

Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



Vol.16 No.7

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

IN THIS ISSUE:

Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold

The story of an extraordinary monument,
the people who built it, and the
great spiritual master they built it for.



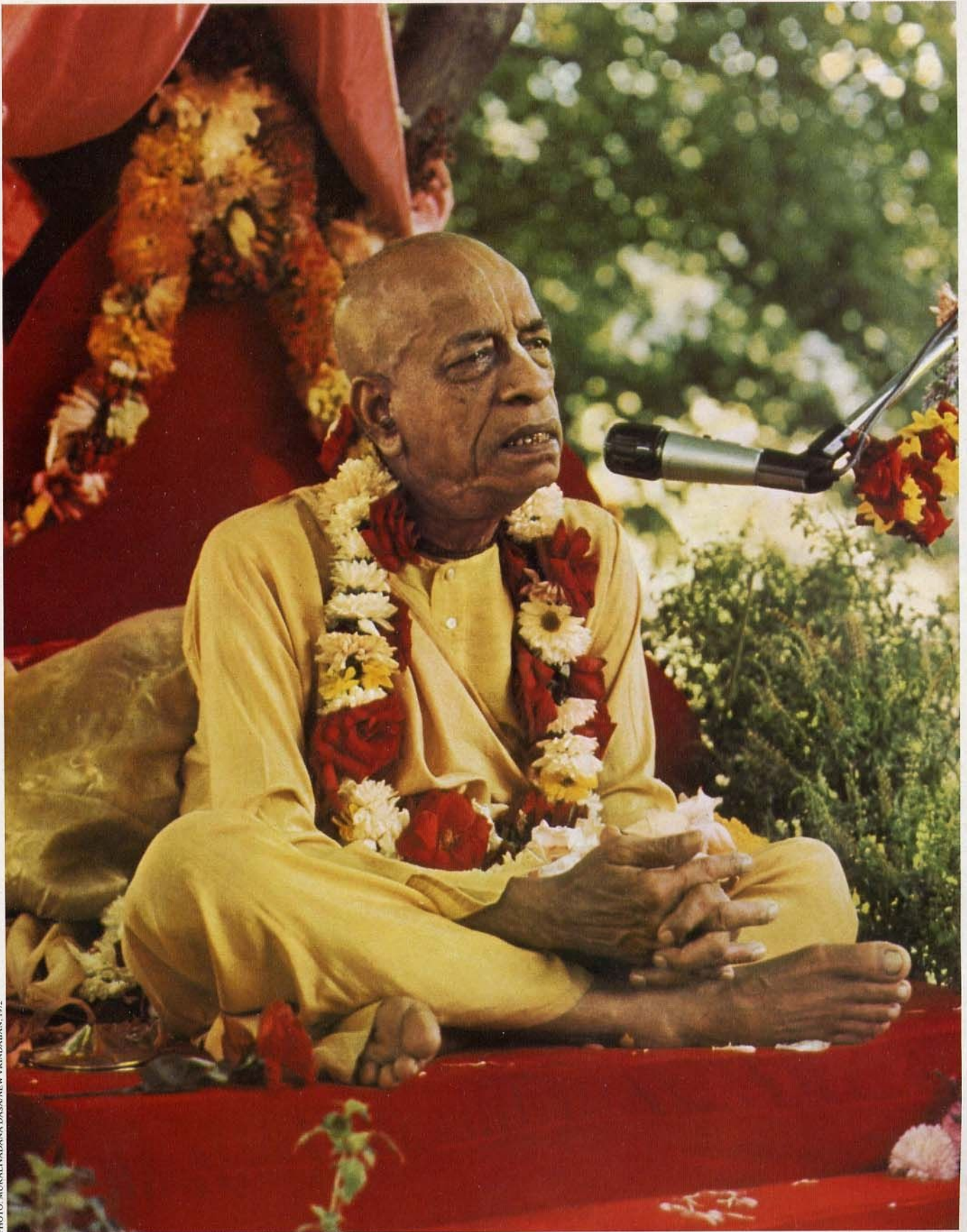


PHOTO: MURALIVADANA DAS/NEW VrINDABAN, 1972

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 16, NO. 7

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION of Sanskrit words and names. BACK TO GODHEAD follows the international scholarly standard. Pronounce short *a* like the *u* in *but*, long *ā* like the *a* in *far* (and hold it twice as long as the short *a*). Pronounce *e* like the *a* in *evade*, long *ī* like the *i* in *plique*. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (*ch*, *jh*, *dh*, etc.) as in *staunch*-heart, *hedge*-hog, and *red-hot*. Finally, pronounce the sibilants *ś* and *ṣ* like *sh*, and *s* like the *s* in *sun*. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

ABOUT SANSKRIT NAMES in by-lines, credits, and text. Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with *dāsa* (*dāsi* for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

◀ His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda came to America in 1965, at age sixty-nine, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literatures, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas*, schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away in 1977 in India's Vṛndāvana, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and his disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.

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COVER: Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold. In the hills of West Virginia, devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa dedicated seven years to create this memorial to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, founder and spiritual guide of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The Palace is an artistic achievement beautified by 8,000 square feet of 22-karat gold leaf, 40 different kinds of marble and onyx, hand-carved teakwood furniture from India, ancient Chinese vases, 42 chandeliers of Austrian and Czech crystal, and more. Now, in a place you'd least expect, as you round a bend on a road in West Virginia, you'll find "The Taj Mahal of the West"—Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold. (Photo: Yaduvara dāsa)

ABOUT BACK TO GODHEAD: "Godhead is light" has always been BACK TO GODHEAD's byword—"Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience." Godhead means the source of everything, and this journal is meant to assist readers in cultivating practical, scientific realization of Godhead. To this end BACK TO GODHEAD explores the ideas presented in ancient India's Vedic literatures, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*. As the *Gītā* itself informs us, "When one is enlightened with the knowledge by which nescience is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime."

A CHOICE OF DESTINIES

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness,
speaks with Jon Nordheimer of *The New York Times*
in a conversation recorded in September 1972 at New Vrindaban,
the Society's farm community near Wheeling, West Virginia.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When we speak of Kṛṣṇa, we mean God. Everyone has some vague idea of God, but no clear idea. Therefore God descends to show what He is. If we speculate on God, someone will think one thing and another person will think another. This is the result of speculation. But if God Himself comes and shows Himself as He is and speaks about Himself, that is perfect knowledge. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is spreading that message.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* God Himself is speaking about Himself: "I am like this; My form is like this; My activities are like this; My address is this and that. If you like, you can come back to Me. There is no restriction—everyone can come to Me." All this information is there in *Bhagavad-gītā*, where God speaks about Himself and presents Himself as He is. We have simply to take that information; then we can understand Him. And when we understand God, Kṛṣṇa, we can go back to Him. It is a very simple thing. Kṛṣṇa says,

*janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

"One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna."
[*Bhagavad-gītā*, 4.9]

So God is there; that's a fact. Anyone can go back to Him and live an eternal life full of bliss and knowledge simply by knowing about it. When God Himself comes, all great *ācāryas*, stalwart men, accept Him: "Yes, He is God." If we simply understand God, we make a solution to all our problems.

Because we are part and parcel of God, we are qualitatively equal with Him. God is eternal, and we are eternal. God is blissful, and we are blissful. God is full of knowledge; we are also full of knowledge. Unfortunately, we are hampered by this material body. Therefore our problem is how to get out of this material body and come to our spiritual body. The spiritual body is there, just as our real body is present underneath our shirt and coat. I, you, and every one of us is a spiritual spark, part and parcel of God, and we are placed within a gross body and a subtle body. When this particular gross body is finished, we are carried by the subtle body into another gross body. That is called transmigration of the soul. And when we finally get free from the subtle body also, we go back home, back to Godhead. It is that easy.

A human being should therefore endeavor to get out of the gross and subtle bodies, attain a spiritual body, and go back home. That should be the aim of human endeavor. Not that we should simply live like animals. Animals cannot get out of the gross and subtle bodies, because to extricate oneself one must know in fact what God is. An animal

(continued on page 26)





IN THE HILLS OF WEST VIRGINIA
**PRABHUPĀDA'S
PALACE OF GOLD**

The Appalachian hills provide the setting for an ornate palace dedicated to the great spiritual master who brought love of Kṛṣṇa to the West.

by YOGEŚVARA DĀSA

Just around a bend in the road, crowning a lush green hill surrounded by valleys and forests in the West Virginia panhandle, stands Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold, a handcrafted seven-years-in-the-making miracle of inlaid marble walls and floors, stained-glass windows, crystal chandeliers, and a three-hundred-ton gold-leafed dome that glitters like a second sun. In the words of one commentator for *The Today Show*, "You won't believe your eyes."

How did it get there? Who built it? And why? Such questions never fail to cross the minds of the half million visitors who come from all over the world each year to



JIM ANDERSON

see “The Taj Mahal of the West.” The Palace was built by the devotees of New Vrindaban, the West Virginia farm community of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), as a memorial to ISKCON’s founder and spiritual guide, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Apart from its architectural and artistic appeal, the Palace is also a place of worship where devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa honor their spiritual master, a lifelong devotee of God, for his work of establishing Kṛṣṇa consciousness—love of God—around the world.

How much is the Palace worth? Some

experts have guessed 10 to 15 million dollars, but they’re quick to add that such work just isn’t done any more, so an accurate estimate is difficult. So far, the devotees have actually invested only \$600,000 for construction materials and equipment. And they did the work themselves.

Where did the money come from? During the seven years of construction more than 200 community members and supporters raised it through private donations and from the Palace’s thriving tourism. Also helpful were contributions from the Hindu community (who see Kṛṣṇa temples as their “home away from home”) and income from commissioned work by

devotee artists, such as the mural in Wheeling’s Civic Center, painted by New Vrindaban resident Muralīdhara dāsa (see page 19).

The New Vrindaban community was started in 1968 by Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s first disciples. Śrīla Bhaktipāda came to West Virginia to set up a farm that would demonstrate the principles of Kṛṣṇa conscious life: simple living, based on nature and the cows, balanced by “high thinking”—in short, a life dedicated to the service of God, free from the dependencies of consumer civilization. Such a place, he hoped, would also be a pilgrimage site.



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Detail from wrought-iron gates at the Palace (above) shows the skill of devotee craftspeople. At right, a front view of the Palace reveals some of the 8,000 square feet of 22-karat gold leaf that highlights the building's surface. Six hundred gilded balusters encircle the Palace at its base.

a Western version of Vṛndāvana, the village in India where Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

But how does an elaborate royal palace fit in with such nonmaterialistic aspirations? Devotees explain that simplicity in their own lives does not rule out opulence in the worship of God or His representatives. They also view the Palace as a landmark of Kṛṣṇa culture, where interested people can learn the basic principles of spiritual life. And the Palace also serves as a place of celebration. Annual festivals draw tens of thousands of pilgrims to attend ceremonies, plays, and feasts cooked in huge kitchens behind the Palace.

In its design the Palace is unique. While most churches and cathedrals reflect the orthodox motifs of their culture, the Palace is a blending of Eastern and Western styles, as if to say that service to God is the universal principle of all religions. While the Eastern roots of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement can be seen in the intricate latticework, peacock windows, and traditional marble patterns, the movement's presence in the West is reflected in the castlelike railings, cathedral-inspired arches, and bright color combinations.

The Palace actually started out in 1973 to be a simple home for Śrīla Prabhupāda, who had come to America eight years earlier, at age sixty-nine, to spread the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa. When Śrīla Prabhupāda passed away in 1977, Śrīla Bhaktipāda decided to make it into a memorial, and the residents of New Vrindaban set out to transform a home into a palace.

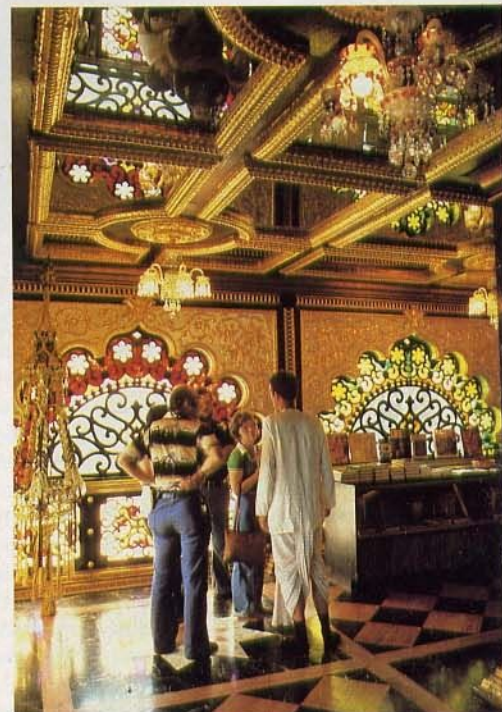
Without any prior training in construction, masonry, or the other skills needed for such a task, the devotees set to work. Acquiring advice and help along the way, they learned architecture, bricklaying,



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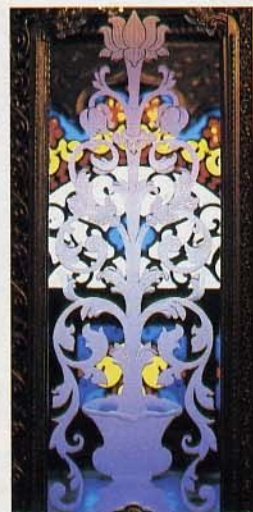
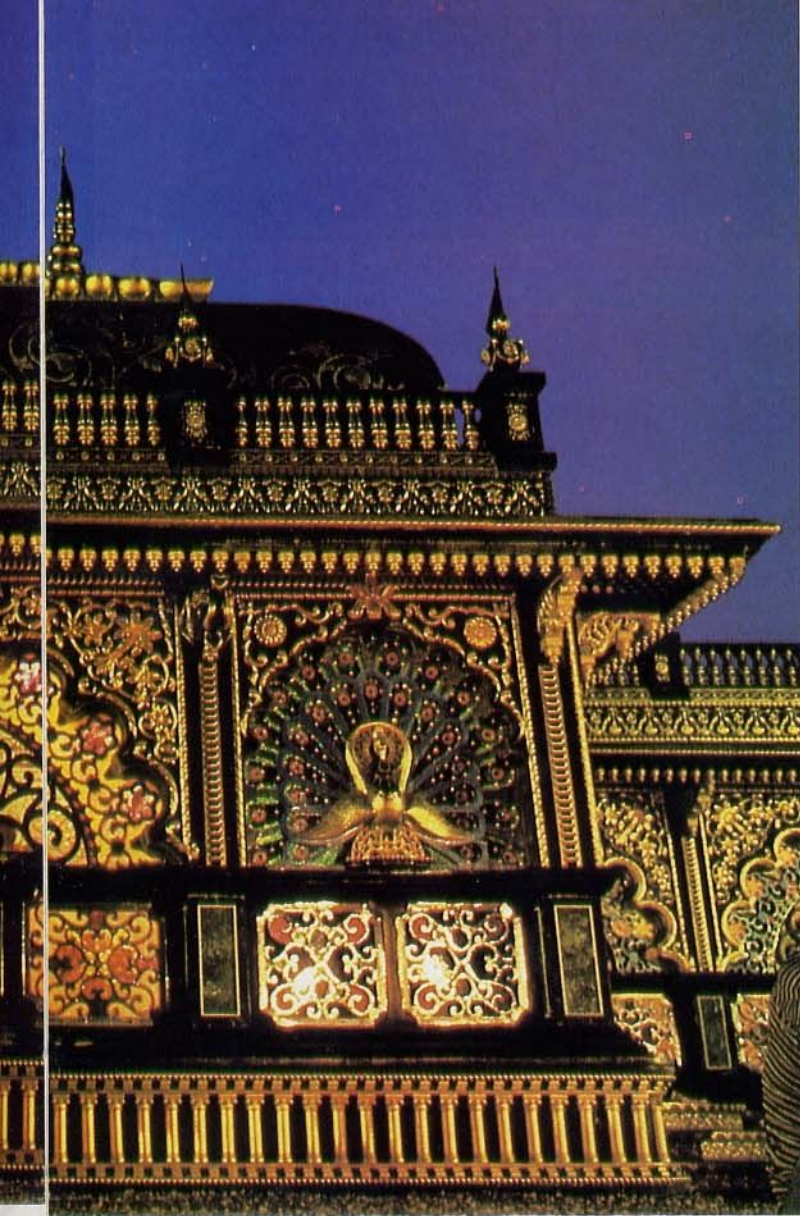


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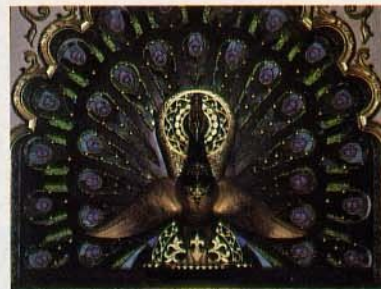
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The Taj Mahal of the West gleams with the light of 42 handmade chandeliers (above), 101 mirrors (like those on the ceiling at right), and more than 12,000 pieces of sculpted, stained, and etched glass fitted into 80 windows. Marble for the floors and walls was imported from various parts of the world.

