His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krsna Consciousness

THE VAISNAVA JOURNAL
"We have to defeat tyranny in the realm of thought, and create a will for world peace." — Srimati Prabhupada

Ratha-yatra 1986
Vol. 1 No. 2

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Your ever well-wisher
Letters from Sri Iskcon Prabhupada

© The Vaisnava Press
Thank you very much for the first issue of the Vaisnava Journal. It is very nice that you are trying to present Krishna consciousness in this form. I am looking forward to receiving further issues of the Journal.

Kirtanananda Swami
New Vrindaban

Yes, I want to receive this wonderful publication, The Vaisnava Journal. Thank you very much for this kind service for our society.

Iswar Swami
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Your efforts and my efforts are all exercises in rhetoric and have ultimately no substance until this society can exhibit its ability to lead and give shelter in a brahminical fashion.

Atreya Rsi dasa
Berkeley, California

Thank you very much for the copy of The Vaisnava Journal, and thank you for the work that you and the others have put into actualizing this forum for Vaisnava kartha. It shows great promise as a means of education, sharing and focusing.

Having a forum in which the means of exchange is the written rather than the spoken word definitely offers certain advantages. It compels those who would present their views in such a durable form to make sure that they can support their position with the highest authority. Furthermore, writing offers the opportunity to be concise and to bring finish and cogency to one's thoughts in a manner rarely available in extemporaneous speaking. This not only facilitates clearer, more effective communication, but it saves valuable time for very busy Vaisnava readers as well. This journalistic forum also utilizes the lapse of time to allow the developments, which may well be utilized by the patience in overcoming lingering vestiges of passion that may sometimes appear in verbal discussions or debates among godbrothers.

For many reasons, then, it would appear that your Journal may serve as a real boon to the society of the devotees. I personally look forward to learning much through its pages.

Stambha dasa
Boston, Massachusetts

I have just received your copy of The Vaisnava Journal, and to say the least, I am completely impressed with the quality of the printing and editing.

Actually, it is very encouraging to see older Prabhupada devotees fulfilling their desires in the development of their service. It is an example that if the older disciples can be encouraged and allowed to think and develop on their own, then good results can be achieved.

Vyapaka dasa
Montreal, Quebec

Hopefully you can solicit and encourage devotees throughout the world to contribute. It would be nice to see this publication come out more often. I think the section on letters (the Vaisnava Forum) is most important in order that devotees can present their opinions of the previous issue's articles, as certainly controversial points and subjects will be discussed. By hearing from senior Vaisnavas and discussing various subjects, we can hopefully come closer and closer to Srla Prabhupada's ideals for this movement.

Mahatma dasa
San Diego, California

Congratulations on your first issue of The Vaisnava Journal. It is very well put together - the pictures, the layout, the content, everything. It is certainly refreshing to see such a wonderful publication, an auspicious symptom of the 50th advent-anniversary of Lord Caitanya.

Locanananda dasa
Brooklyn, New York

You must be commended on putting out a truly "professional" quality publication! This first issue is extremely nice and I am certain it will have a profound impact upon its readers. I am encouraged and hopeful that the Journal will have a significant impact upon the thinking and performance of its readership, thus playing an important role in providing the much needed membership coherence that is essential for the survival of ISKCON as a single, effective spiritual organization.

Prabhupada dasa
Lemon Cove, California

It is not a good concept - one that is much needed and well overdue. Years ago the GBC passed a resolution calling for a journal of this kind to have been called Sajana Tomani which was meant to enliven the devotees. Unfortunately it has never happened until now.

Nayanabhiram dasa
Vrindaban, India

I just finished reading The Vaisnava Journal (Volume 1), which you so kindly sent. I found it very interesting and enlightening. It is nice to see such a forum available for the disciples of Srla Prabhupada to discuss the philosophy of Krishna consciousness and its practical implementation.

Kesihanta dasa
Boston, Massachusetts

ISKCON is in need of protection, and what better safeguard could there be than sadhu-sanga, which is realized by such means as The Vaisnava Journal.

Prabhupada dasa
Guaro, Puerto Rico

First Class! First Class! First Class! Parampara! Concise! Important! In Switzerland we say Einfach seidmachin - Just keep going (and sending)." Padding

Padmanabha dasa
Zurich, Switzerland

I appreciate very much this new publication The Vaisnava Journal, establishing proper and important Vaisnava communication between devotees around the world. It is certainly part of ISKCON development.

Gopaswami dasa
Valence, France

I was delighted to read the first issue of The Vaisnava Journal. It is a well thought of and timely effort. What we need at the moment is the mood and mature vision of Srla Prabhupada, and I am sure this journal will greatly help its readers in acquiring these ingredients.

Nand Maharaj dasa
Chandigarh, India

This journal has been very much needed for some years now. I'm glad that the task is in your apparently very competent hands. Please keep my name underlined in your mailing list.

Nrsimha dasa
Miami, Florida

I just wanted to drop you a short note to let you know that I've distributed all of The Vaisnava Journal that I took with me. I am pleased to note that they have been received very favorably by the devotees here.

Ajitananda dasa
Los Angeles, California

That you call "a gradual erosion of love and trust among the disciples of Srla Prabhupada" has a terrible consequence. Very much devotees are losing faith in the process of bhakti-yoga. In ISKCON, and its senior devotees. So please go on with this sublime effort. All will thank to you.

Nrsimha Caitanya dasa
Tulancingo, Mexico

I just finished reading over to cover The Vaisnava Journal (Vol. 1) and found it to be immensely inspiring. I especially appreciated "Purity is the Force" by Sarva Dharma. It's right - there is no substitute for purity (alas, not even money).

Lala Gopala-devi dasi
Winnipeg, Manitoba

We saw the first issue of your journal at the temple. It was in great demand, so we didn't get an opportunity to read it all. Please put us on the mailing list and include that first issue if possible.

Mayapriya-devi dasi
Rougemont, North Carolina

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Mayapriya-devi dasi
Rougemont, North Carolina

There is no question of ISKCON becoming a spiritually unified force so powerful that it can take over the world.
NOTES

Only through the media can leaders talk to the mass of the people and the people talk to the leaders.

- Knoult Nash
Canadian Journalist

While distributing copies of The Vaisnava Journal to devotees in Mayapur this year, I was startled by the number of times I heard the question, “What’s your motive?” I must admit that I found this query rather distasteful - not in a personal way, for I have no intention of feigning purity - but in a larger, philosophical sense; why was this question being asked?

In the “good old days” we took it for granted that each of us was trying our best to serve Srila Prabhupada (in spite of our various idiosyncrasies). In those days we were innocent until proven guilty - perhaps a naive assumption, but not an unpleasant one. Well, I guess times have changed.

One of the most important responsibilities of a good journalist or editor is to provide information without bias. Although he may certainly have opinions of his own, a journalist is not called upon to make them known, except in the rarest of circumstances. His duty is to present all points of view and let the reader decide for himself. Differences of opinion are not necessarily unhealthy for the social body; in fact, history has shown that even very powerful governments have failed miserably because of a limited and parochial view of things. Progressive leaders are in touch with the people, and vice versa.

Srila Prabhupada encouraged us to study the scriptures from “different lights of directions.” In his personal absence there are bound to be various points of view; some of them right, and others not. So to protect one another from deviation, we need the opportunity to exchange our opinions in an open forum. This will force us to examine the credibility of our own thoughts and actions, as well as those of our godbrothers. That is the meaning of Vaisnava association, and the motive behind The Vaisnava Journal.

In this issue we continue with Prabhupada’s famous discussion on vanasrama - A Vanasrama Society. ISKCON writers and philosophers are encouraged to share with us their realizations on this important conversation.

Kirtanananda Swami, initiating spiritual master and leader of the New Vaisnava community, presents a rousing and thought-provoking interview, sparking discussion on the guru issue. It is impossible to live in ISKCON today and not be aware of the controversy surrounding this important topic. So rather than ignore it, we will try to address it in a responsible manner. All participating devotees are requested to please approach this matter philosophically, and with Vaisnava sensibility. Perhaps we can make some progress towards establishing a better understanding of the role of guru and GBC in ISKCON. There may be some discomfort in the process, but the time has surely come for a solution.

(Note: As this publication is primarily intended for the godbrothers, we will not normally include titles such as Srila or pita [except in reference to Srila Prabhupada] in regular copy unless it is requested. For example, in the last issue of the journal, Jagadish Maharaj wanted his name to appear as “Jagadish Goswami.” If he had asked for the title Srila to be placed in front of his name, we would have happily compiled. So we humbly request all ISKCON guru contributors to please specify how you wish to have your name printed.)

Some devotees have questioned why The Vaisnava Journal is restricted to “the disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.” They feel that it should be made available to all devotees. Personally, I have no objection. In fact, the original title of the journal read “for the followers of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.” But then it was anticipated that certain discussions may arise which could be somewhat weighty in content and therefore unsuitable for newer members of ISKCON. It has been suggested that if such material is submitted, it is better left unprinted. But is that realistic? Numerous papers have already been circulating throughout the society for many years, and they have been available to everyone. It is a well-known fact that there are no secrets in ISKCON (see Hare Krishna in America, Rutgers University Press). The distinct advantage of having an official publication like The Vaisnava Journal is that it obligates those who contribute to be totally responsible for their statements. The worldwide Vaisnava community is watching and will provide almost immediate feedback. Consequently, we can guide and correct one another through the pages of the journal.

The Vaisnava Journal will hopefully benefit everyone in ISKCON, yet it also has a specific readership like any other magazine. There is no legislation stating that others cannot read it, but it will be of special interest to the older devotees and the leaders of our movement. The journal will be mailed to GBC members, temple presidents, and to a limited number of devotees requesting copies. All ISKCON members are asked to use their discretion when sharing their journal with others.

If you read an article which moves you, anger you, inspires you, or changes you, then please write and let us know. We’ll be happy to print your letter in the Vaisnava Forum. Or perhaps you may wish to write a whole article in response. Whatever the case, your participation is welcome.

Perhaps you’ve noticed a change in the design and layout of this issue. If so, I hope it isn’t too much of a disappointment. Due to financial considerations, it was no longer feasible to use a professional typesetter; so I’m doing it myself on a personal computer. Printing and distributing a magazine is a costly endeavor, and every penny counts. But hopefully in the near future we can expand the journal into a more professional looking publication. Until then, please bear with us.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

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THe VAISNAVA JOURNAL
A Varnasrama Society

Part 2

Sriila Prabhupada continues his morning walks in Vrndabana (Reprinted from the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust)

The following is taken from the morning walks in Vrndaban, India directly after the Mayapur Festival of 1976, wherein His Divine Grace talks about setting up varnasrama colleges and Vaisnava communities throughout the world.

DAY THREE

Sriila Prabhupada: It is another college, a varnasrama college.

Sriila Prabhupada: Yes, for everyone. Just like the engineering college is open for everyone. They must be ready to take up the training. Similarly, in this varnasrama college the student must be ready to take up the training.

Sriila Prabhupada: Would it be for a particular age group?

Sriila Prabhupada: Yes. For any education from childhood. Yes, education means from childhood. We are getting so many sannyasis. They should teach. The teaching should be done by the sannyasis. Just like in missionary school the teachers are teachers.

Hridayananda Goswami: How would it differ from gurukula?

Sriila Prabhupada: Gurukula is only for the small children. Preliminary, primary. And when the children are grown up, they should be sent to the varnasrama school or college for further development.

Hridayananda Goswami: Should there be teaching in some particular skill or area? Say, for example, a person is a kariya by inclination.

Sriila Prabhupada: No. Inclination can be trained also, but we should take little advantage of inclination. Not that it should be decided by the ... inclination or no inclination, we can. That will be done. This is the most important item because people have been spoiled all over the world by being misguided by these so-called leaders. Therefore varnasrama college is required.

Hridayananda Goswami: Sriila Prabhupada, still I am not quite clear. In other words, will we teach, for example, Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam? And how much will be expected of the students? Will they live with us and follow four regulative principles and things like that? Will they just come to classes or what?

Sriila Prabhupada: Yes. Come to classes we won't get because no one has got any taste for these things. Boarding school. It will be like this.

Hridayananda Goswami: Should there be any material subject matters taught like in gurukula?

Sriila Prabhupada: Yes. Just like material subject matter, ksetriya, bradmana. Vyasadesya described in Bhagavad-gita what are the symptoms of bradmanas, what are the symptoms of ksetriya. The ksetriya should be taught how to fight. There will be military training. There will be training on how to kill. And nilaya will be trained on how to give protection to the cows, how to till the field and grow food. Practical.

Devotee: They shall be taught business also, the nilaya.

