and being terrified and guilty for wanting to speak out about the nonsense going on there. Now there finally exists an opportunity for devotees to voice their feelings. Keep it up and don't be intimidated. What you're doing is very healthy for Srila Prabhupada's movement.

At a recent PTA meeting at our Alachua community in Florida the question of sex education came up. It seems that some parents think it necessary to give some basic instruction on this matter and others think that it shouldn't be discussed and hopefully it will go away. I was wondering how you have dealt with this. It seems to me that as we teach the children mathematics, geography and so on that a little basic knowledge of their bodily functions wouldn't hurt. Better they learn from devotees in a Krsna conscious setting than from the karmi boyfriends some of the girls are learning from at our community. PS: I recently testified in the Thomas Drescher trial in LA.

Editor's Note: Between the parents and teachers, our children should be educated in all relevant practical knowledge, but from the viewpoint of sastra or Krsna consciousness only. Needless to say, the problem herein is not as much as what to teach, but who and how.

From Anonymous, Baltimore, MD, 12.1.90:

Stop beating a dead challenge horse!!!!

From Gauridasa Pandita dasa, 12.10.90:

Here's a couple of ISKCON Asian publications you might find interesting. More evidence of how the zonal acharya system is still haunting us. In Malaysia, Jayapataka is promoted as the "Guru of the Hare Krsna movement." This was the quote from the local newspaper which received the information from the temple. Then there are Hansadutta's disciples that are still worshipping him! Fanatics! The weak-minded devotees are being controlled by unqualified "gurus".

I just finished reading VVR 14 and I'm very impressed. Your writings and realizations are ever-increasing, bold and on the mark. Who was "Anonymous dasa"? Those two articles were dynamite, excellent! Ravindra's 1984 paper was great also. When I got to the end and saw his name and date, it was great. Keep exposing these pretenders. You're doing the greatest service for this movement. Although it seems like poison now, later the churning of the Truth will produce the Nectar.

From Serage Baranow, Moscow:

What about receiving gayatri from books of Srila Prabhupada without any initiation from a living guru? If you say gurus are bogus, what's wrong to accept gayatri chanting from Srila Prabhupada's books only? (Srimad Bhagavatam Fifth Canto and CC -Madhya lila.) As you think, is it possible to accept any drugs or drug-like medicine in a cause of sharp pain from disease? (ED: *Reader's comments?*)

I am your well-wisher so from that reason, I have difficulties with association of devotees. How to associate with devotees if VVR and it's readers are outcast? It's difficult for me to be strong with the four principles without any association. Thank you ever so much. Srila Prabhupada forever! Your company is senior devotees for me.

From Natha das, LA, CA, 11.12.90:

I want to thank you for publishing VVR. I read each issue cover to cover, and I like it very much indeed as it forces my dull brain to think of the issues facing us. Keep up the good work.

From Jack Elliot, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 12.19.90:

Thanks a million for the usage of the tapes. They have been both entertaining and informative. I have interested the MSU Department of Philosophy and Religion in them and expect to hear within the next few days whether or not they are interested in purchasing them. Incidentally, in November I attended the American Academy of Religion meeting in New Orleans where I met and had a long discussion with an old friend of yours, Jayadvaita Swami. He seemed like a pleasant chap and despite differences within ISKCON, he spoke of you in a very complimentary fashion. All the best.

From Vishwa Ranjan, New Delhi, 12.16.90:

About 3 weeks back I received ten copies of VVR 13. I distributed 4 copies at Krsna Balarama Temple, Vrindaban, to Dhanurdhara Swami, Bhurijana das, Sita Devi Dasi, and Deen Bandhu das. Five copies were distributed at the Radha Partha Sarathi Temple, ISKCON New Delhi, to Krishna Gopal das, Ram Parashar, Maheshwariji and other prominent life mem-

bers of Delhi ISKCON fraternity. Every Sunday, a regular program is held at ISKCON Temple, New Delhi. There is pravachan, kirtana and Sunday feast. About 300 devotees participate in these programs. There is a talk among the devotees about VVR and both positive and negative comments are made.

In this issue of VVR, I find the New Jaipur Regulations and Constitution very interesting and enlightening. It gives an idea of the type of community you are trying to build. I wish there were some such communities in India where I could become a member and lead a useful life. The rules of the New Jaipur community are in accordance with Vedic culture and shastras. They are the solution to all world problems and will enable human life to be purposeful and happy. I know, you must be facing many difficulties, but I can only pray for your success so that New Jaipur Village may become a model community.

Though ISKCON as it is is doing useful work, I feel that too much power and resources are concentrated in the hands of GBC's. As a result they tend to become corrupt. There are no councils of brahmanas to check and guide GBC's who are executive heads and hold vast resources of temples and also faith and reverence of their shishyas. As a result the GBC's tend to lead luxurious lives and are concerned more about their comforts and power. It is because of this reason that much progress has not been made in ISKCON movement after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance. All the three major temples and centers of ISKCON in India, viz., Bombay, Vrindaban and Mayapur, were built in the lifetime of Srila Prabhupada. Though over 13 years have elapsed since his disappearance, no other major center of ISKCON has come up in India.

From Hamsavatara dasa, Honolulu, HI, 12.4.90:

There is so much anger and frustration with the GBC, as you say, and to be honest I agree with your evaluation of this "ISKCON" situation. I do believe though that for the time being it is wasted energy trying to change "them" or their powerful position. Krsna has allowed them their free will, just as we are allowed ours. Do not believe that they believe the so-called "resolutions" that they expound. Unfortunately their power has corrupted them and they are addicted to their temporary positions in these bodies.

Don't you think that if you preached more for devotees to group together, start temples and projects, and to work together to spread Krishna consciousness, than to try to change

ISKCON, it would be more potent and produce more results? Let the GBC have the buildings which they believe they now own and the rest of the material assets. There are many devotees with enough business acumen to gather resources to start projects and I really don't believe the BBT would refuse to fill anyone's book orders, so what's the problem?

The ISKCON that Prabhupada referred to when he said, "I am ISKCON," is the spiritual movement not the material designation of the corporation. One must try to see this in a transcendental light. If you are trying your utmost to follow Srila Prabhupada's instructions and to spread Krishna consciousness with whatever means the Lord has given you, you

are always a part of ISKCON. That will never change regardless of what the material name of the nonprofit corporation is. It only takes a few hundred dollars to incorporate, and devotees can easily rent temples (the buildings used). All of our centers, pretty much, were rented in the beginning. Just as you have done in Mississippi, others can do. Following the order of your guru does not necessarily mean remaining a so-called "member" of ISKCON. If that was what our guru meant, Srila Prabhupada would have started "Gaudiya Math U.S.A." not "ISKCON". What is important is that you use this short lifetime to the best of your ability to become Krishna conscious, and to spread this to the population at large.

If there were other centers with regulated programs, deities, book distribution, prasadam distribution, etc., we'd soon find that it really doesn't matter what the GBC thinks! There are many of us who are disciples of Srila Prabhupada and it is our duty to carry out this mission. Life is not meant to always be easy, so although it's easier to just do nothing and go along, you will later regret that you didn't follow your heart. Pray to Krsna for strength and perseverance, then depend on Him. Single-handedly Srila Prabhupada changed the face of this planet. Are we, his disciples, to squabble to our graves or die trying to spread this philosophy? The choice is up to each one of us.

From Gaurasundara dasa, 8.8.90:

I have just finished reading VVR 3. The first time I heard about the New Jaipur Temple was about a year ago. One day Nityananda's name came up in a conversation that I was having with another devotee. I was told that he was responsible for a great deal of the problems regarding the Robin George case. I was told that the VVR and everything connected to the New Jaipur Temple was maya. I have been a



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devotee for the last 12 years. Basically, when I joined ISKCON, I was taught to not question my authorities or the decisions that were made regarding the treatment and general attitude all temple devotees should hold toward "so-called enemies of the movement."

The fact is, Nityananda and New Jaipur were projected to me in a way that made me stop and ask myself: "Is this for real?" I was initiated by Ramesvara and have been spoon-fed a lot of bogus information over the years. An intelligent person must develop the ability to separate fact from fiction. One day I came home to find a copy of the VVR at our home. I found it to be very inspirational and direct. A lot of the information about the guru issue was not known to me until I read your magazine. Quite frankly, in the VVR 13, Nityananda's answers in the letter section appear to be very philosophically sound. I enjoyed your magazine and hope that all the devotees in New Jaipur continue to serve Srila Prabhupada in such a nice way. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!!

From Sita devi dasi, Thornbury, Ontario, 12.31.90:

I'm sending some quotations from Gopal Krsna Maharaja, excerpts from our brief talk with him a few weeks ago. He said several times, "The ritvik theory is bogus," and seemed to think that having this system meant not accepting any guru. He referred to TKG's not replying to your accusations as if to support his not replying either. A devotee in Toronto spoke with Prabhupada dasa regarding his "ritvik" initiation and was nearly cut off by the temple president who wanted to interrupt the conversation. Prabhupada dasa said that at the time of initiation he clearly felt he was Srila Prabhupada's disciple, and no matter way GKG says now, he can't change that!