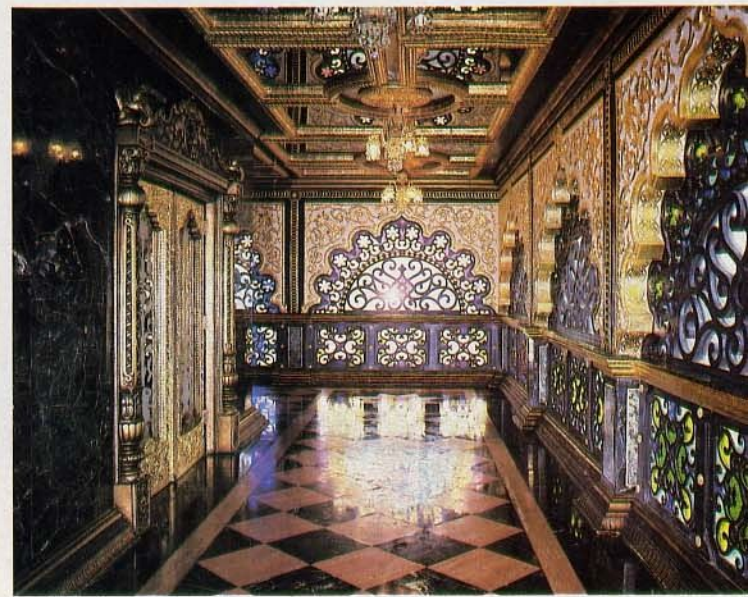


YOGEŚVARA DĀSA

Sand-blasted glass pane (left), stained-glass windows (below), and fine marble inlays (bottom) show expertise the devotees acquired during the seven years they spent working to build the Palace.



YAMARĀJA DĀSA



YOGEŚVARA DĀSA

carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, casting, marble cutting and polishing, stained-glass making, and landscaping. Mothers with their children, men young and old, friends and neighbors—each person worked in the spirit of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the main text of Kṛṣṇa devotees:

All that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, as well as any sacrifice that you may perform, should be done as an offering to Me.

The winters were often bitter cold. Earth turned to mud ankle-deep, and some of the less hardy left the farm in defeat. The work went on, however, fired by Śrīla Bhaktipāda's vision of a holy place in the hills of West Virginia, and the dream slowly became a reality.

A Tour of the Palace

What makes the Palace shine so brightly is its outer covering of 22-karat gold leaf—8,000 square feet of sheets one thousandth of an inch thick, protected by four layers of shellac. Entering the Palace through one of two main doors, we find ourselves

beneath an arched ceiling painted as a Himalayan landscape. Devotee artists air-brushed the large areas and then added details by hand. They assembled 11,000 pieces of Austrian crystal to make the forty-two chandeliers that illuminate the main hallway. Each chandelier is color-coordinated to match the stained-glass windows.

For the walls and floors of the Palace, devotees imported forty different kinds of marble and onyx from Italy, France, Turkey, and Brazil. They cut the large raw slabs into more than 20,000 smaller pieces, polished them all, and shaped them into delicate inlaid designs. Then each ensemble was polished and fitted into place. In all, the 35,000 square feet of the Palace display 254 tons of marble.

The first room we see down the left hallway is the reception room, with furnishings handcrafted at New Vrindaban's marble shop. Here we see photo displays of Śrīla Prabhupāda's worldwide missionary activities. The door is fitted with sand-blasted glass, designed and

executed at the community's stained-glass workshop.

Each of the Palace's four peacock windows contains more than 1,800 hand-shaped pieces of glass. Stones from Czechoslovakia further decorate each window. In India, peacocks are regarded as creatures of good fortune, and Lord Kṛṣṇa is easily recognized by the peacock feather in His hair.

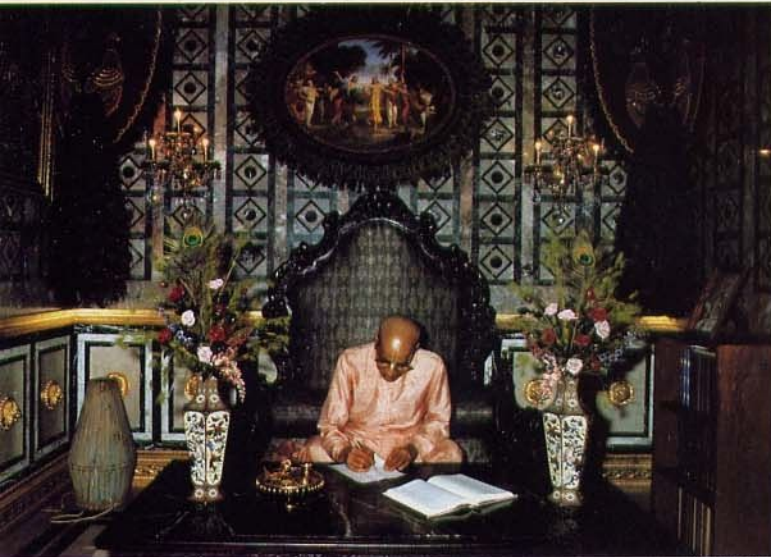
Continuing down the left hallway, we see the kitchen, where devotees cook vegetarian foods according to ancient recipes. The food is prepared six times daily and offered to Śrīla Prabhupāda in the main temple as an act of devotion.

Once we reach the back hallway, we look out onto twenty acres of sculpted gardens and a terrace that serves as a stage for devotional plays and concerts. The terrace is the roof of an underground mall that houses a restaurant, a museum, a library, and a display area where devotees demonstrate their crafts. Beyond the gardens is a guest pavilion, with a large meeting hall and sixty rooms.

This gold-leafed teakwood door (right) leads to the main hall from Śrīla Prabhupāda's study. In the study itself (below) guests see a molded form of Śrīla Prabhupāda posed at his work of translating the Sanskrit Vedic scriptures into English.



VIDYĀNANDA DĀSA



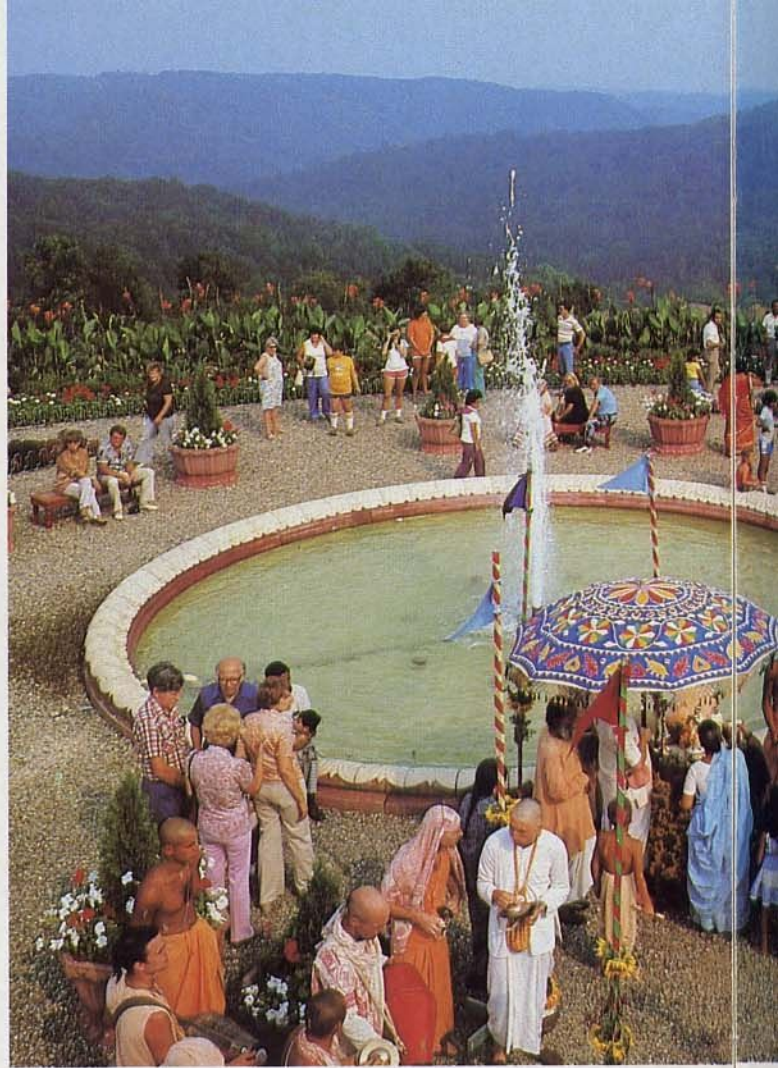
JIM ANDERSON

As we continue around the hallway, we come to the study, where devotees have installed a lifelike form of Śrīla Prabhupāda posed at his work of translating the Sanskrit scriptures of Kṛṣṇa consciousness into English. In his lifetime Śrīla Prabhupāda published seventy volumes of devotional literature, which universities across the country have acquired as standard reference works. (Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples have translated his writings into sixteen languages.) It took devotees more than two years to complete the walls of the study. The teakwood furniture was carved by a devotee family in Bombay. The vases, of ancient Chinese origin, were donated by one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples, Alfred Ford, the great-grandson of Henry Ford.

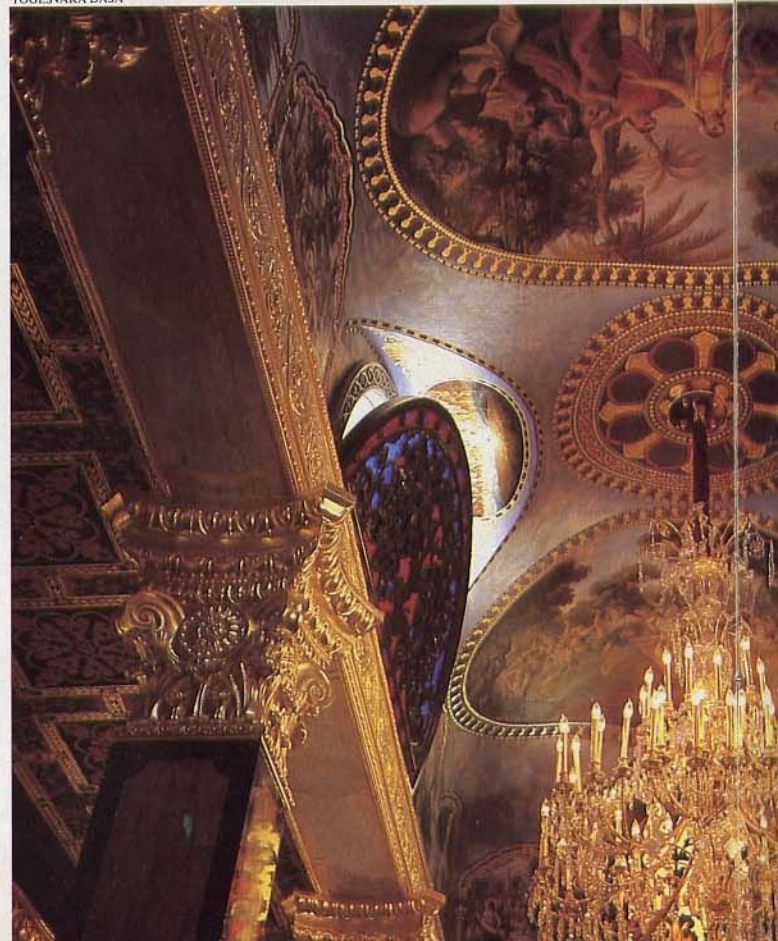
In the next room, Śrīla Prabhupāda's bedroom, we see walls made of Italian Botticino marble inlaid with onyx. The ceiling was painted by devotees lying on their backs, Michelangelo-style. The nine hundred flowers decorating the walls took a devotee artist four months to paint.

In the center of the Palace is the main temple. Here daily classes and ceremonies take place, lit by a 150-year-old French chandelier gold-plated by New Vrindaban craftspeople. Paintings on the ceiling de-

An antique French chandelier lights the ceiling of the main hall of worship (right). The large mural partially obscured by the chandelier depicts Lord Kṛṣṇa dancing with the cowherd damsels of Vṛndāvana. The other large mural shows Lord Caitanya, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and dancing with His close associates.



YOGESVARA DĀSA





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Devotees and guests mingle by a fountain in the Palace gardens (left). Śrīla Bhaktipāda, spiritual leader of New Vrindaban, explains that with the Palace New Vrindaban has begun to reveal itself as “a place of pilgrimage in the Western world, a place where people can come and see spiritual life in action.”

pict scenes from the pastimes Lord Kṛṣṇa performed when He was present on this planet five thousand years ago. The two central paintings show Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu chanting God’s holy names in India five hundred years ago and Lord Kṛṣṇa dancing with His most intimate devotees, the cowherd damsels of Vṛndāvana.

Adorning the walls of the temple are paintings of the saintly teachers who in recent generations have transmitted the ancient science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the benefit of mankind. Śrīla Prabhupāda, thirty-second in the discipic line of teachers from Lord Kṛṣṇa, presides over the temple from a gilded throne beneath a dome of cast gypsum and 4,200 pieces of cut glass.

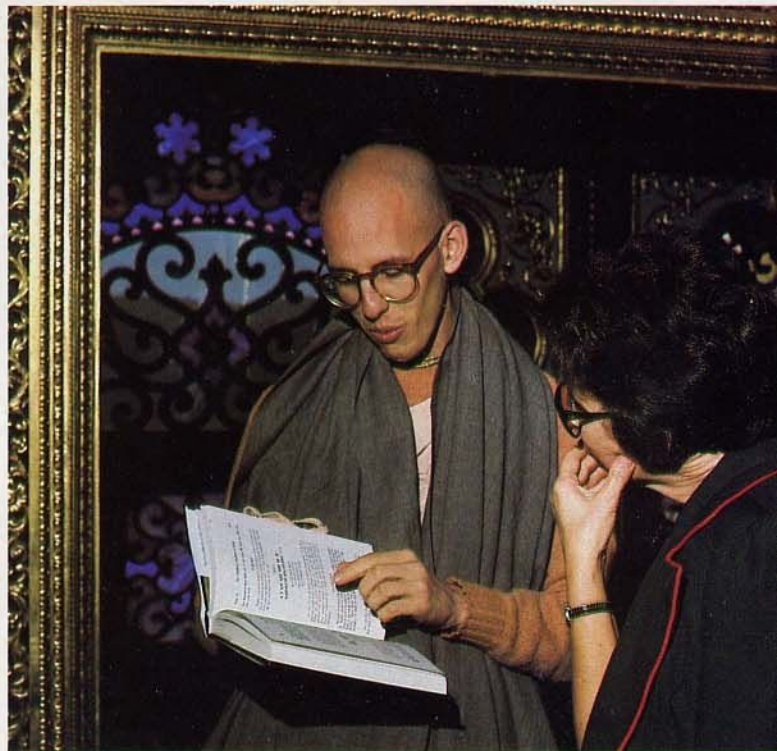
Some Often-Asked Questions

When people tour the Palace, they usually have lots of questions about the ideas and practices of the devotees and about their international Society.

What is the meaning of the shaved head and robes?

Devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa have traditionally shaved their heads as a sign of renunciation, an indication that their concern is for the eternal beauty of the soul and not the temporary appearance of the body. The robes are the devotees’ traditional uniform, orange and saffron for celibate students, white for married students.

What is the mark the devotees wear on their foreheads?



YAMARAJA DĀSA





JIM ANDERSON

Fireworks fill the night sky (above) during dedication ceremonies for the Palace, in 1980. At left, Śrīla Prabhupāda presides over the main temple from a throne of gold and marble. Says Śrīla Bhaktipāda, "The Palace is to Śrīla Prabhupāda what a beautiful setting is to a diamond."

Devotees anoint their bodies with sacred clay from the original Vṛndāvana in India as a reminder that the body is a temple of God. The mark, called *tilaka*, is also a reminder that the mission of human life is service to the Supreme Lord.

What are the vows of a devotee?

To receive initiation into Kṛṣṇa consciousness a person must abstain from meat, fish, and eggs; from intoxicants, including coffee, tea, and cigarettes; from illicit sex; and from gambling. Initiated devotees also chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* on prayer beads and attend temple ceremonies that begin at 4:15 A.M.

Do devotees accept Jesus Christ?

Devotees who worship Kṛṣṇa as God accept Jesus Christ as the son of God and

sincerely try to put his teachings to work in their daily lives.

How is Kṛṣṇa consciousness different from Christianity?

There is no difference in essence, for the common platform of all religions is love of God. Devotees worship the same one God of all creation glorified in the Bible. The teachings of the Bible and those of *Bhagavad-gītā* are essentially the same: worship the Lord of creation and do everything as an offering to Him. But there are differences also. For example, some Christians believe that animals have no souls. The Kṛṣṇa conscious scriptures, however, say that since the life symptoms visible in humans are also visible in animals, the animals also have souls, and man's predominance over animals is not a sanction to slaughter them but a mandate to protect them. This is the philosophical basis of the cow protection program at New Vrindaban.

Why do you put a statue of your spiritual master on the altar?

The Kṛṣṇa conscious scriptures explain that God's representative should be hon-

ored as highly as God Himself, because he is very dear to God. The spiritual master spreads God's word and has no selfish motive in his life. By honoring the spiritual master and following his teachings, devotees imbibe his elevated qualities and advance in their own spiritual lives.

