

Did He Or Didn't He?

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The Real Question

On November 22, 1977, the disciples of His Divine Grace AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada inherited one of the biggest responsibilities ever in the history of religion. On that fateful day young men and women from a wide array of social and educational backgrounds were faced with an overwhelming task. Their duty was to preserve the most important religious teachings ever to impact the western world. Srila Prabhupada's disciples were sincere and committed to their mission but were only just beginning to understand the depth and meaning of the purports taught by His Divine Grace. Unfortunately almost every one of the disciples who were thrown into this tremendous position had little or no experience in the mechanics of establishing a revolutionary, world wide, extremely radical, brand new religious organization.

Twenty two years ago there was much confusion after the departure of His Divine Grace. Some devotees immediately went away. Others lurched for positions and still others dug deep into their soul and sought guidance from paramatma about what to do. Those who were committed knew it was they who were responsible for carrying on what Srila Prabhupada had started. The problem they faced was how to sort out all the details required to do that among themselves without having the loving stewardship of His Divine Grace to intervene when problems arose. The resolutions they had to make back during those strenuous days were difficult ones and some of those decisions have led to the most controversial debate ever to threaten the sovereignty of ISKCON.

There has been a lot of scriptural research, many papers written, spontaneous sidewalk conferences, e-mails sent, and meetings held in an attempt to determine what system for initiation Srila Prabhupada wanted his disciples to follow after his departure. Points have been made, defeated, rebutted, and re-argued endlessly. After awhile many who have tried to follow the play by play action get bogged down in the transcripts that are becoming more like legal documents everyday. All the scriptural minutia has been worked over with microscopic accuracy and various theories, red herrings, and straw men have appeared along the way, each time obfuscating the real question that needs to be answered. That question is straightforward and can be stated very simply: "What system of initiation did Srila Prabhupada want ISKCON to follow?" After 22 years of debate most devotees agree that the proper answer is found in one of two systems presented here.

- 1) The traditional system that has been followed since Lord Krishna Spoke the imperishably science of yoga to the Sun God Visvasvana millions of years ago which is historically known as the Parampara. Or;
- 2) A completely new, totally unprecedented, hybrid, state of the art, sit in proxy, RtVik priest, methodology for initiating disciples.

This is really the question that has been placed into the court of devotee arbitration and it can be boiled down even further into the following succinct sutra; "*Did he, or Didn't he?*" That is the essence of the question before us.... nothing else.

The Smoking Gun Concept

In any investigation the ideal situation is to find the proverbial "Smoking Gun". If such evidence is found then the subject that is in dispute is conclusively resolved and there is no need for further debate. By definition this type of evidence is so clear and unequivocal that only a madman would dare to challenge it. An example of this type of absurd challenge would be if someone were to begin questioning whether or not Srila Prabhupada ever asked his disciples to follow the four regulative principals. Only an extra-terrestrial from Mars would question this directive in light of all the overwhelming evidence that clearly indicates that he did so all the time and always quite emphatically!

In the case of the Guru?RtVik debate it would certainly be very nice if we could find some "Smoking gun" type of evidence. The debate would be over if we had a written statement from Srila Prabhupada that said; "*After I leave this body I order my disciples to carry on as initiating, Diksa Guru, Spiritual Masters that I also order them to accept their own disciples, for the very purpose of sprouting many new branches on the tree of Disciplic Succession, exactly as it has traditionally been done by Vaishnavas for thousands of years.*" If such a quote could be found in a purport from the Srimad Bhagavatam,.. the original edition printed in India circa 1963,.. with a corresponding letter referring to it,.. that was written and signed by His Divine Grace,.. as well as notarized and witnessed by both Jayananda Prabhu and Senator William J. Bennett,.. and preserved on a never before used brand new videotape,.. with a clear soundtrack,.. which is free from all evidence of stops, splits, or editing of any type then,.. we MAY have the type of evidence that everyone wishing to resolve the Guru/RtVik debate would accept thus ending this nauseous argument.

Even then, considering some of the silly things that have been said recently, I could see how some highly imaginative devotee, who got a bad break from an immature temple president in 1983, could build a campaign to suggest that all the proof was actually fraudulent. Our hero would claim that the evidence is unreliable because there was really a conspiracy to stage the whole thing by administering judgement-impairing-bad medicine to Srila Prabhupada from corrupt senior disciples,.. who were impatiently drooling at the mouth,.. although not visibly,.. to have their own feet washed in yogurt everyday,.. while being served hot chapatias and coconut juice prepared by their own robot like disciples,.. at a Mid-Florida luxury resort,.. that was converted into an ashram,.. but still had the original coke-a-cola machine,.. although it was restocked to only serve Seven Up,.. which was donated by a devotee,.. who had no money but stole the stock of bubbies from his parents, to offer as guru-daksina in order to please his now current Diksa Guru!

OK. Lets get serious. Remember the question we are working on is: "Did he or Didn't he?"

Looking For Evidence

If we look at the FO-Sastra carefully we find that the whole document centers around a letter written on July 9, 1997. We have already addressed the psychological affect the dramatic title has on the reader in my previous article entitled *Accepting the Challenge/Nuevo Mantra*. Now we will see how the unsuspecting innocent reader is lulled into a world of cloudy reasoning¹, deceptive information², misleading assumptions³, and nothing less than absurd conclusions.⁴

Just for a moment lets set aside the July 9th letter and see if there is any other reasonable evidence that supports the theory that Srila Prabhupada wanted ISKCON to adopt the type of convoluted RtVik system that the scholars of the FO-Sastra are suggesting. It would seem that if His Divine Grace intended to make such radical changes we would find all sorts of things expressing that intention.

We invite the educated readers of this article to go out to your garage and dig the FO-Sastra out from under all the accumulated newspapers you use for starting your fireplace and open it up one more time. The rest of you can take the garlands off the FO-Deity on your alter and follow along with this exercise if you are still wasting your time reading my editorials, which is hard to understand why you would be after declaring publicly that I am a fool. Now open up to the table of contents and notice that the Chapter called "The Evidence" starts on page two and the next chapter starts on page six. It appears that this chapter is four pages long but if you really check it you will see that the chapter called "The Evidence" is actually just over three pages long. The FO-Sastra is made up of 51 sheets of paper and most of them are printed on both sides. So

¹ See how the instruction to become spiritual master issued by Lord Caitanya are dodged, distorted, and obfuscated using the technique called "Pin the Prefix on the Guru" as presented in my previous article called "Accepting the Challenge".