Sriila Prabhupada: Business? This rascally business, no. Business means that if you have got extra grain or extra foodstuffs you can sell where there is necessity, where there is want. That is business. We are not going to open grain mills and factories. No. We are not going to do that. That is sudra business. The real business is that you produce enough food grains as much as possible and you eat and grow food. Is it difficult? This is business. The first thing is that everyone, man and animal, especially the cows, they must be properly fed so that they will become stout and strong. The cows will supply milk and man will work hard, without suffering from dysentery. They must work hard. In any capacity - work as a teacher, work as a kariya, work as a plowman, work as general assistant. He must work. Everyone should be employed and his employment will be provided from any of these groups according to his capacity: either as a bradmana, a kariya, a nilaya, or a sudra.

Hridayananda Goswami: What kind of training is there for a sudra?

Sriila Prabhupada: Sudra is general assistant, order carrier. He has no intelligence. He doesn't require intelligence. Do this, that's all.

Sriila Prabhupada: What would his business be at the varnasrama college?

Sriila Prabhupada: Yes, that is also training, to become obedient because people are not obedient. What are these hippies? They are not obedient. So obedience also requires training. If you have no intelligence you cannot do anything independently. Just be obedient to the other higher three classes. That is sudra. He must agree to abide by the orders of the bradmanas, kariyas, and nilayas, that's all, so that nobody will be unemployed. Everyone should be trained to sleep from six to eight hours, attend meeting, chant, attend arati, and the balance he must work hard. Not that he sleeps unlimitedly; there is no limit.

Another devotee: Sriila Prabhupada, what class do the arts and crafts come under?

Sriila Prabhupada: Sudra, they are sudras. The arts and crafts can be trained up to the sudras. At the present moment they are giving too much stress on the arts and crafts. Therefore, the whole population is sudra. That is the difficulty. All people are drawn by the attraction of getting a high salary while taking so-called technical education and all of them are working in the factory. No one is working in the field. They are sudras.

Hridayananda Goswami: In our society today such a person is accepted as a philosopher.

Sriila Prabhupada: Artist?

Hridayananda Goswami: Yes, the artist.

Sriila Prabhupada: No, artist is the business of the sudra. Yes, in your western countries the rascals are writing philosophy on sex life which is known by the dog. He is writing so many things. What is this philosophy? Sex life. Even the dog knows how to have sex life and the philosopher is writing philosophy. This kind of philosophy can be appreciated by the rascals but we do not appreciate it. They are not philosophers. Philosopher means who is searching out the Absolute Truth. That is philosophy. Duru. Duru means to search out what is the ultimate. (Sriila Prabhupada quotes from Bhagavad-gita 7.16) "Ardo jijnanur arthartha jnaini" are these philosophers. Even an arto, he is praying to the Supreme Authority: "God, I am very hungry, please give me my daily bread." He is also philosopher because he is searching for the Absolute Truth. He is philosopher, not this Freud rascal elaborating how to have sex life. This kind of philosopher is just like in the jungle the jallak becomes the king. In the western countries the people, they are less than sudras and Freud has become their philosopher. In the jungle the jallak has become a king, that's all. What is the knowledge there? The whole western world is going on for industry, for making money, eating, being merry, wine and women, that's all. They are less than sudras and candalas. This is the first time the attempt is being made to make them human beings. Don't mind that I am using very strong words, that is a fact. They are animals, four legged animals - two legs and two hands. Yes, rejected men. Vedic civilization rejects them as mlecchas and yavanas but they can be reformed. The process is here. Not that because they have been rejected they cannot be reformed. They can be reformed also, just like you have been also. Although you have come from the mlecchas and yavanas, by training you are becoming more than bradmanas. There is no bar for them. Unfortunately, these rascals do not agree to accept. As soon as you say, "no more illicit sex," they become angry. As soon as you say, "no meat eating," they

Philosopher means who is searching out the Absolute Truth. That is philosophy.
become angry. Rascals and fools. As soon as you give them good lessons, education, they become angry. The snake, if you give him nice milk and banana, the result is that he will increase his poison. By Krisna’s grace, by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s grace, they are being trained up. You become trained up and revise the whole religion of the western civilization, especially in America. Then a new chapter will come in. This is the program. Therefore varnasrama school is required.

Hridayandana Goswami: Sril Prabhupada, in the varnasrama-dharma college it is true that there will be no need for teaching, for example, material history and mathematics and so on?

Sril Prabhupada: No, there is no need. For history, you simply read Mahabharata, the history of the great men, the Pandavas; how they are fighting for the good cause, how they are reigning - that history. Not this rascal history. If you study that history for millions of years... What is this history and what shall you learn from this history? Better to learn history of the really great men - how they worked, how they ruled. That is history. Study the history of Maharaj Yudhisthira. Study the history of Maharaj Pariksit. That is required. Not that simply chronological record of all nonsense, big big books... Why should you waste your time in that way? History must be for great persons.

Hridayandana Goswami: So in our varnasrama college, Sril Prabhupada, the students that come to that college, they will follow the four regulative principles?

Sril Prabhupada: The four principles are essential. But only the sudras or the brahmanas... Just like ksetra, they must learn how to kill. So, practically, they should go to the forest and kill some animal, and if he likes he can eat also. But not from the slaughterhouse. Those who are ksetrais, they are allowed sometimes to eat meat. It is understood that Bhima was also sometimes eating meat. Not all the Pandavas, only Bhima, not others. So for the ksetrais, if they want to eat meat, they should be allowed on particular occasions. But they must go to the forest and kill the animal. Not that for meat eating regular slaughterhouses should be maintained. This is all nonsense, degradation. If you want to eat meat, you go to the forest. And the sudras, they also sometimes eat meat, or the candhas.

Hridayandana Goswami: But never the cow. Sril Prabhupada: No! Not the cow. The sudras, they can take a goat and sacrifice it before the Deity of the goddess Kali and then they can eat. No one should be given unrestricted freedom to eat meat or wine. If one is adaman to drink wine there is Durge-puja, Candi-puja. That means restriction. Under certain conditions. Similarly sex life in marriage. There is also sex life but it is under condition. Satvarupa Goswami: There is also a school for women also, or is it just for men?

Sril Prabhupada: For men. Women should automatically learn how to cook, how to clean the home.

Satvarupa Goswami: They don’t attend the varnasrama college? Sril Prabhupada: No. Varnasrama college is especially suitable for the brahmanas, ksetrais, vaisyas. Those who are not fit for education, they are sudras, that’s all. Or those who are reluctant to take education are sudras.

They should assist the higher classes.

Hridayandana Goswami: Would the brahmanas learn Sanskrit?

Sril Prabhupada: Not necessary. Just like I am translating all these books, so similarly any book of knowledge can be translated into different languages. Not that one has to learn Sanskrit.

Hridayandana Goswami: So in varnasrama college, this varnasrama-dharma college, there are the two divisions varna and asrama.

Sril Prabhupada: First of all varna and when the varna is perfectly in order, then there is asrama. Asrama is especially meant for spiritual advancement. Varna is general division. It must be there in human society. If varna is not there then this is a society of animals. And when the varna is working perfectly, then we give them the asrama. Varnasrama, that is later on.

Hridayandana Goswami: Sril Prabhupada: Yes, first of all the whole society should be divided into four varnas. Otherwise there will be chaotic conditions. That is the position now. What is he? What he has to do? One does not know and there is much unemployment. If you organize the society into varnas there will be no question of unemployment.

Hridayandana Goswami: But from the beginning there is to be taught Bhagavad-gita.

Sril Prabhupada: Yes. Our position is that we are above varnasrama. But for the management of the ideal society we are introducing this. But as far as we are concerned, Krishna conscious men, we are above varnasrama. To show the people that we are not escaping we can take part in any order of life. That is our position. Just like if I brush somebody’s shoes, that does not mean that I am a shoemaker. My position is the same, but to show how to do it... Just like the servant is doing and the master is saying, “Oh, you cannot do it, just see.” Just like I show you how to mop. I am not a mopper, but I show you how to mop. So our position is like that. We do not belong to any varna or asrama but we have to show this rascal. Just like Dharma Maharaj, he is perfect Vaisnava, but when he was king he was fighting like anything. Not that, “Oh, now I have become Vaisnava I cannot kill.” He killed like anything. When the enemy attacked his kingdom he was killing them like anything and the enemy’s king came and asked him to pardon them and he immediately accepted. And the king wanted to give him some benediction that, “He was so great that simply on my request he will stop killing me.” But he said, “That’s all right, thank you. You give me the benediction that I become a pure lover of Krishna.” That’s all the benediction he asked. He was so powerful and the enemy could have given him the whole wealth of the universe but he remained, “Thank you very much. You give me the benediction that I remain a pure devotee of Krishna.” This is Vaisnava. He is doing everything but his aim is to please Krishna. Similarly, even if we take to varnasrama... Just like Krishna says, Krishna has nothing to do with varnasrama. Similarly, if we act in varnasrama, still we have nothing to do with varnasrama.

Hridayandana Goswami: Could you explain about the training of a brahmana?

Sril Prabhupada: Yes, he must be truthful. He must have control of the senses and mind. He must be tolerant and not be agitated in trifles matters. He must always be clean. He must take bath at least three times a day. All the clothing, everything is clean. This is brahmisical training. And then he must know what is what, what is knowledge and practical application. And must have firm faith in Krishna. This is brahmana.

Hridayandana Goswami: So what kind of practical work can we engage them in?

Sril Prabhupada: They will all be teachers. Just like Dronacarya. He was brahmana, but he was teaching military art to the Pandavas. The general teacher class will be the brahmanas. It does not matter what he is teaching but that what he is teaching is he is perfectly teaching. How to become a military man. Arjuna’s fighting was due to Dronacarya who was a brahmana. Because he took the position of a teacher, he taught very perfectly. So brahmana should be expert in every kind of knowledge. If he requires, he will become teacher. This is brahmana.

Hridayandana Goswami: So brahmana can teach how to fight?

