

Priti-laksanam

A Forum for Vaishnava Discussion

"Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasada* and offering *prasada* are the six symptoms of love [*priti-laksanam*] shared by one devotee and another." — *Nectar of Instruction*, Text Four

Volume 19

In the service of
His Divine Grace

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A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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Dear Readers,

Since assuming the role of editors of *Priti-laksanam* it's been our goal to broaden the discussion and not get in the way, by dictating it. So I have left the issues to other writers. I will speak this time with you about the nuts and bolts of producing this journal, leaving as much room as possible for others to express themselves on topics that concern them within the context of Krishna consciousness, which is what makes Priti special. This publication is uniquely the readers' and those who contribute their ideas to it.

In order to facilitate the continuation of Priti, it has to be paid for. It costs about \$425 to print and mail it out at 32 pages to the existing mailing list. As of the last issue, about 75% of the subscribers (particularly in the US) had not renewed their subscriptions for the last 5 issues. Some have since responded to our renewal notices, but not yet enough to make a minimum of 200 people for the less expensive bulk US mailing. Those of you who have responded (and especially those who have even included an extra donation or paid for a friend's subscription), I thank you very much for your support.

This situation may be partially my fault, as I did not understand the database arrangement that Pranada Dasi had to keep track of your subs. However, Balarama Dasa figured it out a couple of issues ago and we were able to send out accurate resubscription notices.

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What does this mean? It means that the \$425 it takes to print and mail the journal has to come from additional sources than subscribers, from donations, ads, and perhaps my not-so-deep pockets. I feel that the burden has been resting tenuously on my narrow shoulders.

This struggle to pay for Priti makes me wonder if there is enough support for it. To me, the proof is when people renew their subscriptions or take out new subscriptions for themselves or other devotees. I may be able to get larger donations from some individuals to make up the difference, but that is not the same as raising the funds from the readers. I would rather see that all the readers want it and are willing to pay their small share for it, wouldn't you?

There have been about 30 new subscribers since the last issue, so it is not all bleak. But that still is not enough to cover the costs without having to try and tap outside resources. Fortunately, because of generous donations from Bhakti-Tirtha Swami, Cintamani Dasi (of Detroit), and Rupanuga Dasa that arrived just as we were about to print this, we have the necessary funds to produce and mail this volume. We feel deeply grateful for their support, which came at a critical time.

Another reason why it is important to have a healthy number of subscribers and readers is because that expands the free flow of devotee ideas, which is what makes Priti useful.

If those of you who have expired subs do not respond in a timely fashion to your enclosed or accompanying resubscription notices, I will feel compelled to drop you from the list, as that indicates to me that you do not want it, and this would pain me greatly. I feel that every one of you is precious and I hate to lose anyone. If this happens, it will not be the end of Priti, but it would diminish it, and I would probably have to shorten it from its present 32 pages to

reduce the cost. That would then limit the space we can devote to the free exchange of ideas, which would be a shame, as well as reduce its circle of influence.

So in order to continue and increase this free exchange of thinking about our society, the ability to publish this journal will have to rest on the broad shoulders of Srila Prabhupada, personified here by his followers' support and involvement in working together to please him through these pages. Please take the time to renew or subscribe (\$6 to the US or \$9 outside the US). It costs very little, but means a great deal!

LETTERS

Response to Krishna Krpa Dasi's Honoring Srila Prabhupada (Vol. 18)

Tukarama Dasa
New Delhi, India

On behalf of the Global Centennial Ministry, I would like to thank you for your letter regarding Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja. Your made a number of statements, but I wanted to respond to three points you made that directly relate to the activities of the Global Ministry.

You expressed "heartbreak" that thousands of sincere souls were misled on Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja day into "performing unauthorized ceremonies." I am concerned that some sincere devotees with insufficient knowledge of Srila Prabhupada's teachings might be misled by your letter into thinking that the Sahasra Tirtha Jala (STJ) Maha-Abhiseka was unauthorized. I will argue that the STJ program was an authorized and wonderful way that tens of thousands of Srila Prabhupada's followers worldwide did indeed glorify His Divine Grace on his Centennial Vyasa-puja day.

Point one: You said that the *abhiseka* was a "substitute" for a real Vyasa-puja celebration. You quoted Srila

Prabhupada (Cc. Adi 17.11): "*Abhiseka* is a special function for the installation of a Deity." That is true, but *abhiseka* is done on a daily basis in practically all ISKCON temples with Deities, just as it was done when Srila Prabhupada was present. This is in accordance with the *Hari Bhakti Vilasa* by Srila Sanatana Goswami. Srila Prabhupada said that *Hari Bhakti Vilasa* is the "authorized Vedic guide for Vaishnavas in their daily behavior." (SB. 4.8.54p) He instructed his disciples to compile a book based on the *Hari Bhakti Vilasa* and said that all *brahmanas* would be responsible to learn it (letter of 1/9/76). This was done—under Srila Prabhupada's direction, it became the standard for Deity worship in ISKCON. In the *Arcana Paddhati* (the book's name) the instruction is given to worship the Deity daily with an *abhiseka*. The *Hari Bhakti Vilasa* says that before worshipping the Deity, worshipping the guru is compulsory. That worship includes an *abhiseka*. All over the world in ISKCON temples everyday, an *abhiseka* to the guru is performed in accordance with *sastra*. In addition, at most ISKCON temples with a brass *murti* of Srila Prabhupada, this *murti* is often offered a foot bath with *pancamra* upon arriving at a temple. In fact, Srila Prabhupada describes the *abhiseka* as a standard affair at the coronation of any kind. *Abhiseka* is a bona fide process for worshipping the guru every day, what to speak of his Vyasa-puja day, what to speak of his Centennial Vyasa-puja day.

Point Two: You mention that the GBC devised the STJ as a means to raise money. There are two points I'd like to mention in this regard. First, the GBC did not devise the STJ program. The credit for this idea goes to Badri Visala Dasa (temple president of ISKCON Haridwar). The idea to use the program to raise funds (to help temples around the world with their Centennial projects) came later, from the Deities of Sri Sri

Radha-Madhava. According to the article from which you selectively quoted, the realization of the devotees was that Their Lordships arranged the fund-raising potential in answer to the devotees' sincere prayers for assistance in glorifying Srila Prabhupada. Remember, that Krishna is known as *bhaktanam mana vradhana*, or "He who increases the honor of his devotees." (SB 3.24.30)

Second, in case you doubt whether the STJ fund-raising is bona fide, please consider this statement about accepting wealth to glorify the Lord: "The devotees should preach the gospel of devotional service, and thus engage people in practical service to the Deity. Wealthy people can also be attracted to take part in these activities. In this way, everyone will become spiritually inclined, and the entire society will be converted to Krishna consciousness." (Cc Madhya 4.102p). This verse and purport refer to worship of the Deity, but the *Padma Purana* says, "Although the Vedas recommend the worship of demigods, the worship of Lord Visnu is topmost. However, above the worship of Lord Visnu is the rendering of service to Vaishnavas, who are related to Lord Visnu." That verse is quoted by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. (Cc. Madhya 11.31) So we can understand that it is beneficial and appropriate to facilitate people in rendering service to a pure devotee of the caliber of Srila Prabhupada. Using the STJ to engage people's wealth in the service of ISKCON is in accordance with pure devotional principles.

Point three: Playing a tape of the chanting of the names of the *tirthas* during the *abhiseka* was probably accompanied in every temple (certainly it was in Calcutta) with a live *kirtana* before and after. According to Vaishnava philosophy, the holy *tirthas* are personalities, and they are present in the sacred water. That means that during the *abhiseka*, more than 1,008 supernatural

personalities personally came to worship Srila Prabhupada. To receive a guest by acknowledging his or her presence is the minimum standard of hospitality. Srila Prabhupada wrote, "The law of reception in the codes of the Vedic principles states that even if an enemy is received at home, he must be received with all respects . . . The reception law enjoins that a poor man, who has nothing to offer his guest, should be good enough to offer a straw mat for sitting, a glass of water for drinking, and some sweet words. Therefore, to receive a guest, either friend or foe, there is no expense. It is only a question of good manners." (Bg. 1.18.28p) So it is simply good manners to announce the arrival of such exalted guests as *tirthas* during the *abhiseka* and have kirtana before and after. It was a very small part of the festivities.

Regarding approaching the Vyasasana individually for triple obeisances, the South African *yatra* had to fill their thousand-person-capacity temple 20 times and conduct the same *puspanjali* ceremony 20 times over, so all the people could offer respect to Srila Prabhupada. To have everyone do it individually would have taken months. By the way, Srila Prabhupada used the word "puspanjali" in reference to Vyasa-puja (see the *Lilamrta*)

I hope you will appreciate the sincere endeavors of so many devotees to glorify Srila Prabhupada in a bona fide way and forgive any slight discrepancies or imperfections that might have been there.

**Isvari-rani Dasi
San Marcos, TX, US**

I just would like to say that *Priti-laksanam* forum remains a constant source of inspiration, the poetry section, especially. This is very much like a personal letter—truly informative, simple, and with concern and a truthful look at devotees' views and opinions through-

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out the world. Your action orientation is impressive.

May I say that, in my research, trace element lithium's value can reduce aggressiveness, violence, and self-destruction. Lithium deficiency causes depression, mania, suicide, spouse and offspring abuse, and reduced longevity. Dietary sources are foods grown in mineral-rich soil. Lithium's importance is proper endocrine regulation and brain function.

A suggestion is that Celtic sea salt is greatly nutritious in the preparation of *prasadam*.