² See the Section called "The Dharma Of The Parampara" and the way the Final Order completely misleads the reader regarding the frequency of how often Srila Prabhupada used the word RtVik and Diksha. There is an accompanying chart in my previous article called "Who Is Changing What?" that illustrates the degree of the deception. The FO-Pundits only seem to be able to explain for this discrepancy by describing extenuating circumstances, offering additional disclaimers, and wordy excuses to cover up a clear intent to mislead the reader.

³ See Note #9 regarding the Big Gap quote in my previous article "Who Is Changing What?"

⁴ See how the RtVik understanding changes our appreciation of who His Divine Grace was in the section titled "Srila Prabhupada... Not the Pinnacle Of Humility?" from my previous article called "Who Is Changing What?" *"In the end the RtVik proposal reduces Srila Prabhupada from the extraordinary combination of power and demure, that attracted us so much, to just another Guru who came from India to lock in his own fame and recognition... for the next 9,500 years!"*

what we have is a 100 page document that offers three pages of evidence in the main text to help us find an answer to our sutra. *“Did He Or Didn’t he?”*

Examining the Evidence

I can hear the RtVik authors yelling foul play already, they will insist that. “The whole document is evidence of Srila Prabhupada’s intentions!” But is it really? Look more closely at the index my friends. In this case our authors have actually given us an accurate portrait of what the FO-Sastra is really all about. Look at the titles on the two biggest chapters. *“Objections Relating Directly to the Form and Circumstances of the Final Order.”* & *“Other Related Objections”* These two chapters make up a total of 39 pages. If you look closely at all the other chapters their purpose is also designed to remove objections. The only other place where the FO-Sastra actually offers any other evidence is in the 17 pages that start after the reproduction of the July 9th letter in the Appendix. The content of those 17 pages of evidence has been presented below in a chart format for clarity.

Table of Evidence Offered to Support July 9 th Instruction In The Final Order			
Item	Pgs.	Description	Comments
1	5	Photocopies of original letters retyped as other pages for readability.	Because this is just duplicated material is <u>does not constitute any additional proof.</u>
2	1	July 11 th Letter from Tamal Krishna* to Kirtananda.	<u>No new evidence here.</u> Tamal Krishna* is simply passing along how Srila Prabhupada intended to handle backlogged initiations.
3	1	July 21 st letter from Ramesvara to Godbrothers.	<u>No new evidence here.</u> Ramesvara* is simply passing along what Tamal Krishna has informed him of about backlogged initiations.
4	1	Letter from Tamal Krishna* To Hamsadutta Maharaja	Tamal Krishna* is again passing along what Srila Prabhupada said to Hamsadutta directly in a personal letter.
5	2.5	Apr 22, May 27, July 7, Oct 18 (4 Room Conversations @ with Tamal Krishna*)	All of these conversations are inconclusive and ambiguous. They can be argued in either direction. <u>Not significant proof.</u>
6	1.5	Tamal Krishna* & Pyramid House Discussions July 31, 1977	Here the IRG accept Tamal Krishna’s* comments but later they publish a viscous paper to destroy his credibility.
7	3	Declaration of The Will June 4, 1977. Codocil to the Will Nov. 5, 1977	This will be addressed below. Notice the codicil. Srila Prabhupada did not include everything in the original will!

Before we go on we draw the readers attention to some very interesting things that tend to get overlooked by the casual reader of FO-Fables. We will start with how many places Tamal Krishna Goswami’s name appears on this visual chart of the material found in the chapter of the FO-Sastra called *“Other Evidences”*. We find he is the predominant person involved in items 2, 4, 5 and 6. One would expect the RtViks to feel indebted to Tamal Krishna for providing so much additional evidence to support their theory. But just a quick check on the IRG web site indicates something quite the contrary.

There we find posted a rather lengthy document called *“The Colorful History Of Tamal Krishna Goswami”* authored by a heroic *“Group of Sad Witnesses”*. Doing our best to ignore the ugly overtones that pervades the article we discover in the *second paragraph* of this *colorful* document the following sentence. *“Below the reader will see for themselves how Tamal Krishna Maharaja has offered nothing but a mass of confusing and contradictory positions on what should have happened after Srila Prabhupada’s departure.”*⁵

Your honor; We move to strike items 2,4,5 & 6 from being submitted into evidence because the plaintiff has, for some baffling reason, sabotaged the reliability and character of their primary witness!

⁵ This was copied from the ISKCON Reform Group (IRG) Web Site <http://www.irg.zetnet.co.uk/tkg.html> by myself on March 29, 1999. It appears that this article was originally published by VNN as an editorial on January 7, 1999 and has been available from the IRG web since that date.

It appears that the FO-Pundits are anxious to present the statements made by Tamal Krishna, at the Pyramid House in 1977, as additional evidence to support their theories when it appears they might do so. However when Tamal Krishna was asked very specifically to explain what Srila Prabhupada meant by the word “Henceforward” in 1998, the IRG publishes a ruthless attack on his character for the sole purpose of destroying his credibility. Why? Because they didn’t like his answer... that’s why.

“Therefore, the word 'henceforward,' in fact the entire letter, in no way refers to a situation after Prabhupada's departure, a situation that I was not prepared to normally think of. That situation was already addressed by Prabhupada in the May 28th conversation, which I make brief mention of at the outset of my letter.... this letter was viewed by Srila Prabhupada as a managerial document for how new disciples could continue to be initiated during His illness, not a blueprint for how the disciplic succession would continue after His departure.” Page 30, Paragraph 2&4, “Prabhupadas Order” - GBC Paper 1998

Now lets look at item number four, the letter that Tamal Krishna wrote to Hamsadutta on Srila Prabhupada’s behalf. Leaving aside the fact that the IRG has made it clear they do not trust Tamal Krishna’s intentions, competence, or integrity they have none the less presented this letter to support there theories as additional evidence. Ironically this letter is being sent to Hamsadutta, the very same person that Srila Prabhupada suggested could accept worship (by disciples) after the departure of the spiritual master.⁶ What is remarkable about this apparent piece of evidence is that it is another example of a glaring double standard found in FO-Fables. Remember on page thirteen? The FO-Pundits told us:

“To form a case regarding what should have been done in 1977, one can only use evidence that was readily available in an authorized form at that time. If such (personal) letters really held the key to how he planned initiations to be run for up to ten thousand years, surely Srils Prabhupada would have made their publication , and mass distribution , a matter of utmost urgency.”⁷

And we aren’t done with this table of evidence yet. It gets even more embarrassing.

