

The Vaisnava Journal

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

Gaura Purnima 1986

Vol.1 No.1



The Vaisnava Journal

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

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DEDICATED
TO
His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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The Vaisnava Journal is a quarterly publication. Senior devotees are invited to submit articles for publication. Submissions may be edited for purposes of clarity or brevity. Articles appearing in this journal do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor.

The Vaisnava Journal is an in-house publication. It is not intended for public distribution. Copies will be sent to GBC members, temple presidents, and devotees wishing to be placed on our mailing list.

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Welcome to the first issue of The Vaisnava Journal. The main purpose of this publication is to help unify the senior members of ISKCON.

We have all felt the need for better Vaisnava relationships in our society. For one reason or another, we have to admit there has been a gradual erosion of love and trust among the disciples of Srila Prabhupada. Now more than ever, we need to revive the spirit of unity so prominent during the time of Prabhupada's physical presence.

As the founder-*acarya* of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada has always been the center of our movement. In the absence of personal association with the *guru*, it is essential that one should serve his instructions. "There is no difference between the spiritual master's instructions and the spiritual master himself." Therefore the central pivot of our worldwide activities is the *vani* of Srila Prabhupada. His instructions form the guiding principle of our movement, nay the world, for the next 10,000 years. As disciples of Srila Prabhupada, we share the heavy responsibility of insuring that his message is preserved and transmitted without adulteration.

One of Srila Prabhupada's most important instructions to his disciples is that we cooperate with one another in spreading Krsna consciousness. He recognized there would be differences of opinion among godbrothers, but he also reminded us that we share a common objective which supersedes all petty disagreements.

"Perhaps you may know that there are many political parties in a country but when the country's total responsibility has to be executed, they become combined. To have some little disagreements among yourselves is not very unnatural because we are all individual beings. But as we are working on behalf of Krsna, we should always forget our personal interests and see to the prime cause."

-January 21, 1969 to Gurudas and Yamuna

It is certainly unpalatable to think that we could fall short of fulfilling this order, but history has taught us a lesson that we should be careful not to repeat. If our movement is to be truly successful, then it is necessary that we cooperate with each other. And in order to cooperate, we have to communicate.

In the 10th Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita*, Krsna describes how the devotees relate to one another. He uses the words *bodhayantah parasparam*, translated as "preaching among themselves." This emphasizes the importance of exchanging spiritual realizations with devotees.

The Vaisnava Journal has been created to help establish a healthy dialogue among the Prabhupada disciples. By communicating with each other on a regular basis, we can better achieve an overall consensus on vital issues. Hopefully this will help to improve the quality of our relationships.

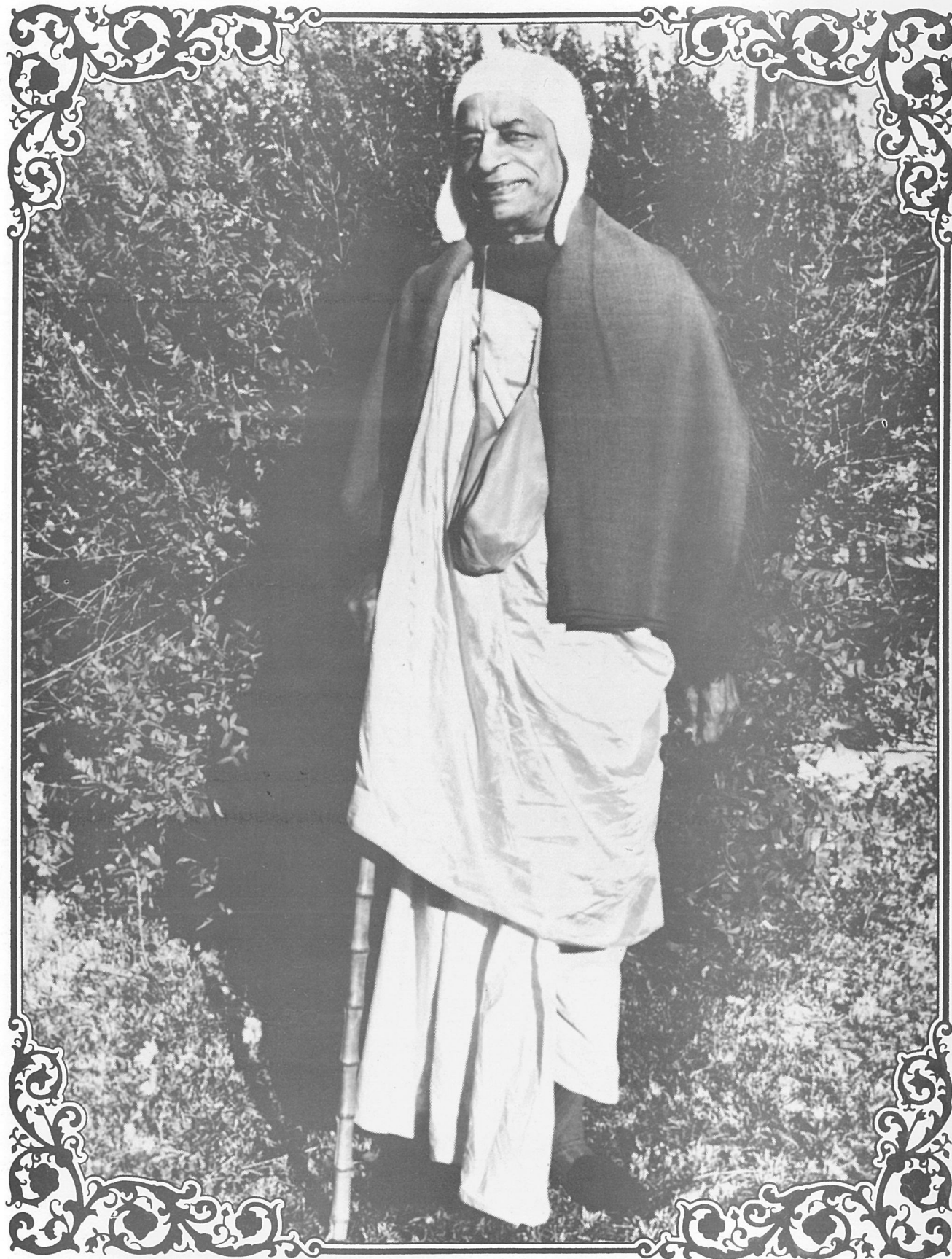
I would like to invite all senior devotees to participate by submitting articles (2000 words or less), or by responding to articles through the letters section (the Vaisnava Forum). Of course, some lively discussions may ensue, but that is not unwanted. Krsna consciousness is not dry or static; neither are the devotees.

Please note that all articles should have their foundation in Prabhupada's instructions, with respect for the basic codes of Vaisnava etiquette.

We're looking forward to hearing from you.

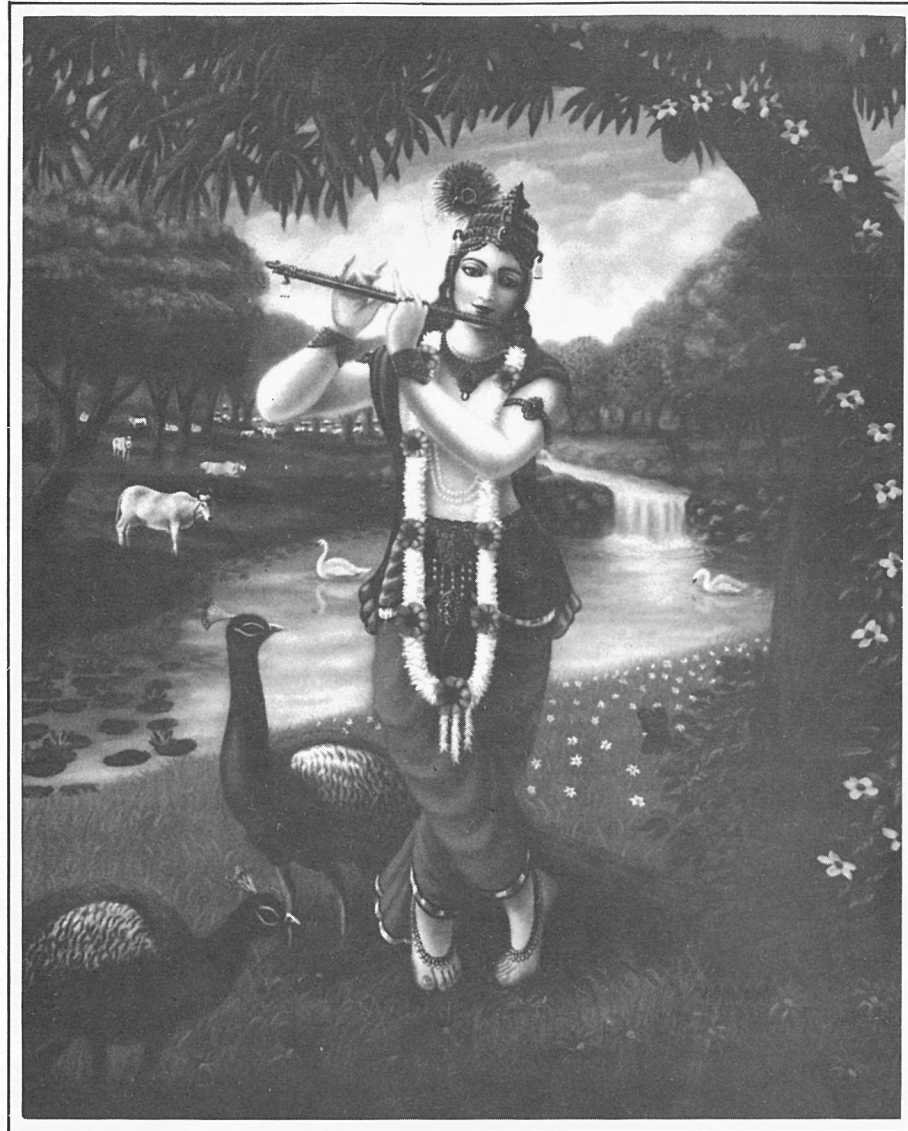
All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

--PD



His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krsna Consciousness



Painting by Vianu dasa

BHAGAVAD-GITA: Chapter Four

Text 13

*catur-varnyam maya srstam
guna-karma-vibhagasah
tasya kartaram api mam
viddhy akartaram avyayam*

“According to the three modes of material nature and the work ascribed to them, the four divisions of human society were created by Me. And, although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the non-doer, being unchangeable.”

Text 14

*na mam-karmani limpanti
na me karma phale sprha
iti mam yo'bhijanati
karmabhir na sa badhyate*

“There is no work that affects Me; nor do I aspire for the fruits of action. One who understands this truth about Me also does not become entangled in the fruitive reactions of work.”

Text 15

*evam jnatva krtam karma
purvair api mumuksubhih
kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam
purvaih purvataram krtam*

“All the liberated souls in ancient times acted with this understanding and so attained liberation. Therefore, as the ancients, you should perform your duty in this divine consciousness.”

A Varnasrama Society

Morning walks with Srila Prabhupada in Vrindaban

(Reprinted from the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust)

The following is taken from the morning walks in Vrindaban, India directly after the Mayapur Festival of 1974, wherein His Divine Grace talks about setting up varnasrama colleges and Vaisnava communities throughout the world.

DAY ONE:

Srila Prabhupada: The politician's business will be to exploit the poor citizens and they will be embarrassed and harassed so much. By one side no sufficient rain and therefore scarcity of food and on the other side taxation by the government. In this way the people will be so much harassed that they will give up their homes and go to the forest. Unless they take to Krsna consciousness they will not be saved. The varnasrama college has to be established immediately. Everywhere, wherever we have got our centers, a varnasrama college should be established to train all divisions: one class brahmana, one class ksatriya, one class vaisya, and one class sudra. But everyone will be elevated to the spiritual platform by the spiritual activities which we have prescribed. There is no inconvenience, even for the sudras.

Devotee: Is the sudra supposed to take sannyasa also?

Srila Prabhupada: No. Those who are sudras, they should not be allowed to take sannyasa-- only those who are qualified brahmanas will be allowed to take sannyasa.

Devotee: Ksatriya used to take sannyasa?

Srila Prabhupada: Some of them but not all of them.

Another Devotee: Yudhisthira Maharaj?

Srila Prabhupada: Yudhisthira Maharaj did not take sannyasa but he left home. There is no need of accepting sannyasa. One has to perform the devotional activities--that is the real thing. Simply by changing dress one does not improve unless he takes

seriously to the principles of devotional service. But in Kali-Yuga they will think, “Because I have changed my dress I have become a big sannyasi.” (laughter) “Because I have got sacred thread now I am a big brahmana.” There must be regular training!

Devotee: Srila Prabhupada, in the varnasrama society, are most of the citizens sudras?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. The number of sudras is always bigger. Just like in university education, the number of graduates and post-graduates they are less. Other's numbers are bigger.

Bhagavan: The whole idea is then at the end of everyone's life everyone is required to leave home and perform devotional activities but not necessarily to take sannyasa.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, devotional activities. Either he leaves home or he does not leave home; that does not matter. He must continue from the very beginning. For the management of affairs we are required to divide because there are different classes of brains. So those who have very intellectual brains, they should become brahmanas. Those who are fit for management and protection, they should be trained as ksatriyas. Those who are fit for producing food and taking care of the cows, they should be trained as vaisyas. And the balance, they are all sudras. This is the thing. Everywhere you will find this division--natural. One class man, very intelligent. One class of man, very strong, good brain for management and administration. One class of man fit for tilling the ground, producing food and taking care of the cows. The balance, sudras. So, in our society these divisions should be there. The most intelligent class of men, they should be engaged in preaching, reading books, instructing, and taking care of Deity worship in the temple. Another class will be strong managers

to see that everything is going nicely and everyone is engaged. Not that only eating and sleeping. Everyone must be engaged, employed. So if one is very much adopted for eating and sleeping, he should be engaged with plows. You see there must be activity. Otherwise, there must be dysentery. Eating and sleeping, you cannot digest. So in this way our society should manage. Not that, “Give me second initiation, sacred thread, and after taking, business finished, now I am liberated, let me eat and sleep.” This should be stopped. Therefore, we have 50 (units) of land and I have calculated in Mayapur, setting aside 20 (units) for the temple and grazing ground for the cows, 30 (units) of land. The production should be 300 mounds of grain but we have produced only 180. So there should be 120 excess in grain. Instead of this excess they want 10,000 rupees a month for maintenance. This management is going on! These things are not discussed in GBC? So what kind of discussing was there? Simply talking? No practical? And the estimate of the budget was presented for 10,000 rupees a month and when it was scrutinizingly studied, immediately it came down to 6,000. So what kind of budget? So management should be arranged in that way, that nobody is sitting idly. Automatically he will fall sick. Sickness means idleness. All excess--eating, sleeping. No excess--no lust. “Yuktahara ...yukta.” Yukta means “actually what you need.” So to everyone in each center, this system should be introduced and there must be practical application of the varnasrama at the same time this program of devotional service. Then it will go on very nicely.

Hridayananda Goswami: Should devotees be formally designated in a particular occupation?

Srila Prabhupada: No. Devotees are devotees. Actually, devotees are

above *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, *vaisya* and *sudra*. But, for management of material things, we have to divide. Just like in the body there are divisions. Krsna, He was acting as a *ksatriya* and in His boyhood He was acting as a *vaisya* or *ksatriya* or *brahmana*. This is the example. When He was a cowherd boy His business was *vaisya* and when He was fighting in the battlefield of Kuruksetra He was a *ksatriya*. He was marrying as a *ksatriya*. So although He is acting sometimes as *vaisya*, sometimes as *ksatriya*, He is neither of these. So devotee is like that. He may act in any position but he is above all the material conceptions of life. That is perfection.

