

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Blackwell, Morton: Files
Folder Title: Cults [and Miscellaneous Groups]
(3 of 3)
Box: 35

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

File
()

RELIGIOUS CULTS:
HAVENS FOR THE EMOTIONALLY DISTRESSED, IDEALISTS,
AND INTELLECTUALS, AND STRONGHOLDS OF AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITIES

Edward M. Levine
Department of Sociology
Loyola University
Chicago, IL 60626

Presented at the Graduate Theological Union's Conference on "Conversion, Coercion, and Commitment in the New Religions," Berkeley, CA, June 1981.

(in press)

The decision of the Graduate Theological Union to hold a conference on "Conversion, Coercion, and Commitment in the New Religions" may prove to be a landmark in the study of contemporary religious trends. In the first place, this conference has drawn together scholars from an impressive variety of disciplines. Some represent school of thought--theology, history, and sociology--that have traditionally studied such salient aspects of religion as its doctrines, institutions, rituals, and its members' religious values and attitudes, as well as the subtle and dramatic, the gradual and abrupt changes that religions have undergone over the centuries and in more recent times. Their seminal contributions serve as both the foundation and background of this conference, and our debt to them is substantial.

Another distinctive feature of this conference is its inclusion of social scientists whose perspectives and research are usually peripherally related to the substantive and companion interests of scholars who specialize in the study of religion and religious phenomena. Their participation suggests that the focal concerns of the organizers of and presenters in this conference incorporate certain emphases that heretofore have been regarded as those of subsidiary interest in the study of religion.

To be more specific, I refer to the motives guiding religious cult leaders in their efforts to convert young people and in attempting to maintain their affiliation and active support. Of even greater importance, in my judgment, are the motives that induce some, impel others, and for still others make them receptive to the overtures and incentives of cult proselytizers who are as active and determined today as during the past decade in seeking to augment the ranks of their members. The thesis of this analysis is that an accurate understanding of the nature of religious cults and the significance they have for their members, religion, and society can be best reached by identifying and examining

in detail the incentives cults provide those who join them, as well as the motives of converts and those of cult leaders. This theory of incentives is based on the premise that human beings respond to incentives others offer them only if they provide them with satisfactions that are otherwise insufficient or lacking in their lives (Levine, 1980).

Why Youth Join Cults

Religious cults attract members with several strongly appealing incentives. First, cult leaders are individuals with authoritative, charismatic personalities who exude, if for some with reserve and indirection, a determined and unshakable conviction in themselves and their religious views. They serve as authority figures with whom their converts identify and their views and pronouncements are presented as infallible. Next, each cult leader claims that only the religious views he espouses are true, as well as being the ideal and practical means of resolving the problems afflicting the world and those who join cults. The doctrinaire character of their statements provides converts with a clear sense of meaning, direction, and purpose for their minds and lives, thus dispelling the confusion, uncertainty, and self-doubt that are characteristic of many of them prior to their conversion.

Third, cults impose specific, demanding, and often ascetic and puritannical rules and regulations that govern most of the major aspects of converts' daily lives (e.g., the observation of religious rituals, diets, personal appearance, sexual codes, prohibiting drug use, etc.). Cultists perceive the religious views as true, encompassing explanations about the meaning of life and their role in it, and welcome the inflexible standards as concrete guides for their personal, inter-personal, and social behavior. Both provide them with an alternative of substance to the anomic culture that so bewilders them. Finally, those who join cults gain close, ongoing relationships with like-minded others of their age--companionship and the feeling of being special, appreciated, and worthy. Their new-found companions also give them a sense of elation by their

having joined an elect few having a special mission to bring their religious truth to others. Furthermore, these new friends assure the novitates of the correctness and wisdom of their having converted.

The more telling significance of these incentives--an adult authority figure with whom to identify and upon whom one becomes dependent; an absolute, idealistic belief that answers all one's questions and thereby reassures and comforts him; a set of rules and regulations explicitly stating what one must and must not do and that are imposed on him; and being with others who care about and for one--are both appropriate for and needed by children because of their limited psycho-social and physiological development. That is, such conditions are indispensable in meeting their age-appropriate needs. However, they are least of all appropriate for youth and young adults, especially when met by anonymous adults. Those most apt to respond to these incentives do so because they have unresolved dependency needs stemming from their childhood. Put otherwise, by responding to these incentives they substitute these dependency needs for the dependency relationships which are characteristic of cult life. While most cult converts appear to be drawn to these incentives, additional reasons for their converting suggest differentiating them into three categories--the "Emotionally Distressed," the "Idealists," and the "Intellectuals." Although the differences suggested by these categories may be more apparent than real, they do exist and may have heuristic value.

The Emotionally Distressed

There are few carefully designed and executed empirical studies of cult converts. However, those undertaken by Galanter and Buckley (1978) and Galanter, et al. (1979), produced interesting data that cast light on the psychological status of cult members. For example, Galanter and Buckley (1978) reported that among the members of the Divine Light Mission (DLM) whom they

studied:

There was a high incidence before joining of both seeking and professional help for psychiatric disturbances (38%) and of hospitalization for emotional problems (9%). In addition, one in four (27%) had been arrested at some time.

The amount of drug use prior to joining was considerable. Nine-tenths had smoked marijuana (92%) at some time; two-thirds had used hallucinogens (68%), and 14 percent heroin. With the exception of alcohol, the use level of all drugs was two to four times that reported by a representative national sample of college students for that same period. (Emphasis added)

As for the members of the Unification Church, Galanter, et al. (1979) found the following:

A sizable proportion (39%) felt that they had had serious emotional problems in the past. This had led many to professional help (30%) and even hospitalization (6%). . . . One-quarter (23%) said that they had had serious drug problems in the past, and the proportion that had ever used rugs of abuse was higher than for a comparable national sample (for example, use of hallucinogenics was 45% versus 14%). (Emphasis added)

And Judah's (1977) study showed that Hare Krishna converts had a significantly higher level of hallucinogenic drug use prior to their conversion than their counterparts in the Unification Church.

It is noteworthy that, subsequent to conversion, these individuals discontinued drug use, as required of them, and that their symptoms of emotional distress disappeared, although it is not known for how long. Parenthetically, Ness and Wintrob (1980) reported in their study of a Pentecostal congregation that the more frequently members engaged in religious activities, the less likely they were to report symptoms of emotional distress, a finding that coincides with the above studies of the DLM and the Unification Church. And Kildahl's (1975) extensive analysis of letters he received from charismatics indicated that they were almost invariably "more cheerful, more joyful, and more optimistic as a result of speaking in tongues. They were less depressed and less pessimistic and had a pervading sense of God's presence and strength within themselves." A deep, intense, and suffused feeling of euphoria is also

a characteristic experience of cult converts, and is all the more important to the Emotionally Distressed in view of the striking contrast in their mood that results from conversion.

Interviews of varying length that I have conducted with both cult and ex-cult members revealed that emotional problems and significant levels of drug use were common, though not characteristic of all of them. However, all agreed that conversion produced an ineffable state of well-being, and cult members were uniform in saying that they no longer had worries because, as each of them put it, "God will take care of me."

Another source of information about the psychological profiles of cultists has been gained from interviews with more than 500 cult and ex-cult members by the psychologist Margaret Singer, as well as from still many others by psychiatrists John Clark and Saul Levine. Many who have voluntarily or otherwise left cults, as Singer (1979) has written, "showed symptoms of slipping into dissociated states, a severe incapacity to make decisions, and related extreme suggestibility. Adding that almost all of those whom she interviewed "suffered from varying degrees of depression, loneliness, indecisiveness, slipping into altered mental states, uncritical passivity, and the blurring of mental acuity," she went on to note that most such persons took from six to 18 months to "get their lives functioning again at a critical level commensurate with their histories and talents." Clark and Levine and other therapists have reported similar findings. The costs of therapy and the time involved for numbers of ex-cult members are considerable.

For those who were emotionally distressed before entering cults, their reasons for conversion can not be ascribed to careful deliberation and reasoned choice. They may be the most vulnerable of all who are contacted by cult proselytizers. Furthermore, conversion merely stabilizes their emotional and behavioral problems; psychotherapy is required to eliminate their causes, and

cults neither provide this service for those of their members needing it nor send them home. The fate of "burnouts," those who suffer emotional breakdowns, remains unknown. Cult life, then, is a way station for those of the Emotionally Distressed who leave it, and very likely intensifies and exacerbates their emotional disturbances by placing them in passive-submissive roles and exposing them to excessive demands to work and obey, as well as by denying them adequate nutrition and rest. Such experiences throw into question the self-acclaimed benevolence of cults.

The Idealists

For reasons too complex to discuss here, individuals with emotional disturbances seldom have good relationships with their parents. Lest it be thought that all who join cults have emotional problems and are emotionally distant from their parents, it is important to realize that numbers of converts have enjoyed satisfying relationships with their parents and do not exhibit symptoms of emotional distress prior to their conversion. This population of cultists would appear to provide unequivocal evidence for those who contend that their conversion is the result of reasoned, independent choice--and that the First Amendment's guarantee of the individual's freedom to choose and worship the religious faith of his preference is the crucial issue to be considered by those, such as myself, who view the proliferation of religious cults and their still growing membership as ominous signs of our times.

These converts are bright, idealistic young people who have a compassionate concern for the well-being of the down-trodden and needy. They share a genuine and deeply held interest in finding ways to help them and to improve the quality of life throughout the world. Articulate inheritors of a liberal-intellectual tradition who possess an admirable social conscience, they apparently join cults because they believe them honestly to be committed to the betterment of human beings and society. The Idealists are more apt to join

Christian, rather than Eastern, cults, since the latter express little or no interest in social activism.

Among the reasons leading to their conversion is their belief that their religion has failed, or is seriously wanting, in providing them with answers for the pressing social and other problems of the day. Yet the Idealists are insistent upon finding answers for secular problems that no religion has provided because they lie beyond the province of religion, and readily accept the unfounded claims of cults that they can and will bring social justice if only a few more young people will "see the light" and join them in this unique mission. "How many supported Jesus when Christianity was born?" proselytizers persuasively ask cult prospects. This approach has a beguiling appeal to those whose untempered idealism leads them to insist that "Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men" appear in the foreseeable future.

Recognizing that numbers of young people become cult converts out of such unimpeachably noble aspirations would seem to lead skeptics and others with less pronounced reservations about cults to be sympathetic and understanding, if not admiring, of their having done so. The Idealists may even be viewed as those who remain among the forefront of their generation, that element that has not lost sight of or a personal commitment to the cause of social betterment, a vision that has all but vanished among many of their generation now that the memory of the Vietnam war has faded into the recesses of their minds.

There are, however, certain compelling reasons for questioning whether their thoughtful, reasoned assessment of the promises of cults have actually prompted the Idealists to join them. For example, I have neither seen a report nor heard an account of these (or any other) cultists having methodically examined the essentials of their religion and those of the cults they joined, thoughtfully compared them prior to their conversion, and then concluded that the substantive and other relevant emphases of the cults' religions were demonstrably

superior to the religious faiths into which they were born. Other doubts about the authenticity of the idealism of such persons emerge since many not only forsake their family and religion, but also subsequently reject and turn against them. In this light, the quality and depth of their religious and familial attachments have not been sufficiently important to prevent them from becoming cult converts; and their idealism disregards the happiness of specific persons, such as parents and siblings, while impetuously dedicated to those whom they will never know and whose lives they can never touch.

Another reason for questioning the Idealists' devotion to bettering the human condition as their principal motive for joining cults is that neither cult leaders nor cult members have been or are now involved, either independently or in cooperation with other secular or religious groups, organizations, and institutions, in efforts to ameliorate some aspect of society or the lot of any group of individuals in need of assistance. They have no record of participation in the political process or community activities.

Other questions arise about the authenticity and caliber of their idealism. That is, many cults, whether covertly or overtly, preach and practise religious intolerance, though they protest that this is not true. Despite their denials, each argues, quietly or more openly, that its religious truth is the only truth and that those who, for whatever reason do not share it, are beyond the pale of reason and morality. At the very least they are hopelessly unenlightened. Indeed, the pronouncement of some cults, the Unification Church perhaps the foremost among them, is that those outside their religion are the forces of evil, the minions of Satan. Since the parents of the Idealists are also the targets of such condemnations, the moral character of the latter falls short of the Judaeo-Christian ethic which they have abandoned in their quest for a higher and more humane morality.

Since numbers of converts, but clearly not all of them, leave cults of their own volition and without being hindered from doing so by guilt or intimidation, it would follow that all Idealists would sever their relationship with cults upon realizing, as would occur sooner rather than later, that the cults are not genuinely concerned about and remain uninvolved in endeavors attempting to resolve the problems besetting society. However, ex-cult members attest that this is not the case; unknown numbers of Idealists remain in cults, victims of their paralyzing insecurities or of the cults' use of intimidation and guilt as techniques of mind control.

The Intellectuals

A third category of cultists, apparently less alienated than the first and more so than the second, consists of those who seem to be drawn to cults, especially Eastern ones, because of an intellectual quest. The Intellectuals' search is born out of a compelling need to find a more satisfying explanation of the meaning of the world and of their role, the role of the human being, in it. Here, too, there is no indication that they have studied the tenets and scriptures of their own religions prior to their conversion as thoughtfully and extensively as they do their new religion subsequent to their conversion. My limited contacts with them have not shown significant levels of pre-conversion drug use, although, as was noted earlier, this is characteristic of the Hare Krishna and Divine Light Mission members.

Appearances here, too, are deceiving, for it is tempting to accept as fact the explanations that Intellectuals offer for having become converts. That is, those who join the Eastern cults in quest of a definitive religious cosmology undergo a striking identity transformation, one that is substantially different from and more complete than that experienced by converts of Christian cults. For example, the Eastern cults usually require their converts to adopt

a new, Indian name, to become vegetarians, to observe daily religious rituals that are physically and emotionally demanding, to abstain from sex if unmarried, and, for some, to wear non-Western clothing. Furthermore, both men and women adopt largely traditional roles, with the latter caring for children, the home, and preparing meals. In one such cult women are forbidden to read their religious scriptures but must learn them by listening to their husbands read them. Certain religious emphases differ considerably from those associated with Judaism and Christianity, further evidencing the change in perspective Eastern cult converts undergo. Radha Soami-Beas states that "Meditation is, in fact, man's real work, for which our benign Creator has bestowed this precious human body on us"; and the Health, Happiness, and Holiness Organization's brochure appeals to prospective converts with the phrase, "The Encounter of Time and Space Where the Spirit Meets With Grace."

To transform one's identity by accepting a new belief system, whether by persuasion, indoctrination, or voluntarily, can only mean that one is extremely dissatisfied with or lacks an adequately satisfying identity--or is prevailed upon to believe this. It can be said of such persons that they have inadequate egos, ego ideals, and superegos. The formation of a sound, satisfying personal identity is largely dependent upon competent parenting and the inculcation of basic values for the purpose of developing effective self controls and, partly through their use, self-assurance. For those Intellectuals whose identities are transformed upon conversion to Eastern cults, it is very likely that their pre-conversion identities were inadequate and that their intellectual quest is a pretext, if unconscious, for their wish to resolve other personality problems. Put otherwise, it is conceivable that the Intellectuals might accept their cults' religious views yet change nothing else about their lives, least of all their names and outward appearance, were their identities sound.

Cult Leaders:Pseudo-Religious Authoritarian Personalities

With the advent of the 1960s, society began undergoing a cultural metamorphosis as a profusion of changes in values and behavior swept through it. Ever increasingly, youth's attitudes toward marriage and family, divorce, out-of-wedlock children, pre- and extra-marital sex, sexual deviance, drugs, education, and, of course, religion broke with traditional religious and secular standards. The cultural topography of this decade and the following years would have been scarcely recognizable from the perspective of the 1950s, for dissensus, the proliferation of values and norms, and the ambiguity of standards gave rise to an anomic culture that may be the most distinctive characteristic of this age, the age of the "undirected."

This cultural vortex had both weakened and drawn expressions of grave concern from traditional religions whose influence was steadily weakening among those most in need of them by their temporizing and up-dating their rituals, ceremonies, and even certain of their values. Least of all were our major religious faiths effectively coping with situation ethics and upholding traditions; nor were they able to offset the disconcerting trends of the time by resorting to reason. Reason, especially as young people had come to understand it, was the instrument of analytic neutrality, the mark of tolerance and congeniality, and a somewhat outmoded means of persuasion. In their eyes, reason did not invite one's allegiance for it was in the service of anyone for virtually any end or value. Then, too, they had heard that "God is dead" and that the "secular city" was mankind's habitat and final resting place.

In such circumstances it is scarcely surprising that in the span of little more than a decade nearly 3,000 religious cults have been formed and are estimated to have from 300,000 to 3 million members, each claiming to be the one true religion. It is also more than a phenomenological commonplace that the

preponderance of their converts consists of single, white, middle and upper-middle class youth and young adults.* Shorn of stabilizing ethno-religious communities and their values, the offspring of "other-directed" nuclear families, and witness to and ever more frequently themselves the children of divorce, these young people are the modern day "uprooted," troubled by the dearth of meaning and purpose in their lives. The value-vacuum enveloping and disorienting them was the gravitational field that attracted cult leaders.

The incentives adopted by cult leaders to win converts and the mounting body of evidence indicating how they deliberately manipulate, subjugate, and exploit their members expose the former as authoritarian personalities bent on fulfilling their aggrandistic needs to dominate others and, secondarily, for material gain by using converts to work for them with little or no compensation. The various and deep-seated needs of gullible young people render them susceptible to those whose personalities compel them to prey on the weak. As the lives of cult converts evidence, cults are settings for the classic symbiosis of sadistic and masochistic personalities. Appearing to provide the assurance and affirmation so greatly needed by the young people drawn to them, the domineering personalities of cult leaders and their assistants enable them to capture and control the minds of those they successfully proselytize. Their false, if inspiring, promises of personal fulfillment and peace of mind through the completion of prescribed stages of religious growth and understanding tantalize even those who are reasonably self confident, for surely such are the quest of many of their generation.

There is little that is genuinely religious about cult leaders and their organizations if the word "religious" is used to incorporate only the second five of the Ten Commandments and to mean a genuine, active concern with the

* Zimbardo and Hartley (1981) have found that the Unification Church has been actively recruiting high school juniors and seniors in the San Francisco area. And for at least a few months its proselytizers were recruiting families by door-to-door canvassing in Evanston, Illinois

well-being and fulfillment of the individual, encouraging his use of reason, respecting and supporting his independence of thought and action, and a companion concern for the welfare of the family and society. Cult leaders' actions belie their facade of spirituality, for they have drawn off and placed in subservience some of the best and brightest of our young people the loss of whose contributions to society is an enormous cost to all of us. And there is ample evidence that many unscrupulously induce converts to use devious and morally reprehensible means in their fund-raising, proselytizing, and other relationships with the public. Moreover, it is scarcely a coincidence that cult leaders have studiously avoided publicly addressing the issues of the day--the deterioration of moral standards, the pervasiveness of sex and violence in the mass media, the collapse of the nuclear family, the growing rates of drug use and delinquency and crime, the plight of the poor, racism, environmental pollution, the needs of the elderly, and other pressing problems.

Cultists are "true believers" who are given a false sense of self-sufficiency and whose identities and sense of well-being are contingent upon their accepting the status of passive-submissive followers of those who derive gratification from their subservience. This may be the ultimate moral degradation for their conversion costs them their individuality, their unique sense of personal identity. As Hendin (1975) wrote, confusion about identity, about who or what one is, is a phenomenon increasingly common to this age.

. . . at root [it is] a confusion about what you feel about [yourself], people, life, and work. Far from being [an exclusively] adolescent quest for self, this confusion is very much the mark of educated men and women in their twenties and thirties. Commitments to work or to someone loved are often viewed as simply limiting one's options.

And Martin Marty's (1976) observation that ". . . the vast majority of human beings use religion as a means of establishing identity, connecting behavior with belief to overcome the unsettling and corrosive effects of pluralism" is

equally germane for cultists. The subordination or submergence of self in their quest for identity has been pointed up by Cox (1977) in his comments about members of Eastern cults which are equally applicable to those of Christian cults. He said that their remarks revealed that they longed for "an authority so unquestionable and total that they would not have to make hard decisions or chew through choices of their own," adding the following about the escapist emphasis in their lives.

At first, converts to these movements often seem to find a new kind of innocence. They are 'blissed out' with their hassle-free life. The emphasis many of these groups place on the inner life, plus their relegation of secular society to an inferior form of reality, means that adhering to their teachings will remove the uncomfortable tensions of school, work, and home. Since money, power, and, in some cases, even the capacity to make choices are viewed as illusory or insignificant, the causes of most political tussles disappear. . . . I am troubled by the pursuit of an absolute religious and moral authority that will relieve the discomfort [and responsibility] for making such decisions.

That such vast numbers of young people have joined cults out of the belief that their new religions will provide them with the belief, structure, happiness, and identity that are lacking in their lives is disconcerting. Many, certainly those most deeply involved in cults, have abdicated the responsibility for managing their minds and lives rather than having searched for more realistic and effective means of coping with their dissatisfactions and problems. Signs such as these bring to mind Erich Fromm's (1941) insightful comment on the human condition four decades ago.

Modern man . . . has become free from the external bonds that would prevent him from doing and thinking as he sees fit. He would be free to act according to his will, if he knew what he wanted, thought, and felt. But he does not know. He conforms to anonymous authorities and adopts a self that is not his.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, many young people joined rural communes, consumed by a thirst for freedom so unqualified and unlimited that it amounted to a denial of almost every kind of restraint. Religious cults

inform us that the pendulum of freedom has swung to the opposite extreme. The value-void of an anomic society has prompted disturbingly large numbers of young people to turn to them in an "escape from freedom." As in other times and places, authoritarian personalities emerge to capitalize on their weaknesses and dependence on others to give order and meaning to their lives.

To insist that freedom of religious choice and worship is the crux of the controversy still surrounding cults, to stress that many cult members freely leave cults, or to point out that numbers of converts do not live in cult centers or ashrams is to bypass the real issues--and ignore the fact that many remain alienated from their parents, are enticed to join cults, and become subservient to cult leaders. To assert, as do some, that the medical model is invalid for or inapplicable to the study of cult members and leaders is to reject much that we have learned from Durkheim and Freud and those who have ably extended their insights and findings. Close attachments to one's family and religion remain stabilizing influences in the individual's life; and the F-scale and other rigorous research modalities effectively identify authoritarian and other negative personality traits.

It is not the habit of authoritarian personalities to reveal their true motives or to admit to them when they become evident. Unfortunately, cultists remain unaware of them and are prevailed upon to believe what their leaders tell them is the truth. Unfortunately, their values are facades masking their propensity to seek to dominate those in search of meaningful values. Addressing his remarks to the inadequacy of contemporary values for human well-being, to what I would term the excessive emphasis contemporary society gives to self-fulfillment and its reification of impulse-gratifying, self-centered, and present-oriented values and behavior, Glock (1976) wrote:

The crucial question, then, will be whether a society, other than a dictatorship, can result where disconsensus, rather than

a relative consensus, prevails about what constitutes a meaningful life, and where, presumably, many people will have found no answer to the question of meaning at all.

This question is being answered for many young people by cult leaders in ways that are manifestly deleterious to their well-being, a trend that should be given high priority on our agenda of major social concerns.

In a society in which it has become increasingly difficult for middle and upper-middle class adolescents and youth to attain healthy emotional development (as is attested to by their rising rates of character disorders and defects and acting-out behavior), it is more necessary than ever to ascertain the ways in which an anomic culture, social fragmentation, the erosion of the family, and personality weaknesses and disturbances give rise to those conditions in which authoritarian personalities prosper. Cult leaders have already sacrificed the well-being of far too many young people by disguising their ambitions in the cloak of religion.

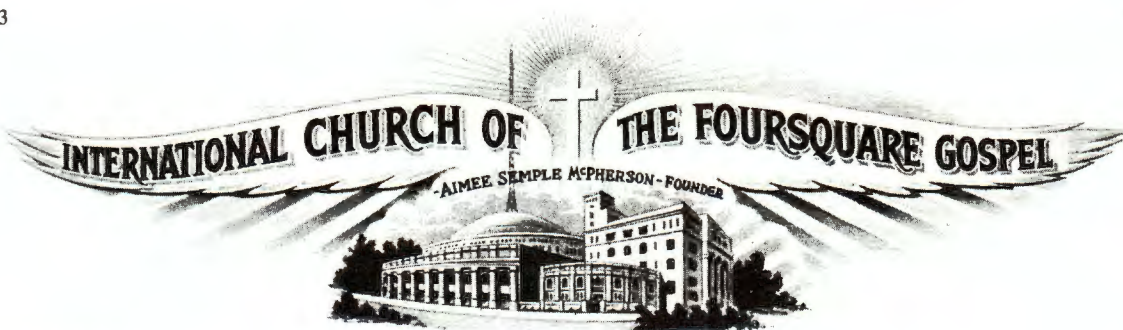
References

1. Cox, Harvey. 1977. "Eastern Cults and Western Culture," Psychology Today, July 1977, 0. 38.
2. Fromm, Erich. 1941. Escape From Freedom. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc., p. 255.
3. Galanter, Marc and Buckley, Peter. 1978. "Evangelical Religion and Meditation: Psychotherapeutic Effects," The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 166:10, p. 687.
4. Galanter, Marc, Rabkin, Richard, Rabkin, Judith, and Deutsch, Alexander, 1979. "The 'Moonies': A Psychological Study of Conversion and Membership in a Contemporary Religious Sect," American Journal of Psychiatry, 136:2, p. 166.
5. Glock, Charles. 1976. "Consciousness Among Contemporary Youth: An Interpretation," in Charles Glock and Robert Bellah, eds., The New Religious Consciousness. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 366.
6. Hendin, Herbert. 1975. "The Revolt Against Love," Harper's, August, p. 26.
7. Judah, J. Stillson. 1977. "Attitudinal Changes Among Members of the Unification Church," paper presented at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Denver.
8. Kildahl, John. 1975. "Psychological Observations," in Michael Hamilton, ed., The Charismatic Movement. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 138.
9. Levine, Edward. 1980. "Rural Communes and Religious Cults: Havens for Middle Class Youth," in Sherman Feinstein, et al., eds., Adolescent Psychiatry, Vol. 8.
10. Marty, Martin. 1976. A Nation of Believers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

11. Ness, Robert and Wintrob, Ronald. 1980. "The Emotional Impact of Fundamentalist Religious Participation," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 50:2, 302-314.
12. Singer, Margaret. 1979. "Coming Out of the Cults," Psychology Today, January, p. 75.
13. Zimbardo, Phillip and Hartley, "The Nature and Extent of Recruiting Contact Between Cults and High School Students in the Bay Area of San Francisco," paper presented at The Graduate Theological Union Conference on "Conversion, Coercion, and Commitment in New Religious Movements," Berkeley, CA, June 11-14, 1981.