**Mahalaksmi Dasi
Badger, CA, USA**

Thank you for your Sept. '96 issue of *Priti-laksanam*. It's so encouraging to be allowed to express my thoughts on various topics, even though what I say may or may not meet with everyone's approval. I very much appreciated many of your articles in the last issue. The one entitled "Vaisnava Nari Kalyanam" by Sudharma Dasi was especially appreciated. I feel that ISKCON will truly prosper and flourish when women's contributions are recognized. Also, the article by Isa dasa, "I Don't Blame Anyone," was short but to the point. Caitanya Dasi's presentation of "How Sadhana Saved my Marriage" was great, and the article about the West Africa Mission was very informative. It confirmed what my husband often has told me about white devotees caring very little about blacks—but I also appreciated hearing of the preaching going on in W. Africa.

In the article entitled "Honoring Srila Prabhupada," I appreciate the effort by Krsna Krpa Dasi to inspire us to follow rules and regulations properly, but her statement, "These substitutes prevent us from experiencing the real nectar of Krishna consciousness" is erroneous. The rules and regulations are not everything. Although I agree that the discrepancies should be corrected, it does not stop the

devotees from feeling satisfied and happy—particularly the general masses, the common devotees. It is the leaders who decide, for whatever reason, to give a different standard. It is they who must be concerned if their adjustments are offensive and will ultimately thwart their devotional creeper.

The attempt to keep this short prevents me from praising or commenting on all the articles. But there were a few more excellent ones, and one I found totally distasteful, entitled "Community and Education." How dare this writer say that the "fringe community," dependent on the "demon host community" develops a low-grade, chronic, *kanistha adhikari* consciousness! Develop from where, a lower or higher stage? *Madhyama-adhikaris* don't give up their faith, that is one of the definitions of that category, so I must assume you're saying, "develop" from a lower stage or *kanistha adhikari*. If that be the case, why criticize? They're better off with whatever level of K.C. they have rather than being *karmis*, and your concepts of centrifugal, centrifugal, and centripetal education don't seem to have much connection to the system of education given by Srila Prabhupada and Krishna, which is explained in Chapt. 9 of *Bhagavad-gita* as Raja-Vidya, the King of Education.

Srila Prabhupada is an *acharya* in the highest sense of the word. Were his pharmaceutical remedies sold only to a small handful of Vaishnavas in the Gaudiya Math? Certainly not. Srila Prabhupada's example is always to depend on Krishna, not this community or that, this arrangement or that, and to use "utility is the principle" as a guideline.

**Radharani Dasi
Chihuahua, Mexico**

I like *Priti-laksanam* very much. It is time that someone can speak on behalf of

the women and children. I hope that it really happens and is not just words. I had to suffer so much personally because of the lack of feelings and conscience, and so many other things from a few so-called devotees. I personally saw many things against children and women and I felt sad in my heart.

God bless the devotees who can do something about that.

**Prtha dasi
Moundsville, WV, USA**

I heard something and decided it's best to go to the source. I heard *Priti-laksanam* has recently been disapproved of by the approval board because homosexuals were running ads in the personals. I hope this is not true and that's why I'm directly asking. My initial response was that I did not believe it, but because I have a subscription and have not received the October issue I began to wonder. If you're just behind on deadlines, don't worry. I understand that. I can wait.

Please don't get discouraged. No matter what anyone says, your newsletter is important to this movement. It's preaching and the preaching must not be stopped. I also hope the personals will continue. Temple authorities aren't helping to find matches. I don't know of anyone else who is. Keep up the good work.

Editor's note: What approval board? There used to be an ISKCON Editorial Review Board that has been defunct for a few years. It used to approve or disapprove of books and other publications. *Priti-laksanam* is an independent publication, not controlled by any ISKCON entity. Its direction is determined by its editors, readers, and contributing writers, all of whom are expected to be guided by Srila Prabhupada's teachings.

As far as we can tell, there are no homosexual personals in this publica-

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tion. These ads are meant only for heterosexuals seeking serious Krishna conscious marriage partners.

Priti is supposed to be published quarterly and we sell four-issue subscriptions. We do run behind schedule. The last issue we published (Volume 18) came out in September 1996. We're about a month late with this one. We appreciate your support and your patience.

**Rasananda Dasa
Secunderabad, India**

Although I thought I was retired from the service of building *rathas*, (I am now 53-years-old and started doing it about 15 years ago when I already thought I was an old timer in K.C.), I stayed in Bangladesh last year to build another one for the first Ratha-yatra to be held there. The story appeared in the Sept/Oct issue of *ISKCON World Review*. It was a pretty intense experience as I had little help or facility and the devotees there had no experience with doing public *kirtanas*. Until recently, street chanting had been banned in Bangladesh.

I am a little unsettled in the location where I do my service, and *Priti-laksanam* is not a very frequent publication, so I sometimes don't remember when I've seen the last one. I found Vol. 17 (May 96) waiting for me when I returned to my base recently, and found, as usual, that almost all the "From the Editors," letters, and articles to be so good that I've read them maybe three times. I will mention the items by Kunti Dasi, Sarva-satya Dasa, Mahalaksmi Dasi, Rupacandra Dasi, Rupanuga Dasa, Bimala Dasi, and Satyaraja Dasa.

I want to point out a serious error of omission in Krishna Dharma Dasa's article titled "A Constitution for ISKCON." Regarding his quote (from GBC documents?) that the GBC body has the responsibility to "appoint, suspend and expel GBC members . . ." he fails to elaborate as to the circumstances under

which the latter two actions are meant to be taken, and he also fails to point out that the appointment—failing the extraordinary circumstances calling for a member's suspension or dismissal—is for life. This latter point I remember from Srila Prabhupada or the GBC in the early 70's and while visiting Mayapur. I have just confirmed from the GBC secretary that she is engaged in a long-term project (among many other official duties in her office) of compiling all the body's resolutions since its inception.

ESSAYS

**GBC Web Page
Vipramukhya Swami
VANCOUVER, BC, Canada**

The ISKCON Governing Body Commission (GBC) now has its own web page to exchange information with members of the society. The GBC Web Page is a way to help the commissioners and devotees communicate and understand each other. Most of the material currently on the page comes from the *GBC Journal*, published by the international GBC and mailed to all ISKCON temples several times a year. But soon we will also make the *ISKCON Resource Manual* available over the World Wide Web.

In his "Chairman's Message" on the site, GBC Chairman Suhotra Swami wrote: "We should never forget, amidst our reflections on past mistakes and our planning for future safeguards, that the purpose of this movement is to fight the war with Maya."

The *GBC Journal* that appears on the site is edited by Kalakantha Dasa, and features local ISKCON managers, GBC policy resolutions, the names of the commissioners, and a format for devotees to write to the GBC Executive Committee.

As Suhotra Swami said: "We look forward to the opportunity to publish

devotees' letters to the GBC in future publications."

The GBC Web Page address is (<http://www.swami.simplenet.com/gbc>).

**Wanting "Unwanted" Progeny
Radha Pessin Selvester
Alachua, FL, USA**

The anti-abortionists have a saying that some of life's best gifts are unplanned. They are urging women who get pregnant out of wedlock to give birth to children they are unable to care for properly. The anti-abortionist groups offer some limited support for women who decide to raise their unplanned babies or help them find good homes to give their children for adoption. These well-intentioned groups consider all children gifts of God; they celebrate each individual's life as unique and special. "All children have the right to life," they say, "both born and unborn."

As devotees, we understand the soul enters the body at the time of conception, so we know that an abortion is as sinful as any other murder. We don't even kill animals, what to speak of unborn humans. But what are we doing as a society to help those devotees who have made the mistake of conceiving a child they are unable to care for? We have a serious social dilemma. Our scriptures teach us to abstain from sex even within marriage unless we are trying to conceive. Sex outside of marriage is absolutely forbidden. So what happens when the lower human nature over-rides our higher spiritual intelligence? Do we try to pretend we can control our senses and wind up "falling down" anyway, conceiving children we didn't want?

Or do we admit we are not on the highest platform and wind up with very large families of children we can't care for as well as we'd like? Some devotees wonder about various types of contraception, including sterilization. There are no easy answers here. And there are

very few devotees who will even discuss these matters openly and honestly, so I doubt we will come up with any clear answers soon. In the meantime, I'd like to present some ideas on the topics of adoption and foster care—ways in which "unwanted progeny" can become wanted. (Fostering means temporarily caring for others' children with the ultimate goal of returning the children to their birthparents.)

Once we've gotten over the misunderstanding that *grihasta* life is Maya and child-care is an interruption to "real" devotional service, we're ready to talk about the joys and responsibilities of parenting. Parenting is a very important service. How children are cared for and provided for greatly determines how they will turn out. Will they be an asset or a burden to society? Will they accept or reject Krishna consciousness? How well will they survive the turmoil of adolescence? Will they grow to use all their potential abilities in Krishna's service or will some talents go unused due to parental discouragement? The answers to these questions are greatly influenced by the way the children have been parented. My personal observation is that the nature of the conception of a child is a lesser influence than the nature of the parenting the child receives after birth.

This brings us to the point of adoption and foster care. It is rare to find a woman ("birth mother") giving up her child because she doesn't want him or her. As we can see by the example of Mother Devaki, it was extremely painful for her to give up Krishna, but she did so out of love for Him. She wanted to do what was best and safest for her child. Of course, comparing ourselves with the Supreme Lord and His transcendental mother is not entirely appropriate, but it is just a well-known example that shows us how birth mothers make a great sacrifice to give up their children. With

abortion legalized in many parts of the world, these birth mothers could have chosen to destroy the babies they couldn't care for. Instead they sacrificed nine months of their lives with the inconvenience of pregnancy to deliver children to other families, knowing full well the suffering they would endure during labor and delivery—what to speak of months or years later in grieving their loss. We do not condone illicit sex, but we do praise those women who after making a mistake did not go on to compound it with something even more sinful—abortion. And to show our support to these women (who may be victims of abusive men), we need to step forward and offer to adopt or foster the children conceived in unfortunate circumstances.