Devotee: Srila Prabhupada, what should *ksatriyas* be taught?

Srila Prabhupada: *Ksatriyas* should be taught that he is manager. He must see that everyone is engaged and if there is any fight he must come forward to fight—this is *ksatriya* business. There may be fight, somebody may attack us. Not that they simply chant Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. No! (Srila Prabhupada laughs) They must come forward. Yes, they are prepared to fight. That is *ksatriya*.

Another Devotee: Srila Prabhupada, in our society we are awarding *brahmana* initiation, second initiation...

Srila Prabhupada: No, no. Initiation should go on. You do not understand what I have said. That is for Vaisnava. Vaisnava and Visnu. Just like Krsna is Visnu. He is not human being but He is acting like human being. Similarly, Vaisnava is transcendental. But for proper management in the material world, one should be acting like *brahmana*, one should be acting like *ksatriya*. That is required. Just like you are actually doing so. Some of you are preaching and some of you are cleansing the temple. That does not mean that a *sannyasi* who is preaching, he is better than that man who is cleansing. The position of Vaisnava is the same. But for management one is cleansing, one is seeing to the construction, one is going to preach, like that. That should be there. It is not that because I have taken *sannyasa* therefore I cannot any longer do anything. If need be,

he has to act as *ksatriya* or *sudra*. It doesn't matter. But for management, this division must be there, otherwise it will be mismanagement. A Vaisnava coming to the position of doing the work of a *sudra* does not mean that he has become a *sudra*. He is Vaisnava. Try to understand this point. Just like on the stage if you want to play something, one must be king, one must be queen or something but neither of them are king or queen. That is stage play. Similarly, to manage things in the material world, we have to "guna karma." *Karma* there must be. Therefore the *karma* should be done, executed according to quality.

Devotee: So in our movement the leaders must decide how every devotee and every resource is engaged properly.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. That is lead-

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ership. Which man is fitted for which work.

Atreya Rsi: Utilization of all resources, including devotees, funds and everything?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. The first thing is to see that everyone is engaged. How they are to be engaged, that requires leadership. But the first business is to engage everyone. Nobody should be without engagement. Then there will be idleness. An idle mind is the devil's workshop. The devil is woman and money. This is the devil. So if you remain idle then you shall think of devils. So we should see that everyone is engaged properly. The instructions in this connection are important. Everyone should be trained as Vaisnava and at the same time he should work in different positions for management. So if our men

are not prepared to do plowing work, Tamal Krsna Maharaj, what is the use of purchasing land?

Tamal Krsna Goswami: They are not prepared, Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Prabhupada: They have to engage a laborer and spend 200 rupees for him at least including salary and food and the production is nil. In this way there must be 10,000 to 20,000 rupees expenditure. Am I right or not? You bring money some way from anywhere and spend lavishly! What kind of management is this? You should consider, after all, that the money is earned with hard labor. A person will bring money with hard labor and other person will spend it like irresponsible prince. That should be stopped. That is management. Especially if the religion means to make a class of men simply idle. What is religion called? The opiate of the people. Therefore they are against religion. But actually, if we show that we are producing, we are managing, we are educating, then we can counteract the communist tendency. They are saying that we are escaping, don't you see? That we are escaping the responsibility of worldly life and we are engaging in some religion. That is the tendency; everywhere the government is complaining like that. Therefore they do not want to increase the number of temples or increase the number of devotees because they say that, "These are a class of idle men. They cannot do anything and they take to this religious life." That is the tendency. They are thinking like that. But if we show that you are actually doing something ideal, then they will appreciate. Make a small community showing ideal life, not idle life. Now in Bombay they have refused because they are under the impression that the Europeans have come here under some sentiment, so what is the use? They have taken some plea and rejected our proposition. (This reference is to the government who has refused to let us build a temple on land we have acquired in Bombay.) We are making counter-propaganda against *maya*, but *maya* is also very strong. She also makes propaganda against you, very strong. So unless you become a very sincere devotee, it will not be possible to conquer over *maya*. You will succumb. In

India the *brahmana* class, they say "I have been born in *brahmana* family so why should I do this work?" You see? So therefore the whole society has gone to hell. In your country still they accept any kind of work. It doesn't matter. And here in India if he happens to be a *brahmana* he'll not take any kind of work. Just like plowing, he'll not agree. Therefore, so much land...The *ksatriya* is thinking he is *ksatriya*; *brahmana* is thinking he is *brahmana*; the land is lying fallow; there is no production; so how is the land plowed? He will go to the office and fight with a pen as a *ksatriya* and instead of studying the *Veda*, he studies the rules and regulations given by the office. But he'll not come to plowing. Therefore there is scarcity of food. He'll go to a mill to work as an ordinary laborer but for plowing he'll not come. So much land is here lying unutilized. And they are crying for grain. The same example, I was in New York City. The whole city is filled with dirty things, garbage, for want of cleaners. But if you go to Central Park you will see that so many hippies are lying down idle.

Devotee: Unemployment.

Srila Prabhupada: No. Not unemployment! They will not work. That means mismanagement. Why should they remain there? Why should they not have employment? The government is not doing that.

Devotee: They do not feel inspired. No one has desire.

Srila Prabhupada: That means mismanagement. You had no desire to take to Krsna consciousness but you have taken to it somehow or other. That is management. Yes, that is management.

Devotees: Jai, Srila Prabhupada! All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

Srila Prabhupada: The child does not want to go to school but it is the duty of the parent to send him to school somehow or other. So the government's duty is that a man should be employed according to his capacity. There should be no unemployment; that is a very dangerous position of the society. Now this unemployment question is very strong all over the world. They say, "This government is not good." And he'll do nothing; he'll personally do nothing.

Just like the hippies—they criticize everyone but they'll not do anything. All these descriptions are there in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Can the government utilize this land? Everywhere you will find land, everywhere. Who was with me in London?

Hamsadutta: Last time I was with you.

Srila Prabhupada: So much land lying vacant.

Hamsadutta: Yes, so much land.

Srila Prabhupada: They have taken into consideration, "What is the use of working with the land? We can kill one animal and eat it." Easy, because he doesn't care about sinful activities. "If I can eat the cow, why should I take so much trouble to till?" This is going on all over the world.

Indian Devotee: Government nowadays simply gets money and does not work.

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Srila Prabhupada: There is employment even for the women. Gandhi also studied this. Women should be engaged for weaving, spinning. Everyone should be engaged. That is management. So our GBC members must see that in every temple everyone is engaged.

Devotee: That is the meaning of leadership.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, that is the meaning of leadership.

Hrdayananda Goswami: And that all the devotees are protected.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Everyone should be engaged. He'll never fall sick. The farmers, their sons, they're giving up the farming business.

Atreya Rsi: Going to the city.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, going to the city. In your country also?

Atreya Rsi: Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Prabhupada: They have

nothing to do with farming. They are just interested in petrol. If they can get money underground, why should they work? (He is referring to Iran.)

DAY TWO.

Srila Prabhupada: You know that business in your country—topless, bottomless?.

Devotee: Yes.

Srila Prabhupada: They want. That is their regular business. In India also, in the hotels, their regular business is to pick up college girls and they are enjoyed by the guests. So many things are going on, on this basis of sinful activities all over the world. So if the whole population becomes polluted, how can they expect good government? Some of them will take charge of the government but they are polluted. Any carpenter working in the government, they are very pleased to reply that they are maintaining themselves by selling literature. Similarly, if it comes to the notice of the government that we are maintaining ourselves by producing food, they will like it very much.

Bhagavan: The children in the society will go to *gurukula* and from there it will be decided what their work will be?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. First of all there should be instruction on spiritual life according to his position. Our spiritual life is the main thing—we should always remember—but for management we have to make divisions.

Bhagavan: So actually, the whole society could be Vaisnava.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. They are Vaisnava, but because you have to live in the material world there must be division of work. If everyone wants to be the brain, then who will act as legs? That is also required. If everyone says, "I am not going to do the work of legs; I want simply to work as..." No. It is needed! The brain is needed; the hand is needed; the belly is needed; the leg is needed. So that you will have to divide: who will work as brain, who will work as hand, who will work as belly, who will work as leg. The main aim is how to maintain the body perfectly fit. That should be the aim—how the society will go on nicely. And for management, this brain, hand, leg, belly,

must be divided. Just like there is slight difference between those who are directly engaged in temple worship and those who are going out to sell books. Apparently there is difference but basically there is no difference. If one can sell books nicely, why should he be engaged in temple worship? He can do better work in that way. But there is no difference between selling the books and temple worship or washing the dish. There is no difference because it is all transcendental. Just like Krsna's hands and legs, there is no difference. "angani yasya sakalendriya-vrtti-manti." (He quotes from *Brahma-Samhita*).

Madhuvisa Swami: Srila Prabhupada, Krsna says in the *Bhagavad-gita*, "Those who repeat this message of *Bhagavad-gita*, those persons are most dear to Me. There is no one more dear to Me than he." Now, wouldn't that indicate that a preacher is higher than a worker?

Srila Prabhupada: No! This is preaching--to help. Suppose you are preaching and I am helping you. This is also preaching.

Atreya Rsi: This building is also preaching.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, this is also preaching. So it is not that preaching simply means talking. Preaching means everything. Construction is also preaching, designing is also preaching. Everything is preaching. Otherwise what is the use of spending so much money if it is not preaching?

Devotee: Anything that has to do with propagating Krsna consciousness in any way.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, it is also preaching. There are nine examples of devotional service, but it appears that *sravanam*, hearing, is different from *kirtanam*, speaking or chanting. Or *pada sevnam*, or *arcanam*. But they are all perfect. So one should be engaged either in *sravanam*, *kirtanam*, *smaranam*, as he is fit. This is the way. So if I cannot speak, *kirtanam*, then I can hear. This is also perfect. So one may argue that speaking is better than hearing. No. Both ways, either hearing or speaking, they are the same thing because it is for Krsna. "Sravanam kirtanam Visnu." In our society, every work is transcendental, for preaching. every work. But one must be engaged in some work. That

is important. Otherwise every work is preaching. See that everyone is engaged. There was an advertisement by the railroad department. Their monogram was a wheel on the carriage and it is written that every employee of the railway should see that that wheel is running on. Now, suppose in the office the clerks are working. So how they will see that the wheel is going on? Because in the office of the railway there is some complaint. There is some claim. So many things are depending on that wheel. So they should expedite their business so that the wheel will not stop. It must go on. It is very nice instruction that the wheel is going on. Suppose some station has asked for ten wagons immediately and they require the sanction of the division superintendent in the office. So the clerk should help the progress so immediately the sanction is done and the wheel can go on. Do you understand? Everyone can help that the railway wheel is going on, although apparently it will appear that, "What does this clerk have to do with the wheel going on?" Is it clear?

Bhagavan: So there is so much to do in Krsna's service that everyone should be engaged somehow.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, everyone should know. Suppose that one is engaged in cooking *prasadam*. He should see that nice *prasadam* is served to the workers quickly so that they can take *prasadam*, be healthy, and go on preaching. So he's helping preaching by cooking. Just like you are walking and the brain is also working. "Go this side. Go that side. The car is coming." Brain says to the leg, "Come this side." Everyone is working. The leg is working. The brain is working. The hand is working. The tongue is also working. The business of the tongue and business of the leg is different but the aim is the central point in Krsna--to help to serve Him. Then everything is one. It is absolute. The *mayavadi* philosophers, they cannot understand it. They think that Krsna is working like an ordinary man. "How He can become God," they say, "It is *maya* so Krsna is also *maya*." Therefore we call them *mayavadis*.

Bhagavan: The leader must be very expert so people will be happy in their engagement.



Srila Prabhupada: Everyone should be expert. The leader must be expert and the worker must be expert so that he will follow the instruction of the leader. If the leader says something and the worker says, "I'll consider it later on," then how can the leader execute his leadership? Both of them should be cooperating and know that we are all working for Krsna.

Atreya Rsi: Srila Prabhupada, we have so few men compared to other religions but we always make such big propaganda.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, it is admitted. Hare Krsna movement, it is admitted.

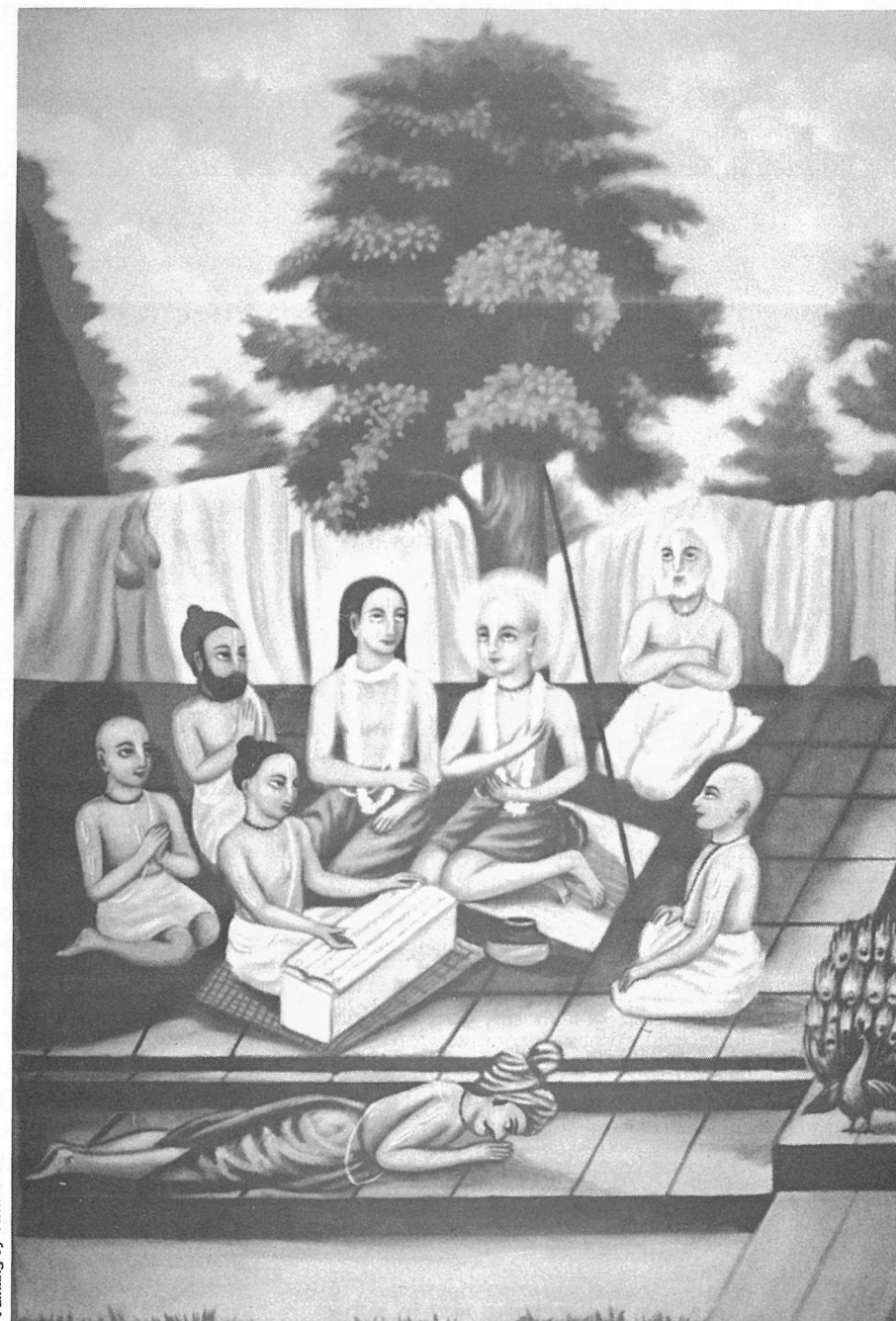
Atreya Rsi: Because we are not lazy like the *mayavadis*.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. They say, "aham brahmasmi. I am now *brahma*, therefore let me stop work, just eat." Make your belly. (Srila Prabhupada exaggerates patting a fat belly and everyone laughs) This is *mayavadi sanjyasis*. They think that, "Now I have become *brahma* I have nothing to do. I've become Narayana." Then why are you eating? And for one chapati you will find that there are many *mayavadis*. They are very busy simply collecting chapatis.