AREA CODE 213
484-1100

CABLE ADDRESS
ATALA



INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF THE
FOURSQUARE GOSPEL
1100 GLENDALE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90026

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF THE
FOURSQUARE GOSPEL
1100 GLENDALE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90026

ANGELUS TEMPLE
L.I.F.E. BIBLE COLLEGE
RADIO STATIONS
KFSG (FM)
KHIS (AM & FM)

OFFICERS

ROLF K. McPHERSON, D.D.
PRESIDENT
HAROLD E. HELMS, D.D., TH.D.
VICE PRESIDENT
ROY H. HICKS, D.D.
GENERAL SUPERVISOR
LELAND B. EDWARDS, D.D.
SECRETARY
DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS, INT'L.
CHARLES DUARTE, D.D.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY / TREASURER
N.M. VAN CLEAVE, D.D.
DIRECTOR
HOWARD P. COURTNEY, D.D.
DIRECTOR
LORNA DE McPHERSON
DIRECTOR
JOHN W. BOWERS
DIRECTOR
PAUL C. RISSER, D.D.
DIRECTOR
DANIEL L. CROTTY
DIRECTOR

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

EASTERN
J. EUGENE KURTZ
8303 COLUMBUS RD.
MOUNT VERNON, OHIO 43050
GREAT LAKES
LYNN T. CHARTER
628 56TH ST., RM. 301 OR 307
DALE BLOCK BLDG.,
KENOSHA, WI 53140
MAIL: P.O. BOX 90
KENOSHA, WI 53141
MIDWEST
GLENN D. METZLER
4303 ROUNDTREE CT.
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80915
NORTHWEST
ROY HICKS, JR.
1410 W. 13TH AVENUE
EUGENE, OREGON 97402
MAIL: P.O. BOX 21240
EUGENE, OREGON 97402
SOUTH CENTRAL
SIDNEY O. WESTBROOK
3516 KIESTCREST DRIVE
DALLAS, TEXAS 75233
SOUTHEAST
GLENN C. BURRIS
219 VALHALLA DR.
HARRISBURG, NC 28075
MAIL: P.O. BOX 340
HARRISBURG, NC 28075
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
PAUL E. JONES, D.D., TH.D.
3901 FOOTHILL BLVD.
LA CRESCENTA, CA 91214
MAIL: P.O. BOX 8306
LA CRESCENTA, CA 91214
SOUTHWEST
JOHN R. HOLLAND, D.D.
230 W. CHAPMAN
ORANGE, CA 92666
MAIL: P.O. BOX 608
ORANGE, CA 92666
WESTERN
FRED H. WYMORE, D.D.
2013 COFFEE RD.
MODESTO, CA 95355
MAIL: P.O. BOX 3008
MODESTO, CA 95355
CANADA
VICTOR F. GARDNER
7895 WELSLEY DRIVE
BURNABY, B.C. CANADA V5E 3X4

March 3, 1983

Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President
for Public Liaison
The White House
Washington, D.C.

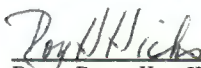
Dear Mr. Blackwell:

I have just received a copy of the President's remarks to the National Religious Broadcasters Convention.

The text of his entire message is one of great encouragement. I especially appreciate his simple, uncluttered (yet profound) approach to the fundamentals of life and liberty that are so clearly set forth in the Word of God.

If you have the opportunity, please express to him our appreciation of his public stand..and our daily prayer and support of him, both personally and in his multitudinous number of responsibilities as President of the United States.

Sincerely yours,


Dr. Roy H. Hicks
General Field Supervisor
RHH:mh

INFORMATION DISEASE

HAVE CULTS CREATED A NEW MENTAL ILLNESS?

BY FLO CONWAY AND JIM SIEGELMAN

"Because your mind troubles you, give it to me. It won't trouble me."

—Guru Maharaj Ji
Divine Light Mission

"A very effective thought-control technique could also be worked out from Scientology, which could be used to make individuals into willing slaves."

—L. Ron Hubbard
Church of Scientology

"I am your brain."

—Rev. Sun Myung Moon
Unification Church

"Can't function properly in society due to instability. Still suffering from amnesia and sexual dysfunction. I've lost a great deal! Totally different person. Without initiative. Extreme drop in faith and belief in God. Can't feel or find myself."

—former Moonie

Cult mind control. In the three years since a U.S. congressman, three journalists and more than 900 other Americans lost their lives in the steamy jungle of Guyana, the cults have not faded away. Since Jonestown, they have grown larger, richer and more powerful; they may have also created an extraordinary new kind of mental illness.

An editorial note on the authors and Science Digest's support of their study is on page 6.

Our nationwide survey of former cult members, the first of its kind, reveals that in their recruiting and rituals, many cults are using a new form of mind control—a sweeping manipulation unlike anything ever witnessed before in our society.

Comparisons with brainwashing are misleading. That method of thought reform, first observed in the early Fifties in Chinese and North Korean prisons and "reeducation" camps, rests firmly on the principal fact of physical coercion. In America's cults, participation almost always begins voluntarily. From first contact to conversion and in daily cult life, control is achieved not by physical coercion but by an even more potent force: information.

CRIPPLING TACTICS

For the past six years we have been studying the communication techniques that some of America's cult leaders use to gain control over people's minds. Most rely on the use—and abuse—of information: on deceptive and distorted language, artfully designed suggestion and intense emotional experience, crippling tactics aggravated by physical exhaustion and isolation.

How is it done? Most groups actively seek out new members by using slick sales pitches: glowing images of easy pathways to ecstasy and personal encounters with God, Jesus or the group's own living messiah. Once an individual has been drawn

into the cult, there is usually a single moment of conversion, an intense experience engineered through the skillful manipulation of information. A vivid example: the Hare Krishna's *arti ka* ceremony, in which new recruits, led by older members, perform a feverish, jumping dance amid flickering lights, heavy incense, loud, droning music and pounding drums until they are physically and emotionally overcome.

Next, most cults step up the indoctrination process, inculcating the group's beliefs and values at a time when the new convert is highly receptive. More importantly, at this stage group leaders begin to sow the specific suggestions that lie at the heart of the mind-control process. Calls to "surrender," to "turn off the satanic mind" or merely to "let things float" act as covert hypnotic suggestions. If heeded, they can place the new convert in an on-going trance.

These simple self-hypnotic rituals close off the recruit's mind to doubts, questions and disquieting memories of family and the outside world. They also produce a kind of "ecstasy by default," a numbed, mindless high that many interpret as the attainment of their ultimate spiritual goal. But the price of this bliss may be incalculably high. It is here that the cult experience departs from what has always been respected as valid religious or spiritual experience.

In our initial research, we noted more

Illustration by Alan E. Cober

than 20 serious mental, emotional and physical effects of cult life. Physiological problems included extreme weight gain or loss; abnormal skin conditions such as rashes, eczema and acne; menstrual dysfunction in women and higher-pitched voices and reduced facial-hair growth in men. The pressures of cult life also led to feelings of fear, guilt, hostility and depression, sexual dysfunction, violent outbursts and self-destructive or suicidal tendencies.

But the most startling effects of all were bizarre disturbances of awareness, perception, memory and other basic information-processing capacities. Former cult members complained of disorientation and of "floating" in and out of altered states; of recurrent nightmares, hallucinations and delusions; of instances of bewildering or unnerving "psychic" phenomena; and—widespread among former members of groups known for their intense repetitive rituals—of an inability to break mental rhythms of chanting, meditation or speaking in tongues.

No term exists in medicine or mental health to describe this new kind of illness that is infecting America's cult members. In our 1978 book, *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change*, we introduced the term "information disease" for what may represent a disorder of awareness caused not by germs, drugs or physical abuse but by the manipulation of information feeding every sensory channel of the nervous system.

Can the way a person thinks and feels be altered solely by information? Research in neurophysiology has established that, from birth, information-processing pathways in the brain are shaped and maintained by the steady flow of information throughout the nervous system. Our findings go even further and suggest that, at any age, these same pathways may be altered or impaired by a sudden bombardment of new information or experience.

SYNAPTIC CHANGES

From interviews with neurophysiologists and bio-information specialists at Caltech, Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley, we learned that, in some cases, new and intense experiences may bring about a reorganization of long-standing synaptic microstructures; in others, new patterns of thought and feeling may simply bypass or be superimposed over older ones.

Yet from the beginning of our research we observed an apparent link between the frequency and severity of reported effects and the amount of time spent practicing cult mind-stilling rituals. Extended practice of these techniques appears to have a lasting impact on the mind. In conversations with former cult members, we heard

of disturbances in thinking and feeling that persisted for months, even years, after they left the group. In anguished testimony, they talked of experiencing "physical pain" while attempting to make reasoned, independent decisions for the first time in years; they described frightening periods of being unable to distinguish between reality and fantasy.

"My life was blown to bits by the experience," said a former member of an Eastern mystical cult. "I never knew such bewilderment, pain and feeling on the brink of insanity," said one former Moonie. "I cried all the time," said another. "I experienced more fear and terror than I imagined existed."

Some former cult members claimed that they had become *unable* to think; they were uncertain of their perceptions and incapable of remembering events from their time in the cult or from their life before they joined. One young woman reported that, after several years in the Church of Scientology, she realized that her mind had stopped functioning altogether. "I'd been sleeping, mentally shut

"When I left," says one former member, "I felt broken, shattered and scared of everything and everyone, even myself."

off for nearly six and a half years," she told us. "I hadn't developed personally, intellectually or emotionally since the first day of doing the cult exercises, when I was apparently dazed or hypnotized somehow."

Our study, completed in 1981, surveyed more than 400 former cult members from 48 different groups, including the five major international religious cults (see chart), local sects and minor cults such as the Children of God, the Summit Lighthouse and the Love Family, followers of Eastern gurus such as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, and participants in self-help therapies such as est (Erhard Seminars Training) and Lifespring.

We solicited 98 detailed answers and 4 open-ended responses to questions covering every stage of the cult experience: recruitment, cult life, separation, deprogramming, rehabilitation and long-term effects.

Our respondents varied widely in age—from mid-teens to mid-fifties (average age: 21 years)—and in length of time spent in the group—from 3 days to 12 years (average time: 34 months). They di-

vided almost evenly by sex (51 percent male, 49 percent female) and broadly by religious background (46 percent Protestant, 26 percent Roman Catholic, 21 percent Jewish, 7 percent atheist, agnostic or other).

The grim realities of the cult experience emerged from our questions about daily life. For most members, cult life is perpetual motion, an exhausting program of menial labor and around-the-clock fundraising and recruiting duties suffused throughout with endless ritual and devotional activities.

"HAPPY HOOKERS FOR JESUS"

Among the shuffled priorities of most cults, sexual relations ranked low. Celibacy predominated (72 percent), although roughly one-quarter (24 percent) reported having heterosexual relations at least occasionally while in the group. Sexual exploitation of members by group leaders was minimal. Only 5 percent reported having sex with leaders of their group. A notable exception here was the Children of God (a.k.a. the Family of Love), whose female members are commanded to become "fishers of men" and "happy hookers for Jesus." Here 60 percent reported having sexual relations with leaders of the group.

Incidents of physical punishment, reported by approximately one in five respondents, included beatings, starvation, physical bondage, cold showers and dousings and long hours of humiliating and degrading labor. "I was beaten, harassed and locked in a room," said one woman who had tried to leave a cult and had succeeded only on a second attempt. A former Scientologist reported, "I was held in a 'prison camp' under guard and isolated for fifteen months. During this time they tried to convince me that I was evil and psychotic."

Cults expect more than spiritual dues-paying. Our modest sample donated more than \$1.3 million of their own savings and possessions to their groups (average gift: \$3,250), and nearly half of those responding worked on fund-raising drives and at outside jobs that brought in another \$5.7 million over the time they spent in cults (average earnings: \$25,000).

Without exception, the most compelling acts of cult life were the intense daily ritual or therapeutic practices required by every group. These methods varied widely according to cult: meditation in the Divine Light Mission, the Moonies' act of "centering" on the teachings of Rev. Moon, the "tongues" ritual in The Way, Scientology's "training regimens" and "pastoral counseling," the Krishnas' chanting of their familiar mantra. Our respondents reported spending from three to seven hours per day practicing one or

more of these techniques. Members also reported spending time each day in group rituals, including sensitivity sessions, psychodramas, guided fantasies and a variety of emotion-filled confessional activities. Moreover, nearly all our respondents reported spending an additional 20 to 30 hours per week at lectures, seminars, workshops or required private study of cult doctrines.

This grueling schedule of devotional activities adds up to a numbing 40 to 70 hours per week (average time: 55 hours per week) spent in various mind-control practices.

The result may be catastrophic. Nearly all of our 400 respondents reported experiencing one or more of the negative long-term effects we had cataloged in our initial research. (In this part of our study, we eliminated any subjects who reported a prior physical or mental-health problem.) We found that nearly one in five experienced some lasting health problem and two-thirds experienced long-term emotional difficulties.

"When I left the cult," said one former member, "I felt broken, shattered and terrified of everyone and everything, mainly myself." And an ex-Moonie raged: "I'm really mad! My body is damaged from poor nutrition and years of fear and guilt and pressure on my nerves."

But, as we expected, it was in the area of disturbances of perception, memory and other information-processing capaci-

One in seven respondents suffered from delusions or hallucinations for up to eight years after having left a group.

ties that our survey was most revealing. More than half of all who responded experienced one or more disorders in this category. Fifty-two percent reported periods of disorientation or of "floating" in and out of altered states. Forty percent reported suffering from nightmares about the group. More than a third (35 percent) reported being unable to break mental rhythms of chanting, meditation or speaking in tongues. One in five (21 percent) experienced some memory loss. And one in seven (14 percent) reported suffering from hallucinations or delusions for up to eight years after leaving the cult!

"It hurts to think, physically aches," said a former member of the Divine Light Mission. Wrote an ex-member of another cult: "In times of stress or loneliness, I still find myself meditating without having decided to do so. I have memory lapses and find it hard to remember details." "The cult has limited my imaginative and creative abilities in ways that may be irreparable," said an ex-member of a Christian cult.

For many ex-members, coming out of the cults proved to be the most harrowing ordeal of all. On the average, full rehabilitation took more than 16 months. More than one in five respondents reported having suicidal or self-destructive tendencies during this crucial time, and more than one in three sought professional follow-up counseling or therapy.

Do these widespread reports of traumatic effects prove that cults cause information disease? Not by themselves, of course. But our research showed what appeared to be a direct relationship between the number of hours spent per week in cult ritual and indoctrination and the number of long-term effects. In addition, we found a similar correlation between hours per week spent in ritual and indoctrination and the reported length of rehabilitation time. Put simply: our findings appear to confirm that *the psychological trauma cults inflict upon their members is directly related to the amount of time spent in indoctrination and mind-control rituals.*

Perhaps most startling of all was a second finding: in most cults, after the first three to six months of participation, the impact of ritual and indoctrination varies little over the member's remaining time in the group. In other words, *most of the damage appears to be done in the first few months.*

Two groups in particular showed signs of inflicting the most severe physical, mental and emotional harm on their members: the Hare Krishna and the Church of Scientology. Among all groups, Krishna and Scientology tied with the Unification Church in reports of physical deprivation. Their members reported getting the least sleep per night and having the most deficient daily diet. The Krishnas also chalked up the most hours per week of ritual and indoctrination (70 hours), highest reported celibacy rate (95 percent), highest average earnings per member from fund raising and outside jobs (\$72,000), and the second highest incidence of physical punishment (32 percent). Krishna members obsessively chant the mantra almost seven hours per day on the average, nearly double the time spent by all other groups in mind-stilling rituals.

"MY MIND, THE ENEMY"

"I was taught to think of my mind as the enemy," said one former member. "For me, the chanting lasted twenty-four hours a day," said another.

The rituals of the Church of Scientology bear little resemblance to those of any other cult. With its extensive program of "training regimens" and expensive "auditing" counseling, Scientology operates successfully as both religion and mass-

rites and rights

A lawyer opposes *Science Digest's* view on cults.

Key to the legal debate over "cults" and deprogramming is whether *scientific evidence* supports restriction of "cult" activities.

What is mind control? The law must be wary of scientists' definitions, for one man's indoctrination is another's received truth. Reprogramming is a fancy word for a variety of kidnapping. If courts may judge the validity of claims of blissful "revelation" or encounters with God, what is to stop them from looking into transubstantiation (the Catholic belief that Communion's bread and wine are Christ's body and blood), or promises of eternal salvation? Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas once wrote, "The miracles of the New Testament, the Divinity of Christ, life after death, the power of prayer, are deep in the religious convictions of many. If one could be sent to jail because a jury . . . found these teachings

false, little indeed would be left of religious freedom."

But religious freedom, protected by the Constitution's First Amendment, is at issue. Efforts to differentiate "cults" from "mainstream" religions have their antecedents in crusades against atheists, Catholics, Jews, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses—all once reviled in terms as scathing as those now applied to the "cults."

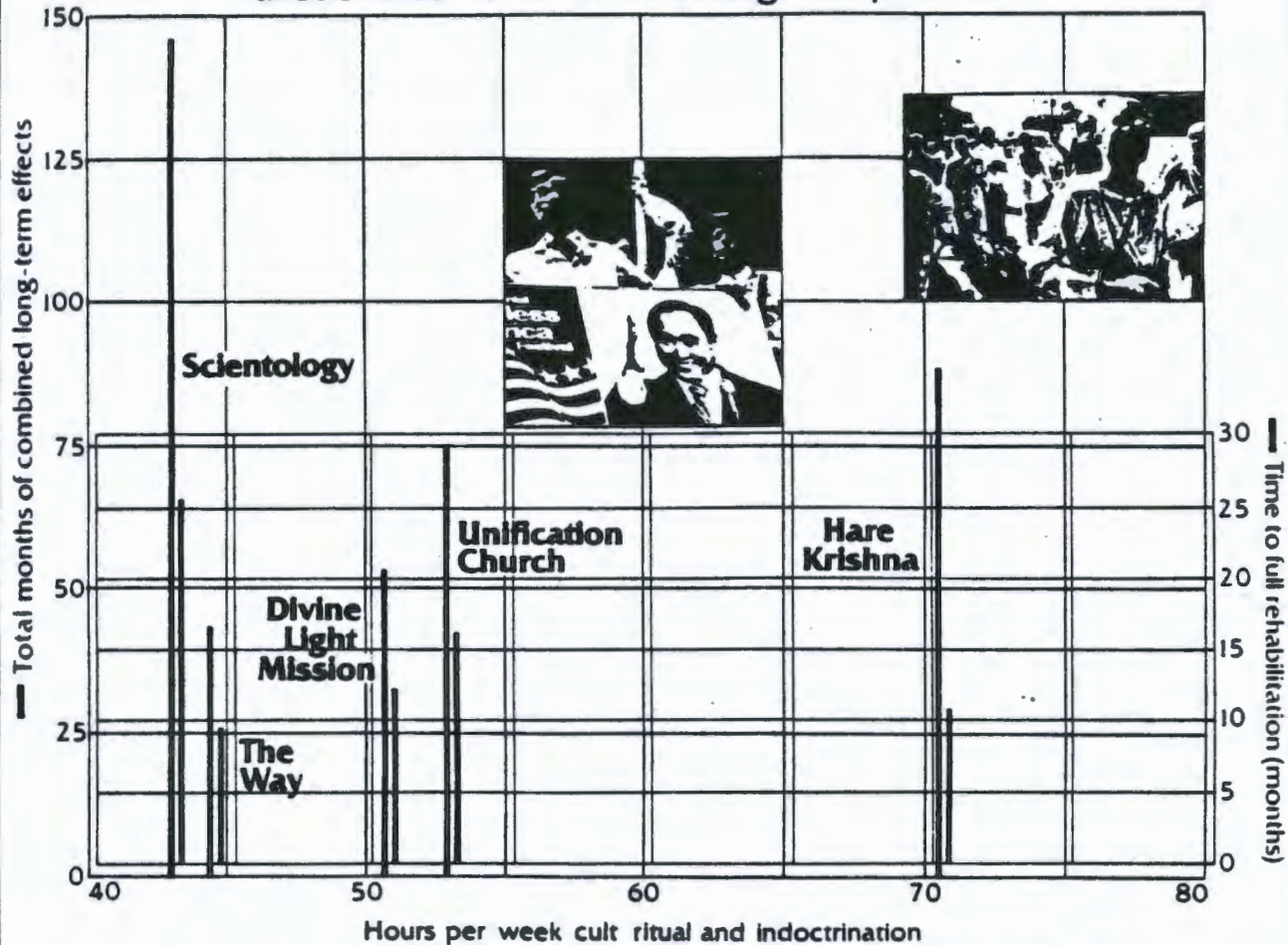
The First Amendment does not, of course, give religious groups total immunity. It does not bar prosecution for criminal acts. But singling out "cults" for special scrutiny is exactly the kind of religious discrimination the First Amendment forbids. When, even in the name of science, individuals are denied personal choice, the rights of all of us are endangered.

—Gara LaMarche
Assistant Director
New York Civil Liberties Union

D I S E A S E

RITUAL VS. RECOVERY

How the number of hours spent in cult indoctrination affects rehabilitation time and long-term problems.



Figures based on reports from 262 former members. Copyright © 1982 by Flo Conway & Jim Siegelman

Combined figures for all 48 cults reflect the study's basic finding—that the number of hours of ritual a week affects the extent of long-term problems and recovery time. The five biggest cults vary widely in methods. Some highlights: Scientology offers a "personality test," which reveals problems that may be cured by its "communication course." The Way International has been criticized for its alleged anti-Semitism and growing emphasis on weapons training. Divine Light Mission recruits people by offering free meditation instructions. The Unification Church's ultimate goal is an anticommunist world "theocracy" under founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon. Hare Krishna members rise at 4 A.M. to take icy showers and chant 1,700 "rounds" of the mantra.

A SAMPLING OF FINDINGS

	Moon	Hare Krishna	Church of Scientology	Divine Light	The Way	Average, all 48 groups
Average length of time in group (months)	17	33	36	49	23	34
Average hours per day spent in ritual processes	3.3	6.9	3.1	4.4	3.2	4.6
Total hours per week: ritual & indoctrination	53.2	70.1	42.9	50.8	44.8	54.5
Percent of ex-members who were deprogrammed	78%	79%	24%	80%	91%	71%
Long-term mental & emotional effects*						
"floating" in and out of altered states	52%	93%	47%	52%	60%	52%
nightmares	42%	60%	53%	42%	30%	40%
amnesia	16%	40%	31%	18%	25%	21%
hallucinations and delusions	11%	7%	28%	10%	15%	14%
inability to break mental rhythms of chanting	35%	80%	19%	42%	40%	35%
violent outbursts	12%	20%	28%	15%	20%	14%
suicidal or self-destructive tendencies	22%	20%	44%	25%	15%	21%
Average rehabilitation time (months)**	16.6	11.1	25.6	12.3	9.5	16.0

* Percentages show members responding in each group.

** Based on members out of groups six months or longer. Many reported ongoing effects; actual figures may be 5 to 10 percent higher.

C U L T S

marketed therapy. According to those who responded to our survey, however, Scientology's may be the most debilitating set of rituals of any cult in America. Onetime Scientologists who answered our questionnaire reported that it took them, on the average, more than two years (26 months) before they felt fully rehabilitated—more than *twice* the time of those from other major cults. Moreover, former Scientologists surpassed all others in reported incidences of physical punishment while in the group (35 percent) and, upon departure, they claimed the highest rates of sexual dysfunction (22 percent), violent outbursts (28 percent), hallucinations and delusions (28 percent) and suicidal or self-destructive tendencies (44 percent). On the average, former Scientologists surveyed reported more than *twice* the combined negative effects of all other cult groups.

Ironically, although claiming the most severe long-term effects, former Scientologists surveyed reported the *lowest* total of hours per week spent in ritual and indoctrination. This apparent discrepancy seems to support opinions we have expressed earlier that, in combination, Scientology's training regimens and "auditing" counseling sessions (conducted on an E-meter, a kind of crude lie detector) may have an intensifying and compounding effect on the nervous system that goes beyond that of simpler cult rituals. And our survey findings appear to confirm that, *hour for hour, Scientology's techniques may be more than twice as damaging as those of any other major cult in America!* In our view, this could be a vital direction for further research by scientists working in the field of neurophysiology.

"The overall impact? Devastating!" wrote one ex-member. "I still tend to view the world in Scientological terms: 'Truth is only an illusion.' 'People are robots.' 'People are basically insane and dangerous.'" Another was even more bitter: "The only thing I got out of this scam was deep suicidal depression coinciding with the fear of death within five years after separation. We were told that ninety percent of all 'refund cases' eventually commit suicide."