This chapter of the FO-Fables is entitled *Other Evidences* but where are they? Is the letter that Ramesvara wrote, passing along what Tamal Krishna informed him of, new evidence? All of the room conversations are certainly not clear and remain vague and inconclusive. The important point of all this is to illustrate how FO-Fables doesn’t really present much evidence to support the treatise it portends to create based on a letter written July 9, 1977.

Notice how nearly every point that follows the introduction to FO-Fables is designed to clear the way for eliminating objections that would kill the possibility of Srila Prabhupada requesting a RtVik system. The FO-Sastra has been laid out to grab the unsuspecting reader’s curiosity, and then seductively lead one through a labyrinth of gates intended to usher in the hypothesis that Srila Prabhupada ORDERED his disciples to adopt a RtVik system. What the reader may miss along this colorful journey filled with Tibetan Yaks⁸, Star Trek imagination⁹, linguistic

⁶ “I have heard that there is some worship of yourself by the other devotees. OF course it is proper to offer obeisances to a Vaishnava, but not in the presence of the spiritual master. After the departure of the spiritual master, it will come to that stage, but now wait. Otherwise it will create factions.” Letter 1/10/74 – Page 12, Section 7, Paragraph 7.

⁷ Final Order - Page 13. Section 7. Paragraph 8.

⁸ Yak Logic has been explained in my previous paper called: “Who is Changing What? / Exotic Longhaired Tibetan Yaks” The entire section diagnosing the “Appointment Tape” Pages 21-26 is a remarkable example of Yak logic. Here we have a straightforward dialogue that gets twisted completely inside out in a desperate attempt to force meaning out of a conversation that is not really there.

gymnastics¹⁰, pretzel logic¹¹, misleading quotes¹², false facts¹³, intimidating suggestions¹⁴, and unsubstantiated dramatic conclusions¹⁵ is that the most important thing we are all looking for is: ADDITIONAL Evidence. Where is it?

The FO-PhD's¹⁶ have very cleverly plowed a path for their theory to take root based solely on the strength of the July 9th Letter, but they offer very little significant evidence to support their hypothesis beyond that. To suggest that something *is possible* is not the same as *proving that*

⁹ "Srila Prabhupada will be the initiator within ISKCON for as long as the Society is extant" – Final Order Page 47, Section 25, Paragraph 8.

¹⁰ "Once again Srila Prabhupada answers in the third person (having been asked the question in the third person): '*They are his disciples*'. As we have discussed he can only be referring to himself since ritviks do not, by definition, possess their own disciples. Further evidence **FOR THIS ASSUMPTION** is in the fact that he answers the question in the singular ('his disciples...who is initiating'), having just been asked the question about the ritviks in the plural ('these ritvik-acaryas')." - Page 24, Paragraph 3. Notice the authors consent that this is an **assumption** they are making.

¹¹ "It will be shown that the full acceptance and implementation of this order does not in any way clash with the teaching of Srila Prabhupada." – Final Order, Page 1. Introduction, Paragraph 7.

¹² Please see our earlier document called; "Who Is Changing What?" In the section "More Double Standards" we illustrate how FO-Fables relies on not quoting references properly as well as failing to follow their own rules that they have imposed on the GBC regarding the applicability of evidence found in personal letters.

¹³ "On the other 86 occasions that we find on Folio where Srila Prabhupada has used the word 'henceforward', nobody raised even the possibility that the word could mean anything other than from now onwards." In the 1989 paper called "Prabhupada's Order" the GBC provides a clear response to this false claim with the following illustration:

"However, even if we follow the TFO's logic and pretend for a moment that Prabhupada did use the word 'henceforward', we can easily show examples of where his use of the word didn't necessarily mean for all time/ For example:

*"I am so glad to hear that you are now married. I pray Krishna that **you may live henceforward happily as a householder**, without thinking of a separation from your wife."- Letter to Janis, New York, December 10, 1966*

It would be ludicrous to suggest that Prabhupada wanted his devotees to "*live happily as a householder*" for all time. However this is the main pillar of supporting proof that the author gives for the *ritvik*-theory. Again and again in *ritvik*-papers we read the word 'henceforward', as though it was some grave pronouncement of deep import, which should be stressed over and over again. We should remember that Srila Prabhupada himself never stressed this letter as being the last word or final order for all time, those are the words of the *ritvik*-theorists."

¹⁴ "Thus changing the ritvik system of initiation was in direct violation of Srila Prabhupada's final will." – Final Order, Page 4. Paragraph 6.

¹⁵ We have already elaborated on how the title of the document, "THE FINAL ORDER" is neither the last thing Srila Prabhupada asked us to do nor was it an ORDER. It was simply a practical management decision that His Divine Grace made so candidates who had been patiently waiting for Srila Prabhupada's health to recover could be given their initiation ceremony without further delay.

¹⁶ PhD's = Pretty Handy Dudes. We really have to give credit to the imagination and creative abilities demonstrated by the authors of the Final Order. They have expertly shown us all how to take one of the most simple and straight forward situation and extrapolate such an intriguing plot that it competes with some of the best horror stories by Stephen King.

something occurred. Someone could also clear the way to suggest that Srila Prabhupada did not want his disciples to consume excessive amounts of white sugar, but proving that to be true is a completely different thing. The first is a possibility the second is a fact. Our inquiry is in regards to: “*Did he or Didn’t He?*” Not; “*Here is how he could have if he wanted to.*”

Not “*Could He?*” But “*Did He?*”

The FO-Sastra gets the reader so focused on the questions posed by Modifications a & b stated on page two that one might fail to realize how both of these apparently key issues are based on the assumption that our FO-Scholars interpreted the July 9th letter correctly! *Let us not forget that the letter is the very thing that is in dispute!*

Consider the following two sentences.

Implied Conclusion...	based on evidence yet to be proven.
The CIA killed President Kennedy...	because Lee Harvy Oswald could not have done it alone.
Srila Prabhupad wanted a RtVik system...	because that’s what the July 9 th letter says.