(To be continued)

the VAISNAVA FORUM

Letters from around the world



Painting by Visnu dasa

I feel this is a wonderful project you are committing yourself to (The Vaisnava Journal) and I hope you will get enough support to make it successful.

Atreya Rsi dasa
Berkeley

I think The Vaisnava Journal could provide a forum of non-inflammatory exchange which is most needed at this junction of ISKCON's history, so I'd like to extend to you my strongest hopes for its success.

Suhotra Swami
Heidelberg

I believe it is a great idea to start a Vaisnava Journal, and the New Vrindaban Community would certainly have materials available for contribution.

Sukavak dasa
New Vrindaban

Can We Implement Varnasrama-dharma?

A lecture delivered by Jagadisa Goswami on September 9, 1985 in Vancouver, Canada

Before we begin discussion, I want to read a few things about *varnasrama*. Some time ago I wrote an article for our education newsletter which I am going to read first, entitled "Varnasrama-dharma and ISKCON."

"What did Srila Prabhupada mean when he said in 1977 that only fifty percent of his work was finished? He had written, published, and widely distributed sixty different volumes of Krsna conscious literature in many languages. He had directed his disciples in opening more than one hundred and eight temples. Huge *Rathayatra* festivals were being held in dozens of major cities of the world. The wheels were in motion for making the whole world Krsna conscious. But Srila Prabhupada wasn't yet satisfied because he wanted to introduce *varnasrama-dharma* to facilitate a broad expansion of the Krsna consciousness movement.

Srila Prabhupada, in his early writings, clearly described *varnasrama-dharma* as the perfect social system for organizing human activity and the perfect spiritual system for elevating human beings to Krsna consciousness. He observed, however, that due to the chaos and degradation of these times, *varnasrama-dharma* could not be instituted within contemporary society. He therefore wanted to create a brahminical class of men who would enlighten and guide the other classes. 'Because at the present moment there is a scarcity of *brahmanas*. and *ksatriyas*. and because the entire world is being ruled by *sudras*. there are many discrepancies in society. It is to mitigate all these discrepancies that we

have taken to this Krsna consciousness movement. If the *brahmana* class is actually reestablished, the other orders of social well-being will automatically follow...'

Then, during several morning walks in Vrindaban in the spring of 1974, after the Krsna consciousness movement had expanded dramatically, 'beyond my expectations,' Srila Prabhupada revealed that he wanted to use *varnasrama-dharma* within the Krsna consciousness movement. 'Everywhere, wherever we have a center, a *varnasrama* college should be established to train all divisions.'

Many questions arose. 'Should the devotees in our temples be trained in a particular *varna*?' 'Should we encourage young people to come to our college?' 'Must all the students be devotees?' 'Should our gurukula children, when grown up, go to *varnasrama* college?' 'Could you explain about the training of a *brahmana*?' 'What kind of training is there for a *sudra*?' 'What should *ksatriyas* be taught?' Srila Prabhupada answered these and many other questions during the famous Vrindaban morning walks.

During these walks and in subsequent conversations and writings, Srila Prabhupada cited three basic reasons for using *varnasrama* within ISKCON: (1) to effectively organize our society, (2) to engage the psychophysical propensities of our devotees to keep them happy and advancing in Krsna consciousness, and (3) to construct the house wherein all the people of the world can live peacefully.

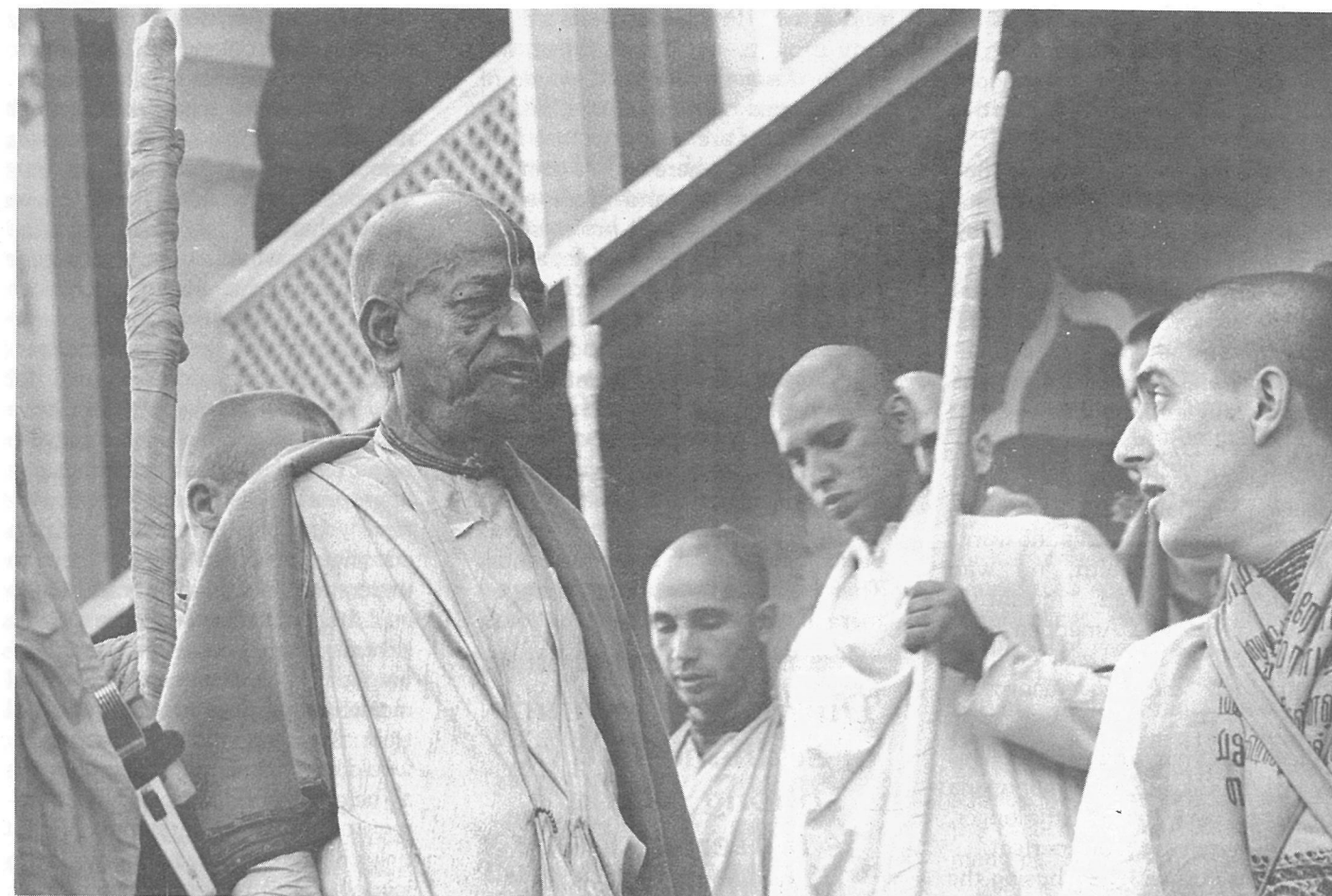
Effective Organization of ISKCON

Srila Prabhupada said that although Vaisnavas are above *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, *vaisya*, and *sudra*, for effective management we should make these divisions. 'For the management of affairs we are required to divide because there are different classes of brains. Those who have very intelligent brains should become *brahmanas*. Those who are fit for management and protection should be trained as *ksatriyas*. Those who are fit for producing food and taking care of the cows should be trained as *vaisyas*. And the balance are all *sudras*. In our society these divisions should be there.'

Because *varnasrama* is Krsna's own social management system, it is the only effective way to organize any society of human beings. Even Krsna Himself, although completely transcendental, is submissive to the *varnasrama* system. 'O son of Prtha, there is no work prescribed for Me within the three worlds. Nor am I in want of anything, nor have I need to obtain anything, but still I perform prescribed duties.'

Keeping Devotees Happy in Krsna Consciousness

One may contend that we don't need *varnasrama-dharma* because we are all Vaisnavas, and Vaisnavas are above even the *brahmanas*. In the *Padma Purana* it is stated, 'One who considers a Vaisnava to belong to a particular caste is possessed of hellish intelligence.' In a discussion with Srila Gurupada and Hari-Sauri Prabhu in



1977, however, Srila Prabhupada said, 'It is not that all are Vaisnavas, because why are the devotees leaving and falling down?' He cited the example of one of his *sannyasi* disciples who had fallen down. 'He should have been engaged in his real order. We have to introduce *varnasrama-dharma*.' Quoting from *Bhagavad-gita*, Eighteenth Chapter, he said, 'Better remain in your position and become perfect.'

Varnasrama-dharma will strengthen and support the Krsna consciousness of the majority of ISKCON's devotees. Undoubtedly, the completely Krsna conscious devotees, unaffected by *maya*'s constant invitation to sense gratification, transcend *varnasrama*. Most devotees, however, even though eager to come to that stage, cannot, as shown by the fact that at least eighty percent of Srila Prabhupada's disciples are no longer active within ISKCON.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura writes, 'During the practice of *sadhana-bhakti*, so long as there is material desire within the heart, one should

remain within the confines of *varnasrama*.' We must provide suitable training and occupational engagements to enable all devotees to make life-long commitments to the Krsna consciousness movement so that they can make steady advancement back to Godhead. *Daiva varnasrama-dharma* allows a devotee to 'cleanse his heart by a gradual process, not abruptly'; working according to his nature but with a 'full sense of Krsna consciousness' as Prabhupada explains in his purport to *Bhagavad-gita* 3.35.

Constructing the House of Peace

The objection may be raised that Lord Caitanya rejected *varnasrama-dharma*. Srila Prabhupada explained, 'Lord Caitanya rejected *varnasrama* as external because He was a *sannyasi* and wanted nothing to do with the material world, but we are different, we want to help the masses by introducing this.'

The most significant feature of this scheme is its external implications. Using his own society of Vaisnavas,

Srila Prabhupada could establish *varnasrama* to offer the whole world the chance for perfection in Krsna consciousness. His transcendental genius discovered how to establish *varnasrama* in this age, despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

In August of 1975, Srila Prabhupada visited the New Talavan farm in Carriere, Mississippi, and, after seeing the land and the opportunities for development, gave instructions on organizing a *varnasrama* community. As he described the benefits that would arise for humanity out of successful implementation of *varnasrama*, he was moved to tears.

In December of 1976, as the car in which Srila Prabhupada was riding pulled away from the Vrindaban temple, he declared in a grave voice, 'Now we are about to embark on a new phase of our movement, *varnasrama-dharma*.' We were on our way to a farm near Hyderabad, which, to Prabhupada's great satisfaction, had finally, after much negotiation, been donated to us by some life members. Once we had arrived, Srila Prabhu-

pada assigned three of his senior disciples (two of whom were GBC men and *sannyasis*) to cooperate to develop a model *varnasrama* community on the seven hundred plus acres of land. Srila Prabhupada was convinced that India's and the world's economic and spiritual problems could be solved by *varnasrama* organization, and he outlined the basic program and objectives to us. He also wrote one of his GBC men describing the plans for the Hyderabad farm and recommending the same program for America.

In August of 1977, Srila Prabhupada, critically ill and unable to walk, insisted on leaving Vrindaban to go to America. Despite many obstacles and warnings about his health, he was completely determined. "I want to organize there. The American boys are so nice. If I make everything strong, then the movement will endure."

A few days later, in England, on his way to America, Srila Prabhupada remarked, 'I want to live a little longer, to make everything more perfect.'

'Will you do this by enthusing the devotees by staying with them,' asked Tamala Krsna Maharaja, 'or is there a specific program?'

'A specific program,' said Srila Prabhupada. 'I want to introduce *varnasrama*.'

There is also a section in one of Prabhupada's *Bhagavatam* purports that I would like to read from the 9th Canto, 10th Chapter. He says that, "The purpose of *varnasrama* is to enable people to become God conscious...to become Vaisnavas through the system of *varna* and *asrama*...As there are schools and colleges to train students to become chemical engineers, lawyers, or specialists in many other departments of knowledge, there must be schools and colleges to train students to become *brahmanas*, *ksatriyas*, *vaisyas*, *sudras*, *brahmacaris*, *grhasthas*, *vanaprasthas* and *sannyasis*...If the process of *varnasrama-dharma* is introduced, even in this age of *Kali*, the situation of *Satya-yuga* can be invoked. The Hare Krsna movement is meant for this purpose."

There are many other quotes also, but I think that is sufficient to give everyone some orientation on the importance of *varnasrama*. This is the

reason why Prabhupada started his farm projects--not just as farms, not just for farmers. We have a kind of undeveloped conception of what the farm projects are all about; that they are just places where we are going to have some cows and grow some vegetables. The farm projects are actually *varnasrama* projects, and in order to have a *varnasrama* community you need some land. So, farming is only one aspect of what will go on in a fully developed, self-sufficient *varnasrama* community. Many other activities will also go on there.

There will be *brahmacaris* there. There will be *sannyasis* there. There will be a gorgeous temple. There will be lots of farming and cow protection. There will be education going on there. It will be like a village, or a town,

'During the practice of sadhana-bhakti, so long as there is material desire within the heart, one should remain within the confines of varnasrama.'

— Bhaktivinoda Thakura

or a city, where everything that normally goes on in one of those places goes on. So, to get from where we are now to that eventual goal is quite a long distance. It is not going to happen automatically. As money does not grow on trees, similarly, *varnasrama* does not develop overnight just by some good rains. It will develop only when we put our brains together, and our energy together, and do it in the service of Krsna and Srila Prabhupada, as it is Their desire.

We can discuss for a few minutes the vision of what such a community would be like. There would be a temple in the centre of the community; or if not in the physical center, at least it would be the center for all the devotees for worshipping the supreme master of the community, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The temple would be staffed, of

course, by *brahmanas* doing the Deity worship and cooking for the Deities, perhaps cooking for the community. There would be a *gurukula*, either nearby the temple or somewhere in the community. Perhaps the academic division would be housed in one place where all the children in the community would come together for appropriate education. The children would live in *asramas* with *brahmanas* as *asrama* teachers. And perhaps, as our devotees mature, not only would our *asrama* teachers be *asrama* teachers, but they would also be *gurus* initiating their students at the appropriate time; training them, personally guiding them in their Krsna consciousness, and helping them to understand everything about how to lead a spiritual life. So, there may be several *gurus* living within the community; the *brahmanas* who would maintain the *gurukula asramas* and train the new students. Each *guru* would have as many disciples or pupils as he could handle properly (according to mutual understanding). Not only children, but the newcomers who join our movement may also need to be in a *brahmacari asrama*.

*brahmacari guru-kule
vasan danto guror hitam
acaran dasavan nico
gurau sudrdha-sauhrdah*
(S.B. 7.12.1)

This is the statement of Narada Muni that a *brahmacari* should live in a *gurukula* under the guidance of his spiritual master. That would be the *brahmana* department; carrying on the education, the Deity worship, the preaching, and so on in the community. They would hold regular classes; not just ordinary classes, but regular methodical classes, even in the temple. The *Bhagavatam* class in the morning and the *Bhagavad-gita* class in the evening would be a careful, methodical presentation given by learned and studied *brahmanas* and scholars who were enlightening and enlivening the whole community in their Krsna consciousness. Of course, as we understand it, the brahminical community would be the most important part of the community, because the spiritual life of the community depends on the qualification of the

brahmana members of the community.