How do you educate your children?

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has opened several primary and secondary schools for academic and religious instruction. Devotee children learn all the basics—reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography—but also receive training in the principles of religion: cleanliness, honesty, compassion, and self-control. There is hardly any television, but devotee children have much to replace it. Every week they take hikes, go swimming, learn to play musical instruments, and take part in the feasts and festivals of the community. And most of them are academically on a par with children two or three grades older.

What are your plans for the future?

That's a pretty big question. For the answer, please turn to page 27.

The Biography of a Pure Devotee

SWAMIJI IN SAN FRANCISCO

A New Frontier for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

January, 1967: San Francisco International Airport.
An enthusiastic throng of young people chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa
welcomes Śrīla Prabhupāda to the West Coast.

by ŚRĪLA SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

With Kṛṣṇa consciousness flourishing on New York's Lower East Side, Śrīla Prabhupāda felt he could entrust the New York center to his followers and expand the movement west. His envoy, Mukunda dāsa, had found a place for a temple in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district, and now Śrīla Prabhupāda was on his way to new preaching adventures.

As the United Airlines jet descended on the San Francisco Bay area, Śrīla Prabhupāda turned to his disciple Raṇacora and said, "The buildings look like matchboxes. Just imagine how it looks from Kṛṣṇa's viewpoint."

Śrīla Prabhupāda was seventy-one years old, and this had been his first air trip. Raṇacora, nineteen and dressed in a suit and tie, was supposed to be Śrīla Prabhupāda's secretary. He was a new disciple but had raised some money and had asked to fly to San Francisco with Prabhupāda.

During the trip Śrīla Prabhupāda had spoken little. He had been chanting: "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare." His right hand in his cloth bead bag, he had been fingering one bead after another as he chanted silently to himself. When the plane had first risen over New York City, he had looked out the window at the buildings growing smaller. Then the plane had entered the clouds, which to Prabhupāda

had appeared like an ocean in the sky. He had been bothered by pressure blocking his ears and had mentioned it; otherwise he hadn't said much, but had only chanted Kṛṣṇa's names over and over. Now, as the plane began its descent, he continued to chant, his voice slightly audible—"Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa . . ."—and he looked out the window at the vista of thousands of matchbox houses and streets stretching in charted patterns in every direction.

When the announcement for United Airlines Flight 21 from New York came over the public-address system, the group of about fifty hippies gathered closer together in anticipation. For a moment they appeared almost apprehensive, unsure of what to expect or what the Swami would be like.

Roger Segal: *We were quite an assorted lot, even for the San Francisco Airport. Mukunda was wearing a Merlin the Magician robe with paisley squares all around, Sam was wearing a Moroccan sheep robe with a hood—he even smelled like a sheep—and I was wearing a sort of blue, homemade Japanese samurai robe with small white dots. Long strings of beads were everywhere. Buckskins, boots, army fatigues, people wearing small, round sunglasses—the whole phantasmagoria of San Francisco at its height.*

Only a few people in the crowd knew Swamiji: Mukunda and his wife, Jānakī; Ravindra Svarūpa; Rāya Rāma—all from New York. And Allen Ginsberg was there. (A week before, Allen had been one of the leaders of the Human Be-In in Golden Gate Park, where over two hundred thousand had come together—

"A Gathering of the Tribes . . . for a joyful pow-wow and Peace Dance.") Today Allen was on hand to greet Swami Bhaktivedanta, whom he had met and chanted with several months before on New York's Lower East Side.

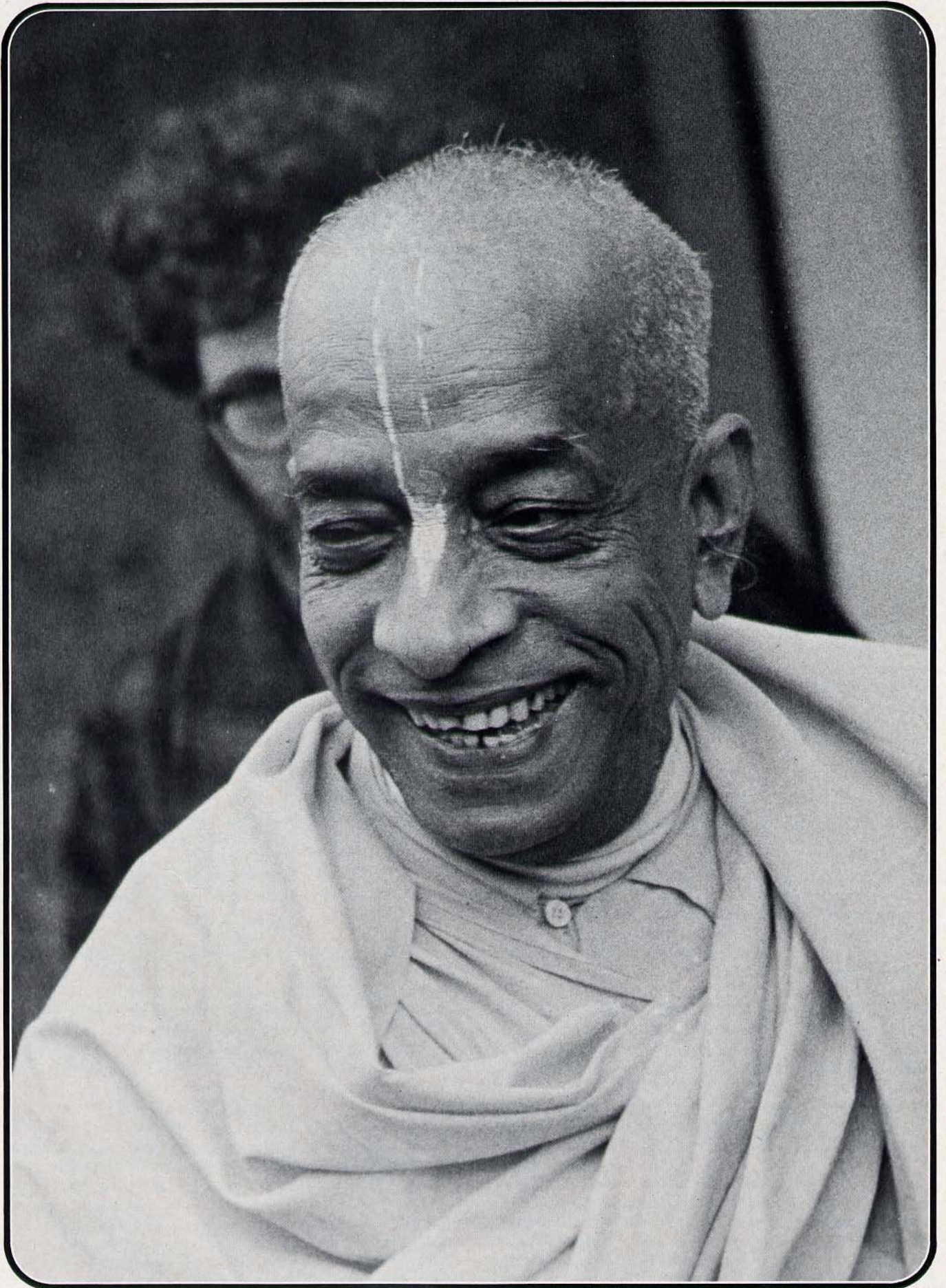
Swamiji would be pleased, Mukunda reminded everyone, if they were all chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa when he came through the gate. They were already familiar with the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. They had heard about the Swami's chanting in the park in New York, or they had seen the article about Swamiji and the chanting in the local underground paper, *The Oracle*. Earlier today they had gathered in Golden Gate Park—most of them responding to a flyer Mukunda had distributed—and had chanted there for more than an hour before coming to the airport in a caravan of cars. Now many of them—also in response to Mukunda's flyer—stood with incense and flowers in their hands.

As the disembarking passengers entered the terminal gate and walked up the ramp, they looked in amazement at the reception party of flower-bearing chanters. The chanters, however, gazed past these ordinary, tired-looking travelers, searching for that special person who was supposed to be on the plane. Suddenly, strolling toward them was the Swami, golden-complexioned, dressed in bright saffron robes.

Prabhupāda had heard the chanting even before he had entered the terminal, and he had begun to smile. He was happy and surprised. Glancing over the faces, he recognized only a few. Yet here were fifty

(continued on page 30)

From *Śrīla Prabhupāda-lilāmṛta*, by Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami. © 1981 by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.



ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Plain Living, High Thinking

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, and Kulaśekhara dāsa took place in New Vrindaban in June of 1976.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The Western civilization is a nasty civilization, artificially increasing the necessities of life. For example, take the electric light. The electric light requires a generator, and to run the generator you need petroleum. As soon as the petroleum supply is stopped, everything will stop. But to get petroleum you have to painstakingly search it out and bore deep into the earth, sometimes in the middle of the ocean. This is *ugra-karma*, horrible work. The same purpose can be served by growing some castor seeds, pressing out the oil, and putting the oil into a pot with a wick. We admit that you have improved the lighting system with electricity, but to improve from the castor-oil lamp to the electric lamp you have to work very hard. You have to go to the middle of the ocean and drill and then draw out the petroleum, and in this way the real goal of your life is missed. You are in a precarious position, constantly dying and taking birth in various species of life. How to get free of this cycle of birth and death—*this* is your problem. And this problem is meant to be solved in the human life. You have advanced intelligence for self-realization, but instead of using your advanced intelligence for self-realization, you are utilizing it to improve from the castor-oil lamp to the electric lamp. That's all.

Kulaśekhara dāsa: People would say that your suggestion is impractical. Besides, electricity does many other things besides produce light. Most of our modern comforts depend more or less on electricity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In this life you may be living very comfortably, but in the next life you might become a dog.

Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami: People don't believe that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Whether they believe it or not, it is a fact. For example, a boy does not know that he is going to grow into a young man, but his mother and father know. If the boy says, "No, I'm not going to become a young man," that is childish. The father and mother know that the boy will grow into a young man and that they should educate him so he can be properly situated. This is the guardians' duty. Similarly, when we talk of transmigration of the soul, a rascal may say, "I don't believe



in it," but it is still a fact. A rascal, a madman, may say transmigration is not a fact, but the real fact is that he'll have to accept another body according to the quality of his endeavor in this life (*kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgo 'sya sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*).

Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami: What if someone says, "This life of growing the castor seeds is very difficult, and farming in general is very difficult. It is easier to go to the factory for eight hours, come home with my money, and enjoy."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You may enjoy, but by enjoying you forget your real goal in life. Is that intelligent? You have been given the human body to improve your next life. Suppose you become a dog in your next life. Is that success? You must know the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then, instead of becoming a dog, you will become like God.

Kulaśekhara dāsa: Once, at John Lennon's estate in London, you said that the tractor is the cause of so much of the trouble today. It took all the work from the young men and forced them to go to the city for work, and they became entangled in sense gratification. I've noticed that life in the country is simpler, more peaceful. It's easier to think of spiritual life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The country is less disturbing, less taxing on the brain. Just work a little for your food, and the rest of the time engage yourself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is ideal life.

[Śrīla Prabhupāda holds up a flower.] See the minute fibers in this flower. Can anyone manufacture this in a factory—such small fibers? And how brilliant the

color is! If you study only one flower, you become God conscious. There is a machine that you call "nature," and from this machine everything is coming. But who has built this machine?

Kulaśekhara dāsa: In London you said people don't know that the flowers are painted by Kṛṣṇa—with thought.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Do you think that without an artist the flowers can come out so beautiful? This is foolish. What is nature? It is Kṛṣṇa's machine. Everything is being done by the machine of Kṛṣṇa.

So improve your mode of living at New Vrindaban. Live in an open place, produce your own food grains, produce your own milk, save time, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Plain living, high thinking: ideal life. But if you increase the artificial necessities of your life—your so-called comforts—and forget your real work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is suicidal. We want to stop this suicidal policy. Of course, we don't insist that people stop the modern advancement of technology. We just present the simple formula given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Even in your technological factory you can chant. What is the difficulty? You can go on pushing the buttons on your machine and simultaneously chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami: And if people take up the chanting, gradually they will give up the technology?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Of course.

Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami: So you're sowing the seeds of their destruction.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, not destruction; rather construction. The repetition of birth and death, the constant change of bodies—this is destruction. But by our method, you live forever—*tyaktvā deham punar janma naiti*: you don't get another material body. But without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, *tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ*: you have to accept another body, which means suffering. So, which is better? To accept material bodies, one after another, or to accept no more material bodies? If we finish our suffering with this body, that is intelligent, and if we create another body for further suffering, that is unintelligent. But unless you understand Kṛṣṇa, you have to accept another body. There is no alternative.

*An incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in Bengal, India, five hundred years ago and taught love of God through the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the "cream of the Vedic literatures" of ancient India. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa*, or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. The original Sanskrit text is presented here with transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"

CHAPTER SEVEN

Scheduled Incarnations with Specific Functions

As our serialized presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam continues, Lord Brahmā continues to tell his son and disciple Nārada of Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnations. First he describes the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra, and then those of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

TEXT 24

यस्मा अदादुदधिरूढभयाङ्गवेपो
मार्गं सपद्यरिपुरं हरवद् दिग्धक्षोः ।
दूरे सुहृन्मथितरोषसुशोणदृष्ट्या
तातप्यमानमकरोरगनक्रचक्रः ॥२४॥

*yasmā adād udadhir ūḍha-bhayāṅga-vepo
mārgam sapady ari-puram haravad didhakṣoḥ
dūre suhṛn-mathita-roṣa-suṣoṇa-dṛṣṭyā
tātapyamāna-makaroraga-nakra-cakraḥ*

yasmā—unto whom; *adāt*—gave; *udadhiḥ*—the great Indian Ocean; *ūḍha-bhaya*—affected by fear; *āṅga-vepaḥ*—bodily trembling; *mārgam*—way; *sapady*—quickly; *ari-puram*—the city of the enemy; *hara-vat*—like that of Hara (Mahādeva); *didhakṣoḥ*—desiring to burn to ashes; *dūre*—at a long distance; *su-hṛt*—intimate friend; *mathita*—being aggrieved by; *roṣa*—in anger; *su-ṣoṇa*—red-hot; *dṛṣṭyā*—by such a glance; *tātapyamāna*—burning in heat; *makara*—sharks; *uraga*—snakes; *nakra*—crocodiles; *cakraḥ*—circle.

TRANSLATION

The Personality of Godhead Rāmacandra, being aggrieved for His distant intimate friend [Sītā], glanced over the city of the enemy Rāvaṇa with red-hot eyes like those of Hara [who wanted to burn the kingdom of heaven]. The great ocean, trembling in fear, gave Him His way because its family members, the aquatics like the sharks, snakes and crocodiles, were being burnt by the heat of the angry red-hot eyes of the Lord.

PURPORT

The Personality of Godhead has every sentiment of a sentient being, like all other living beings, because He is the chief and original living entity, the supreme source of all other living beings. He is the *nitya*, or the chief eternal amongst all other eternals. He is the chief one, and all others are the dependent many. The many eternals are supported by the one eternal, and thus both the eternals are qualitatively one. Due to such oneness, both the eternals constitutionally have a complete range of sentiments, but the difference is that the sentiments of the chief eternal are different in quantity from the sentiments of the dependent eternals.

When Rāmacandra was angry and showed His red-hot eyes, the whole ocean became heated with that energy, so much so that the aquatics within the great ocean felt the heat, and the personified ocean trembled in fear and offered the Lord an easy path for reaching the enemy's city. The impersonalists will see havoc in this red-hot sentiment of the Lord because they want to see negation in perfection. Because the Lord is absolute, the impersonalists imagine that in the Absolute the sentiment of anger, which resembles mundane sentiments, must be conspicuous by absence. Due to a poor fund of knowledge, they do not realize that the sentiment of the Absolute Person is transcendental to all mundane concepts of quality and quantity. Had Lord Rāmacandra's sentiment been of mundane origin, how could it disturb the whole ocean and its inhabitants? Can any mundane red-hot eye generate heat in the great ocean? These are factors to be distinguished in terms of the personal and impersonal conceptions of the Absolute Truth. As it is said in the beginning of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Absolute Truth is the source of everything, so the Absolute Person cannot be devoid of the sentiments that are reflected in the temporary mundane world. Rather, the different sentiments found in the Absolute, either in anger or in mercy, have the same qualitative influence, or, in other words, there is no mundane difference of value because these sentiments are all on the absolute plane. Such sentiments are definitely not absent in the Absolute, as the impersonalists think, making their mundane estimation of the transcendental world.

TEXT 25

वक्षःस्थलस्पर्शरुग्णमहेन्द्रवाह-
दन्तैर्विडम्बितककुब्जुष ऊढहासम् ।
सद्योऽसुभिः सह विनेष्यति दारहर्तु-
र्विस्फूर्जितैर्धनुष उचरतोऽधिसैन्ये ॥२५॥

*vakṣaḥ-sthala-sparśa-rugṇa-mahendra-vāha-
dantair viḍambita-kakubjuṣa ūḍha-hāsam
sadyo 'subhiḥ saha vineṣyati dāra-hartur
visphūrjitar dhanuṣa uccarato 'dhisainye*

vakṣaḥ-sthala—chest; *sparśa*—touched by; *rugṇa*—broken; *mahā-indra*—the King of heaven; *vāha*—the conveyor; *dantaiḥ*—by the trunk; *viḍambita*—illuminated; *kakup-juṣaḥ*—all directions thus being served; *ūḍha-hāsam*—overtaken by laughter; *sadyaḥ*—within no time; *asubhiḥ*—by the life; *saha*—along with; *vineṣyati*—was killed; *dāra-hartuḥ*—of the one who kidnapped the wife; *visphūrjitar*—by the tingling of the bow; *dhanuṣaḥ*—bow; *uccarataḥ*—strolling fast; *adhisainye*—in the midst of the fighting soldiers of both sides.