Looking forward to issue 15—please send it in a plain envelope. I have nearly distributed the 12 copies you sent earlier. Support is growing in Toronto. We watched the ritvik tapes and will let another devotee couple watch it before returning it; the GBC's arguments are very weak and based on personal attacks. Why have they barred further discussions when it was agreed on at that meeting by practically everyone present? (Jagadish Goswami refuses to speak about it around here.)

Editor's Note: Upon request, VVR will send 5 to 12 extra copies to selected individuals who would like to pass them out to devotees in their area who are too poor to subscribe, are new to VVR or are interested to read it, etc. Just let us know. But we depend on our paid subscribers to keep the VVR project going!

From Prabhas das and Bisalaksi dasi,

Royal Oak, MI, 12.10.90:

We very much appreciate your services to ISKCON and devotees all over the world. Thank you for sending VVR to us. We always find it enlivening to our devotional creepers.

From Gaura das, Florida, 2.11.91:

I hope that as Godbrothers, we can soon stop pinching our spiritual father, Srila Prabhupada from either side, when in the name of one side making itself appear righteous and the other side mischievous, the end result is that the father is pained from either side.

While the diksha/ritvik battle ensues, I see many qualified Godbrothers offering first-class siksha to their students who most ISKCON diksha gurus consider to be Prabhupada's disciples anyway, although these diksha gurus have been entrusted by Srila Prabhupada to engage these students (disciples) in his service. Srila Prabhupada always saw his disciples as being sent by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, and he engaged us in helping him to carry out Bhaktisiddhanta's orders. Those that you accuse of supporting a bogus diksha system are continuing to increase the spiritual strength of our ISKCON by giving birth to so many new qualified bhaktas and bhaktins! These new devotees are dynamically taking the essence of Srila Prabhupada's mission to heart by distributing Srila Prabhupada into millions of conditioned souls' homes. The potency of the Brahma Madhva Gaudiya Sampradaya is alive and well in ISKCON!

I recommend you look at the World

Sankirtana Newsletter sometime. A Vaishnava can be judged by how many others he can turn into Vaishnavas according to Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura. Every book distributed in a gentlemanly fashion is virtually a devotee made. This was the best year for book distribution in ISKCON's history!

Those of us who are so strongly critical of the current diksha system which I believe Srila Prabhupada gave to us, should take a closer look at the fruits of our own preaching efforts, compare it to the invigorating results of other successful preachers and remove the log from our own eyes before we take the splinters out of others.

For the last few years, I feel extremely fortunate and privileged to be able to regularly associate with the senior preachers of North America (such as HH Ganapati Swami, HH Tamala Krishna Goswami, HH Hrdayananda Goswami, HH Romapada Swami, HH Angrani Swami, HH Vipramukhya Swami, HH Gunagrahi Swami, HH Jagadisha Maharaja, HH Satsvarupa Maharaja, HH Jayadvaita Swami, HH Virabahu, Badrinarayana, Annutama, Prithu Srava, and Danavir Prabhus



JAMAICAN JUNGLE

to name just a few). Some are initiating and some are not. That doesn't make one more authorized than the other. They are all taking the "burden of love" of giving up personal comforts and selflessly going out of their way to preach the sankirtana mission.

In the name of spreading the "greater ISKCON", I think we have to be very cautious about not becoming the "lesser ISKCON" by minimizing those who are always meditating on progressively maintaining the transcendental institution that His Divine Grace gave us. P.S. Several Godbrothers (initiating) admittedly made blunders during the "acarya syndrome" but as a result they've become humbled for it and better Vaishnavas. *Api cet sudur-acarah. Let's not dwell on the past:*

"Forget the past that sleeps, and ne'er
The future dream at all,
But at in times that are with thee
And progress thee shall call!!

—BK Thakura

Had we been in the position of responsibility of many of those that encountered difficulties or fell, would we have done better? Krishna is rectifying and purifying His movement from within.

If those initiating Godbrothers were not closely linked up with the parampara, how could they be so empowered to continue vigorously preaching? *Kali kalera nama sankirtana, krishna sakti vina nahe tara pravartana.* This is what I believe to be one of the most conclusive statements regarding the ritvik issue.

If the head of our Sampradaya is not regarded as a pure devotee yet is exalted enough to lead it, why can't we regard our Godbrothers as exalted personalities who by symptom of their preaching are enthusing thousands to be connected to our Sampradaya.

You don't have to be an *uttama-adhikari* to initiate. Why blow everything out of proportion and create so much dissension? VVR started out as a wonderful forum for devotees to exchange ideas until it got constipated on the ritvik/diksha issue. Please go back to your original format! Then you'll be back at the level of the "New Talavan Review" that Srila Prabhupada praised you for! There is still a lot of nectar in your pages. See if you can print one issue without mentioning the ritvik issue. Heads will turn!

From Anonymous, East Lansing, MI, 12.14.90:

I am not a devotee so my opinion has no merit, but in my heart I support your efforts to promote ritvik initiation in ISKCON until such time as a worthy successor to Srila Prabhupada appears. Srila Prabhupada is so obviously a great saint; unfortunately, the same cannot be said of all of his successors. If I were to take initiation I would want to put

myself under the spiritual protection of a truly pure soul; I would not care to take as spiritual master a novice devotee who could relapse at any time. I wish there were not so much disagreement between the ISKCON GBC and New Jaipur; conflict is very seductive, and a difference in principle can become, in time, a schism, with both sides opposing each other for the sake of being in opposition.

In my opinion, the best thing devotees and friends of ISKCON can do is to pray to Prabhupada to continue to guide and protect his ISKCON, and to make sure his disciples handle all things as he desires. The Krishna Consciousness Movement (outside of India) is Prabhupada's movement; without Prabhupada's mercy it is doomed, and it breaks my heart to see senior devotees falling down and fighting amongst themselves and to see ISKCON splintering into sects. I pray that Prabhupada will establish the form of initiation that he desires for ISKCON, and that he will restore harmony between you in New Jaipur and the GBC.

From Gaurasundara Dasa Adhikari, 12.10.90:

All glories to Srila Prabhupada! All glories to every one's devotional service to Srila Prabhupada! I would like to thank the editors for all the nectar that went into the new VVR. I really enjoyed the contents of the magazine. One day, I hope to meet the editors personally so that I can congratulate them on the work that they are doing for Srila Prabhupada. I think the GBC owes every devotee in ISKCON an apology. The GBC also owes every devotee the truth. The GBC should not think that they

are free from all reactions in this matter. Krsna knows what is in all of our hearts.

From Gauridasa Pandita Das to Sivarama Swami, Auburn, WA, 12.11.90:

I just returned from an extensive tour of India and Asia. I saw you in Vrindavan and Mayapur and wanted to talk to you but the opportunity never arose. I did talk to Jayapataka Swami and afterwards he advised that I write you. He agreed that it would be beneficial for the movement to have at least one more GBC meeting to discuss the guru issue. He asked you to put it on the agenda. We need to clear the air once and for all. We must cooperate and communicate to unite Srila Prabhupada's mission. You might think that the guru issue is settled with the ISKCON Journal but the reality is that the majority of devotees are not satisfied with the ISKCON Journal (it was published even before the GBC meeting), nor are they satisfied with last year's GBC meeting. Nor are they satisfied with GBC policy on guru tattva. Nor are they satis-



fied with TKG's responses to the guru issue and what he heard from Srila Prabhupada. Why is the "appointment tape" backwards with the July 8th conversation first, then the May 28th conversation after without any indication? It's the only tape in the archives that is chronologically backwards! There were other discussions with Srila Prabhupada about initiations after his departure, as I personally heard them, but they have curiously disappeared. We need to clear the air in a gentle Vaisnava way. The sooner the better. Let's get ISKCON back on the right track, back to Godhead, with the control of our captain, Srila Prabhupada. He heads the train that everyone can ride if they pay the price, faith. Please let me know when and where we can meet in this regard. Thank you!

From Kundali das, Malaysia, 12.19.90:

After a three-year absence from reading VVR, in one sitting I read through a stack of them recently, #7 through #13, except that #12 was missing. What can I say? VVR is rendering a valuable service to the mission of Prabhupada just by being a forum for devotees to air their feelings, whether right or wrong. Personally, I am not completely sold on many of the views I've seen aired. But that is hardly the point. The main thing is that VVR serves as a conscience for the leaders of the Krishna consciousness movement. It's something vitally needed. I pray they will attune themselves to VVR in the same way that Lord Ram would wander His kingdom in disguise to know the thoughts of His subjects. VVR is the magazine of the Krishna consciousness movement. That's what you prabhhus have started. Let that be your service, but under no circumstances allow it to become a vehicle for Vaisnava aparadha, sadhu-ninda. Also, to continue being effective, you ought to remain independent not just financially, but managerially as well. One of the oldest of managerial ploys is to defame one's opposition by taking them in and giving them a nice position. It worked pretty well with the reform movement in 1985 when so many of my godbrothers were "blessed" to become gurus. Then a number of them became versions of the same monster they set out to reform. Best, therefore, to stay independent.