Besides the *brahmana* community there would be the *ksatriyas*. These are the managers who would administer the affairs, protecting the community from unwanted influences and from all kinds of legal problems. Eventually we may have our own incorporated township, our sheriff's department, and our mayor. (I don't know if that is what we will call him.) So, we will have our *ksatriya* department, protecting and maintaining the citizens, seeing that people are following properly under the guidance of the brahminical community. There will probably be some specific *brahmanas* who are trained in political science who would dispassionately advise the administrators. From their position of detachment, these *brahmanas* would instruct how to govern the society, and how to insure that people are happy and peaceful in their execution of Krsna consciousness.

The *vaisya* community would take care of the cows and produce food and clothing from the land. They would provide the basic necessities of life for everyone.

The *sudra* community would assist by working in the fields or at some skilled trade. They would build and maintain the structures such as the temple and other important buildings in the community. They would also produce brass items and other kinds of metal goods useful to the community. Many other skills and trades would be needed; blacksmithing, goldsmithing, silversmithing and cloth weaving, for example.

Prabhupada assured us that if all the divisions of society cooperate together in harmony with each other, then we will have everything we need to live peacefully. We won't have to depend on the deteriorating, demonic civilization. This was his vision. This is like the Phoenix rising from the ashes in the Egyptian legend. The civilization in which we now live is burning to ashes; maybe not literally, but figuratively it is burning to ashes because of the sinful activities...the unlimited sinful activities that are going on within it. And because by its very nature it fosters and encourages sinful activities, it is doomed. The combined reaction to

all the sinful activities have already doomed it.

Many times Prabhupada would challenge us if we were convinced that this is a misdirected civilization. Many or most of the devotees have not understood that it is a misdirected civilization and that there is nothing to gain from it; from watching television, from going to movies, from listening to music. These things have no benefit for us, but we are not convinced. We must be convinced; not only for our own spiritual well-being, but for the sake of the great task that lies ahead in trying to build this alternative civilization. No one can do it alone. It is going to take a group effort--cooperation. I am also convinced that it will have to be with the combined participation of Prabhupada's disciples who are the

Prabhupada assured us that if all the divisions of society cooperate together in harmony with each other, then we have everything we need to live peacefully.

senior members of this movement. Even if some of them are a little bit out of the center of the movement, as long as they are serious about serving Prabhupada and want to maintain a spiritual standard in their lives, then they should be welcomed to cooperate with us. One person can't do it; even two or three people can't do it. But our cooperative energies, applied together, will make it successful. After all, it is for a community. We have seen farm projects begun in ISKCON, develop to a certain point, then more or less level off--not as *varnasrama* communities really, but more like farms. And in some cases, they are completely dependent on collections from outside, without much going on other than just some mechanical farming. Some of our farm projects have actually stagnated; some have had to

be sold because that overall group cooperation was not there. It was left up to a couple of devotees to try and develop it. But what were they going to develop? Just the land? Grow some vegetables and some grains, or take care of a few cows? What is to be developed? We can only do so much from the land. It is not just land that has to be developed--it is the community that has to be developed.

The community means persons. Those persons are us. You are not going to grow them on farms. The community will not be made of new devotees because most of them are immediately sent out on *sankirtana* or some kind of collecting activities. So, the farms often end up being staffed by people who can't be engaged in any other place. Nobody quite understands what they are all about. Some of the leaders are saying, "I don't understand why Prabhupada wanted these farms. They just take away from the preaching." But actually, they are supposed to be a tremendous asset to the preaching because in the future many people will want shelter.

Even now people want shelter from the materialistic civilization. Where can they go? There is no place that offers an alternative. It is our duty to provide some alternative. People are impressed by our philosophy. It is a most wonderful philosophy. But we have to demonstrate how to apply this philosophy by building an alternative lifestyle which is self-sufficient and fully satisfying in all respects. Otherwise, people (including our devotees and their children) will have a hard time understanding the practical value of our philosophy because it is a non-materialistic philosophy.

But the civilization around us is completely materialistic. We have to establish a non-materialistic civilization. The Vedic civilization is non-materialistic. It is completely based on self-realization, advancement in spiritual life, and going back to Godhead. That's all.

Everyone within the Vedic culture was engaged in that way. There were no cars, no airplanes (as we know them), no factories. People lived very simply. The farmers took care of the land and cows. The *ksatriyas* managed, maintaining everything in a good

state. The *brahmanas* lived very simply in small cottages; teaching, taking care of the Deity worship, and preaching. All these other things; this ratrace, hellbent civilization just didn't exist.

But now there is no alternative. If we can provide an alternative, that is the most wonderful preaching. Then people who have read Prabhupada's books will have someplace to go and live a Krsna conscious lifestyle. That should be our aim in establishing this *varnasrama* community.

Now, the logistics, the practical details of how to do it are quite complex. When we think of what we have now and what I described as a potential future, we can see that there are thousands of steps in between. And where do we begin?

We have had some discussions over the last couple of weeks; Bahudak Prabhu, Dharmarupa, and some of the other leaders here in the community. We have discussed how we can implement this plan. Of course, we will put it up for discussion, but let me just tell you about some of the ideas we have.

We know that there are different interest groups amongst the devotees here. There are the *brahmacaris*. There are the *grhasthas* and other devotees who live in the temple doing service. There are the administrators of the temple. There are the money-earners; devotees who are earning their own money and living off the property in most cases. There are also those who are working for the temple, performing some kind of maintenance task, etc. Some are even receiving a salary from the temple in exchange for services rendered.

We know that these different interest groups all have their own angle of vision on how things should be developed. I have also noticed in my discussions with devotees around the movement that everyone wants to be sure that his interests are being protected in the cooperative push towards developing *varnasrama*. I find there is some trepidation and fear. For example, if one group is too strong, or if things are done too much in one way, then another group will feel completely unprotected and insecure. Then they won't wish to partici-

pate in the development. Unless it is voluntary, there is no question.

That is something which is becoming more obvious to the leading devotees in our society; that Krsna consciousness is a completely voluntary thing. There is a need of changing the authority structure so that the voluntary aspect is made to bloom. For example, in Russia and other communist countries, the state owns everything. The people have to work for the state, and therefore their work is not very productive. Russia is a huge country. It is bigger than the United States. I think it is the largest land area in the world, and yet every year they have a shortage of wheat because the people are just not inspired. There is no initiative because it is not a voluntary thing.

So, we don't want to establish a communistic society. There is variety

It is a most wonderful philosophy. But we have to demonstrate how to apply this philosophy by building an alternative lifestyle which is self-sufficient and fully satisfying in all respects.

within the *varnasrama* system. For the *brahmanas* there is a kind of anarchy. In other words, the *brahmanas* don't really come under the authority of anyone, unless they start misbehaving. But as long as the *brahmanas* are righteous and following strictly, they are not under anyone's authority. For the *ksatriyas* there is monarchy. They are ruling and controlling the citizens in an authoritarian way, but tempered by the counsel of learned philosophers of the society. For the *vaisyas* there is capitalism. They are not told what to do, but they take responsibility for developing a section of land. Of course, there are some restrictions governing them; they are taxed by the government, but

free enterprise is encouraged. For the *sudra* there is a kind of communism. They work according to their abilities, and they receive according to their needs.

So different kinds of persons require different kinds of protection. The *vaisyas* require capitalistic arrangements so that they feel encouraged to do their service. The *sudras* require that kind of communistic protection from the government. And the *brahmanas* need to have that freedom from authority in order to feel encouraged. Therefore, to get things started properly, all the groups need representation and organization. So we thought that we should probably form what we call a *Varnasrama* Council, with representation from all the different groups. The council will meet regularly and discuss plans on how to begin development.

First of all, we have to decide how we are going to raise money for finalizing the purchase of the farm so that we don't have to worry about the overhead payments.* How are we going to divide up the land for agricultural and residential purposes? Where should the temple be? Where should the *gurukula* be? How soon can people start moving up there? What will they do when they get there? How soon should the *gurukula* move up there? What sort of facilities should be provided? And so on.

Many decisions have to be made. We want to make those decisions with everyone feeling secure that they are being made with their own interests at heart. Then they can move there with confidence; or they can participate in the gradual development of the project with confidence that their needs will be met, and that they will be fully satisfied in their engagement, maintenance, and so on.

I should also point out that although some devotees are afraid to be designated as a *sudra*, or a this or that, there is nothing to be worried about as long as we keep everything Krsna conscious and on the Vaisnava platform. Originally, I thought we could call this council the Vaisnava Council because there would be representatives from

**(Note: The farm mentioned here is the Saranagati Vedic Farm Community near Ashcroft, B.C.)*

each group who would be the leaders of that group. We could call it by that name, but we thought that may be a little presumptuous for people to sit on the Vaisnava Council, considering themselves Vaisnavas. Therefore, we decided to call it the *Varnasrama* Council. The idea would be that the leading devotees from the different groups would represent their group in setting the direction for the project. So, with that Vaisnava vision, people would be protected from the caste-consciousness that destroyed the *varnasrama* system in India.

No doubt, if we successfully revive *varnasrama* again, it will be destroyed after some time—at least after 10,000 years. We can rest assured. But it is Krsna's system, and it is a wonderful system. It should be employed in Krsna's service as long as possible.

We can look at it in this way; just as if we were going to put on a drama. Let's say we are going to put on a drama—Hamlet. Someone is going to play Hamlet, and someone is going to play Ophelia. Someone is going to play Hamlet's mother, and someone is going to play Polonius. Nobody thinks he is Polonius. Nobody thinks he is Hamlet. But for the purpose of the

drama, people take on different roles within the drama, so that the drama comes off effectively to the audience.

Similarly, this is the purpose of *varnasrama*. Krsna followed it. When He met Maharaj Yudhisthira, He bowed down and offered His obeisances because Maharaj Yudhisthira was His elder cousin. He played the role of a *ksatriya*. He played the role of a chariot driver and a messenger as His prescribed duty. Similarly, we can also play these roles in society without any qualms, as long as we remain Krsna conscious and there is a Krsna conscious basis for the community. Playing these different roles will fulfill the function of creating a successful human society. When everyone within the drama takes his role very seriously and plays it perfectly, the drama is a success.

So, we talked about dividing ourselves into these groups. Let us have some discussion about this to alleviate people's doubts, or maybe change the idea. We printed up some lists of all the devotees, putting them in different categories or headings. This more or less goes along *varnasrama* lines, although we haven't specifically designated it in that way because we felt it

When everyone within the drama takes his role very seriously and plays it perfectly, the drama is a success.

was a little premature. For example, perhaps all the temple *grhasthas* or temple devotees are not actually *brahmanas*. They are more or less living like *brahmanas*, but for the time being let us just say that they are temple devotees. They are living in the temple community, supported by the temple, and are doing some temple service.

Then there are the *bramacaris* who are doing their service, which is mostly *sankirtana*. And a few of them are staying here doing service in the temple.

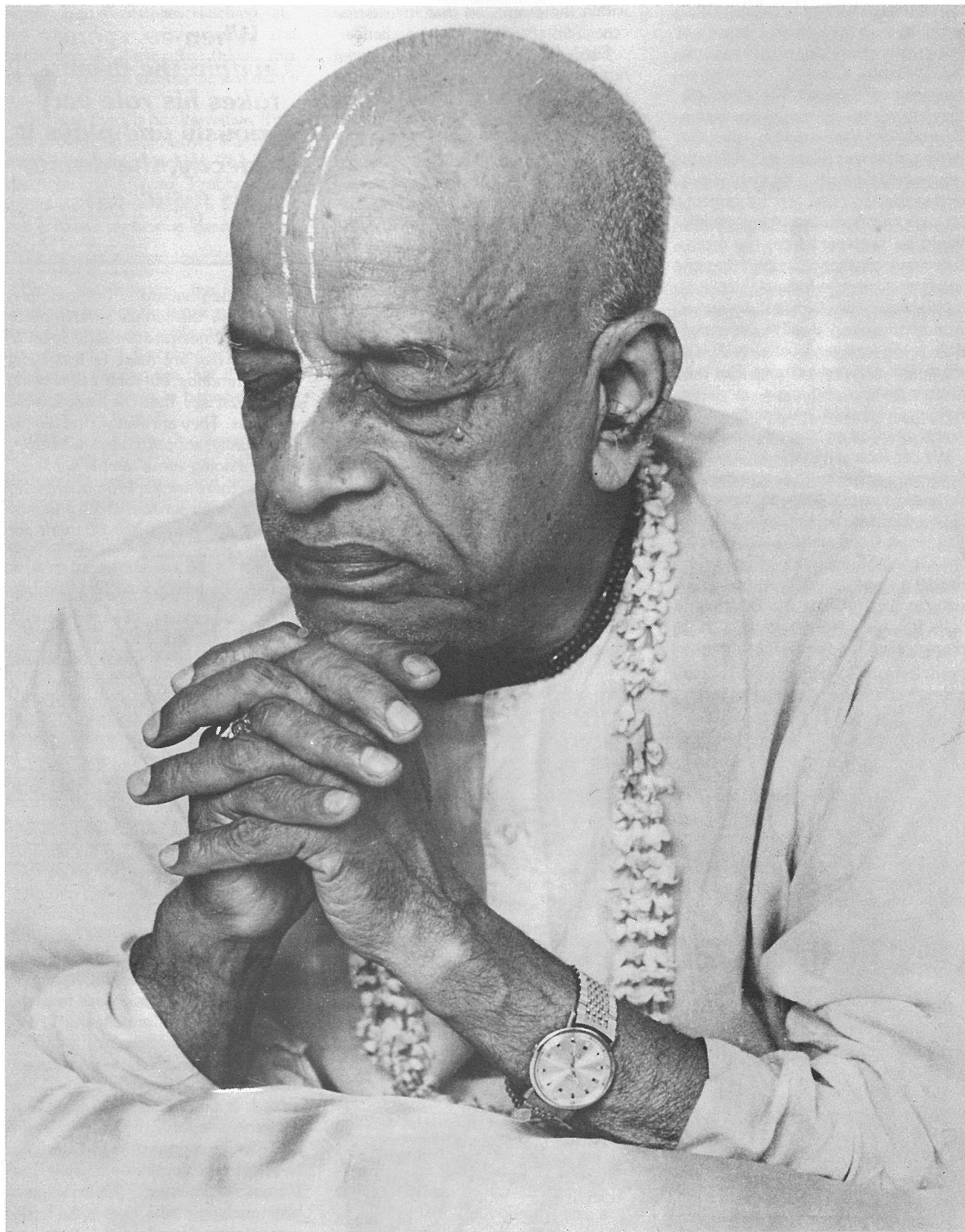
We grouped the single ladies in different categories. There weren't enough single ladies to make a separate category, but we tried to see where they would fit most appropriately under the headings that we had. The money-earners may not all be *vaisyas*. But for the time being, because they are all in a similar type of situation, we thought we would make that one division.

Eventually, the groups will probably conform more directly to the *varnasrama* divisions. But for now, we observed what divisions had naturally developed within the temple community and tried to split the devotees up on that basis. Some groups are larger, therefore more representatives could be chosen from those groups to sit on the *Varnasrama* Council.

If this idea is accepted, then the devotees can check the lists and see if they agree with where they have been placed. If they want to change to a different category, then they can do that. These various groups can meet to select representatives to sit on the *Varnasrama* Council. Then we can begin making plans. That is the basic presentation. Now let us discuss.