TRANSLATION

When Rāvaṇa was engaged in the battle, the trunk of the elephant which carried the King of heaven, Indra, broke in pieces, having collided with the chest of Rāvaṇa, and the scattered broken parts illuminated all directions. Rāvaṇa therefore felt proud of his prowess and began to loiter in the midst of the fighting soldiers,

thinking himself the conqueror of all directions. But his laughter, overtaken by joy, along with his very air of life, suddenly ceased with the tingling sound of the bow of Rāmacandra, the Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

However powerful a living being may be, when he is condemned by God no one can save him, and, similarly, however weak one may be, if he is protected by the Lord no one can annihilate him.

TEXT 26

भूमेः सुरेतरवरूथविमर्दितायाः
 क्लेशव्ययाय कलया सितकृष्णकेशः ।
 जातः करिष्यति जनानुपलक्ष्यमार्गः
 कर्मणि चात्ममहिमोपनिबन्धनानि ॥२६॥

*bhūmeḥ suretara-varūtha-vimarditāyāḥ
 kleśa-vyayāya kalayā sīta-kṛṣṇa-keśaḥ
 jātaḥ kariṣyati janānupalakṣya-mārgaḥ
 karmāṇi cātma-mahimopanibandhanāni*

bhūmeḥ—of the entire world; *sura-ītara*—other than godly persons; *varūtha*—soldiers; *vimarditāyāḥ*—distressed by the burden; *kleśa*—miseries; *vyayāya*—for the matter of diminishing; *kalayā*—along with His plenary expansion; *sīta-kṛṣṇa*—not only beautiful but also black; *keśaḥ*—with such hairs; *jātaḥ*—having appeared; *kariṣyati*—would act; *jana*—people in general; *anupalakṣya*—rarely to be seen; *mārgaḥ*—path; *karmāṇi*—activities; *ca*—also; *ātma-mahimā*—glories of the Lord Himself; *upanibandhanāni*—in relation to.

TRANSLATION

When the world is overburdened by the fighting strength of kings who have no faith in God, the Lord, just to diminish the distress of the world, descends with His plenary portion. The Lord comes in His original form, with beautiful black hair. And just to expand His transcendental glories, He acts extraordinarily. No one can properly estimate how great He is.

PURPORT

This verse is especially describing the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His immediate expansion, Lord Baladeva. Both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Baladeva are one Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord is omnipotent, and He expands Himself in innumerable forms and energies, and the whole unit is known as the one Supreme Brahman. Such extensions of the Lord are divided into two divisions, namely personal and differential. The personal expansions are called the *viṣṇu-tattvas*, and the differential expansions are called the *jīva-tattvas*. And in such expansional activity, Lord Baladeva is the first personal expansion of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, as well as in the *Mahābhārata*, both Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are mentioned as having beautiful black hair, even in Their advanced age. The Lord is called *anupalakṣya-mārgaḥ* or, in still more technical Vedic terms, *avān-manasā gocaraḥ*: one who is never to be seen or realized by the limited sense perception of the people in general. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.25) it is said by the Lord, *nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya yogamāyā-samāvṛtaḥ*. In other words, He reserves the right of not being exposed to anyone and everyone. Only the bona fide devotees can know Him by His specific symptoms, and out of many, many such symptoms, one symptom is mentioned here in this verse, that the Lord is *sīta-kṛṣṇa-keśaḥ*, or one who is observed always with beautiful black hair. Both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Baladeva have such hair on Their heads, and thus even in advanced age They appeared like young boys sixteen years old. That is the particular symptom of the Personality of Godhead. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated that although He is the oldest per-

sonality among all living entities, He always looks like a new, youthful boy. That is the characteristic of a spiritual body. The material body is symptomized by birth, death, old age and diseases, but the spiritual body is conspicuous by the absence of those symptoms. Living entities who reside in the *Vaikuṅṭhalokas* in eternal life and bliss have the same type of spiritual body, without being affected by any signs of old age. It is described in the *Bhāgavatam* (Canto Six) that the party of Viṣṇudūtas who came to deliver Ajāmila from the clutches of the party of Yamarāja appeared like youthful boys, corroborating the description in this verse. It is ascertained thus that the spiritual bodies in the *Vaikuṅṭhalokas*, either of the Lord or of the other inhabitants, are completely distinct from the material bodies of this world. Therefore, when the Lord descends from that world to this world, He descends in His spiritual body of *ātma-māyā*, or internal potency, without any touch of the *bahirāṅgā-māyā*, or external, material energy. The allegation that the impersonal Brahman appears in this material world by accepting a material body is quite absurd. Therefore the Lord, when He comes here, has not a material body, but a spiritual body. The impersonal *brahmajyoti* is only the glaring effulgence of the body of the Lord, and there is no difference in quality between the body of the Lord and the impersonal ray of the Lord, called *brahmajyoti*.

Now the question is why the Lord, who is omnipotent, comes here to diminish the burden created upon the world by the unscrupulous kingly order. Certainly the Lord does not need to come here personally for such purposes, but He actually descends to exhibit His transcendental activities in order to encourage His pure devotees, who want to enjoy life by chanting the glories of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.13–14) it is stated that the *mahātmās*, great devotees of the Lord, take pleasure in chanting of the activities of the Lord. All Vedic literatures are meant for turning one's attention towards the Lord and His transcendental activities. Thus the activities of the Lord, in His dealings with worldly people, create a subject matter for discussion by His pure devotees.

TEXT 27

तोकेन जीवहरणं यदुल्किकाया-
 स्त्रैमासिकस्य च पदा शकटोऽपवृत्तः ।
 यद् रिङ्गतान्तरगतेन दिविस्पृशोर्वा
 उन्मूलनं त्वितरथार्जुनयोर्न भाव्यम् ॥२७॥

*tokena jīva-haraṇam yad ulūki-kāyās
 trai-māsikasya ca padā śakato 'pavṛttaḥ
 yad riṅgātāntara-gatena divi-spr̥ṣor vā
 unmūlanam tv itarathārjunayor na bhāvyaṁ*

tokena—by a child; *jīva-haraṇam*—killing a living being; *yat*—one which; *ulūki-kāyāḥ*—assumed the giant body of a demon; *trai-māsikasya*—of one who is only three months old; *ca*—also; *padā*—by the leg; *śakataḥ apavṛttaḥ*—turned over the cart; *yat*—one who; *riṅgātā*—while crawling; *antara-gatena*—being overtaken; *divi*—high in the sky; *spr̥ṣoḥ*—touching; *vā*—either; *unmūlanam*—uprooting; *tu*—but; *itarathā*—anyone else than; *arjunayor*—of the two *arjuna* trees; *na bhāvyaṁ*—was not possible.

TRANSLATION

There is no doubt about Lord Kṛṣṇa's being the Supreme Lord, otherwise how was it possible for Him to kill a giant demon like Pūtanā when He was just on the lap of His mother, to overturn a cart with His leg when He was only three months old, to uproot a part of *arjuna* trees, so high that they touched the sky, when He was only crawling? All these activities are impossible for anyone other than the Lord Himself.

PURPORT

One cannot manufacture a God by one's mental speculation or by accumulating votes, as has become a practice for the less intelligent class of

men. God is God eternally, and an ordinary living entity is eternally a part and parcel of God. God is one without a second, and the ordinary living entities are many without number. All such living entities are maintained by God Himself, and that is the verdict of the Vedic literatures. When Kṛṣṇa was on the lap of His mother, the demon Pūtanā appeared before His mother and prayed to nurture the child in her lap. Mother Yaśodā agreed, and the child was transferred onto the lap of Pūtanā, who was in the garb of a respectable lady. Pūtanā wanted to kill the child by smearing poison on the nipple of her breast. But when everything was complete, the Lord sucked her breast along with her very air of life, and the demon's gigantic body, said to be as long as six miles, fell down. But Lord Kṛṣṇa did not need to expand Himself to the length of the she-demon Pūtanā, although He was quite competent to extend Himself more than six miles long. In His Vāmana incarnation He posed Himself as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa*, but when He took possession of His land, promised by Bali Mahārāja, He expanded His footstep to the top of the universe, extending over thousands and millions of miles. So it was not very difficult for Kṛṣṇa to perform a miracle by extending His bodily feature, but He had no desire to do it because of His deep filial love for His mother, Yaśodā. If Yaśodā had seen Kṛṣṇa in her lap extending six miles to cope with the she-demon Pūtanā, then the natural filial love of Yaśodā would have been hurt because in that way Yaśodā would have come to know that her so-called son, Kṛṣṇa, was God Himself. And with the knowledge of the Godhood of Kṛṣṇa, Yaśodāmayī would have lost the temper of her love for Kṛṣṇa as a natural mother. But as far as Lord Kṛṣṇa is concerned, He is God always, either as a child on the lap of His mother, or as the coverer of the universe, Vāmanadeva. He does not require to become God by undergoing severe penances, although some men think of becoming God in that way. By undergoing severe austerities and penances, one cannot become one or equal with God, but one can attain most of the godly qualities. A living being can attain godly qualities to a large extent, but he cannot become God, whereas Kṛṣṇa, without undergoing any type of penance, is God always, either in the lap of His mother or growing up or at any stage of growth.

So at the age of only three months He killed the Śakatāsura, who had remained hidden behind a cart in the house of Yaśodāmayī. And when He was crawling and was disturbing His mother from doing household affairs, the mother tied Him with a grinding pestle, but the naughty child dragged the pestle up to a pair of very high *arjuna* trees in the yard of Yaśodāmayī, and when the pestle was stuck between the pair of trees, they fell down with a horrible sound. When Yaśodāmayī came to see the happenings, she thought that her child had been saved from the falling trees by the mercy of the Lord, without knowing that the Lord Himself, crawling in her yard, had wreaked the havoc. So that is the way of reciprocation of love affairs between the Lord and His devotees. Yaśodāmayī wanted to have the Lord as her child, and the Lord played exactly like a child in her lap, but at the same time played the part of the Almighty Lord whenever it was so required. The beauty of such pastimes was that the Lord fulfilled everyone's desire. In the case of felling the gigantic *arjuna* trees, the Lord's mission was to deliver the two sons of Kuvera, who were condemned to become trees by the curse of Nārada, as well as to play like a crawling child in the yard of Yaśodā, who took transcendental pleasure in seeing such activities of the Lord in the very yard of her home.

The Lord in any condition is Lord of the universe, and He can act as such in any form, gigantic or small, as He likes.

TEXT 28

यद् वै व्रजे व्रजपशून् विषतोयपीतान्
पालांस्त्वजीवयदनुग्रहदृष्टिवृष्टया ।
तच्छुद्धयेऽतिविषवीर्यविलोलजिह्व-
मुच्चाटयिष्यदुदरं विहरन् हृदिन्याम् ॥२८॥

yad vai vraje vraja-paśūn viṣatoya-pītān
pālāns tv ajivayad anugraha-dṛṣṭi-vṛṣṭyā

tac-chuddhaye 'ti-ṣa-vīrya-vilola-jihvam
uccāṭayisyad uragam viharan hradinyām

yat—one who; vai—certainly; vraje—at Vṛndāvana; vraja-paśūn—the animals thereof; viṣa-toya—poisoned water; pītān—those who drank; pālān—the cowherd men; tu—also; ajivayat—brought to life; anugraha-dṛṣṭi—merciful glance; vṛṣṭyā—by the showers of; tat—that; suddhaye—for purification; ati—exceedingly; viṣa-vīrya—highly potent poison; vilola—lurking; jihvam—one who has such a tongue; uccāṭayisyat—severely punished; uragam—unto the snake; viharan—taking it as a pleasure; hradinyām—in the river.

TRANSLATION

Then also when the cowherd boys and their animals drank the poisoned water of the River Yamunā, and after the Lord [in His childhood] revived them by His merciful glance, just to purify the water of the River Yamunā He jumped into it as if playing and chastised the venomous Kāliya snake, which was lurking there, its tongue emitting waves of poison. Who can perform such herculean tasks but the Supreme Lord?

TEXT 29

तत् कर्म दिव्यमिव यन्निशि निःशयानं
दावाग्निना शुचिवने परिदहमाने ।
उन्नेष्यति व्रजमतोऽवसितान्तकालं
नेत्रे पिधाप्य सबलोऽनधिगम्यवीर्यः ॥२९॥

tat karma divyam iva yan niśi niṣayānam
dāvāgninā śuci-vane paridahyamāne
unneṣyati vrajam ato 'vasitānta-kālam
netre pidhāpya sabalo 'nadhigamya-vīryaḥ

tat—that; karma—activity; divyam—superhuman; iva—like; yat—which; niśi—at night; niṣayānam—sleeping carefreely; dāvā-agninā—by the glare of the forest fire; śuci-vane—in the dry forest; paridahyamāne—being set ablaze; unneṣyati—would deliver; vrajam—all the inhabitants of Vraja; ataḥ—hence; avasita—surely; anta-kālam—last moments of life; netre—on the eyes; pidhāpya—simply by closing; sa-balaḥ—along with Baladeva; anadhigamya—unfathomable; vīryaḥ—prowess.

TRANSLATION

On the very night of the day of the chastisement of the Kāliya snake, when the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi were sleeping carefreely, there was a forest fire ablaze due to dry leaves, and it appeared that all the inhabitants were sure to meet their death. But the Lord, along with Balarāma, saved them simply by closing His eyes. Such are the superhuman activities of the Lord.

PURPORT

Although in this verse the Lord's activity has been described as superhuman, it should be noted that the Lord's activities are always superhuman, and that distinguishes Him from the ordinary living being. Uprooting a gigantic banyan or *arjuna* tree and extinguishing a blazing forest fire simply by closing one's eyes are certainly impossible by any kind of human endeavor. But not only are these activities amazing to hear, but in fact all other activities of the Lord, whatever He may do, are all superhuman, as confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9). Whoever knows the superhuman activities of the Lord, due to their very transcendental nature, becomes eligible to enter the kingdom of Kṛṣṇa, and as such, after quitting this present material body, the knower of the transcendental activities of the Lord goes back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 30

गृहीत यद् यदुपबन्धममुष्य माता
शुल्बं सुतस्य न तु तत् तदमुष्य माति ।

यज्जृम्भतोऽस्य वदने भुवनानि गोपी
संवीक्ष्य शङ्कितमनाः प्रतिबोधितासीत् ॥३०॥

*grhṇāta yad yad upabandham amuṣya mātā
śulbam sutasya na tu tat tad amuṣya māti
yaj jṛmbhato 'sya vadane bhuvanāni gopī
saṁvikṣya śaṅkita-manāḥ pratibodhitāsi*

grhṇāta—by taking up; *yat yat*—whatsoever; *upabandham*—ropes for tying; *amuṣya*—His; *mātā*—mother; *śulbam*—ropes; *sutasya*—of her son; *na*—not; *tu*—however; *tat tat*—by and by; *amuṣya*—His; *māti*—was sufficient; *yaj*—that which; *jṛmbhataḥ*—opening the mouth; *asya*—of Him; *vadane*—in the mouth; *bhuvanāni*—the worlds; *gopī*—the cowherd woman; *saṁvikṣya*—so seeing it; *śaṅkita-manāḥ*—doubtful in mind; *pratibodhitā*—convinced in a different way; *āsī*—was so done.

TRANSLATION

When the cowherd woman [Kṛṣṇa's foster mother, Yaśodā] was trying to tie the hands of her son with ropes, she found the rope to be always insufficient in length, and when she finally gave up, Lord Kṛṣṇa, by and by, opened His mouth, wherein the mother found all the universes situated. Seeing this, she was doubtful in her mind, but she was convinced in a different manner of the mystic nature of her son.

PURPORT

One day Lord Kṛṣṇa as the naughty child disturbed His mother Yaśodā, and she began to tie up the child with ropes just to punish Him. But no matter how much rope she used, she found it always insufficient. Thus she became fatigued, but in the meantime the Lord opened His mouth, and the affectionate mother saw within the mouth of her son all the universes situated together. The mother was astonished, but out of her deep affection for Kṛṣṇa she thought that the Almighty Godhead Nārāyaṇa had kindly looked after her son just to protect Him from all the continuous calamities happening to Him. Because of her deep affection for Kṛṣṇa, she could never think that her very son was Nārāyaṇa, the Personality of Godhead Himself. That is the action of *yogamāyā*, the internal potency of the Supreme Lord, which acts to perfect all the pastimes of the Lord with His different types of devotees. Who could play such wonders without being God?