Sril Prabhupada: Yes. Brahmana means intelligent brain. Through
an intelligent brain one can learn anything and teach anything.
Satsvarupa Goswami: Srimla Prabhupada, this is all very new. It seems that there will be many difficulties if we try to start this.
Prabhupada: What is difficulty? If I teach you how to cook, is there any difficulty?
Satsvarupa Goswami: No.
Prabhupada: And similarly like that. I am doing that. I am teaching how to mop the floor.
Satsvarupa Goswami: It becomes easy.
Prabhupada: I must know everything because I am a teacher.
Hridayananda Goswami: For example, if I become a teacher, a first teacher in saranaram-dharma colleges, then I must become expert in how to fight and to...
Prabhupada: Not all of you, but some of you must learn the art of fighting. Practically speaking, we are not going to fight. If required we can fight. I said that we are above all this saranaram-dharma but we must train others, ourselves also, for material activities under these divisions.
Visnijana Swami: For example in New Vrndaban we have brahmanas who are expert in tilling the soil and taking care of cows and they could travel around and teach others how to do the same thing just as well.
Prabhupada: He is brahmana but he is teaching others how to take care of the cow and till the ground.
Hridayananda Goswami: It is not that one teacher has to teach everything then.
Prabhupada: No.
Hridayananda Goswami: Oh, I see. So a brahmana teacher should become expert in a particular subject and simply teach that.
Prabhupada: Yes.
Hridayananda Goswami: It is very exciting Srimla Prabhupada.
Prabhupada: The thing is actually at the present moment there are sadras or less than sadras. They are not human beings. The whole population of the world. It doesn’t matter whether it is western or eastern. This is the position. So unless they are trained up, the society is already in chaos and it will still go on. More and more chaos. It will be hell. How will people live? These rascals are being elected as government men and they are making a budget, how to tax. On one side there is no rain, one side no rice, especially in India, and one side heavy tax. So they will all become confused. They have already become confused. From this confused state it will be very difficult to make them Krsna conscious. Therefore preliminary help should be given, that they should not be in chaos and confusion because how will the brain work?
Visnijana Swami: No one can give raplent attention without peace of mind.
Prabhupada: Yes. Our main aim is how to give them Krsna consciousness. But if they are already disturbed in every respect, how will they take it? Therefore we are taking this subject to help them to come to Krsna consciousness. And this is the method - saranarama.
Hridayananda Goswami: Just to clarify it, Srimla Prabhupada, I want to make sure I have it very clear. If someone comes to our saranarama college, although it may be preliminary help, in general, you have made some exceptions, but in general when they come to our college they have to follow the four regualtive principles and also learn something about Bhagavat-gita. And side by side they learn some particular type of skill.
Prabhupada: Yes. Four regulative principles, they are compulsory. But if some of the kṣatriyas or the sadras want to eat meat, this is our prescription - go to the forest, kill some animals and eat them.
You can kill one boar; some disturbing animals you can kill. You can kill some tigers, like that. No nonviolence. (Note: Srimla Prabhupada goes on for another minute to say how the kṣatriya, when authorized by the government, will arrest and punish thieves and rogues.)
Devoite: How will the kṣatriyas kill the animals? With guns or bows and arrows?
Prabhupada: However it is suitable. It is not that because the kṣatriyas were killing with bows and arrows formerly that you should continue like that. This is another foolishness. If you can kill easily with gun, take that gun. Just like formerly Caitanya Mahaprabhu walked on the street. There was no airplane. He did not use it. Does it mean that I should have to follow that? Take the jet we need if it is available.
Hridayananda Goswami: Jai!
Prabhupada: Someone criticizes that Caitanya Mahaprabhu walked on land, did not use jet planes. Does that mean I have to accept that idea? They are rascals. When you have to work, you have to work with the greatest facility, that's all. Now I've got the facility of talking into the microphone, so why should I not take it? It will be recorded. It will be heard by so many others. I can be speaking before five men but it can be heard by a big crowd, four hundred men.
Visnijana Swami: So, Srimla Prabhupada, this means that we should perpetuate this technical skill.
Prabhupada: No. We are not going to. But if somebody is interested in doing it, then we will take it and make the best use of it. Just like we do not want money, but they are having money by so many different ways. So we take their money and construct a temple. We can sit down here and chant Hare Krsna. We don't require a temple. But these rascals, they are accumulating money for wine and women. Take their money somehow or other and build a temple and then invite them to come and see. Give them prasad. This is our position. We are not constructing big, big temples for our convenience, but for their convenience. This is sanrvayi.
Visnijana Swami: There should always be program for their welfare. Not that we just live there.
Prabhupada: No. But we are taking it, "Now we have got very nice house, let us sleep and eat."
Visnijana Swami: Then there would be wide criticism.
Prabhupada: That is not good. We should remain always sanrvayi. Outwardly, for others' convenience we may do something. Similarly, we are accepting this saranarama. We are not saranarama. We are above saranarama, but to give others the facility to come to the stage of Krsna consciousness, this program must be done.
Hridayananda Goswami: Generally in the west the colleges charge some fee for going to college. What is our position?
Prabhupada: No. We won't charge any fee. There is no question of money because the brahmanas, they will teach free. These colleges charge money because they have to give fat salary to these rascals. We haven't got to. And even if we have to feed them, we produce our own grain. So what is the question of taking money? Therefore it is required - somebody must produce food and then there will be no necessity for money.
Hridayananda Goswami: The vaisya students will produce the food.
Prabhupada: Yes.
Satsvarupa Goswami: Our children at guru-kula, when they grow up, should they go to saranarama college?
Prabhupada: Yes, they should go. Varnarama college means for grown up students.
Satsvarupa Goswami: Is there a minimum age for beginning such a policy?
Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes. Ten to twelve years. From five to ten years - gurukul. And after ten years they should go to the Varsanara college. Visnunata Swami: New Vrindaban would be an ideal place in America for such a school.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes, yes. Organize that. I shall go.

Visnunata Swami: (Pointing to Paramahamsa Swami) This Maharaj is going there.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes, yes. Do that. You and Kirtanananda Maharaj combine together and do that. We have got so many duties to do, don't waste time. Not a single moment. Don't eat more and don't sleep more. Then you'll be able to work.

Visnunata Swami: This is the most auspicious work for now, this remedial measure to step the chaos in the world right now.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes, most auspicious. If the people are in chaos, how will they be able to accept the great philosophy? It requires a cool brain.

Visnunata Swami: My program now is that I have ten brahmacharis and buses and everything and we're distributing books. But if the people are in chaos, how will they be able to accept the knowledge in the books?

Sri-la Prabhupada: No, not all of them are in chaos. There are some of them. Only some of them, not all of them. (Man walks by and exclaims "Radhe Radhe.")

Sri-la Prabhupada: Just see. Due to past training even an ordinary man is chanting "Radhe Radhe." This is India, because due to past culture even the lowest of men are greater philosophers than those rascals in western countries.

Hrdananda Goswami: All the other programs should be continued and this program added.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes.

Devotee: The persons who took part in this program would have to be devotees, wouldn't they?

Sri-la Prabhupada: I have already explained, we are all devotees. First condition - we are all devotees. You do not belong to this movement. I have already told you. Suppose I am mopping. That does not mean that I am mopper. But I am teaching how to mop. This is our position.

Devotee: So the students, they must all be devotees.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes. Everybody is devotee. That is our life and soul.

Satsvarupa Goswami: The idea is that after they finish schooling they will take part in ISKCON preaching, either as nitya or in some way.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes, this preaching is also required. To make the ground work... because nobody is taking care. Just like some of the great devotees, they took the profession of becoming thief. A devotee is a thief? But they took because no one was giving. So they organized this plundering party and they plundered all these big men, just like the politicians do. That is history, yes. So even up to the point of becoming thief, devotee takes it. The ogis, even up to the point of becoming prostitute for Krishna. So for Krsna's sake we have to accept any nonsense type of business or the highest grade or anything. For Krsna we have to do that.

Hrdananda Goswami: So, Sri-la Prabhupada, in our temples we have so many devotees...

Sri-la Prabhupada: They should be engaged.

Hrdananda Goswami: Should they be trained in a particular...

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes, those who are not able to preach or to do other things, they must go to the plow department, agriculture. Those who are less educated, not very much expert in preaching, they must be acting as krshi or nitya or as smyra. Always remember like that, but he has to act to fill up the gap. Proxy.

Hrdananda Goswami: So we should encourage young people, young students to come to our college?

Sri-la Prabhupada: They'll automatically come if you are ideal because they are being forced to poverty. When there is a question of poverty they will come.

Hrdananda Goswami: Room, board, training...

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes. This poverty, why is there poverty? Because they are not producing food. Everyone wants so-called comfortable life, so-called education, sitting idle in the table and chair and talking all gossip and nonsense and sleeping. They are being trained up in this way - suka.

Hrdananda Goswami: So they should be trained to rise early.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Yes, if you keep healthy then you will naturally rise early. But because you have lost all stamina, therefore sleeping is your only business. Sleeping means for the weak. And for the strong, perspiration. This is the sign. When a man sleeps too much he is weak in his health. And a strong man, he will perspire. Human being means trained up under principle. That is the difference between humans and animals. The animals, they cannot take up any training. The human beings, this human form of body, is meant for taking training. If they are not properly trained up then they will remain animals. And the whole society is in chaos and confusion, that's all. At this moment, the human society is so degraded even though we are working. This is all so risky. Gradually it is becoming like our New York or Brooklyn. It is difficult to walk due to some Negroes. They immediately say, 'What have you got? Give me.' There are so many incidences. In such city as New York there is always danger like that. If somebody kills you, no one will take care of you. The human society has become so degraded. And in India still they are not so degraded. Even at night you can safely walk on the street. In America and Europe you cannot walk alone with confidence in the big, big streets. The human being has become so degraded. Less than animal. They can attack you just like in the forest. In the forest they can attack you anytime and the big cities have become like that. They have started the United Nations but what have they done actually? Have they done anything progressive?

Hrdananda Goswami: No.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Big, big advertisement, "United Nations." All the cats and dogs united, what can they do? If all the world's cats and dogs meet together to make a formula, will they be able to? So actually this is the proof. They are all cats and dogs. What do they know? How to unite? How to live in peace? They do not know because they are all animals. Cats and dogs. This is the proof. Just study this institution. What have they done? Am I right or wrong?

All Devotees: Right.

Visnunata Swami: Thirty years now.

Sri-la Prabhupada: Thirty years they are struggling for United Nations. Big, big expenditure, so many humbug programs and no result. Prahlad Maharaj said, 'I am thinking only for these rascals. They are making humbug program but there is no action - just for temporary so-called happiness without God consciousness. I am simply thinking of them. Otherwise, personally I have no problem.' This was spoken by Prahlad Maharaj to Nrsimhadeva. We can chant anywhere. Krsna will provide everything. We have no business to do, but we have to take them because we are sympathizers. So many people are being killed by this modern civilization. They have the opportunity to become Krsna conscious, but by the setup of this rascal civilization, they are being killed spiritually. Therefore we have to take them. Devotee personally, he has no problem. But he pushes himself in this degraded society to teach
The Miracle of Discipular Succession

PART 1

An interview with Srita Bhakti pada in Delhi, India, on March 3, 1986

(Note: The following transcript was submitted for publication by Srita Bhakti pada.)

Question: Could you please explain the meaning of "Guru is one"?
Srita Bhakti pada: "Guru is one" means that there is one message. If anyone presents the message of guru, that means he is guru. There is no hocus-pocus to being guru. You simply represent the previous acarya. How do you represent him? By repeating his message.

It's a very simple thing. Prabhupada said, "Surrender to Krishna." You show people how to surrender to Krishna by your practical living. Then you are guru. You don't need any rubber stamp by any commission. You are guru. It's factual. That's what we need. We need hundreds and thousands of such bona fide gurus.

Question: What is the definition of jagadguru?
Srita Bhakti pada: It's in Prabhupada's books. Jagadguru is one who travels all over the world and makes disciples. It is not some elected post. It's not some little niche you put somebody in after he has passed on.

Question: Can there be many jagadgurus?
Srita Bhakti pada: There can be thousands and millions. Everyone can be jagadguru - if he does the work of jagadguru. On the other hand, if someone just sits on his backside and does nothing, he may be given the jagadguru title by some commission, but it doesn't mean anything. We don't care for such rubber stamps.

I'm not here to contradict anyone; I'm just here to explain sastra. If they agree, OK; if they don't, that's their business. Prabhupada had the same problem with his godbrothers. You see, history repeats itself. After the disappearance of a great acarya there is always this controversy. Less intelligent disciples try to put the acarya in a niche. They say, "Oh he was different. He was unique. You can only go back to Godhead by him."

And that takes away their responsibility to become perfect like the great acarya. They did the same thing with Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is the only Saviour. He is the only way. Jesus Christ is perfect, but you can't become perfect. Therefore, you can go on with your sinning and Jesus will take care of it. Same philosophy. "We can't become jagadguru. We don't have to do anything. We'll just let Prabhupada do it all." This is nonsense philosophy.

Question: Can the siksā guru take us back to Godhead?
Srita Bhakti pada: Siksā guru is the instructing spiritual master. He is helping you progress in Krishna consciousness by his instruction. But the actual contact is between the diksā guru and the disciple. The diksā and siksā gurus are one in their instruction, but they are different in their function. You personally promise the diksā guru, "I accept you as my spiritual master. I will surrender to you. I will follow your order." There is not such a contract with siksā guru. And diksā guru also promises that if you do this, he will take you back to Godhead. Siksā guru does not make such a promise. Their instruction is the same, but their office is different.

Question: Today is the disappearance day of Gaur Kisco das Babaji.
Srita Bhakti pada: The appearance and disappearance days of the great acaryas are very holy times. Krishna explains in Bhagavad-gita that one who can understand the transcendental nature of His appearance and activities and His disappearance will not take birth again in this material world. Similarly, if we understand the appearance and disappearance of the great acaryas, or pure devotees of Krishna, we also become liberated. They don't come here like ordinary, conditioned souls for sense gratification. They come here on the order of Krishna to liberate the conditioned souls. Their only business is to preach Krishna consciousness. That's how you can tell a bona fide spiritual master. He is not canvassing for many disciples, but he is teaching men to give up sinful activities and surrender to Krishna. He is the representative of Krishna.

Question: You said once that Krishna is more pleased when His devotee is worshiped. What is your view of their stopping the worship of the present acaryas in the temple?
Srita Bhakti pada: They are concocting their own philosophy. They want to make the past acarya the only acarya. Nobody else has to become perfect. They think we can go on with our sinning. It's the same philosophy - fool-osophy. They are all fools because they have deviated from the path of the past acarya. 

(To be continued)
...there is something higher than unity. That is truth. If 500 people say that 2 and 2 is 5, does that make it right?

Prabhupada went through the same thing with his godbrothers. He stood alone. His godbrothers were all of one opinion and Prabhupada had something different to say. He didn't listen to them and say we should all cooperate, we should all do the same thing. He said, "No, you are wrong.