(To be continued)





ISKCON AND VARNASRAMA — A Re-Examination

by Suhotra Swami

Part 1: Relating *Varnasrama* to Devotional Service According to Nectar of Devotion.

According to Srila Prabhupada, "Nectar of Devotion is the lawbook of ISKCON." The question of the structural adaptation of ISKCON to the principles of *varnasrama* should be carefully scrutinized in the light of Srila Rupa Goswami's directives in this book. The purpose of this part of my essay is to re-emphasize key principles given in N.O.D. that should always be kept in mind regarding Vaisnavism's relationship to *varnasrama*. As will be readily seen, N.O.D., while not denying the efficacy of that relationship, always maintains a certain perspective that should likewise always be maintained in ISKCON.

That devotional service to Krsna can be rendered within the *varnasrama* structure is doubtless, since *varnasrama-dharma* is created from the universal body of Lord Visnu. Thus the goals of both devotional service and *varnasrama-dharma* are in one sense complimentary, because both oblige one to remember Visnu (see N.O.D. ch. 2, pg. 24-27).

The ultimate perfection of *varnasrama-dharma* is that it brings the performer to Krsna; *varnasrama* is "recommended in the revealed scriptures only to bring one to the point of Krsna consciousness" (ch. 12,

pg. 112). Moreover, "Under the prescribed duties of *varna* and *asrama* there are many activities which belong to devotional service in Krsna consciousness"... "When householder devotees perform some Vedic ritualistic duties, they do so to satisfy Krsna"... "any activity aiming at satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead is considered devotional service" (ch. 11, pg. 95-96).

Therefore, "those who are attached to ritualistic activities, the four orders of social life and the four orders of spiritual life, are considered devotees," although "...not actually pure devotees. But still, because they are offering the result to the Lord, they are accepted as devotees" (ibid.).

Now, though devotional service and *varnasrama-dharma* are complimentary, there are also important differences directly related to structure. The structural function of *varnasrama* is not devotional service, as the structural elements are material, leading to material ends: "...the prescribed forms of *varna* and *asrama* are ritualistic ceremonies of religion intended for economic development, sense gratification or salvation." This important observation on *varnasrama* is reiterated by Srila Prabhupada in a *Srimad-Bhagavatam* purport: "The four *asramas* and four *varnas* act for some benefit in accordance with their personal interests. Therefore such

activities are in the mode of goodness; they cannot be counted in the category of pure devotion" (S.B. 3.29.20, purport). Therefore, as clearly indicated on page 96 of N.O.D., neophytes lose interest in the stereotyped activities of *varnasrama* in proportion to their devotion. In simultaneous proportion to their attraction to sense gratification, the results of material activities should be offered to Krsna via the *varnasrama* structure. Simply by following *varnasrama-dharma* alone one cannot rise to the perfections attained by practicing devotional service (ch. 13, pg. 111).

Therefore, though the structure of *varnasrama-dharma* may be utilized by devotees for getting themselves properly situated in the material nature and somewhat purified of material contamination, that structure should not obscure the essential principle of devotional service, which is described on page 29 of N.O.D. as being "a little bit of attraction for Sri Krsna" though "one may remain very much attached to fruitive activities and material sense enjoyment and not be prepared to undergo the different types of renunciation." This attraction to Krsna, it is furthermore explained here, is nurtured, through good fortune, by association with great souls one-hundred-percent in the devotional service of the Lord. In this connection, Srila Prabhupada writes,

(continued on page 28)

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The Spiritual March of the Soul

by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura



Alas, for those who spend their days
In festive mirth and joy;
The dazzling, deadly, liquid forms
Their hearts fore'er employ.

The shining bottles charm their eyes
And draw their heart's embrace;
The slaves of wine can never rise
From what we call disgrace.

Was man intended to be
A brute in work and heart?
Should man, the Lord of all around,
From common sense depart?

Man's glory is in common sense
Dictating us the grace,
That man is made to live and love
The beautiful Heaven's embrace.

The flesh is not our own alas,
The mortal frame a chain;
The soul confined for former wrongs
Should try to rise again.

Why then this childish play in that
Which cannot be our own;
Which falls within a hundred years
As if a rose ablown.

Our life is but a rosy hue
To go ere long for naught;
The soul alone would last fore'er
With good or evil fraught.

How deep the thought of times to be!
How grave the aspect looks!
And wrapt in awe become, O, we,
When reading Nature's books.

Man's life to him a problem dark,
A screen both left and right;
No soul hath come to tell us what
Exists beyond our sight.

But then a voice, how deep and soft
Within ourselves is felt,
Man! Man! Thou art immortal soul!
Thee Death can never melt.

For thee thy Sire on High has kept
A store of bliss above,
To end of time, thou art Oh! His--
Who wants but purest love.

O Love! Thy power and spell benign
Now melt my soul to God;
How can my earthly words describe
That feeling soft and broad.

Enjoyment, sorrow--what but lots
To which the flesh is heir?
The soul that sleeps alone concludes
In them it hath a share.

And then, my friends, no more enjoy
Nor weep for all below;
The women, wine, and flesh of beasts
No love on thee bestow.

But thine to love thy brother man
And gives thyself to God,
And God doth know your wages fair--
This fact is true and broad.

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

But tell me not in reasoning cold
The soul is made alone,
By Earth's mechanic lifeless rules
And to destruction prone.

My God who gave us life and all
Alone the soul can kill,
Or give it all the joys above
His promise to fulfill.

So push thy onward march, O soul,
Against an evil deed,
That stands with soldiers Hate and Lust--
A hero be indeed.

Maintain thy post in spirit world
As firmly as you can,
Let never matter push thee down--
O stand heroic man.

O Saragrahi Vaisnava soul,
Thou art an angel fair;
Lead, lead me on to Vrindaban
And spirit's power declare.

There rests my soul from matter free
Upon my Lover's arms--
Eternal peace and spirits love
Are all my chanting charms.

Elevation to Goodness

by Bhurijana dasa

(Note: The following essay was written for gurukula teachers, but is equally applicable to all devotees.)

Teachers wishing success in their service must cultivate the mode of goodness. But wait a minute! Am I hearing protests from hard pressed devotees sincerely striving to serve their Lord with a passion? Are they not crying out from the distance that there's no need for goodness? Are they not emphatically stating that devotees are transcendental to the three modes of material nature? Srila Prabhupada once addressed this very question after a Sunday feast lecture at 26 Second Avenue.

Prabhupada had finished speaking, and I raised my hand and spoke my first words to my spiritual master. They were not submissive. "Swamiji, in your lecture, you said that devotees were in the mode of goodness. But I thought that devotees were transcendental to the mode of goodness." Although I had no concept or care for either goodness or transcending goodness, I was foolishly seeking a contradiction. Prabhupada gently replied, "Yes, devotees are transcendental to the mode of goodness, but generally, they act in the mode of goodness." To understand the ramifications of this statement, we must first consider the position of all conditioned souls within the material world.

According to the purport of *Bhagavad-gita* 18.60: "If one refuses to act under the direction of the Supreme Lord, then he is compelled to act by the modes in which he is situated. Everyone is under the spell of a particular combination of the modes of nature." Contrarily, a pure devotee, one who is continuously engaged in the Lord's service, does not fall under the control of the three modes of material nature.

*mam ca yo 'uyabicarena
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa gunan samatityaitan
brahma-bhuyaya kalpate*

"One who engages in full devotional service, unfailing in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature..."

(BG 14.26)

Most devotees, however, are neither completely controlled by the modes of material nature, nor are they completely transcendental, serving the Lord in all circumstances. These devotees are considered transcendental by the mercy of the spiritual master who offers their mixed service through the disciplic succession to Krsna. But because a devotee is transcendental due to his sincerely serving his spiritual master does not mean that simply because he has performed an act, it is transcendental. That an immature Vaisnava transcendentalist is sometimes adversely infected by the control of the modes of material nature was confirmed by Prabhupada within a 1976 Vrindaban conversation. "Vaisnava is not so easy, or why are they falling down?"

In the purport to *Bhagavad-gita* 2.45, Prabhupada states: "As long as the material body exists, there are actions and reactions in the material modes. One has to learn tolerance... This transcendental position is achieved in full Krsna consciousness when one is fully dependent on the good will of Krsna." As tiny spirit souls, we are eternally *prakrti*, and are always controlled—either by Krsna or by *maya*'s agents, the three modes of material nature. "*Krsna surya sama, maya haya andhakara* -- Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience." As the current near the banks

of a river is stronger than the current at the river's middle, *maya*, through the modes of material nature, acts stronger on those souls who are seeking to escape from the midst of the rushing river of material life. Therefore, it is in those dark periods of non-surrender, when we are controlled by the modes of material nature, that our position is precarious.

"O son of Bharata, the mode of goodness conditions one to happiness; passion conditions one to fruitive activities; and ignorance, covering one's knowledge, binds one to madness."

(BG.14.9)

Thus due to the strong dictations of the modes, an impure soul acquiesces to the demands of goodness, passion, and ignorance, and neglects his own true desire of loving devotional service to Krsna. Although all three modes are binding, the modes of passion and ignorance bind tighter. They fill us with intense desires, foolishness, and improper discriminations. The *Bhagavad-gita* confirms this when describing the understandings caused by each of the modes of nature:

"O son of Prtha, that understanding by which one knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating, is in the mode of goodness.

O son of Prtha, that understanding which cannot distinguish between religion and irreligion, between action that should be done and action that should not be done, is in the mode of passion.

That understanding which considers irreligion to be religion and religion to be irreligion, under the spell of illusion and darkness, and strives always in the wrong direction, O Partha, is in the mode of ignorance."

(BG 18.30-32)

Although we, as devotees, are certainly performing devotional service, we tend to stir into the brew of our devotional service the pinches of passion and/or dashes of ignorance left over from our conditioning. History has even shown that the entire transcendental process coming down through the previous *acaryas* can be neglected for the dictates of the modes of nature. We should, therefore, guard against this happening to us by seriously taking to the process of Krsna consciousness, as well as by guarding against passion and ignorance being active within our own consciousness. If we examine the qualities of passion and ignorance mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gita*, it is easy to see why they should be avoided.

Passion: great attachment, fruitive activity, intense endeavor, uncontrolled desire and hankering, never satisfied with one's position, family attachment, greed, desire for honor, performance of sacrifices to gain respect and honor, and speculative tendencies.

Ignorance: whimsy, purposelessness, inactivity, madness, foolishness, misery, distress, intoxication, illusion, excessive sleep, degradation, laziness, renunciation of activities meant for spiritual welfare, and the seeking of happiness without considering its effects on one's self-realization.

Discerning passionate and ignorant qualities from true devotion is as important for a devotee as it is for a gardener to discern the flowering creeper from the weed. Lack of discrimination may find a devotee nurturing only luxuriant weeds of *karma* and *jnana* rather than the true creeper of devotional service:

"Sometimes unwanted creepers, such as the creeper of desires for material enjoyment and liberation from the material world, grow along with the creeper of devotional service. The varieties of such unwanted creepers are unlimited... If one does not distinguish between the *bhakti-lata* creeper and the other creepers, the sprinkling of water is misused because the other creepers are nourished while the *bhakti-lata* creeper is curtailed. As soon as an intelligent devotee sees an unwanted creeper growing beside the original creeper, he must cut it down instantly. Then the real

creeper of *bhakti-lata bija* (devotional service) grows nicely, returns home, back to Godhead, and seeks shelter under the lotus feet of Krsna. Purport: If one is misled by unwanted creepers and is victimized, he cannot make progress back to Godhead. Rather, he remains within the material world and engages in activities having nothing to do with pure devotional service. Such a person may be elevated to the higher planetary systems, but because he remains within the material world, he is subject to the three-fold material miseries."

(Cc. *Madhya Lila*, Ch. 19, Texts 158, 160-161)

By strictly practicing the rules and regulations of *sadhana-bhakti*, all the good qualities of a devotee will automatically develop. But if we allow the weeds of *maya* to grow along with our devotional service, the proper growth of the *bhakti-lata* will not take place.

As soon as an intelligent devotee sees an unwanted creeper growing beside the original creeper, he must cut it down instantly.

Therefore, the weed-like tendencies caused by the conditionings of passion and ignorance should be uprooted, and one should strictly adhere to the process of Krsna consciousness while acting in the mode of goodness:

"One should be serious about his human life and take to the mode of goodness and in good association transcend the modes and become situated in Krsna consciousness. That is the aim of human life."

(BG 14.15 purport)

Having examined the qualities born of passion and ignorance, it is easy to see how these modes, if embedded within our devotional service, are a disturbance. Krsna always directs his pure devotee, but because that pure devotee is not disturbed by the intense

desires of passion or the foolish dullness of ignorance, he can neglect the modes and surrender to Krsna's promptings. As long as the interplay of passion and ignorance interferes with our devotional service, our surrender will be incomplete. Therefore, as Prabhupada said at 26 Second Avenue, devotees "generally...act in the mode of goodness." The purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.2.19 confirms the necessity of the mode of goodness being the general consciousness of the devotee:

"The effect of devotional service becomes manifest by complete elimination of these effects of passion and ignorance."

The same point is also confirmed in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.1.20:

"This attainment of success (perfection in human life) is possible when one is above the modes of passion and ignorance, or, in other words, when one is actually a *brahmana* by qualification. A *brahmana* is the symbol of *sattva-guna*, or the mode of goodness... The brahminical stage is the highest stage of human life because of its good qualities. So one cannot be a devotee unless one is at least qualified as a *brahmana*."

And again in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.4.24:

"The subject matter (of the Vedas) is understood by persons with exceptional qualities of goodness. Persons who are in the modes of passion and ignorance are unable to understand the subject matter of the Vedas."

And yet again in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.6.21:

"The beginning of devotional service starts from the point when one is freed from at least two forms of material modes, namely the mode of passion and the mode of ignorance."

And the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2.7.39 states:

"...one who develops the mode of goodness under the protection of Lord Visnu has the greatest chance of being liberated by following the Vaisnava principles and thus being promoted to the kingdom of God, no more to return to this miserable material world."

But it is not that contaminations by passion and ignorance disqualify us from rendering devotional service, but

Thus goodness, while being rejected as an end in itself, should be embraced by devotees as a jumping off point for pure devotional service.

rather, the expert spiritual master deals with them in such a way that we become elevated to goodness. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.2.24 states:

“(Of the modes), goodness is the best because by the mode of goodness one can come to realize the Absolute Truth. Purport...As explained above, one can get release from the conditioned life of material existence by devotional service to the Personality of Godhead. It is further comprehended herein that one has to rise to the platform of the mode of goodness (*sattva*) so that one can be eligible for the devotional service of the Lord. But if there are impediments on the progressive path, anyone, even from the platform of *tamas*, can gradually rise to the *sattva* platform by the expert direction of the spiritual master.”

And in the purport to BG 17.2:

“But this nature (the nature as acquired by his association with the three modes of nature) can be changed if one associates with a bona fide spiritual master and abides by his rules and the scriptures. Gradually, one may change his position from ignorance to goodness, or from passion to goodness ... One has to consider things carefully with intelligence, in the association of a bona fide spiritual master. Thus one can change his position to a higher mode of nature.”

Thus, through serving Krsna through the spiritual master, the disciple's consciousness gradually becomes elevated from ignorance to passion to goodness.

However, if we are teachers in the *gurukula*, and our service is to deal with impressionable, young Vaisnavas, we must quickly develop our consciousness to the point of goodness. Krsna conscious teaching is simply not for the struggling devotee.