TEXT 31

नन्दं च मोक्षयति भयाद् वरुणस्य पाशाद्
गोपान् बिलेषु पिहितान् मयस्त्रुना च।
अह्वयापृतं निशि शयानमतिश्रमेण
लोकं विकुण्ठमुपनेष्यति गोकुलं स्म ॥३१॥

*nandaṁ ca mokṣyati bhayād varuṇasya pāśāḍ
gopān bileṣu pihitān mayas-trunā ca
ahvya-āpṛtam niśi śayānam atīśrameṇa
lokaṁ vikuṇṭham upaneṣyati gokulaṁ sma*

nandaṁ—unto Nanda (the father of Kṛṣṇa); *ca*—also; *mokṣyati*—saves; *bhayāt*—from the fear of; *varuṇasya*—of Varuṇa, the demigod of water; *pāśāt*—from the clutches of; *gopān*—the cowherd men; *bileṣu*—in the caves of the mountain; *pihitān*—placed; *mayas-trunā*—by the son of Maya; *ca*—also; *ahni-āpṛtam*—being very engaged during the daytime; *niśi*—at night; *śayānam*—lying down; *atīśrameṇa*—because of hard labor; *lokaṁ*—planet; *vikuṇṭham*—the spiritual sky; *upaneṣyati*—He awarded; *gokulam*—the highest planet; *sma*—certainly.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa saved His foster father, Nanda Mahārāja, from the fear of the demigod Varuṇa and released the cowherd boys from

the caves of the mountain, for they were placed there by the son of Maya. Also, to the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, who were busy working during daytime and sleeping soundly at night because of their hard labor in the day, Lord Kṛṣṇa awarded promotion to the highest planet in the spiritual sky. All these acts are transcendental and certainly prove without any doubt His Godhood.

PURPORT

Nanda Mahārāja, the foster father of Lord Kṛṣṇa, went to take his bath in the River Yamunā in the dead of night, mistakenly thinking that the night was already over; thus the demigod Varuṇa took him to the Varuṇa planet just to have a look at the Personality of Godhead Lord Kṛṣṇa, who appeared there to release His father. Actually there was no arrest of Nanda Mahārāja by Varuṇa because the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana were always engaged in thinking of Kṛṣṇa, in constant meditation on the Personality of Godhead in a particular form of *samādhi*, or trance of *bhakti-yoga*. They had no fear of the miseries of material existence. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is confirmed that to be in association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead by full surrender in transcendental love frees one from the miseries inflicted by the laws of material nature. Here it is clearly mentioned that the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana were extensively busy in the hard labor of their day's work, and due to the day's hard labor they were engaged in sound sleep at night. So practically they had very little time to devote to meditation or to the other paraphernalia of spiritual activities. But factually they were engaged in the highest spiritual activities only. Everything done by them was spiritualized because everything was dovetailed in their relationship with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The central point of activities was Kṛṣṇa, and as such the so-called activities in the material world were saturated with spiritual potency. That is the advantage of the way of *bhakti-yoga*. One should discharge one's duty on Lord Kṛṣṇa's behalf, and all one's actions will be saturated with Kṛṣṇa thought, the highest pattern of trance in spiritual realization.

TEXT 32

गोपैर्मखे प्रतिहते ब्रजविप्लवाया
देवेऽभिवर्षति पशून् कृपया रिरक्षुः ।
धर्तोच्छिलीन्द्रमिव सप्तदिनानि सप्त-
वर्षो महीध्रमनघैककरो सलीलम् ॥३२॥

*gopaiḥ makhe pratihate vraja-viplavāya
deve 'bhivarṣati paśūn kṛpayā riraḥṣuḥ
dhartocchilīndhram iva sapta-dināni sapta-
varṣo mahīdhram anaghaika-kare salīlam*

gopaiḥ—by the cowherd men; *makhe*—in offering a sacrifice to the King of heaven; *pratihate*—being hampered; *vraja-viplavāya*—for devastating the whole existence of Vrajabhūmi, the land of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes; *deve*—by the King of heaven; *abhivarṣati*—having poured down heavy rain; *paśūn*—the animals; *kṛpayā*—by causeless mercy upon them; *riraḥṣuḥ*—desired to protect them; *dharta*—held up; *ucchilīndhram*—uprooted as an umbrella; *iva*—exactly like that; *sapta-dināni*—continuously for seven days; *sapta-varṣaḥ*—although He was only seven years old; *mahīdhram*—the Govardhana Hill; *anagha*—without being tired; *eka-kare*—in one hand only; *salīlam*—playfully.

TRANSLATION

When the cowherd men of Vṛndāvana, under instruction of Kṛṣṇa, stopped offering sacrifice to the heavenly King, Indra, the whole tract of land known as Vraja was threatened with being washed away by constant heavy rains for seven days. Lord Kṛṣṇa, out of His causeless mercy upon the inhabitants of Vraja, held up the hill known as Govardhana with one hand only, although He was only seven years old. He did this to protect the animals from the onslaught of water.

(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

A look at the worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Devotee Paints Mural for Civic Center



Muralīdhara dāsa works on "French Explorers," one of two murals he has painted for the Wheeling, West Virginia, Civic Center. He donated the \$5,000 fee for this painting to Prabhupāda's Palace.

Wheeling, West Virginia—A 12-foot by 20-foot mural entitled "French Explorers" has been painted by Muralīdhara dāsa, a devotee at the New Vrindaban farm community, for the Wheeling Civic Center. Rejecting the undisciplined modern styles that often adorn public buildings today, Muralīdhara painted the mural (the first of two he's doing for the Civic Center) in the classical style of old masters like Rembrandt, Rubens, and Michelangelo. The

\$5,000 Muralīdhara received for his mural he donated for ornamenting Prabhupāda's Palace.

For some ten years Muralīdhara has been painting illustrations for the books of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Says Muralīdhara of his art, "I have a desire to paint as a pure instrument representing God, Kṛṣṇa, and through art to bring His beauty out." (For more on Muralīdhara, please see page 24.)



The Honorable J. B. Pattanaik (second row, center), the chief minister of Orissa; His Holiness Gaura-Govinda Swami (to his right), director of ISKCON's Bhuvaneśvara center; and stage director K. C. Pattanaik (to the minister's left) pose with members of the cast of *Prahlāda*.

Chief Minister of Orissa Joins Devotees for Kṛṣṇa's Appearance Fête

Bhuvaneśvara, India—For two days in this capital city of the state of Orissa, more than two thousand devotees and guests celebrated Janmāṣṭamī, the Appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa, with chanting, dancing, plays, readings from scripture, and feasting.

Noted stage director Śrī Krishna Charan Pattanaik offered a performance of the life of the great devotee Prahlāda, enacted by devotees and local supporters. The evening's festivities were inaugurated by the Honorable Janaki Ballava Pattanaik (no relation to Krishna Charan), the chief minister of Orissa and a life member of ISKCON. In his speech the chief min-

ister emphasized the accomplishments of ISKCON's founder-ācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who laid the cornerstone of the Bhuvaneśvara temple in January 1977.

Mahabharata Times Debuts in Great Britain

London—The official debut of the *Mahabharata Times*, a publication sponsored by ISKCON for Indian people in Great Britain, recently took place at the home of Dr. S. K. Dutta, an ISKCON life member. Among the guests were several members of Parliament. Mr. David Lane, chairman of the British government's Commission for Racial Equality, came to express his gratitude to the Mahabharata Association of the United Kingdom for its successful work in race relations between England's British and Asian communities. The Mahabharata Association is the branch of ISKCON that deals with Indian community affairs.

With a circulation starting at 25,000 and projected to double within a few months, the *Mahabharata Times* is Britain's largest publication for Indians. It aims at preserving the cultural and spiritual traditions of the two million Indian people residing in Great Britain.

Advertisements purchased by the Indian community pay for the monthly magazine, and the Mahabharata Youth Clubs, which are part of the Mahabharata Association, distribute it nationwide.

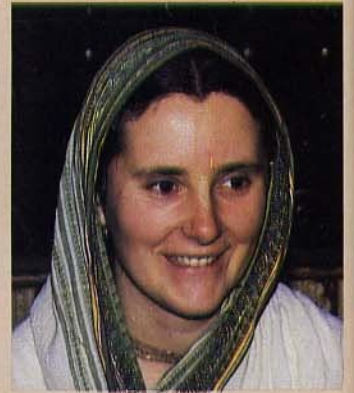
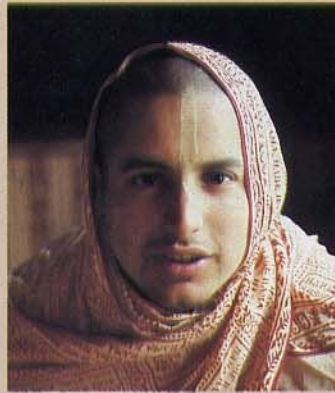
Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees at the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Year 495 Caitanya Era—Month of Vāmana		
June 27	June 28	July 1
Disappearance of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita.	Yoginī Ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Disappearance of Śrīla Gaṇḍādhara Paṇḍita. Disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura (fasting till noon).
July 2	July 3	
Śrī Guṇḍīcā-mārgjana (cleansing of the Guṇḍīcā temple).	Ratha-yātrā of Lord Jagannātha. Disappearance of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī. Disappearance of Śrīla Sivananda Sena.	
July 7	July 11	July 13
Herā-pahcamī	Return Yātrā of Lord Jagannātha.	Baṅgūlī Mahā-dvīdaśī (fasting from grains and beans).

The People Who B

“An offering of love at every moment.” by



Ask anyone who lives near the New Vrindaban farm community, Who built Prabhupāda's Palace? and chances are they'll say, "Oh, the Hare Kṛṣṇas built it." Ask the devotees, and they'll all say, "Śrīla Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda built the Palace. We just helped him." And ask Śrīla Bhaktipāda himself, and he'll likely say, "Lord Kṛṣṇa built it, working through the devotees."

These answers are all correct in their own

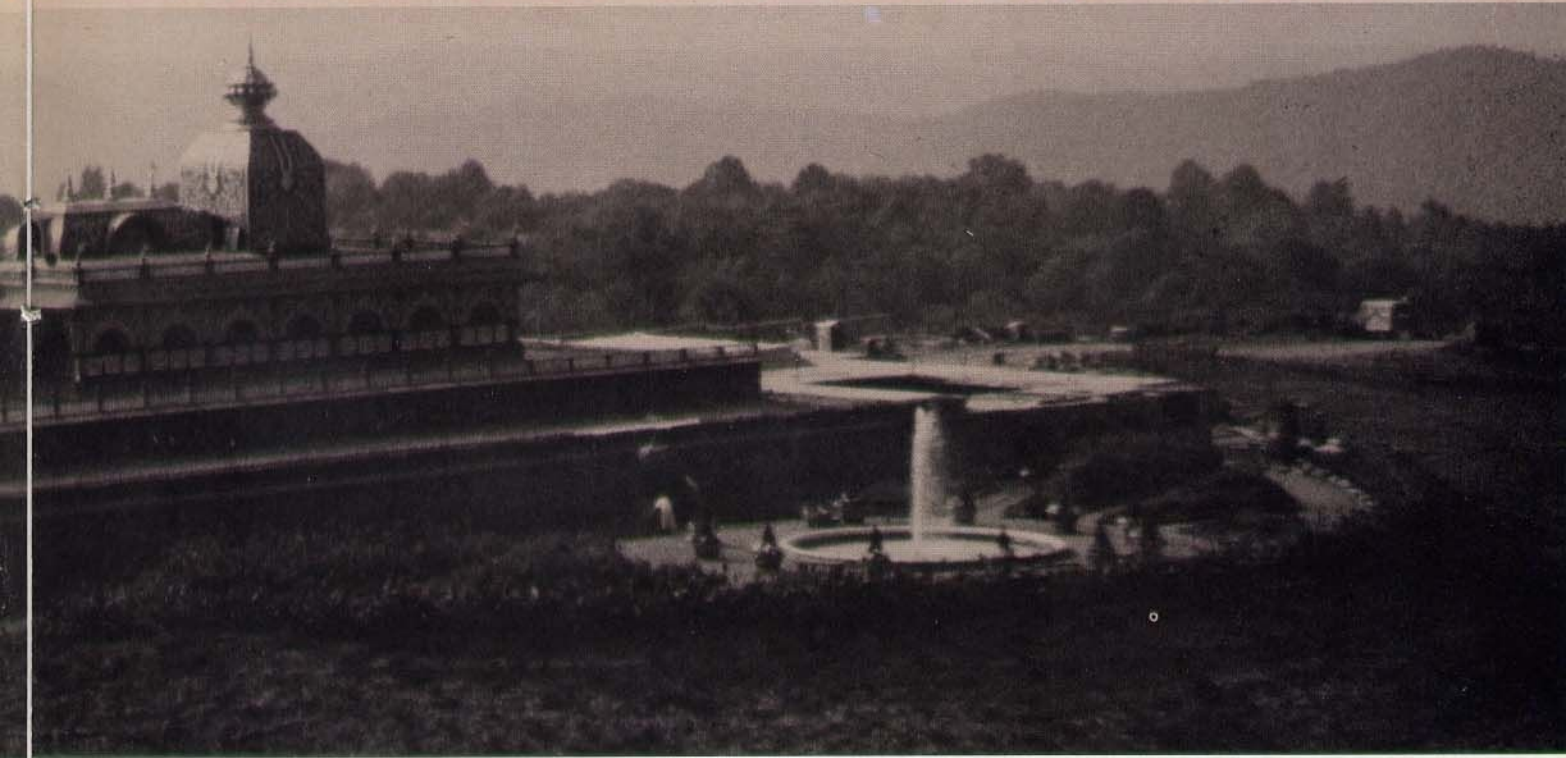
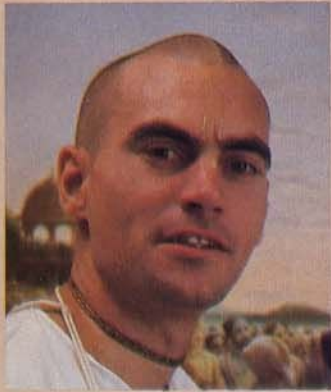
way. First, the building of the Palace was indeed the work of the Kṛṣṇa devotees at New Vrindaban. During the seven years it took to complete, everyone pitched in with whatever talents and energy he could bring to bear. Some spent day after day crouched on a scaffold, painstakingly applying gold leaf. Others poured and mixed concrete by hand, even in the bitter-cold West Virginia winters. Still others carved wood and glass, painted ceilings, cast architectural orna-

ments, landscaped the grounds, or cut and laid marble. Though modest in size compared to the great cathedrals of Europe and the magnificent temples of India, Prabhupāda's Palace ranks beside them as an expression of collective devotion and sacrifice of the highest order.

But the Palace is first and foremost an expression of Śrīla Bhaktipāda's devotion to his spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Built the Palace

by DRAVIDA DĀSA



It was Śrīla Bhaktipāda who started the New Vrindaban community, at the request of Śrīla Prabhupāda, back in 1968; it was Śrīla Bhaktipāda who conceived and developed the idea of the Palace; and it was Śrīla Bhaktipāda who personally guided, encouraged, and inspired the devotees through every step of the arduous construction. So, in an important sense, Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace is also Śrīla Bhaktipāda's palace.

Finally, devotees of Kṛṣṇa understand

that ultimately it is Kṛṣṇa Himself who built Prabhupāda's Palace. When Kṛṣṇa sees that His devotees have a strong desire to perform a certain service for Him—especially one that glorifies His most exalted servitor—He empowers them to do it and provides all necessities in abundance. So it was Lord Kṛṣṇa, through His various energies, who supplied the marble, the cement, the gold, and even the muscle and intelligence the devotees used to build the

Palace. But the devotion, the love, and the strong determination to push through all difficulties and create something wonderful to glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda—these the devotees themselves brought to the task. And it is these qualities that glow from every inch of the Palace.

On the following pages we meet a few of the many devotees whom Kṛṣṇa especially empowered to build Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold.

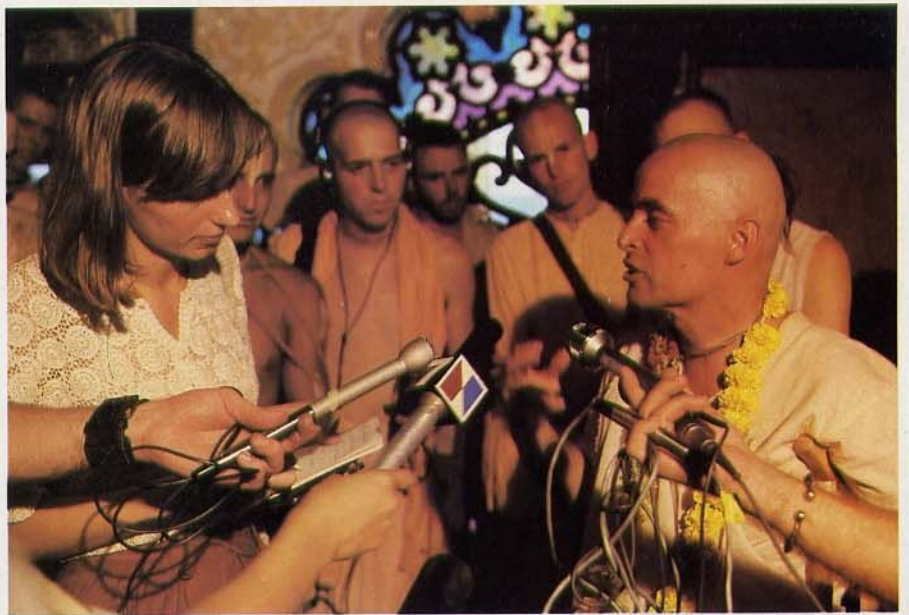
If we were to try to single out one person responsible for Prabhupāda's Palace, the only possible choice would be His Divine Grace Kīrtānānanda Swami Bhaktipāda. One of the first and most intimate disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktipāda began the New Vrindaban farm community in 1968 at his request and nurtured it through its first few difficult years.