Notice how in both statements the integrity of the conclusion is based entirely on a statement that remains yet to be proven. In both cases the people wishing to convince us of the *Implied Conclusion* have gone to great lengths to *remove the objections* that would kill their theory but that is not the same as proving their theory. Those who promote the conclusion that the CIA was responsible for the second gunman *who actually killed President Kennedy* have pointed out to us the “*Shady Grove*” where he *could* have been standing. They have also shown that there was relaxed security along the motorcade route, breached procedures at the hospital, and evidence that the CIA had dubious political objectives in 1963. Similarly the RtViks have compiled the FO-Sastra and practically the entire document is made up of *very creative ways to overcome the objections* that stand in the way of suggesting that Srila Prabhupada wanted us to implement the RtVik system for initiation. But that is where the similarity ends.

Just for a moment let us refresh our memory of what happened in Dallas Texas on November 22, 1963. We shall see how the evidence for a RtVik system, as suggested by the FO-Sastra, compares to the evidence that was offered in testimony to suggest that the CIA intentionally conspired to kill President Kennedy.

In the Kennedy example the public was offered a lot of facts that stand on their own. These independent facts constitute further evidence to support the theory that Oswald could not have killed the president alone. Some of the additional information that was submitted to the court and supports a conspiracy theory that suggests there could have been a second gunman is:

- 1) There was not adequate time for Oswald to reload aim and fire three consecutive shots accurately from the sixth floor of the Texas SchoolBook Depository.
- 2) The live film of the assassination shows that the president’s head was thrust in directions that are inconsistent with the direction of the bullets shot by Oswald.
- 3) Tape recorders captured what could very possibly be sounds of gunfire coming from locations not in the Book Depository.
- 4) Oswald was a political misfit, a 24 year old professed Marxist, and sympathizer of Fidel Castro. He had no current job, lacked financial stability, was already under investigation by the FBI and in general had the type of profile one would expect the CIA to lure into a conspiracy to kill the president.

On Nov. 29, 1963, President Johnson appointed Chief Justice Earl Warren to sift through all the evidence and lead what became known as the Warren commission. A lot more *hard facts* than just the four simple examples we have listed above were considered during the investigation. Yet after studying all the evidence for almost a year, it was concluded that

Oswald acted alone and was not part of any conspiracy, domestic or foreign, to assassinate President Kennedy.¹⁷

We are still waiting for those who contend that Srila Prabhupad wanted us to establish a RtVik system to provide additional evidence that stands on it's own to support their theory. The July 9, letter is really only one piece of extremely bad evidence because Srila Prabhupada's intent is not absolutely clear regardless of how much the authors of the FO-Sastra try to intimidate the rest of us into believing it was.

We hope that by using this example the reader is able to make the distinction between the *possibility* of something happening and the *proof* that it did happen. To show how a second gunman *could have* participated in the assassination does *not prove* that there was one. To show how a RtVik system *could be* implemented, which is really all FO-Fables does, is *not proof* that Srila Prabhupada asked us to implement it.

So where is the additional evidence? Even with the strong supporting facts like the ones we listed above the Warren Commission remained unconvinced that there was a second sniper or that the CIA was involved. Why should the disciples of Srila Prabhupada accept a less rigorous process of discovery than the American people did during the investigation of their President's assassination?

July 9 Letter = Exhibit A

While we may all have our own interpretations of what Srila Prabhupada really meant by the word "*henceforward*" when he issued the July 9 letter, objective devotees will concede that it is extremely controversial evidence at best. As such it can be given no more significance than a simple court evidence tag which reads: "*Exhibit A*".

Did He Or Didn't He? What we must remember during our investigation is that just because some creative writers have showed us how to interpret everything in order to *clear the way* for a RtVik system, that does not constitute any additional proof that Srila Prabhupada instructed us to adopt it.

The Will = Exhibit B

The only other thing that the FO-Sastra offers the reader as any significant type of additional evidence to support the theory that Srila Prabhupada *did* want us to follow a RtVik system is a single word of two letters from *one* short sentence found in his will. The sentence offered as additional evidence to support their conclusions reads as follows.

*"...a successor director or director may be appointed by the remaining directors, provided the new director is my initiated disciple..."*¹⁸

The authors then tell us that "*This is something that could only occur if a RitVik system of initiation remained in place...*"¹⁹ Touché! At first glance it appears our FO-Scholars have actually come up with something that seems to be conclusive and *actually makes sense*. But before we go further let us notice that the strength of this evidence hinges totally on the single two letter word: "*my*". If that small word was replaced with the word "*an*" the meaning of the entire sentence would completely change. This is important to notice because it is an example of how the FO-Pundits would like to impress us with their vigilance about following every word Srila

¹⁷ The synopsis of President Kennedy's assassination, investigation, and conclusions were extracted from the 1989 Compton's Encyclopedia electronic edition.

¹⁸ (Srila Prabhupada's Declaration of Will, June 4th, 1977) Final Order, Page 4. The Evidence. Paragraph 8.

¹⁹ "This is something that could only occur if a RitVik system of initiation remained in place after Srila Prabhupada's departure, since otherwise the pool of potential directors would eventually dry up." – Final Order, Page 4. The Evidence. Paragraph 9.

Prabhupada gave us down to the exact letter. (In this case two letters. ie: “my”) The meaning of the sentence, and the intent it conveys, hangs on this one two lettered word. Having made this point we will now concede that the will *does* use the word *my* and not the word *an*.

Every devotee accepts that Srila Prabhupada is a maha bhagavat. Given the fact that the word he chose to use in this sentence is “my”, it appears like the RtViks have found the “Smoking Gun” they are looking for! But is it really?