Adoption is not just for the childless couple. I know many families with both biological and adopted children. Adoption is not only for couples—occasionally single adults adopt. The important things to consider are: love, commitment, and at least a minimal amount of the material things like food, shelter, etc. Mother Pranada began the Adopt-a-Child networking system three years ago to help birth mothers find families for the children they couldn't raise. She has helped to make several successful placements worldwide. Mother Revati and I offered to take over the Adopt-a-Child program when Pranada Prabhu became unable to continue it. Revati and I (along with our husbands) feel strongly that more devotees should pursue adoption. We need to take care of children born of devotees (birth mothers are often young second-generation women). Even children born of non-devotee parents may be karmically destined for Krishna consciousness from an early age. We must be open to adopting these children, as well.

Revati and I are available to talk with birth mothers and prospective adoptive parents. We can help you find answers to questions about costs, proce-

dures, and other aspects of adoption and foster care. We are both licensed by the State of Florida for foster care and adoption and have cared for devotee and non-devotee children in our homes. We are both currently in the process of adopting children who are not newborns.

I recently helped a young woman find a home for a child she couldn't care for. I know it was difficult for her to make this sacrifice, but she cared not for herself. She only wanted what was best for the baby and I believe the family she chose will adore the child and give everything the child needs both materially and spiritually.

We are eager to help facilitate more "marriages" between children and parents. The first step is hearing from prospective adoptive families (couples or single adults). We need to compile portfolios on adults willing to take care of children. If you are interested in serving Krishna by caring for His juvenile devotees (or potential devotees), please call, write, fax, or email, and we'll be happy to help you find the rest of the family Krishna has planned for you. We are also available to help (informally) counsel women as they make one of the toughest decisions of their lives—what to do about an unplanned pregnancy. We have access to various resources to help women in crisis.

Radha Pessin Selvester and Bhagavat Dasa (Joseph Selvester)

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Common Myths About Adoption

1. Women who give babies up for adoption don't love them.

2. Babies conceived by parents who

don't want them will have mental and emotional problems.

3. Adoption is exorbitantly expensive.

4. Children who have spent the first part of their lives in messed up families will be a bad influence on adoptive family's biological children.

5. Having children is *maya* anyway, so we shouldn't adopt.

6. It's the karma of the children and the parents who give birth to them to live together.

7. Only infertile couples should adopt.

Editors' note: Sarva and I have been blessed with an adoptive son, Krishna Dasa (KD), who is now 20, living at home, doing well in college, working, has a wonderful relationship with his girlfriend, Radha Krueger, and is practically an unlimited source of help and happiness to us. He remains in steady contact with his other mother, Radharani Dasi, who gave him to us when he was 10. Radharani approached us about her son because she was unhealthy, poor, single, and old, and felt that she could not give her son what he needed materially to have a good start in life. It was the hardest thing she ever did.

It was hard for KD, too. At first he understandably resented the situation, though he tried not to show it. But Sarva and I were determined to be patient and love him (not spoil him), relating with him as though he had always been ours, as well as Radharani's. As Radharani gently explained to him at the time, "You are a very fortunate boy to have two mothers, just like Krishna!"

Now KD has spent half his life with us, and our lives fit lovingly together like peas in a pod. It's impossible for me to conceive of our family without him, or our marriage without the added dimension of being KD's mom and dad. I thank Krishna for the opportunity to parent and love this wonderful person. Another

benefit is that parenting makes you tow the mark and be a better devotee—you feel the pressure to set a good example and learn to be less selfish. I strongly encourage others to open their lives by adopting children. —Kunti Dasi

Applying Varnashrama to ISKCON (Continued from last issue)

Krishna Dharma Dasa
Manchester, England

At this point, without getting too deeply into a discussion of *varnashramadharmā*, I would like to tie it in a little more with the discussion about ISKCON's constitution. I feel that we need to look at the various roles within our society and relate them to their corresponding *varnashrama* position. For example, the GBC. What kind of role is this? The top, visionary, policy-making, leadership role seems to be very much in accord with that of the *brahmana*. Especially when we also take into account the fact that we do not want them to be hands-on managers. If we therefore say that the GBC are a *brahminical* body, then we need to consider what other responsibilities are incumbent upon them. What are the full duties of the *brahmanas*? Are they performing all those? And further, what are the privileges of the *brahmanas* in society. Do they have all those? Again, what is a temple president? Is he also a *brahmana*, or perhaps a *ksatriya*? In this way we can begin to examine various existing roles in ISKCON and see how they line up with the *varnashrama* system.

This is more than just an interesting exercise. As I have said in earlier installments, from the statements of the Vedas we know that *varnashramadharmā* is the only system of societal organization recommended for human society. Unless we are able to define our own organization in its *varnashrama* terms, we may well be speculating a different system with built-in fatal flaws. For example,

there is mention in the Vedas of *paradharma*. This means when a member of a particular order in society performs the duties of another order. In *varnashrama-dharma* this is generally considered anathema. The balance of social order is maintained by every one performing their own duties. As I already mentioned, in *varnashrama-dharma* there is complete interdependence. The Vedic statements are quite strong on this point: "To follow another's path is dangerous." (Bg 3.35) "It is better to engage imperfectly in one's own occupation than perfectly in another's" (Bg 18.47)

Again, I don't wish to presently enter into a deep discussion of *varnashrama-dharma*, but the point is that one should know what is one's own duty and properly perform that rather than do anything else. If someone is working half as a *brahmana* and half as a *ksatriya* then there will be problems. Or if one is enjoying the status and privileges of a *brahmana*, then it will be quite anomalous if he accepts only the responsibilities incumbent upon a *sudra* or *vaishya*. If therefore, we have a post such as temple president and that is defined as a *brahminical* post, then it should be fully performed as such. The person performing that duty should be careful not to embrace the duties of another order. He should also ensure that he is properly observing the responsibilities incumbent upon a *brahmana*. For example, one could not be a *brahmana* within the *varnashrama* system and be in the employ of someone else. Or be desirous of an opulent lifestyle. Or neglect the duty of studying and teaching scripture. These things may be appropriate or acceptable in other orders, but not for *brahmanas*.

Or if we have a post which is identified as being a *ksatriya* type of engagement, then again other responsibilities are there. For example, unlike the *brahmanas*, *ksatriyas* cannot accept

charity. But they can live a more opulent lifestyle. They can exact taxes, but they must be chivalrous and powerful. And so on. *Paradharma* is only one anomaly that may be present, there are numerous others, the presence of which will all cause the ultimate failure of societal order. The only way to root out these anomalies is to properly define, and then work within, a *varnashrama* structure based on scriptural direction.

Can There Be Democracy?

Interestingly, we find many kinds of the societal systems seen today present within the whole *varnashrama* picture. For example, as I mentioned in an earlier article of this series, a certain amount of democracy is there. But it only has application among equals. There is a story in the Vedas of how one day the lions, traditionally the powerful leaders of the animal community, decided to become more democratic. The jackals approached them and asked if they could be involved in selecting the leader. The lions liberally agreed, saying; "We lions have always been running things among ourselves. Let's give these jackals a fair say in things. We shall all have a vote and thus decide who shall lead." In this way, when the vote was called, the jackals, who far outnumbered the lions, selected the best jackal to be the leader of all the animals. And thus, having for its leader an unqualified and weak animal, there was chaos in the animal community. So democracy must be carefully applied in its proper context.

As *varnashrama-dharma* is a system designed by and directed towards God, this raises one other point with regard to the flaws inherent in democracy. We see today that, because we have a complete democracy in society, the qualities of leadership are dictated by current public whims. The leaders try to determine what the people want and then simply offer that. But in *varnashrama*, the leader is representing God and not the

people. He represents God and protects the people (and the animals). Just as the father knows what may be in the best interests of the child, even though the child may desire something else, God knows what is best for society. The parents will never allow the child to eat only sweets, or stop going to school, although this may be the child's wish, because they know what is in the child's best interests—what will make him happy. Similarly, the leader should lead according to the directions of the supreme father, God, and thus really benefit the people. To provide liquor houses, gambling shops, pornography, and so on may be popular, but it does nothing to conduce the stability and happiness of society. We can see how the current type of democracy fails by witnessing how we are always changing the leaders. Although they are offering more and more economic and material gains (basically what most people believe will make them happy), the directions of God are neglected, no one is happy, and society is a mess. In *varnashrama-dharma*, the leadership directs society towards the spiritual goal of life, which is an unchanging direction given by God, and which gives everyone complete happiness.

Another feature of today's society also found in *varnashrama* is capitalism. This is found amongst the *vaishyas*. But again, it cannot be taken out of its specific context and broadly applied to the whole of society. The *brahmanas*, for example, cannot be concerned with material acquisition and gain. They must remain materially aloof in order to retain their position of independence and spiritual power. Just see today the scandals involving corruption among leaders who have personal vested interests over and above those of the people they are supposed to be protecting. Again in *varnashrama-dharma*, there is theocracy and autocracy, but, as already discussed, these are mutually self balanc-

ing.

As I stated, the whole *varnashrama* society is designed by God and is meant for His ultimate pleasure and satisfaction; which of course means the satisfaction of everyone, as everyone is a part of the supreme whole or God. In this sense there is even, within the whole of society, communism, as every individual works, with God at the center, for the good of the whole. Everyone is a part of the whole and thus everyone benefits. Srila Prabhupada would often compare Vedic society with communism, saying that the principal difference is that we have Krishna at the center rather than the state. The moral instructions of the Vedas regarding societal organization also require that everyone is always considerate of the welfare of others; the famous *ahimsa* philosophy propounded by Mahatma Gandhi.