In 1971 he left New Vrindaban for some time to travel around the United States by bus, teaching the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in colleges and universities and through the media.

By 1972 Śrīla Bhaktipāda had returned to New Vrindaban, and in 1973 he began to contemplate how to fulfill a desire Śrīla Prabhupāda had for the community: the construction of a temple on each of seven of the farm's hills. Śrīla Bhaktipāda explains how the Palace grew out of this project: "In 1973 we were getting ready to start a temple for Kṛṣṇa at the Govindaji site down at Bahulabana [the principal farm at New Vrindaban]. We had already done the preliminary excavation work and dug a little footer. But I began to think, 'This is not very proper. We are building a home for Kṛṣṇa, but actually in our community there is no home for Śrīla Prabhupāda.' So I thought, 'Let us build a home for Śrīla Prabhupāda, because that is the proper way to approach Kṛṣṇa.' If we want to render service to Kṛṣṇa, we first have to render service to His devotee.

"So we began. But as we worked on Prabhupāda's home, it began to take on the shape of a palace. So the Palace gradually developed."

During the first years of the Palace con-



VIDYĀNANDA DĀSA

struction, men and money were scarce, and the seemingly impossible task of building an elaborate Vedic temple in the hilly backwoods of West Virginia would have stopped an ordinary man cold. Not Śrīla Bhaktipāda. His intense devotion and love for Śrīla Prabhupāda, and his equally intense desire to see him glorified royally, kept the devotees enthusiastic to complete the project.

"Śrīla Bhaktipāda was everywhere," relates one devotee who worked on the Palace from the beginning. "He was ferrying devotees and supplies up and down the three-mile road from the main farm to the Palace; he was making sure we all had *prasādam* [sanctified food] during those long marathon nights before the grand op-

ening two years ago; he was observing our work to make sure we did it as he wanted it done—perfect for Prabhupāda. He was always encouraging us, inspiring us, and, when necessary, chastising us."

As Śrīla Bhaktipāda said in a recent interview with Professor Harvey Cox of Harvard Divinity School: "In graduate school I was simply approaching [religion] from the academic point of view, like trying to know the taste of honey by licking the bottle on the outside. So in the end I decided that rather than simply *record* religious history, I would *make* religious history." Śrīla Bhaktipāda has certainly made religious history by building Prabhupāda's Palace of Gold, and by all indications this is only the beginning.

Art for Bhāgavatānanda dāsa, structural engineer and sculptor for the Palace, found its meaning in a Sanskrit scripture praising the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. "There Kṛṣṇa is described as *vidagdha*," he explains, "meaning 'He who lives wonderfully at the height of beautiful artistic craftsmanship.' That same book explains how, since each of us is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, we each possess the qualities of Kṛṣṇa in minute degree. I happen to have a little artistic ability, so I've made it my purpose in life to glorify Kṛṣṇa with my craft—to create a beautiful place for Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotee Śrīla Prabhupāda to live in and be worshiped."

Bhāgavatānanda (formerly Joseph Cappelletti of Norristown, Pennsylvania) came to New Vrindaban from New York City in 1970 and helped Śrīla Bhaktipāda construct the first few houses in the fledgling community. By 1972 they were planning out Śrīla Prabhupāda's residence, which gradually grew into the Palace.



VIŚAKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Over the past six years, Bhāgavatānanda has assumed a variety of duties in the Palace construction, from engineering the massive 300-ton dome to sculpting the peacocks, elephants, and ornamental pieces that adorn the walls and columns. His present assignment is the design and execution of *The Garden of Time*, which will include a revolving circular fountain that traces in four-foot-high figurines the soul's journey from birth to death to reincarnation.

Bhāgavatānanda sees the significance of the Palace in cultural as well as devotional terms. "Architecture reflects the stability and historicity of a people or tradition," he explains. "The Palace is a monument to the Lord's pure devotee Śrīla Prabhupāda; but it is not a mere memorial to someone no longer present. It is a living tribute to the greatness of his work. It is a place of daily worship, and proof that his mission of establishing Kṛṣṇa culture around the world is being fulfilled."

Nityodita dāsa (formerly Carlos Ordonuz of Buffalo, New York) did construction work on the Palace almost from its inception eight years ago. Like nearly all the devotees who built the Palace, he learned his skills on the job, mixing and laying cement by hand and using pick and shovel for excavation during the many months before the acquisition of machinery.

He recalls how the plans for the Palace changed over the years: “When we first started work on the Palace, it wasn’t going to be a Palace at all. It was simply planned as a modest yet comfortable country home for Śrīla Prabhupāda. But as the project developed, Śrīla Bhaktipāda kept making the plans more and more elaborate—all for the pleasure of Śrīla Prabhupāda. We all felt that actually we weren’t building the Palace so much as the Palace was building *us* into better devotees. Our devotion to Kṛṣṇa was developing by our helping Śrīla Bhaktipāda offer something



YAMARAJA DĀSA

Of all the people who took part in the Palace construction, few are as familiar with the details as Sanāthā-devī dāsī (formerly Susanne Parmelle of Washington, D.C.), who shared in the research and design and supervised much of the labor. A graduate in structural engineering from Pratt Institute in New York City, she was responsible for drawing up working blueprints for approval by state and county officials, and for coordinating the efforts of the other workers—marble layers, stained-glass fitters, plumbers, electricians, casters, cement layers, and many others. Sometimes only Sanāthā knew how to do some special task, like pouring five thousand square feet of concrete for

the restaurant roof and tying the reinforcing rods, and then she would have to spend days with the construction crews.

“One especially wonderful thing about the Palace is that it is actually a simple, basic design—like the whole life of a devotee: a simple design made beautiful by devotion.

“That’s how I came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I was looking for an uncomplicated way to structure my life. In architectural school I could see that both the students and the teachers were motivated only by the desire for sense gratification and fame. They didn’t care at all how the buildings they built affected people’s consciousness.

“But the Palace is not like modern ar-

wonderful to Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is the real secret of how the Palace was built: It didn’t depend on any one worker or group of workers or on money or machinery, but on the strength of Śrīla Bhaktipāda’s love for Śrīla Prabhupāda. This was the inspiration for all of us to keep going through the greatest difficulties.

“Before I came to New Vrindaban I worked in a food co-op in Ann Arbor, Michigan. I had high hopes then for living an ideal life in the country and doing good for people. But there was little cooperation in the co-op, and all the people I worked with were basically materialistic and self-centered. Now I know that real cooperation can come only when we agree to work for Lord Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of a pure spiritual authority. Then amazing things like Prabhupāda’s Palace become possible.”

Nityodita’s latest construction project consists of helping to lay the marble floors of the new restaurant at the Palace.

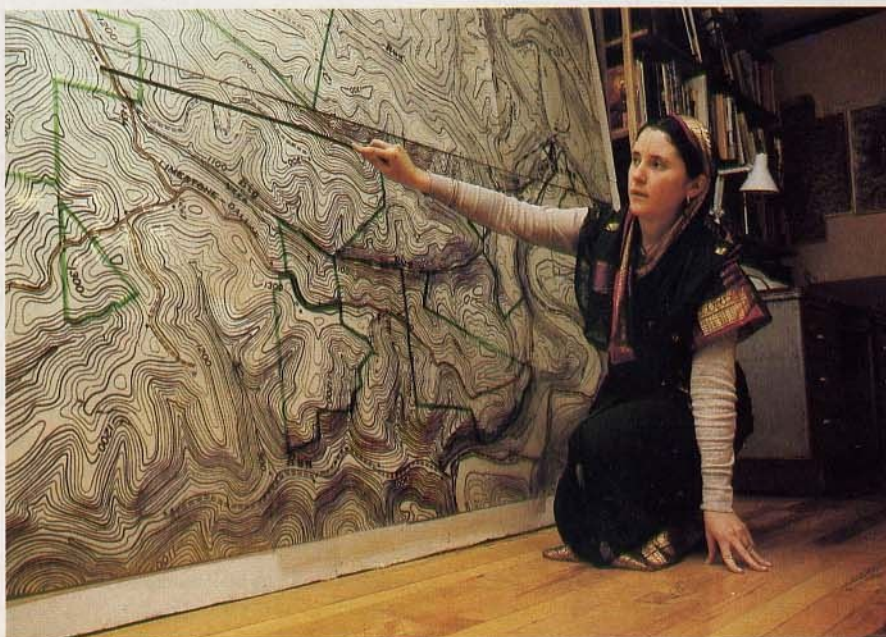
chitecture, where everything is designed complex and expensive. Here in the Palace a window is just two columns and a beam; but the workmanship—stained glass, relief carving, sculpted enclosure—makes it something special, because it has been done with love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Sanāthā explains that in the Palace a pattern often repeats itself many times. For example, the doors, windows, and terrace railings have all been cast from one original design and then finished in various ways, proving that simplicity doesn’t have to be dull.

She says that state officials were skeptical at first as to whether devotees could do such challenging work. “I remember inspectors from the environment board making regular visits because they doubted that we could build an adequate sewage system. But the devotees did such a professional job that the inspectors were amazed. The septic pond is literally sculpted out of the land—a work of art.”

Apart from the superior quality of the work, Sanāthā appreciates the spirit of the Palace as well. “This structure was built first to glorify God. Architecturally, therefore, it has the highest functional use. Anyone who comes to the Palace will be inspired, and he will go away a little bit better spiritually. The way the landscaping is done, you can see God’s creation on all sides.”

Sanāthā looks forward to working on other New Vrindaban construction projects: six temples (including one the size of two football fields), a school, four guest pavilions and summer festival halls, and a crafts center for the many workshops run by devotees.



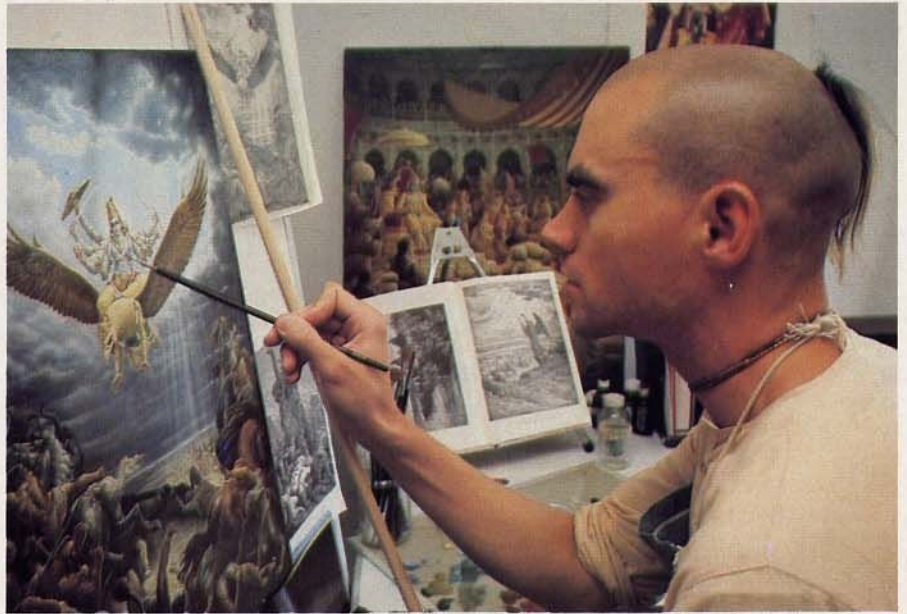
YOGESVARA DĀSA

When Mark Missman left Northwest Missouri State college in 1969 after three years as an art major, he thought he was leaving behind his brushes and easel for good. He was looking for self-realization, and his art career just seemed to be an impediment. But after a short time in the San Francisco Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, Mark (now Muralīdhara dāsa) happily discovered that he could have both his art *and* his self-realization.

Explains Muralīdhara: "I had sketched a picture of Kṛṣṇa, and the devotees showed it to Śrīla Prabhupāda. He asked to see me, and when I came into his room he said, 'Just as Arjuna used his fighting ability to serve Kṛṣṇa, you should use your artistic talent. Just use this talent in Kṛṣṇa's service, and your life will be glorious.'"

Since then Muralīdhara has executed dozens of exquisite paintings depicting the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, His incarnations, and His devotees. The originals grace the walls of Kṛṣṇa temples around the world, while full-color reproductions illustrate Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and the pages of BACK TO GODHEAD magazine.

In 1978 Muralīdhara came to New Vrindaban to help decorate Śrīla Prabhupāda's Palace. The two large oval murals on the temple's vaulted ceiling are his work. The one nearest the altar portrays Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa* dance, a pastime glorified in



VISĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

Vedic scriptures as the epitome of loving exchange between the Lord and His most intimate devotees. The other mural shows Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who propagated love of God through the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, dancing and chanting with His close associates.

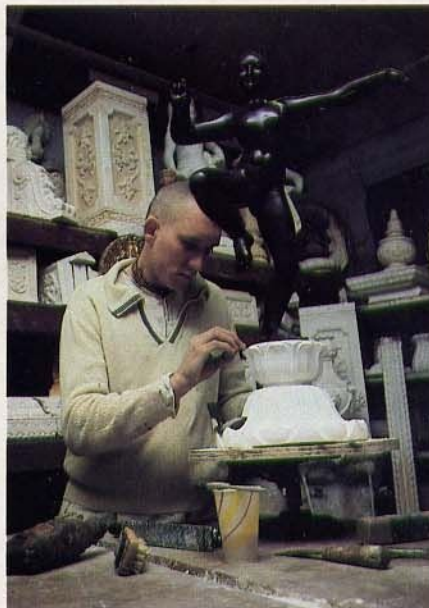
Today Muralīdhara is busier than ever using his artistic skill in Kṛṣṇa's service. Besides designing a series of murals for

the new restaurant at the Palace, he has recently completed two murals for the Civic Center Auditorium in Wheeling (please see news story, page 19). In addition, Muralīdhara is the coordinator of design, placement, and subject matter for all the paintings at the Palace. And with a museum and a new temple in the works at New Vrindaban, it looks like Muralīdhara has a full lifetime of transcendental painting ahead of him.

Sudhānu dāsa (formerly George Weisner of Newark, New Jersey) always had a practical bent. Whatever was necessary, he would do or learn how to do. So, when the plans for Prabhupāda's Palace began to take shape back in 1975 and it became clear that a lot of fine decorative work would be needed, he went to India to learn how to carve.

His first stop was Bombáy, where he spent two months with a family noted for the excellence of their carved wooden pieces! Next he traveled north about five hundred miles to Jaipur, India's center for decorative temple arts, where he studied how to carve in stone. Finally he visited a town near Jaipur called Makrāna to learn the art of how to use carved marble in architecture.

On returning to New Vrindaban, Sudhānu helped devotee-artist Bhāgavatānanda dāsa set up a marble-cutting shop. But then they contemplated the design of the Palace, which was eventually to encompass hundreds of decorative balusters, richly ornamented capitals and roof brackets, and scores of delicately embellished arches, spires, and pillars. It was obvious that they wouldn't be able to carve *everything*. So Sudhānu set out to learn the art of molding . . .



YAMARĀJA DĀSA

He recently outlined the procedure he used in constructing the Palace: "First Śrīla Bhaktipāda and I would consult on an idea for an architectural mold. Then I'd carve a model from clay, wood, glass, or marble—we even used plastic sometimes—and from the model I'd design a production mold out of rubber or fiber-

glass. Then the casting could begin, mostly in concrete for the palace. On the average the whole process took from three to five weeks. Of course, a piece with many components would take longer. The central ornament inside the main dome, with 4,200 separate cast pieces, took months to create."

Many people who come to the Palace say that Sudhānu's work is so expertly done that they can't tell the difference between his cast pieces and those laboriously carved by hand. And now that the Palace hosts yearly festivals for devotees and guests, Sudhānu's work has attracted orders from all over the world. Kṛṣṇa centers in Montreal, Vancouver, Washington D.C., New York, and Zurich will soon boast castings by Sudhānu. And he's still learning new techniques, like the art of casting synthetic marble, which will be essential for constructing the huge new Kṛṣṇa temple now in planning. With this technique he can faithfully reproduce the texture, colors, and patterns of the finest marbles in the world.

For Sudhānu, who regarded the construction of the Palace as "not just the building of a beautiful structure but an offering of love at every moment," there will always be plenty to do, and more to learn.

The Palace is lit with chandeliers hand-crafted and designed by Īśānī-devī dāsī (formerly Ellen Schramm of Williamsburg, Virginia), who has been a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa for nine years. She also created the jewelry and crowns worn by the Deities of Kṛṣṇa and His consort, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and by the molded form of Śrīla Prabhupāda at the Palace.