Historically, religious institutional reforms, usually come from outside the mainstream, wherein political machinations usually made for all sorts of strange bedfellows. The legal body of ISKCON does not have a monopoly on devotional service, not any more than Citibank has a monopoly on money. So just remain in "greater ISKCON" and continue to produce VVR. Anyway that is the opinion of one insignificant soul. My only other advise, prabhhus, is that you tone down the shrill tone of your message. People tend to hear shrillness over

content. I am not expert in this myself, but it is an axiom of the literary community that understatement is 99% of the time more effective than its counterpart. Also, and this is important, acknowledge the sincerity in those who disagree with you. No one has a monopoly on Krsna conscious realization. Ultimately, we all tend to have only parts of the solution. By selfless cooperation we can put all those parts together and get some wonderful results.

From Bhakta Ralph, NYC, NY:

I have to congratulate you all on the wonderful service you are all doing, especially at the gurukula. Everyone is engaged so nicely at New Jaipur fulfilling Prabhupada's intimate desire to start a new generation of preachers. The New Jaipur devotees made me feel like I was in the pleasure groves of Vrndavana. I gained lots of strength and confidence in our mission to please our savior Srila Prabhupada. As a result, my preaching activities are much more effective. New Yorkers are really blind in seeing their suffering but Prabhupada is opening their darkened eyes with his books, tapes, posters, prasadam and Prabhupada Speaks Out leaflets. They are liking it more and more every day.

Kapindra Prabhu is very sick with anemia but he is still our five-star General. I am surviving this hellish City on his conviction and confidence in Prabhupada's mercy and protection. He sends us out on sankirtan every day. We go to Macy's on 34th Street and fight our battle against maya with Prabhupada's books and the Holy Name. It is real sense gratification for us. I don't know how it is all going on but we are like a

fearless few. We are really trying to become bhaktas. Our enthusiasm attracts all kinds of people and they join in our kirtans and even dance. We also meet devotees on sankirtan from around the world, and some devotees that have not been active in Prabhupada's Mission for years are also joining in our chanting party. Kapindra Prabhu told us to rotate our chanting and book distribution because he learned that in the early days and it is very effective.

This is my first real effort to distribute Prabhupada's books so for the two hours that I am distributing, I'm averaging about 35 books. I hand them a reservoir of Pleasure and say, "This book tells you how you can actually increase your pleasure." As they are listening to the devotees chanting, I say, "By chanting or even just hearing the name of God, it cleans your heart and soul because the names of God are not ordinary names, they are very powerful names and they are very purifying and by purifying your heart and soul you can actually increase your pleasure." Everyone who hears us chanting God's names is being purified. That's why we are chanting in the street.



WEST INDIES WATER WHEEL

Thanks again for making my stay at New Jaipur so wonderful and encouraging. When you come to New York, please come and join us in Prabhupada's Sankirtan Party!

From Anonymous, 1.3.91:

Thank you very much for the books and tapes, and the guru-tattva book which was a very wonderful gift. I saw the ritvik tapes and it is obvious you won. But what has happened since then? Did the guru committee ever get started? Everyone seemed very convinced, and especially the GBC members present seemed quite favorable for a further investigation. It looks like no one feels concerned enough to start this research, within the shelter of ISKCON. Why?

From Labangalatika dasi, Denmark, 1.4.91:

We do not wish to receive any more issues of your VVR. I am satisfied trying to serve my spiritual master, who is acting as an ideal disciple, pushing on Srila Prabhupada's mission of printing, translating, and distributing Srila Prabhupada's books, establishing Krishna conscious farm communities, etc., and at the same time taking up the thankless task of accepting disciples to train them to be engaged in Srila Prabhupada's service also.

From Jagadvira das, Japan, 1.11.91:

In VVR 14 there's a letter from Ekachakra dasa (Nigeria, Africa 9.12.90). Actually, Kavichandra Swami has been to Africa and he found it very enlivening to preach there. He wanted to go sooner, but it took a little while to obtain the visa. He's planning to return there later and now he is out on book distribution and collecting his air fare. Also Bhaktitirtha Swami was there.

From Yamuna-priya devi dasi, Cincinnati, OH:

Please do not send VVR. I re-subscribed (Nov. 20, 1990) and have changed my mind. Please keep the \$10 as a donation for your community.

From Puranjana das, Fair Oaks, CA:

We have been informed that the guru party seeks to check your activities by their usual "final solution" ... the iron fist method. They have threatened you with a legal attack. This is the same history as the Gaudiya Matha's guru folks, who also tried to use the courts to establish their bogus acharya scam. Similarly, the Medieval Church used various iron fist tactics to uphold their papal oppression. In short, what else would we

expect from them?

When we ask for just one village, they say no, let us go to war. They are bent on such aggression, they will drive out anyone who is not "cent per cent" with them. Since the qualification for guru is brahma-nistha, they have driven everyone back to material life by expelling them from the protection of Prabhupada's temples, so they will be drastically impeded from attaining brahma-nistha. In fact many of them seem to gloat over the fact that so many devotees have left and have fallen in their devotional practices. This is some type of "victory." In short, they have an agenda, not even a hidden agenda or subtle agenda. Blatantly, they want their godbrothers to be gone so they can pursue their guru enterprises. And they want those "brothers" to be cut off from all



resources to attain their independent success. That brings us to the BBT rights issue, since they have already taken the temples in the main. Fortunately, in the U.S. the basic idea is freedom of religion. Thus, a religion cannot be copyrighted in the ordinary sense, as say a manufacturing process. A belief cannot be checked by some legal copyrighting, and that is a very powerful sentiment in the U.S. What is a religious belief? It is not a tangible item subject to copyright, rather it is a subjective understanding of certain religious writings. It has already been established in courts that followers are able to use the writings in offshoot groups, such as the Seventh Day Adventists, to start their own Church—independent of the so-called main Church. In America, the Protestant ethic is very, very powerful. The Church cannot grab the writings and oppress any-

one who does not agree with their interpretation. That, indeed, is why the country was generally established. Since the belief cannot be copyrighted, the writings must be freed up for all followers, even those who opine differently from the "main" or "legal" Church.

The "legal" Church, as we know from American history, may not be representing the teachings in their original form. Thus everyone must be free to break off with what they believe is the original teaching. The guru party would have one heck of a hard time proving that they are adhering to the original and pure teachings. We could start off our case (a defense) by offering the Judge a copy of *Monkey On a Stick*. When we explain that those "monkeys" appointed their successors, the current wave, and so on, their case would get mighty weak. Then, we have so much additional testimony independent of the *Monkey* book. Then we would bring forward their oppressive techniques, scandals, philosophy changes, lies, internal back-biting, altered annual reports which flip-flop truths (hypocrisy, diplomacy) ... and then the reports are not even circulated (a secret cadre), their cover-ups for fraudulent

gurus, etc., etc., etc. Then, they would not have much to stand on, and this would be clear to the courts.

The question is whether or not to fight them, as it would require some financing, and energy, and more heavy repressive techniques such as blackballing, etc. Personally, I know they would come out very weak in court, if indeed we would not spawn an FBI investigation on those guru gung-hos. In short, our victory is very probable, but there may be some practical reasons for continuing the charade that they are the "well-wishers" of the movement and us. Should you decide to opt for independence, I will help in whatever way possible.

Editor's Note: *It is probably best to avoid confrontations in courts so we can save our time and resources for chanting and preaching. Besides, the real battleground is not the courts, but in the philosophical arena of the devotees' hearts*



1990 NEW JAIPUR VYASA PUJA AT GLOUCESTER

and minds. It is here that VVR has entered, to present a forum for devotees to philosophize and discuss issues relevant to the Krsna consciousness movement. May the truth prevail!

**From Markendeya and Temple Pres.
Radhanatha Prabhus, Honolulu, 1.17.91:**

Keep with good work! All devotees from Honolulu are sending their best wishes.

From Urdhvaga das, London, 12.12.90:

I am very sorry to hear that you face the threat of being kicked out of ISKCON. This latest act of stupidity shown by the GBC clearly proves that "ISKCON" is far from being reformed. You should know that some GBC members are expert in implementing the motto: "give the dog a bad name and then hang him." Regarding the banned VVR, I always liked to read forbidden literature. I herewith pledge my life-long subscription to VVR. Regarding your excommunication, do not worry. There are many devotees who have been kicked

out before you and there will be still some to come. The majority of devotees live outside the official temple establishment anyway. Why should you be attached to a minority group? So let me welcome you back in ISKCON, the greater ISKCON, where 95% of Prabhupadites reside.

For neophyte devotees, ISKCON refers to an institution comprised of temples, farms and restaurants governed in finite bounds by the so-called supreme GBC. However, on a more spiritual level, ISKCON always refers to the consciousness of the devotees and not to an institution consisting of properties manipulated by westernized super-gurus or zonal acharyas. The very word ISKCON is the short form for International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which denotes a group of people who are conscious of Krishna. ISKCON therefore refers to the consciousness of the members that form

a group (society) with Krishna in the center. ISKCON is therefore a state of consciousness and not an institution comprised of buildings subjected to the monopoly of a selected few. ISKCON is the same as Krishna consciousness, there is no doubt about it. The real meaning is given in the purport of Bhagavad-gita 9.29 where Srila Prabhupada says, "The very phrase Krishna consciousness suggests that those who are in such consciousness [of Krishna] are living transcendentalists, situated in Him." In the purport of Bhagavad-gita 6.30 Srila Prabhupada defines Krishna consciousness [or ISKCON] as follows: 'A person in Krishna consciousness sees Lord Krishna everywhere and he sees everything in Krishna. He is con-

scious of Krishna knowing that everything is the manifestation of his energy. This is the basic principle of Krishna consciousness. Krishna consciousness is the development of love of Krishna." There are further quotes in the purport of Srimad Bhagavatam 4.29.69, 4.21.25, and 4.12.38. Therefore, love of Krishna or Krishna consciousness or ISKCON is all synonymous. So how then can the GBC excommunicate you from your consciousness of Krishna or ISKCON?