What makes this gun smoke so much is the fact that it is based on a highly emotional issue which is poorly understood and easily confused for a neophyte devotee. Much of Srila Prabhupada’s preaching was based on dispelling sentimental misconceptions about spiritual life and establish Krishna Consciousness on a solid foundation of practical theological science. He did not encourage fanaticism, kicked on sahasas, and weaned hippies from the flowers in their hair and drug induced conceptions of a Free Love, Peace and other sentimental conceptions of spiritual life. When he was challenged by the skeptical to perform miracles he scoffed at their foolishness and responded with:

“Prabhupada: Why should I show miracles? What is the business? I have to speak the truth. That’s all. What is the use of miracle? When you go to college or school, we want to see miracles or you learn books and knowledge? Krishna never said that you go to a guru who can perform miracles. He never said that. He said

tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya

upadeksyanti tad jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah [Bg. 4.34]

Go to a jnani, and who has known the truth, not to a jugglers, magician. Science is not magic. Science is knowledge. That is the Vedic injunction. Tad vijnanartham: in order to understand that science, not to see jugglery and magic. The jugglery and magic is here present: all these meat-eaters, drunkards, woman-hunters, now Vaisnava. This is real magic. If you have got eyes to see, see the magic. If you are blind, then that is different question. This is magic.” - Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.5.2 -- Hyderabad, April 12, 1975

Recently there have been a lot of articles published on the Internet adding additional tension to this issue. As with much of the RtVik material it is supercharged with guilt ridden consequences for anyone who so much as thinks, for even a moment, that Srila Prabhupada could have possibly overlooked the implications of this one small word in this sentence. This is also the hidden implication that gives the FO-Sastra it’s power when it presents this sentence to the devotee community as evidence. After all, who would be crazy enough to dare suggest that Srila Prabhupada... made a mistake! Heretic! Faithless! Blasphemer of the Guru! Get Out!

Religious Fanatics

Before we go any further let us draw the readers attention to the following sentence found in the introduction of FO-Fables.

“It is therefor imperative that constant vigilance is maintained in ensuring it does not stray even one millionth of a hair’s breath from the managerial and philosophical parameters set out by our Founder-Acarya”²⁰

What makes this sentence so interesting is how dramatically it overstates the simple point that we should all do our best to follow Srila Prabhupada’s instructions as nicely as we can. But here on the first page of the FO-Sastra the authors are setting up the drama to intimidate the reader into accepting everything that follows as not straying “...even one millionth of a hair’s breath..” from what Srila Prabhupada told us to do on July 9th. Despite the four defects that

²⁰ Final Order - Page 1. Introduction, Paragraph 5.

interfere with everything the rest of us set out to do our authors appear to be very confident that they have the gifted ability to understand the instructions of his Divine Grace with atomic accuracy.²¹ The FO-Pundits may have such lofty impressions of their own skills but for the rest of us their claims sound like the talk of religious fanatics and Srila Prabhupada warned us to be very careful of these types of people and even called them dangerous.

“So we should not become religious fanatics, nor dry mental speculators. Both these classes of men are dangerous. They cannot make any advance. – Bhagavad Gita: Lectures 31-5 Los Angeles December 20, 1968

So now we will address what appears to be the Smoking Gun statement found in the will. We do not expect our answers will satisfy the FO-Rishi's, with their acumen of molecular precision, but for the rest of us simple folk I expect it will probably make sense.

The Flawless Nature of Guru

What makes this a highly charged issue is the misconception that Srila Prabhupada never made any mistakes. The position of the Guru is so elevated and revered that we begin to think of the Spiritual Master as completely flawless in every possible sense of the word. This is actually a remnant of sentimental hippie type thinking similar to the myth that a real guru would never show interest in accepting any material assets. Spiritual integrity and material wealth seem to be as juxtaposed as the concept that a bona-fide spiritual master could make any type of mistake.

It is essential that every devotee understand the subtle, but extremely important difference, between the possibility of Srila Prabhupada forgetting a persons name, or not hearing something clearly and the fact that he was absolutely perfect as the spiritually pure servant of Krishna. This is actually not very difficult to understand when we consider that a pure devotee is completely absorbed in thoughts of serving and remembering his dear Lord Krishna. Srila Prabhupada tells us how Mother Yasoda was so involved in her service as Krishna's mother she would forget to give him milk²². We are also told how the gopies would completely loose them selves when they thought of Krishna and during the rasa dance they even failed to keep their garments properly tied.²³

The fact that the RtViks rally around this clause found in the will is not surprising. It actually requires a very refined spiritual maturity to be able to make the type of distinction that we are talking about here. The straightforward explanation for the sentence that has been submitted as Exhibit #2 is very simple. *The exact wording was not an issue at the time nor did Srila Prabhupada ever expect that it would become an issue.* It's not as if His Divine Grace anticipated all of the strange ways his disciples would start drifting off from his basic teachings. His western disciples were especially notorious for surprising him with inappropriate behavior, strange beliefs, new ideas and zealous interpretations of Vaishnava culture all the time. For example Srila Prabhupada never expected book distributors to start selling Rock & Roll records but due to the

²¹ Only much later in the conclusion, after the reader has been led through 51 pages of aggressive statements, bad research, and eccentric conclusions do the authors step back and acknowledge the possibility that they *might have made some mistakes*. “Of course we are also subject to the four defects and thus we warmly welcome any comments or criticism.” Final Order, Page 51, Conclusion, Paragraph 6. (First sentence in the very last paragraph, of only five sentences, in the Final Order commentary!)

²² Yasoda very silently laid Him down on the bed. Being engaged in receiving all the friends, relatives and residents of Vrndavana on that holy occasion, she forgot to feed the child milk. – Krishna Book Chapter 7: The Salvation of Trnavarta

²³ They could not adjust their loosened clothes, although they tried to keep them adjusted properly. Their hair and garments became scattered, and their ornaments loosened as they forgot themselves in the company of Krishna . – Krishna Book Chapter 33: Description of the Rasa Dance

creative imagination of some leaders that very deviation crept into the Sankirtan party and His Divine Grace had to specifically request that it be stopped.

My Dear Ajita Das,

*Please accept my blessings. I am due receipt of your letter dated Dec. 27th, 1974 and have noted the contents. Regarding dishonest means being used I have never advised or taught anyone like that. That is not my idea. **This record distribution has caused havoc. It should be stopped immediately.** I have also asked Hamsaduta to stop it. Book distribution is our real business. If we give them a record, they simply hear some magical sounds and take it for sense gratification but if they receive one of our books and read even one page, they get eternally benefited. **Therefore I am stressing this book distribution, not other things. Stop record selling completely. This is my order.***

(Letter to Ajita dasa Bombay January 1975)

Regardless of the exact word that has been used in this particular sentence of his will, Srila Prabhupada's intent is quite clear. Anyone who was going to be considered as a replacement executive director for ISKCON properties must be someone who is serious enough about Krishna Consciousness to have gotten initiated. It's simple for the simple and an apparent hay-day for RtViks scraping to find additional evidence to support their strange conclusions.