Understanding *varnashrama-dharma* and its application is, I feel, the only way we can create an effective structure for ISKCON—one that will work and one that will endure. Although we need not abandon the use of terms such as GBC, temple president, etc., we need to understand them in terms of the *varnashrama* model. Then we will understand how our relationships should work. At least this could be the basis. By defining the various *varnashrama* roles we will have the basic framework onto which we could place all our other terms and definitions. Such a framework really would be a "house in which the whole world can live." Within that basic framework we could have other institutions. For example, within *varnashrama* society we find separate and distinct communities for all the various orders of life, each having their own leadership and organization. But their individual duties and inter-relationships are defined, integrating them all into a complete society. Perhaps, within *varnashrama-dharma*, ISKCON will

evolve as an organization of *brahmanas*, or perhaps it may become the larger framework into which everything else fits. That is a difficult question to resolve at present, although I don't think it really matters.

To be continued next issue.

**Essential Association
Dhatta Dasa
Badger, CA, USA**

Srila Prabhupada is with us in so many ways. And he is also not with us. He is not here to admonish those who start down other paths. He is not here to immediately disband the Gopi-bhava clubs and other such groups. However, he *has* made the knowledge available to us by which we can check ourselves. But we have to make the effort to do this. The first thing a drowning man has to do is to close his mouth, so he doesn't breathe water. He has to discriminate: "This is water, this will kill me." Then, "OK, this is air, I can breathe this." That is knowledge.

We will not become learned accidentally. Though we can only know the difference between truth and ignorance, *vidya* and *avidya*, by the mercy of Krishna and Srila Prabhupada, we still have to make the endeavor ourselves. "Read all of my books or you will fall down," Srila Prabhupada said. We are additionally blessed with so many of his audio and video tapes, and we have most of his transcendental words on database.

When Srila Prabhupada was physically present, we would sometimes get away with "things" until he'd set us straight. We no longer have the luxury of his physical presence. What we do have, though, is a deeper responsibility to Srila Prabhupada and Krishna to become spiritually mature and philosophically fixed. "In the absence of the spiritual master, his words of direction should be the pride of the disciple" (Adi Lila 1.35 purport by Srila Prabhupada). Krishna tells Arjuna

in the Bhagavad-gita (4.42) "Therefore the doubts that have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, oh Bharata, stand and fight." Without that knowledge, we are unarmed, marching into battle unprepared. And not fighting is impossible. Who would walk into the middle of a raging battle and say "Well, I'm just not going to fight." Sorry, that's not an option, and neither is avoiding the battlefield altogether. The entire material world is the battlefield. The opposing sides are truth and illusion. The only other option is surrender to the enemy, illusion. Unfortunately, most of us, to one degree or another, have pledged allegiance to both sides. And yet we wonder why we feel uncomfortable.

What are the first things to know when in a war? Who is the enemy, and who is on our side. There may be persons, groups, or philosophies, who are not the enemy, but are neither on our side, that is, not part of Srila Prabhupada's mission. It is very easy for us to become distracted from our prime direction. We desperately need each other to stay "on track."

Why did Srila Prabhupada place so much emphasis on Krishna conscious association with devotees? One of the reasons is due to the four defects we possess as conditioned souls: 1) the *certainty* to fall into illusion, 2) the propensity to cheat others, 3) the *certainty* to make mistakes, and 4) the fact that our senses are imperfect. It is up to us to help each other. We all need support, encouragement, and the means to provide each other with checks and balances. If we think we don't need help from other devotees—whether we run our own business, manage a huge zone, wash pots in the temple, sell Srila Prabhupada's books, or maintain hundreds of disciples—we are in big trouble. Minor deviations, major deviations, the tendency to follow persons or philosophies not in

Srila Prabhupada's line, corruption within our movement on different levels—these things will be among us from now on, at the very least to the extent that they will always be a potential threat. We are knee-deep in Kali yuga, whether we like it or not. Our enemies are many—including anger, lust, envy, greed, illusion, and the most dangerous of all, pride. Pride is like the AIDS of spiritual life, because it prevents us from properly dealing with other diseases in an effective way. It blinds us to those *anarthas* that absolutely must be removed to be able to progress in spiritual life.

Devotees are our true friends. For a person to be our friend, or well-wisher, they have to know first of all who we are, and secondly what is in our real interest. There are so many junk mailings where the bulk printed computer label begins "Dear friend," But anybody with a half-ounce of sensitivity will think "*Where do these people get off calling me their friend? They don't even know who I am!*"

As devotees, we know who everyone is—eternal servants of Krishna in one degree or another of forgetfulness. And we know that the most valuable thing we have is our mutual association, if we stop for a moment to think about it. The tendency is extremely strong, however, to take that association for granted. How we are developing our love for Krishna can be measured by how we are developing true, spiritual love for each other. We must never forget that how we treat Krishna's devotees, no matter how externally insignificant, demonstrates how we feel about Krishna.

Whatever our *varna* and *ashram*, we have to stand united. That unity can only be obtained through devotion to the instructions of Srila Prabhupada. And *that* can only be had if we know what those instructions are. If we endeavor to only know enough of those instructions to prove ourselves right, then what is our

gain? It is easy to take words out of context if we only focus on a small part of them. For a realistic picture, especially in relation to difficult situations, we have to have the same broad view of Krishna consciousness that Srila Prabhupada had.

A person's words must align with his actions to be believed, but both his words *and* his actions must be based on truth to be consistent with each other. We must similarly base what we do and what we say on the absolute truth given to us by Srila Prabhupada to be ultimately successful. We may be fond of quoting one thing or another to prove a certain point, but we have to know what Srila Prabhupada gave us "as a lawyer knows his books," not in a superficial way. We have to absorb ourselves in Srila Prabhupada's instructions. By attempting to do that, Krishna will give us whatever we need.

**To Whom Much Is Given . . .
(fourth in a series)
Rupanuga Dasa
Alachua, Florida**

Teachers, leaders, even parents did not give them as much as they deserved, but those born in the Hare Krishna Movement were benedicted by Lord Krishna with a birth giving them association with Srila Prabhupada. That association with Srila Prabhupada's *vani* (his form of his teachings) and in some cases Srila Prabhupada's *vapu* (his physical form) is extremely rare and fortunate. Consider: Lord Krishna comes once every 4,320,000,000 years, and then only to the earth planet—just 5,000 years ago! Then Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu appeared just 510 years ago. And then Srila Prabhupada, the *acharya* for the rest of the Chaitanya era, arrived in the West just 32 years ago.

Those born in the movement are, according to Lord Krishna's design, are continuing their devotional service from

the past. Yet many such devotees are reporting that they were mistreated or abused. To comprehend how this could happen in a spiritual society, one has to understand the nature of *spiritual* abuse. Spiritual abuse is the foundation for all other abuses because it creates and sustains an atmosphere conducive to all types of abuse. Spiritual abuse retards the natural revival of the constitutional position of the spirit soul, and thus it is most reprehensible.

Because the spiritual abuse hindered spiritual development, the natural inclination of the conditioned soul to bad habits and unrestricted sense enjoyment remained within the heart like seeds. Srila Prabhupada intended that proper training and education would keep those seeds dormant, or even remove them. That many of those seeds—the *anarthas*, bad habits, and unrestricted sense enjoyment—fructified within the hearts of the youth are proof that the guardians were neglectful. The guardians' neglect is evident in their failure to train and educate their dependents. Well-meaning attempts to "protect" the youth "from Maya" generally failed. That kind of "protection" is a negative concept, and not the foundation for spiritual training and education. "Protection from Maya" is often a cover for the lack of spiritual knowledge and love (referring to affectionate efforts to be a transparent medium for Srila Prabhupada).

Such an atmosphere created the first and foremost abuse: the failure to explain and establish Srila Prabhupada's unique position as a *nitya-siddha* and as the infallible *acharya* for the remaining 9,500 years of the Golden Age in Kali-yuga. Instead, within less than a year of his disappearance, 11 seats were put next to Srila Prabhupada's Vyasasana in Mayapur, communicating that leadership of ISKCON was divided among those 11 disciples. By 1982, the influence of the Gaudiya-Math, which Srila

Prabhupada clearly warned us against, created the so-called Acharya Board, which established 11 of Srila Prabhupada's disciples above the jurisdiction of the GBC. The board made ISKCON management decisions privately. This was a change in Srila Prabhupada's directions for management.

Those were dark days indeed, especially for the children whose future was being shaped by this new emphasis on special loyalty to the gurus rather than to Srila Prabhupada. In contrast, the recent celebration of Srila Prabhupada's 100th Appearance Day was but a small sample of the original and pervading loyalty to him that thrived from 1966 through 1977. Such an atmosphere can be rejuvenated fully and the movement can be given new life, but only with the help of the young devotees, "the future hope of the movement."

The second most significant abuse is the general failure of the educational system to follow Srila Prabhupada's basic instructions. For example, he said that the most important aspect of teaching is to love the students. The first symptom of that love is to be very kind. In this connection, he gave orders that teachers are not allowed to administer physical punishment. Another instruction is that the students are not expected to chant 16 rounds on beads before the age of 12; otherwise, they would lose their interest for chanting later. A most important instruction was given in Vrindavana, March 1974—the clear orders to establish *varnashrama* colleges at every center for the training of devotees age 10 and up in their *varnas* and *ashramas* (*Conversations with Srila Prabhupada*, Vol. 7). From these instructions and similar ones, it's clear that he wanted young men to graduate from *varnashrama* colleges trained to enter the *grihastha ashrama*, responsible with sufficient training in one of the four

varnas. He wanted young devotee men of character to be suitable husbands for qualified young devotee women. He wanted marriages to keep "within the group." Although these instructions were given to leading *sannyasis* 23 years ago, all young devotees have grown up without *varnashrama* college training. Neglecting this education is another kind of abuse.