The problem does not lie with you or all the other expelled devotees but with the GBC itself. Through long years of incompetence, mismanagement and deviation from Prabhupada's teachings, they have degraded to an exclusive guru-cartel-club, preaching and publishing bogus philosophy and driving out thousands of devotees. The GBC, which consists of incompetent members, have caused more harm in the Society than all expelled devotees together could do in years to come. It is the incompetent members of the GBC who have to rectify themselves. Their previous accounts of black-mail, intimidation and force (sometimes even murder) to preserve the bogus guru system, are well known all over the

world. There are even books available in the karmi bookshops which give detailed accounts. The GBC's have to stop playing the [overlord] supreme authority of Srila Prabhupada when they are spiritually not qualified. It is a well known fact that little children like to play "merry-go-round" and when they are disturbed in their play, they become nasty. Similarly, the bigger kids in our ISKCON society like to play "guru-go-round" and they do not like to be disturbed in their game. Otherwise they become nasty and resort to threats, intimidation and excommunication. That is all.

From Paraupadam das, Mason, WI, 2.4.91:

I'm very much appreciating your expanding on details of setting up the varnashram community. In this day, and in these times, with only a little introspection, we should all see the desperate need for implementing this system as an example the whole world can take up.

From Anonymous, LA, CA, 2.8.91:

I am thankful someone finally wrote you about the difficulties in the LA temple. Prior to that, I thought I was alone in my concern. It gave me the courage to speak out. First I must say, there are some nice things happening there. Many devotees are warm, loving, and nonjudgmental. And no one harasses anyone. These are wonderful qualities I wouldn't want to see lost. On the other hand, there are some very real problems which cannot be corrected if we continue to stick our heads in the sand.

Major difficulties are that the teen-agers are absorbed in the latest lyrics of Paula Abdul or the latest sit-com. Dating, if kept quiet, is considered normal and expected, even with nondevotees. Many parents are running their children, from babies to teens, to advertising agencies to get them involved in TV commercials or modeling. Children and teen-agers ridicule those who wear tilaka, chaste or devotional clothing, for liking aroti or even Krishna! To be Krishna conscious is "square".

Gurukula has become so expensive that it is like a country club for the elite, and the poor brahmana is forced to send his children to the public school systems, where their souls are slaughtered. (Maybe gurukula could offer a sliding scale payment program according to one's honest income? And maybe stop buying into the latest method of teaching, alleviating an additional fee for new books passed down to the parents each year. Also, insurance could be optional, not mandatory.) No one is interested enough to learn how to be a junior high or high school teacher, so these children too are thrown to the slaughter house. The teen-agers are not engaged,

but ignored. There are no youth group meetings, no activity center, not a club for them, or anything at all. The adults no longer show any interest, so as a result the kids act out, and then the adults criticize them harshly and have to sometimes ban them from the property. But it is hard to tell which came first, the chicken or the egg. They are treated like unwanted progeny, so they behave that way. The children and teen-agers are a reflection of the consciousness of the parents and society leaders.

I am so annoyed at all of this that sometimes I wish there was someone like Jesus who removed the money changers from the temple, who would come forth and do the same thing here—however, I don't really believe in such heavy tactics and they never really have a lasting effect. But that is how angry I am. I do feel some change can happen if authorities



JAMAICAN COWS

could find a way to rekindle the desire that is already there within the heart of these devotees. They really want to be Krishna conscious. Authorities could show an interest, do their duty, and try to create an inner desire. This is really how all of us came to this movement in the first place; because it was so attractive, and not because someone was heavy with us. And for those who will not or cannot change, they don't need to be "kicked out" of the community, but requested to leave in a compassionate way, encouraged to move only around the corner, and sincerely invited to please attend, often; they remain wanted. One serious problem in LA is the abuse of TV. This is destroying the consciousness of children and adults alike. But it is considered the lesser of the two evils. At least you know where your teen is and what he or she is doing. (So imagine what the other "evils" are!) Because there are no "fun" activities for the young children either, it's common to take them to a movie, any movie, and PG 13 is considered OK. That is, if anyone bothers to look at the ratings.

The GBC are too busy doing trivial things like banning astrology ads in IWR or defending their positions in ISKCON

instead of cleaning up such problems, or keeping them clean so such things never arise in the first place.

One last concern I have about New Dwarka is the fear of losing it due to the Robin George case. As I look up and down it's a beautiful street, I see one of Prabhupada's dreams has come true: a temple, a school, BBT, offices, and living quarters—a little city of devotees. I fear that due to abuse we will lose all this, thus destroying Prabhupada's dream, ourselves. Most LA devotees are more concerned over fashionable dress, beauty parlors, fancy furniture, gossip (men, too), and basically money; and too little concerned for increasing spiritual life. I do understand money is a big issue and necessity in the city. This creates a problem because we can talk like this, but when the rent comes around, it MUST be paid. But I also think we can all work together to find better alternatives. If we want to save New Dwarka we must re-evaluate our needs, our lifestyle; and we need to do something spiritually. Not just temporarily, not just to "get what we want"—but permanently, to show we appreciate living in such a special place. We have become forgetful. This is a Holy Dhama. To become materialistic on a Holy Dhama is an offense.

The temple authorities are ignoring all this, especially the teens' needs. Therefore, now their needs are even greater. So the small devotee should not be given complete blame, all is allowed or encouraged, particularly where money is concerned. Even the authorities themselves do similar things, like letting Totally Hidden Video come on our property to joke about us on national television—for a fee. Or, driving fancy cars. If they want fancy cars, they can have, simply renounce their positions, move, and make their own money. They can still attend. This would be honest and respectable. but I doubt that would happen. Not that I want it to, I'd rather seem them straighten up, but I doubt anything will happen. Can anyone out there help? (GBC sure isn't!)

From Anonymous, Planet Earth:

I think your VVR has helped in breaking down the Bhaktitirtha/ Kirtanananda DADS thing in West Africa. At least the devotees who have seen your magazine are receptive to reform, and we may be able to save West Africa from slipping away into the Kirtanananda camp. There are some temples, however, that are still in the dark ages. I would like all the temples in Africa to see VVR. I like your policy of printing all letters. Devotees should be encouraged to think and explore the different sides of issues.

From Gadai das, 1.12.91:

I happened upon a ritvik reference (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.3.30). This has engendered a question: Which of the four types of priests are being proposed in the various ritvik-acarya arguments presented in VVR? Please also see the texts and purports of these verses: Bhag. 2.9.23-24; Bhag. 7.4.14, 26, 28, 43; and Bhag. 7.5.7, 11, 12, and 19.

Editor's Note: *The use of ritvik acharyas in ISKCON was*

Srila Prabhupada's arrangement, not a new idea by VVR. In previous issues all the available evidence regarding Prabhupada's instructions in this regard have been given. A ritvik guru in ISKCON initiates a devotee on behalf of Srila Prabhupada, who is the diksha guru.

From Dravinaksa das, Naples, FL, 1.22.91:

Here is an idea for your next VVR issue: Does your public or college library have a full set of Srila Prabhupada's books? If so, are they in good condition? Take the opportunity to donate Prabhupada's books to your local libraries. Make sure they have all the books. Replace old and tattered books with new ones.

Operation Library Nectar:

Send Srila Prabhupada's books to the people! Send \$10, \$25, \$50 or whatever you can, and we will send an equal value of BBT books to the libraries in the U.S.A. who need them. Nonprofit. All donations go to books and postage. Make checks payable to Goravani, 1730 Keane Ave., Naples, FL 33964. Phone (813) 455-4287 Dravinaksa das.

From Jayadvaita Swami, an excerpt only, 4.24.91:

I agree with you that a publication such as Vedic Village Review could serve a useful purpose as a forum for delicate internal ISKCON issues. The problem with VVR is not that it took on these delicate issues, but that it took them on without the necessary delicacy. Whether one is within "official ISKCON" or outside it is not what counts. What counts is good judgment. If VVR had shown more of it, I would have been a regular reader.

From Nrsingha das, Pepeeko, HI, 3.5.91:

Sorry for remaining out of touch for so long. I had a long letter written for you, but my printer broke, and I've still been unable to get it fixed. I, of course, still support most of VVR's views on guru-tattva and the need for further reform in ISKCON, particularly at the GBC level. But I still think much patience and restraint is needed on our part to assure that devotees are not needlessly offended. Forcing the issue may not help the cause greatly.

I will soon send an article I wrote about my trip to a holy place in South India.