Having told us of the importance of not straying "... even one millionth of a hair's breath..." the FO-Pundits are apparently honing in on the exact wording of this sentence like some type of flawless, visionary, absolute instruction from the guru. It makes for an impressive act. But what they fail to explain is why they do not have equal alacrity for following the instruction found in clause #1 of the same will?

"The Governing Body Commission (GBC) will be the ultimate managing authority of the entire International Society for Krishna Consciousness."²⁴

After many years of deliberations on this issue the GBC has concluded that Srila Prabhupada did not intend to establish a RtVik system in ISKCON. Are the authors of the FO-Sastra committed to not waver from the conclusion handed down from *the ultimate managing authority of ISKCON*, with the same type of microscopic accuracy in regards to Srila Prabhupada's other instructions after declaring how important doing so is on the introduction page of FO-Fables?

Not Quite!

For over ten years they have insisted on openly defying what Srila Prabhupada has requested all of us to do in clause #1 of his will. More recently the IRG has been so defiant of the decisions made by the GBC it has filed a legal suit against ISKCON... the very thing the Gaudia Matha did which disgusted His Divine Grace So much.

*Just like our Godbrothers. They are envious. What I have done to them? I am doing my business, trying to serve my Guru Mahārāja. But they are envious because I am so opulent. I have got so much fame, so many influence, so much influence all over the world. Everyone is praising me about... That is ignorance. **And this is regrettable because they are posing themselves as Vaishnava. Ordinary man can do that, but they are dressing like Vaishnava, and they are so envious. That Tirtha Maharaja, unnecessarily he was envious, whole life fighting, fighting, fighting in the court and died.** - Room Conversation -- January 8, 1977, Bombay*

It is clear that His Divine Grace was not pleased by this type of behavior and even stressed that it "...is regrettable because they are POSING themselves as Vaishnavas." which is an indirect way of stating that those who are envious of other Vaishnavas are just "ordinary men".

²⁴ Clause two in Srila Prabhupada's Will dated June 4th, 1977. Also found in the back of the Final Order. (Page number omitted by the FO-Quality control publishing team.)

Where does the IRG demonstrate their commitment to not "...stray even one millionth of a hair's breath" from the desires of the spiritual master as they are expressed in this next passage?

Now this displeasing of godbrothers has already begun and gives me too much agitation in my mind. Our Gaudiya Math people fought with one another after the demise of Guru Maharaja but my disciples have already begun fighting even in my presence. So I am greatly concerned about it. - Letter to: Kirtanananda -- Bombay 18 October, 1973

We need not consider looking any further than the name "ISKCON Reform Group" to understand that the supporters of the FO-Sastra not only don't accept the authority of the GBC but they have also been more than willing to unilaterally appoint themselves as the *enlightened ones* who are here to *correct* the GBC. I am sure this has been a great boost to their self esteem but we are still waiting for them to tell us by who's authority they were given this responsibility? What happened to the laser like commitment to not "...stray even one millionth of a hair's breath from the managerial and philosophical parameters set out by our Founder-Acarya?" Doesn't the RtVik fundamentalist vigilance also pertain to clause one? Looks like another FO-Double standard again doesn't it?

What..! Mistakes?

Perhaps the skeptical reader is uncomfortable with the suggestion that Srila Prabhupada wasn't as focused on the exact wording of his will as our FO-Scholars seem to be. (At least with the last paragraph of clause three.) If you are in that category then go recover your FO-Sastra from the circular file again and notice how in paragraph two Srila Prabhupada says each temple will be managed by *three* executive directors. In the very next paragraph item a & e he lists *four* executive directors. How do the fundamentalist RtViks explain this inconsistency if Srila Prabhupada was being so intentional about every word and detail he put in the will? But even more important for us to notice is that five months after Srila Prabhupada wrote the June 4 will, he felt parts of it were so vague and unclear it was necessary for him to amend it with a codicil on November 5, 1977.²⁵

The argument that Srila Prabhupada was flawless in every way is a variation of the same immature mindset that the people who expect the Spiritual Master to perform miracles have. Srila Prabhupada's perfection was not in training his senses to win an Olympic gold medal or gain some type of mundane recognition for the Guinness book of world records. His unsurpassed glory was in his extraordinary ability to deliver Krishna directly into the heart of each and every one of us despite our useless fallen and undeserving conditional state. His perfection was in demonstrating to us all how absolutely everything can be done as a service to Krishna. He deserves to be worshipped by us as the representative of God because he exhibited all the 64 qualities of an exalted maha bhagavat, uttama adhikari, jagat guru. The fact that His Divine Grace did not spend hours pooling over the exact usage of every word found in his will has absolutely nothing to do with any of these things.

The Srimad Bhagavatam instructs us that we may encounter mistakes even in very elevated transcendental literature but such apparent errors do not have any significant impact on those who are properly situated.

"On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such

²⁵ The Codicil has also been included in the FO-Sastra just after the will. (Page number omitted again by the crack shot FO-Quality control production team.)

transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest” - SB 1.5.11

In the purport to this verse His Divine Grace suggests that the essence of what we really seek lies way beyond improper English, mundane mistakes, petty faultfinding, or literary expertise. He advises that Krishna is found in the heart of one who makes an honest attempt to glorify Almighty God.

“Our presenting this matter in adequate language, especially a foreign language, will certainly fail, and there will be so many literary discrepancies despite our honest attempt to present it in the proper way. But we are sure that with all our faults in this connection the seriousness of the subject matter will be taken into consideration, and the leaders of society will still accept this due to its being an honest attempt to glorify the Almighty God.” - SB 1.5.11

Can the FO-Pundits Explain This?

Still not convinced? Then we suggest the obstinate readers consider the following and request the FO-Pundits to provide the rest of us an explanation for what is going on without straying “...even one millionth of a hair’s breath...” from the words of the Spiritual Master.

Srila Prabhupada stated that he was not perfect several times:

Srimad -Bhagavatam 3.25.41 -- Bombay, December 9, 1974

Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.25.41 -- Bombay, December 9, 1974

Lecture -- Los Angeles, May 18, 1972

Room Conversation with Krishna Tiwari -- London, May 25, 1973, (new98)

Need more? In conversation Srila Prabhupad would request for clarifications quite often. Many times he asked his disciples to repeat what they said. Why would this be necessary for one who is perfect in the mundane sense of the word? This was not an occasional event, it happened all the time. We searched the Folio for the clause “Prabhupada: Huh?” to find out just how often His Divine Grace would indicate his desire for clarification. What we discovered was that Srila Prabhupada responded to someone speaking to him with the single word “Huh?” over 880 times!