Taking care of young devotees is a labor of love. The greatest symptom of that love is to always remain a transparent medium for Srila Prabhupada. In this way, the dependent is linked to Lord Krishna. After all, a conditioned soul, no matter how advanced, can link anyone to Srila Prabhupada, which is the first real step in Krishna consciousness.

As Srila Prabhupada explains (Bg. 10.4-5), not to train someone to use their body for Krishna consciousness is committing violence on the human body. Therefore, the duty of teachers, gurus, and parents is to carefully establish the link in Krishna consciousness for their dependents, the link to Srila Prabhupada. Building a conscious loyalty to him is the first essential step in *vaidhi-bhakti*, or obligatory service performed in obedience to the orders of the *parampara* (NOD, Chap. 2).

Persons who take birth in the Hare Krishna Movement are continuing their devotional service from previous lives. The higher authorities arranged that they are born under Srila Prabhupada's jurisdiction so that they may progress under his affectionate direction and protection. In return, they are obligated to help him continue the movement. Unfortunately, spiritual abuse has weakened this continuity, or *parampara*.

Modern nondevotee professionals define abuse and neglect of minors to include educational, physical, sexual, emotional, and nutritional aspects, often occurring simultaneously and rated on a continuum of severity. Of course,

they have no idea of spiritual abuse; but when the above-mentioned abuses occur in a spiritual context, they become spiritual abuses. From 1966 to 1977, abuses were perpetrated in the name of or in the guise of Krishna consciousness, deliberately or out of ignorance, including the belittling of the *grihastha ashrama* as a class; the "big" temple president who Srila Prabhupada said tried to "enslave the devotees;" and the managers who Srila Prabhupada said were living like princes at the cost of the hard labor of others (*Conversations*, Vol. 7, Vrindavana, March 1974). Since 1977 the number and kinds of abuse have increased.

We can trace all abuse in a spiritual society to its genesis, the failure to act as a transparent medium for Srila Prabhupada, an act of free will. Spiritual abuses can be overcome only by the spiritual means of surrender to Lord Krishna and association with Srila Prabhupada. In the struggle to surrender to Lord Krishna, one must first surrender to Srila Prabhupada, with or without another person's help. Lord Krishna does not want us to surrender to Him directly; instead, He orders us to surrender and serve the pure unalloyed devotee (Bg. 4.34-35). This will free us from all contamination, including the effects of spiritual abuse.

Srila Prabhupada's greatness is proven and demonstrated. He is the bonafide *acharya*, and his books are the law books for all mankind, what to speak of devotees. One sometimes hears that one must have "a living guru." But Srila Prabhupada is a living guru. Since we ordinary conditioned souls do not die, surely Srila Prabhupada lives on as the *acharya* in his *vani* form. "He lives forever in his divine instructions, and the follower lives with him." Association with Srila Prabhupada is the secret of advancement in Krishna consciousness, an open secret to the faithful. Those who

associated with Srila Prabhupada's *vapu*, his physical presence, are certainly fortunate, but he repeatedly told us that his *vani* form was far more important. Those who have faith in his words without seeing him physically are equally fortunate, perhaps more so. For they do not run the risk of familiarity breeding contempt or of misjudging his infallible position with imperfect perceptions, as many have done.

Association with Srila Prabhupada will overcome any abuses, inspire us for suitable work and service, and encourage us to behave properly within a spiritual ashrama. Regarding the *grihastha ashrama*, Srila Prabhupada wrote in a purport (Bg. 18.7): "*vivah-yajna*, the marriage ceremony, is meant to regulate the human mind to become peaceful for spiritual advancement." He explained suitable work and service: "The point is to be engaged in doing something for Krishna, never mind what is that job, but being so engaged in doing something very much satisfying to the devotee that he remains always enthusiastic. He will automatically follow the regulative principles because they are part of his occupational duty—by applying them practically as his occupational duty, he realizes the happy result of regulative principles." (Letter to Karandhar, 12/22/72)

Once Srila Prabhupada asked a devotee what service he would like to do for Krishna. The devotee answered that whatever Srila Prabhupada asked him to do. "No," Srila Prabhupada replied, "Try to understand our philosophy. What do you want to do for Krishna?" The devotee answered that he would like to make *mridangas*. "Yes," Srila Prabhupada said, "But make them unbreakable!" And the devotee went on to invent the fiberglass *mridanga*.

Indicators of satisfying work and service are: 1) whatever kind of work you really want to do the most, and 2) whatever work makes you forget the passage

of time because you are fully absorbed. A person should have a clear indication of their abilities and differentiate between the "major" ability and other "minor" or subsidiary abilities. Sometimes a minor ability is mistakenly pursued as a major ability, and the result is frustration in work and family affairs. Or circumstances may require using minor abilities for economic reasons, but the major ability should be used on a part-time or even recreational basis.

Value judgements create confusion because devotees mistakenly think that one *varna* or *ashrama* is better, although Lord Krishna accepts them all equally in devotional service. He designed the *varnas* and *ashramas* for cooperation, not competition. All work is meant for dovetailing with Krishna's instructions as presented by Srila Prabhupada. Many great artists, musicians, scientists, CEOs, scholars, architects, doctors, military men, etc. also received their abilities from Krishna, but they perform their work in the modes of passion and ignorance.

When a person knows their *varna*, or life's work, they have a solid foundation for taking their *ashrama* seriously. All four *varnas* are sheltered in the *grihastha ashrama*. So practically every devotee needs to be married. But marriage based on physical attraction alone is headed for frustration. As explained in a previous essay, that attraction must include compatible psycho-physical natures as well as similar interests in devotional service. Ultimately, it is a question of both parties being serious about Krishna consciousness. One cannot expect mercy from a meat-eater or intoxicator; that is impossible, for these habits destroy the quality of mercy and cultivate pride, harshness, selfishness, cruelty, and mental disturbance, ending in separation and divorce.

The *grihastha ashrama* requires controlling the lower self by the higher self

(*sat* and *asat-svabhava*, SB 10.13.53). It is difficult to avoid contamination while living in a country which culturally assimilates the four *anarthas* as normal behavior by the majority. Yet spiritual success is assured if one is advancing in *varna* and *ashrama*, knowing that Srila Prabhupada wants such good examples for the sake of the people in general.

The young devotees can advance the Hare Krishna Movement in the 21st century by establishing *daiva varnashrama-dharma*. Srila Prabhupada instructed in 1974 that the people in general must have their *varna* so they can be peaceful and take to Krishna consciousness. He intended such a sublime society to be spread all over the world under the leadership and example of devotees. When the younger devotees dovetail their needs for family life, education, and occupation into *daiva varnashrama-dharma*, it will greatly satisfy Srila Prabhupada and will enable the rescue of the world from the pernicious effects of Kali-yuga.

Srila Prabhupada puts his hope in the younger devotees to carry this movement into the next century. He has given them all his blessings and assured them of Lord Krishna's blessings. Srila Prabhupada's books contain everything they need for life's perfection, as well as the mandate to make the whole world Krishna conscious. To whom much is given, much is expected.

Betrayal of the Spirit Nandini Dasi (Nori Muster) Tempe, AZ, USA

As the author of *Betrayal of the Spirit*, I would like to take this opportunity to explain why I wrote the book. It is about my experiences in the ISKCON Public Affairs office at New Dvaraka from 1978 to 1988. Despite my knowledge of guns, drug money, internal dissension, and lawsuits everywhere, I obediently helped cover-up to withhold certain informa-

tion from the media and the regular devotees. I finally left when the hypocrisy became too much for me.

I wrote this book to clear my conscience and fill in some missing pieces for others who lived in ISKCON during those years. I have always believed that ISKCON members deserve to be informed and that the truth can heal. There are those who would still keep the secrets and paint a rosy picture of ISKCON's history for new members.

While *Betrayal of the Spirit* is critical of the structure set up by the gurus and GBC, it conveys Srila Prabhupada's vision that Krishna is God. The book explains that ISKCON represents a true religion that has meaning for many people, including myself.

Betrayal of the Spirit is available in bookstores, or refer to the classified ad in this issue of *Priti-laksanam* for information on ordering a copy.

Parents' Legal Liability Vedanta Dasa (no address given)

As devotees we are trying to be spiritual, and rightly so. Sometimes we are unaware of the things happening in the world—things that could hurt us. Here is a piece of news that may be helpful.

One teenage boy (nondevotee) was recently arrested. The police went into his room and found drugs lying around and a live marijuana plant. The police were surprised that the parents were unaware of all this. Along with the arrest of the boy, the parents were charged with irresponsible parenting.

Another teenager (again, nondevotee) was damaging property. Besides his arrest, his mother was also charged with irresponsible parenting.

This originally started in one state. However, with its success, many other states have followed. It is strongly suspected that more will follow still.

Whether this law is right or wrong is

another story. Bottom line? If your teenager gets in trouble, you may too. Be mindful of this.

Editor's note: Readers, please include your address and phone, along with your name when submitting letters or articles.

**Chanting for Unity
Rupacandra Dasi
Bonners Ferry, ID USA**

Presenting the Chanting for Unity (CFU) project idea (while it was evolving) was the most difficult challenge of my life, but I am very grateful for this service. Eternal gratitude to those in ISKCON Communications through whose discretion CFU is afloat and poised for the future. Special thanks to Priti volunteers for assisting Srila Prabhupada display his mystical potencies through this intimate forum.

CFU is a means to increase dynamics and forge friendships and alliances by devotees from various sectors of Lord Chaitanya's movement, making annual pilgrimages to Ratha-yatra festivals. CFU has petitioned for Project Unity status in order to let everyone know they are welcome. In juxtaposition, by communities from various factions producing chanting parties that travel to tourist parks occasionally this cooperative spirit can help advance the movement in America. Please help to spread the word about this theme.