I'm glad to see VVR is still going strong. The extra copies I've always distributed. Sridhara Prabhu has moved to Australia, but it's unlikely that I'll follow. I hope to sell here soon and then tour the U.S.A., meeting devotees and looking at farms.

From Nikurjivasini devi dasi, Alachua, FL, 2.10.91:

Thank you for honestly and openly addressing so many issues in VVR. I'm sure this publication has been a solace for many devotees who, over the years, have had confusing and painful experiences in ISKCON at the hands of manipulative

and misguided leaders. I myself have been spared any truly horrific situations, but have suffered some painfully disappointing and confusing encounters. Many of us feel angry. After 13 years and many travels to many "zones", I have heard some incredible stories similar to the one sent to you and printed in the last issue of VVR #15 by an anonymous lady from Hawaii. I have heard chronicles of complaints and stories of injustices and crimes from the uninitiated to former GBC members and truly acknowledge and empathize with this pain and suffering. Some have been so discouraged as to shake the very foundation of their faith.

Ironically, however, I have observed one common feeling from all of our narratives. Everyone of us claims our own personal position as that of the "victim". It is a common thread woven through every tale of woe. How can this be? Some who claim to be the victim of injustices have also been claimed by others to be the perpetrator of injustices. Can it be that we are all victims? Or could we all be at fault at some level or another?

From Anonymous das, TX:

I have read the articles on life leases at New Jaipur (VVR #15), and would like you to clarify a little further how this works. My understanding is that the land is leased free to devotees that meet the requirements and is then taxed. It appears that the lessee is responsible for generating income to cover the village tax on the land, the cost of house construction and the maintenance of his family, etc. To do this seems to require the devotee to have a very well paying "outside" job. The concept seems to be one of a self sufficient and/or self contained devotional community so I can't seem to reconcile these. If all of the householders have jobs or individual businesses whereby they pay rent to the temple and supply all the other needs of their families, as well as giving patron member donations and practical service to the temple; how does your program for Varnashrama life differ, other than the rural setting? Here we have been talking for a long time about rural Varnashrama life, but talk is all it has been.

Regarding the guru issue so prevalent in VVR, I agree that Srila Prabhupada is the acarya for ISKCON. No one else that I know of is anywhere near His Divine Grace's level. These temples are his, the devotees are his; none of us would even know anything about Krishna consciousness if not for him, nor can we make any advancement without his mercy. Srila Prabhupada is most definitely available to us through his books, tapes, videos, service, worship, murti, prayers, dreams and dedication to an appreciation for him. He is jagat guru and



patita pavana.

As for those who would abuse Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON, devotees and mercy; Krishna will set all things right in His own way and time. Lord Sri Krishna is the supreme controller of all things, what to speak of His pure devotee's Sankirtana movement. We have already seen some of the bogus "big ones" fall. Whatever happens, if we stay close to Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet we will be sheltered and protected.

From Gauridas Pandita das, Issaquah, WA, 2.21.91:

I just got my last letter to TKG (I think I sent you a copy) unopened with a letter from Yudhisthira saying that TKG doesn't wish to correspond with me anymore. How depressing! It's like an ostrich putting its head in the sand! That's what started this whole guru mess anyway; communication breakdown!

Well, I'm busy here in the ISKCON temple; I'm the head pujari and temple commander now. We're keeping Srila Prabhupada in the center here, anyway! Hey, I missed the last VVR! What happened? Anyway, they are all over the temple here from other devotees you sent them to. If you can send me some, I'll distribute. Keep up the good work.

From Brian McCord, Wheeling, WV, 4.21.91:

I am an 18 year old student about to enter college and newly introduced to the path of Krishna consciousness. A secretary at ISKCON Los Angeles sent me a VVR 8 from April 1989. I was more than impressed by not only the breadth and professionalism of your insightful and candid articles, but also the wide array of excellent and economically sound books available from Vedic River.

I can assure you of two things: In my desire for increased knowledge of and devotion to Krishna consciousness, and, as

I acknowledge your schism with the local New Vrindavan community, let it be known that my only affiliation with the ILOD is the occasional trip to New Vrindavan to attend traditional services. I am by no means affiliated with the current hierarchy of the community, nor do I support the majority of its tenets. I hope this will clear up any hesitancy on your part.

From Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, Calcutta, India, to all devotees, 2.11.85:

We are writing to you on the authority of the GBC and the BBT trustees, in regards to the illegal publication of the Caitanya Charitamrta by unauthorized individuals in Singapore. Urdhvaga dasa, who by his actions has proved himself unworthy of our trust, is here in India selling this book and also taking orders for future deliveries. The money from these sales is going to support the activities of a splinter group who are actively preaching against Srila Prabhupada's movement in Malaysia.

The Hong Kong BBT has already published a superior edition of the Sri Caitanya Charitamrta with full Bengali text and word for word translations. This will be on sale at the Mayapura Festival for the same price. So under the circumstances, we would hope that you will inform all the devotees not to buy this pirate edition from these people and also to cancel any orders that you may have made. Hope this meets you fully immersed in the distribution of Srila Prabhupada's books.

From Urdhvaga das, London, England, 2.28.91:

Concerning Sivarama's weird threats against you and VVR, I think they are more bark than bite, and you are doing quite good not to take his bluff seriously. I also very much doubt the legality of a lawsuit against you. As a Prabhupada disciple, following the ISKCON Founder Acaryas four regulative principles, you cannot be "excommunicated". You are ISKCON as anyone else is ISKCON who follows the rules laid down by the Founder Acarya of ISKCON. ISKCON belongs to Srila Prabhupada and not to the GBC. As long as you follow the principles laid down by the Founder Acarya of ISKCON, you are a bonafide member of ISKCON and cannot be disassociated from the society by a disgruntled GBC. They have hijacked Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON. Now they have made an incorporated company out of it and claiming it to be theirs. Prabhupada and his movement have become the monopoly of the GBC. Not only does the movement belong to them, but

also the founder acharya himself has become a property of the GBC including all of his books which are monopolized by a so-called BBT. It is the GBC who no longer is a part of Srila Prabhupada's International Society for Krishna Consciousness because they have deviated from the founder acarya's original set up by introducing a bogus guru system for the exploitation and manipulation of the society.

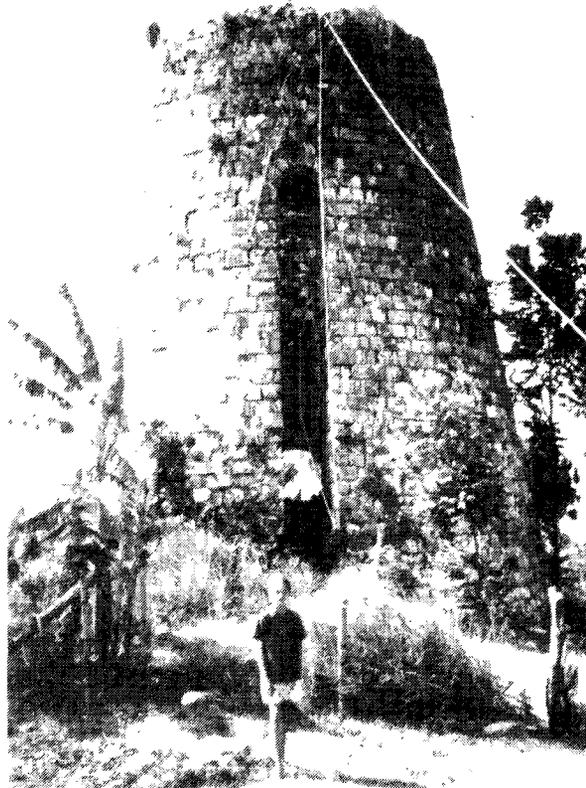
Regarding trademarks, copyrights, registered companies, etc., there was a similar problem in Malaysia with Jayapataka and a Malaysian devotee (Bhima dasa, ex-Hansadutta disciple) who was threatened in the same way. Bhima and his devotees did not want to call their Hare Krishna center by a concocted name and went to the Malaysian courts. Bhima was partially successful. Although he could not use the

name International Society for Krishna Consciousness of ISKCON, he was never the less allowed by the courts to legally use the name "Society for Krishna Consciousness (ZIP)", where ZIP is any city he establishes his own centers. That means for example: "Society for Krishna Consciousness Saravak", "Society for Krishna Consciousness Ipoh", "Society for Krishna Consciousness Penang", etc.

Perhaps you can inquire from some lawyers about the American system. You might even be able to call yourself "Society for Krishna Consciousness New Jaipur", because you follow the same principles of the Founder acarya and preach the same philosophy distributing the same books.