You see, there is something higher than unity. That is truth. Unity is wonderful. We want to be united, but we have to make sure that we are united on what is right. If five hundred people say that two and two is five, does that make it right? First of all, you have to be right; then there can be cooperation and agreement. We cannot be right by mental speculation. We cannot be right by votes. We are right when we follow the previous acarya. Prabhupada gave us his personal example; he simply became the servant of his guru Mahaprabhu.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati wanted Krishna consciousness to be spread all over the world. Prabhupada, in his wonderful way, in his humble way, did so. He didn't get any encouragement or any help from his godbrothers. He came with just a few rupees in his pocket. He came to America and sat down and chanted Hare Krishna, and by Krishna's arrangement he got everything. Everything was successful.

But even after he was successful, his godbrothers didn't recognize him. Even after all the blessings of Krishna were showered upon him, his godbrothers didn't recognize him. So who was right, Prabhupada or his godbrothers? We know Prabhupada was right. Why? Because he strictly followed the discipulal succession in carrying out the orders of the previous acarya. That is also our conviction. We want to cooperate, but we want to cooperate on the right thing: spreading Krishna consciousness.

Question: In view of one letter Srila Prabhupada wrote Karandhara, it appears that the GBC is saying one thing and you are saying something else. Srila Bhaktipada: Who is the GBC? Mahaprabhu dasa: They say they are Srila Prabhupada's representatives. Srila Bhaktipada: All right, that is GBC. Not somebody who is simply elected - he is not GBC. You become GBC when you follow Srila Prabhupada's orders. Then you are actually a zonal secretary/GBC. Srila Prabhupada gave the definition of zonal secretary/GBC: it is one who travels and preaches and maintains the standard. He didn't say it was the one who owns the land. He didn't say it was the person who does all the management. He travels, he preaches, he maintains Prabhupada's standard.

In that same letter to Karandhara, Srila Prabhupada said, "The problem is that my leading disciples are not maintaining the standard. They are deviating. That is the problem." He said that the future of this Krishna consciousness movement is very bright if everyone maintains the standard.

What is the standard? Getting up before 4:00 AM, following four regulative principles: no meat eating, no intoxication, no illicit sex, no gambling. And we should preach to everyone we meet. That is the standard. So it is the duty of everybody, and one thus becomes a real GBC by maintaining that standard.

Question: They say that zonalism was there in Srila Prabhupada's time also. Srila Bhaktipada: Yes, but what was meant by the zone? A zone isn't a piece of property you lord it over. A zone is an area in which you maintain the standard. For instance, if someone wants to come to Wheeling and open a center, or Columbus, or Cleveland, they are welcome. After all, Srila Prabhupada has given me the responsibility to spread Krishna consciousness in that area. So if someone wants to come and help me by opening a center, he is welcome. But I am responsible to see that he maintains the standard. He can't teach something bogus, that's all. That's my only responsibility.

Now if we do that, our society will be very loving, very free, very open. But if we try to make it "my property," it will be a very unpleasant affair, because no one can tell you not to preach. No one can say, "Don't come in this area. This is my area. You cannot preach here." That is nonsense.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu has given us the order to go into every town and village and preach. Now, who can tell you not to do so? You are ordered by Caitanya Mahaprabhu to go into every town and village and preach. That is an order no one can change.

You cannot renounce discrimination, or you will be renouncing what has been given to you for service by Krishna. Such renunciation is Maya. We don't teach you to renounce everything; we teach you to use everything in Krishna's service. Your intelligence, your discrimination - everything is to be used in Krishna's service. Ultimately you are responsible. Therefore, you have to become very educated, very learned in the scriptures. Then you will know clearly, and no one will be able to fool you.

Question: What is the duty of the guru towards his disciple? Srila Bhaktipada: His duty is to take his disciple back home, back to Godhead. But he can only do so if he surrenders to his own spiritual master. That process is coming down in discipulal succession. Such a sincere follower is guru. As I said, guru is not a piece of cloth, a degree, nor a diploma, nor a rubber stamp. Guru is he who represents the previous acarya. Just open your eyes. Then you can see who represents Srila Prabhupada, the discipulal succession, and ultimately, Krishna.

Question: The disciple has to study the sastra and discriminate, but isn't it only by the mercy of guru that he can do this? Srila Bhaktipada: Therefore, Srila Prabhupada gave us so many books. He said that these books are for you, not the karmis. Now, if your guru is bona fide, he will certainly help you read Srila Prabhupada's books. He should also be writing to explain Srila Prabhupada's books for your understanding. That is the duty of guru, to make the message that was handed to him understandable to others who might be in some different circumstances. He has to pass on the same thing intact.

Question: They say that only Srila Prabhupada's books should be there. They don't want to discuss other books

Ultimately you are responsible. Therefore, you have to become very educated, very learned in the scriptures.
that will diminish Srila Prabhupada’s value.

Srila Bhaktipada: Then Srila Prabhupada was wrong in writing all these books. He should have just distributed Srila Bhaktipada’s books. Is that what you have to do? You have to take the same thing and make it understandable to us.

And if you are going to be guru, that is what you have to do. You have to take the same thing and make it understandable to your disciples.

Question: Srila Bhaktipada, everyone is quoting sastra and Srila Prabhupada according to what suits them or their purpose.

Srila Bhaktipada: Therefore I have said that quoting is nothing. There is a saying: “Different sles for different fellows.” You can find a sles to justify anything.

Question: The bottom line is that Srila Prabhupada did like it, you are not Srila Prabhupada, so how can we do like that?

Srila Bhaktipada: I am saying that if you become like Srila Prabhupada, you will honor your spiritual master and honor Srila Prabhupada when you don’t become like him. What kind of guru is one who is so unique that he can’t make anybody like himself? The bona fide spiritual master is he whose potency can turn even a mleccha into a first-class Vaisnav. Someone once asked Srila Prabhupada to show some mystic powers. Srila Prabhupada pointed to his disciples and said, “This is my mystic power.”

Question: How can we give up envy in successful Vaisnavas?

Srila Bhaktipada: That is the $6,000 dollar question, isn’t it? First of all, we should try ourselves to become real Vaisnavas. There is no

envy in the spiritual world. Nanda Maharaj is not envious of Krishna. The father is not envious of the son, even if the son does better than the father. In fact, Srila Prabhupada once wrote me a letter saying, “I am simply praying to Krishna that you become a better preacher than I am.”

That is the way of the father. The father is thinking, “Let my son surpass me.” He is not thinking, “How do I keep him down so I can remain in the big position?”

Of course, a loving son thinks that no one is equal to his father: “My father can beat anyone.” That is reciprocal love. But actually, the son serves the father when he becomes greater than the father. He will never say, “I am greater than my father,” but factually, he may do more than the father. He will try, at least.

Question: There are many gurus and they are all explaining sastra. How are we to know when they are giving the real meaning of sastra?

Srila Bhaktipada: Well, that’s why we have guru-aadhina-sastra. You have to accept the explanation of sastra that agrees with your guru and the previous aadhina. Then you can understand that it is correct. Krishna consciousness is not for fools; it is for very intelligent men. Actually, Srila Prabhupada said that it is for the most intelligent class of men.

You have to become expert in the sastra yourself. You have to know what has been said by the previous aadhina. Then you will not be fooled. And don’t let anybody tell you, “Well, you just follow blindly.” Srila Prabhupada said that Krishna consciousness was not for blind followers. The difference between the human being and the animal is that the human being has the power of discrimination. If we are to serve Krishna with our intelligence, we must utilize our discrimination. We have to discriminate: this person is following, this person is not, or this person is following more strictly than that person. That is discrimination.}

On Economic Development

by Jai Gurudeva dasa

Srila Prabhupada writes the following in the purport to verse 135 in CC. Madhya, 12:

“A material desire is explained as a desire to enjoy the material world to its fullest extent. In modern language this is called economic development. An inordinate desire for economic development is considered to be like straws and grains of sand within the heart. If one is overly engaged in material activities, the heart will always remain disturbed. As stated by Narottama das Thakur, samsara visvané dhis nisí hiya jale, jaduha na këu pa. In other words, endeavor for material opulence is against the principle of devotional service. Material enjoyment includes activities such as great sacrifices for auspicious activity, charity, austerity, elevation to the higher planetary system, and even living happily within the material world.”

Further in his purport, Srila Prabhupada points out what economic development can cause, namely a disaster:

“Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura explains that even though one may become free from the desire for fruitive activities, sometimes the subtle desire for fruitive activity comes into being within the heart. One often thinks of conducting business to improve devotional activity. However, the contamination is so strong that it may later develop into misunderstanding, described as kul-mati (faultfinding), pratishtha (the desire for name, fame and high position), nishadha (accepting things forbidden in the sastra), kama (desire for material gains), puja (bankering for popularity) and jiva-kintu (envy of other living entities)… the word jiva-kintu (envy of other living entities) actually means stopping the preaching of Krishna consciousness.

In the conclusion of the purport we find the following important instruction: “The Lord was personally chastising and praising individuals in the course of the cleaning, and those who are engaged as acarya must learn from Caitanya Mahaprabhu how to train devotees by personal example.”

That these instructions of Srila Prabhupada can be very beneficial for solving some problems that our ISKCON may be facing appears evident, and one could even say that these instructions are more important than “faultfinding” within the ranks of our acarya or even acarya of other religious sects.

Basically it can be said that in the U.S., “an inordinate desire for economic development” has been manifesting within some branches of ISKCON throughout the years since Srila Prabhupada’s departure from our gross vision. Many temples and zones in the U.S. permitted “conduct business to improve devotional activities,” instead of sticking to the simple formula that Srila Prabhupada has taught — simply preach, distribute transcendental literatures and depend on Krishna for everything. This mentality of conducting business went even further, that many temples in the U.S., and later in Europe, stopped book distribution completely, or at least diminished it considerably.

Paraphernalia selling, on a purely business basis, has nowadays become in most temples of the western world (and even in the so-called Third World), a fully justified means for “improving devotional activity.” Indeed, one may think that the standard of preaching will increase by increasing the financial overhead or by developing and maintaining costly projects (such as big temples, sophisticated facilities, modern amenities such as video recorders, computers, nice automobiles, castles, farms, etc.). But it should be noted in this regard, that both in America and Europe, the number of devotees has not increased as could have been expected. In most of the temples in the western world, the number of paraphernalia selling devotees is much higher than the number of book distributors, thus relegating the importance of book distribution to a mere “idealistic duty,” whereas for practical purposes such as financial maintenance, the more lucrative paraphernalia selling is preferred.

Srila Prabhupada has written that conducting business for improving devotional activity can “later lead to
misunderstanding," and he has described these misunderstandings as follows:

1) kuti-mati (faultfinding). We have seen this tendency clearly within some of our American and European godbrothers, of whom quite a few have unfortunately left ISKCON. The fact that a devotee has faults has already been described by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad-gita. But if one is a faultfinder like Amogha or Ramacandra Puri, then he may ultimately find fault with his own spiritual master or even the Supreme Lord (like Srila Prabhupada or Amogha). This faultfinding mentality has now even become institutionalized like the "vote of no confidence" and other "democracy" or democratic procedures of distrust and disruption.

2) pratibhavas (desire for fame, name, and high position). The "guru issue" appears in this connection as a certain manifestation of pratibhavas. One should clearly distinguish the desirer for fame and high position from what Lord Caitanya described as anavatam samadhi. To never desire respect or worship for oneself cannot be synonymous to demanding respect simply because one is a so-called advanced disciple of Srila Prabhupada, or one has been successful in developing economically. Moreover, to always be ready to offer all respect to others cannot be synonymous to verbal or even physical violence in the name of so-called justice or injustice. Srila Prabhupada's instruction to "train the devotees by one's example" is more important than armchair discussions and skillful maneuvering of the devotees. It is more valuable to have trained Vaikunthaias in our movement, than having very, very costly projects with huge financial overheads, thus forcing devotees to sell paraphernalia in order to maintain.

3) rabhuprasnithakacara (accepting things forbidden in the sastras). Though the sastras may be accepted as the Vedic literature as such, we may, being eternally indebted to our spiritual master, accept only Srila Prabhupada's books as the sastras. Inasmuch as we never find any direct instruction for selling paraphernalia in garb of sanyasini, but rather the emphasis is clearly given to simply preach and distribute transcendental literature, then we can ascertain that selling paraphernalia in garb of sanyasini is forbidden in the sastras. Nonetheless, paraphernalia selling is nowadays accepted almost everywhere in ISKCON as a legitimate and justified means for maintenance and development of projects, in the name of time, place and circumstance.

4) kama (desire for material gain). That kama or lust is detrimental for spiritual life has been described by Srila Prabhupada at length in his books.