There are also numerous examples in the folio where Srila Prabhupada simply forgot something. This is no big deal for devotees who understand the distinction we are trying to convey. Consider the following exchange.

Prabhupada: That Mr. What is his name?

Janardana: Paramhansa? (?)

Prabhupada: Yes.

Janardana: I guess he’s not here this evening.

Prabhupada: Oh. So, I forgot to bring my watch. What is the time now? ...

Janardana: Seven to nine.

Prabhupada: Seven to nine. - Bhagavad-gita 7.3 -- Montreal, June 3, 1968

Does this exchange reduce Srila Prabhupada’s exalted position? Not for a devotee who isn’t a religious fanatic. Here we find that His Divine Grace even forget the Sanskrit portion of a verse from the Bhagavad Gita which he did on many occasions.

Prabhupada: Annad bhavanti, huh?

Pradyumna: ...bhutani.

Prabhupada: Ah, bhavanti bhutani. Annad. Anna means food grains.

- November 25, 1973 London, Srimad Bhagavatam Lecture

There are literally hundreds of examples like this that can be easily found in the Folio. The ultra extremists FO-Fanatics may be living in some type of hyper-fundamental conception that the Spiritual Master must be a robotic-like computer perfected flawless machine in order for them to accept him as the representative of God but this is a less advanced sentimental understanding.

Srila Prabhupada did not walk on water or command the heavens to part. He did not speak the Kings English so well it would get past the highest settings of the grammar checker on your word processor. Nor was His Divine Grace the personification of a perfectionist without all the psychological complexities that accompany that type of mental illness. Srila Prabhupada clearly frowned upon this type of cheap exhibitionism and he had little regard for those who measured spiritual advancement by such mundane standards.

AC Bhaktivedanta Swami was the dedicated servant of his Spiritual Master and he was the shining example of the most exalted Vaishnave empowered by Lord Caitanya to deliver the message of Krishna to the fallen mechas of the western world. As far as we are concerned, for that reason alone he is non-different than Krishna himself. The fact that he forgot his watch, spoke broken English, seemed to appear as an older Bengali gentleman, would sometimes request people to repeat themselves, and didn't catch a little oversight on his Last Will and Testament does not make him any less revered as a pure devotee of God. To allow any of those considerations to tinge our appreciation for Srila Prabhupada is more of the same make-believe, fantasy-like, immature sentimental misconception of what a guru is suppose to be and the flip side of seeing him as an ordinary person.

*“Similarly, to think that the body of the spiritual master consists of material ingredients is offensive. **Atheists think that devotees foolishly worship a stone statue as God and an ordinary man as the guru.** The fact is, however, that by the grace of Krsna’s omnipotence, the so-called stone statue of the Deity is directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, **and the body of the spiritual master is directly spiritual.** A pure devotee who is engaged in unalloyed devotional service should be understood to be situated on the transcendental platform (sa gunan samatityaitan brahma-bhuyaya kalpate [Bg. 14.26]). Let us therefore offer our obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose mercy so-called material things also become spiritual when they are engaged in spiritual activity.” - SB 8.3.2*

Exhibit C... ?

If there is an exhibit C, it is not presented in the FO-Sastra. We are still waiting for the FO-Pundits to go into their brainstorming think tank to produce Exhibit C and then toss it out for the rest of the devotee community to consider. To find a third exhibit, they will really have to work hard. But given their creative imagination I am sure they will not disappoint us and may even come out with a newer and enhanced version of FO-Fables that with a deserving title like “*RtViks In Shiksha-Land*” considering the philosophical value that we can expect to get from it. For those who know the futility of such an effort their inventive writing will, in one sense, be entertaining. But when considered from a more sober point of view it is very sad. The devotee community does not need more disturbances from a few highly critical individuals who have wagered their entire spiritual life and reputation on desperately wanting to convince us that FO-Fables is more than a myth.

Did He Or Didn't He?

Unlike some of the more vocal defenders of the FO-Sastra, who are in the habit of complementing their own work regardless of how fatuous it may sound, we prefer to let each reader come to their own conclusions. It's easy to just join the bandwagon when there are difficulties, but real leadership requires deciphering well-crafted political rhetoric from 12 years of straightforward preaching by His Divine Grace. Doing the right thing is often not the easy thing and ultimately each devotee must review the evidence in council with paramatma and answer the question; “*Did He or Didn't He*” for themselves. To answer that question one should not only review the books, letters, and lectures given to us by Srila Prabhupada, but who is interpreting it for us, how they present that interpretation, and why they are taking the time to do so.

The FO-Sastra offers us just Exhibit A and Exhibit B. In both cases the conclusions the authors reach rely heavily on a generous amount of extremely controversial Yak like reasoning. In the July 9th letter everything pivots on the single word "Henceforward" and in the Will everything rests on the word "my". In both cases all the conclusions balance on the fulcrum of how a single word is interpreted.

In considering the evidence for the traditional system we have the following things to give serious thought to:

- 1) The traditional system is consistent with twelve years of elaborate purports describing the science of the parampara and how essential it is to the successful transmission of Transcendental Knowledge.
- 2) The traditional system honors the following prayer found in the Srimad Bhagavatam 4.12.34 where Srila Prabhupada shares with us these intimate feelings: "...sometimes I think that even though I am crippled in many ways, if one of my disciples becomes as strong as Dhruva Maharaja, then he will be able to carry me with him to Vaikunthaloka." The traditional system preserves the memory of His Divine Grace as the humble servant of his Spiritual Master
- 3) The traditional system honors Lord Caitanya requested that each and every one of us become so serious about spiritual life that we become fully qualified to fill the post of Spiritual Master and deliver all that we meet *Back Home, Back to Godhead!*
- 4) The traditional system preserves the personal loving teacher/student relationship that is completely unique to the process of Krishna Consciousness. The dynamic application of the parampara system, when practiced with real living people, is the inspiring force that touches the heart of the disciple even if it only happens infrequently and it has been demonstrated that such an encounter can have the potency to last for an entire lifetime.
- 5) The traditional system does not require a 100-page document that relies on selective quoting, bad research, Yak like logic, political motives, pathetic mistakes, double standards, and embarrassing conclusions.
- 6) The traditional system is based on a path that is consistent with the collective conclusions of Srila Prabhupada's most trusted and intimate senior disciples and the decisions of the GBC who were appointed by His Divine Grace to lead ISKCON.
- 7) The traditional system does not need to be politically campaigned for outside of every temple nor does it rely heavily on faultfinding, endless criticism, lawsuits, and a complete disregard for Vaishnava Aparada.
- 8) The traditional system keeps the responsibility on both the Teacher and the Student holding both accountable to their own relationship with paramatma and their respective initiating diksa Spiritual Masters.
- 9) The traditional system is consistent with the example set by Krishna, Lord Caitanya, and all the other great Vaishnava acaryas in our tradition.
- 10) The traditional system is based on a straightforward understanding of Srila Prabhupada's teachings, does not rely on a fanatical hairsplitting fundamentalist interpretation of the scriptures, or the English language, and honors the rigorous science of Hermeticism that is respected by scholars around the world.