The next step of the GBC will be to prosecute you for publishing Srila Prabhupada's books. Of course, this would be another gunda-type activity of the GBC, but rest assured that

they will not hesitate to do so. They have done this already with many different devotees (including my own self). I have been managing the printing of the 30 volume Srimad Bhagavatam set (the small black books printed in Singapore) as well as the one volume edition of Srimad Bhagavatam (with the small print). We also printed the pocket Bhagavad-gita in Taiwan (small, black, vinyl soft cover) as well as all the other small books of Srila Prabhupada. I also helped other devotees to print the one volume Caitanya Charitamrta (the one without Bengali). Ultimately our printing set up in Singapore was destroyed by the combined efforts of Hari Sauri, Bhakticharu and Tamala, and I was prosecuted by the named devotees for preaching against Srila Prabhupada. It sounded a bit schizophrenic to me how one can preach against Srila Prabhupada by printing Srila Prabhupada's Bhagavad-gita as it is. So I con-



Jamaican Windmill

tinued to also distribute all those books I printed, for which I was also punished. Bhakticharu (with Tamala's approval) wrote a letter against me saying that I "pirated" Prabhupada's books and that these books are therefore "unbonafide". This letter was circulated to all temples to warn all devotees about my "illegal activities". I have enclosed a copy of that letter so you can see for yourself. They also wanted to start legal proceedings against me for breaching the copyright law of the BBT, but fortunately there were no copyright laws in Singapore.

It is disheartening to see that a handful of GBC have the monopoly of Srila Prabhupada's books. In India, everybody can print BG, there is no such thing as a copyright on the words of God or guru. No single organization can claim to have the copyright on Krishna's words. How is it that we as disciples of Srila Prabhupada are not allowed to print our guru's books? Didn't our guru tell us many times that he would be very pleased if we print and distribute his books? What is the offense in printing one's guru's books as they are? Does it break the monopoly of the BBT or does it diminish the control of the GBC?

From Bill Wulfoop, 3.91:

I was visiting a friend in New York, and I managed to get in touch with Kapindra Prabhu, and now I've joined Srila Prabhupada's Sankirtana Center. So if you could please send my VVR to this address. I'm having a really good time here. It's the first time I've ever been able to surrender to a strict temple program. From my experience, it's impossible to follow Srila Prabhupada according to his high standards unless you get his mercy directly and not diverted by someone else. Here there is no anxiety and every day is fulfilling. And Srila Prabhupada's formula for success in every activity is in the forefront: Sankirtana!

Things are rolling here. We're just about to get into a large farm community project for which a devotee here has offered the land and others manpower and money. It's going to be called New Raivataka. And we're planning soon to go on a cross country "back to Prabhupada" sankirtana program. So everything is looking really positive and strong for a big surge to bring Srila Prabhupada back to the forefront of ISKCON real soon. I was really sorry to hear about your recent trouble, but I'm praying that everything will work out well soon for you and the community. And thanks again. Your project was always a big help to me the last couple of years. Actually a

lifesaver.

From Mallika dasi, Italy, 3.29.91:

My name is Mirella, I'm 28 years old and I took 1st initiation in 1985 from Bhagavan das (ex Srila Gurudeva), and as Bhagavan is no more a guru, my actual spiritual master is Srila Jayapataka Swami Maharaja, Srila Acaryapada. The reason I'm writing to you is because I'm looking for some devotees around the world to write letters and to receive answers back (an International postal sadhu-sanga).

I've been living in a temple of ISKCON for four and a half years and now am living with my family again, chanting 16 rounds, offering the food to Krsna, studying the books of Srila Prabhupada and following the 4 regulative principles. If there is someone who wants to correspond with me, we can talk about the Deities, the philosophy, the Sankirtana and about everything else. I'd be very happy to find someone in your temple who will write to me (boy or girl is the same), of course I'll write back as soon as possible. Hare Krishna. My address: Paoli Mirella, V. Dei Bicelli, 26, 55014, Marlia-Lucca, Italia.

From Prahlad das, New Mayapur, 3.26.91

Since a few months we have moved to New Mayapur. There is some problem getting the VVR. We have got only #13. Please go on sending us your wonderful paper. I think it is better to send it in a plain envelope. The 13th issue you sent to the temple I found in the waste paper basket in the president's office. He himself was a regular reader a few

months back. We are many devotees around the world very close to your points. Please don't stop your preaching. May the blessings of Prabhupada be always with you.

From Anonymous, 1.3.91:

Thank you for the last issue of the VVR. Although I sympathize with your cause, I do think it has been taken to an extreme. My view point is the same that stated VVR 13 in a letter from Jasomatandana das, Gujerat. Many older devotees I know hold the same view. I want to relate to you an interesting event which took place here in Australia recently. A few months ago, H.H. Gaur Govinda Maharaja came here for a preaching tour despite his physical incapacity. Many devotees were very eager to see and hear him speak. Indeed his preaching was so effective and potent that he put us all to shame. The leaders and sannyasis here felt their positions being undermined, and feared a spiritual revolution. Instead



Jamaican Castle

of being happy to see such an advanced and pure Vaisnava, they conspired to discredit him. Some of his disciples were a little over zealous and proclaimed him to be an uttama-adhikari and more advanced than any of the other gurus. This is not so unusual as we hear the same sort of thing from disciples of other gurus. The general mass of devotees were very impressed by the purity and potency of Gaur Govinda Maharaja, and indeed it reminded us of the times when Srila Prabhupada was before us. Naturally many new devotees and ex-Bhavanandis wanted to accept him as their guru. A lot of them were dissuaded from doing so, others who were determined had to go to Bhubaneswar to get that mercy.

The GBC meetings were apparently dominated this year in Mayapur for days with this topic. In their usual diplomatic way they have now prohibited Gaur Govinda Swami and some of his disciples from visiting Australia for one year, and then who knows?

The point I would like to make is: Is ISKCON prepared to accept an uttama-adhikari, or perhaps a successor acharya? Prabhupada was not accepted by the majority of his godbrothers. Why did Srila Prabhupada write such heavy purports in C.C. ML T218 and 220? And indeed why did Prabhupada leave when he did? Perhaps he was disappointed with us.

From Nrsimhananda das, ITV, Culver City, CA:

I want to say that I admire your determination to air your views, and I respect thoroughly your right to do so whether I agree with your philosophical points or not. The mood of the ISKCON Journal stooped to whatever level it was criticizing. (And where is this "ISKCON Forum" now? A year later, it can no longer be held to be an ISKCON equivalent to Vaisnava Journal or VVR; rather it hid behind a cloak of providing a place for devotees to air their views when it was, in fact, a one-time publication to combat your philosophical viewpoint. Now why weren't they honest about that fact? Maybe they really don't want to have the devotees hear from one another in an open forum.) Were it not for outspoken devotees like yourselves, we would still be living under the whammy of power-trip gurus much more so than we are today. Silence is far more dangerous than sound, for it implies consent and hides behind fear. Unfortunately, the prevailing atmosphere of repression continues. Speak! Don't be afraid! Welcome all criticism! Engage in dialogue! We do it with the nondevotees; then why be afraid to do it with those who accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead? The Truth is not subject to our



Jamaican Waterfalls

material considerations; it will always be the Absolute Truth.

From Riktananda das, Dallas, TX; 2.14.91:

Thanks for the latest issue of VVR. It's as stimulating as usual. Weird of the big boys to threaten a lawsuit over the ISKCON logo—disheartening, actually. May the Lord continue to bless your campaign.

From Anonymous, Denver, CO; 2.13.91:

Thank you for the complimentary issue #15, Vedic Village Review. I appreciate reading the various points of view on spreading Krishna consciousness. Keep up the good work! I feel that it is very unfortunate to see how ISKCON has suffered so much over the years and how so little can be done

about it. The status quo must change! What has ISKCON become? The stench of power-politics and elitism has driven many a kindly soul away.

I sincerely hope Krishna uses your services and others like yours to someday make ISKCON the 'house in which the whole world can live,' as Srila Prabhupada envisioned.

It seems that the GBC's efforts to silence any and all opposing viewpoints is proof that a sensitive nerve has been struck. Perhaps too many false egos are being exposed to the light of scrutiny!

From Antonio R. Bermudez, Caracas, Venezuela, 4.20.91:

Please accept my respectful reverences. The last week I received my books and magazines. Thank you very much, are very beautiful, I read it, (VVR) and it made clear many things

to me. VVR is re-inspiring me to the path of devotional life, but I got a problem, my last VVR was #14, it came with the books but what happened with #15 and #16(December and March). I need it like daily bread, please don't forget me, keep me on your mailing list; I sent \$13 for a foreign subscription on December, when it come to end please notify me and I'll agree to renew my subscription. I hope receive you answer soon. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

P.S. You sent me again VVR's 12 and 13, and I gave it to a devotee who is now engaged in Sai Baba's Movement; he was a bhakta in Prabhupada's time, and he could not receive Srila Prabhupada's initiation by politics. The time passed and he took initiation from Pramana Swami. When this "guru" fell down, he took initiation from Pancadravida Swami, and he has left devotee association with the above result. He just read Srila Prabhupada's letter where His Divine Grace appointed

the eleven ritviks, and he said to me, "Actually, we are Srila Prabhupada's disciples, and in that time when Prabhupada passed away and the time thereafter also, why don't they publish this letter before? Many problems would not have taken place."

From Satsvarupa dasa Goswami, Boston, to Ganesh das, 2.5.91:

I do not agree with your interpretation of the Srila Prabhupada Lilamrita. I have sometimes heard this criticism before. On the other hand, I have more often hear that the Prabhupada Lilamrita has done much good in spreading Srila Prabhupada's glories.