For her creations Īśānī used fine crystal imported from Austria and Czechoslovakia. She cut and reshaped each piece and then colored each crystal “drop” so that the chandeliers complemented the stained-glass windows facing them. Next she gold-leafed the structural pieces of each chandelier to reflect the Palace motif. And all this without any previous training.

“Since I had to learn everything as I worked,” she explains, “I also had to develop extreme patience. Along with learning a new skill, I learned that there is as much pleasure in working for Kṛṣṇa as in seeing the result. In other words, the work taught me a lot about devotion to God.”

For her jewelry Īśānī borrowed ideas from books on classical Indian and European designs. Additional instruction came from visits to the largest jewelry workshops in the United States, where she learned the intricate techniques of electroplating and electroforming (a process of



YAMARĀJA DĀSA

producing molded objects by electrolysis).

“The real problem in doing the Deity’s jewelry,” she says, “was that nobody makes such pieces anymore. Crowns, scepters—any structural problems with these had to be solved by me alone. The professional jewelers just couldn’t relate to processes like chasing, *repoussé*, and

filigree. I had to solve the problems myself.”

But solve them she did, to the amazement of jewelry makers and distributors who have seen her work. A representative from Tiffany’s declared that much of the work surpassed his own abilities, and several suppliers of jewelry-making equipment and stones now display photographs of her work in their showrooms.

What is the secret of Īśānī’s expertise? “If you know whom you are making something for,” she says, “you can know how to make it best. My work is an offering of love to Lord Kṛṣṇa. It’s an effort to please Him. After all, if you want to make the most beautiful thing, you should do it for the most beautiful person—God.”

Īśānī says her work for the Palace was just the beginning. Not only are more temples already under construction at New Vrindaban, but she receives orders daily from visitors who have admired her pieces and want to buy reproductions. Favorites are the forty portico chandeliers, uniquely designed to hang so that light is beautifully reflected from the mirrored ceiling of the Palace hallways.

Īśānī is married to another Kṛṣṇa devotee, Sāmba dāsa, who’s in charge of the crew that hauls heavy equipment and supplies for construction work at New Vrindaban. They have one son, four years old.



YOGESVARA DĀSA

As a child in Morristown, New Jersey, Jack Mowen was more interested in spiritual things than his friends were. He spontaneously gave up eating meat at age seven and began asking probing questions about God that even his Presbyterian minister couldn’t answer to his satisfaction. Later, as a religion major at St.

Andrews College in North Carolina, he still couldn’t get satisfying answers to such questions as What is God? Who am I? What is my relationship to Him, and to this world?

In 1973, after a spiritual odyssey that took him from one end of the United States to the other, Jack met some Kṛṣṇa

devotees in New York who *could* answer his questions. He soon joined the Kṛṣṇa temple there and became Kaśyapa dāsa. Being a country boy at heart, though, he found the lure of New Vrindaban irresistible and headed for the hills of West Virginia.

Kaśyapa (pointing in picture at left) had always had a way with animals, so Śrīla Bhaktipāda put him in charge of New Vrindaban’s most obstreperous team of workhorses. When the massive job of clearing land for the Palace began back in 1974, Kaśyapa handled the team that hauled logs and yanked stumps out of the ground. Then it was Kaśyapa who headed up the workmen who used dynamite, bulldozers, and trucks to blast, level, and terrace the rough terrain at the Palace site.

“Sometimes, during the big push before the grand opening of the Palace in 1979, I’d be riding the bulldozer eighteen hours a day and longer. It was Śrīla Bhaktipāda’s inspiration—his pure desire to glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda by building something wonderful—that kept me going despite being bone-tired. I could never think of a better way to offer something to Śrīla Prabhupāda for all he’s done for us. Of course, it’s not possible to ever repay him, but I feel very fortunate to have been able to work on Prabhupāda’s Palace.”

DESTINIES

(continued from page 2)

cannot know what God is, but a human being can. That is the opportunity afforded by this body. Nature gives us this human body just to understand Kṛṣṇa, but if we simply use it for animal propensities, we will again go down to the animal kingdom. That is a form of punishment.

Mr. Nordheimer: What problems do you have in making your words, your instructions, reach the ears of everyone in the world?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We are not preaching our own words; we are preaching Kṛṣṇa's words. Now it is up to you to make your choice. Kṛṣṇa says to give up all other engagements and just surrender unto Him. How? He says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.34],

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yājī mām namaskuru
mām evaiśyasi yuktvaivam
ātmānaṁ mat-parāyaṇaḥ*

"Engage your mind always in thinking of Me and become My devotee. Offer your obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me."

Suppose I am a member of a political party and am always thinking of Mr. Such-and-Such, my leader. I become a staunch follower of that leader. People are sacrificing their lives simply to follow a political leader, and for party superiority they are doing so many things—always thinking of the party's activities, always glorifying the party's principles. If all these activities are transferred to Kṛṣṇa, they become good. Kṛṣṇa says, "Think of Me, become my devotee, worship Me, and offer obeisances unto Me." If we perform these activities for Kṛṣṇa, we become Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is what we are teaching.

We advise that you keep doing what you are doing—but do it for Kṛṣṇa. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is not difficult. But if you want to love a dog and become a dog in your next life, instead of loving God and becoming like God in the next life, that is your choice. The prison and the university are open to everyone, and by making your choice you make your future destiny. My disciples are worshipping God, and people criticize them, but when a man worships a dog he is not criticized. In this way society has progressed. So it is folly to be wise where ignorance is bliss.

Mr. Nordheimer: What about the future? Is it possible to bring more people into Kṛṣṇa consciousness? To expand?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Of course, there are good men and bad men, and good men are taking to this movement, because it is a good movement. "Good" means not hav-

ing illicit sex, not eating meat, not indulging in intoxication, and not indulging in gambling. If anyone observes these four principles, he is considered a good man, and if he does not observe them, he is a bad man. So good men will take to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, and bad men will not.

We give distinct rules on how to become good, for if one does not become good, how can he understand God, who is all good? First we must become good men; then we can understand God. It's up to us to make the choice.

I can say,
"Don't remain in
darkness. Please
come out into the
light." But if you
say, "No, I shall
remain here," how
can I save you? You
have your choice.

The future is open for everyone. There is no restriction; no one says, "This class of men shall be good, and this class of men shall be bad." Anyone can become good. If we educate a child nicely, he becomes good, but if we train him foolishly, he becomes a rascal. It is the duty of the government, the father, and the teachers to make everyone good. If the government is bad, the father is bad, and the teachers are bad, how can the child be good? Everywhere the government, the father, and the teachers are bad; therefore we are producing bad men, and there is no peace and prosperity.

Mr. Nordheimer: What about the men who surround you?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They're all good men.

Mr. Nordheimer: They are good men who were raised in a bad society.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They were raised in a bad society, but they have chosen to become good.

Mr. Nordheimer: Is that preordained, or is it by free choice?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Free choice. What is "preordained"? You are here of your free choice. If you like, you can sit down and talk with me, and if you don't like, you can go. That is your free choice. Free choice

makes destiny: if I act in goodness, then my future is good, and if I act badly, my future is bad. That is destiny.

Man is the architect of his own destiny. In other words, our future destiny depends on our present action. This life is an opportunity to improve our next life, and if we behave like human beings, then in our next life we will go back home, back to Godhead. But if we behave like animals, then in our next life we will take animal bodies. That's all. All this is very nicely described in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The conclusion is that human beings are meant for understanding God, but if you waste your time understanding dog, that is your choice. If you try to understand dog instead of God, and if you become too attached to dog, then you will become a dog in your next life. But if you are attached to God, you become like God in your next life. The choice is yours.

Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.11],

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

"As living beings surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O Arjuna."

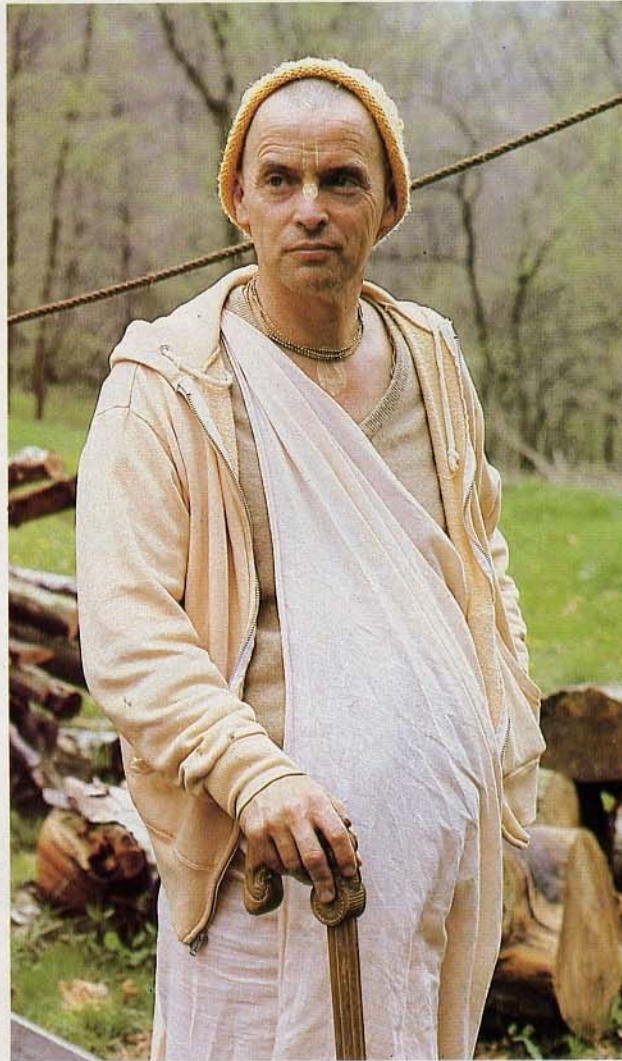
God is available, and we can associate with Him according to our choice. The ability to choose, or our conscience, is given to us in the human form so we can utilize it. All the ingredients are there for us to cross the ocean of birth and death. This human body is a very nice boat, and we have a very good navigator, the spiritual master. We also have a very favorable wind—the instructions of God. So we should take our chance and cross the ocean of birth and death. But if we don't take this opportunity and solve the problems of life, we are cutting our own throat. If you cut your own throat, who can save you? We can say, "Now here is an opportunity. Take it and be saved from birth, old age, disease, and death," but if you don't take advantage, what can we do?

Mr. Nordheimer: Why does all this exist? Why the challenge in the first place? Why *māyā*?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Māyā* means illusion, darkness. If I tell you to come from the darkness into the light and if you don't come, that is your misfortune. *Māyā* is there, and God is there. If you want to remain in *māyā*, then how can you be saved? I can help you by saying, "Don't remain in darkness. Please come out into the light." But if you say, "No, I shall remain here," then how can I save you? You have your choice. God is there, and *māyā* is there. If you take to *māyā*, you remain in darkness. What can I do, and what can God do? That is your choice. 🙏

PIONEER FOR A SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

The spiritual leader of New Vrindaban
talks of palaces, people, and pure devotion to God.



Prabhupāda's Palace is the inspiration of His Divine Grace Kīrtanānanda Swami Bhaktipāda, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's first and most intimate disciples. It was he who started the New Vrindaban farm community in 1968, and he who guided the devotees at every step of the seven-year Palace project. Here are his answers to some questions concerning Prabhupāda's Palace and the future of New Vrindaban.

BACK TO GODHEAD: Now that you've completed Prabhupāda's Palace, how will you further develop New Vrindaban?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: In a letter Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to me in 1974 or '75, he told me to develop New Vrindaban like Tirupati in south India. But at that time I didn't know anything about Tirupati; I'd never been there. Last fall I visited the place, which is a whole city located on top of a mountain. It is centered on the temple of Venkateśvara [a form of Kṛṣṇa] and provides food and shelter for millions of pilgrims who come each year. There are thousands and thousands of cabins and dormitories, all provided for the pilgrims according to their means.

Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted New Vrindaban to be as spiritually opulent and attractive as Tirupati. He wanted our community to be a place of pilgrimage in the Western world, a place where people can come and see spiritual life in action.

BTG: Already thousands of people are

coming to New Vrindaban every month to see Prabhupāda's Palace. Do you expect many of them to settle here?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: No, we're more concerned that they come and then go away with a change of heart. The real solution to the modern predicament is not that they all settle here and live in New Vrindaban. The solution is that they tune in to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and take spiritual life back home with them.

We want to see that people everywhere

put Kṛṣṇa in the center of their lives. That is the primary characteristic of New Vrindaban, as it is of the original Vṛndāvana in India, where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago. Vṛndāvana is the place where everyone is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa. So Vṛndāvana is for everyone, everywhere.

BTG: How will you engage those people who *do* want to live in New Vrindaban?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: People will naturally be engaged according to their propensities. Whatever you want to do, you can come and do it for Kṛṣṇa. If you want to paint, paint for Kṛṣṇa. If you want to sew, sew for Kṛṣṇa. If you want to write, write for Kṛṣṇa. Whatever you want to do, do it for Kṛṣṇa. New Vrindaban is a very broad project; there are all kinds of talents required.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very practical, because Kṛṣṇa is very practical. He is the creator of everything; therefore He is the most practical. So the real system

of Kṛṣṇa conscious living is a very simple, practical way of life. Living on the land need not be very complicated. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that if you maintain cows, there will be bulls, and you can use them to till the soil, without needing to employ any artificial source of energy. Full utilization of the cow and the bull is part of the natural system that we think will manifest gradually here at New Vrindaban.

BTG: Śrīla Bhaktipāda, how do you introduce Kṛṣṇa consciousness to visitors who



Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvanacandra, the presiding Deities at New Vrindaban.

come to New Vrindaban?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: By presenting Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the most attractive way we can. That's why we've built the Palace. People may come with some motive—either to see a unique place or to enjoy a vacation or for some other reason—but if they become convinced of the value of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by appreciating its beauty, that is our success. Prabhupāda's Palace is to Prabhupāda what a beautiful setting is to a diamond. The Palace is a means of drawing attention to Śrīla Prabhupāda. That will benefit all humanity.

BTG: How is that so?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: Because no matter how people become acquainted with Śrīla Prabhupāda, they'll want to know more about him. His books have been distributed for the last twelve years, but sometimes we wonder how many people are reading them. The books may be sitting on the shelves. But if people come to Prabhupāda's Palace and see the beauty of the work and the devotion of those who have worked here, they may take the books down off the shelf and read them. Then Prabhupāda can deliver them his mercy.

We have to give people a setting in which they will feel the importance of hearing from Śrīla Prabhupāda. Other-

wise they may take him to be just an ordinary man—just some *swami*, or just some man who started a movement or cult. If they actually see the Palace, they will feel, "This is unique." And when someone is in a very opulent position, naturally people will listen, because people are attracted by opulence.

BTG: Might one not argue that this is a contrivance, that you could glorify an ordinary man and people would think him important?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: The difference is this. Prabhupāda always said that you can dress a fool up to look like a king, but when he opens his mouth anyone can understand,

“Oh, he is a fool.” So if someone is a fool, then there is no use in dressing him up as a king. But if someone is actually a king and you dress him like a king, that is proper. So because Prabhupāda actually *should* be worshiped like this—because he actually deserves this position, because he actually looks right in this position—when he opens his mouth and speaks, it sounds exactly right too. Therefore it is perfect.

BTG: When people visit the Palace, what is it you want them to come away with?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: At the lowest level, they can come away with some appreciation of the building: “Oh, this is a beautiful building.” Actually, that is Kṛṣṇa consciousness also. The building is related to Kṛṣṇa, so simply by appreciating the building they make advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Almost all of them go away with one of Prabhupāda’s books. Almost all of them say, “We want to come back.”

Actually, that is the whole idea—that this will become a place of pilgrimage, where people can come, relax, and make spiritual advancement simply by being here. That is very important. Instead of taking a vacation and going to some useless place, take your vacation and go visit Śrīla Prabhupāda and the Palace, get the world’s best *prasādam* [spiritual food], and experience real spiritual life.

BTG: Śrīla Prabhupāda visited the Palace when it was under construction and said that it is an expression of the love of the disciple for the spiritual master. Could you explain what this love is, what it means?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: That is the spiritual master’s mercy, of course. Whatever his son or his young child does, he accepts in that way. Actually I have no love for Prabhupāda—but I wish I did. I am simply praying to Prabhupāda that if I continue to worship him he will kindly bless me with a little pure love. But certainly these devotees who have built the Palace have great love for Prabhupāda. They have sacrificed so much. They’ve been working for years now, winter and summer.

BTG: What is the benefit for them?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: That is the nature of love. When you serve your beloved, your service itself is the benefit. When you speak of a “labor of love,” for the lover it is not work. It is all joy. Therefore Prabhupāda said, “In Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is no work.” Actually that is a fact—it is all love. Therefore it is all joy. There is only singing, dancing, and feasting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Whatever a devotee speaks, that is poetry. Whatever a devotee eats, it is a feast, because Kṛṣṇa has first tasted it. So there is singing, there is feasting, and there is dancing. Simply vibrate the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma

Rāma, Hare Hare—and you will dance your whole life through.