LIFESAVING INTERVENTION

Some of the most impassioned comments came in response to our questions on separation and deprogramming. Since the early Seventies, when the practice of abducting young cult members at the request of their families first began, deprogramming has been a sensitive civil liberties issue. Cult spokesmen condemned it as a brutal violation of individual rights and Constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, while former cult members praised the process as a lifesaving inter-

vention that helped them regain their freedom of thought. In their defense, deprogrammers have claimed that abduction is used only as a last resort and that the deprogramming process itself is merely a marathon question-and-answer session. Cult members are provided with information about cult practices and their possible effects on the mind and encouraged to examine their own buried doubts and questions about the group. Through this process, most cult members usually emerge from their trance-like state in as little as a few hours or days.

Our survey confirmed that deprogramming is indeed a vital first step on the road back from cult mind control. Three distinct steps in the process emerged: first, separation, which, for those under mind control, may require involuntary removal from the cult; then the deprogramming proper; and finally a slower rehabilitation process in which the individual gradually rebuilds his weakened thinking and decision-making capacities, much as one would strengthen an injured muscle.

More than two-thirds (71 percent) of

Rehabilitation time for
ex-cultists who were
not deprogrammed was
10 months longer than
for those who were.

those in our survey were deprogrammed, but only about 40 percent were abducted. In almost every case, those who were deprogrammed recovered more quickly and experienced fewer long-term effects than those who were not. Deprogrammees needed an average 10 months less rehabilitation time than non-deprogrammees (14 months instead of 24 months) and reported, on the average, less than half the long-term effects.

"Deprogramming was a godsend," said a former Krishna. Another waxed philosophical: "Being deprogrammed forced me to accept responsibility for my actions and control over my own life. I sometimes curse that fact. It isn't as much fun having to blame myself for my own failures."

We found little evidence to support allegations that deprogramming is violent or brutal. Only five percent said threats or verbal abuse played a significant role in their deprogramming. Only 10 people out of 400 described any instance of physical injury during separation or deprogramming—and 6 of those injuries were self-inflicted. However, serious shortcomings were cited among some deprogrammers

with regard to their personal styles, experience and specific knowledge of each group's methods.

The fledgling field of deprogramming remains at the leading edge of the cult controversy, yet leaders of the mental-health community have steadfastly refused to call on it. As public concern mounts, a growing number of veteran deprogrammees and undertrained amateurs are being drawn into the action and, in some instances, undermining the field's tenuous and hard-won credibility. Despite these problems, deprogramming remains the only remedy currently available for many victims of mind control.

WREAKING HAVOC

For most people, the term *cult* conjures up images of arcane, secretive societies whose members hold bizarre beliefs and swear allegiance to a living guru or self-proclaimed messiah. We found something like this to be the case in most of the major cults. But we were surprised to find that the majority of cult groups, including many we had never heard of before, were fundamentalist Christian sects apparently employing sophisticated mind-control techniques. Thirty of the 48 cults we surveyed emerged out of this traditional branch of Christianity, including The Way International, the Christ Family, the Tony and Susan Alamo Christian Foundation, the Church of Bible Understanding and—not to be forgotten—the People's Temple. As a group, Christian-based cults reported the highest average hours per week spent in ritual and indoctrination. They also rated higher than all cults except Scientology in combined long-term effects and average rehabilitation time (19 months).

As we write, newly completed surveys continue to arrive in the mail. Daily we receive new evidence that cults in America are wreaking havoc on the minds and lives of millions. Yet each day it becomes clearer to us that support for official action from those in positions of responsibility is virtually nonexistent.

The cults continue to claim that any inquiry into their operations and practices is forbidden by the Constitution. Yet U.S. courts have repeatedly ruled that the First Amendment provides only unqualified freedom of religious *belief*, not unlimited freedom to practice those beliefs in ways that may violate existing laws or pose a threat to the health and safety of individuals or society. Similarly, the mental-health establishment has historically been slow to examine matters of faith in medical or scientific terms. But in the eloquent testimony of these hundreds of former cult members—the first victims of information disease—there is a plea for help that should not be ignored. ■



U. S. Department of Education

Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Fred W. Decker, Ph.D.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

Suite 722, Brown Bldg.
1200 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20208

Ofc. (202) 254-3401
Res. (703) 920-6155
Msg. (703) 521-7900 (A-910)



©1982, Rajneesh Foundation

Associated Press

Residents of Antelope, Ore., fear followers of Rajneesh, left, would take over the town. At right, disciples of the guru line up as he drives his Rolls past them on their ranch.

Ore. Hamlet Votes on Whether to Disband

→ ANTELOPE, Ore., April 15 (AP)—Voters were deciding today whether to disband this tiny 81-year-old community in an effort to keep disciples of an Indian guru from taking over.

Even while balloting was under way, the two sides in the dispute vowed to challenge the outcome in court.

Karen LeBreton, the Wasco County election supervisor, said the county automatically entered a challenge to any voter who had registered fewer than 30 days before the election.

A ruling eventually would be made by a circuit court judge after either side challenged the election, she said.

Today's vote, the latest step in the six-month legal battle between the red-garbed followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and a town that doesn't want them, brought about 100 reporters and other onlookers. That's more than the population of the entire town.

"I think we would be better disincorporating," said Don Smith, a City Council member who was one of the leaders of the disincorporation movement and one of the day's first voters.

He denied charges by Rajneesh followers that the council was discriminating against the commune members because of their religion.

"I don't even know what their religion is. How can I discriminate against something that I don't even know what it is?" he said.

Arthur Clark, an Antelope resident, wore a necklace of empty rifle-cartridge cases with a button proclaiming him a "Descendant of Oregon Pioneers." The necklace was a parody of the wooden-bead necklaces worn by the Rajneesh with a picture of their spiritual leader.

Sheela Silverman, president of Rajneesh Foundation International, described the Bhagwan's message as one of living and loving in which all traditional religions have value.

The election assumed a party atmosphere as a dozen town residents sold homemade cakes, cookies and other goodies in the basement of the school, where the polling took place. The proceeds were to help pay the town's legal expenses.

Antelope had a population of 40 in 1980 and 31 voters, but by 9 a.m. today, 98 people had registered, six of them that morning.

An informal count indicated 53 were Rajneesh members.

The problem became complicated by Oregon's liberal election law, which lets voters register up to and on election day.

Voters qualified to cast ballots in Oregon can move into a city and vote that day if they can convince officials they intend to remain inhabitants of the community.

The City Council set the election last month as an emergency measure, saying Rajneesh followers planned to move in enough voters to control the town in the upcoming November general election.

Residents said they feared the Rajneesh, who bought a 65,000-acre ranch 18 miles from town last July, would raise taxes and force out any non-members.

Silverman denied the charges and said the followers, who now number about 330, wanted to keep to themselves, but Oregon zoning laws forced them to buy commercial property in town.

Rajneesh became known at a now-defunct commune in Poona, India, for his teaching that sex is to be enjoyed without guilt or commitment—although members say his teachings do not differ from American life.

The Rajneesh first operated a mail-order store in Antelope to ship tracts and tapes of the Bhagwan's messages to its estimated 250,000 adherents worldwide.

The city council balked when the foundation, which holds title to the ranch, wanted to build a printing plant. The council refused to issue a building permit and the commune responded by buying up more property and moving the red-garbed followers into town.

5-20-82

**Followers of Guru Back
Incorporation of Ore. City**

THE DALLES, Ore., May 19 (AP)—Members of the commune dedicated to Indian Guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh have unanimously approved a proposal to incorporate a new city on their 100-square-mile commune in central Oregon.

The 154-to-0 vote was no surprise, since only residents of the area proposed for incorporation could vote.

If the proposal survives continuing legal challenges the city will start operation with election of a city council in November.

1-13-83
Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who lives on an Oregon ranch with several hundred followers, will not have to leave the country, although his case is still under consideration.

Rajneesh had been denied permanent residency by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and ordered out by Jan 21. The INS previously stated that the guru's visa application, filed in India, had contained false information.

Now, however, INS says there may have been a procedural error and that the case is under review.

"We're back to square one," said a lawyer for the guru Tuesday.

Oregonian 2/27/83

Rajneesh tax bill totals \$38,000 in two counties

By JEANIE SENIOR
Correspondent, The Oregonian

THE DALLES — Property tax bills for the Rajneesh Investment Corp. in Wasco and Jefferson counties for 1982 total about \$38,000, according to county officials.

In Wasco County, where some 19,000 acres of Rajneesh-owned land, including the new city of Rajneeshpuram and a portion of the Rancho Rajneesh, are located, the investment corporation's property is assessed at about \$3 million, said Wasco County Assessor Clair Balzer.

Certain personal properties, including construction equipment and office equipment used for Rajneesh public occasions, also are taxable. Some properties in the city of Antelope are included, too.

The Rajneeshes' tax bills in Wasco County come to about \$32,000, a figure that will increase as the city of Raj-

neeshpuram develops, Balzer said.

Some 44,000 acres of ranch land located in Jefferson County have a farm use assessment of \$202,740 that carries a tax bill of \$3,200. Six mobile homes located on the ranch inside Jefferson County generate another tax bill of \$3,000.

Jefferson County Assessor Cecil Zemke said that because the farm land is valued for exclusive farm use "you can't put market value on it."

The majority of the land is grazing property, Zemke said. "It's on the breaks of the John Day, and it's pretty steep up and down."

The ranch land is valued comparably with surrounding ranch properties, Zemke said. Next year, the Rajneeshes' tax bill will be higher because several mobile homes, valued at about \$30,000 a unit, have been located inside Jefferson County, the county assessor said.

Fraternities favor hazing ban

EUGENE — Fraternities at the University of Oregon endorse and will lobby for a bill that would ban initiation hazing in the state.

The school's 15 fraternities all support House Bill 2551, which would end activities that might injure, embarrass

or ridicule members, said Alan Scarce, Interfraternity Council president.

The bill, introduced at the request of Delta Tau Delta fraternity's Willamette University chapter, sets a \$1,000 maximum penalty for groups and a \$250 maximum fine for individuals.

Rajneesh protesters target INS

By DAN HORTSCH
of The Oregonian staff

The music was joyful and the singing glad, but the feelings behind the gathering of hundreds of followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh outside U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service offices in Portland Thursday were serious.

The protest stemmed from what the Rajneeshees said was hostility and physical abuse by investigators for the INS.

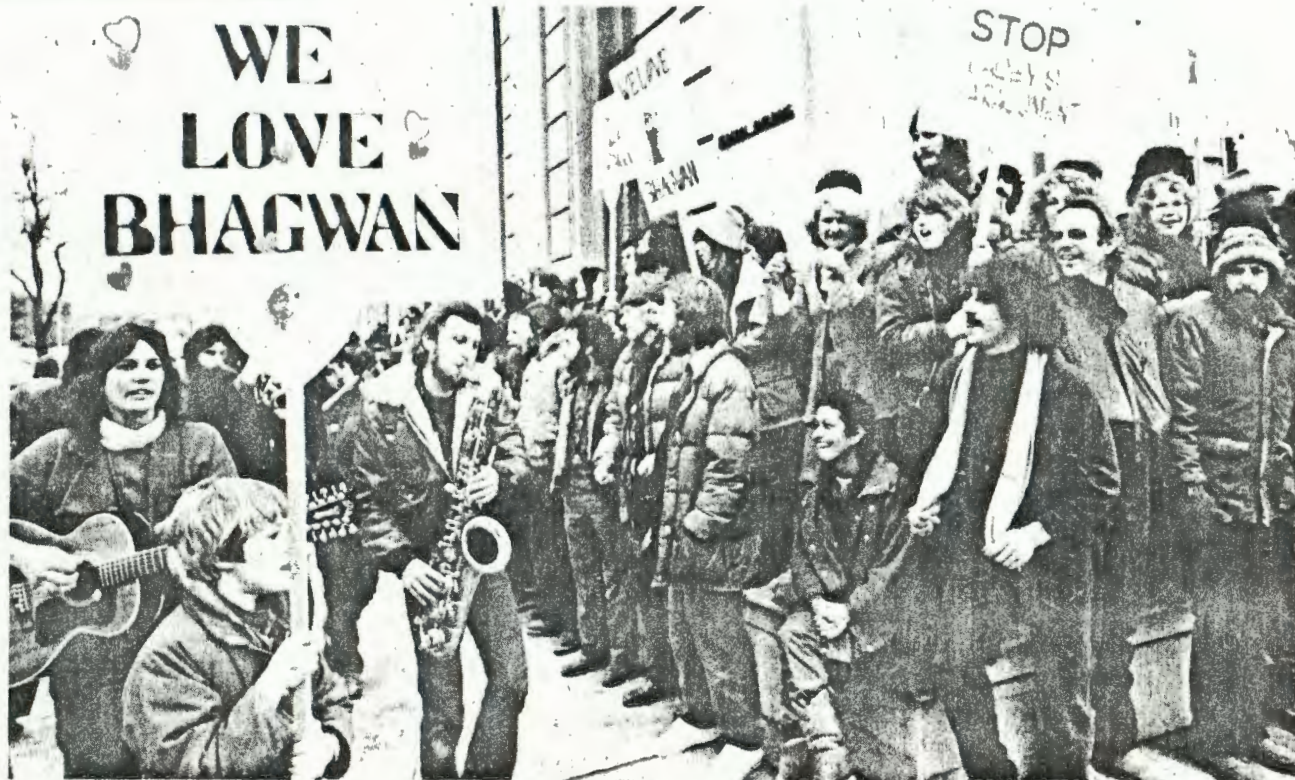
A statement distributed by the group cited an incident last week in which INS investigator Charles Wood "assaulted a Rajneesh disciple on the steps of the INS building in Portland."

A man who said his name is Swami Cliff said he was the person referred to and that the incident occurred when he and two other Rajneeshees were leaving the Federal Building at 511 N.W. Broadway, where INS offices are located, and were in a gateway leading to a fenced-in parking area at the rear.

Cliff said a man who turned out to be Wood "quite rudely yelled at us to get out of the parking lot," and when asked why, he stepped on Cliff's foot and shoved him with a forearm.

Cliff said that if the parking lot were restricted — there are no signs inside the building saying that it is — they could have been told so, but "our problem is that the way we were treated is totally uncalled for."

A lawyer with the group, Swami Prem Niren, said he was with Cliff at the time and that he himself had gone to the parking lot "to copy down Tom Casey's license plate" number. Casey is



Staff photo by TOM TREICK

SMILING PROTEST — Followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh sing and dance outside U.S. Immigration and Naturalization offices Thursday to

protest what they said is recent harassment and physical abuse by INS investigators. Indian leader of the group is seeking permanent residency.

another investigator for the INS. The car, Niren said, has been seen "trespassing" on the group's ranch in Central Oregon.

Niren also said that Robert Krueger, INS district director, had been asked by Sheela Silverman, president of Rajneesh Foundation International, to give assurance that harassment by Casey and Wood would be stopped.

Krueger said such assurance "was not requested nor denied."

Krueger also said Wood said "he may have stepped on his foot" when asking the Rajneeshees to leave.

Krueger added that if a complaint were made and he were asked to investigate it, he would do so, but that none had been received. Niren said such a

request had been made.

Referring to the singing and music outside the building, Krueger said, "It appears to me they are trying to adjudicate the Bhagwan's case in the media." The Indian mystic's application for permanent residency in the United States was turned down late last year, but the case has been reopened.

Earlier this month, Krueger said

Rajneesh and his followers had 30 days from Jan. 27 to show U.S. immigration officials why the Indian mystic should be granted permanent residency in the United States. Niren said Thursday, however, that he understood that the 30-day period started about two days ago, the day the Rajneeshees received the last of the government's evidence in the case.

Staff cleans up details at emptied Martha Washington Hotel



MOVING ON — Carol Ann Kuchmak, last resident at Martha Washington Hotel, 1115 S.W. 11th Ave., packs belongings Thursday in

preparation for move to Northwest Portland apartment. After Friday, followers of Bhagwan Shree Raineesh will take possession of hotel.

Staff photo by GREG LAWLER

By DAN HORTSCH
of The Oregonian staff

If nerves were a little sensitive at the Martha Washington Hotel Thursday, there was reason. Thursday night was the last night for the last resident and Friday the staff of 12 will leave for good.

The spacious, quietly elegant lobby was dimly lit and still Thursday afternoon as the manager, Doris McWhorter, and the rest of the staff put in their final hours.

After Friday, followers of the Bhagwan Shree Raineesh will take possession of the residential hotel at 1115 S.W. 11th Ave. The Portland Women's Union sold the building a month ago, thereby bringing an end to an institution that was founded in 1887 to provide women with safe, low-cost housing.

"We're all still working," McWhorter said. "We've had a very busy week getting the building in shape, putting everything in tiptop shape."

The 76 residents, two-thirds of them students, started moving out soon after the sale was announced a month ago. The Raineesh Investment Corp. purchased the building for \$1.4 million.

Thursday, the residents were down to one, Carol Ann Kuchmak, 29, who works part-time as a pharmacist at the Oregon Health Sciences University hospital. She has lived at the hotel 1½ years and "I don't want to leave."

She wasn't looking forward to moving to her new apartment in Northwest Portland. "It's nice eating dinner with friends," she said of life at the Martha Washington. "There were lots of friends here. The desk clerks were friends, the maids were friends, everybody was a friend."

The manager, who has held the job 3½ years and also lived in the hotel until getting an apartment after the sale, was sorry to see the residents leave. "We really had a good group here this last year," she said. "Very congenial."

As for the problem of residents' finding new places to live, "The people in Portland were terrific in calling and offering their homes or telling us of apartments that were available," McWhorter said.

Both McWhorter and the assistant manager, Maria Busto, worked in their office Thursday — some bookwork on their desks, some packing still to be done. Neither has looked for another job yet.

"We have a certain loyalty to the board and the Portland Women's Union until we are completely finished here," McWhorter said.

"I can't work for two masters at the same time," added Busto, who has worked there seven years and for five of those years also lived in the hotel. She added that as the accountant for the hotel she probably will continue to work part-time with the Portland Women's Union to finish the bookkeeping.

The Martha Washington has had other homes, and for the past 12 years has been in the old Campbell Court Hotel. The cost to the residents was \$285 monthly for room and board. The women's union estimated annual operating losses of \$50,000, and sold the hotel with the intention of putting the proceeds into a charitable trust that will benefit women.

Even though virtually all residents had moved out before the Friday deadline, many returned Thursday evening "to spend time and eat dinner," McWhorter said.

Oregonian 2/11/83





Robert Anderson

Former Bhagwan disciple tells of 'cult' involvement

By Susan Stanley

A man describing himself as the first Oregon disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has "gone public" with his defection from what he now regards as an increasingly dangerous cult. Describing "free sex," "mind control" and a herdlike acceptance of the guru's monetary goals, the former Rajneesh has decided to make public his qualms about both the religion and his former master, criticizing what he views as undeservedly positive publicity for a spectacular sham.

In a copyrighted series of brief radio interviews by KMJK-FM's Carolyn Myers (Feb. 14-18, 6:55 and 7:55 a.m., KMJK-FM), Robert Anderson, 29, details his five-year involvement and ultimate disillusionment with Bhagwan's particular brand of Tantric Buddhism. Called "Better Dead Than Red—Confessions of a Rajneesh Refugee," the series resulted from research for reporter Myers' upcoming half-hour program, "Rajneesh—Religion Or Cult?" (Sunday, Feb. 20, 8:30 a.m., KMJK-FM.)

From 1977 to 1982, known as Swami Prem Gautama, Anderson was "a prime suspect," he says, for becoming a disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, the famous Oregon-based Indian guru. A baptized Episcopalian, he was exposed early to Christian Science, lived for a time with a Jewish aunt and uncle, attended a Roman Catholic boarding school for a year, "dabbled in Hinduism," and studied Zen Buddhism with a master.

"What happened to me?" The question is asked in a curiously dispassionate voice as he speaks of a half-decade spent as a sannyasin, as the Rajneeshes call themselves. "I feel like I stepped out of a time capsule . . . or a space ship. I felt like I was coming off a drug," he says of his eventual defection from the "cult," as he calls it, in January 1982.

Talking in the KMJK-FM studios, Anderson was calm as he ticked off his reasons for "coming out" against the high-profile, red-clad devotees and their master, waiting to do so for more than a year after becoming disaffected.

"My personal life experience has led me to believe that Bhagwan is a fraud—and that he is

rapidly building one of the world's largest religious cults. And you can go ahead and say 'cult' . . ." Looking like a hip young David Niven, the jazz guitarist was clad in apricot-hued shirt over black turtleneck, with black corduroy pants and black jacket. A burgundy-colored beret topped his blond hair, and a pin of a guitar was attached to the beret.

"I didn't realize there was such a vacuum of information about him . . . it's hard to relate to people who have so little information," he continued in explanation of his stepping forward now. He thinks the rapidly increasing numbers, and the financial strength of the organization, present several kinds of danger.

"He's buying property very quickly. Why is he buying property so fast? It looks to me like he's trying to build a foundation very quickly . . . to transfer his funds to this locale. What's that all about?" Most of Bhagwan's followers, he asserts, are "dirt-faced broke—hippies. There's a healthy proportion, maybe 20 percent who are rich. And those are the people they're shoving in front of the camera."

Another danger he sees is less obvious, one he calls "mind control."

"I feel the word 'hypnotized' refers to the average sannyasin more than the word 'meditative.' Meditation practice is basically being able to sit still and pay attention. As a concert artist, I found sannyasins able to relate only

"dehydrated Tantric," producing "Instant Tantric Yogis." And therein, he asserts, lies much of the popularity: "America is becoming more jaded—and free sex appeals to a jaded consciousness."

He believes that the sexual freedom within the Rajneesh community has a literal price—money. Several times, he says, people tried to convince him to sell his two guitars, "the tools of my trade." There were other examples.

"There was an occasion where a woman who knew I had feelings for her tried to take advantage of those feelings to get me to take out a loan and make a donation to him," he recalls. "I began to realize that the whole focus of my life had changed, that the whole focus was Bhagwan. I think he presents a very convincing facade." That facade, he says, along with official approval from an authority figure to indulge freely in sexual activity with a variety of people, has figured importantly in Bhagwan's success.

"There's a strong connection between psychic vulnerability and sexual activity. I think that in the general context, the freedom that is given to people for sexual activity is basically harmful."

"Sannyasins didn't seem to me to be people who were getting less angry . . . They're very alienated, very separatist. Another danger is the encouragement to abandon critical thinking."

He thinks the rapidly increasing numbers, and the financial strength of the organization, present several kinds of danger.

to dance music. A great deal of antagonism came to me because they couldn't understand what I was trying to do with my music . . .

"Shamanism. He was encouraging people to get intoxicated—on music, or on him. A state of psychological intoxication. If I were going to pick someone's pocket, I'd want 'em drunk. It's true, love is blind," Anderson continues.

Living in Eugene in 1977, the University of Oregon graduate, with a degree in music, first became acquainted with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh by reading his works.

"I sent a letter—you become a disciple by mail. I was the first in Oregon, for whatever that's worth," he says. One of the first appeals was the promise that wearing orange, red and other colors of the Indian sunset "can make you free," releasing the disciple from feelings of self-consciousness. (The theory being, says Anderson, that "you look like such an idiot that pretty soon you stop worrying about what people think of you!") After sending in two pictures of himself and filling out a form, Robert Anderson became Swami Prem Gautama, and began his five-year stint, a spiritual journey that took him to various cities in California. (His involvement with the religion predated the establishment of the Oregon community. Nor, he admits, has he ever spoken with Bhagwan.)

"Another reason I got involved was it looked like there was a group of people who'd be supportive of what I do, of my music," he says.

For many, the appeal is sex—the sexual component of Tantric Yoga, an emphasis on what he calls "knowing the real powers, the psychological possibilities of sexual intercourse. In the hands of people who don't know what they're doing, it can be dangerous. Sexual energy is extremely powerful."

Anderson has continued his years-long studies of traditional Buddhism, and now regards the Rajneesh as offering his followers

There's very much an 'us versus them,' which is encouraged by Bhagwan," Anderson continues.

The establishment of the town of Rajneeshpuram—near conservative Antelope—in the eastern part of Oregon, creates further dangers, he believes. "He's speaking of creating an isolated 50,000-population city. What about separation of church and state?" he asks.

Since dropping out, Robert Anderson believes that he has been under surveillance of sorts—"peeping Toms . . . blank calls to my various addresses. And there seems to be an abundance of Rajneesh-clad women in my vicinity in the past year."

He doesn't expect any personal physical danger to result from his disclosures, however. "I think any harm that'd happen to me would only be backfire," he says, pointing out that good public relations are important to the religion. "I think that's the last thing he'd do."

The former Swami Prem Gautama has continued his study of traditional Buddhism, viewing his "state of infatuation" with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh as simply part of his own spiritual journey. Yet he continues to be concerned by media attention toward the religious community of Rajneeshpuram, to voice his worries about the thousands he believes exploited. It would be different if the guru were purveying "good Tantric Yoga," he repeats.

"I don't think Bhagwan is doing that at all. I think he's just dressing people in red and heading for the golf course."