Your basic point is that some of my descriptions of Prabhupada seem to make him sound like an ordinary human being. But I have explained in several places that Srila Prabhupada is actually a nitya-siddha or liberated person, a saktavesa-avatara and so on. And so it is not out of character for liberated souls to act in ways that are just like human beings. Even Lord Krishna acts, as Prabhupada says, like an "ordinary human being." We read in the Krishna Book how sometimes Krishna is sorry and sometimes anxious, sometimes tired and so on. You could level your same criticism that you made against me against the Krishna Book.

Prabhupada explains the behavior of the nitya-siddha as follows:

"The nitya-siddha never forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whereas the nitya-baddha is always conditioned, even before the creation. He always forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By the order of the Supreme, the nitya-siddha remains within the material world like an ordinary man, but his only business is to broadcast the glories of the Lord. All nitya-siddhas within this material world may appear to toil like ordinary men, but they never forget their position as servants of the Lord."

Of course, it is a matter of opinion also. Descriptions of saintly persons and pure devotees in which there is almost no reference to their human activities, I find to be stilted and artificial. I find the flowery prose style that is used, for example, in the Gaudiya-math tradition, to be very inaccessible to ordinary persons. They will not say that a pure devotee caught a cold but that he "had the pastime of ecstasy of appearing to have a cold." This kind of presentation is not the way Prabhupada wrote. Prabhupada wrote in more down-to-earth, clear-cut prose. I tried to capture both the devotee

audience as well as the larger audience, and it is not an easy thing.

From Kusha devi dasi, 1.4.91:

Just recently, a dear friend passed away due to an unfortunate automobile accident. He was at the mercy of the hospital. They had no knowledge of his will or his beliefs. He was a devotee of Lord Krishna and had spent 3 years of his life in Vrindavan. During his hospital stay, he was hooked up to machines and kept alive. I was so upset that he was being forced to stay in such an abominable condition artificially. I cried until I heard that he had passed away inspite of their efforts. We were all sad to lose him, but we were relieved when his torture was ended.

My mother had just given me a copy of her living will. I, still feeling the affects of losing a friend, realized this "living will" could be an excellent tool. We could avoid misunderstandings at a time when we don't have control of our faculties and can't express our needs and beliefs. Enclosed is the revised version that Sruta Kirti and I have signed witnessed and had notarized. I am hoping that this will help even one person on their journey back to Godhead.

A Living Will

To my family, my physician, my clergyman, my lawyer:

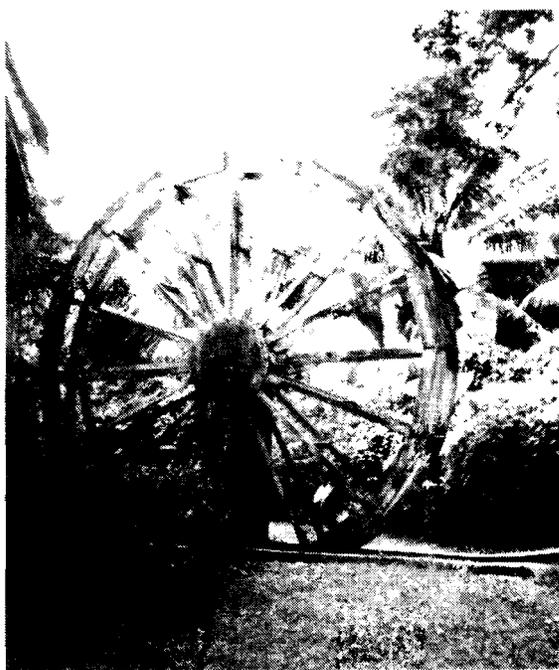
If the time comes when I can no longer take part in decisions for my own future, let this statement stand as the testament of my wishes:

If there is no reasonable expectation of my recovery from physical or mental disability, I, _____, request

that I be allowed to die and not be kept alive by artificial means or heroic measures. Death is as much a reality as birth, growth, maturity and old age—it is the one certainty. I do not fear death as much as fear the indignity of deterioration, dependence and hopeless pain.

Do not put any product of food containing meat, fish or eggs into my body. This is in affordance with my belief system. I wish to maintain this standard in sickness and in health.

I ask that a tape playing the Holy Names of Krishna sung by my spiritual master A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami be played close to my ears constantly (24 hours a day), or transcendental sound vibrations such as Srimad Bhagavatam or Krishna bhajans mercifully be administered me without cessation for terminal suffering up to the moment of death assist me in my journey back to Godhead. If it is at all possible to take me to the Holy Dhama of Vrindavan, South of Delhi in India for my



West Indies Water Wheel

final days, this is most desired. This request is made after careful consideration. I recognize that it places a heavy burden of responsibility upon you, and it is with the intention of sharing that responsibility and of mitigating any feelings of guilt that this statement is made.

From Syamasundara das, India, 11.25.90:

This is my true opinion and kindly consider that there is no use of trying to rectify the situation or reform the "gurus" in ISKCON. (Please don't consider this complacency or inert.) It is merely a waste of energy on your part who are so sincerely trying to serve the cause of Srila Prabhupada.

From Jambavati dasi, Florida, 2.10.91:

I just read many of the articles in VVR this morning. Thank you for sending me this important magazine. It is encouraging to me and offers the chance for many "so-called outcast" devotees to feel that they are most definitely still part of the Hare Krishna movement. I am struggling so hard to follow the basic principles and go to the temple and help my children to think of Krishna. And although it is hard, it is very possible. It is ever sublime and worth the effort. I will never give up trying to fight maya by engaging in K.C. I agree on practically everything I have read in VVR, and I must tell you that for many years I could see that the main authorities were losing the substance of the basics of teachings that Srila Prabhupada first gave us. I could see immediately that the new gurus were taking an artificial stand trying to replace our spiritual master. It hurt me so and I had no one to relate to — to tell how horrible I felt it was. I could see so many things, and I always knew that they should only initiate on behalf of Srila Prabhupada and humbly at that. This had to be common knowledge for any intelligent Prabhupada disciple. It amazes me how out of hand it had become — and still lingering!

So your magazine is good to open the minds of those who had not known the truth or for those who have, and even for those who are stubborn. Thank you for persisting and remaining strong through the storm! (Editor: *Jambavati, please pay your bill with us!*)

From Clayton O'Claerach, Berkely, CA, 2.11.91:

Karnamrita das's remarks on the Bible in *Interfaith Preaching* (Vol. 15) were quite interesting to me. I think it is patent fact that one cannot preach to Christians, or as I call them, "Christers", without satisfactorily impugning the absolute authority of the Bible in favor of the authority of the Vedas. It is not the fact that they are perfectly congruous. Srila Prabhupada states in his purports to *Chaitanya Charitamrta*, in the section dealing with the Kazi's discussion with Lord Chaitanya, that the Bible is "neither very sound, nor very transcendental", but so far no one has elucidated this statement in depth.

I personally do not hold that the High God of the Bible is Sri Krishna, I think Jehovah is more in the character of Lord

Shiva, i.e. wrathful, lives on a mountain, often orders horrible things to be done, in many sects is not worshipped in any form by only through the impersonal representation of the lingam, etc.

Actually, there seem to be two main religious conceptions in the world: that enunciated by Jehovah, or Allah, in which there is no conception of rebirth and in which the soul is not eternal, but Allah said to Adam, "Be!" and he was, and the other coming from Krishna, more or less, and from India, in which there is endless rebirth, karma, and some version of liberation from the wheel of rebirth, as well as a pantheon of demigods, including Brahma and Indra, and which includes us, Hindus, Sikhism, Jainism, and Buddhism, and to which the religions of the Far East are similar. A strong point of division is on the subject of deity worship, God-as-a-little-doll, which the Bible and the Koran absolutely forbid but which our Founder acarya has enjoined.

The followers of the Bible swear it is the only revealed book from God; the Bible, moreover, is familiar to the West as authoritative sastra, whereas the Vedas are distant, strange, and not readily available in full; the Koran also has many adherents; so why do we accept the Vedas as superior to the other two books. An answer in detail should be provided: I would consider this the best preaching "interfaith".

I do not know entirely what to make of this big ritvik controversy; I am just a little guy. I take prasadam, do some service, and chant rounds. I can't even keep all four regulative principles at once for more than a day here and there. I question whether any religious movement so strict in the matter of sex life as ours could ever hope to really become popular; Hazred Mohammed, on whom Peace, allowed the believers to go in to their wives "as often as they liked", and he had excellent success in spreading Islam; if we are to be virtual celibates even in married life, what is the motivation for marrying? Does anybody actually want all those brats that badly? According to Varnashram as K have read of it, these strict sexual restrictions were meant only for the brahmanas, who could speak of "illicit sex in marriage", an absurd concept, say to a Moslem; considerable more liberty was allowed to sudras, who were not expected to show such high restraint. What is the point, prabhu, of a counsel that no one can keep?

Personally, I am quite happy without taking diksha of one of these ISKCON gurus; I used to place great importance on the idea of "living guru", but my conception has changed; there is plenty enough to do understanding Prabhupada's books and carrying out his instructions, and when I am qualified to recognize a diksha guru, Prabhupada assures me one will be at hand.