5) puja (bankering for popularity). Some devotees misunderstand Srila Prabhupada's desire to make Krishna consciousness popular. One's personal desire to become popular may extend so far that it almost becomes idolatrous, or looks similar, to the desire to glorify Krishna. But one can judge by the results. Most of the time such devotees fall down and the desires of Srila Prabhupada, such as the desire to double book distribution, have not been fulfilled.

6) jiva-himsa (envy of other living entities). According to Srila Prabhupada, this means "stepping the preaching of Krishna consciousness." This may be clearly observed in many temples of the world. If we accept the axiom that preaching means book distribution, and book distribution means preaching, then we can conclude, that in many places around the world, the preaching of Krishna consciousness has deliberately been diminished or even grossly neglected. If one goes door-to-door, in a mall or airport, and instead of distributing literature, we sell paraphernalia to the public, then we are actually manifesting an envious attitude toward the conditioned soul. Why? Because by the act of selling paraphernalia, we omit preaching. Granted that the laxmi donated by the conditioned soul for some paraphernalia is used in Krishna's service, insofar as this can be considered as ajnata-sukrti. But if a devotee, due to desire for economic development, neglects to instruct everyone he meets on the science of Krishna (yare dehba tare kaha krsna upadesa) then he can be qualified as a fallen victim to jiva-himsa.

In conclusion, it may be noted that the economic development in ISKCON, achieved during the presence of Srila Prabhupada's presence on the planet, was not due to any material cause. As stated by Bilvamangala Thakura, muktij-nukalitanjali senate asman, abharnam svar gatagay samayhat pratibhasa. For a pure devotee, liberation, religiosity, economic development and sense gratification are always available. But the pure devotees are not interested in these things. The pure devotee is neither interested in bhakti, mukti or sadhchi. In other words, he is ekamsa, and therefore always very peaceful. Srila Prabhupada's apparent desirelessness in the matter of economic development does not mean that during his physical presence, economic development was not present. On the contrary, it was manifested even more than today, even though we are now engaged in so much business and financial enterprise to "improve our devotional activities." Srila Prabhupada succeeded in building three huge projects in India in only five years! We all know that these achievements will remain unparalleled in the history of ISKCON, or even in the history of Lord Caitanya's preaching movement. But we cannot simply brush away these facts by the statement that this was Srila Prabhupada and we are not so pure (naturally). We cannot excuse our inability to fulfill Srila Prabhupada’s desire that we double book distribution every year, by the fact that we have to first develop economically! Srila Prabhupada built all the centers in India with laxmi from the BBT - that means from book publication and book distribution. Nowadays, in many parts of the movement, the BBT is almost out of business due to greater emphasis on paraphernalia selling.

Srila Prabhupada stressed book production and book distribution above all other projects, even above the Mayapur project, and he chastised as rascals those, who even during his physical presence, were spreading rumors that in the future book distribution would stop due to the karmis being too heavy and the economic circumstances too difficult to survive simply by selling transcendental literature.

Srila Prabhupada's preaching and managing strategy was, in fact, very clear and straightforward: produce and distribute books and literature unlimitedly. That is our real mission.

If we at all desire to increase the prestige of our movement, increase the number of followers of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and decrease frustration and quarreling as well as worldliness within our ranks, wouldn't it be worthwhile to reconsider the "circumstantial necessity" of paraphernalia selling in garb of sanyasini, in favor of our real mission?

Sankirtanas Vajra ki jaya!

Sri Krsna Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura instructed his disciple: "If you ever get money, print books."
Parallelism proposes an association of persons that imitates externally the structure, activities and symptoms of the association of devotees.

over by such corruptions as jati-upostha - the system of caste by birth.

Varnasrama-dharma certainly provides a means of identifying oneself according to their material attachments. Thus it serves an important function in screening out those who cannot give up their social status and mental speculation, by taking up positions in the higher echelons of devotees. But once a person is recognized as a brahmana, advanced devotee, or even g guru, it is difficult to undo unless there is an obvious instance of fall-down. In parallelism or caste-ism, those who have gotten recognition as brahmans are usually very scrupulous about maintaining their "profile," though it be only external, and thus it is difficult to imagine how such a person can be controlled by mere structural rules and regulations. There has not been an instance that I know of in which Vaisnavas have used varnasrama social mechanisms to check the activities of caste brahmans and the like. Rather, the emptiness of caste-ism was exposed by the strong preaching and blissful association of advanced Vaisnavas. The innocent populace have to choose for themselves the spiritual leadership that they find most inspiring; if pure Vaishnavism shines forth in its own glory, then the choice is obvious for those who are intelligent.

Part 3: Preachers and Power Structures

Another reason why devotees are troubled by the idea of an "excessive varnasramization" of ISKCON is the adverse effect a too-visible hierarchical power might have on the public.

Since this is a question of perception, which is always relative anyway, it admittedly represents no essential objection to the establishment of varnasrama-dharma within ISKCON. However, faced with this problem, even at ISKCON's current stage of organizational development, and they have learned to work around it. But this question is nonetheless worth considering. The preaching should always remain the essence of our movement.

Especially in kili-yuga, there is a considerable skepticism, if not downright disrespect, among the karmi population for power structures of any kind, whether priestly-hierarchical, corporate-capitalist, totalitarian-

I believe parallelism arises from what Srla Prabhupada terms "an initiatory attachment to Krsna.”
There are numerous statements in sastra extolling the glories of the bona fide spiritual master. We are told he is the very soul of Lord Krsna, the bestower of grace by which the mercy of the Supreme Godhead is attained, the abode of the demigods and so on. We are therefore hard put at times to comprehend the position of initiating spiritual masters who exhibit peculiarities and vagaries of behaviour. How is a person who has failings we normally regard as pertaining to conditioned souls at worst, and to neophyte devotees at best, to be seen as the manifestation of Sri Krsna, or the abode of the demigods? It has been suggested that their disciples are able to see them in a light that their godbrothers are not, and in order to explain the discrepancy in their vision, philosophically erroneous parallels have been drawn between their disciples' and godbrothers' perception of them and the perceptions of the citizens who witnessed the entry of Lord Krsna into Kamsa's palatial abode.2 The position is, of course, if someone performing the function of guru is not free from anartha, if he is not situated on the transcendental platform, why should he be seen as a bona fide preceptor?

A sruiti mantra defines the position of the bona fide gurudeva: tattvajnanartham sad-gurum abhijaccheta samipantra prohitah nishnitya nishnitya acaryan puruso veda

"In order to gain practical knowledge of Lord Visnu, one must humbly approach the sad-gurudeva. Such a personality is conversant with scripture, and is fixed in the transcendence."

Two compound words are of particular interest to us here. Firstly, the compound "sad-gurum," a term which Sri Prabhupada has rendered as "bona fide spiritual master." The word "sad" in this instance means "true," and the compound thus indicates a real preceptor, one who is free from any pretense. Secondly, "nishnitya-nishnitya," which indicates his qualification - that he is fixed in transcendence, or, to be precise, that he has attained to the stage in spiritual evolution known as "nithya." The nithya stage is the point at which true devotional service begins, and where the four types of anartha, or unwanted things, have dwindled to virtual nonexistence. The Srimad-Bhagavatam, first Canto, Chapter two, confirms this fact as follows:

nirnaya-prapya abhadre stotam bhagavatasa svayam bhaktir bavastii naisaktii

"By regularly serving the Bhagavata, all inauspicious things within the heart are almost totally destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead is established as an irrevocable fact."
manifestation of the Lord, and yet is not free from anarthas be a pretender to something he has not attained?

What the author wishes to propose, in plain language, is that unless one has at least attained to the platform of niṣṭhā, then he is not a guru in the strictest sense, if he is one at all. This proposition would seem to be confounded by the following comments from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purport to the Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Adi-līla, Chapter One:

There are two kinds of instructing spiritual masters. One is a liberated person fully absorbed in meditation in devotional service, and the other is he who invokes the disciple’s spiritual consciousness by means of relevant instructions.

It is clear from this statement that there is a type of sīkṣa guru who is not liberated, but who can aid the aspirant in his advancement. However, no mention is made anywhere of an initiating guru who is not liberated, and even the notion of there being sīkṣa gurus who are not transcendentally situated should be qualified. In order to elucidate this point, let us consider the first line of Bīravamangala Thākura’s Kṛṣṇa Karmānta and its purport:

cintamani jyotiṣa somagṛīṣī guror me
sīkṣa-guru ca bhagesa sākṣi-pīṇaka-mānlak

"All glories to Cintamani and my initiating spiritual master, Somagṛīṣī. All glories to my instructing spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who wears peacock feathers in His crown..."

Śrīla Prabhupāda comments on the above thus: ‘In the beginning of (Kṛṣṇa Karmānta, Bīravamangala) has offered his obsequies to his different gurus, and it is to be noted that he has adored them all equally. The first spiritual master mentioned is Cintamani, who was his instructing spiritual master because she first showed him the spiritual path... Next he offers his obsequies to his initiating spiritual master, Somagṛīṣī, and then to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was also his instructing spiritual master.” The Kṛṣṇa Karmānta has been commented on by a number of acaryas in the Gaudiya Vaiśnavī line, and they have generally opined that it was not exactly Cintamani who instructed Bīravamangala, but rather his self-realized sīkṣa guru, Somagṛīṣī, who spoke to him through her.2 If this is accepted, then it can be seen how the sīkṣa guru who is not self-realized can impart relevant instructions, and how he is to be understood - as the mouthpiece of the sad-guru. In other words, a sincere soul can act as the via medium for the self-realized preceptor, as the harlot Cintamani did when she felt the pricking of her conscience. But this is effected by the power of the sad-guru, not by the limited power of one who yet possesses material desires and ambitions.

But we have to consider the healthy continuation of our sampradāya - how, one may ask, is the disciple succession to be perpetuated and the message of Godhead to be disseminated if qualified sīkṣa gurus are not to be found? If it is found, and it might well be the case, that none of our number are sufficiently free from anarthas, how will the conditioned humanity get the benefit of the purifying process of dīkṣa?

The answer to this conundrum is found, I believe, in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Easy Journey to Other Planets. In the section entitled "How one can prepare himself for an easy journey to the Vaikuntha planets...", His Divine Grace enumerates 20 steps that can lead one towards that goal. These 20 points are very scientifically presented and progress the reader to a point of initiation, that is to say the threshold of

madhyama adhikara, through anartha-nīrīti, which is described especially in points 6, 8, 11 and 12, and up to the stage of nīṣṭhā, or brāhma-bhūta, in point 16. But it is point 13 which is especially significant. In point 13 Śrīla Prabhupāda states, and I quote from the original edition: ‘He must not create unlimited disciples. This means that a candidate who has successfully reached up to the 12th stage can also become spiritual master himself just as a student becomes the monitor in the class with a limited number of disciples.’

The purport of this statement is that a devotee who has come to the stage of anartha-nīrīti, that is, when he has been initiated and has taken up regular devotional practices and has progressed to the stage where his propensity for material enjoyment is factually diminishing - such a devotee may initiate a limited number of persons, with the clear understanding that he has the minimum qualification for assisting the true preceptor - the sad-guru. The analogy of the monitor is striking, and conveys a great deal in this respect. In the situation to which Śrīla Prabhupāda alludes, that is to say the traditional school, or the guru-kula, the teacher may appoint some of his more qualified students to teach what they know to the younger, less experienced students. The younger students are expected to be respectful and obedient to their monitors, and to show them more or less the same deference as the teacher, but at no time do the monitors present themselves as the teacher, and neither do the younger students forget the identity of their teacher or the debt they owe him for their education - even if he teaches them through the medium of the monitors.

It should be in the case of a preaching mission like ours. Those who have progressed to the stage of anartha-nīrīti may initiate others on behalf of

Those who have progressed to the stage of anartha-nīrīti may initiate others on behalf of the sad-guru...
sad-guru, namely Srila Prabhupada, with the clear understanding, both on their part and the part of the initiates, that Srila Prabhupada is the actual preceptor and will continue to be so after the time of initiation, and with the clear understanding that they are factually older, more experienced disciplic of the inexcipient disciples of the common spiritual master.

Naturally, a devotee who has genuinely attained to the platform of dīkṣā, which is more or less irrefutable, is the best candidate for dīkṣā guru, and any fortunate soul who rises to the higher platform of nāma, where true spiritual relish is first perceived, or to atilā, where the spiritual body is attained and one's eternal spiritual mellow realized, is the better candidate. And what need we say of one who has attained to nāma or to prāna, the ultimate goal of life?