★ ★ ★

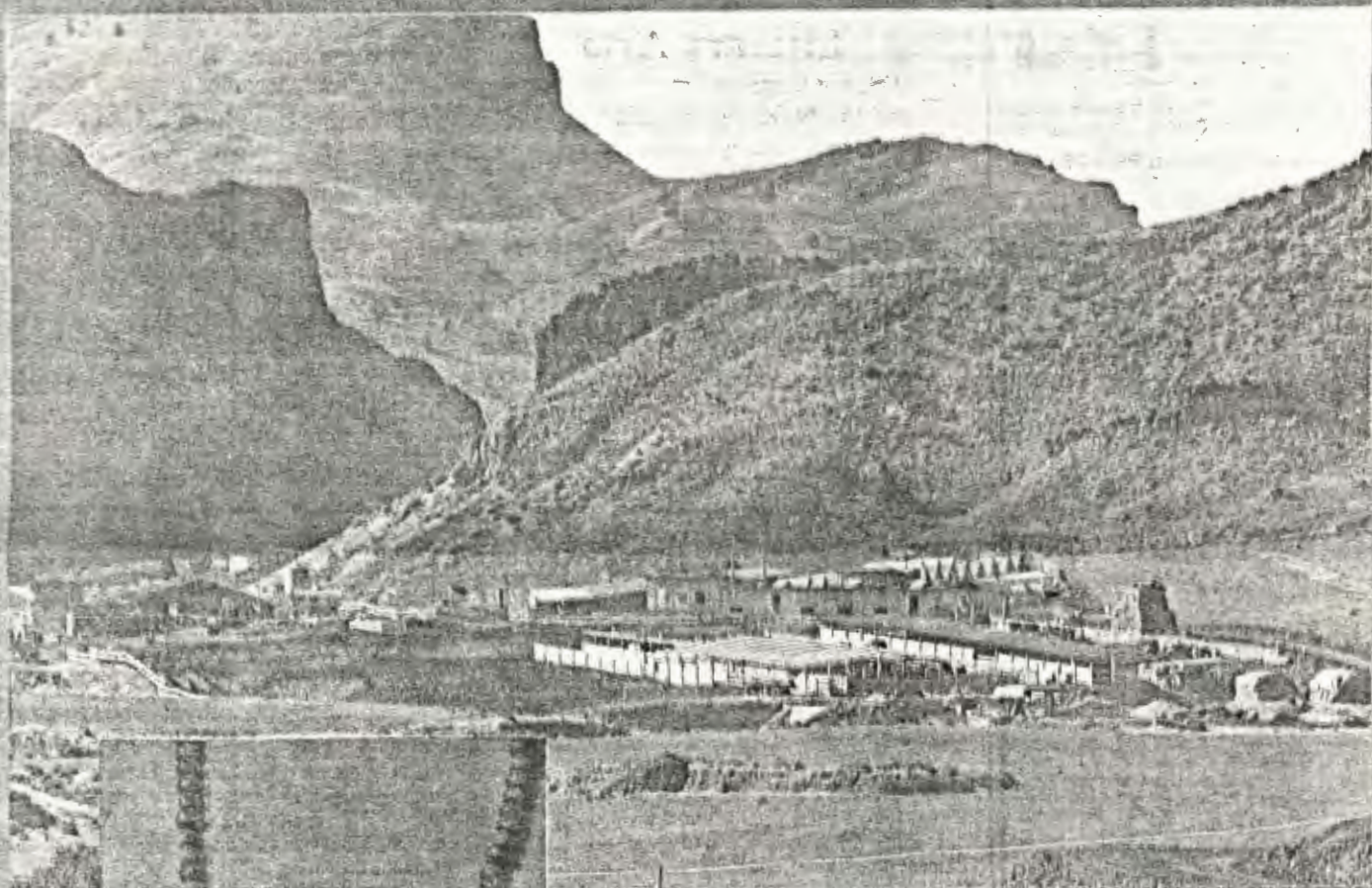
Readers can get the whole story by listening to Carolyn Myers as she interviews Robert Anderson on KMJK-FM radio (107 on the dial) now through Friday at 6:55 and 7:55 a.m. and the half-hour special Sunday at 8:30 a.m.

Inside:

CLICK

NORTHWEST

The Sunday Oregonian Magazine, January 9, 1983

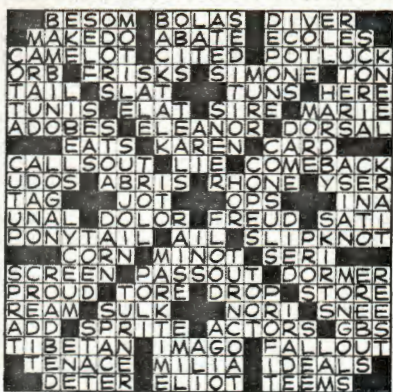


RANCHO RAJNEESH:
visions of an oasis
in the Oregon desert

Northwest

The Sunday Oregonian Magazine

Jan. 9, 1983 Volume XVIII, No. 21



Answer to Sunday, January 9, Cryptquip:
SODA JERK WHO DIDN'T LIKE JOB NOW TELLS
BOSS: THAT'S THE LAST STRAW.

Crossword Puzzle on Page 23

Portraits to celebrate warm family pride



2 - 8x10
3 - 5x7
15 wallet size
3 charm miniatures
\$14.95
Includes
95¢ deposit

Sears studios specialize in photographic portraits of babies, children, adults and family groups. No appointment necessary. 95¢ for each additional subject in a portrait package. Your choice of scenic or traditional backgrounds. Poses our selection.

Also Available:
Black Background & Double Feature Portraits
Passport Photos • Copy & Restoration

Offer good for portraits
taken thru Jan. 15

Available at most Sears retail stores. Studio Hours:
10:00a.m.-8:00p.m. (or until store closing, if prior to 8:00p.m.)

Studios also open Sunday 12:00-5:00 except Vancouver, Salem, Longview, Eugene, Bend, Roseburg, Medford, and Albany closed Sunday and Monday.

Use your SearsCharge!
You can count on **Sears Portrait Studio**
SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO.
Satisfaction Guaranteed or Your Money Back

Features

- Letters 2
- Moving heaven and earth on the Big Muddy
By Kirk Braun 12
- A spiritual quest in an age of affluence
By Larry Colton 3
- Literary Arts**
- U.S. big business and the Nazi war machine
By Paul Pintarich 16
- Cooperation and the Japanese success story
By Malcolm Bauer 17
- The writer's art
By James J. Kilpatrick 17
- Best-seller list 17
- Northwest Pages
By Paul Pintarich 18
- Poetry
Edited by Paul Pintarich 19
- Garden**
- Ground rules
By Andy Rocchia 20
- Thinning out unneeded foliage
By Andy Rocchia 20
- Home**
- Home plan 21
- Plugging hidden air leaks in the home
By Lloyd Edwards 21
- Getting in tune with 'push-up' piano players
By Buck L. Hannon 22

Northwest Magazine Staff

Jack R. Hart, editor
 Susan Hobart, deputy editor
 Paul Pintarich, book editor
 Randy L. Rasmussen, photographer
 Ted Reeves, designer

THE COVER: The photographs are by Randy L. Rasmussen, staff photographer for Northwest Magazine. The cover design is by Ted Reeves, a staff artist for The Oregonian. "A spiritual quest in an age of affluence" begins on Page 3.

Interested writers are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Northwest Magazine is under no obligation to return others. Address correspondence to The Editor, Northwest Magazine, The Oregonian, 1320 S.W. Broadway, Portland, OR 97201.

Letters

Phony description

As a member of Mount Angel Abbey for almost 35 years, I disassociate myself from the views expressed in the article ("The hidden men of God," Nov. 14) on the (Mount Angel) abbey and monastic life.

The phoniness starts at the beginning. If one doesn't like the cold floor in the morning, one can get a scrap of carpet for a rug. I know. I dump the garbage and there are plenty of scraps available. Or common sense tells one to place one's slippers or shoes where one can slip into them. But enthralled with fluttering eyes, ginger-colored hands and bandy legs, that writer was looking for the exotic.

The ending about sleep on a tiny bed is phony, too. If one needs an extra-long one, one may speak up. Several people here have them. Of course, one doesn't have to sleep on a bed. There is a long ascetic tradition of sleeping on the floor. It makes rising easier.

It is difficult not to entertain contempt for those who cannot rise above such frivolous trifles. One must, I suppose, depending on with whom one associates, beware of shouters, swearers and other such noise-makers; as city dwellers must beware of murderers, rapists and burglars. But such things do not define a city. Nor do the former define a monastery. And I do not know where that writer found the subjects of these acts ... in some arcane corners of the psyche?

But the most grating transmogrification of all is to try to relate Christian monasticism with something like Buddhism. Because modern thinkers, and especially American writers, are too lazy to find out what bonzes, lamas,

fakirs, yogis, dervishes and mullahs really are, they lump them all together as monkery and priestcraft. But when the dollar sign entices them to write on the subject, they become sanctimonious, instant experts and get paid for fuddling the public.

I respect the good in all other religions. But it is a good that is essentially different from Christianity and the purpose of Christianity.

Father Athanasius Buchholz
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Ore.

Scripture Lesson

As a member of the "religious types of that ilk," I would like to briefly comment on the letter by Jo'Anne Johnson (Dec. 5) about "The Hidden Men of Mount Angel Abbey."

Jesus did not begin his public life of teaching and healing until the last three years of his life. Up to that time, Scripture simply says he went home with Mary and Joseph and was "subject to them." Presumably, he helped in Joseph's carpenter shop.

During his three years of public service, he frequently went into seclusion to pray, sometimes with his apostles, sometimes alone.

Actually, the monastic life is much the same, except in one thing. Jesus was put to death *not* because of his work for people, but because he claimed to be, and *is* the Son of God.

Mary M. Taylor
Portland, Ore.

The takeover of a town drew worldwide attention, and a fleet of Rolls-Royces fueled an image of eccentric excess. But for the sannyasins, Rancho Rajneesh is the culmination of...

A Spiritual Quest in an Age of Affluence

Story by Larry Colton,
photographs by Randy L. Rasmussen

The sign on the side of Oregon Highway 18, four miles east of Antelope, reads: Rajneeshpuram — 18 miles. It is riddled with bullet holes.

Conflict in paradise.

Like dirt under their work boots, controversy has traveled with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his red-clad disciples on their path to an unlikely promised land — Rancho Rajneesh, a God-forsaken chunk of barren, ravaged land near a small, church-going community in the Oregon high-desert country.

The San Francisco Examiner labeled them a sex cult. 1000 Friends of Oregon slapped a you-can't-build-a-city-here lawsuit on them. Citizens for Constitutional Cities hit them with questions about conflicts of church and state. "60 Minutes" fired questions at them about anti-Semitic jokes and jaw-breaking therapy sessions. The U.S. Immigration Service denied their leader's request to remain in the United States (the decision is being appealed). And a popular bumper sticker around conservative Antelope reads: "Better Dead Than Red."

Rajneesh rumors abound: An orgy every night. A Jim Jones brainwash. A labor camp. A Penthouse morality. A nuclear-survivalist enclave. A self-awareness scam for a lot of people whose self-images stink.

LARRY COLTON is a Portland free-lance writer whose work regularly appears in Northwest Magazine. RANDY L. RASMUSSEN is the magazine's photographer.



Who are these people? Why have they bought into the master-disciple scene? And just what are they up to, besides spending, out there in the middle of nowhere?

Downtown Rajneeshpuram, called Jesus Grove by its neo-settlers, looks a bit like Dodge City seen through rose-tinted glasses — a dirt road, a couple of wooden storefronts, a post office and smiling people in red greeting their neighbors. New pre-fab trailers, the city offices, bookend the main drag.

Parked in front of one of the trailers is a muddy, 4-wheel-drive Bronco, a Rajneesh company car. Its bumper sticker reads: "Jesus Saves, Moses Invests, Bhagwan Spends." And, oh good guru, does he spend.

The Rajneeshees aren't just whistling through their ledger when they talk about spending. They arrived in Oregon looking and talking like flower children caught in a time warp, but they came with far more than rose petals in their pockets.

The sex, the politics, the religion, the ecology, the '60s slang and the trendy cosmic trips are all integral parts of the Rajneesh whole, links connecting the spiritual and material worlds that Bhagwan says are so important. They are parts that are just starting to unfold for outsiders to see. The cash already has unfurled. It comes from contributions and the sale of Bhagwan books and paraphernalia.

Since moving to Oregon, the Rajneeshees have pumped an estimated \$35 million into a sick economy. Those bucks, along with their vegetable gardens, have helped in the greening of Oregon, putting smiles on the faces of more than a few local businessmen.

Ma Anand Sheela Silverman, the head honcho of the Rajneesh corporate empire, has stated quite clearly that the Rajneeshees have no use for the poor. Beggars are despised; the work ethic is embraced.

One theory has it that Bhagwan's 27 Rolls-

Royces, at \$150,000 a unit, are but an investment, a capitalistically subtle way of trickling currency into the economy, spawning it at the ostentatious top of the mountain, rather than feeding it directly to the poor begging fish at the bottom of the pool. Reaganomics dressed in red.

In the final judgment, riches for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh may very well be riches for the Rajneeshees. But there is much more to the Rajneesh experiment, phenomenon, mystery, blight — whatever — than just the corporate ledger's bottom line. Who are these people? Why have they bought into the master-disciple scene? And just what are they up to, besides spending, out there in the middle of nowhere?



Sannyasin Ma Prem Veena, 37, contact-lens-blue eyes, sun-frosted hair, slides behind the wheel of a Rajneesh Bronco, the one with the "Bhagwan Spends" bumper sticker. She starts the engine, ready to give another tour of Rancho Rajneesh, Oregon's newest and most-controversial tourist attraction. Veena, an ex-model, is a Twinkie, Rajneesh-speak for hostess.

Her job is tour guide, showing off the 100-square-mile former cattle ranch once used to film a John Wayne movie. She also charms the bad ink out of journalists who come snooping around in search of sex, violence and religious weirdism. She is the buffing machine to smooth over head spokesperson Sheela Silverman's double-grit sandpaper approach.

Driving slowly down Yoga Road, the washboard main street, she stops behind a yellow school bus, one of 30 recently bought at an auction. Two men dressed in burgundy sweatshirts and apricot



A man walks down the main street of Rajneeshpuram. Buildings from old Big Muddy Ranch stand among the new mobile homes.

jeans, both 6-foot tall and full of honest muscle, step off, stealing quick goodbye hugs from the bus driver, who's wearing a red bandana in her hair.

Veena, whose husband is a sannyasin working as a studio rock musician in Los Angeles, eyes them walking toward the welding shop. "I've never seen so many good-looking men in one place," she says, speaking in a Southern-soft British accent that makes her sound as if she's reading Chaucer, which she did when she majored in English literature and psychology at Durban University in South Africa.

She turns left onto Zen Road, a major Rajneeshpuram highway. In another city the rut-filled dirt road probably would be closed to traffic. She drives past the soon-to-be-completed solar green house. It will be the largest in America, bigger than the Rose Bowl. A little farther down the road, a lush green field waves an unexpected greeting, like a country-club fairway calling out from a dirt-brown course.

"When I look at these fields and hills," she says, "I get the feeling they are laughing, laughing because they're so happy to be turning green."

In the past year, thousands of fruit and shade trees, 1,200 acres of grain crop, 50 acres of vegetables and a vineyard have been planted. Previously, the hills around Rajneeshpuram were alive, but only with sagebrush and scrawny juniper trees. The rocks didn't even want to be there. Geologists have labeled much of the land grade VIII, meaning there's not much chance for anything to make it.

Sparse vegetation, insufficient rainfall and overgrazing had turned a rugged, dramatic landscape into an ecological sissy. Flash floods often transformed the place, formerly named the Big Muddy Ranch, into slop.

"A lot of experts thought we had taken leave of our senses to try to farm here," says Veena, pointing toward several dozen acres of winter wheat. "But our irrigation system is proving to be successful."

She stops the car, pointing again, this time toward a cluster of double-wide, three-bedroom, \$30,000 mobile homes nestled against a hillside. They are part of the 60 modular homes purchased from a then-about-to-go-belly-up dealer in Albany. It's six sannyasins to a home.

"That's where I live," she says, a mother showing off her new baby. "A lot of people seem to think we all live in a big dorm and sleep in a big pile. It's not true. I have my own room; I like my privacy, thank you."



Veena, whose name means a musical instrument played by the gods, was reared by her divorced mother in a Sunday-school conservative, South African environment. In high school she involved herself in art, music, theater, dance, good grades, beach parties and a little messing around with her boyfriends.

"Actually, I was a little rebel," she recalls. "But I kept it bottled up, like sitting on a volcano or keeping the lid on a boiling teapot."

She helped put herself through college working as a fashion model. After graduation, she moved to England for a while and worked as an educational psychologist. That wasn't for her; so she moved to Toronto, Canada, to teach English to tough kids in an alternative school. She burned out on that, too, and went back to England where she dabbled briefly in drugs, hung out in art galleries, listened to the Rolling Stones and met the beautiful people.

"I was leading the good life," she says. "But I

couldn't shake the feeling there was something more."

In 1971 she met a man who asked her to meet him in India. Why not? She threw her jeans in a backpack and caught the Orient Express.

"The further east the trains went, the more I felt the shackles and chains of Western civilization dropping away," she says. "But when I got to India I got depressed. It was ugly and there were so many beggars. I couldn't stand them."

"The Westerners I met all seemed to be there on some kind of a search, going through all the spiritual trips — gurus, transcendental meditation, yoga, acid. I felt like I was committing emotional suicide."

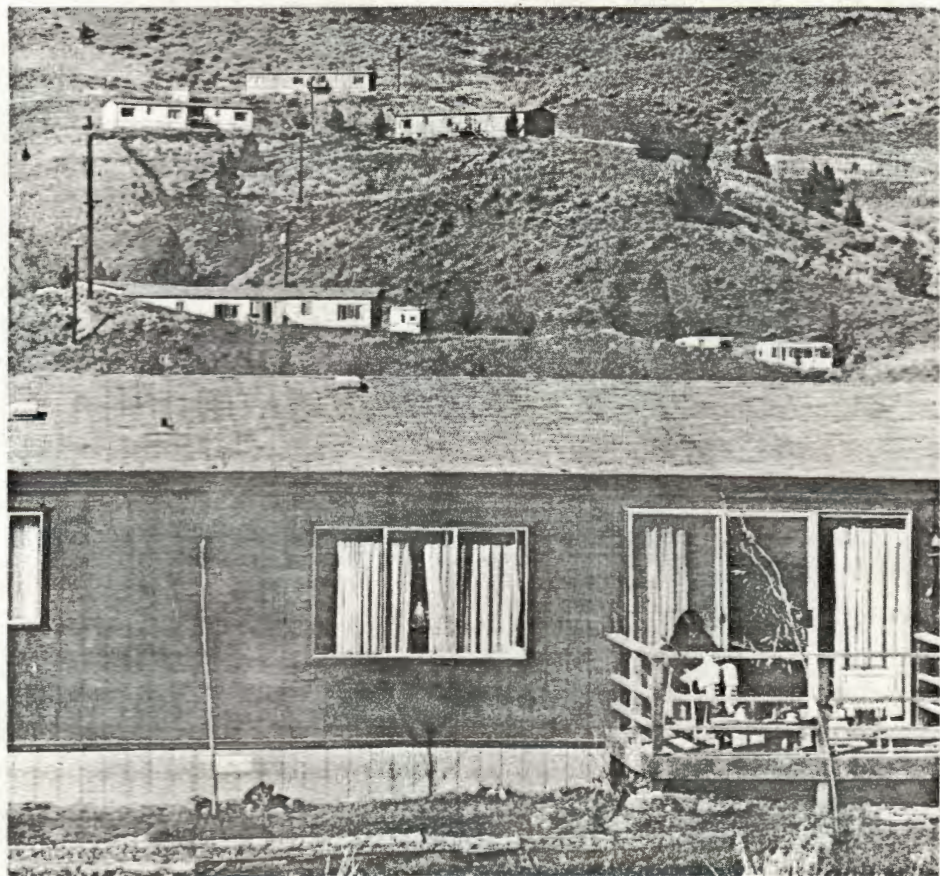
Then she met another man. "Sometimes it seems my life is just a series of meeting guys," she muses. "We were on a beach, making plans to fly back to London together when a film crew making a documentary on hippies in India asked if they could take our picture."

"A lady in the crew, dressed in red and wearing a necklace with some strange looking guy's picture on it, started tuning into me, telling me about this unbelievable guru. I told her I'd heard enough guru trips and I thought they were all totally fake."

As it turned out, however, Veena and her boyfriend had an afternoon to kill in Bombay before heading back to England. He talked her into taking a taxi to check out the guru.

"We went to a high-rise apartment," she remembers. "I thought, 'No guru lives in a high rise.' We went inside and while we were waiting we met

'People are sex-crazed because they've been so repressed. We don't do anything different than they do in Portland, but we don't feel guilty about it.'



Ma Anand Jivana and Swami Ananddip, top photograph, take morning break to enjoy the sun on the porch of their A-frame. Above, mobile homes dot the hills around Rajneeshpuram.

a couple of Western sannyasins. I thought they were talking complete and utter garbage.

"When we finally went into meet Bhagwan, he started talking to my friend. Within two minutes, he cut straight to the core, opening him up like I hadn't been able to do in two months.

"My first impression was that he was the greatest psychologist I'd ever met. My second impression was that he was the greatest intellect I'd ever met.

"When he turned to me and asked what I was looking for, I drew myself up in full righteousness and said, 'I'm not consciously looking for anything. I'm quite happy as I am, thank you. I'm just waiting to fly home to London.' He looked me straight in the eyes and told me to cancel my flight."

She did just that, saying goodbye to her friend and signing up for Bhagwan's dynamic meditation course, a daily one-hour exercise with stages in

rapid breathing, jumping around and screaming, shouting "hoo, hoo," standing still and dancing.

"The second day in meditation they told us to let it all hang out. After we started, I began to panic. I was blindfolded and I could hear all these Indians rolling around the ground and freaking out. I whipped off my blindfold and ran out of there.

"I thought I'd made the mistake of my lifetime. I stormed back to my hotel, packed my bags and went to the train station. I was furious."

While she waited for her train, a woman approached her and told her Bhagwan wanted her to come back. Veena gave in.

"When I went back, I explained to him that I hated Indians and I wanted to leave. He convinced me to give it another try. He told me to stay away from the Indians.

"I went to see him again the next day in his room. When I looked at him, I suddenly went into

another dimension. I sat there staring for an hour. Nothing was said. Everything fell away; I became bodiless. I sat there knowing myself, knowing I needed this man, knowing that this was what I was looking for all my life. That was 11 years ago. There has never been a moment's doubt since."



Non-sannyasins have their doubts, however. The Rajneesh trip has been described as "Jesus and Buddha meet Lenny Bruce," or "I'm OK, you're OK, just get your assets in gear." Veena is aware of the skepticism.

"Religion is such an invisible thing," she offers, driving slowly past the new dairy and the chicken coops that yield 500 eggs a day. "Outsiders are suspicious. A lot of it has to do with the notion we are a sex cult on their doorstep.

"They are disappointed when they discover that

BHAGWAN SAYS:



Photograph by Kenneth Thompson

agricultural, political and spiritual oasis in the middle of sagebrush and juniper?

Bhagwan was born Chandra Mohan Rajneesh on Dec. 11, 1931, in Kutchawada in northern India, the son of a cloth merchant. He holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Jabalpur University in Jabalpur, India, and a master's degree in philosophy from the University of Saugar in Saugar, India. He taught philosophy at Mahakoshal Arts College in Jabalpur before settling in Bombay and then Poona to lecture to his disciples.

Since leaving India and coming to America in 1981, Bhagwan has remained silent. The following quotes, just a few plums from his philosophical supermarket, have been gleaned from his books, video tapes and lectures, all available by mail order.

On whether he is God: "There is no God, hence the question does not arise. Bhagwan does not mean God, it simply means The Blessed One. The very idea of God is non-democratic. Either everything is God or nothing is God.

On faith: "Faith has nothing to do with religion. Faith is rooted in believing in something you know nothing of. It is a way of covering your ignorance. Religion is not belief or faith but knowing. The whole of history has been 99.9 percent just stupid — because of faith. But all the so-called religions preach it, because that is the easiest way to exploit.

On communism: "Communism is ugly; it is a great epidemic. The sooner it disappears from the world, the better."

On socialism: "I am against socialism because it destroys something which is very precious; it destroys the individual. Socialism means society is the goal, not the individual."

On capitalism: "Capitalism is basically individualism. It is more than a social structure; it is democracy and freedom. Capitalism simply gives you the freedom to be yourself."

On America: "America is the future of the

world."

On sex: "The simple truth is that sex is the starting point of love. Never repress it. Rather go deep into it with great clarity and with great love. Go as an explorer. Search all the nooks and corners of your sexuality and you will be surprised and enriched and benefited. Knowing your sexuality, one day you will stumble on your spirituality."

On men: "There is a great need for a men's liberation movement — not liberation from women, but liberation from all the nonsense that has been taught to him down the ages: Be hard! Don't bend! Break but don't bend! Man has been taught to be hard like a rock — man has missed much."

On women's liberation: "The women's liberation movement is not really a liberation movement. It is in fact just the opposite; it is trying to imitate men, to become as hard as men are, to do whatsoever men are doing."

On ecology: "The way to regain the balance of nature is not by renouncing technology. It is not by becoming hippies, no, not at all. It is through superior technology. We can bring an even better ecological balance than nature itself."

On the role of a Master: "This is the whole effort of all the Masters: to create a sudden clash of thunder so those who are fast asleep can be awakened."

On Jesus: "Christ is the flute on God's lips. So whatsoever has come from Christ is gospel, is gospel."

On Rajneeshpuram: "Not only will things not be possessed, but persons will also not be possessed in the commune. If you love a woman, live with her — out of sheer love, out of sheer joy — but don't become her husband. You can't. To become a wife or husband is ugly because it brings ownership, and then the other is reduced to property."

He has 270,000 disciples worldwide, 27 Rolls-Royces in his driveway and a farm in the central Oregon desert that's bigger than the city of San Francisco. Depending on who's speaking, he's described as a spiritual savior, a glorified pimp, a corporate genius or a big, fat hoax.