Winter is a good time to formulate summertime excursions, get a camping-gear box going, make bhoga/supply/needs lists, and set aside some Laxmi. To assist the *harinama* warriors, CFU has petitioned the ISKCON Foundation to include chanting parties in its new Project Facilitations Grant Program to provide literature for distribution and Laxmi to defray travel costs. In this way, those who cannot physically take part, could partake in the mellows of Lord Chaitanya's *sankirtana* movement by making all this possible through Srimati

Laxmi-devi's blessings.

I hope this meets with the devotees' approval. A project is only as good as the people who work on it. We can expect to see God's hand in things.

**No More Denial!
Bhakti Ananda Goswami
(no location given)**

I offer my humble obeisances to all Vaishnavas. I was initiated by Srila Prabhupada and I received my *sannyasa* initiation from Radhanath Swami. While I have the deepest love and respect for the devotees of ISKCON, many of whom I consider to be saints, I feel compelled to share the following experiences and analysis in the hope that devotees reading it will be like bees instead of flies and derive whatever good may be found in it.

I was deeply moved by your words in *Priti-laksanam* regarding child abuse in ISKCON. I was repeatedly separated from my children to serve the mission (often caring for others' children), and while I was elsewhere, my children were badly abused and neglected. I kept rescuing them, only to be convinced to trust ISKCON again in another *gurukula*, and then to have the nightmares of abuse and neglect repeated again. After years of these repeated experiences, I gave up on corporate ISKCON completely, having no faith anymore that its leadership (local or global) really cared about the health and welfare of devotees. Only book distribution and Laxmi collection numbers, putting on big shows of Krishna consciousness, and being "holier than thou" while committing heinous crimes against women, children, and submissive, humble devotees who sacrificed everything to serve guru and Gauranga.

As you can tell, I am not able or willing to accept the "authority" of this "ISKCON" which has inflicted so much suffering on Krishna's dear devotees, the most dependent, humble, submissive, and helpless of them. Nevertheless,

I love Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON—the ideal one he founded, envisioned, and empowered. I have to believe that this ISKCON is alive and well and living like Paramatma in the hearts of his disciples.

The domains of the ideal ISKCON and the corporate ISKCON certainly overlap. Everywhere a humble devotee serves in corporate ISKCON, it becomes more ideal and incarnates Srila Prabhupada's desire and mission more perfectly. If devotees can not be treated properly in that ISKCON and do their service without being abused, exploited, or neglected, then they have to serve outside corporate ISKCON. Devotees must serve—that is their life and soul. It is corporate ISKCON's loss that so many devotees now do not serve in it. In my humble opinion, corporate ISKCON must "die" and be reborn before it can embody Srila Prabhupada's mission once again. Mortal sin is atoned for by death. A corporation can dissolve. Old debts can be settled and forgiven. A new constitution and laws can reflect profound learning. Persons who are unrepentant (in denial) can remain in their denial and out of the new order. ISKCON's corporal sins of commission and omission are too great for it to survive or thrive as it is. Spiritual ISKCON needs to repent and be reborn, reincorporated, and renewed.

If "ISKCON" had remained faithful to Srila Prabhupada, it would be the number one force in Vaishnavism today and a major influence in world interreligious affairs, scholarship, human services, and spirituality, etc. Instead, offenses have marginalized our efforts in every area. We have no *varnashramadharma* social order to show humanity simple living and high thinking on any real practical and sustained level. We have failed to protect women, children, cows, and *dharma*, but we sure can present a slick and glossy public relations campaign to tell non-ISKCON people that we have all the answers! We

do—but we don't ourselves implement or realize them!

God forbid that any honest fool should point out that the emperor has no clothes! It would be blasphemy to suggest that maybe there is something fundamentally wrong with "ISKCON" as it presently exists. I am not opposed to devotees trying to fix it. But it is, in my opinion, an exercise in futility. It is not "broken" and fixable. Rather, it is an impostor (a Maya ISKCON) which needs to humbly step down and allow the real ISKCON to take its place. The ISKCON Srila Prabhupada founded is a *sanga* of saints and humble servants, a family of souls who love and care about each other (and all beings) enough to serve them sacrificially. How can one love Krishna or guru, and abuse devotees? It is not possible to understand the heart of God or guru without realizing how precious His devotees are to Him. The humble toilet cleaner is more dear than the self-filled *brahmana* big book distributor, big Laxmi collector, or grand inquisitor of the GBC.

ISKCON should purge itself "give up its body" in penitential sorrow and humility. Humility equals honesty. I don't think it will happen by choice (because of denial), but sooner or later the impostor ISKCON will render itself irrelevant to Sri Mahaprabhu's mission. If change does not occur while the exclusive bunker mentality, self-appointed, self-important leaders go on and on being big fish in the little pond of their corporation, the spiritual ISKCON of Srila Prabhupada will become a giant of holiness on the Earth without them! Devotees will fulfill the mission of Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai despite the proud impostor "ISKCON" and all its attempts to control and rule in the domain of devotional service. Spontaneous devotion and service cannot be artificially compelled or suppressed indefinitely. It will break out of repressive structures and run rampant. Stifling the

charismatic (Krishna “All-Attractive”) spirit of the *sankirtana* movement with the “spiritual” bullying of duplicitous control freaks will not kill it. The spirit of the Goswamis cannot be owned by a handful of hypocrites and egomaniacs posing as religious persons.

Even secular scholars speak of the enormous social changes caused by the followers of Sri Chaitanya. A renaissance has been credited to Gaura-Nitai. But what ISKCON leaders have told us that it included Muslims, Shaivites, and Pure Land Buddhists (the original theistic Buddhists who practice *harinama*)? “Goswaminis,” married gurus, *sudras*, and ascetics—every imaginable kind of devotee was caught up in the net of Mahaprabhu and captured by the divine love of guru and Gauranga. No one with any devotion of any denomination could escape! It was a charismatic movement. A charismatic religious movement typically involves an enthusiasm that overflows denominational and even formal religious boundaries.

A movement is, in the largest social sciences sense, a major trend in civilization (like a renaissance or a revolution). It is a “field change” or “sea change” paradigm shift that profoundly affects all members of a society. The Indian independence movement, the American civil rights movement, the movement that ended the communist control of Europe and the USSR, the movement that was the church of Jesus Christ in the Apostolic Age, the scientific movement, the women’s rights movement, democracy, communism, the New Age movement, fascism, the nuclear power movement, environmentalism, the industrial revolution, the computer age—these are movements.

The Hare Krishna Movement has been suppressed by the leadership of the very organization which is supposed to be its catalyst and inspiration! Corporate ISKCON has promoted the holy

name only as far as it can control it. It over-controls where control is not necessary and is actually harmful to the mission, and yet has utterly failed to control where it should, in the moral, ethical realm of its own internal and external relationships and activities. Let those who incarnate God and guru’s love become corporate ISKCON and then corporate ISKCON will inspire and truly lead a worldwide charismatic movement that spreads like wild fire and unites millions of devotees across all religious, cultural, social, and political boundaries.

The souls of incorporated or unincorporated ISKCON that live the ideal of humble servant leadership in the cause of revival and unity will be empowered by God and guru to spark a massive worldwide movement that fulfills the kingdom of God prophecies of all the saints of East and West!

Srila Prabhupada brought the movement of Gaura-Nitai to the world, but corporate ISKCON has put a wet blanket on it. We must remove that blanket and release the power of Harinama, *prasadam*, and Srila Prabhupada’s books.

Children can’t grow into adulthood if the parent stifles them. If the parent says, “I refuse to let you grow up because then I might not be able to control you,” is that love? Or is that oppressive selfishness? Did Srila Prabhupada inspire personal responsibility and accountability, or did he try to have his disciples be childish or mindless droids in an army of his clones? Srila Prabhupada delegated authority. He expected his disciples to use their spontaneous initiative and propensities to serve.

Srila Prabhupada’s personal example was one of complete integrity, humility, openness, and magnanimity. Why would he want us to be duplicitous, proud, immoral, and small-minded? Yet, sadly these are the qualities that some persons in ISKCON have exhibited.

No more denial! The Hare Krishna Movement and the ISKCON Srila Prabhupada conceived is not the small-minded, “Hindu,” fundamentalist, corrupt, or new age organization that some persons have tried to make it. Let us free the mission of guru and Gauranga from the lingering effects of the Vaishnava *aparadhas* committed in the past. Then we will experience a spiritual explosion of *shakti*!

If we don’t end the *aparadha* within corporate ISKCON and of corporate ISKCON towards other devotees of God, then we will abdicate ISKCON’s role in history, and some other group of devotees will lead Gaura-Nitai’s mission in this world. The World Vaishnava Association or some other group will take up the cause and unify the Vaishnavas under the banner of Sri Chaitanya. As it is now, corporate ISKCON should accept the creation of the WVA as a challenge to a transcendental competition of selfless humble service. With such an attitude, all the world will benefit. Corporate ISKCON should demonstrate its humility and maturity by joining in the unifying efforts of the WVA. A repentant, reborn ISKCON should glorify Srila Prabhupada by distinguishing itself in humble service to all Vaishnavas. Let ISKCON members excel in servant leadership and show all respect to others. Let us lead in saintliness and loving community and social order.

Let us set an example all the world can follow. Srila Prabhupada did!

Let’s Get the Socialism Out of ISKCON Dharmapada Dasa SP, Brazil

Socialism can be defined as a form of political governance in which the ruling body restricts pluralism and the right to come and go freely, even imposing itself on the personal business of an individual. One’s private life is structured for him,

at least to a great degree.

The results of socialism can be seen in the stagnant societies which have been formed by it—the former Soviet Union, communist China, and Cuba—where wholesale alienation of the governed, a lack of initiative, and economic as well as social constriction, instead of expansion, have been experienced.