BTG: In many rural communes, people are searching for alternative sources of energy. Do you plan to use such things as solar or wind power in New Vrindaban?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: We have no energy shortage, because we are using all our energy to serve Kṛṣṇa. God is the Supreme Energetic. In Him there has been no decrease in energy since time immemorial. If there is any energy shortage in the world, it is simply due to a lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are showing people how to make contact with the source of all energies, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme

We have no energy shortage, because we are using all our energy to serve Kṛṣṇa. If there is any energy shortage in the world, it is simply due to a lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Lord. If they get *that* idea, it will solve all their problems. After all, whether you burn coal or use wind power, there is basically no difference. The real question is, What is the *source* of the coal power and the wind power? When you make contact with the source, then all your energy problems are solved. We have no faith that this so-called ecological movement is going to solve the problems of the world. The problems brought about by a complicated technological society are automatically solved when there is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, because Kṛṣṇa consciousness means plain living and high thinking. But without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no one will agree to live simply; by some means or other one will try to exploit nature.

BTG: Throughout American history there have been many rural communities set up along more or less socialistic or communistic lines. Is New Vrindaban something like them?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: We are not communists, nor are we capitalists: we are Kṛṣṇa’s servants. The capitalists are claiming, “This land is ours,” and the communists are

claiming, “No, it is ours.” So there is no difference; they are simply opposite sides of the same coin. They both want to exploit the resources of material nature for sense gratification. But a Kṛṣṇa conscious person says, “No, the land is not yours to exploit; it is Kṛṣṇa’s.” Everything is meant for Kṛṣṇa’s enjoyment, because He is the creator, the maintainer, and the proprietor of everything. We are all eternally His servants. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

BTG: What are some of the future plans for New Vrindaban?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: At the old Vrindaban farm, we are planning to construct a scaled-down replica of the original Vṛndāvana in India. It will have many gardens, about twenty dioramas depicting Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, replicas of the holy ponds Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, and other holy places. As I mentioned before, we also plan to build residential quarters for tourists and pilgrims, as well as recreation facilities and shops.

But our main project for the immediate future is Rādhā-Vṛndāvanacandra’s Palace, a huge temple for the presiding Deities here at New Vrindaban. We will construct it in the central area of New Vrindaban, near Prabhupāda’s Palace.

BTG: What will the new palace be like?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: It will be 140 feet high and 600 feet long—three times as high and seven times as long as Prabhupāda’s Palace. Altogether, the new temple will have four floors. The first floor will contain Rādhā-Vṛndāvanacandra’s temple room, bedroom, greeting room, and dining room. On the second floor (but not directly above Rādhā-Vṛndāvanacandra’s altar) there will be a men’s dormitory and a rooftop restaurant. The basement will house a Rādhā-Vṛndāvanacandra museum, and the subbasement will contain a gymnasium. We’re going to landscape the temple grounds with a lake and formal gardens. Sometimes Their Lordships will tour the grounds on a chariot thirty feet high.

BTG: When will the cornerstone be laid?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: In the spring of 1982.

BTG: You advertise New Vrindaban as being a spiritual Disneyland. Does that mean it will encompass some of the features of Disneyland, such as rides?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: Yes, we may have some rides—perhaps pony rides or ox-cart rides. If they help people remember Kṛṣṇa, they are good. The difference is that Disneyland is meant for sense gratification and Kṛṣṇaland is meant for learning about Kṛṣṇa.

BTG: Twelve years ago New Vrindaban was just one small house and a lot of mud. Now it is lakes, gardens, and Prabhupāda’s Palace. How amazing! Will New Vrindaban’s growth in the next twelve years be even more amazing?

Śrīla Bhaktipāda: Why not!

**HARE KṚṢṆA HARE KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA HARE RĀMA RĀMA RĀMA HARE HARE**

WHAT IS A MANTRA? In Sanskrit, *man* means "mind and *tra* means "freeing." So a *mantra* is a combination of transcendental sounds that frees our minds from anxiety.

Ancient India's Vedic literature singles out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* explains, "These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the present age of quarrel and anxiety."

Five centuries ago, while spreading the

mahā-mantra throughout India, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, "O Supreme Lord, in Your name You have invested all Your transcendental energies."

The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive one," the name *Rāma* means "the all-pleasing one," and the name *Hare* is an address to the Lord's devotional energy. So the *mahā-mantra* means, "O all-attractive, all-pleasing Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in Your devotional service" Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and your life will be sublime.

SAN FRANCISCO

(continued from page 12)

people receiving him and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa without his having said a word!

Mukunda: *We just had a look at Swamiji, and then we bowed down—myself, my wife, and the friends I had brought, Sam and Marjorie. And then all of the young men and women there followed suit and all bowed down to Swamiji, just feeling very confident that it was the right and proper thing to do.*

The crowd of hippies had formed a line on either side of the narrow passage through which Swamiji would walk. As he passed among his new admirers, dozens of hands stretched out to offer him flowers and incense. He smiled, collecting the offerings in his hands while Ranacora looked on. Allen Ginsberg stepped forward with a large bouquet of flowers, and Śrīla Prabhupāda graciously accepted it. Then Prabhupāda began offering the gifts back to all who reached out to receive them. He proceeded through the terminal, the crowd of young people walking beside him, chanting.

At the baggage claim Śrīla Prabhupāda waited for a moment, his eyes taking in everyone around him. Lifting his open palms, he beckoned everyone to chant louder, and the group burst into renewed chanting, with Prabhupāda standing in their midst, softly clapping his hands and singing Hare Kṛṣṇa. Gracefully, he then raised his arms above his head and began to dance, stepping and swaying from side to side.

To the mixed chagrin, amusement, and irresistible joy of the airport workers and passengers, the reception party stayed with Prabhupāda until he got his luggage. Then they escorted him outside into the sunlight and into a waiting car, a black 1949 Cadillac Fleetwood. Prabhupāda got into the back seat with Mukunda and Allen Ginsberg. Until the moment the car pulled away from the curb, Śrīla Prabhupāda, still smiling, continued handing flowers to all those who had come to welcome him as he brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness west.

The Cadillac belonged to Harvey Cohen, who almost a year before had allowed Prabhupāda to stay in his Bowery loft. Harvey was driving, but because of his chauffeur's hat (picked up at a Salvation Army store) and his black suit and his beard, Prabhupāda didn't recognize him.

"Where is Harvey?" Prabhupāda asked.

"He's driving," Mukunda said.

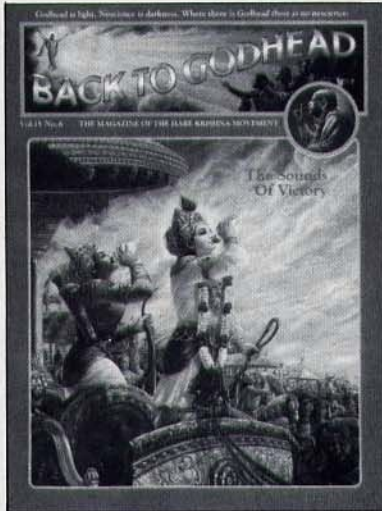
"Oh, is that you? I didn't recognize you."

Harvey smiled. "Welcome to San Francisco, Swamiji."

(To be continued.)

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Ideology for an Ideal Community

Historically, men have chosen to sacrifice individual autonomy for the benefits of life within human society. Nations, communities, tribes, communes—all attest to the truth of John Donne's famous adage: "No man is an island."

But history also attests that communities often weaken and dissolve. This is true for many reasons, but one of the most common is that the people in a given community lose faith in the basic principle of sacrificing their own interests for the collective good. And without a strong spirit of sacrifice among its members, no community can endure. America's short-lived communities—Brook Farm, New Harmony, Oneida—bear this out. These communities grew up around a charismatic leader and an idealistic philosophy, but when the demands for self-sacrifice became too great, the members gave up striving for utopia, and their "ideal community" collapsed.

A cynic might predict the same fate for New Vrindaban, the Kṛṣṇa Society's farm community in West Virginia. But there is an important difference between New Vrindaban and communities based on some indefinite idealistic principles. New Vrindaban is successful and productive because its members are spiritually satisfied by serving the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. Why is serving Kṛṣṇa so spiritually satisfying? Because each of us is eternally part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, and serving Him means linking up with the source of unlimited transcendental pleasure. No one can be truly satisfied by working for the pleasures of the body, but when the soul is spiritually satisfied, sacrificing material pleasures for a common cause is not at all difficult. For a devotee, the reward for his service is the pleasure of the service itself.

The construction of Prabhupāda's Palace at New Vrindaban is a perfect example of how the transcendental pleasure of serving Kṛṣṇa enables devotees to work hard without thought of material reward. By hard work and self-sacrifice, the devotees created a wonderful architectural tribute to God and His representative, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

In the preface to *The Nectar of Devotion*, a guidebook for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes,

Every one of us in this material world is perpetually engaged in some sort of service, and the impetus for such service is the pleasure we derive from it. Driven by affection for his wife and children, a man works day

and night. A philanthropist works in the same way for love of a greater family, a nationalist for the love of his country and countrymen. But the relish or taste for the mundane does not long endure. . . .

The mellow relished in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, however, does not finish, even at the end of life. It continues perpetually and is therefore called *amṛta*, that which does not die but exists eternally.

The Vedic literature explains that because Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and we are all meant to serve Him eternally, natural happiness and harmony within society can easily be achieved when Kṛṣṇa is the center and everyone engages in His service. A community founded on this ideology can weather all storms of discord and settle all controversies—on the transcendental level.

But a society or community based on service to God must strictly follow revealed scriptures. Western theistic ideologies are often too vague to help their followers stay linked with the Supreme Lord while they work in community life. But in a Kṛṣṇa conscious community, the members serve God in all their activities, not simply in their morning and evening prayers or weekly religious ceremonies.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says to His devotee Arjuna, "You should always think of Me, and at the same time you should carry out your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt." This is true *yoga*, "the art of all work."

So, for a community or society to be successful, it must be based on pure devotional service to God, and that service must permeate the life of the society. Otherwise, the members will not be fully satisfied, and they will be unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices for the common goals.

The United States is supposedly a society based on faith in God. The founding fathers of American democracy recognized the Creator as the source of their "inalienable rights." The phrase "one nation under God" in the "Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag" and the motto "In God we trust" on all currency also evince America's theistic leanings. Yet in America today, as in Europe, God consciousness is lacking, among both the government leaders and the people in general. Americans may say, "In God we trust," but they have little genuine knowledge of God—what to speak of trust in Him.

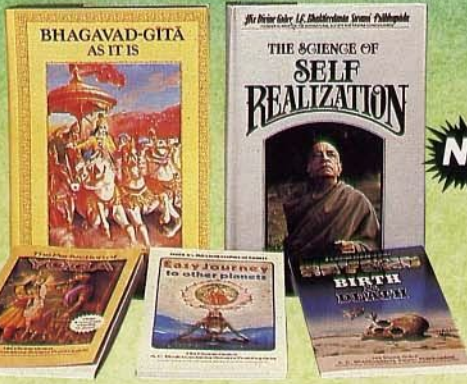
Today's ideologies for social happiness are more hedonistic than theistic; noble, inspired doctrines have given way to the paltry and the mundane. The present generation—often called "the me generation"—is a selfish one. Ignorant of how to execute their natural activities in their eternal relationship with God, people have rejected whatever theism there was in the conception of Western democracy and have become engrossed in the pursuit of materialistic pleasure. When people take the body to be the self and sense gratification to be the goal of civilization, they see service to God as far removed from the needs of society.

The history of communist societies also demonstrates that no ideology short of pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord can satisfy people for long. Marxist philosophy is based on the misconception that people can be happy simply by working collectively for economic well-being. "Religion is the opium of the people," declared Marx, and today more than 90% of the people in Russia under thirty are atheists, according to a mid-1979 report in *Pravda*. A recent article in *Harper's* magazine, however, reports that most people in the Soviet Union have lost their taste for communist ideology and their faith in Soviet leadership. Sixty-five years of communism in Russia has left a spiritual void among the people, and it has also failed to provide economic security, communism's avowed goal.

Thus the two most powerful societies on earth have no ideology to inspire their people. Leaders may promise more and more sense gratification, but whatever a nation's economic advancement, and however selfish a generation may be, the quest for material pleasure will never produce a successful society. There may be years or even decades of apparent prosperity and peace, but mass disillusionment and social dissolution inevitably await a society that pays only lip service to God, or that ignores Him entirely. The illusory quest for material happiness and the resultant dissatisfaction of the soul are eating away at the heart of materialistic society. And now the frustrated nations of the world stand ready to destroy one another with nuclear weapons.

The leaders of the world's confused societies would do well to investigate the ideological basis of Kṛṣṇa conscious communities like New Vrindaban, where spiritual satisfaction and economic prosperity result naturally from sacrificing all for the glorification of God. —SDG

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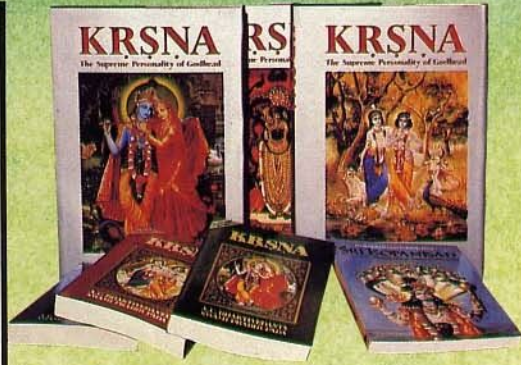
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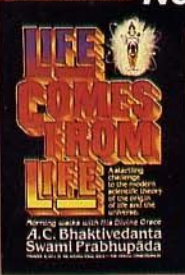


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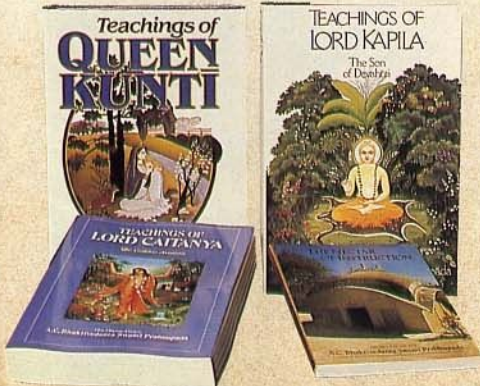
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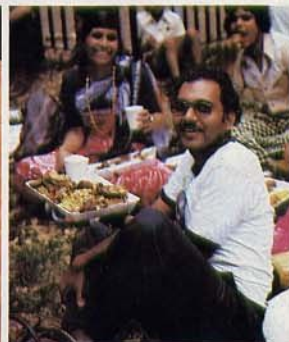
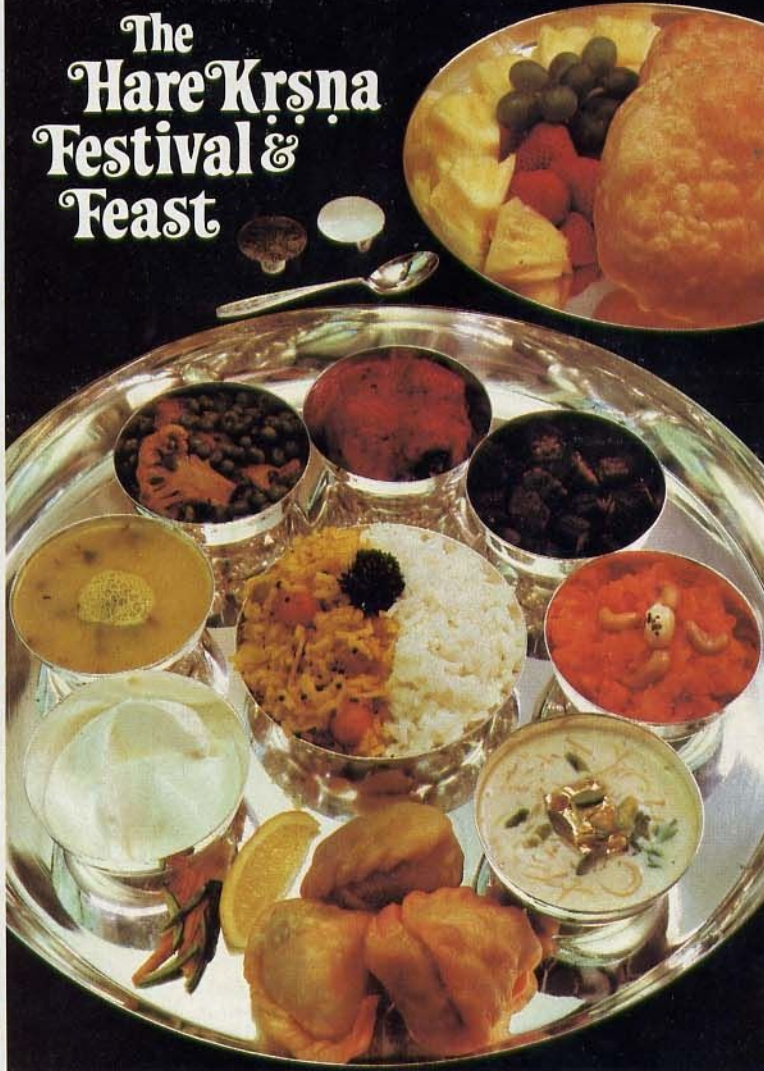
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