Who is this guru? What has Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, a 51-year-old former philosophy prof turned "enlightened master" and religious mystic, said or done that makes his believers, called sannyasins — most of them high scorers on their college entrance exams — want to dress in red and wear his picture around their necks? What's so hot about him that these people work like mules, for no pay, 12 hours a day, seven days a week, trying to build him an

sex is only 5 percent of what goes on around here. When you work 12 hours a day, there's not a lot of energy left over for wife-swapping and orgies.

"We have all sorts of different types of relationships going on here. It's definitely not static. But we're not hung up on sex; it's society that is.

"People are sex-crazed because they've been so repressed and told it's something to feel guilty about. Here at the ranch, we don't do anything different than they do in, say Portland, except we don't feel guilty about it."

□

On the wood-paneled walls of Ma Anand Sheela Silverman's triple-deluxe prefab pad, pictures and posters of Bhagwan watch over the room. One of his 300 books, a large glossy copy of "Book of Secrets," adorns the glass coffee table. His framed messages — pearls of Rajneesh wisdom — sit atop shelves.

It's almost lunch time. Sheela's living room, which doubles as a comfy social lounge and board room for Rajneesh Foundation International, clatters with the sounds of big business in motion. Hanging on one wall is a large world map, with red pins to show the location of the 325 worldwide Rajneesh Meditation Centers. Most of the pins are in Western Europe and America.

On the living room couch, Ma Prem Sangeet, who was Therese Wendling at Roseburg High and the University of Oregon, and is now the Rajneeshpuram city attorney, confers with Ma Prem Karuna, recently elected mayor of Antelope and the only politician to wear glitter on her face on election day. Across the wall to wall-carpeted room, Sheela sits in a plush leather chair, talking to a lawyer in Los Angeles. There is mention of a possible lawsuit against "60 Minutes."

Another woman, Ma Prem Isabel, the head Twinkie and editor of the Rajneesh Times, enters. There are affectionate hugs all around, even though it's been only a few hours since they were last together. Everybody is in sunrise-colored stockings — shoes are always left on the front steps to keep the ranch dirt out of the carpeting.

Sheela, 33, hangs up the phone. She joins the other women, taking her seat at the head of the tasteful, Sunset-magazine table setting in the adjacent dining room. She is clearly the ranch matriarch. Not surprisingly, she is the one sannyasin who gets to talk with Bhagwan.

"We talk about things that trouble me in my heart," she explains. "We never talk about anything to do with business. We talk about how the people and children at the ranch feel and how he feels."

Born in India, educated in America, Sheela is the ranch spokesperson, the one who goes on the Merv Griffith Show or takes on the "60 Minutes" crew. Her deceased first husband was a successful New York businessman. Some say her present husband is the silent force behind the Rajneesh business success; some say Sheela's sometimes arrogant tell-it-like-it-is public image is rubbing a lot of people the wrong way.

A young man in his early 20s, part of the Rajneesh domestic crew responsible for daily housekeeping, sets the salad, homemade bread, natural fruit juices and souffle on the table. None of the women, all part of the ranch's inner circle, say thanks-be-to-Bhagwan for this gourmet vegetarian meal. They just dive in.

The phone in the living room rings again. It's

another call for Sheela about "60 Minutes." She takes the call, then returns to the table.

"I don't know how long I can stay mad about this," she says. "But I'd sure like to nail that. . . ." She is referring to Barbara Tucker, the producer for "60 Minutes," whom Sheela describes as "an uptight, silicone phony who knew what kind of story she wanted before she ever got here."

"She cut the interviews to make it look like we break each other's jaws in our group therapy sessions. That simply is not true."

The Rajneesh group therapy encounter sessions have gained a reputation for their anything-goes, let-out-all-your-anger techniques.

"Ten years ago, we let people touch each other in our sessions," Sheela explains. "Now we have pillows for people to project their anger on. We also have a trained counselor there to monitor. You won't find anyone walking around here with a broken jaw."

She pauses to sip her juice, then calmly continues. "'60 Minutes' never bothered to deal with what we're all about. What this place offers is obvious in the faces, the actions and the style of

living of the people here. Nowhere will you find such happy people.

"We're all about creating a beautiful agricultural oasis. We're all about great vegetarian food, 12 hours of work a day, a lot of fun, games and nice people. We're not violent; the exact opposite is true.

"We're not hippies either. Bhagwan teaches us the Rolls-Royce style. We're a bunch of capitalists. I say let's act like it. If we're going to offer a gift, why offer less than a diamond or a Rolls?"

"People have said we attract people with a low self-image. My God, these people here have known success, yet they had the ability to recognize something was missing.

"'60 Minutes' implied we are anti-Semitic. How can they say that? Over 25 percent of our sannyasins are Jewish. I married a Jew. Can they be serious?"

"Sure, we make jokes about Jews. And blacks. And Polacks. Bhagwan teaches us not to take life too seriously. People have to be able to laugh at themselves and be able to take life as a joke. You'll find people here with senses of humor. One of the



Ma Prem Veena, left, and Ma Prem Isabel serve as Twinkies — tour guides.



The community maintains the Rajneesh Airport and an Air Rajneesh Mitsubishi prop jet, which help link it to a sprawling web of outside interests.



To the joyful attention of Rajneeshees, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh makes daily afternoon drive in a Rolls-Royce.

only rules we have around here is that each city council meeting has to start with a joke."

Two more women enter the room. One is wearing a slinky, low-cut pink evening gown, hardly appropriate attire for a weeknight in Antelope. Like a model past her prime, she twirls around, offering to let Sheela wear the gown when she jets to New York for a film festival where a Rajneesh documentary is up for an award.

"I'd freeze," replies Sheela, declining the offer as she swats a fly, Rancho Rajneesh's Public Enemy Number One.

The second woman, Ma Prem Shannon, sits down next to Sheela and shows her a knitting project she is working on. She tries to convince Sheela knitting is the latest ranch rage. Sheela isn't going for it.

Shannon, 30, is a '74 graduate in art from the University of California at Davis. She has a plain, soft, pleasant smile. Her hair is dishwater blond. Under her mala — the official necklace of the sannyasins — she wears a silver necklace bearing the optimistic inscription: "yes."

In one way, Shannon's is a typical sannyasin story. She ran into an old friend, saw how happy she was, and three weeks later was on her way to India.

In another way, however, Shannon's presence at Rajneeshpuram is jolting: Her father was Leo Ryan, the California congressman who was murdered in Jonestown, precipitating the Jim Jones, Kool-Aid suicides.

Dessert is brought to the table. It's cappucino and homemade chocolate chip cookies, the Rancho Rajneesh answer to the jelly bean. With a sly smile, Shannon picks up a cup of cappucino and offers it

to Sheela.

"Want some Kool-Aid?" she asks. Everyone laughs, the Rajneesh we-can-laugh-at-life chuckle.

"No tacky Kool-Aid for us," Sheela says. "We'll go first class with cappucino."

The intersection of Nirvana and Zen roads, such as it is, is lined with people who act as if they've



Sannyasins embrace after Bhagwan has driven by.

just been chosen to guess what's behind Door Number 3. Everyone is in red and orange except the brown-clad United Parcel Service driver making a delivery to Rajneeshpuram City Hall. It's 2:15 and the sun is shining brightly for Bhagwan's early drive-by on his 60-mile round-trip cruise to Madras. Work has stopped. Bulldozers, Skil saws, and calculators all have been turned off.

A small, olive-skinned boy starts to dash across the street to greet a playmate. Then, realizing Bhagwan is coming, he stops dead in his tracks and clasps his hands together under his chin. Rock 'n' roll music blaring from Noah's Ark boutique abruptly dies. Only the sound of gravel under approaching car wheels hovers over the scene.

A gleaming, silver-and-black Rolls-Royce Silver Spur slowly turns the corner. Inside, the driver, the Bhagwan himself, smiles softly, knowingly. His left hand rises and waves like a slow pendulum. His nails are long.

The sannyasins lining the street are ecstatic. Some giggle; some cry softly, like they've just proudly watched their little girl star in the school play; some hug, a joyful wedding-reception embrace; some dance, an unhinged shimmy. It's like it's 1965 and the Beatles have just driven by; it's as if they all have just been dusted with an invisible religious aphrodisiac; it's as if they have just achieved simultaneous, multiple orgasms.

"The love of Bhagwan is why I'm here," echoes off of their eyes and hearts and lips. "He is the speaker of truth."

A few moments after Bhagwan, like a whiff of laughing gas, has passed, the sannyasins slowly float back to earth. Contented smiles, an afterglow, crease their faces. Swami Wadud, 37, the Rajneesh

city planner, stands silent, still deep inside his heart, one of the last to land. He is a man who has shopped gurus and this is the real thing.

Dressed in shades of soft pink, with the clear blue eyes of a Marin County psychologist, curly, light brown hair and a trim beard, he looks like he could have just stepped off his yacht. If sannyasins owned cars at Rajneeshpuram, Wadud's would be a top-of-the-line BMW.

He earned his master's in environmental design at Harvard and his bachelor of fine arts in sculpture at the University of Michigan. He gained experience in city planning on the job at Rajneeshpuram, designing Bhagwan City from scratch. His previous experience had been in new-age, energy-awareness counseling. He is the son of a wealthy Long Island nurseryman.

"I feel blessed to have an enlightened being drive down my street every day," he says, in a voice so calm the words seem to slow-dance on his lips. "Bhagwan is a daily reminder of what my highest potential as a human can be."

The concept of an enlightened being is something Western religions have never much cottoned to. According to Wadud, being enlightened is the highest form of man. It is coming to understand the whole of life. Bhagwan became enlightened on March 21, 1953, according to his official biography.

On that night, the man born Chandra Mohan Rajneesh, the son of a cloth merchant in Kutchawada, India, couldn't get to sleep. He walked out to a nearby garden and sat beneath a "tremendously luminous" tree. It was there he was enlightened and experienced a "virgin reality — uncorrupted, untouchable, unmeasurable."

"The idea of an enlightened being is one reason why a lot of people don't understand us," Wadud says. "But I don't worship Bhagwan. He's not a god I gave myself to. He doesn't have followers, he has companions. He is just here to help me celebrate life."

"It isn't dogmatic like other religions. It is not a faith; it's an experience. That's the beautiful thing about having a master. You don't have to go on faith. He's right there for you. Either you feel it or you don't."

Not everyone has felt it, however, including some of his contemporaries in India. From 1970 to 1981, every day, monsoon or shine, Bhagwan loquaciously lectured his companions for an hour and a half at his ashram in Poona. He rapped it all down, everything from Nietzsche, to loving a tree, to the price of eggs in Bombay. Perhaps that is why, when asked to explain his vow of silence here, he replied, "I have said everything."

His Western disciples grew in number and so did the offerings in the plate. Seekers from all over the world flocked to his ashram. To conservative Hindus, however, he was a Hugh Hefner talking religious jive about sexual energy, group therapy and the bottom line.

There was an assassination attempt with a knife. Then, when his health started to fade — diabetes, bad back, allergies — he decided to head for America the beautiful. It was bye-bye beggars of Poona, hello Jersey, Sheela's old stomping grounds.

A few months later, Bhagwan, heeding the advice of Horace Greeley, his doctors and Sheela's realtor, headed West. The controversy followed and so did 500 of his companions.

For city planner Wadud, it was a unique opportunity to plan a city from the Grade-VIII ground up.

"What your job is here at the ranch isn't the important thing," he explains. "The goal isn't to be a lawyer or a mechanic or a city planner; it is to do whatever is best for the commune."

"I have a housemate who headed a university psychology department but now he drives a bus. He's totally happy with it. That's the way it works around here. Before he gets bored another opportunity will open up."

Giving up some of the old is part of becoming a sannyasin, although nothing is written in stone. Old names, old money, old cars, old jobs, old egos are accepted by Bhagwan when a new sannyasin signs on the red dotted line, although it is not necessary to give anything, according to the party line. Wadud gave up his old name, David Lovegarden, even though it had a nice Rajneesh ring to it.

Wadud's wife, Waduda, 32, and daughter, Taraka, 3 1/4, also get their mail at the ranch, making them a typical Rajneeshpuram family. Waduda coordinates the Rajneesh Airport, booking flights and making sure the new \$2 million Mitsubishi jet will have a hangar in which to hide from the cold. Taraka attends nursery school every day.

"Before we moved here, I wondered how Taraka would adjust," says Wadud. "But she's very happy here. I spend more time with her than before we moved here. I eat lunch with her five days a week. I pick her up from school and we go home together. She has lots of nice little friends here."

Swami Richard, a construction-crew foreman, shifts his mud-splattered Bronco into compound low and grinds through the sloppy, bumpy goo. He is on his way to check a building site. On the dashboard is a picture of Bhagwan. On the front seat is a hard hat, a blueprint and a two-way radio.

A Rajneesh cowboy on his two-ton pony, Richard reaches in the pocket of his maroon parka and pulls out a package of Zig Zag rolling papers. With one hand still on the wheel, he rolls a cigarette — of the legal variety, not the funny stuff. Dope of any kind is about the only ironclad no-no at the ranch.

If city planner Wadud is a smooth, Marin-County hot-tub type, Richard is the dude down at the local tavern, having a couple brews after work. He has disheveled long hair, a long, ragged beard and dirt under his nails. He looks like he's earned all 36 of his years the hard way. But under his aviator sunglasses and his aqua-green eyes, he is Bhagwan-smart.

"To be here is a bitch," he states, taking a long drag from his cigarette. "It's tough to have to look so closely at yourself every day. It's intense. So why am I here? It sure as hell isn't for the job or for the orgies. I'd be crazy if it was. There are no orgies and I work like a maniac."

"No, the best part of this place is the people who are here," he continues, swatting a fly. "What I get out of this place isn't available for money."

"The people here could be compared to a group of guys climbing one of these cliffs around here. It's a bond: If one guy screws up, everyone goes down. And just because Uncle Harry, or Bhagwan, is underwriting the climb for us, we're not climbing for him. We're doing it for ourselves. In the process, a city will happen."

"This isn't a Berkeley, off-the-pig commune

'Bhagwan has a practical, nuts-and-bolts approach to a new concept of being. The old politics and the old religions have taught disharmony.'



SWAMI WADUD



SWAMI RICHARD

'How do we get people's attention? If Jesus — who isn't the only begotten son, just one of them — came back tomorrow, I doubt he'd be driving a Chevy.'



Bumper sticker on Sheila's Mercedes Benz reads "Jesus Saves, Moses Invests, Bhagwan Spends."

either. Nor is it the rah, rah Bhagwan trip. I really have no idea what he wants to accomplish. I'm just here for my own personal growth."

Richard pulls over to the side of the road while a road grader struggles to make a dent in the muck. He waves a friendly greeting to the woman at the controls. When he pulls out to pass, two sannyasins in a Datsun fly by him, like the Dukes of Hazzard, arms waving out the window, wheels throwing up dirt and mud. Just a couple of red-collar, country boys out for a joy ride.

The fact that Richard is a sannyasin might come as a surprise to a few of the good old boys at the frat house in Florida. In 1964, he was a button-down business-administration major, guzzling beer and knocking up his girlfriend. They got married. He kept going to school and, to feed the wife and baby and the regents of the University of Florida, he worked two full-time jobs, pumping gas and pushing Kentucky Fried.

"This 12-hour-a-day stuff is a breeze compared to that," he says, pulling up next to the Dukes of Rancho Rajneesh. They have a flat tire.

Leaving the Datsun abandoned in the middle of the road — there is a zero crime rate in Rajneeshpuram — the Dukes, who are really geologists, hop in the Bronco. One of them opens a backpack and pulls out a bottle of tequila and a jug of vino. Everybody takes a couple nips from the jug to take the bite out of the gathering chill of the late afternoon. Booze isn't a taboo at the ranch; it's just that it's a long hike to the closest liquor store, and besides, working 12 long, hard hours with a hang-over isn't popular in anybody's book.

After college graduation, a divorce and a shot at selling insurance, Richard took off for the glitter of Los Angeles in '67. The 60s were in full riot and he had trouble connecting with his job as a stock broker. He moved to San Francisco, but not being into dope, or long hair, he wasn't quite ready for Haight-Ashbury. He moved back to Miami and went to work for Southern Bell Telephone Co.

When Uncle Sam came calling, offering a trip to Salgon, Richard remembered an old hearing problem and missed the boat. Instead, he took a job as an East Coast salesman for a door company, complete with a cushy expense account, air travel cards and a closet full of snazzy suits that wouldn't sell at a Rajneesh rummage sale.

He moved to Cambridge, Mass., and started dropping acid. He wasn't ready to be a crash-pad hippy, but he was ready to say goodbye to the suit-and-tie routine. He quit his \$30,000-a-year sales job and went to work as a buck-an-hour clerk in an occult bookstore.

He read prolifically, especially books on philosophy, psychology, Eastern mystics and spiritual guidance. He started studying energy yoga in New York, eventually teaching classes himself, getting good enough to gain a bit of a reputation as a mini-guru of yoga energy. He moonlighted as a carpenter.

Then one morning in 1974, he decided to start over. He moved to Taos, N.M., took all his cash and plunked it down on a motel and bar. He went bankrupt faster than he could say 1974 gas crisis and had to borrow \$500 to buy a VW bus so that he'd have someplace to sleep.

Busing tables and leading therapy groups saw him through until he scraped together enough money to buy a few acres of land and to begin work on building a house. He camped out on-site long enough to build three houses, selling each for \$100,000.

Then in 1979 Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh came into his life.

"A girlfriend gave me one of Bhagwan's books and told me I was going to like it. I read the first chapter and felt a prickle. I'd read thousands of books but none hit me like that one.

"I was awestruck at the clarity and the poetry and what was between the lines. I went out and bought all his books I could find. I wrote to India and said I had to meet this guy. A couple weeks later I was on a plane for Poona. It didn't take long for me to realize this guy was for real. I called back to New Mexico and told a friend to sell my house, close my bank account and send me the cash. I was staying."

Three years later, Swami Richard is pulling his car up to the A-frame assembly line site where they churn out seven new two-person units for the new Rancho Rajneesh subdivision. Two women are taking a hug break. The other 30 workers are all smiling and joking as if it were a party rather than a boring, repetitious job in the cold dusk.

"People here don't cheat on their coffee breaks," says Richard, inspecting the area to see if any supplies are needed. "There's no mind control. They're not mesmerized. They can leave anytime they want.

"There's no boss. I may be the foreman but that's only because it's a job that needs doing. Everyone is the same, yet everyone here is an individual. And it's not for the Rolls-Royce stuff."

It is that "Rolls-Royce stuff" that many outsiders are choking on, however. No matter how many times Sheila tells the world that Bhagwan deserves



Lineup of Bhagwan's Rolls-Royces before gift of more of the luxury cars for his Dec. 11 birthday.

the very best because he has done so very much for his sannyasins, it isn't going to wash with Mr. and Mrs. Average Working Stiff. Richard has a slightly different interpretation of the Rolls controversy.

"Look," he says, revving the motor behind his penetrating eyes. "The world is going bonkers. Everybody's building more bombs. People are getting knocked off in the streets. It's insanity.

"Bhagwan has a message, a practical, nuts-and-bolts approach to a new humanity, a new concept of being. He's saying enough is enough. The old politics and the old religions have taught disharmony. It's suicide.

"So how do we get people's attention? If Jesus — who isn't the only begotten son, just one of them — came back tomorrow, I doubt he'd be driving a Chevy.

"The Rollsies are just little slaps in the face saying, 'Hey, wake up, folks, there's something more going on here. Come and check it out and find what the buzz is. There's something cooking here.

"Sure it's a contradiction, us claiming material goods are of no importance yet flashing Rolls-Royces around like salt. But if you want to make a case against Bhagwan, you can find contradictions in tons of things he says. You think Ronald Reagan doesn't have a few contradictions?

"The cars are just a symbol of wealth, a capitalist prop to get people's attention. If Bhagwan had just one Rolls, nobody would notice. It has to be a ridiculous number, an absurd, take-it-to-the-limit number. And what it really symbolizes is how many TV spots, how many news stories it takes before somebody finally figures it out. Is it a rip-off? Or is it something more subtle? So far, everybody, including all the super journalists, has missed it."

□

Snuggled up next to the Bhagwan books and the framed Bhagwan messages on the shelf, the other books on municipal bonds, securities regulations and banking credit look like dark pinstripe suits at a poetry reading. Ma Prem Prabodhi, 30, brown hair, almond eyes, stretches across the mattress on the floor of her temporary office in one of the back rooms of Sheela's place.

She sits up to greet a friend stopping in to offer a chocolate-chip cookie. Her voice is like caramel syrup pouring over bright vanilla teeth. Mellow is too rowdy a description of Prabodhi.

Night has fallen with full-moon quickness at Rancho Rajneesh. It is Prabodhi's first chance of the day to relax. But then, how does she unwind from being laid back?

Prabodhi doesn't look like a skydiver. Yet that's exactly what she used to do for a living.

A former cheerleader, English teacher and skydiving instructor, she is now an assistant accountant for Rajneesh Foundation International. She's a woman who has been through some changes in the last 2½ years: She graduated from college, became a sannyasin, changed jobs three times, relocated three times and got married.

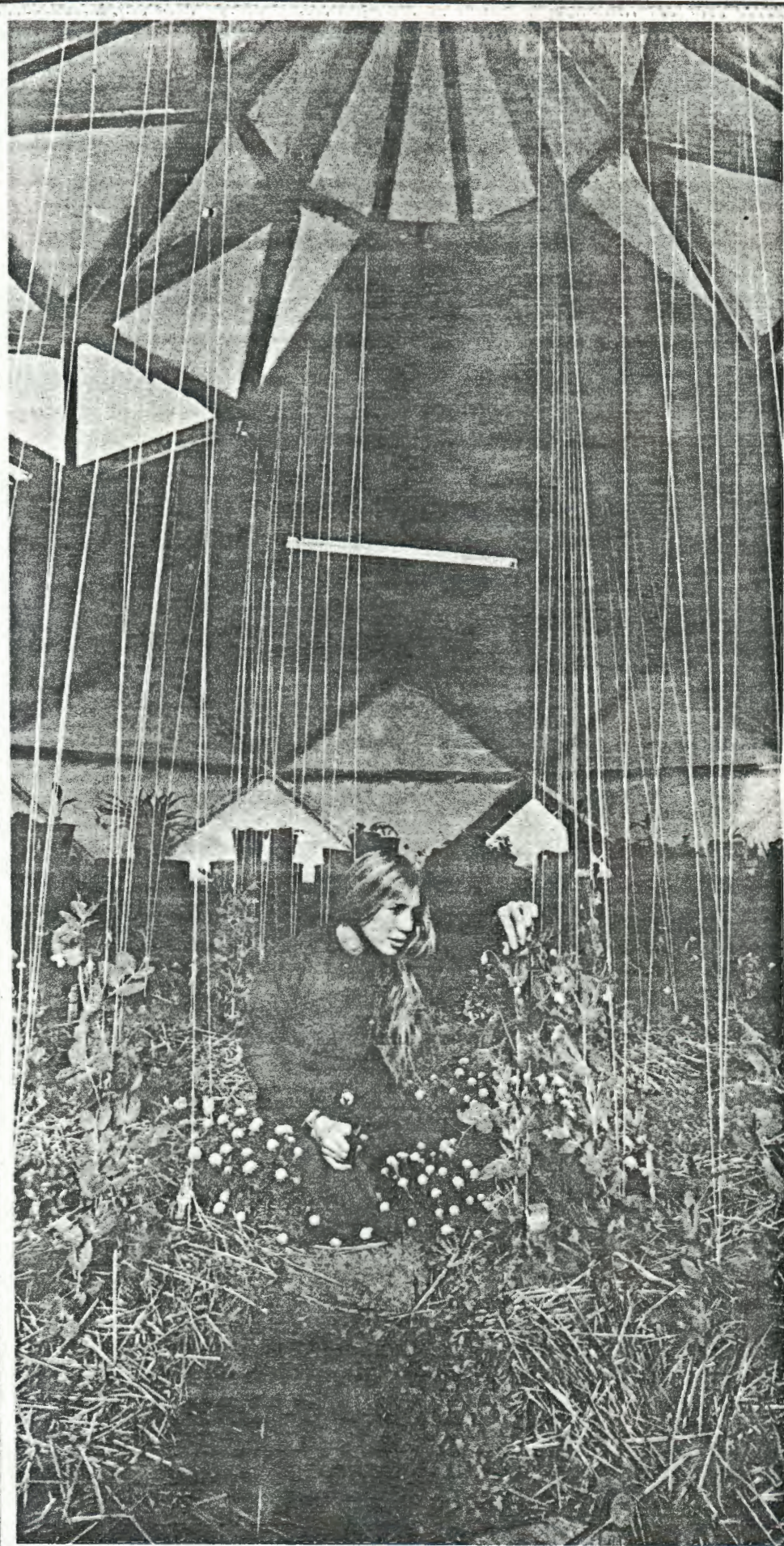
"In many ways," she says softly, "becoming a sannyasin was like jumping out of a plane the first time. I was petrified, yet there was something compelling and exciting about it.

"When you're freefalling, there's just no place else to be. Nothing else exists. It's the total experience, just like what Bhagwan is always talking about.



Continued on Page 23.

MA ANAND SHEELA SILVERMAN



It is perhaps the most-expensive agricultural experiment ever undertaken in Oregon, a vision of ecological redemption on a truly grand scale.

Some 350 disciples of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh have poured nearly \$35 million into central Oregon in an effort to carve out a livable agricultural oasis in the arid, rocky hills and flood-ravaged canyons of the 64,000-acre Big Muddy Ranch, an isolated and desolate property that lies 60 miles east of Madras.

If money, determination, research and hard work have anything to do with their prospects, Bhagwan's disciples may well pull it all off.

Up to now, the ranch has been nothing more than a tax loss. Its hills have been overgrazed for a hundred years, abused to the point where there is little left but sagebrush and juniper. Its denuded canyons have belched forth so many flash floods that most of the topsoil on the adjacent hills has long since been washed into the John Day River. Its elevations, ranging from 1,350 feet to 4,300 feet, are swept by early and late frosts that wreak havoc with anything but grass crops. Its winters are bitter cold and its summers stifling hot.