“The teachers should be fixed-up, initiated devotees, otherwise, how will the children get the right information and example.” (Letter from Prabhupada dated Feb. 16, 1972)

“Teach the qualities of a *brahmana* mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gita*. These qualities will naturally develop if you give the process purely. The information is in my books. If you strictly adhere to my instructions there, then your program of teaching will be successful.” (Letter from Prabhupada dated Aug. 19, 1974)

“Example is better than precept.” If teachers are in passion or ignorance, the children will get the wrong idea about Krsna consciousness. For example, a central principle of *gurukula* training is obedience. Srila Prabhupada states in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3.12.20, “...unless the student is obedient, it is sure that the so-called *brahmacari* will fall prey to the attack of sex.” While the boy is young and in the *gurukula*, he learns to defer his mind's dictates to the instructions of the spiritual master or teacher. When the student turns sixteen, his relationship with his teacher changes, and he is given more independence. But until his sixteenth year, the student must be afraid to disobey his teacher in the same way, that when he is older, he must be afraid to disobey his trained intelligence which discriminates according to *sastra* and *guru*. Thus, while the student is young, the teacher takes the place of the student's immature intelligence. This is the transcendental system. Imagine the unfortunate result if that person to whom the child must surrender is not transparently giving Krsna. If the teacher adulterates the Krsna conscious process with his own whimsical speculations, how will the child receive bonafide instructions? If the teacher tends towards greed, ambition, foolishness, distress, illusion, or laziness, and if he seeks pleasures combining the senses with their objects, where will the child see the example of satisfaction with pure,

simple, austere, Krsna conscious life? A perceptive child may even find himself thinking, “My teacher demands controlled behavior from me but doesn't behave in a controlled way himself.” Thus even a good child can lose faith and become cynical.

Considering our great responsibility in dealing with the future preachers of ISKCON, we teachers should maintain ourselves in the mode of goodness and strictly adhere to the transcendental *gurukula* system coming down through Srila Prabhupada's instructions. We should not become bewildered and think, “There's no necessity for me to act in goodness; I'm transcendental.” Instead, we should recognize goodness as the desirable “general” consciousness in which to serve. We should cultivate the mode of goodness by strictly following the principles of *sadhana-bhakti*, regularly reading Prabhupada's books (*srnavatam sua katha krsna, punya sravana kirtanah*), and weeding out remnants of unwanted passionate and ignorant desires. We should also keep in mind that Srila Prabhupada, rather than denegrating goodness as “just a material quality,” often equated goodness directly with Krsna consciousness:

“The intelligent renouncer, situated in the mode of goodness, neither hateful of inauspicious work nor attached to auspicious work, has no doubts about work. Purport: A person in Krsna consciousness or the mode of goodness does not hate anyone or anything which troubles his body. He does work in the proper place and at the proper time without fearing the troublesome effects of his duty. Such a person situated in transcendence should be understood to be most intelligent and beyond all doubts in his activities.

(BG 18.10)

One who performs his duty without association with the modes of material nature, without false ego, with great determination and enthusiasm, and without wavering in success or failure is said to be a worker in the mode of goodness. Purport: A Krsna conscious worker is detached from the results of his work, and he is always enthusiastic until the completion of such work. He does not worry about the distress undertaken: He is always

enthusiastic. He does not care for success or failure; he is equal in both distress and happiness. Such a worker is situated in the mode of goodness.

(BG 18.26)

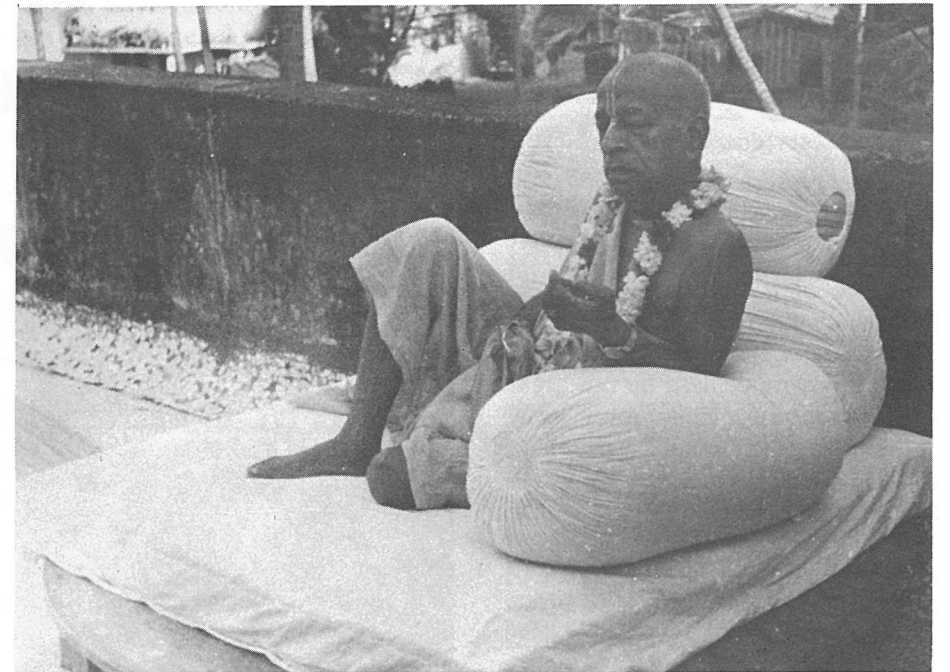
That determination which is unbreakable, which is sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice, and which thus controls the activities of the mind, life and senses is determination in the mode of goodness. Purport: One who is steadily fixed in the Supreme Soul with determination, concentrating one's mind, life and sensory activities on the Supreme, engages in Krsna consciousness. That sort of determination is in the mode of goodness.” (BG 18.33)

Of course, to cultivate the mode of goodness for its own sake is dangerous: one may become conditioned or limited by it. Therefore one must always keep in mind his business is simply service to Krsna. Becoming “good,” a *brahmana*, or anything other than pure servant to Krsna is simply *maya*. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* clearly states this point. “You cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead by becoming perfect *brahmanas*, demigods, or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or by vast learning...The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him.”

(SB 7.7.51-52)

And the *Bhagavad-gita* also states the danger by describing how one can become conditioned by the happiness goodness offers. Or one can become full of pride, thinking he is better than everyone else, or become complacent, satisfied simply being an intellectual. But despite these dangers, teachers must accept Krsna's instructions on the impossibility of transcending from the heavily contaminated position of passion and ignorance. Thus goodness, while being rejected as an end in itself, should be embraced by devotees as a jumping off point for pure devotional service.

In conclusion, to show how the mode of goodness can aid our Krsna consciousness teaching, here is a compilation of some of the qualities listed in the *Bhagavad-gita* as born of goodness. It is easy to see how these qualities are essential for devotees



aspiring to become good teachers. Practically speaking, these qualities are essential for any devotee wishing to render pure devotional service.

Qualities of Goodness

The performance of the following three AUSTERITIES, when practiced

1. with faith
 2. for the sake of the Supreme
 3. without expectation of material benefits
- is called austerity in goodness.
1. Austerity of the BODY
 - a. worship of the Supreme Lord
 - b. worship of the *brahmanas*
 - c. worship of the spiritual master
 - d. worship of the parents
 - e. cleanliness
 - f. simplicity
 - g. nonviolence
 - h. celibacy
 2. Austerity of SPEECH
 - a. speaking words that are truthful
 - b. speaking words that are pleasing
 - c. speaking words that are beneficial
 - d. speaking words that are not agitating to others
 - e. regularly reciting Vedic literature
 3. Austerity of the MIND
 - a. satisfaction
 - b. simplicity
 - c. gravity
 - d. self-control
 - e. purification of one's existence
- One in goodness is BRAHMINICAL. He is--
1. peaceful
 2. self-controlled

3. austere
4. pure
5. tolerant
6. honest
7. knowledgeable
8. wise
9. religious

One in goodness gives CHARITY --

1. at a given time
2. to a suitable person
3. at a worthy place

One in goodness has unbreakable DETERMINATION which--

1. controls the activities of the mind
2. controls the activities of life
3. controls the activities of the senses.

One in goodness--

1. DISCRIMINATES between what should and should not be done.

One in goodness--

1. performs his DUTY without false ego.
2. performs his DUTY with great determination.
3. performs his DUTY with enthusiasm.
4. performs his DUTY without wavering in success or failure.
5. performs his prescribed DUTY only because it ought to be done.
6. is fearless over the troublesome effects of his DUTY.
7. DUTIFULLY goes to the temple simply to offer respect to the Deity.

(continued on page 30)

Seeing Krsna Everywhere

by **Patraka das**

Now we are preparing to meet the challenge of a third decade in the growth of ISKCON. Over twenty years have passed since the establishment of our movement by our great spiritual preceptor Srila Prabhupada, and we are now feeling the necessity to combine our efforts as a more unified world society. Unity and cohesiveness were certainly spontaneous when Prabhupada was with us. So in order to again create the same cooperative spirit it is now important to take a closer look into what Krsna consciousness is in order to accomplish our purpose.

Prabhupada's original idea for a world movement was called the *sarva bauma bhagavata-samaja*, or the *International League of Devotees*. He was, so to speak, interested in doing away with the caste-conscious idea of brahmanism or Vaisnavism by family heredity; as well as the vague, multi-god concept of Hinduism; as well as any religious conceptions that limit their views to particular social, ethnical, or ecclesiastical beliefs. If Krsna, as the Supreme Entity, has an unlimited expansion of energies which includes all living beings, then certainly the concept of a world society of devotees goes far beyond all such mundane ideas.

From an absolute point of view, it becomes easy to see how material names, designations, and distinctions have little relevance to the eternal relationship between the living entity and Krsna. Therefore, if we study the unity underlying basic Krsna consciousness philosophy, all socio-political problems arising from divergent interests will become unimportant and trivial. Thus, in order to achieve this realization, some discussion about the absolute nature of Krsna consciousness is required.

Quoting from the *Visnu Purana*, Lord Caitanya has compared Krsna to a fire and the multifarious expansions of His energies to sparks emanating from that fire. In this way it can be



understood that although He is aloof in His personal abode, He is present everywhere by His energetic expansions which generally are grouped into three categories: by His *cit-sakti* He maintains His personal abode and paraphernalia in Vaikuntha; by His *maya-sakti* the material worlds are generated and maintained; the third energy is called *jiva-sakti* or His separ-

ated parts and parcels who are generated from the marginal position between the spiritual and material worlds. They are called *tatastha*, or marginal, because they have the perpetual tendency to either be attracted to Krsna and go back to Godhead, or to be attracted to the illusory glitter of *maya* and remain in the material world. Aside from these three, in com-

bination, there is no existence of anything within the material or spiritual worlds.

Mayavada philosophers of the *advaita* school, beginning with *Sankara*, do not accept the theory of transformation of the Lord's energies (*parinama-vada*) because it defeats their theory of monism in various ways. First, if the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the controller of multifarious potencies, and if the living entity (*jiva-sakti*) is one of those potencies, then the living entity can never be equal to God. Secondly, because the Absolute Truth is the origin of various energies, He is also the reservoir of all opulences, which includes form, qualities, and personality and therefore He must be the Supreme Person. These conclusions are supported by numerous Vedic references, but the *mayavadis*, being bereft of intelligence due to offenses at the lotus feet of Visnu, can only vituperate various Vedic slokas, such as *sarvam khalu idam brahma*, (everything is *brahman*), or *eko brahma vidhyanasti* (there is only *brahman*, and nothing else), without understanding the obvious meanings of such verses.

Disgusted with the monistic assertions of the *mayavadis*, Sripad Ramanujacarya propounded his *visistadvaita* philosophy, or qualified oneness. According to him, everything is one but different also, in the same sense that the arm is one with the body, but it is not the whole body. Therefore, it is also a separate entity from the body. The fact that *brahman* is one is acceptable, but categorically it is analyzed separately in three distinct features, although one substance. The following *sruti-mantra* confirms this: *bhokta-bhogyam preritaran ca matva sarvam proktam trividham brahman etat*: "There are three *brahman* conceptions: *prakrti*, or the field of activities, *jiva-sakti*, who is trying to control *prakrti*, and the factual controller of both of them, who is the Supreme *Brahman*." So *brahman* is one, but different categorically.

In pursuance of these conclusions, Sripad Madhvacharya desired to describe the plurality of the Absolute Truth in a more definitive way. Therefore, referring to numerous Vedic *sastras*, he summarized his *dvaitadvaita* philosophy in five basic points: (1)

Material forms (*prakrti*) are different from other material forms, although one in substance; (2) *jiva* souls are different from other *jiva* souls, although one qualitatively; (3) *jiva* souls are different from material forms; (4) material forms are different from Krsna, the Supreme *Brahman*; and (5) *jiva* souls are different from Krsna. In this way, the great Vaisnava *acaryas* have established the sameness and difference of the Supreme *Brahman* and everything, and that, being the reservoir of all potencies, the Supreme *Brahman* is the ultimate refuge and most worshipable Entity.

In His dissertation on *Sankhya* philosophy in the 3rd Canto of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Lord Kapiladeva has described that after the material substances were generated,

Therefore, if we study the unity underlying basic Krsna consciousness philosophy, all socio-political problems arising from divergent interests will become unimportant and trivial.

beginning with false ego, the Lord in His form as Hiranyagarbha lies down on the *Garbodaka* ocean and, expanding His *virata rupa*, begins to generate all the various cosmic manifestations. Having impregnated the material energy with the innumerable *jiva* souls, all the various planetary systems along with different species of life appeared one after another. Therefore whatever moving and non-moving things that exist are simply parts of the universal form of the Lord. Thus adjusting our perspective, we can see that Krsna is existing everywhere, both in His personal forms and energetic expansions, and that according to our advancement in knowledge, we shall see only Krsna and nothing else. This is confirmed in the *Visnu Purana* as follows:

Jyotimsi visnur-bhuvanani visnur vanani visnur-girayo disas ca nadyas-samudras ca sa eva sarvam yad-asti yan-nasti ca vipravarya

"The stars are Visnu, and the planetary systems are Visnu; the forests, directions, the rivers and oceans are Visnu. O best of the *brahmanas*, whatever is and is not is also Visnu!"

When Arjuna desired to see the Lord's universal form on the battlefield of Kuruksetra, Krsna told him that his present vision was insufficient. So, endowed with Divine vision by the grace of the Lord, Arjuna saw all the multifarious features of the Lord's form. It is in a similar way that the spiritual master acts upon the cataract eyes of the disciple and endows him with the vision of pure knowledge by which he can see all things in relationship with Krsna. It is said, "*jnananjana salakaya caksur unmilitam yena*." In the most advanced stages of realization, the devotee sees all moving and non-moving things, but he doesn't actually see their forms; he sees only the transcendental form of his worshipable Deity. Bereft of Divine vision, however, one must act to exploit the resources of the Lord's energy for gross or subtle sense gratification, or he attempts to merge with the Lord's existence by the mistaken concept of oneness. Either idea is *bhinna-drg-bhavah*, or a separatist conclusion, i.e. not recognizing the connection between everything and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At least the neophyte devotee offers his respect to all living beings, acknowledging the presence of the Lord within them as Supersoul, as well as to all things knowing them to be the expansions of His variegated energies. Lord Rsabhadeva has advised his sons as follows:

sarvani mad-dhisnataya bhavadbhis carani bhutani suta dhruvani sambhavitavyani pade pade vo vivikta-drgbhis tad u harhanam me

"My dear sons, you should not envy any living entity--be he moving or non-moving. Knowing that I am situated in them, you should offer respects to all of them at every moment. In this way, you offer respect to Me." (S.B. 5.5.26)

So this is the *krsna-sambandha* (continued on page 30)



Purity is the Force

by Sarva drk dasa

The members of ISKCON and followers of Srila Prabhupada have brought Krsna consciousness to nearly every corner of the globe. We must now further expand, and especially, we must strengthen this movement by sincerely endeavoring to become increasingly Krsna conscious. By strict adherence to the principles of spiritual life and Vaisnava behavior that we have received from Srila Prabhupada, ISKCON can become the successful, influential institution he meant it to be. If we neglect those principles, our longterm success is questionable.