But we needs must be honest, and having recourse to scripture, to our own scrutinizing, to examine ourselves, and determine what level of advancement is. We must ask ourselves: "Am I free from lust, from unwarrented anger and pride, from the desire for adulation, and profit? Am I never disturbed by sudden material or territorial loss? Am I never elated by sudden material gain? If the answer to these and other pertinent questions is no, then we cannot accept disciples as our own and present ourselves as guru-kari, as the manifestation of the original guru, Lord Sri Krsna. We may only aspire to the post of monitor-guru and must clearly point out Srila Prabhupada as the real spiritual master of those whom we initiate. If we fail in our manifest duty, when we assume a post beyond our realization, then we set foot on the road to a certain destruction and divine retribution, and risk taking on our own entangled disciples.

In this brief essay, the author has set out to provide a true and practical definition of the bona fide guru, at a time when it is sorely needed and required, in the light of the fact that we generally are not so very advanced Vaisnavas. Yet our attempts up until now to initiate aspiring devotees into the cult of Sri Caitanya can hardly be a cause for universal pride or satisfaction. We have seen several initiating gurus fall utterly from the path of real devotion and decent behaviour. We observe others on the brink of downfall and have been forced, reluctantly, to question the position of them all. The author does not contend that there will never be sad-gurus in the future, nor does he suggest that none could exist at present. And to propose that he does would be to do him an injustice, for all his frailty and worthlessness. But still, it is certain that the ideas outlined above constitute the only practical solution to our pressing problems, and they demand to be adopted by those who have the welfare of all at heart.

1. Srnim-Bhaqvanam, 11th Canto, Chapter 17: "My dear Uddhava, the spiritual master must be accepted by me as my representative but as My very self. He must never be considered on the same level as an ordinary human being... The spiritual master should always be considered as the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by following the spiritual master, one is able to serve all the demigods."

2. In the Krsna book, Chapter eight, the following is to be found:

"When Krsna entered the wrestling arena with Balarama and Their Friends, He appeared differently to different people according to their different relationships (nāsā) with Him... He appeared to the wrestlers exactly like a thunderbolt. To the general in public He appeared as the most beautiful personality. To the females He appeared to be the most attractive male, Cupti personified, and thus increased their lust. The cowherd men who were present there looked upon Krsna as their own kinmen... The rākṣas kings who were present saw Him as the strongest ruler. To the parents of Krsna, Nanda and Yasoda, He appeared to be the most loving child. To Kamsa, He appeared to be death personified. To the unintelligent, He appeared to be the most incapable personality. To the yogī present He appeared to be the Supersoul. To the members of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty He appeared to be the most celebrated descendent."

This description of the Lord's entry into Kamsa's arena, in Madhayamāda, has been often referred to as an illustration of how the spiritual master may be seen differently by different persons according to their relationship with him. For example, the disciples consider him as the manifestation of the Supersoul, etc., and his godbrothers will see him as some other thing, perhaps an incapable person, or a chum, etc. The public, who is not yet a member one, and is merely reciprocating variously according to the observers' relationships with him. This explanation, therefore, is extremely reasonable, and it is to be taken as a scientific, scientific, scientific. To begin with, Krsna is the only rājā of nāsā and the living entities are the ancestors of nāsā. There can be an exchange of nāsā only between the rājā, Sri Krsna, and the innumerable rājās, the infinitesimal living beings.

The guru is generally a living being, and we suppose our esteemed godbrothers are just so. Thus there can be no exchange of nāsā between them and their disciples, nor between them and their godbrothers. There are of course exchanges of love between Vaisnavas, and these are detailed in the Upanisadātma of Sri Rupa Goswami. Such exchanges are termed prīta and not nāsā.

If the above mentioned analogy were to be taken literally, as it could be disastrous. Imagine, for example, if it were considered permissible for the female disciples or godbrothers of a guru to see him as "The most attractive male, Cupti personified" - in consequence of their last increasing. The worry is that, on the basis of this misconception, such an exchange of "nāsā" may be encouraged in some quarters.

3. This verse is quoted by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, in his Tatvar Tīrtha, and is somewhat different to the verse Srila Prabhupada has several times reproduced in his books.

Sri Prabhupada has quoted from the Mundaka upanisad, First Mundaka, Kanda I, Mantra 12. The second line of the mantra runs as follows:

tad-vijnanarthah sa gurum eva brahmacaryam
samvitpannam svetaksir bhur-bhuvah

The purport of the second half of this verse is more or less the same as the verse quoted by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, although the term "sad-guru" is absent. The term "sad-guru" is mentioned elsewhere, as for example in Srila Sanatana Goswami's Hari-bhakti-vilasa:

kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa-deviṣa
tāda-bhakti-jana-sangitah
bhakti mahastumyam mukarnana
tam iccān sūd-gurum bhūjat

"Having attained the company of Lord Kṛṣṇa's Followers, His grace, do not disregard the glorification of spiritual master. If one desires the devotional service of the Lord, one must worship the bona fide spiritual master, the sad-guru."

4. The four types of anātman are:

1. Saorasupata-ta - forgetfulness of one's true identity and identification with one's body, nation, etc.
2. Aparajita-ta - untidiness and worldliness and mundane sense gratification.
3. Apanva-ta - offences, especially to the Holy Name.

5. Cintamani is supposed to have said: "What a great fool you are! Shame on your scholarship! I know and am always conscious of my own wicked life and profession. Had you been attached to the Supreme Lord the way you are to me, then you would have been an angel!" It is important to note, that having uttered these inspiring words, Cintamani also resolved to take wholeheartedly to the devotional service of the Lord, and forthwith renounced all her possessions.

6. The 20 points Srila Prabhupada enumerates are clearly derived from Sri Rupa Goswami's Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu. They are, in summary, as follows:

1. Surrender to a bona fide guru.
2. Taking initiation from him.
3. Render service unto him.
4. Place relevant inquiries before him.
5. Always follow the example of saintly persons.
6. Give unswayed habits and adhere to the rules and regulations detailed in sastra.
Thoughts Regarding Varnasrama Communities

by Nrsimha dasa

Before discussing the developed aspects of the varnasrama divisions and their interrelationships, we might ask: "What should be the practical foundation of a latter-day varnasrama community?"

Should a varnasrama community use income derived almost totally from outside sources to develop transcendental tourism and retreats and mechanized agricultural systems? Well...for now, why not? We can use everything in Krishna's service, but what is the attraction? Is it only manmade opulences - created by capital intensive endeavors that require advanced technology and materials brought from far away? This may be a good beginning for special titras where farming is difficult, but shouldn't we also show a more complete example of Vedantic ideals? If we can successfully develop authentic Vedic villages that thrive by self-sufficient agrarian enterprises, that will surely be a great asset for preaching. Prabhupada said, "Make a small community, showing ideal life..."

Some devotees say simple agrarian living is impractical in an affluent society because modern men would almost rather starve than work the land by hand. Is this really true? Certainly it is difficult for people to return to growing food they need, because farming has come to be associated in their minds with misery and degradation. This is unfortunate. Nevertheless, we see (just look at the back-to-the-land movements and their publications) that many people are starting to reject the insidious propaganda that says: "Simplicity is slavery. Sophistication is salvation." Indeed, the trend Srila Prabhupada predicted has already begun. Millions of people are contemplating, planning, or actually making the break from the technological beast. Prabhupada said that soon millions of city dwellers will flee for the forests to look for new lifestyles. Is it difficult to believe that those times are now near at hand? If the devotees come to us, how will we employ them? Which of our communities (twelve years after Prabhupada spoke these things) knows how to employ thousands of people in growing food without relying on advanced machinery?

Certainly several self-sufficient varnasrama communities can be quickly founded in the West, without great difficulty, when we become convinced that the Vedic agrarian lifestyle ("living in the lap of nature" - actual planting and high thinking) is the most practical and advantageous engagement for the majority of devotees and the strongest economic base for a socially broad, worldwide movement. Building huge temples and creating other transcendental institutional panellenia may certainly be wonderful preaching, yet many people will come to scorn these things if they see that the surrounding villages are starving (materially and spiritually) and that there is no example of a developed agrarian project that can employ everyone.

Efficient labor-intensive farming operations and well managed cows and land are Vedic culture's best capital, money and technology. Our realization in this regard could avert a lot of future suffering. Even now many ghastha devotees chase after city money and suffer due to a lack of spiritual association. For one reason or another, many devotees find it difficult to fit into our different organizations, which tend to make everyone dependent upon sometimes inefficient central administrations. Neither Srila Prabhupada nor the Vedas emphasize communitarian communal living as the only glorious path for ghasthas. Rather, varnasrama social institutions encourage that ghasthas develop strong, independent, agrarian communities.

Such communities can employ all types of people, not just simple farmers and reclusive brahmanas. Nor should we reject the principle of free enterprise and private ownership. In Hyderabad, Srila Prabhupada commented that ownership turns sand to gold, and be suggested that we give land to villagers. Our main task there was supposed to be preaching to the people and training them how to work in Krishna consciousness. Prabhupada's formula, which was never followed in India, could be implemented in the West. Responsible ghasthas who have been reluctant to commit their lives to totally communal projects that may be sold or neglected or drastically rearranged under a new management, might then be more amenable to make serious commitments in Vedic farm communities. If we encourage devotees (who are so inclined and qualified) to develop their own land and household, that could greatly assist a core of ascetic devotees living communally in the center of the community. Why should we worry that pure devotee preachers will get boxed in among some spiritually loose householders? Why not take a small risk and try to increase our faith in the potency of Lord Caitanya's movement? In any community, no matter how large and unruly, if there is a core of pure devotees who actually teach and preach, the whole community should quickly advance in Krishna consciousness. If we can't inspire those who already have some attraction for Krishna, how will we inspire the world?

Our farm communities must preach by showing the advantages of a God conscious way of life. We can clearly demonstrate the Krishna conscious alternative for demoniac industrial civilizations. Ideally, Krishna conscious communities should evolve naturally by utilizing "the gifts of nature." Naturally prosperous God conscious villages form the backbone (or belly) of Vedic society and are the bulwark and refuge of spiritual culture. But if brahmacaris, vanaprasthas, and sanayasis must divert their attention to business and other than direct forms of godly activities will speak about Krishna and His pastimes? If Krishna-katha is minimized, our consciousness will become polluted. Instead of remembering Krishna, we will constantly ask: "Where is the money?" And in spite of bigger collections, we'll feel dissatisfied. Without prosperous varnasrama communities, ghasthas, brahmacaris, and even sanayasis may have to do business or sell bumper-stickers in the cities. In this way, we may gradually lose faith in the ideals of simple Vedic culture.

Of course, if we see Krishna everywhere and remember Him constantly, we may call practically anything "sankirtan." But few devotees remain spiritually enthusiastic in the cities when, just for extracting money, they must constantly contact materialists. In connection with Raghunatha das Goswami's rejection of his pious father's wealth, which Raghunatha considered untouchable in spite of his ability to use it in Lord Caitanya's direct personal service, Srila Prabhupada's comments in the purport that strict Vaisnavas should never accept the impure charity of materialists. Those who are learned in Vedic science know that such charity, which is usually not offered out of love, is full of karmic reactions. Then what should we do? To remain on the transcendental platform, we must immediately give a book or offer some real service in reciprocation for every donation received. We must at least offer some straight preaching. Can we risk thinking our activities are as exalted as Raghunatha das Goswami's and therefore above the possibility of degradation? By developing varnasrama communities, at least ghasthas (both inside and outside the temples) can work very honestly and at the same time preach by their practical example. Sanayasis and brahmacaris also must be very cautious about collecting more than required or missing funds, especially when receiving donations from sinful materialists. Such caution is an important Vedic principle.

Once established in small-scale, prototype varnasrama communities could be duplicated and greatly expanded in the crisis times ahead. The only formidable obstacle I see is internal doubt. We are still not convinced that the whole modern civilization is a "condemned, rubbish civilization." Modern industrial societies offer no real advantages for preachers or people in general. Of course, as long as modern technology is available, we should use it to fight fire with fire, so to speak, but we must always...
For one reason or another, many devotees find it difficult to fit into our present administration, which tends to make everyone dependent upon central administrations.

remember that modern civilization is unwanted and doomed by its accumulated sinful reactions. When we have thoroughly understood this point, I believe we will be more enthusiastic to pioneer the varnasrama phase of Krsna consciousness and less enthusiastic to see devotees stay in the city doing regular business. We should be very vigilant about trends towards asat-sanga. Even now several devotees, including a few ISKCON leaders, feel forced to send their children to the slaughterhouse for "modern education."