Its soils range from tiny amounts of Class III to large amounts of Class IV-VIII. In Soil Conservation Service language, Class III is mediocre for farming and Class VIII is good for nothing. With an annual rainfall of about 12 inches, one-fifth of the amount that drenches the Willamette Valley, it is

KIRK BRAUN is a free-lance writer who lives in West Linn. He writes an opinion column for 14 small Oregon newspapers and is a former photographer for The Oregonian.

Moving he



Ma Deva Mradula, a former model, left, in

It is perhaps the most-expensive agricultural experiment ever undertaken in Oregon, a vision of ecological redemption on a truly grand scale.

Some 350 disciples of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh have poured nearly \$35 million into central Oregon in an effort to carve out a livable agricultural oasis in the arid, rocky hills and flood-ravaged canyons of the 64,000-acre Big Muddy Ranch, an isolated and desolate property that lies 60 miles east of Madras.

If money, determination, research and hard work have anything to do with their prospects, Bhagwan's disciples may well pull it all off.

Up to now, the ranch has been nothing more than a tax loss. Its hills have been overgrazed for a hundred years, abused to the point where there is little left but sagebrush and juniper. Its denuded canyons have belched forth so many flash floods that most of the topsoil on the adjacent hills has long since been washed into the John Day River. Its elevations, ranging from 1,350 feet to 4,300 feet, are swept by early and late frosts that wreak havoc with anything but grass crops. Its winters are bitter cold and its summers stifling hot.

Its soils range from tiny amounts of Class III to large amounts of Class IV-VIII. In Soil Conservation Service language, Class III is mediocre for farming and Class VIII is good for nothing. With an annual rainfall of about 12 inches, one-fifth of the amount that drenches the Willamette Valley, it is

KIRK BRAUN is a free-lance writer who lives in West Linn. He writes an opinion column for 14 small Oregon newspapers and is a former photographer for The Oregonian.

almost a desert.

In short, it is hardly a locale for fulfilling a vision of bountiful land and agricultural abundance.

But since the Rajneesh Investment Corp. bought the ranch a year and a half ago for \$6 million, work to bring the 6,000 acres of marginally farmable land into production has proceeded at a frenzied pace, creating a self-sufficient agricultural community that is intended to support up to 2,000 of Bhagwan's faithful.

Last summer the ranch looked like a major construction site. Heavy equipment — bulldozers, graders, dump trucks, excavators, pipe-layers, backhoes and farm tractors — were busy everywhere. Buildings sprang up almost overnight. The hills and canyons were alive with workers, clad in the required bright-red garb of the religious order. They planted trees, built fences, laid pipe, pulled weeds and performed the dozens of other tasks that made the place hum. Work appropriate to the seasons proceeded through the fall and into the winter.

In good weather, Bhagwan's followers — the sannyasins — work 12 hours a day, taking time out mornings and afternoons for a tea break and at noon for a hearty — but meatless — meal.

An 88,000-square-foot greenhouse, said to be the largest in America, has been nearly completed. Three miles of creek have been riprapped for erosion control, a scheme that employs rough stone or log barriers to trap the sediments that otherwise would wash out to sea. The sannyasins have reseeded an additional 26 miles of creek bank and have spotted the drainage course with small earth dams to check erosion and flooding. They've built 13 irrigation systems, with several miles of under-

ground pipe.

They've drilled several wells that produce more than 300 gallons a minute. A key to the irrigation system is a dam on Current Creek. The dam and its reservoir already has from 243,000 cubic yards of earth. The dam will create a 45-acre lake, three miles long and capable of holding 3 million gallons of water for irrigation, domestic use and power.

Most of the food needed for the community last summer came from 50 acres of vegetable gardens; a 600 loaf-per-day bakery; a 50-cow dairy with modern milking equipment; a methane generator that turns trash into gas and fertilizer; and 2,000 chickens. The ranch also has 100 head of cattle from rodents, rattlesnakes and imported emus, flightless Australian ostriches.

The hubbub of production has led to a surplus of produce to ship some to local food stores and to sell many of the visitors who toured the ranch last summer. The corporation now markets produce in Portland, Bend, Madras and The Dalles.

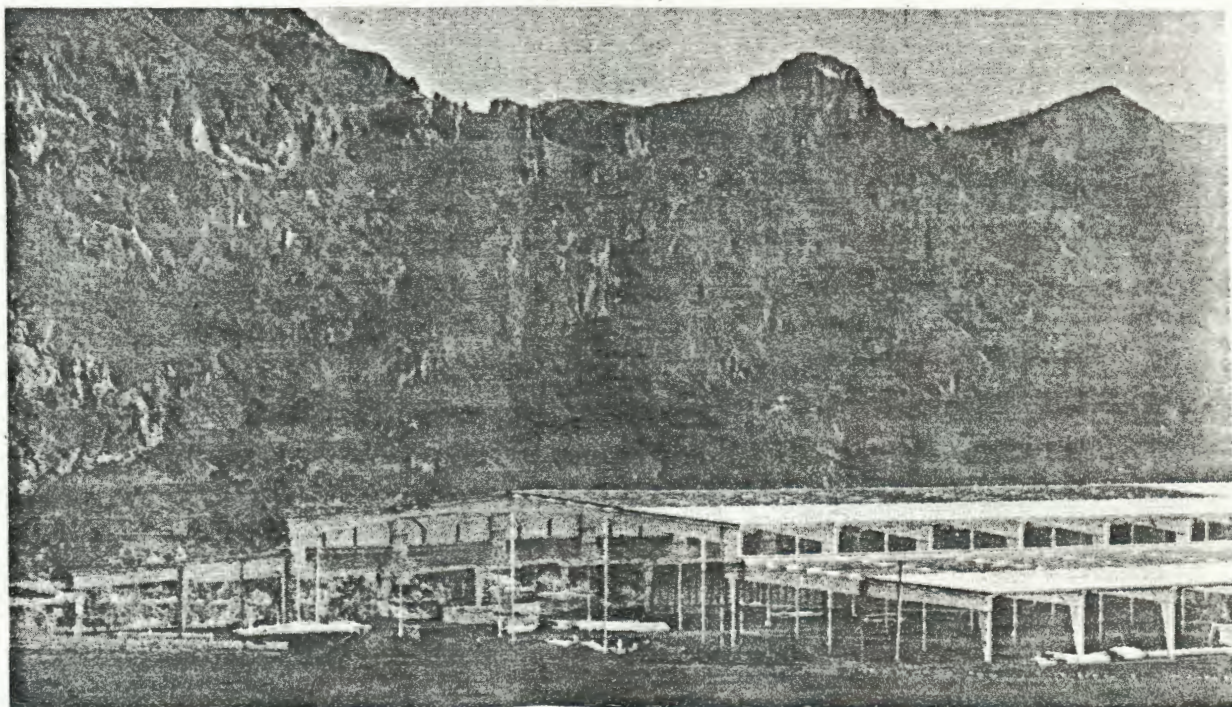
The second phase of a two-year plan includes facilities for 150 head of cattle to provide fertilizer and cash. The ranchers all will sell the cattle for 100 to 150 dollars a head.

The ranch planners also have a sheep herd, 15 to 20 horses and six alpacas to supply fine wool.

In addition to 2,500 acres of land that has been cleared and put into grain production, 25 acres of fruit trees and 10 acres of vineyards, much of which is already planted.

Moving heaven and earth

Story by Kirk Braun, photographs by Randy L.



Ma Deva Mradula, a former model, left, inspects peas grown in Rajneeshpuram greenhouse. Above, a new 88,000-sq-

desert. In fact, it is hardly a locale for fulfilling a bountiful land and agricultural abundance. Since the Rajneesh Investment Corp. bought the land a year and a half ago for \$6 million, work on the 6,000 acres of marginally farmable land has proceeded at a frenzied pace. The goal is creating a self-sufficient agricultural community that is intended to support up to 2,000 of Bhagwan's faithful.

By last summer the ranch looked like a major construction site. Heavy equipment — bulldozers, dump trucks, excavators, pipe-layers, and farm tractors — were busy everywhere. Buildings sprang up almost overnight. The canyons were alive with workers, clad in bright-red garb of the religious order. They planted trees, built fences, laid pipe, pulled out stumps and performed the dozens of other tasks that go on at the place. Work appropriate to the season proceeded through the fall and into the winter.

Good weather, Bhagwan's followers — the sannyasins — work 12 hours a day, taking time out in the mornings and afternoons for a tea break and at a hearty — but meatless — meal.

The 88,000-square-foot greenhouse, said to be the largest in America, has been nearly completed. The soil banks of creek have been ripped up for erosion control, a scheme that employs rough stone or concrete walls to trap the sediments that otherwise wash out to sea. The sannyasins have reinforced an additional 26 miles of creek bank and straightened the drainage course with small earth check dams to check erosion and flooding. They've built terracing systems, with several miles of under-

ground pipe.

They've drilled several wells, including one that produces more than 300 gallons a minute. But the key to the irrigation system is Krishnamurti Dam on Current Creek. The dam is virtually complete, and its reservoir already has begun to fill. Built from 243,000 cubic yards of compacted earth, it will create a 45-acre lake, three-quarters of a mile long and capable of holding 330 million gallons of water for irrigation, domestic uses and recreation.

Most of the food needed for the commune last summer came from 50 acres of intensive truck gardens; a 600 loaf-per-day industrial bakery; a 50-cow dairy with modern milking machines and a methane generator that turns the manure into energy and fertilizer; and 2,000 chickens, protected from rodents, rattlesnakes and coyotes by two imported emus, flightless Australian birds that resemble ostriches.

The hubbub of production turned out enough surplus produce to ship some to two Portland organic food stores and to sell more to the hundreds of visitors who toured the ranch during the summer. The corporation now markets baked goods in Portland, Bend, Madras and The Dalles.

The second phase of a two-part farm plan includes facilities for 150 head of cattle, which will provide fertilizer and cash. The sannyasins, vegetarians all, will sell the cattle for beef.

The ranch planners also envision a 25-goat herd, 15 to 20 horses and six llamas that will supply fine wool.

In addition to 2,500 acres of new land that has been cleared and put into grains, the plan calls for 25 acres of fruit trees and 10 acres of vineyards, much of which is already planted. In fact, the

sannyasins now have about 3,500 fruit and nut trees, as well as 14,500 shade trees, in the ground. Some 3,000 acres already are under cultivation and protected from the numerous deer on the ranch by 17 miles of New Zealand-type electric fences.

Every phase of the operation seems to be in keeping with Bhagwan's stated philosophy that "man should live in complete harmony with his environment." Even the new city, Rajneeshpuram, the incorporated part of the ranch, provides for wildlife corridors through the city.

The sannyasins call all this a demonstration project, one that could be copied by others to carve livable space out of inhospitable wasteland. But critics point out that even if successful, the demonstration will prove only that given enough money and free labor, any man could work miracles in the desert.

The money for all this comes from three interlocking corporations, boasting assets of \$23 million and an operating budget this past year of \$15 million, most of which went into the development of Rancho Rajneesh.

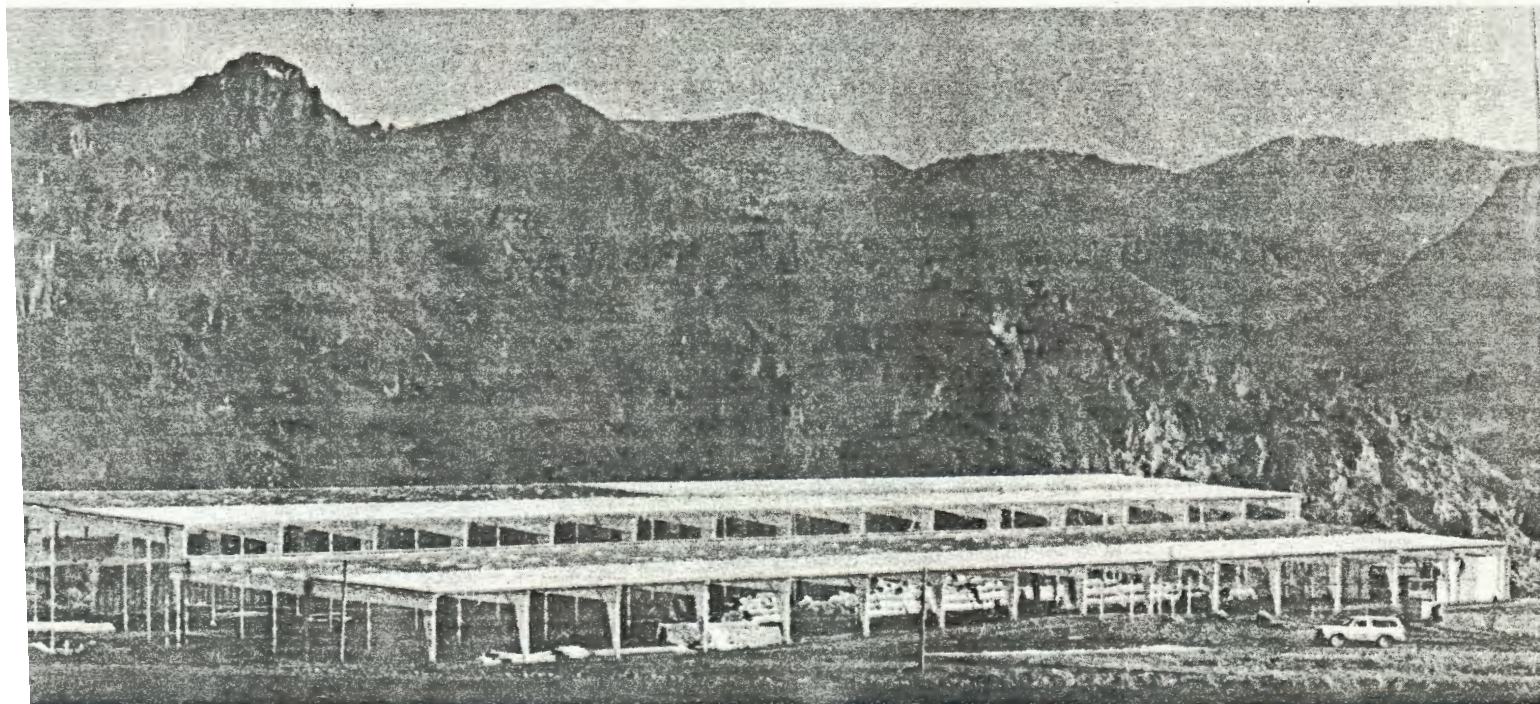
The parent corporation is the non-profit "church," Rajneesh Foundation International. Ma Ananda Sheela, the articulate, 33-year-old Indian beauty who serves as corporate president, looks like anything but the stereotype of her corporate counterparts.

RFI's income, which last year totaled \$6 million, comes from the sale of tapes, books, bumper stickers, pictures and other printed material, as well as from contributions supplied by the organization's 300,000 worldwide members. The corporation claims assets of \$20 million, \$12 million of which is the value placed on the archives contain-



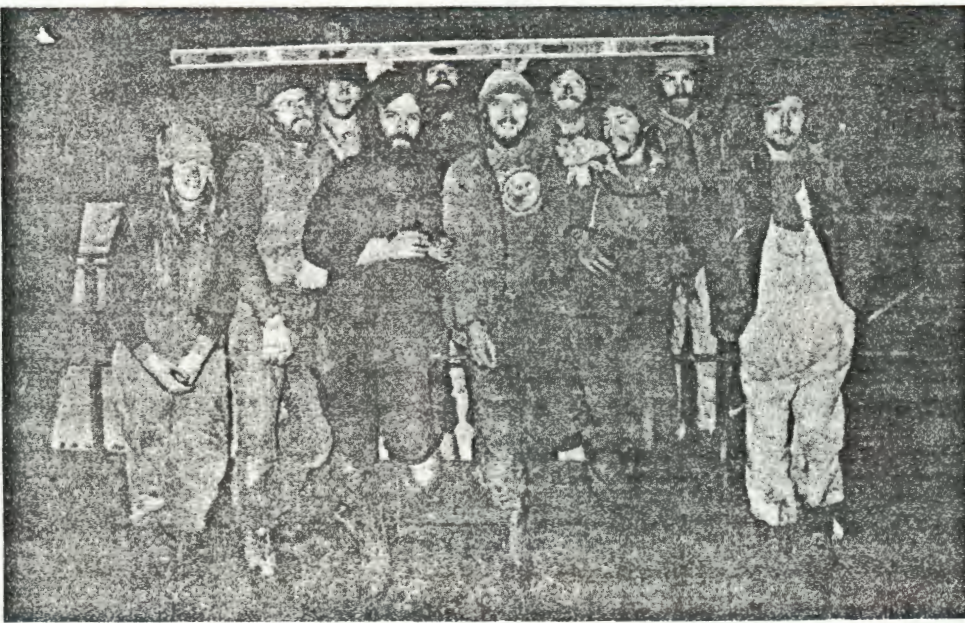
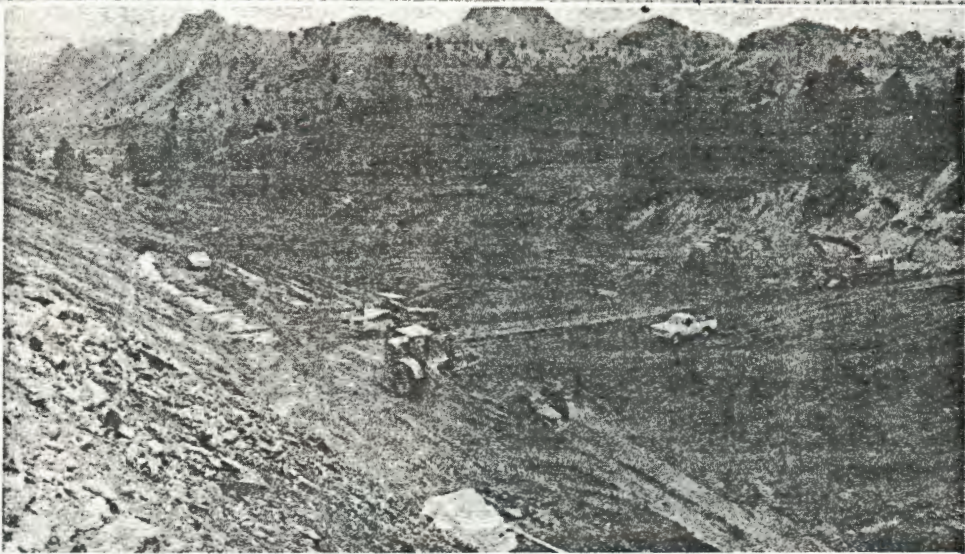
Heaven and earth on the Big Muddy

Story by Kirk Braun, photographs by Randy L. Rasmussen



... is grown in Rajneeshpuram greenhouse. Above, a new 88,000-square-foot greenhouse, said to be the largest in America, lies waiting for clear panels.

COAT 'A LIPPURE 'APRIL 1978



A glimpse of the work day at Rajneeshpuram, from top of page, includes heavy equipment clearing land for an earthen dam, workers carrying produce from the fields and a work crew at an airplane hangar gathering at the end of the day.



ing the yet-to-be published lectures of their spiritual leader.

When Bhagwan and his shock troops landed in central Oregon and the local residents raised a howl heard round the world, the resulting publicity caused the sales of books and tapes to rise dramatically. Income from that one source reached \$200,000 a month.

The actual owner of the ranch and its buildings is the Rajneesh Investment Corp., a for-profit, tax-paying subsidiary of RFI with assets valued at \$7 million. Because the principal source of income for RIC is the leasing of the real property to the commune, RIC doesn't expect to show a profit until the farming operation becomes profitable.

Sheela's husband runs the investment corporation. Swami Prem Jayananda is a former sales executive with a New Jersey heating and air-conditioning firm and a shrewd businessman, as many of the ranch's suppliers have learned.

But if the Rajneeshees drive a hard bargain, they also have provided plenty of business to Oregonians who might otherwise be out of a job. Bob Bauer, director of sales for Golden West Mobile Homes, notes, "The \$3 million in sales we have enjoyed from Rajneeshpuram has not only kept 35 to 40 people employed in Albany and Pendleton, but conversely saved the state from as much as \$200,000 in unemployment benefits."

He notes, too, that the Rajneeshees passed up cheap units with aluminum roofs in favor of top-of-the-line homes with soft exteriors and shingle roofs that blend in with the surrounding country. They also were careful to place them where they would not waste productive land or conflict with the environment.

The third organization is the commune itself, Rajneesh Neo-sannyas International Commune (RNSIC), structured as a cooperative or partnership in which all the residents are partners. It has assets of \$3 million, most of which consists of the equipment and vehicles used on the ranch. RNSIC leases the ranch from the investment corporation and in turn performs services for RIC, including the construction of buildings and other improvements.

The young woman who keeps an eye on all the numbers is Ma Prem Savita, a 32-year-old English accountant who works out of another corporation, Rajneesh Services International of London. RSI provides financial services for the 400 meditation centers scattered throughout the world; so Savita spends most of her time either on the telephone or on a jet airplane.

Little formal organization characterizes the various corporate structures and the Rajneeshees contend that the organizations feature none of the typical scratching and clambering to climb the corporate ladder.

"There is no room for hostility, competition or negativity," Sheela says. "We are here because of Bhagwan and our work here is performed out of



love and respect — love for Bhagwan and respect for each other.”



The so-called business meetings seem to bear her out. Every Sunday morning, Sheela gathers the 50 “coordinators,” who might be called supervisors, of the various departments. She laughs, jokes and listens.

The entire commune occasionally meets as well. One such gathering took place on a hot summer evening in August. It was 8 o'clock and the work day was winding down. Dozens of vehicles loaded with red-clad sannyasins converged on the Magdalena cafeteria from all corners of the ranch.

The main hall of the huge building soon was jammed to the walls with permanent and temporary residents of the commune — some 600 in all. A sea of smiling faces waited to hear from Sheela.

She began, as any good comedian might, with an off-color one liner that brought the house down.

She faced a tough audience. The men and women in front of her had been working in the oven-hot central Oregon desert for 12 hours a day, seven days a week. It was the end of one such day, and the sannyasins were still waiting for dinner. But Sheela had their rapt attention.

For the next hour she teased, informed and inspired her audience. She spoke of the recent death of a sannyasin while on a rafting trip on the John Day, and advised the disciples to avoid similar adventures. “Tell one of us before you do it and we'll try to talk you out of it.” She denounced “negativity” that originated outside the commune and warned of its destructive dangers.

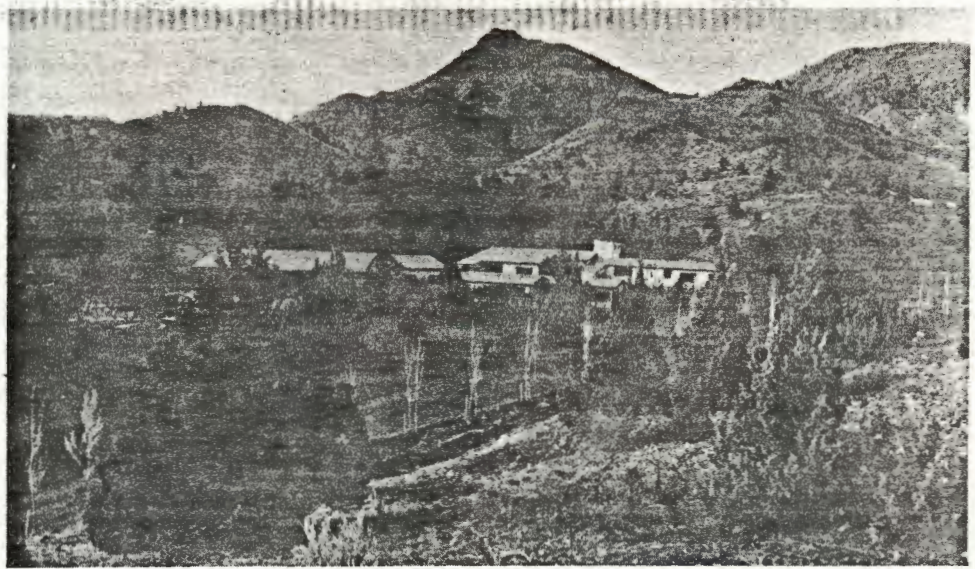
On a table at Sheela's side was a huge cake. Three of the women sannyasins whose birthdays had fallen in the past few days were called to the front of the room. They were all in their mid-30s and there was some good-natured teasing about the decline of sexual prowess after 35. The inscription on the cake read: “Happy Birthday to anyone who has ever had a birthday.” The assemblage then sang a spirited rendition of “Happy Birthday.”

Then the sannyasins dashed toward serving tables laden with a half-dozen vegetarian dishes, potatoes, bread from the commune bakery and several kinds of fresh fruit.

After dinner, they pushed the tables back to the wall, musicians took up saxophones, guitars, clarinet and drums and willing hands cleared the floor. Dancing bodies filled the room, not necessarily dancing with each other, but just dancing. The loud, fast music clearly had roots in rock, but pulsed with a mystic, chanting beat.

In the end, the dancers sang a devotion to their master as they continued to dance. The music ended abruptly at 10:30.

By 11 p.m., the rocky hills around Rajneeshpuram were bathed in moonlight and the commune in the valley below fell into a ghostly silence. ■



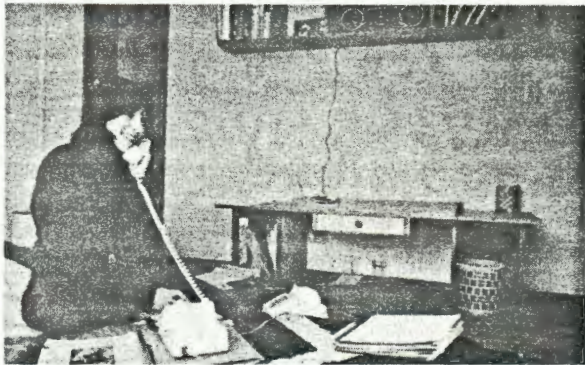
Set at the foot of the hills, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's house, top of page, is surrounded by trees and shrubs that were transplanted to the semi-arid area. Above, Bhagwan's face peers from a mala, a necklace given to seekers who become sannyasins.