Unfortunately, ISKCON has also organized itself along rather socialistic lines and typically suffered as a result. There are many examples of this; I would like to make indirect reference to a farm community with which I am familiar in order to illustrate this point. I am going to say that this community is not in North America. Other than that, I’m not going to point out which one it is so as not to cause consternation.

In this farm community, the right to own property is conditioned by management. Devotees are allowed to own the house they construct, and even pass it on to inheritors. They may also transfer title by sale, but they may not speculate with the property; they may only sell it for the same price that they bought it, though they may recover improvement costs. Contracts are offered such that the movement has the right to revoke ownership (with reimbursement) and force a person out if one’s behavior is not in accordance with certain pre-defined stipulations. One of the stipulations, for example, has to do with regularly attending the programs. Of course, management is known for working with good faith, but this basically means that if a devotee hits a rough spot in his devotional career, he could be forced to leave. (This actually happened once)

And what if he had a bad relationship with management? Conditional ownership of property is classic socialism. In this case, ownership of property is conditioned by the “government,” i.e., about moving there, and some distrust has been created.

Other aspects of this community are overly structured, too. For example, one day I was waiting for a householder to come home. I was chanting *japa* underneath his car port, which was a pretty tranquil place. Keep in mind that this was a car port in an isolated farm community, not in a *karmi* residential area. Well, the resident Guru, sannyasi and community president drove in from town and saw me there. He sent a messenger saying that I should chant *japa* in the temple room and that he didn't want devotees lingering in the householder areas, or something like that. (He wasn't asking.)

While seemingly an innocuous incident, this incident exemplifies the great degree to which our communities are rigidly structured (usually). Restricting the right to come and go is another classic component of socialism. Imagine telling a *karmi* not to go over to his friend's house, or not to hang around his pal's car port because those are the rules! Do we see personal movement, such as the right to visit a devotee friend, conditioned or subject to approval in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* or *Sri Caitanya Caritamrita*?

A devotee's personal affairs, such as marriage, childbirth, the right to work, where and how he can work, how much he can earn, etc.. are all subject to scrutiny or worse in this community. This usually means that a devotee has to get permission to do these things. These affairs are not absolutely determined for him, but his freedom in these regards is severely restricted by the society. And the results have been pretty much what one might expect—discouragement, suffocation, and a lack of enterprise. Actually, this same type of arrangement has generated similar results in other parts of ISKCON. *Varnashrama* wasn't supposed to be like this.

In addition, many visitors and friends of the movement either stay on the mar-

gins or go away because they get the idea that the movement is a cult or something, that devotees quit thinking for themselves. And actually, they are right to a large degree. Even though this movement is pure and practically has a lock on the Vedic conclusion, there have been unhealthy doses of personality worship, discrimination against women, and blind following. If we are going to attract the intelligent class of men, this type of thing has to be dealt with, because intelligent people don't swallow this kind of stuff—such people are capable, and think for themselves.

That things may be regulated to the degree described above may come as a surprise to many devotees, but much of the respect and personal freedoms which have been won by devotees in North America and Europe are not so prevalent in other places. I think that if some guru expected his permission to be sought for a householder lady to marry her daughter in North America, he would be in for an abrupt surprise.

At any rate, it is interesting to note that most socialist movements are characterized by some kind of idealistic fervor in the beginning, after which natural apathy sets in. The Soviet Union and Cuba are good examples. In the 1920s, the Soviet Union experienced the highest rate of industrial growth in the world, propelled by the idealism of communism. And Cuban society was very hopeful and enthusiastic about the revolution for a good ten years. Now they are not.

ISKCON also had an idealistic period in which the enthusiasm of the members carried it, but now the natural effects of its management structure has taken its toll. Actually, alienation began to impact the movement before Srila Prabhupada's departure. Even while he was physically on this earth, there was a great amount of turnover. Back then, it wasn't noticed too much. The movement was so dynamic that new recruits more

than made up for the losses, and the movement as a whole grew. But now it is noticed.

And of course, we can't expect the devotees to be so much on the absolute platform that they can just shrug off management and social structure, and continue with Krishna consciousness, uninterrupted. We have to recognize that the devotees are not on the absolute platform yet, and we must take their conditioning into consideration. I remember one of the original 11 gurus lecturing and saying that the word burnout "doesn't exist in the dictionary." But business schools include worker alienation in their curriculum, and the treatment of workers with dignity has been a linchpin of the successful Japanese management model. The *Nectar of Devotion* does make a comment to the effect that acting on an artificial platform is a cause of falldown.

One problem is that our leaders typically haven't had the right type of training for the job. *Karmi* organizations typically have human resource managers, psychologists, and political science majors in positions of managing people. I'm not saying that our movement depends on anything other than Krishna's mercy to succeed, let's just say that we haven't typically had broad perspectives on a managerial level.

We have to make our leaders understand that the type of management style and, indeed political organization that has typically been employed in ISKCON, is not very functional and that it is responsible for our movement's shrinkage. I am not referring to preaching in Eastern block countries, where backlash may not have had time to set in yet. And it doesn't matter if the socialism is benign or not; if that were the case, then it would just take more time for the alienation to set in. The problem is a social structure which decides personal issues for people (devotees), and not whether or not it is benign.

Of course, our leaders are not generally inclined to see their control compromised; no leader is. This situation kind of reminds me of the Soviet leaders before the transition to democracy. They felt that if they gave up their strict control of society, then Western-style bad elements would come to the surface, such as crime, prostitution, and drug use. (I think the devotees should promise not to take drugs or become prostitutes if our leaders change things!). This was actually the case. But it is a natural trade-off for a more productive and expansive society. In the same way, our leaders may have to witness some things which make them uncomfortable, were the social organization of ISKCON made more liberal. For example, maybe a householder scandal would occur which they couldn't control very well. But it would be a small price to pay for a functional Krishna conscious society which conserves its members and doesn't alienate them. And it's also true that devotees have to learn by their mistakes in order to grow, either materially or spiritually. Things shouldn't always be done or decided for them.

An ISKCON constitution with some type of Magna Carta or Bill of Rights could go a long way towards solving problems caused by an organizational structure with strong strokes of socialism. We need a structural, fundamental solution. At the same time, I do feel that the GBC has an obligation to absolutely defend and protect the philosophy, though a devotee's personal business should be none of theirs. All of this could be reconciled in a constitution.

ISKCON Women's Ministry Update Sudharma Dasi Alachua, FL, USA

After the publication of our first newsletter, the Women's Ministry received many letters from devotees around the world expressing appreciation that the

GBC has recognized the need for women to have this Ministry as a vehicle for increased communication and involvement. Several GBC wrote to convey they felt this was one of the most important programs taking place in ISKCON. And other devotees wrote to convey they hoped the ministry would increase the women's sense of dignity and feeling of belonging in ISKCON.

One of the first, most important steps the ministry has been focusing on is encouraging increased communication, not only from the women to the managers and visa versa, but more importantly with each other, as godsisters. Recently while traveling in Europe, I noted at a recent continental meeting that everyone present, men and women alike, knew the men attending by name. In contrast, the women did not even seem to know each other by name. And these were women with similar capabilities and interests within a geographical area no larger than the United States.

Thus, we are working to establish a network of association and support for one another's devotional lives. This network can then effectively address concerns and issues, and provide support for women as realistic to their individual situations.

Perhaps the most impressive awakening for me working on this project has been the genuine support coming from many devotees who have made the ministry a reality. Active advisors helping to chalk out the international strategy and organization include Bhakti-Tirtha Swami, Bir Krsna Goswami, Lokanath Swami, Anuttama Dasa (NA ISKCON Communications), Malati Dasi, Visakha Dasi, Pranada Dasi, Subhalaksmi Dasi, Jyotirmayi Dasi, Gaurangi Dasi, and the Women's council in Germany.

In Australia the women have already held a successful Social Development Conference, two women's retreats, and spoken with their national leadership

council regarding their concerns and insights.

Senior women in India are forming a National Women's Ministry Council with behind-the-scenes support and guidance from Lokanath Swami.

Women in England, Northern Ireland, and Germany have long been active and concerned with various women's issues. While visiting Europe it was very encouraging to have the association of all these nice Vaishnavis. After attending the GBC Social Development Conference in Abenteur, Germany many devotees gathered for a communications conference. It was helpful and enjoyable to meet with women representing nearly every European country. This opportunity has formed the basis for the formation of the European Women's council.

Malati recently traveled to South America where she spent time introducing the Women's Ministry and encouraging the women to work together to develop and expand their spiritual life and preaching activities. This was well received by ISKCON's South American leadership and led to a great deal of enthusiasm among the women there.

In North America we have formed a North American steering committee. Two devotees, Radha Dasi and Nandimukhi Dasi, are planning the first ISKCON All Women's conference and retreat to be held later this year.

We are also looking into developing a Krishna conscious business cooperative in North America for women in need of financial support. Soon, many of the single mothers on welfare in the US will lose their public assistance (welfare) checks, with no alternative means of support. As the Ministry is very much concerned for the well-being of these women (who have given years of their lives serving the movement) we are hoping to develop this cooperative as a means of preaching, association, and better than minimum wage financial support—not

only for themselves, but also to support their children decently and live with dignity.

Under guidance from Kim Knott, a professor at the University of Cambridge, we are also considering the publication of a journal. The targeted audience for the publication would most likely be devotees, academics, and inquisitive seekers. Comprised of a compilation of reflections and realizations about life from a Krishna conscious perspective, the submissions will include meditations on diverse subject matter, such as life and death issues, seeing God in everyday experiences, the value of association, and overcoming obstacles. Each submission will also include a passage from one of the scriptures, and artwork.