Without varnasrama culture, brahminically inclined devotees may not appreciate the scope for their role and may thus get diverted from valuable occupations in Krsna's service as scholars and teachers. Having been alienated from the land and the noble aims that are involved in protecting the land and its caretakers, devotees with katriya inclinations may become lawyers, politicians, and campaign stategists jockeying for positions and votes. Vaishyas devotees may become involved in dirty business and entangling associations that cause them to quickly forget all about preaching and establishing Krsna conscious societies. Sudras (and women) won't receive proper protection and guidance and will thus become a source of constant disturbance, both within and outside of the spiritual community.

Somehow or other, everyone must be engaged in Krsna's service. And to achieve this end, we must attempt many bold programs in the doomed cities. It should be clear, however, that unless we develop varnasrama communities, we will find it extremely difficult to properly engage the talents and abilities of more than a very narrow segment of society. Indeed, without a Vedic socio-economic base for the Krsna consciousness movement, we may soon view even many of our own children and godbrothers - why speak of others - not as potentially great assets for the preaching movement, but as embarrassing impediments. And if we can't engage all sincere devotees and their children, how can we think that ISKCON will ever become influential in world society?

devotees who have thoroughly studied Prabhupada's books don't need to read an essay describing the necessity of varnasrama. I'm sometimes amazed, however, to hear supposedly well-read devotees still questioning the validity and desirability of varnasrama divisions in ISKCON. Those who express concern that as second or first class devotees, they may be asked to conform (for the sake of a broader form of preaching and organization) to an external social standard and themselves not as advanced devotees, but as kashishtha-bhakats who definitely could improve themselves by following varnasrama social codes. Until neophytes are approaching the higher stages of devotion honestly admit that their position is not yet on par with paramasastras, where is the hope for advanced Vaisnavas aanga? What is the use of declaring that varnasrama is essentially mundane and unnecessary for "fixed-up ISKCON devotees" when we have all seen how difficult it is for many devotees, even sannyasis, to exhibit undeviating Vaisnavas behaviour?

What to speak of others, even Lord Caitanya followed the varnasrama principles appropriate for His social situation. Relying on nothing external, which one of us can distribute the Holy Names of Krsna everywhere, exciting prema-blaski within the hearts of everyone? Even if we are experiencing "spontaneous devotional nasa," as advanced Vaisnavas we should want to show by our compassionate example how anyone can approach Krsna. How can anyone approach Krsna? Most people begin devotional service by devoting the inclinations and abilities they already have. Few devotees will get a higher taste unless they first engage their acquired propensities.

Therefore I feel that ISKCON should not prematurely designate paramahamsas, but should go ahead and designate categories of work in Krsna's service. As it is impossible to elevate a man by appointing him to the post of paramahamsa, it is similarly impossible to impose casteism on pure devotees who are fully engaged in Krsna's service. Of course, until we are actually free from false designations, it will be difficult to appreciate the spiritual utility of authorized Vedic designations. In any case, Jagadisha Maharaj and others have already cited numerous passages from Prabhupada's books, proving that Srila Prabhupada wanted some form of varnasrama in the movement as early as 1974. It's absurd to worry that our attempt to fulfill this desire of Prabhupada will somehow open ISKCON to casteism. A more grave concern may be that if we don't fulfill this desire of Srila Prabhupada, ISKCON will be open to sahaajasam and Buddhism (Hare krsna walk conv. Bom. 2/29/74).

Anyway, the central purpose of this essay is to asseverate that - with the proper leadership, organization, basic knowledge and desire - varnasrama communities will easily develop without tremendous suffering and hardship or damage to metropolitan preaching programs. To help assure our quick success in founding a Krsna conscious varnasrama culture, I feel that we must understand the full import of the following fundamental principles:

1) In Vedic culture, land and cows and the simple knowledge, skills and tools that are required for their proper use and protection are the most important capital assets. By Krsna's arrangement, these assets expand immense natural opulences that create favorable environments for God conscious civilizations.

2) In varnasrama society, the basic unit of structure is the kula - the family structure. Kula-dharma, or spiritual family life, is the building block of Vedic civilization. When this structure is respected and not (and encouraged to flourish as an autonomous unit (usually through noble private enterprises) within the larger agrarian-based culture, an enduring community prosperity is virtually impossible. The guru and community leaders obviously cannot perform all the functions of leaders and elders in the family (see B.G. purport 1.43). One of Arjuna's strongest arguments against fighting at Kuruksetra was based upon his understanding of the importance of maintaining strong kula-dharma.

3) Vedic communities don't evolve simply by the labors of hard working sadhus. There must be a strong brahminical culture. In every community an esteemed council of sober sannyasis and brahmans must guide the development. Members of the brahminical council must clearly display exemplary simplicity and austerity. They must remain personally uninvolved in trivial political affairs and petty social concerns that might inhibit their broader vision. In a Krsna conscious society, of course, those working as sadhus can be just as self-realized as those working as brahmans. In the body, however, a good brain is the most essential part. Without the sagacious advice of brahmans uncorrupted by desires for great wealth and prestigious posts - no community prosperity will long endure.

The science of varnasrama is clearly outlined in Prabhupada's books. Therefore, if we carefully study Srimala-Bhagurutai and Caitanya-caritamrta, we will understand everything about the transcendental position of pure Vaisnavas and the practical necessity of varnasrama. If somehow we can show a comprehensive example of the Krsna conscious alternative society and boldly preach that such a society will conteract all hellish conditions created by Godless industrial nations, we could quickly win a large congregation who feel greatly indebted to the movement. Having been saved from a blazing fire, many will surely become loyal members of the Krsna consciousness movement. They will want to take leading roles in Srila Prabhupada's mission.
Becoming Gurus for Our Children
by Bhurijana dasa

It has been long understood that in order for our guru system to be successful, highly qualified teachers must train our children. The following analysis is offered to encourage all teachers to actively become gurus for their students by first becoming qualified, then obtaining the authority to do their service, and finally by taking the responsibility to train the children of the Krsna consciousness movement.

Who Holds the Responsibility?

When a child doesn’t do well in Krsna consciousness, his parents often wonder, “But I surrendered him to Krsna by giving him to guru. What went wrong?” In trying to answer this question, let’s, for the time being, put aside the question of a child’s individual karma, and think of our guru system’s goal as to bring each child to as high a stage of Krsna consciousness as he is able to obtain. Whose duty is it to take the first educational steps to insure that this comes about? Is it the society’s, the temple president’s, the guru’s? Experience1, Prabhupada’s words, and asura’s equating the father and the guru2 all indicate that the responsibility falls first upon the child’s parents. Therefore, the virtue of that responsibility, parents are obliged to place their child into the best possible situation for training.

Understanding the Mentality Needed to Become Trained

According to the Vedic culture, the most favorable situation within which to train a child in Krsna consciousness is when he lives under the shelter of a qualified guru. This is recommended in the Srimad-Bhagavatam by Narada Muni: “brahmacari guru ksetram danante guru kramam: A student should practice completely controlling his senses. He should be submissive and should have an attitude of firm friendship for the spiritual master. With a great vow, the brahmacari should live at the guru’s place, only for the benefit of the guru,” and is also confirmed by Srila Prabhupada in innumerable places, such as: “The old system of guru-ksetra should be revived. It is the perfect system, designed to produce great men, sober and responsible leaders, who know the real welfare of the citizens” (letter from Srila Prabhupada dated Nov., 1971) and “Children at the age of five are sent to the guru-ksetra or the place of the spiritual master, and the master trains the young boys in the strict discipline of becoming brahmacarins. Without such practice, no one can make advancement in any yoga, whether it be dhyana, japa, or bhakti.” (B.G. 6.13-14 purport) To understand why so much emphasis is placed on a child’s living at the guru-ksetra under the care of a qualified spiritual master, let us first explore the necessary mentality that must be developed within a child before he can become trained in Krsna consciousness. Prabhupada compared the training of a student to the dealings between a tiger trainer and a tiger. The tiger trainer first beats the tiger and then feeds him. Again and again the trainer beats the tiger and feeds him. After some time (a short time with some tigers and a longer time with others), the tiger realizes that his happiness or distress simply depends on the pleasure or displeasure of his trainer. This reverential and submissive attitude places the tiger in the perfect frame of mind to actually become trained.

Of course we are not suggesting a system of alternating feeding and beating our children, but nonetheless, as Prabhupada’s analogy shows, a student must first feel dependent on his guru’s happiness for his own happiness and must simultaneously feel misery in causing his spiritual master displeasure. Only then can he become a spiritual disciple. The spiritual master/disciple relationship cannot be one where the disciple thinks, “Whether or not my spiritual master is pleased with me is not important. So

neither are present. I care little whether my teacher is pleased with me.”

If a child has this mentality, can he be trained by one other than his parents or his guru? And if those authorities only occasionally contact the child, do not train him in the details of devotional service, and are not present to provide a shelter during crises, how deeply will the child feel his relationship with them? Will he even feel secure and well taken care of? If no in-depth, long-standing loving relationship truly exists with even one Krsna conscious adult, can a child be successfully guided through the agitations of adolescence and sexual desire?

Prabhupada confirmed the extraordinary depth of relationship needed within the guru-ksetra between the guru and the disciple by saying, “It is not an artificial thing. The brahmacari, the disciple, must have genuine love for the guru; then he can be under control. Otherwise, why one should be under the control of another person?” This can be possible when one is really thickly related to the guru. Otherwise, ordinary relationship will not do.” (From a Bombay lecture, April 1976)

It is essential for those involved in educating our children to understand the “thick” relationship needed between a guru and his student that allows the student to become trained. Understanding this, we must give each child the facility to develop such a relationship with the one who trains him. If it is a teacher who is actually doing the training of a child, that teacher should be encouraged to develop the necessary relationship that will allow him to truly train. At the present, most of those who teach, even if they are qualified, neither have the authority nor do they consider it their duty to take full responsibility for a child’s physical, mental and spiritual development. And that lack has left many of our children, for all practical purposes alone, in guru-less guru-ksetras.

The Parents Retake the Authority

As a reaction against subsequent guru-ksetra failures, parents are taking more of a direct role in the training of their children. Some results of this are Krsna conscious day schools, “half guru-ksetras” (where the parents, who may or may not be present, half delegate their authority to the teachers) and the sending of our devotee children directly to public schools. None of these produce optimal Krsna conscious result because the child’s much needed relationship with his guru does not exist. Although these are not ideal, parents actually taking responsibility to train their child may bring better results than either guru or teacher taking the responsibility. That depends on the Krsna consciousness of the parents.

Delegation of Authority to a Qualified Teacher

A better alternative is that the parents or guru follow the Vedic guidelines and delegate the authority to a qualified teacher and allow that teacher to become a guru for their child. Although the teacher-guru may never

1 Who does the liability for educating the child fall upon if the child doesn’t want to become a devotee?
2 “The parents must take the responsibility for their children, or they should not have children.” (letter from Srila Prabhupada dated Jan., 1976)
3 “guru ne se krtv me-jana ne asat: One cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master (or a father...” (S.B. 5.5.18)
even become an initiating guru, he, after having received the authority to train, can then use psychology, control of environment, punishment and Krishna consciousness to cultivate that guru/student mentality within the child that will enable the child to become successfully trained. Understanding that he is a guru for the child will also help the teacher become clear about the depth of his responsibilities.

Without being acknowledged as guru, and if his decisions are greatly restricted by the parents and others, the teacher loses his ability to take the responsibility for training. A teacher can, in fact, only take responsibility to train if he possesses the authority to train. Therefore, a child’s parents, the ones who possess the initial authority for their child’s training, have the responsibility of finding a qualified teacher and delegating their authority to him. If they have already delegated their authority to a guru, the guru can either take the responsibility to train the child himself or find a teacher he trusts and place the child under his care. Thus, the authority to train should be clearly transferred to the actual trainer, and that trainer should clearly accept the responsibility to train.

Because a teacher-guru who holds the authority to train has in fact become that person whom the child must please, the delegation of authority must be viewed with extreme seriousness. For example, if such a teacher becomes displeased with a child, the parents or guru must never be disdainfully pleased with him. Because this authority should never be whimsically changed (each time a child changes his authority, it becomes more difficult for him to completely trust authority), that teacher should be extremely qualified, as a guru should be qualified, worthy of full faith and trust, and should never be appointed simply out of necessity. If a parent or guru feels that no one is qualified enough to receive his delegation of authority, he should, understanding the mentality within a child that allows him to become trained, maintain the authority and train the child himself. If the delegation of authority to a teacher does occur, the child should be made fully aware that his teacher is also his guru.

Conclusion: The Challenge - Filling the Need

Since the number of children in our society is dramatically increasing, the need for qualified teacher-gurus is great. Therefore, we should encourage whatever men and women we have to become qualified to take up this guru/student relationship with as many children as possible. We should also search for and encourage many suitable candidates to take up the responsibility of becoming gurus for our children.