Quest...

Continued from page 11

"Becoming a sanniyasin was taking a chance. It's total. I was scared, but I said yes anyway. You have to risk every moment. Otherwise you end up with an ulcer.

Unlike many of the Rajneesh persuasion, Prabodhi was not a seeker, drug freak, or season-ticket holder at the spiritual circus before stumbling across Bhagwan. She was a social dilettante.



Former skydiver Prabodhi relaxes in her room.

"I was involved in everything," she says, recalling her high-school days in suburban, upper-middle-class Port Chester, N.Y. "Choir. French Club. Yearbook. Cheerleader. I was one of those isn't-she-cute girls. I was voted most school-spirited."

The first few years after high school, she hitchhiked around Europe with her sister, enrolled briefly at the University of Wisconsin and then taught skydiving in Antioch, Calif. In 1974 she decided a college diploma would look good with her hanging ferns and ended up at the University of Washington, majoring in English lit.

"I had never done any personal-growth stuff. I was so unesoteric I didn't even know my sign. Then one day a friend gave me a book by some weird guru. I read part of the first page and thought it was written in Russian. The word 'master' turned me off. So did the words 'surrender' and 'drop your ego.' I wasn't about to say yes to anyone but myself. I put the book away.

"For some reason, I'm not sure why, I took the book with me when I went back to Europe in 1978. One day, on a beautiful, empty beach in Greece, I took it out. I was alone. I started to read a few lines and suddenly I began to weep and cry and cry.

"That just wasn't like me. I didn't know what was going on. In retrospect, it was that I wasn't in my mind anymore; I was in my heart."

The rest, as they say, is Bhagwan history. A few years later, after a stint teaching English in her red clothes in Seattle, she moved to the ranch. And met and married the swami of her dreams.

"Neither of us had ever been married before. It sounded like a lark. Now, it's fun; it's non-serious; it's a commitment to be good to each other and to help each other grow. It's an incredible feeling of openness and non-possessiveness."

And what if hubby has a fling with that cute little sanniyasin honey in crimson down the hill? "I don't know what would happen," says Prabodhi. "Every moment is different. I'd probably say, 'Who is she?' and then see what happens. I've never been a jealous person.

"I have absolutely no commitment to monogamy. For the last 12 years, serial monogamy has been my trend. The only rule we have is to never bring somebody else into our space.

"But that's us. There are all sorts of different types of relationships here. Some are yelling, screaming battles, just like the rest of the world."

Prabodhi pauses, glancing around the room as if she is trying to put the Rajneesh trip into perspective. Her eyes stop at the bookshelf.

"Bhagwan teaches us that we have to have a sense of humor about life. That's what I think about when I try to reconcile my life with those dumb municipal bond books. Hell, I flunked math in high school, but now I'm an accountant here. I had zero training before I started; it's a joke. But it's a job that needs to be done and I'd do anything to help the ranch work — and the money is important." ■

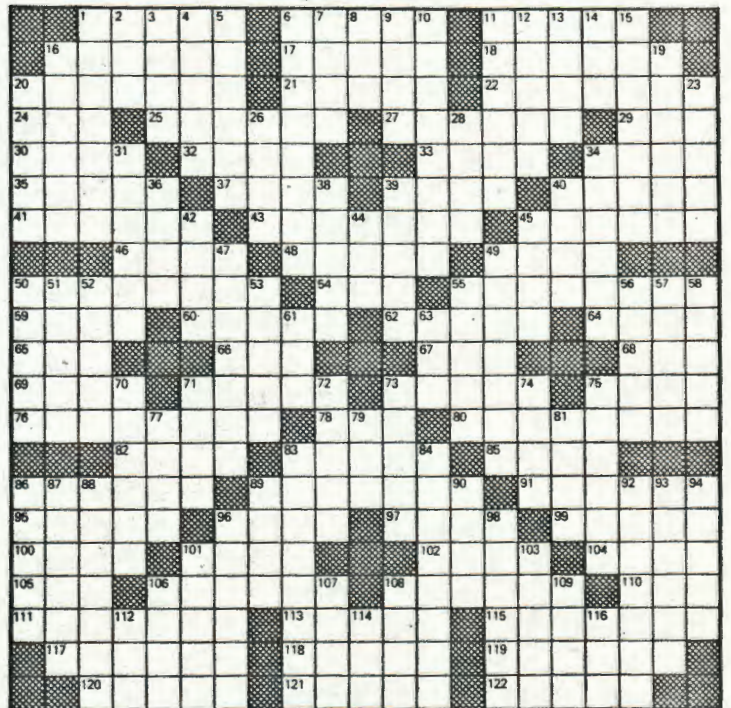
PREMIER CROSSWORD

By Jo Paquin

Manner of Speaking

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 59 Japanese shrubs | 108 Thespians | 20 Short surplice | 77 Driven obliquely, as a nail |
| 1 Straw broom | 60 Hillside dugouts | 110 Playwright's initials | 23 Make an obeisance | 79 Incumbents |
| 6 Gaucho weapons | 62 French river | 111 Lhasa native | 26 Auction | 81 They play for money |
| 11 Pearl fisherman | 64 River to the North Sea | 113 Adult insect stage | 28 Razor-billed auk: var. | 83 Walk in place |
| 16 Get by; manage | 65 Child's game | 117 Strategic card holding | 31 Defames in print | 84 Renegade |
| 17 Lessen | 66 A little bit | 118 Nodules in the skin | 34 Near | 86 Herringlike fish |
| 18 French schools | 67 Goddess of the harvest | 119 Standards of excellence | 36 Large waves | 87 Opposed to debit |
| 20 Site of King Arthur's court | 68 Miss Claire | 120 Hinder | 38 River ducks | 88 Highway foundation |
| 21 Quoted | 69 Single | 121 English novelist | 39 Gibe | 89 Town in Cameroon |
| 22 The meal at hand | 71 Sorrow | 122 Abounds | 40 English saint and statesman | 90 Blow a horn |
| 24 Sphere | 72 Father of psychoanalysis | DOWN | 42 Portico | 92 Certain |
| 25 Searches for weapons | 73 Wife of Siva | 1 Baby boy, in Bologna | 44 Onassis | 93 Abode of the dead |
| 27 — Signoret | 74 Hair style | 2 Supplement | 45 Titled woman | 94 To smoke fish: Scot. |
| 29 Heavy weight | 75 Trouble | 3 Personal interest | 47 Add at the end | 96 English painter |
| 30 It's missing on a Manx cat | 76 Not the tie that binds | 4 Fragrances | 49 U.S. officials stationed abroad | 98 Monetary surplus |
| 32 Lath | 77 U.S. physician and Nobelist | 5 Moving spontaneously | 50 Prankster | 101 Room |
| 33 Wine casks | 78 Indian | 6 Impudent response: colloq. | 51 "A Bell for —" | 103 Sovereign's decree |
| 34 Present! | 79 Room divider, sometimes | 7 Kimono sashes | 52 American playwright | 106 It follows rheo or thermo |
| 35 Formerly a Barbary State | 80 Faint | 8 Opposed to long. | 53 Fish for pike | 107 Biographer Ludwig |
| 37 Israeli port | 81 Projecting window | 9 The sweetsop | 55 Contends with | 108 Exchange premium |
| 39 Father | 82 Haughty | 10 Mutiny | 56 Cholera or flu type | 109 Sly, in Scotland |
| 40 TV Osmond | 83 Ripped | 11 Testify under oath | 57 Kind of poem | 112 Compass reading |
| 41 Sun-dried brick buildings | 84 Omnipotent | 12 Pictures | 58 Venomous snake | 114 Noted boxer |
| 43 A former first lady | 85 Mope | 13 Advocate by ballot | 61 Robert —, of "Quincy" | 116 Quick escape: slang |
| 45 Abaxial | 86 Purple seaweed of Japan | 14 House wing | 63 Biblical mount | |
| 46 High way sign | 87 Mope | 15 Famous news service | 70 Aristotle taught here | |
| 48 Actress Black | 88 Purple seaweed of Japan | 16 Rove in quest of plunder | 71 Mend | |
| 49 Comb wool | 89 Dagger | 19 Dross of metal | 72 Elevate | |
| 50 Shouts | 90 Append | | 73 Deluge | |
| 54 Norwegian statesman | 91 Elf | | 74 Expired | |
| 55 Clever retort: slang | | | 75 Minis and maxis | |

Average time of solution: 61 minutes.



CRYPTOQUIP

IDQX ASJV NMD QGQZ'W YGVS ADC
ZDN WSYI CDII: WMXWT WMS YXIW
I W J X N

Today's Cryptoquip clue: W equals T.

© 1983 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Answers on Page 2

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANE BROWN, STYLING BY JANE BROWN, JANUARY 9, 1983



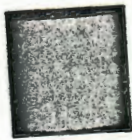
**BAKER
SEZ:**

Sheldon Baker

J. J. B. B. T

Are we getting Bhag-ed down?

Some folks out there really hate the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. They'd literally enjoy seeing him offed, and I don't mean in the sense of deported. Other kindhearted souls whose chief source of information is radio talk shows believe him to be some sort of sex-crazed gluttonous guru. Apparently he counsels people to be less than prudent with their morals; promiscuity (is that still a word?) appears to make certain otherwise-sensible citizens uncomfortable. The other side of the rupee is oft expressed: He spends, his disciples have thus far not caused the earth to fall off its axis, and he knows a decent automobile when he sees one. He has a proclivity for contradicting himself. Larry Colton, in the Sunday paper, quoted him as saying there is no God, then a few paragraphs later the Bhagwan claims Jesus to be "the flute on God's lips."



→ with Post 1-4-83

Guru's Disciples Take Office in Oregon Town

ANTELOPE, Ore. (AP)—Followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh may be losing their guru to a government deportation order, but they gained this town yesterday as one disciple became mayor and three others were sworn in as members of the Town Council.

It was the final defeat for about 40 longtime residents of this central Oregon town who didn't want their town taken over by the eastern religious sect, which has claimed 250,000 members worldwide, with a reported income of \$10 million a year.

Last April, Antelopeans tried to save their town from the Rajneeshes by destroying it—or at least disincorporating it so it wouldn't have a government to be taken over.

The effort failed, as did the attempt to gain control of the Town Council in an election last November.

The new officials took office in an swearing-in ceremony yesterday.

A non-Rajneesh also will serve on the Town Council, while two additional seats will be filled by council appointment.

With their new-found governmental power, the Rajneeshes have put an end to the prejudiced way they were treated by the former Antelope Town Council, said Ma Prem Karuna, the new mayor.

While her religious beliefs may be unique among U.S. mayors, the 43-year-old mayor, who holds a doctorate in education, seems to have mastered the political art of being non-committal.

Asked what she and her colleagues intend to do with the town, she said, "In the general sense, we are hoping to continue to improve this little city and bring the best resources to bear on its problems."

She said she also intends to review the Antelope Comprehensive Plan, the document that governs the town's growth.

"I expect population growth," she said. "You never can tell. Maybe there are some people (non-Rajneeshes) who may want to move here."

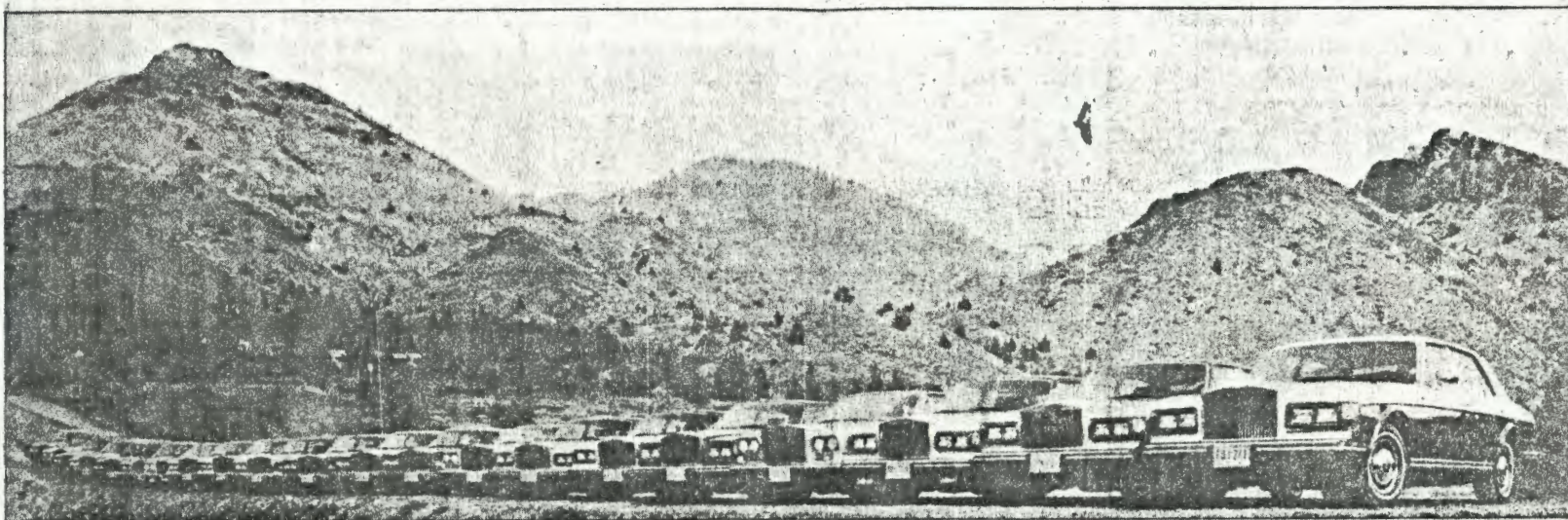
The guru's disciples moved into Antelope about 20 months ago and purchased the 64,000-acre Muddy Ranch north of the town. About 70 Rajneeshes and 40 non-Rajneeshes live in Antelope. Rajneesh and about 700 followers live on the ranch.

Now, the old-time residents can only hope the deportation proceedings won't be blocked by Rajneesh's followers. Except that the devotees might do just as well without him—Rajneesh rarely has personal contact with the mass of his followers and has taken a vow of silence anyway.

11/20/82 Oregonian

The Rajneesh Times

The Rajneesh Times



Yes, it's true, and here they are to prove it! Don't bother counting; there's 21 here plus two in for service

GURU'S FLEET — Rajneesh Times makes light of questions about Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's Rolls-Royces, available at ranch near Antelope for guru's daily drives. Former Jefferson County sheriff's deputy Harry Hawkins, now Rajneeshpuram safety officer, is quoted as saying big safety problem is "making sure no pickup is double-parked when the guru drives by."

Rajneeshi out front with their guru's Rolls-Royce fleet

By **SCOTTA CALLISTER**
of The Oregonian staff

Besieged by inquiries about their lavish gifts to their guru, followers of Indian mystic Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh have issued an official hood-count for their fleet of Rolls-Royces.

"Don't bother counting; there's 21 here plus two in for service," reads the headline accompanying a photograph of the automotive assembly in Friday's Rajneesh Times.

The weekly paper, published by the guru's commune in Central Oregon, also offered an editorial explanation for the

fancy fleet.

"Compared to love, a Rolls-Royce is nothing," the editorial states. "It is a beautiful machine, but only a machine. It can be traded, bought and sold... Yet it is the best way we can find to symbolize the gratitude of a quarter of a million disciples worldwide."

"Out of our gratitude, out of our abundance, we offer Bhagwan the best. Compared with what he is giving us, it seems small," it concludes.

On the opposite page readers find a photo of the smiling guru — looking quite content with the arrangement —

at the wheel. For others, the stream of Rolls-Royces rolling into the former Muddy Ranch, now affectionately dubbed Rancho Rajneesh, has been a source of confusion, curiosity and controversy.

On national television, in newspaper columns and in town meetings, critics and fans of the commune alike have pondered the question: Just how many Rolls-Royces does that guy have?

Even talk show host Merv Griffin got into the act, according to the Times. "These 20 Rolls-Royces are driving me crazy!" Griffin reportedly told Shee-

la Silverman, president of Rajneesh Foundation International, during an interview.

The two-page spread in the paper was warranted by all the fuss over the fancy fleet, according to a spokeswoman at the ranch. "We do get so many questions about them," Ma Prem Veena said.

Underlying the message of love and gratitude is another message to the curious public:

"We're not hiding them," Veena said. "Don't be worried about them. Forget about them; just look at what else is going on here."

The public may seem preoccupied with the fancy cars, but the Rajneesh followers also give them a share of their attention. The newspaper offers its 1,500 subscribers — mostly within the United States — several Rolls-Royce jokes, not to mention a full-page advertisement from a Beverly Hills, Calif., dealer in the automobiles.

Beneath a picture of a guru-driven sedan — just rounding a curve at the scenic ranch — is a block of advertising copy loaded with double meanings.

"Visibility on a Rolls-Royce is custom-built for the man of vision," it reads.

Oregonian 12/1/82

Crematorium wins pollution variance

By CAROL RUBENSTEIN
of The Oregonian staff

The Oregon Environmental Quality Commission Friday granted a variance from state air pollution laws so that followers of Central Oregon's Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh may build a crematorium employing an open funeral pyre.

In other business, the EQC granted requests from three Oregon firms for additional time to meet air quality standards.

The Rajneesh Neo-Sannyas International Commune, located near the Central Oregon town of Antelope, had applied for the variance for the crematorium, saying that a standard crematorium furnace would be incompatible with the sect's religious beliefs.

The commission granted the variance because of the remoteness of the proposed crematorium site and because its use would be limited to deceased residents of the commune, said Janet Gillaspie, information officer for the state Department of Environmental Quality.

Gillaspie said the Bhagwan's followers were able to control the density of the smoke from the proposed crematorium but could not control the total amount of pollution. Both density and amount of pollution from crematoria come under commission review because of their effect on the state's air pollution standards, she said.

The commission granted the variance with no set timetable — "one of the very few open-ended variances ever

granted," Gillaspie said — because of the remoteness and proposed limited use of the facility.

Meanwhile, the commission granted extensions of air quality variances to Mount Mazama Plywood Co. in Sutherlin, to the Oil-Dri Corp. of America's cat litter plant in Christmas Valley, and to the Diamond International lumber Co. in Bend.

All three companies said they couldn't meet current timetables for complying with state air pollution guidelines because of the poor economy, Gillaspie said.

While the commission granted the extensions, Gillaspie noted, it also imposed deadlines for compliance by each company.

Mount Mazama Plywood, the only veneer dryer in the state that is not in compliance with state air pollution standards, was granted an extension of its current variance — originally granted in March 1980 — until March 1983.

The commission granted Oil-Dri an extension until April 1984 of its variance for visible air contamination and particulate emission limits, with seven progressive steps to meet during the interim period.

A similar five-step procedure was established for Diamond International's Bend plant, which will have until June 1984 to meet the standards.

Gillaspie said the company had pledged to reduce its sander dust emissions — the major part of the pollution problem — by 80 percent by May 15.

Oregonian 9/11/82

Floating guru inn studied

By SCOTTA CALLISTER
of The Oregonian staff

Disciples of Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh hope to develop a floating restaurant and hotel to be moored on the Columbia River in the Portland-Vancouver area.

The guru's faithful want such a complex to accommodate disciples from around the world who have been streaming into the Northwest to visit the Central Oregon ranch commune that has been Rajneesh's home since last summer.

"We have an enormous flow of people to and from the ranch who need accommodations," said Ma Prem Isabel, spokeswoman for the commune. "What we want is a beautiful spot for them that could also be available to other people."

Swami Prem Jayananda confirmed Friday that the Rajneesh Investment Corp., of which he is president, has been considering a hotel-restaurant complex probably on the water, in the Portland area for about four months.

He said the corporation is considering sites on both the Washington and the Oregon sides of the river, but all discussions have been preliminary.

Among several vessels being considered by the Rajneesh group is the Vashon, a 52-year-old ferry moored in Seattle. The ferry was purchased last spring by the Doe Bay Ferry Association, which has an agreement with the state to maintain it as a historic vessel.

Thomas vonBahr, member of the non-profit association, confirmed that the group had been approached by Rajneesh representatives concerning use of the vessel.

The association hopes to convert the vessel into a restaurant with hotel state rooms and then lease it to an interested party, he said.

"We don't even have a memorandum of understanding from anyone," vonBahr said.

Jayananda stressed that the Vashon was just one of the options the Rajneesh group was considering. He said the group also had thought of converting a barge or some other type of vessel.

The main intent, he said, was to create a hotel and restaurant operation that would be run by sannyasins, as the disciples are called. The fare would be vegetarian, as is preferred by disciples, but the access would not be restricted to the red-clad followers.

Jayananda said the operation probably would have a capacity of just under 50 people a day.

The key factor, he said, would be finding an adequate vessel — or even a site on land — that would provide reasonable access to and from the Portland International Airport.

Oregonian 8/19/82

Rancor rooted in wrong method

By BARBARA LENMARK-ELLIS

THE RECENT BROUHAHA between Central Oregon's small community of Antelope and the interloping, enterprising 250-member guru group of Rajneesh Foundation International might have been prevented if the followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh had adopted the tactics mastered long ago by business and government when they shop for a building site.

In my opinion

The followers did everything right, they thought: They paid good money (\$6 million) for the 64,000-acre Muddy Ranch; they complied with all the laws and ordinances; they showed they were unafraid of hard work; and they made the place — like Israel — bloom despite the wasteland climes. But the Antelope City Council voted unanimously to hold a special election April 15 to vote on the disincorporation of the town.

Gov. Vic Atiyeh got into it by siding with the townspeople, saying the Rajneesh followers, who settled in last summer, should leave if residents don't like them.

The trouble is that the followers operate the way all separatist, counterculture exclusivists do. If only they had done what Boeing or Georgia-Pacific or the National Aeronautics and Space Administration all have done when they decide to engulf a community.

Now, when a company decides to expand or to relocate, it generally sends out feelers (along with the size of the payroll) to chambers of commerce or

city governments in areas deemed suitable. The results are predictable, given the propensity for greed among those who dispense goods and services. Out go packets of literature and telephone entreaties — along with the mayor and a delegation of business leaders — extolling everything from the labor force and schools to cultural benefits and even the sparkling spring water. They make deals with landowners so a live one will get a good price. And tax incentives certainly are not unknown in the romancing of a corporation.

This the Rajneesh failed to understand.

To do that, of course, they would have had to pick a different name for their operations. Anything beyond one or two strong syllables that doesn't have an Anglo-business ring to it is doomed. Things would have been different today at the Muddy Ranch if they'd incorporated as Tectromatics, Reagan Industries or Smith's Farms.

Secondly, they failed to do as the Romans do — which in small towns makes one unpopular. A representative for the group said: "We wear red clothes, we laugh, we live life and enjoy life and we love. Many people who have had miserable lives are jealous."

Take the red clothes. Nobody in Central Oregon wears red clothes because Penney's and Sears don't have much call for it. We don't know what the Rajneesh are eating, but it's bound to be loaded with vitamins and pure, neither of which would keep the local supermarket open for long. Indeed, in-

stead of buying from other local merchants, the group has purchased the old Antelope General Store (now called Zorba the Buddha), which includes a cafe, gasoline pumps and the post office.

Third, they have not worked hard at trying to fit in the way newcomers traditionally must do when they hit town. Newcomers must never upstage the locals or try to take over things like Kiwanis right off. Experienced corporate migrants well know that you provide service that nobody else wants to give: clean-up committee at the athletic field, Brownie leaders, cafeteria helper at the grade school, fund-raiser for the Every Member Canvass.

It's also true, of course, that in most of America's small or medium-sized towns — discounting those that started yesterday in California — interlopers are never quite accepted at the country club even if they've been there for a generation or two. In some Maine towns, new people might have been around for 250 years; out West these days, it's more like 80 years. But at least the newcomers know their place and how to fit in.

Had the Antelope interlopers visited with a few outfits like IBM or Honeywell, they might have been singing jolly songs at Rotary Monday noon and enjoying fellowship at the Moose Lodge of a Saturday night.

Barbara Lenmark-Ellis is a resident of West Linn and has been a contributor to *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and *the Wall Street Journal*.

6,000 Followers of Guru Expected at Oregon Festival

W.P. Post

ANTELOPE, Ore., July 2 (UPI)—Busloads of disciples of an Indian guru arrived today for the sect's first "World Celebration," expected to attract 6,000 from around the world to a barren, central Oregon ranch-commune.

The highlight of the five-day festival, which begins Saturday for the followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, will be Guru Purnima Day Tuesday, billed as a "traditional Eastern celebration when disciples and devotees gather in the presence of the master."



Followers of the Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh participate in a dynamic meditation during a mass religious festival on the group's 65,000-acre ranch

near Antelope in central Oregon. More than 5,000 persons—including many from Europe and Japan—convened for the five-day festival, which is set to end today.

Associated Press

Oregonian 4/15/82

Antelope awaits its fate as faithful, fearful flock to ballot box

By JEANIE SENIOR
Correspondent, The Oregonian

ANTELOPE — The life or death battle of the tiny town of Antelope in the ranch country of Central Oregon will be fought at the ballot box Thursday between the newcomer followers of an Indian guru and longtime plain folk residents of the community.

The longtime settlers are going to the town's lone precinct to kill Antelope's corporate status rather than see legal control of the community go to the religious cult of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, a transplanted guru from India.

The election day drama in the sagebrush country has become a national media event, drawing upward of 500 reporters, photographers and commentators from newspapers, news wire services, the television networks, radio and magazines to report the results.