From Anthony Chambers, Chillicothe, OH:

My name is Anthony, and I am a 30 year old prisoner here in Ohio. I am also a student of Krishna Consciousness who hopes to one day be initiated. I was given your publications address and told to write and ask that you print this letter for me. I wish to correspond with devotees so that in this way I may receive their association. This is my purpose for writing. Also I wish to receive your publication as well. Thank you very much. Anthony Chambers: Box 5500, #155773, Chillicothe, Ohio 45601.

NOTE Presently our devotional supplies are still locked up by the local state officials. This harassment is expected to end soon, therefore we are going ahead with our ads below, anticipating return of our warehouse by the time our readers receive this issue. Haribol !

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For grammar and writing/ composition we have the ISKCON series of Language Arts books by Bhurijana das. Start with the A BeKa Method, and after the basic phonogram skills are mastered (in 6-12 months), the Readers and Language Arts series are used. For grade 6 grammar we use Harcourt.

Mathematics: For Kindergarten, we use Alarka dasi's Krsna's Math A & B. For grades 1-6 we use MacMillan '82 Mathematics books, with teacher editions optional.

We teach only Vedic History thru grade 6. Philosophy and scripture is taught in all grades, memorizing Gita verses Sanskrit & English, discussing the meanings, and reading Prabhupada's books with study guides. For grade 6 and up we recommend a home study schooling program available thru a Christian company (the Bible study is separate and can thus be left out). Mature students can study these home courses under parental guidance, and avoid bad association during the teenage years. Krsna conscious education starts with a morning sadhana program and pure standards at home. Academics & scripture can be set up as 2-4 periods a day: each 30-60 minutes long. One or two periods for English subjects, one for math and some geography, one for scripture and history. DESIGN YOUR OWN SCHEDULE, according to your time, children, etc. Short breaks between classes help. Armed with text and yoga, teach & fight maya!

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Challenge Horse to the GBC!

VVR's Challenge Horse remains on our page! The GBC has not yet replied to the following challenges, and until they do, the Challenge Horse remains on the loose in their territory:

1. *Substantiate the present ISKCON Guru System with reference to Srila Prabhupada's teachings — especially in regards to the appointment and qualification issues.*

2. *If unable to do so conclusively, abandon the present system as unauthorized and institute the Ritvik Acharya System authorized by Srila Prabhupada in 1977. This would not preclude the appearance or recognition of new Diksha Gurus who are qualified as described in sastra.*



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 New Vrindavan — Debate Umapati Swami etc.
 Virabahu Challenged Yasomatinandana dasa

VVR 11

Reply to Ravindra's GBC Circular KDA
 At the Pearly Gates — Reply to Kirtanananda
 Eight Point Conclusion on Guru Tattva and ISKCON
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 Transcript of "Appointment Tapes"

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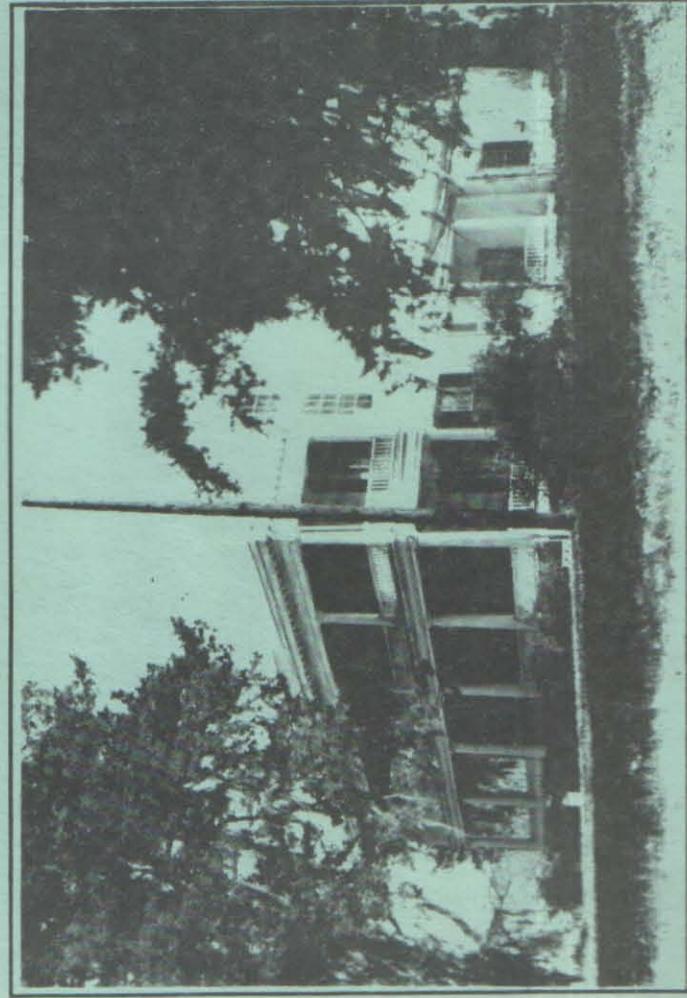
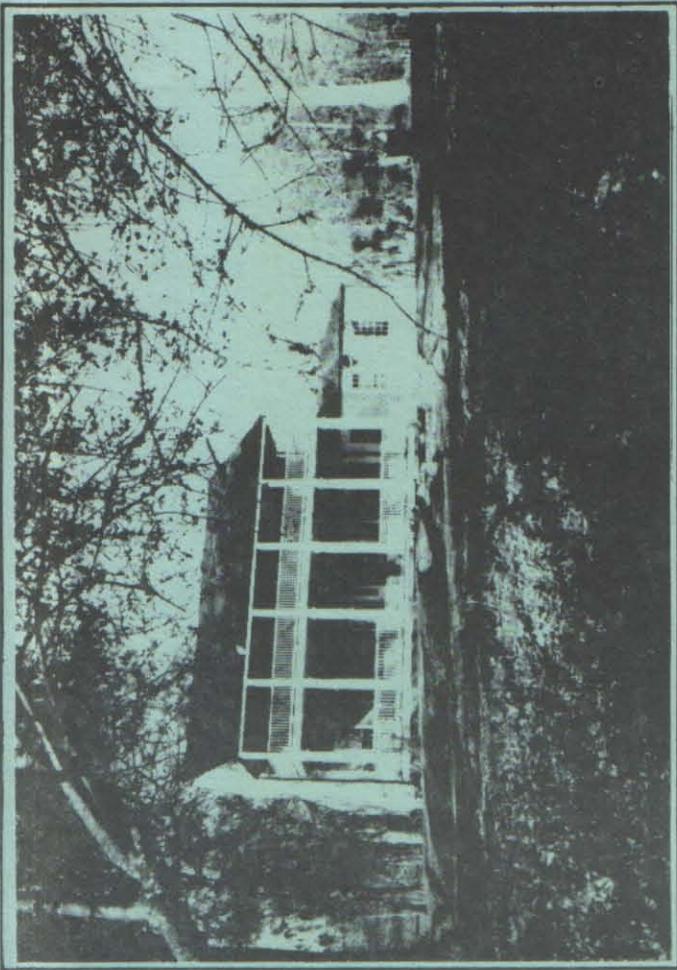
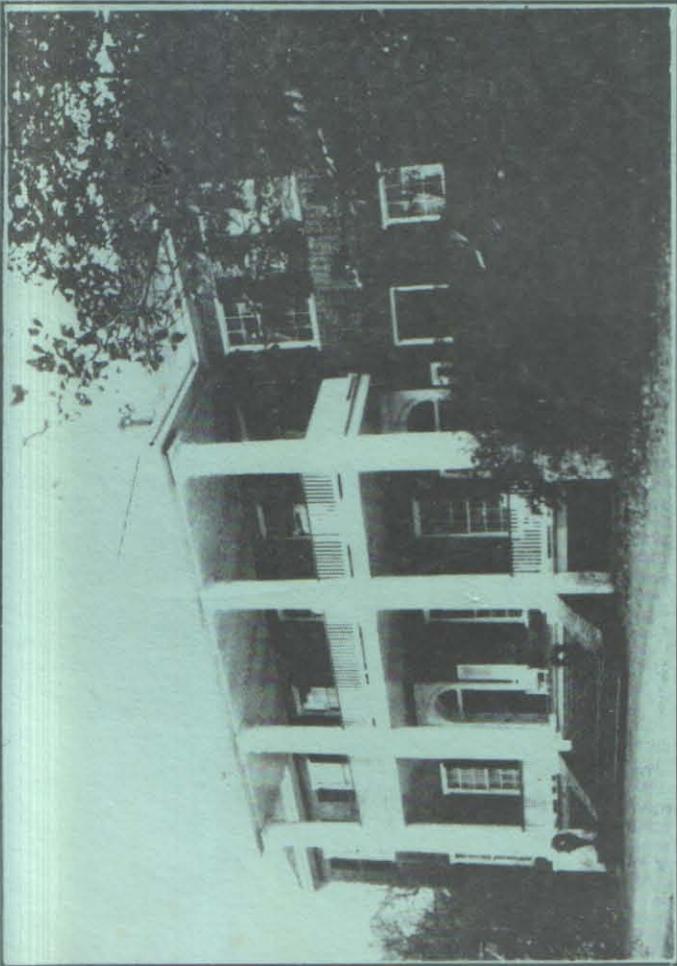
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