Submitted at the feet of the Vaisnavas by Bhurijana dasa May, 1986

When a child doesn’t do well in Krishna consciousness, his parents often wonder, “But I surrendered him to Krishna by giving him to the guru! What went wrong?”

"notes and queries"

The idea for this column comes from Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu, who writes: “How about a section of the journal called ‘Notes and queries’? There’s an English literary journal of that name, to which people submit notes and observations too small to warrant an article, and questions other readers might be able to answer. Here is a query I have, for example: ‘Where in Srimad Prabhupada’s books does Prabhupada define “body” as a collection of sense organs?’ I’m sure there are many devotees who have read something in Prabhupada’s books and can’t remember where they need to look it up again. There are probably other queries concerning, e.g., the meaning of Sanskrit verses.

‘Impatience’ and ‘Impatience’ in the purports to Bhagavad-gita 1.29 and 30 by Ravindra Svarupa dasa

In Bhagavad-gita 1.29, purport, Srimad Prabhupada writes, “Arjuna’s symptoms in this situation are out of material fear — namely loss of life. This is evident from other symptoms also; he became so impatient that his famous bow Gandiva was slipping from his hands.” And in 1.30, purport, he writes: “Due to his impatience, Arjuna was unable to stay on the battlefield, and he was forgetting himself on account of this weakness of his mind.”

Devotees are puzzled by the use of ‘impatient’ and ‘impatience’ in these passages. Current meanings don’t fit the context. Webster’s New Colloquial defines ‘impatient’ as “restless or short of temper, esp. under irritation, delay, or opposition,” or “in tolerant,” as in “intolerant of delay.” But Prabhupada is describing someone suffering from great fear, not someone restless or irritable due to delay or frustration.

As it turns out, Srimad Prabhupada is using these words in an older sense, one still current when he learned English, but now quite out of use. This older meaning is given in the Oxford English Dictionary: “Want (i.e. lack) of endurance; failure to bear suffering, discomfort, annoyance, etc.” This meaning reflects the etymological derivation of the word from the Latin impatientia, from the negative prefix in plus patientia, “the quality of suffering.” The OED records this usage as of 1846: “Sore as the trial must have been, we detect no sign of impatience on his part.”

So the impatience that impelled Arjuna to leave the battlefield was his inability to endure his suffering.

Devotees are encouraged to submit relevant material for this column.
Genuine Vaisnava relationships are developed by advancement in Krishna consciousness. In the Upadesamrita, Srita Rupa Goswami describes the various dealings between devotees according to their level of spiritual advancement. These exchanges do not exist in a vacuum, but are dependent on a devotee's relationship with Krishna. In other words, Krishna is the center, or the absolute point of reference, in devotee relationships. To the extent that we are able to enliven one another in hearing and chanting about Krishna, to that extent we are successful in establishing real Vaisnava sangha. As we make further advancement in devotional service, our kinship with one another should improve; if it doesn't, that is symptoms of spiritual immaturity.

Rupa Goswami also informs us of the six kinds of exchanges between devotees. These are described as pritilaksana, or "symptoms of love," indicating the very substance of Vaisnava rapport. Of course, in the English language the word "love" has been misinterpreted to mean lust or exploitation, but that is not the Vaisnava understanding. The heart of a devotee is the residence of Lord Krishna (sudhakrama krsnam atma-bhuan). The essence of his existence is Krishna. Therefore a devotee sees everything and everyone in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He has no enemies; politics and diplomacy have no place in the person of a Vaisnava. His only motivation is to please Krishna, being always absorbed in His loving devotional service (bhaktam pritipuruksam). So when truly advanced Vaisnavas interact with one another, the atmosphere is suffused with spiritual bliss (tusyant ca ramant ca).

Advancement in Krishna consciousness is dependent on following the instructions of the spiritual master. There are hundreds of quotes available from Srita Prabhupada's books and letters emphasizing the importance of strictly following the rules and regulations of devotional service:

"I hope that you are being very careful to strictly observe all of our basic rules and regulations as rising early (before 4:00 AM), attending mangal-atri and classes, chanting 16 rounds without fail and of course the regulative principles. Without accepting these things seriously, there is no question of spiritual life. So I hope you understand the utmost necessity of these things and are remaining pure in your activities." - February 3, 1975 to Jivananda

Any attempts to establish a perfect Vaisnava society without adherence to these basic instructions of Srita Prabhupada are simply mental concoction. Krishna consciousness is a great science, and if we follow it properly, the result is guaranteed:

"Be very careful to follow all of the regulative principles nicely and chant 16 rounds and study my books very deeply. This will make you able to go back to Godhead at the end of your life." - February 15, 1975 to Krsna dasi

These instructions form the basic foundation of our society and our relationships. They set a standard in our dealings with one another. There is no possibility of improving our relationships if we are minimizing or neglecting the orders of Srita Prabhupada. The quality of our association with one another is dependent upon the quality of our hearing and serving the words of our spiritual master.

Although a Vaisnava is very strict in his personal sadhana, he is also very compassionate by nature. He is not cold or distant in his personal relationships; in fact, he is kind and considerate in his dealings with others. In the Bhagavad-gita, Krsna describes Himself as suhrद sava-bhuan, "the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities." As a devotee of Krsna, the Vaisnava is deeply concerned that every living being is awakened to his eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore he is the true friend of everyone.

vansha-kaipatrasuhvas ca krsna-sindhuhvas eva ca patilanam pavamahyai vaisnavasah yam namah

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the Vaisnava devotees of the Lord who can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and who are full of compassion for the fallen souls." - February 3, 1975 to Jivananda

This does not mean that he is compassionate only to the nondevotees and that he is callous towards his godbrothers and godchildren who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord. A Vaisnava is a servant of everyone - especially to the devotees. Even Krsna Himself is naturally inclined towards the devotees (B.G. 8.25). In the Nectar of Devotion, Srita Prabhupada describes the perfect Vaisnava attitude:

"A devotee always appreciates the activities of other devotees. Yudhisthira Maharaj was appreciating the qualities of Prahlada, and that is one symptom of a pure devotee. A pure devotee never thinks himself as great; he always thinks that other devotees are greater than himself. The King was thinking, 'Prahlada Maharaj is actually a devotee of the Lord, while I am nothing...'

N.O.D. p.10

This is the humility of a Vaisnava. He is not materially motivated for name, fame, or any temporary acquisition (na bhuan na janam na sandar). He sincerely appreciates the qualities of others, thinking himself to be unfit and unqualified. This is the example taught to us by Srita Prabhupada. Although he did the most to spread Krsna consciousness worldwide, he was simultaneously the most humble. He would never claim credit for his success, but gave all credit to his spiritual master, Srita Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati (Preface to Bhagavad-gita As It Is, p. VII).

This humility is not a matter of personal preference or choice, limited to a few interested devotees here and there. Rather, it is a part of the surrendering process (trud api sunecca) and is a direct result of spiritual advancement. In the 16th chapter of the Bhagavad-gita, Krsna explains that a godly man endowed with the divine nature is free from envy and the passion for honor (adho natinisita). The qualities of arrogance, pride, anger, conceit, harshness, etc., are described as those born of the demonic nature, not conducive to liberation but to bondage. Devotees of Krsna are purified of these lower qualities by the process of devotional service (nityam atma-bhuan). Therefore, genuinely advanced devotees will automatically exhibit all the good characteristics of the demigods (S.B. 5.18.12). There is no esoteric understanding, separate from the conclusion of satsvar, which exempts anyone from this principle. The saintly qualities of a Vaisnava are proportionate to his spiritual advancement.

A progressive devotee not only develops humility, but he gradually attains all 26 qualities of a Vaisnava as described by Lord Caitanya in the Caitanya-caritamita (Madhya-lila 22, 79-80). These qualities are self-manifesting and cannot be acquired through external means. The spiritual fragrance of an advanced devotee is so attractive that by his very existence he is a preacher of Krsna consciousness. In fact, the whole world can be united by the presence of one pure devotee.

Krsna consciousness is not a theological philosophy; neither is it a dogmatic religion. Rather, it is a dynamic process of spiritual growth and realization in which the association of devotees plays an integral part. If that association becomes dry or hackneyed, it is indicative of poor spiritual health. The solution is simply to increase the level of Krsna consciousness; no material formulas will suffice.

As the members of ISKCON become more advanced in devotional service, the tone of our personal relationships will improve, directly resulting in more effective preaching. By keeping Krsna and Prabhupada firmly in the center of our movement, all good qualities and auspiciousness will automatically manifest. This should be our top priority.
If you at all feel indebted to me then you should preach vigorously like me. That is the proper way to repay me. Of course, no one can repay the debt to the spiritual master, but the spiritual master is very much pleased by such an attitude by the disciple. In the Bhagad-gita it is said: evaassyastambhir ekahe kuru-namaha. "Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one." Our only business is to be fixed up in devotional service by pleasing the spiritual master. Those who are not fixed up they have various lines of action (da means "one" and baha means "many"). The real ocean of mercy is Krishna and it is the duty of the spiritual master to tell his disciple to come to the ocean and be happy. The spiritual master's duty is to lead the disciple to his ocean. I am trying my best and if you try to follow surely you will benefit.

Bhaktivinode Thakura has sung, "Krsna sei tomara, Krsna dite pura, tomara sakati ache. Amai ta'langala, krsna krsna boli, dahi tana pace pace." "Krsna is yours and you have the power to give Him to anyone you wish. I am poor and wretched and running behind you shouting Krsna, Krsna!"

Krsna is unlimited, no one can catch Him, but if someone follows the parampara, He agrees to be captured. Everyone is afraid of Krsna, but Krsna is afraid of Mother Yasoda. That is Krsna's special mercy.

- August 14, 1976 to the Residents of New Vrindaban

One thing is, our process of Krsna consciousness, if it is followed with determination and enthusiasm, automatically it has the effect of fixing us, body, mind and soul, to the Lotus Feet of Lord Krsna, so that all sorts of fluctuations of the material nature, all sorts of difficulties and discrepancies of life are easily withstood. But first you have to agree to understand the process and follow it scrupulously. That is wanting. If I only think I know something, that is mental platform of accept/reject, and any knowledge gathered from the mental platform is like that, tottering and precarious, and it can be immediately rejected at any time. Krsna consciousness has great potency to deliver us to the highest platform of perfection, but only if it is understood by the intelligence. Something understood by the intelligence is fixed forever and cannot waver, and that is almost spiritual. From your letter, I can understand you are confused in your mind, because you do not want this, you do not want that, you might like another, like that. That position of confusion is not very much desirable, so you are a Vaisnava, now rid yourself of such misunderstanding of things. Vaisnava means one who is able to sit down anywhere, under any conditions, and be happy. He wants only a place to lay down, a little prasadam, and if there's a little service he can do, gladly let me do it for Krsna, that's all. As long as we are thinking I want this, that is not to my liking, or if I adjust things in a certain way everything will be better, these thoughts are material. Devotional service is not conditional. So stop this dreaming state. Try to understand things with the light of your intelligence, and if you are sincere in this way, without a doubt Krsna will give you full facility to understand Him and become freed of the bondage of ignorance.

Nowadays it seems many of the older disciples like yourself are having difficulty. If you do not set the example for the younger students and take the responsibility for instructing them in the right line, how will things go on? Try to always study our books and see our philosophy from different lights of directions, become convinced yourself of this knowledge and without a doubt all of your difficulties of mind will disappear forever and you will see Krsna face-to-face.

- July 8, 1972 to Bhagavatana

We have to manage our men in such a way that they may bend to our will but not break. After all, our work is purely voluntary. If they become angry and leave then our work is defeated.

- December 31, 1973 to Tamal Krsna Goswami

I have considered this matter of record distribution and have decided that it should be immediately stopped. It has simply caused havoc. It should be stopped everywhere. The stress must be on books, nothing else needs to be sold. If someone hears a record, he will not understand anything of our philosophy. He will simply enjoy it as sense gratification. But if he gets a book and reads even one page, then he may very likely be induced to take part in our movement. These records are not important. My books are important. You should make arrangements to distribute them in as much quantity as possible.

- January 6, 1975 to Hansadutta

"Krsna is yours and you have the power to give Him to anyone you wish. I am poor and wretched and running behind you shouting Krsna, Krsna!"
At the present moment, the editorial offices of THE VAISNAVA JOURNAL in Vancouver are pretty empty — we only have one staff member. Most of the time he is out on the road collecting to pay for printing and mailing costs. You can help. Why not participate in this exciting new publication and serve the worldwide Vaisnava community? How? It’s easy. Just pick up a pen and do one or more of the following:

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