The election is being watched over closely by Secretary of State Norma Paulus, along with state elections officer Raymond Phelps and county elec-

tion officials.

Polls will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Wasco County Clerk Sue Proffitt said Wednesday that any Antelope voter who has registered within the past 30 days will face a challenge at the polling place Thursday. That means the relatively new voter will have to fill out an official form stating his validity as a voter in the city of Antelope. The challenge, and reply, will be sealed and not reopened unless the election is contested.

While the voters are serious, there is a festive air in Antelope, where women of the town will be selling piles of goodies to the small army of media representatives. Antelope has but one cafe, and it is too small to handle the horde.

Each new voter registration adds to the census of the community. Oregon law permits voter registration until the polls close. Before this election, the official 1980 census for Antelope was 40 residents. But the rolls for Thursday's

election had swelled to 91, with 52 identified as members of the guru's commune. Election officials report new registrations from both sides and growing. The commune claimed at least 174 eligible voters.

The City Council voted last month to hold the emergency election because it feared enough followers of the guru would move into town to take control of the administration in the November general election. Longtime residents said they feared the guru followers would raise taxes so high that longtime residents would be forced out.

Gov. Vic Atiyeh's support is with the longtime residents, and he said recently he was kind of old-fashioned but believed if someone moved into an area where they weren't wanted he believed it a good idea for them to leave.

Sheela Silverman, who heads the Rajneesh Neo-Sannyas International Commune, which last year bought the 64,000-acre Muddy Ranch outside Antelope, denies accusations that her

group is trying to force the longtime residents out. She says the commune members want the city to remain incorporated as a support community for the ranch.

The battle between the guru's new settlers and the old already has recorded a political casualty. Commissioner Jim Comini, one of three for Wasco County in which Antelope is located, resigned Wednesday after receiving a scolding from the county's district attorney for not following his legal advice to grant a permit for an early summer festival attracting 5,000 guru devotees from around the world.

That festival is set between June 30 and July 10.

Comini said, "It's my true feeling that we're permitting a commercial endeavor in an exclusive farm use zone and I'm voting against it." That angered Bernard L. Smith, the county's district attorney, who had advised the commission that if the Rajneesh group "jumped through all the hoops, the county is

obliged" to give guru followers the gathering permit.

Comini said he quit, and he also doesn't plan to run for Wasco County judge, the equivalent of county commission chairman. The other commissioners accepted his resignation.

In addition to granting the festival permit, the commissioners also gave approval to the Rajneesh group to form the Rajneeshpuram (new name of their ranch) Rural Fire Protection District to protect dwellings and barns on the ranch.

On yet another battlefield, six Wasco County ranchers and the land-use watchdog group 1,000 Friends of Oregon filed a complaint in Wasco County Circuit Court seeking an injunction to halt a May 18 election to incorporate 2,135 acres of the guru ranch as the city of Rajneeshpuram.

The Bhagwan, 50, is a spiritual leader and takes no part in the operation of the ranch where he lives in a double-wide mobile home.

Oregon Town Seeing Red Over Bhagwan and His Cult

By Steve Twomey
Knight-Ridder

ANTELOPE, Ore.—It was 3:05 p.m. time for the jurt; and right on schedule a shimmering Rolls-Royce purred around the butte and headed toward two dozen people—all clad entirely in red—who were hastily forming an honor guard along the dusty highway.

"Watch, you won't believe this," said Rose Kuhlman, who is most certainly not dressed in red, as she waited in a pickup truck at the only intersection in town.

She should know. After all, this impending display has been a daily fixture ever since Antelope's 40 souls awoke one morning in the summer to find that their old stage-coach stop was now world headquarters and experimental commune for a very unusual, very wealthy, very big Indian religion.

"Yeah, here he comes," said Al Kuhlman, Rose's husband, squinting into the spring sun to see Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh driving his blue—not his white—Rolls-Royce on this afternoon.

As the car slowed, the flanking red lines of sanniyasin (disciples) folded their hands reverently, and the little man in white (only he wears white) smiled through his scraggly gray beard. Then, as usual, he sped off into the rugged, empty Oregon desert on his motorized constitutional to nowhere, 50 miles out and 50 miles back.

"You asked what was so weird about them—now you know what we mean by weird," said Rose, 62, triumphantly.

"It's not the Antelope we moved to," Al, 63, would say later.

It surely is not. And that is why tiny, 81-year-old Antelope, Ore., is in turmoil these days. Thursday, voters narrowly rejected dissolving the town—a device that had been proposed by longtime residents as preferable to being taken over ultimately by the Bhagwan and his disciples.

The vote was 55 to 42, but 70 of the votes were automatically challenged because they were cast by people who registered within the last 30 days, many of them Bhagwan followers.

That sets the stage for a court struggle that would continue a battle that burst upon Antelope in the last year.

Up until eight months ago, it was a poor, isolated collection of tired bungalows and mobile homes, with an annual town budget of \$15,000 and two score residents who were almost all retirees. Now it is also the home of the Rajneesh Foundation International, which has annual revenues of \$10 million and 250,000 members worldwide, plus 300 here in Antelope and on the commune outside of town—and more expected, perhaps thousands more.

Foundation officials very much want to keep Antelope a town because, under the state's land-use regulations, the large-scale business operations they envision can only take place within a designated urban area. While someday they would like to incorporate a city on their commune, which is now rural county land 20 miles away, Antelope is the only convenient urban spot around and that is where the foundation's business offices are.

If they can keep Antelope a town, and take it over electorally, they—and not the county—will be able to control zoning and initiate tax-supported projects, such as drilling for water, needed for their growth.

"We wouldn't be in Antelope otherwise," said a source close to the foundation. "We had to go and find an urban-growth city, and this is the closest one. And the only way we can do that is to keep this city alive."

They are very friendly, hard-working folks and are sympathetic to Antelope, but the Bhagwan and his people are determined to prevail, they say.

"They're afraid of change," Ma Prem Isabel, a spokeswoman for the group, said of the townspeople. "Most have chosen to come to a place where they thought there would be no change, but you just cannot do that. Life is change."

And life certainly has changed hereabouts. "The town's going to hell," said Rose Kuhlman.

The Antelope Cafe, the metropolis' only commercial establishment, is now Zorba the Buddha Restaurant, offering a complete vegetarian menu right down to the "hot dogs." The vacant lot across from the deceased Union 76 station now has three spanking new mobile homes that contain foundation offices and staff, pending more permanent quarters. The 79,118-acre Big Muddy Ranch has been purchased for a tidy \$6 million and is now the Rajneeshpuram commune.

Already the commune has two twin-engine airplanes and an air strip; a huge cafeteria serving 900 meals a day; new fields and roads plowed or built by the ranch's own tractors, earthmovers, graders, dump trucks and rock-

"Here it is nice and everybody's getting along nice and—zap!—this bunch of creeps is here... What the hell happened?"

crusher, 53 mobile homes; a swimming pool; greenhouses and barns, and dozens of young Americans, Britons, Indians and others practicing a philosophy of unrestrained sexual and emotional expression coupled with diligent farm work aided by modern technology.

A snowball of panic-selling has rolled through the tiny town. The Hickses and the Bennetts already are gone; the Obornes have sold to the foundation and will follow.

"Here it is nice and everybody's getting along nice and—zap!—this bunch of creeps is here," said Don Smith, 60, a retired Marine colonel. "... What the hell happened?"

Simple. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, 50, founder of a religion that blends Eastern mysticism with Western life styles, finally has found a home, a place to implement his vision of man living richly and simply, luxuriously and harmoniously, materially and spiritually.

The Bhagwan—it means "god"—has closed up shop in Poona, India, amid local mutterings about possible tax evasion and his brand of free love, which had not gone over too well in his rather modest native country. After examining 70 sites in many states, he and his followers settled on Antelope, a speck 130 miles southeast of Portland.

They did not exactly choose paradise. Americans usually think of Oregon as having dense forests and abundant rainfall, but Antelope sits in another Oregon. The towering Cascade Range, which runs north to south through the state, blocks Pacific storms, leaving much of

the central and eastern portions in a "rain shadow" of few trees and stark, rocky mountains.

So broad are the vistas that Mount St. Helens, more than 100 miles away in Washington state, could be seen from Antelope's buttes until it blew its top off two years ago.

But precisely because it is so desolate and quiet—state maps at one point designated it a ghost town—Antelope in recent years attracted a handful of retirees from Portland. Housing was cheap, crime nonexistent. And because there were no city departments or paid city employees, there were no city taxes.

There was only the Antelope Cafe, and everything else in the way of necessities was 35 miles away in the town of Madras. Living was easy, if a bit dull.

"It is normally peaceful and quiet out here," said Mayor Margaret Hill, who moved to Antelope 15 years ago to teach in the school. "I think you can sense that. They genuinely enjoy it."

The Kuhlman, for example, arrived eight years ago after selling their Portland machine shop. "It was kind of a retreat, away from the damn business," said Rose.

For precisely the same reasons, the sanniyasin also liked the land, particularly the Big Muddy Ranch, which sprawls over 100 square miles of some of the most beautiful, most rugged local terrain. According to Ma Prem Isabel, the foundation wanted the challenge of turning overgrazed, undernourished land into a self-sufficient Eden that would be a tribute to their religious philosophy.

So far, what they have done is impressive. More than 1,000 acres of valley bottom have turned a lush green

"I love it here, and I'm happy here. The land is just amazing... I'm grateful to have a beautiful place with such beautiful people."

against the tans and grays of the hills as winter wheat and barley take hold, irrigated by creeks. Fields are peppered with people in red jeans, red shirts and red jackets preparing the soil for 5,000 strawberry plants, 1,000 raspberry plants and hundreds of fruit trees, or finishing the new dairy barn.

"I love it here, and I'm happy here," said Ma Prem Veena, 38, a former teacher from England who became a disciple while traveling in India. "The land is just amazing... I'm grateful to have a beautiful place with such beautiful people."

From the beginning, however, Antelope did not quite see the beauty of the arrival of the new residents. "It gave me the feeling a UFO had landed and a whole bunch of people in red got out of it and started walking around," Rose Kuhlman said. "You don't know who they are or where they came from."

What started the problems was really not the red clothes, which disciples wear as a sign of commitment to the Bhagwan and because, said Ma Prem Veena, it is "a joyful color."

Nor was it resentment that the foundation was tax-exempt—it is not—nor fear that Rajneeshpuram was another Jonestown in the making or that the Bhagwan's followers were glassy-eyed zombies threatening to kidnap everybody. In fact, most commune members seem normal, happy people.

While many such sects advocate denial, this one advocates enjoyment. Members can smoke or drink in moderation. They can take advantage of any and all tools of modern living, such as cars and money. They read newspapers, they watch movies on big screens, they listen to popular music—the theme from "Chariots of Fire" was blaring through the cafeteria one recent afternoon—and they eat well, very well.

"They're a fun cult," said one Madras motel owner. "I don't see any signs of a cult," said a nonmember who has worked closely with them in dealing with governmental agencies. "... They're good people. I haven't seen anybody's bad side."

The problem was not even their frank "if it feels good, do it" brand of personal relations, although locals will swear that all kinds of orgies go on back at the ranch. While members acknowledge that sexual relations are open and easy—"We're not closed about sex; we don't have any guilt," said Ma Prem Veena.

No, the root of the problem was, and remains, zoning laws and money.

From the outset, Rajneeshpuram officials wanted not only a commune on the old Big Muddy Ranch but also homes, a hospital, stores, maybe restaurants for tourists, a printing plant and a recording studio to reproduce the Bhagwan's books and speeches, and all the utilities that would go with all that.

But under Oregon's land-use laws, which are among the strictest in the nation, such nonagricultural uses were prohibited on agricultural land. So the officials decided to try to incorporate 3.1 square miles of the ranch as a city, which would then be able to have urban zoning and urban land uses. They petitioned the county court for the right to hold an incorporation vote, and one was set for May 18.

But the court's decision disturbed a powerful citizens group called 1,000 Friends of Oregon, whose sole goal is to ensure that land-use policy is carried out. It seemed to this group that all of the Big Muddy Ranch was meant to be used for agriculture under the state's master plan and should not be converted to a city, even a small one, just because its owners wanted it to be.

Particularly troubling was the fact that, once a town incorporates, there are no limits to what can be built there. A major metropolis could suddenly sprout in the desert.

"They can potentially take thousands of acres of agricultural land out of production, as well as potentially threaten other agricultural production around them," Mark Greenfield, staff attorney for 1,000 Friends, said in a telephone interview. "... If they wanted to become a city of 50,000 to support the world population of Rajneesh, they could do that."

So his group several weeks ago started a campaign to block the May 18 incorporation vote. And if they fail and the city plan is approved, Greenfield said, the 1,000 Friends intend to continue court challenges over its future, which even foundation officials concede could take years to resolve.

And so Antelope, which could provide the Bhagwan with a fallback incorporated base, is in turmoil.

RO/NORTHWEST

The Oregonian, Friday, July 1, 1983 Section

C
Editorial, Forum

High court rejects appeal by Rajneeshees

By JOSEPH R. SAND

SALEM (UPI) — The Oregon Supreme Court Thursday rejected an appeal by followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh of a lower court's ruling that their city's incorporation was subject to state land-use planning goals.

The high court declined to review the Rajneesh followers' petition, upholding a Court of Appeals ruling that incorporation of Rajneeshpuram must satisfy statewide land-use planning goals.

The Court of Appeals in March reversed an earlier decision by the state Land Use Board of Appeals and ruled that incorporation of cities was a land-use matter subject to Oregon's land-use planning goals.

The matter now will return to the Land Use Board of Appeals for a decision on whether Rajneeshpuram meets state land-use goals.

The Supreme Court action pleased members of The 1000 Friends of Oregon, the land-use watchdog group that joined in a challenge to the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram on the Indian guru's Central Oregon ranch near Antelope.

"I am very pleased that LUBA will now get the opportunity to address the merits of this case," 1000 Friends attorney Mark Greenfield said.

"The Supreme Court's action confirms what we've believed all along — that Oregon's land-use laws apply equally to everyone," he added.

Six Wasco County ranchers and 1000 Friends have fought the city's incorporation since the Wasco County Court, in November 1981, approved an incorporation election for a portion of Rancho Rajneesh, occupied solely by Rajneeshees.

The ranchers and 1000 Friends claimed the

community was on ranch land that must be zoned for exclusive farm use, and that since a city is not needed to run a farm, its incorporation violated state land-use laws.

Rajneeshpuram Mayor Swami Krishna Deva said city officials would consider whether to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court or ask the state Supreme Court to rehear the matter.

"The city is still a legal city," he said. "What the court did does not change that status."

Deva said one of the constitutional issues involved was whether "people have a right to form their own government and when that can be conditioned, and can it be conditioned on vague, vague standards."

He said city officials were "not afraid of being measured against the state land-use planning

goals. We're surpassing those goals, as far as we're concerned."

He also said Oregon's land-use planning goals were "too vague" regarding new cities.

Mary Kyle McCurdy, a spokeswoman for 1000 Friends, said another round of appeals by Rajneesh followers could follow, but said, "We don't anticipate that an appeal to a federal level will impede or slow down a decision made in Oregon on the merits of the case."

The Supreme Court's decision not to review the Court of Appeals ruling "does mean we'll have something on the merits of the case very soon," McCurdy said. She said a ruling by the land use appeals board could come within 90 days.

"The ranchers we're representing in this action are relieved that a definitive ruling will come soon," she said.

LCDC to tackle question of Rajneeshpuram's status

By JOHN HAYES
of The Oregonian staff

The state Land Conservation and Development Commission agreed Friday to cut away much of the red tape surrounding the incorporation of the Central Oregon city of Rajneeshpuram by followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh.

Members of the LCDC voted 6-1 to tackle immediately the issue of whether the Wasco County city had been legally formed, and they agreed to consider validating the city's comprehensive land-use plan in June.

In doing so, the commission went against the recommendation of James Ross, director of the

Department of Land Conservation and Development, who urged postponement of the plan review until courts determine whether the city was legally incorporated.

Staff lawyers for 1000 Friends of Oregon, the land-use watchdog group, had requested indefinite postponement of action on the Rajneeshpuram comprehensive plan until a final court decision could be obtained on whether the city was legally established.

Lawyers representing the city argued that delays could disrupt life in the religious commune, prevent final decisions on development and even hold up review of the Wasco County comprehen-

sive plan.

"There is no reason to postpone; no reason to delay," said Rajneeshpuram lawyer Ed Sullivan.

"It is the function of the commission to cut short repetitive, needless litigation. The feelings of people in the city seem to be lost in the shuffle of paper," said Frank Josselson, another Rajneeshpuram lawyer.

The 1000 Friends of Oregon group has waged a year-long legal battle to overturn the formation of the city on part of the 64,000-acre Rancho Rajneesh near Antelope in north-central Oregon.

Last month, 1000 Friends won a decision by the Oregon Court of Appeals that sent the incor-

poration issue back to the state Land Use Board of Appeals for a determination of whether the city had been legally formed in late 1981.

On Friday, Rajneeshpuram Mayor Swami Krishna Deva said the Rajneesh followers would ask the Oregon Supreme Court to review that decision, a process which could take up to a year.

But the LCDC vote Friday appeared to have cut through much of the legal maneuvering, since the commission agreed to review whether the incorporation of the city had violated state land-use planning goals. Once the LCDC makes that determination, many of the legal issues in current proceedings would be settled.

Oregonian 3/11/83

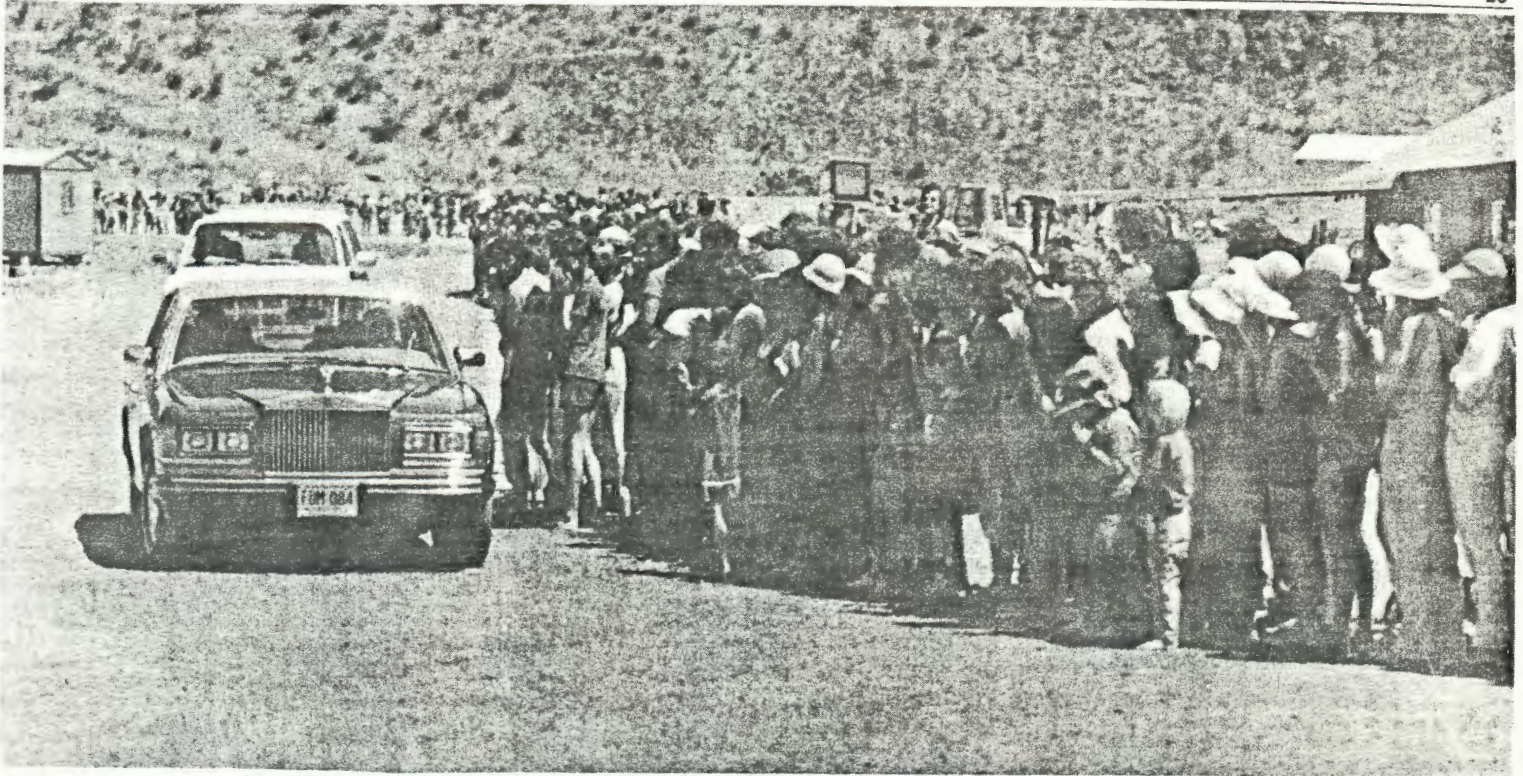


Photo by JEANIE SENIOR

ROLLING BY — Faithful followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh line up for a glimpse of the religious leader, who daily drives a Rolls Royce through Rancho Rajneesh.

Ranch takes on summer camp air as festival nears

By JEANIE SENIOR
Correspondent, The Oregonian

RAJNEESH PURAM — With some 3,000 visitors already here to attend the Rajneesh Neo-Sannyas International Commune's second annual World Celebration the first two weeks in July, the 64,000-acre Rancho Rajneesh is beginning to take on the air of a summer camp.

Upward of 12,000 more visitors are expected, arriving in time for the "main event" of the celebration — Guru Purnima, or Masters Day, July 6.

The followers of Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who are readying their remote south Wasco County homeplace for the gathering, say things are under control. Some 1,000 Rajneeshes live at the commune.

"I think everything is pretty well done and ready," said Swami Deva Prem, who is coordinating all construction for the festival, which he said is drawing Sannyasins, or disciples of Rajneesh, from all over the world.

Five tent cities — a total of 3,700 four-person tents — have been erected in the narrow valley that is the working center of Rajneeshpuram, the town created by the Rajneeshes. A giant kitchen and an open-sided, steel roofed eating area that seats 6,000 already are in use.

In the 2.2 acre Buddha hall, where all the festival-goers will gather daily July 1-8 in the presence of Rajneesh, workers are completing an elaborate sound system, laying linoleum on the dirt floor where Sannyasins will sit, and setting tile on the concrete dais where Rajneesh will preside.

About 100 festival-goers are expected from India, Rajneesh's native land and the previous home of the commune, along with larger numbers of festival-goers from Germany, Japan and Australia. About 80 percent of those attending will be Sannyasins, said Ma Prem Sunshine, a member of the public relations department at Rajneeshpuram. "It's like a family reunion for us," she said.

Those attending the festival are offered

produce the festival and anticipates earnings of \$12 million, Sunshine said. All the profits may not be directly related to the festival itself. Just this week, final touches were being added to a two-story, block-long shopping mall, which houses a beauty shop, Rajneesh boutique, an ice cream parlor, food shop and a place where pottery, jewelry and other items manufactured at the commune will be sold.

A disco is nearby, along with a store that

hangar, are two DC-3 passenger planes and a bigger Convair aircraft that formerly belonged to Howard Hughes, according to Sunshine. All are emblazoned with "Air Rajneesh" lettering. The commune also owns a faster Mitsubishi propjet.

Other sizable new buildings include a bus service shop and parts yard, a welding shop, carpentry shop, book shipping center and a clinic. One sprawling complex houses the Rajneesh International Meditation University, where students learn the meditation techniques espoused by Rajneesh.

Like last year, the festival is taking place in the ranch's wheatfield; the buildings will be disassembled after the festival. Next year, Sunshine said, plans are to move it to a permanent setting in Buddha Grove, in the undeveloped lobe of the city to the southwest, where a campground for 15,000 is envisioned.

However, if a court challenge to Rajneeshpuram's legal status as an incorporated city succeeds, she said, "We will do it like this for the rest of our lives — or we will do it in Antelope."

Sunshine acknowledged that the Rajneeshes' initial plan for a rural farming community has changed to the reality of a more urbanized festival and meditation center. Is there a Resort Rajneesh in the future? "What we envisioned two years ago and what we are doing now — I mean, we have good imaginations, but we would never have dreamed what would be happening now," she said.

The commune is spending \$9 million to produce the festival and anticipates earnings of \$12 million

programs lasting from eight days to 91 days, with basic prices of \$500 to \$3,052. The price includes transportation from Portland International Airport to Rajneeshpuram, in one of the commune's fleet of 85 buses. Ten luxury coaches recently were purchased to augment school buses used by the transit system.

The program cost covers shared tent space, with toilet and shower facilities nearby, three vegetarian meals a day, health insurance and regular bus services around the ranch. Persons who feel that tent accommodations will not be suitable can pay an extra \$50 a day and stay in the quadruplex A-frames that are the future Hotel Rajneesh. The buildings are air-conditioned and share two bathrooms to a fourplex.

The commune is spending \$9 million to

sells Rajneesh tapes and publications. There is a large outside beer garden with another disco, and snack stands are dotted throughout the festival grounds. The old frame farmhouse that was the headquarters for Muddy Ranch before it became Rancho Rajneesh has been transformed into a restaurant, offering varied vegetarian cuisine.

There are many changes since last year's festival, including a 45-acre fresh water lake backed up by an earth-filled dam and fed by Current Creek. The private lake offers a sandy beach, a two-story float dubbed "Club Atlantis" and a dock with 60 canoes.

To the north, the ranch's dirt airstrip has been lengthened, widened and smoothed. Parked near the airstrip, outside the large