I will be traveling to Mayapur for the annual GBC meetings to represent the Women's Ministry. We have been given 45 minutes to address the GBC and convey progress, issues, and concerns. Although many GBC support the ministry, questions still remain concerning priorities and organization of the ministry. Thus this meeting may be particularly telling as to the ministry's future.

In closing, I would like to say that this ministry is meant for all Vaishnavis to actively participate in, according to their individual talents and desires. And I hope all women will be comfortable and enthusiastic to be involved.

For more information, or to receive a copy of the Women's Ministry newsletter, please contact: Sudharma Dasi, Global Women's Ministry Coordinator, P.O. Box 2038, Alachua, FL 32616, USA; phone: 904-462-2306; fax: 904-462-2307; email: sudharma@aol.com

Note: As there is no designated fund for the ministry, financial support will be greatly appreciated; please make checks payable to ISKCON.



POETRY

'Member?
Vegavati Dasi
Port Royal, PA USA

'Member when Gita-nagari was bustling
with people and more people and all of their kids and the ridiculous petty quarrels that would spring up between them and the rip-roaring *kirtanas* and the time Lokanath Maharaja came and was spinning around in circles going "Hari bo- o-o-l
Hari bo-o-o-o-l
Hari bo-o-o-o-l
Nitai-Gaura haribol"
and there was rice, dal, and subj for breakfast and men working out in the fields all day and lots of produce and sometimes they'd call everyone out, men, women and chilluns (but the chilluns didn't have to) and we'd all go pick potatoes or chickpeas or whatever it was and maybe Bhubhrt and someone would be there having a *kirtana* to keep everyone's spirits up?

Those were the good old days.

Of course, there's always advantages and disadvantages, but dis poem's just hittin' the high spots mostly because some days are for the high spots and some days are for low.

Low, we've had our share, both old and new.

It's good to learn how to go through them all, or let them move through you. And you just go on chanting Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare and in the end you come out alive. But what about

what about
what about the others?

What about them?

Of course, you could always be like the older *brahmana* in the story of Saksi Gopala. Listen to the son's advice:

"Just say, 'I don't remember.'"

Priti-laksanam 25

I don't remember.
I don't remember.
I don't 'member anymore.
I forget.

It hurts too much. I forget. Go 'way.
Leave me
alone.

• • •
Krsna Rap
Vishvambar Dasa (age 18)
Narayan Dasa (age 17)
Badger, CA, USA

Krsna is god it's what we got to say,
Going back to godhead is the only way.

Prabhupada showed us how to fill the
gap,
and gave us the holy rap.

If you take another path,
You'll feel Maya's wrath.

Maya is fire as hot as it burns,
Melting you like butter as your karma
churns.

Prabhupada has made us see,
All you need is to chant in ecstasy.

So fulfill your heart's desire, free your
soul,
And then obtain the ultimate goal.

Chant the holy name,
And spread Krsna's fame.

Arise from your material demise,
Into the spiritual skies.5
Make Govinda proud, emerge from your
shroud,
And preach to the crowd.

So everyone sing along,
And chant the holy names.
Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna,
Hare Hare
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama,
Hare Hare

Gita Poeticizations
Dravida Dasa
San Diego, CA, USA

Gita 2.12
*na tu evaham jatu nasam
na tvam neme janadhipah
na caiva na bhavisyamah
sarve vayam atah param*

Never did I not exist,
Nor all these kings, nor you,
And certainly we shall exist
Throughout the future, too.

Gita 2.13
*dehino 'smin yatha dehe
kaumaram yauvanam jara
tatha dehantara-praptir
dhiras tatra na muhyati*

Just as the soul progresses from
Young childhood to old age,
He gets another body
After leaving life's last stage.

A sober person's never fazed
To see this transformation,
Rememb'ring that the spirit
Soul exists without cessation.

Gita 2.14
(with a little help from the purport)

*matra-sparsas tu kaunteya
sitosna-sukha-duhkha-dah
agamapayino 'nityas
tams titikshasva bhārata*

O Bharat's scion, Kunti's son,
Now hear My words, most true.
And may your glorious heritage
Give inner strength to you.

When senses their five objects touch,
Then cold and heat and joy and pain
Inevitably come and go—
Just tolerate, and poise attain.

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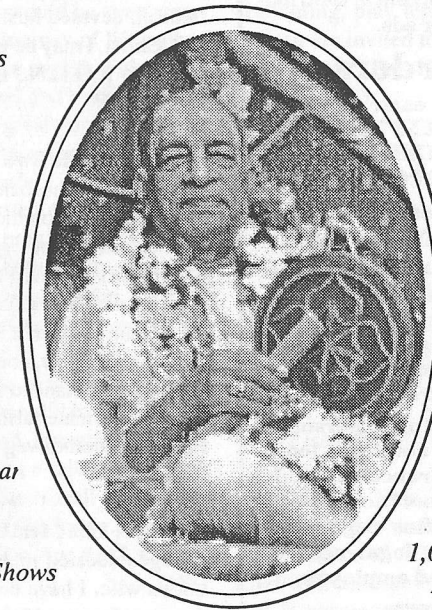
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PERSONALS

Wanted: A good wife for life. Sane and healthy, please. Follow four regulavive principles. Must want children and be willing to move to my home in S. Oregon (near coast). I want an equal, not a slave. Please, no anti-Catholics, no cat lovers, U.F.O., astrology, "channeling," psychics, New Age alternative medicine, or other fanatics. I'm a private, middle-road person, not a public preaching type. I try to serve
28 Priti-laksanam

Krishna and Srila Prabhupada by helping my disabled sannyasi father and my exhausted sister who has 11 kids. I began *gurukula* in Texas in 1973. I'm now 28-years-old and have been steadily employed since age 17. I'm a former police reserve officer and security guard with two years of college in criminal justice. By nature, I'm a *ksatriya* and I've always loved Hanuman. I also like nature's beauty, classical music, bicycling, excellent movies, plays, and literature. I enjoy old fashioned family fun with children and friends. I hope to have my own home business someday. If you want a faithful, devoted husband who loves Krishna and Christ, I may be your man. Write Saranga Dasa c/o E.O.H.N., Box 863, Coquille, OR, 97423, US. (19)

German lady in Switzerland age 34, looking for Vaishnava husband. Not important if you are a congregation member or elevated, initiated devotee. Your goal must be to become Krishna conscious. For 7 years I have really tried to practice Krishna consciousness and don't want to leave it, whatever. I prefer a man 30 to 40, a thinker, poet, preacher, or artist, but no fanatic. I want to help my husband in his spiritual and material life. Send photo to Monika Pauli, Bruderhofweg 43, CH-8057, Zurich, Switzerland. (19)

ISKCON Life Member, 33 years old, single, college-educated male seeking Krishna conscious wife. I have been in the association of devotees for over 12 years. I follow most of the principles of devotional life and chant on a regular basis. I'm into astrology, Krishna conscious rock & roll, FOLK programs, interfaith discussions, as well as writing and preaching Krishna consciousness at the introductory level. I have many plans for services, and need a wife (partner, not a servant) to help me. Please write me: Vasu Murty, 30 Villanova Lane, Oakland, CA 94611, USA. (26)

Indian Life Member of ISKCON for over a decade, active, in good health and spirit seeks Hindu or Hindu convert wife—young, healthy, loving, obedient, sincere, devoted, and com-

plimentary. I am 49 years, divorced, in export/import business, financially independent, seeking relocation, and the most dharmic lifestyle as a householder in creative fulfilling and mutually beneficial relationship for the benefit of all beings, sentient and nonsentient. I have varied interests in the arts, media, and social work. Correspond with returnable photograph to Dhruv Dalmia, 199, Golf Links, New Delhi 110003, India. Tel/Fax 91-11-4617515. Every letter will be answered. Haribol! (25)

I am a 41-year-old lady disciple of Srila Prabhupada. Life is wonderful when Krishna is in the center of it. But it would be even more wonderful to go on this journey of life with a mate. I would love to share my life with a man who can be my best friend and husband. I am seeking a man who has a great sense of humor, is reliable, trustworthy, communicative, intelligent, optimistic, and joyful.

I am cheerful, dedicated to my beautiful family, upbeat, honest, easy going, compassionate, and simple. My interests include self growth, hiking, traveling, metaphysics, Krishna rock and roll, professional massage, and cooking, to name a few.

Krishna consciousness is my first priority and love in my life. But I am still in the material world. I am self employed. I want a man who can appreciate that. I want a relationship and marriage that can grow emotionally and spiritually. I live in Northern California. Send replies to B. Dasi, 820 W. 4th Ave.#147, Chico, CA 95926, USA. (19)

Soul mate wanted for mutual assistance in completing material sojourn and progressing in Krishna consciousness. I am a male disciple of Srila Prabhupada who personally served His Divine Grace for many years in heading up key projects in India. I am an excellent listener, very kind, understanding, affectionate, with a good sense of humor. In addition, generous, principled, entertaining, loyal, refined, sagacious, and unassuming. I am self employed and independent. At the same time I am trying to carefully follow all the precepts of Krishna consciousness. I have a deep respect for women

and the role that a man and women can both play for a pleasant life now, and overcoming obstacles in the progress of Krishna consciousness. My life had been very cultured and I enjoy the creative arts, including classical music, cooking, nature, walking, travel, and keeping fit. Contact Tejiyas Dasa, 1431 Seventh St., Santa Monica, CA 90401, USA. (19)

Seeking devotee girl 20 plus, intelligent, easy going. Any nationality (white or Indian). I am a 45-year-old Asian-Indian-American. Joined ISKCON 1991. I'm lacto-vegetarian, B.A. in accounting, play tennis, easy going. Foreign women are invited to write. Paul Harkissoon, 31 Adams St., East Hartford, CT 06108, USA; 860-289-7653. (19)

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