Success must be judged primarily on an individual basis and secondarily from an institutional point of view. We can't measure success by the apparent external advancement of the cause. This will, in the long run, prove empty if there is no individual example of spiritual purity. When each individual within ISKCON and especially our leaders are spiritually strong, then Krsna consciousness will spread as a natural function of each individual's Krsna consciousness. Management alone cannot protect us and insure a positive future.

We have to practice the principles of Krsna consciousness in our regular daily affairs. Expertly creating the external structure of a religious institution is not a genuine measure of success. We can't become confused and measure success solely by numerical calculation; how many temples, how many books, or how many dollars. The world is overburdened with so-called successful spiritual institutions. They have more temples, more

books, and more money, but they can never give shelter to humanity because they lack even one example of spiritual purity. In the name of religion they simply cheat.

If we become expert externally, yet fail to develop the internal purity of purpose that is required of us, then ISKCON becomes mundane. As we become more and more influential, we must simultaneously become proportionately Krsna conscious. The improprieties within our movement must be corrected. We must purify ourselves, genuinely love one another, trust one another, and cooperatively distribute Srila Prabhupada's mercy to the millions of conditioned souls on this planet. If we don't do this, certainly we are a disappointment to Srila Prabhupada.

***We are not
Machiavellian in
our spiritual outlook.
We can be opportun-
ists for Krsna but
never debauchees.
There is no substitute
for purity.***

Let us recognize the principle upon which this movement was started and the force that insures its growth. In the name of utility we cannot sacrifice pur-

ity. We are not Machiavellian in our spiritual outlook. We can be opportunists for Krsna but never debauchees. There is no substitute for purity. It is not a commodity that can be purchased on the market. It cannot be imitated. It is difficult to achieve.

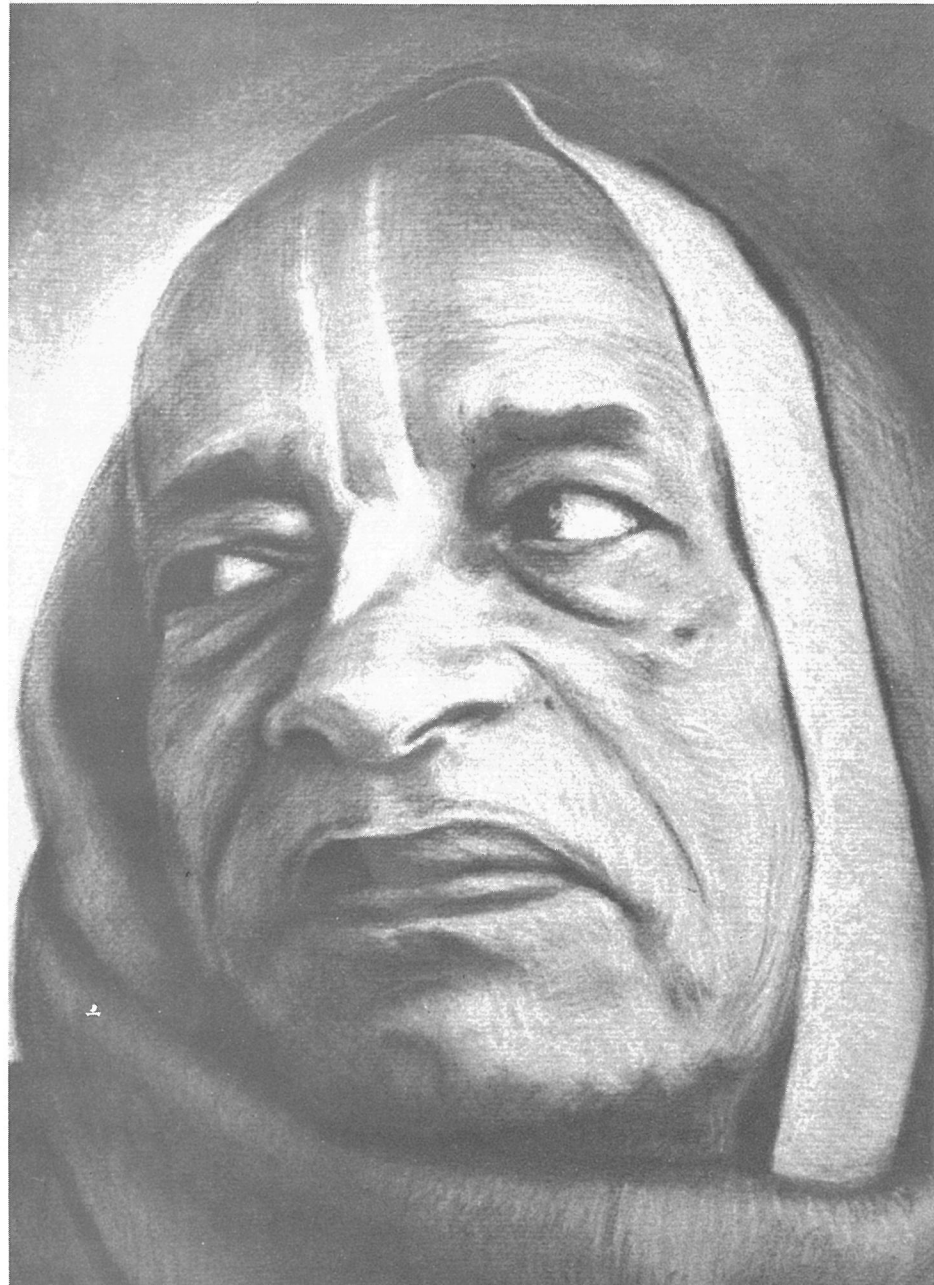
The devotees in our movement, particularly those in responsible posts, must be exemplary, their spiritual qualities self-evident, and character beyond doubt. We must be trustworthy carriers of Srila Prabhupada's message and must undeviatingly be relied upon to execute his instructions.

Personally, I have hardly a drop of any of these qualities. My heart is flooded with loathsome desires and fruitive intentions. But there are devotees in this movement who do measure up to the standard of purity that Srila Prabhupada expects of us. These great souls deserve our unconditional cooperation and surrender, irregardless of the title they may or may not bear. It is through them that Srila Prabhupada will manifest his mercy.

By Srila Prabhupada's mercy each of us must become cent-per-cent pure devotees, completely free from the affliction of material desire. When we no longer bear the heavy burden of attachment to matter, false prestige, and sense gratification, then we will be free to preach and rejoice in seeing ISKCON's influence expand unlimitedly. Then we are truly successful and we can hope to give shelter to those unfortunate persons who suffer in this nasty material world without a relationship with Srila Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya.

Your ever well-wisher

Letters from Srila Prabhupada



Drawing by Visnu dasa

I am so much pleased with your kind and affectionate words on the occasion of my birthday anniversary on the Nandotsava day this year (1972). My Guru Maharaj wanted me to spread this Krsna Consciousness Movement in western world, and you are all helping me in this great attempt.

My Spiritual Master knew it that alone I could not do this great work. Therefore He has very kindly sent you all to help me in this task. I accept you therefore as representatives of my Guru Maharaj playing as my affectionate disciples.

It is said that child is father of man. Kindly therefore continue your help in this great task and act as my young father and mother in my old age.

--August 26, 1972 Vyasa Pujah reply

If you follow my instructions very carefully as you promise in your letter, then your life will be perfect. I am not saying anything which is not given by my Guru Maharaj. I am simply repeating what I have learned from him. So you please do the same and your life will be full of *ananda*--blissful happiness, and you will be able to help spread this *sankirtana* movement all over the world.

--April 8, 1975 to Daruka dasa

Yes, we shall base our preaching work on Lord Chaitanya's formula: *sankirtana*. After all, He is God, and if He recommends, what is the question

of failure? That is not possible. If we simply stick to this programme as I have done it since the beginning, namely, *kirtan*, preaching, *kirtan*, distribution of *prasadam*--if you do like this only that will be sufficient. Of course, you may make the *kirtan* as nice as possible, with dancing, many *kholes*, *kartals*, *conches*, and if you preach sincerely, anyone will listen and become convinced. The potency of Krsna consciousness movement does not come from some outward showing, no, it is the transcendental sound vibration of Hare Krsna Mantra and the words of *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, like that. So now go on and develop the things in this spirit, that will be nice. We are not interested to attract millions of men to see some show. Better we attract one sincere soul to join us in ecstatic chanting and hearing, that will be of real value. And distribute books, as many as possible. If anyone hears something philosophy from us, that will help him. But if he purchases one book that may turn his life. So selling books is the best preaching activity. Sell books, hold the *kirtan* in public places like schools and colleges, preach--if you practice these things, and try to improve them more and more simply by your practicing sincerely, that simple programme will please Krsna the most and you will see that very soon.

--November 25, 1972 to Sudama

So far as your fraternal quarrel is concerned, I may recite in this connection one story: An old father required massaging so all the children wanted to serve the father. The father divided the right and left portion of his body to be served by the children. Later along with the service, there was some quarrel between the children, and they were competing by hitting the parts of the father which was assigned to the opposing party. So the father said that you are hitting my different parts due to your opposition to one another, but I am therefore dying. Similarly, either this department or that department, if you quarrel amongst yourselves it will be detrimental to my missionary ambition. Please therefore stop this unnecessary strain.

--February 20, 1969 to Rayarama



I am very glad to receive your letter (undated), and I have noted the contents that you had left the temple but now you have returned again. This is most encouraging, because it means that Krsna is very kind upon you. Although you left Him, He did not allow you to go away. It is His special favour upon you. As individuals there may be disagreement sometimes, but that is quite natural. Even in ordinary family affairs there is sometimes disagreement, but that does not mean immediately the disagreeing members shall leave the family. Similarly our Krsna Consciousness Movement means we are all gathering together in families of Krsna. Actually we are eternal family members of the Lord, but due to our misuse of independence we have now forgotten our eternal relationship with Krsna, exactly like a man who is mad forgets his family relationship and loiters in the street. But when he is again in his normal mental condition, he remembers his family members and goes back to them. Similarly this Krsna Consciousness Movement is a treatment for reviving the memory that we all belong to Krsna's family. So we are trying to establish a replica of Krsna's family in this material world, wherein there is no material activities. To avoid the material activities means to follow the four regulative

principles and to engage ourselves constantly in Krsna consciousness activities and to have the association of pure devotees. We should not give indulgence to our senses more than what is required just to keep body and soul together. We should not engage ourselves in very difficult tasks, and we should not talk anything more than what is necessary for spreading Krsna consciousness. We should follow the regulative principles, regard being had to situation, circumstances and objectives. We should not be greedy and we should not mix with persons not interested in Krsna. In this way we can make steady progress and maintain our membership in Krsna's family. Thus, at the end of this life we will enter actually into the spiritual world. So your main business should be to spread *Sankirtana*, becoming tolerant as the tree and becoming humbler than the grass. If you have anytime any difficulty, please try to settle up in the above way, but do not leave the company of devotees. That will not help you, even though there may seem to be difficulties.

I am so pleased to read in your letter that you have unflinching faith in Krsna and in my directions, and this attitude will help you more and more in Krsna Consciousness.

--June 7, 1969 to Uttama Sloka

(continued from page 15)

"There are many societies and associations of pure devotees, and if someone with just a little faith begins to associate with such societies, his advancement to pure devotional service is rapid" (N.O.D. ch. 19, pg. 146).

As a succinct summary of the unique position of devotional service, Srila Prabhupada writes: "...as long as one is materially inclined or desirous of merging into the spiritual effluence, one cannot enter into the realm of pure devotional service...devotional service is transcendental to all material considerations and... is not limited to any particular country, class, society or circumstance. As stated in *Srimad Bhagavatam*, devotional service is transcendental and has no cause. Devotional service is executed without any hope for gain, and it cannot be checked by any material circumstances" (N.O.D. ch. 5, pg. 47). Obviously, then, the society through which devotional service is made available to the world is going to similarly be unique. In terms of structure, how shall it appear? Shall it conform to *varnasrama* organizational principles, or shall it have distinguishing features of its own? This question is certainly food for thought, and is much discussed today. It is furthermore interesting to note that it has been precisely answered in chapter 3 of *Nectar of Devotion*, beginning on page 29.

There a clear indication is given of how ISKCON devotees should be classified, and these classifications do not exactly correspond with *varnasrama-dharma* categories. Devotees are to be classified according to spiritual advancement as first-class, second-class and third-class. To summarize, a first-class devotee is expert in the study of relevant scriptures, and is expert in putting forward arguments in terms of those scriptures. He can present conclusions with perfect discretion and can consider the ways of devotional service in a decisive way. He understands perfectly that the ultimate goal of life is to attain to the transcendental loving service of Krsna and he knows Krsna is the only object of worship and love. He strictly follows the rules and regulations under the direction of *guru* and *sastra*. He never deviates from the

principles of higher authority. He is not interested in dry speculation.

The second-class devotee is not very expert in arguing on the strength of revealed scripture, but he has firm faith in the objective. This means he may sometimes fail to offer arguments and decisions on the strength of revealed scripture to an opposing party, but is always undaunted within himself as to his decision that Krsna is the supreme object of worship.

It is in the description of the third-class devotee that a relationship of devotional service and *varnasrama-dharma* is clearly indicated. Here are some relevant quotations: "The neophyte or third-class devotee is one whose faith is not strong and who, at the same time, does not recognize the decision of the revealed scripture. The neophyte's faith can be changed by someone else with strong arguments or by an opposite decision...Further

Devotees are to be classified according to spiritual advancement as first class, second class and third class.

classification of the neophyte devotee is made in the *Bhagavad-gita*. It is stated there that four classes of men—namely, those who are distressed, those who are in need of money, those who are inquisitive and those who are wise, begin devotional service and come to the Lord for relief in the matter of their respective self-satisfaction. They go into some place of worship and pray to God for mitigation of material distress, or for some economic development, or to satisfy their inquisitiveness. And a wise man who simply realizes the greatness of God is also counted among the neophytes. Such beginners can be elevated to the second-class or first-class platform if they associate with pure devotees...The neophyte devotees are classified into four groups—the distressed, those in need of money, the

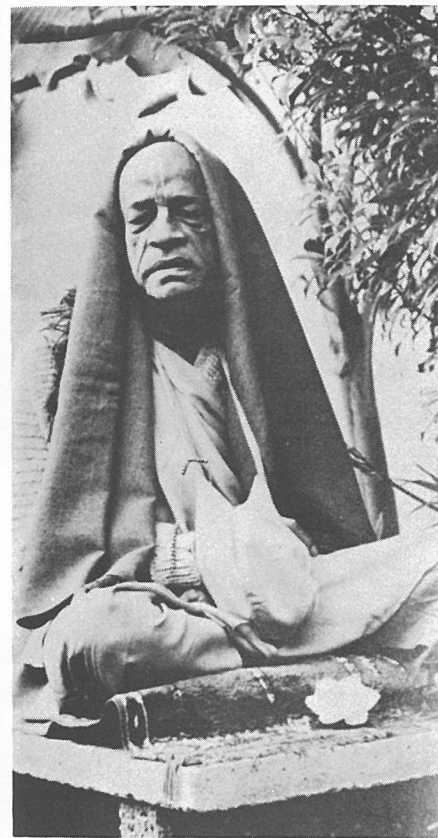
inquisitive and the wise, according to their gradations of pious activities."

It is clear to me that the last sentence quoted above explains that the four classifications of neophytes according to pious activities are indicative of positions in the *catur-varna* with the neophyte in distress corresponding to the *sudra*, the one seeking money the *vaisya*, the inquisitive one the *ksatriya*, and the wise man the *brahmana*.

Higher than and distinct from the neophytes who are situated within the field of pious activities are the first and second-class devotees. They cannot be only a select few sages, but rather correspond to those whom we know now in ISKCON as "fixed-up devotees." Neophytes should aspire to get the mercy of the association of these, the *uttama* and *madhyama-adhikaris*.

What follows is an outline of conclusion, based upon the above-cited *sastri* evidence, intuition, practical experience and consultation with other leaders:

- A. First and second-class Vaisnavas comprise the internal core of ISKCON.
 1. The devotional service of *madhyama* and *uttama adhikaris* is free from desire for *artha*, *kama*, and *moksa*. Therefore the structure of *varnasrama-dharma* does not apply to them.
 2. Srila Prabhupada has given two tiers of structure for "internal" ISKCON, namely the GBC and the local temple preachers. In my opinion, these two levels are meant to correspond to the two levels of devotees rendering pure devotional service.
 3. If *varnasrama-dharma* is imposed upon the higher two classes of devotees, the effect would be:
 - a. To discourage preaching and book distribution by encumbering devotees with unnecessary designations and stereotyped duties.
 - b. To interfere with the natural spontaneity of devotional *rasa* relished by Vaisnavas following Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, introducing instead formalized principles of other *sampradayas* (e.g. the *Tattvavadis*).



- c. To obscure the purity and simplicity of *Vaisnava sanga*, thus giving no clear view of the ideal that the neophyte *varnasrama-dharmis* should aspire to achieve. This purity and simplicity is one of the outstanding attractive features of Vaisnavism, a definite asset in preaching, and a quality that certainly inspires the neophytes to take shelter among the advanced devotees. (As opposed to the idea of ISKCON "becoming the world" socially).
 - d. To open ISKCON to caste-ism (see article below).
 - e. To promulgate the misconception among the populace that Vaisnavism is excessively hierarchical like mundane religious societies such as the Catholic Church, and is interested in social domination by way of this hierarchical structure. (As opposed to the idea of ISKCON "leading the world" politically).
- B. The four *varnas* are reserved for neophyte devotees, who comprise a society of pious persons who are attracted to Krsna but are attached to sense gratification and liberation.

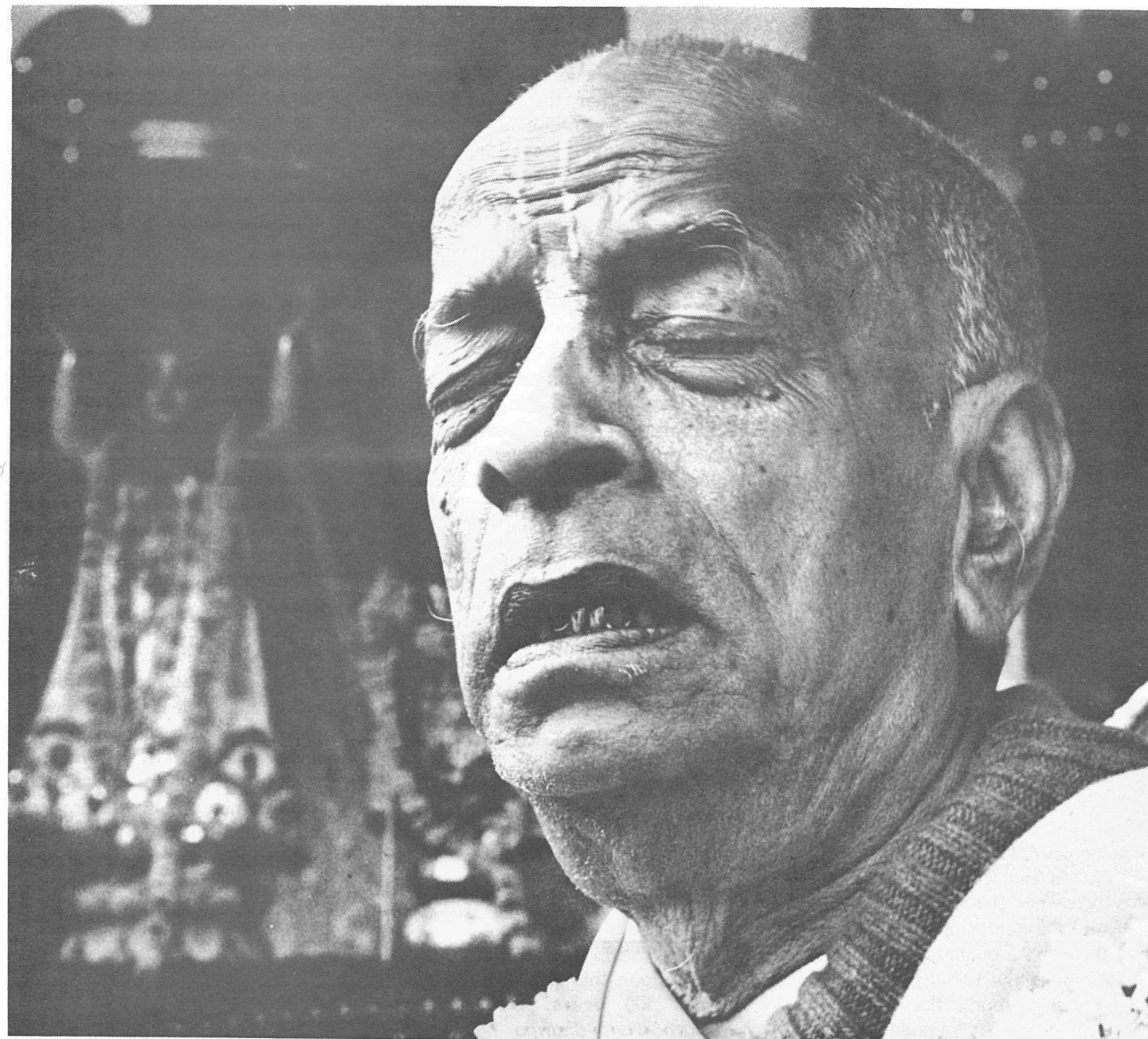
- C. It is not that ISKCON's present internal problems can be traced only to a confusion of the *varnas* within it; rather, they arise from the presence of neophytes occupying positions reserved for the higher two classes of devotees, for instance, in the cases of so-called leaders who are swayed by outside opinions that contradict those of the founder-*acarya*.
- D. To counteract the entry of neophytes within the realm of core leadership of ISKCON a strengthening of *Vaisnava sanga* is required. That *sanga* must become pure and selfless so that contamination cannot enter, just as contamination could not enter the *sanga* of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates.
- E. If the above conclusions are said to be idealistic and unrealistic, the following points are offered:
 1. The "ideal" of first and second-class devotees associating together blissfully has been vis-

... a strengthening of Vaisnava sanga is required.

- ible upon this planet within the last 100 years. But proper *varnasrama-dharma* has been extinct for centuries at least. So speaking simply in terms of history, pure *varnasrama-dharma* is an ideal even more remote than pure *Vaisnava sanga*.
2. It has already been shown practically in Germany that finding qualified devotees to fill specialized roles (e.g. the manager-as-*ksatriya*-role-model) is very difficult; or shall we say, easy to do superficially and temporarily, but very difficult to do properly. The devotees who are most enthusiastic for such roles are very often struggling with material contaminations that place their whole ability to associate with other devotees in serious doubt.

3. Besides, the above presentation is not meant to negate the employment of *varnasrama* principles within the practical affairs of "internal" ISKCON. But the evidence shows that designations most certainly should not be imposed (N.O.D. Ch. 2, pg. 26), nor should whatever principles employed carry with them VAD social expectations, etiquettes, or obligations.
4. At this point in ISKCON's development, there is no easy direction to take to solve our problems. If it is asked, "Who will choose who are the first and second-class devotees?", I would say (a) the answer is probably best sought in terms of who's giving inspired leadership to others (Bhaktivinoda Thakur said that you can tell an advanced *Vaisnava* by how many people he attracts to Krsna), and (b) if it is yet said that nobody in ISKCON will accept that, then who among the older, well-established devotees is going to accept a *varnasrama* role that does not meet his own conception of himself?
5. Concerning the establishment of the *varnas*, it does not seem to me to be such a terribly complex problem once the proper standard of "internal" ISKCON is established; it would seem to be a natural development, as indicated in N.O.D. But trying to arrange for *varnasrama-dharma* before establishing a distinct *Vaisnava sanga* of first and second-class devotees is like putting the cart before the horse.
6. Devamrta Swami feels that division of devotees is necessary to create a civilized atmosphere within our society, but he says that division can only be made at this stage along the lines of spiritual qualification. It is too early in the development of our movement to seriously consider dividing devotees along the lines of occupational proclivity. There is also no practical example of this anywhere in our movement, except possibly in *gurukula*, where it is certainly easier to do than with grown-ups.

(To be continued)



(continued from page 23)
 conception. It is the vision by which all things are united, and anyone or anything who awakens this consciousness within us is our *guru* and we offer our respects to such *gurus* knowing them to be the delegated agency of the Lord to take us back home, back to Godhead. Now we must implement this knowledge which has been bestowed upon us by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and nurture a more cohesive society of devotees without false sectarian concepts or segregated party interests. If Krsna is the focal point in all dealings, and if our inner realization, or *sraddha*, is very firm, then integrating the universal society of

devotees under one flag will become a very good possibility.

(continued from page 21)

One in goodness is attracted to FOODS that --

1. increase duration of life
2. purify the mind
3. aid bodily strength

One in goodness-- feels HAPPINESS because he isn't affected by material miseries, feels HAPPINESS knowing he is free from material reactions, finds HAPPINESS from that which awakens him to self-realization.

One in goodness is freed from ILLUSION.

One in goodness has KNOWLEDGE

concerning the spirit soul beyond this body.

One in goodness is NOT--

1. HATEFUL of that which troubles his body.
2. HATEFUL of inauspicious work.
3. ATTACHED to auspicious work.

One in goodness has NO DOUBTS about work.

One in goodness RENOUNCES--

1. all material association.
2. all attachment to the fruit.

One in goodness SACRIFICES--

1. according to the direction of scripture.
2. as a matter of duty.
3. desiring no reward.

One in goodness UNDERSTANDS things in the correct perspective.

Lord Caitanya's Mission

Reprinted from the Teachings of Lord Caitanya
 — A Gaura Purnima Special

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabu instructed His disciples to write books on the science of Krsna, a task which His followers have continued to carry out down to the present day. The elaborations and expositions on the philosophy taught by Lord Caitanya are in fact most voluminous, exacting and consistent due to the system of disciplic succession. Although Lord Caitanya was widely renowned as a scholar in His youth, He left only eight verses, called Siksataka. These eight verses clearly reveal His mission and precepts. These supremely valuable prayers are translated herein.

1.

Glory to the Sri Krsna *sankirtana*, which cleanses the heart of all the dust accumulated for years and extinguishes the fire of conditional life, of repeated birth and death. This *sankirtana* movement is the prime benediction for humanity at large because it spreads the rays of the benediction moon. It is the life of all transcendental knowledge. It increases the ocean of transcendental bliss, and it enables us to fully taste the nectar for which we are always anxious.

2.

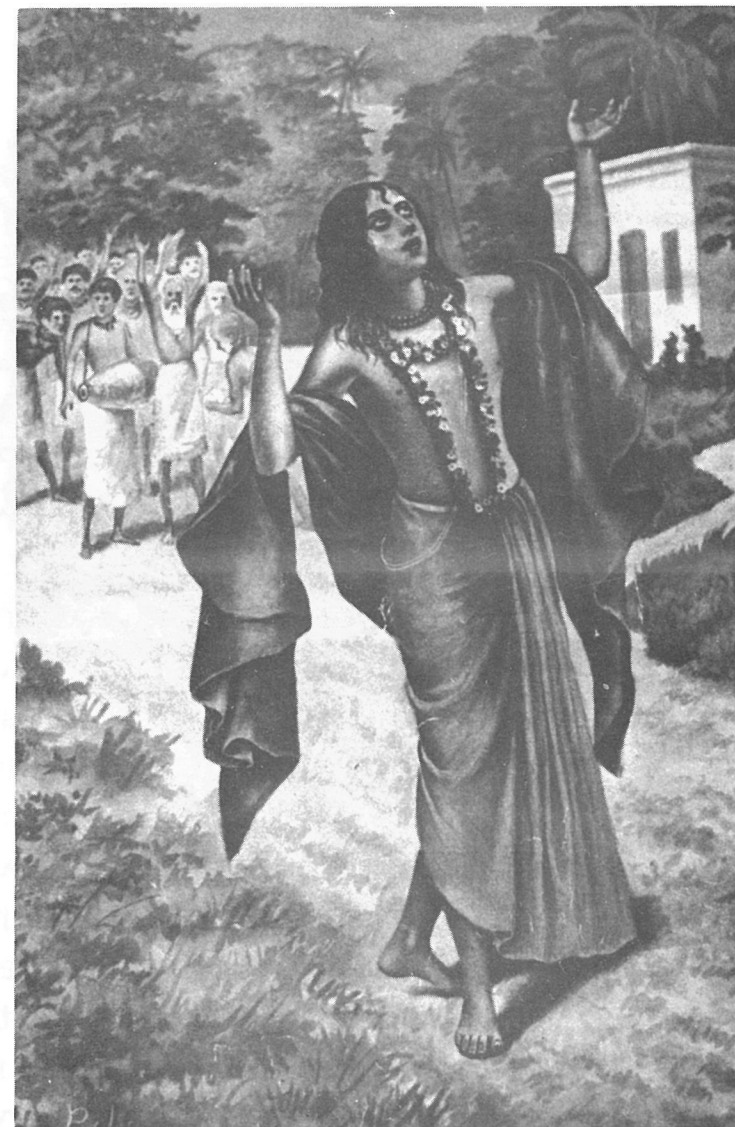
O my Lord, Your holy name alone can render all benediction to living beings, and thus You have hundreds and millions of names like Krsna and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies. There are not even hard and fast rules for chanting these names. O my Lord, out of kindness You enable us easily approach You by Your holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for them.

3.

One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.

4.

O almighty Lord, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor do I desire beautiful women, nor do I want any number of followers. I only want Your causeless devotional service birth after birth.



5.

O son of Maharaja Nanda [Krsna], I am Your eternal servitor, yet somehow or other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms at Your lotus feet.

6.

O my Lord, when will my eyes be decorated with tears of love flowing constantly when I chant Your holy name? When will my voice choke up, and when will the hairs of my body stand on end at the recitation of Your name?

7.

O Govinda! Feeling Your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years or more. Tears are flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain, and I am feeling all vacant in the world in Your absence.

8.

I know no one but Krsna as my Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles me roughly by His embrace or makes me brokenhearted by not being present before me. He is completely free to do anything and everything, for He is always my worshipful Lord unconditionally.



7 . . . Personally, I have no hope for any direct service for the coming crores of births of the sojourn of my life, but I am confident that some day or other I shall be delivered from this mire of delusion in which I am at present so deeply sunk. Therefore let me with all my earnestness pray at the lotus feet of my divine master to allow me to suffer the lot for which I am destined due to my past misdoings, but to let me have this power of recollection: that I am nothing but a tiny servant of the Almighty Absolute Godhead, realized through the unflinching mercy of my divine master. Let me therefore bow down at his lotus feet with all the humility at my command.