The AIM is a Concession

In closing I would like to thank all the numerous wonderful devotees who have contacted me via e-mail, by phone, and in person with words of support and appreciation for my small contribution to this discussion. It is particularly satisfying to know that I have been instrumental in helping others see through the confusing spaghetti like reasoning that has become the artistic style which permeates RtVik propaganda. Apparently some of these devotees have become so consumed with their RtVik agenda they are unable to understand the value of inserting an

Alternative Initiation Methodology (AIM) into ISKCON. The concept is actually quite simple and the reason why I suggest it is that it would reunite devotees under the victorious leadership of Srila Prabhupadas mission. It is authorized by the Paicaratriki-Vidhi principal and it concurs with the psychology of problem resolution and the nature of human dynamics. This is probably why it is also consistent with what management studies have determined to be the best method for resolving organizational problems.²⁶ For these reasons AIM is a legitimate solution, a pragmatic alternative to endless war and conflict and completely consistent with the Phalena Paricityate policy that Srila Prabhupada relied on so heavily when he made day to day decisions.

It is also worth pointing out that I have never equated AIM to any RtVik propaganda although I do not object to it manifesting that way after proper consideration by ISKCON leadership. I have always made it very clear that the validity of AIM is based on what I have stated above, not the tawdry conclusions of FO-Fables. RtVik enthusiasts claim that their primary mission is to establish a recognized vehicle for connecting new members directly to the instructions of Srila Prabhupada. The RtViks methods leave a lot left to be desired and the conclusions of the FO-Sastra are academically laughable, but most of the concerns that have been pointed out by those campaigning for reform are legitimate and ISKCON leaders must come to terms with these issues. Inserting and AIM into the ISKCON system provides that for those who may be hesitant to step up to the Guru-Roulette wheel and take their chances.

It is only the most extreme acid brained RtViks who have no hesitation broadcasting to the rest of us that the healthy and thriving relationships which currently exist between ISKCON spiritual Masters and their respective disciples are illegitimate, bogus, and completely corrupt. What is intelligent about proposing the GBC INSERT an AIM into ISKCON is that it satisfies the primary objectives of the RtVik proponents and provides a common ground for us to cooperate on and get back to the more important business of preaching. This statement is based on the fact that the generals of the RtVik army personally told me in the fall of 1998 that they would completely stop their RtVik campaign if ISKCON agreed to at least implement a recognized parallel system. An AIM would be a GBC concession that would satisfy the terms of this offer and end the dispute unless there are additional masked motives that have yet to be revealed.

From the GBC side of the fence AIM puts an end to all the spiritual fratricide for everyone, except those who are simply riding the RtVik bandwagon as a convenient way to justify their envy and personal resentment's. (Which appear to be a large number based on the mood and comments made by the audience that spoke out at the Florida and Los Angeles RtVik pseudo-conventions.) For those individuals no concession will be good enough because the problem resides in their own heart not a particular system of initiation. ISKCON management should genuinely embrace AIM devotees the same way the Department of Defense works hand in hand with the Reserve Forces. AIM devotees should be given the same privileges of other Hari Nama initiated devotees so they can work side by side with Traditionally Initiated Devotees (TIM). After being granted opportunity to perform service cooperatively with other Vaishnavas, the sradha of

²⁶ The most important principal in problem resolution is to break down the walls that have developed between disagreeing parties. This is best achieved by involving the fractured groups in the process of working towards the solution instead of trying to isolate them out of the process. A serious evaluation of the current dysfunctional environment between ISKCON devotees is the driving force that gives an AIM system it's validity and purpose. Regardless of if a devotee believes Srila Prabhupada advocated a RtVik system or the current Guru system we all agree on the urgency of distributing Krishna Consciousness. That agreement provides a strong common ground to base our unity on and where we need to start from.

Those who are interested in reviewing psychological research that further supports the AIM approach to problem resolution are invited to study the research done in 1968 by behavioral psychologists called the "*Robbers Cave Experiments*". Readers interested in further practical reasons for instituting the AIM solution are also invited to consider the successful management philosophies that have been studied and practiced by Peter Uberoff, Tom Peters, Steve Covey, Peter Druker and Charles Demmings to name a few.

the AIM devotee would increase and could even culminate in a desire to take second initiation from a senior devotee who is accepting disciples.

Service is the Goal, Not Linguistics.

The authority for AIM is based on the Paicaratriki-Vidhi principal which is what gave Srila Prabhupada the authority to reduce the standard number of recommended rounds of japa from the 64 that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta instructed him to follow, to the 16 that he asked us to commit to. His Divine Grace made this significant adjustment when he could see how impossible it was for us to adopt the standard he was given. He did not tell us to toss out the japa bag because we had difficulty chanting 64 rounds a day, he simply fine tuned the principle so it could be adopted by the most fallen, skeptical, and agitated western minds without losing the essentials of the Yuga Dharma.

Even the most neophyte RtVik is capable of regurgitating a litany of problems in ISKCON without even stopping to inhale once. There are real problems, but to present FO-Fables as a panacea for solving them is not the solution. Such a pathetic attempt to try and bring respect to a RtVik philosophy, that took birth in the pain of disappointment, mistakes, misunderstandings, and assorted other difficulties, will not help us if it has no philosophical foundation. The RtVik frenzy is just a fanatical reactionary swing of the initiation pendulum all the way to an opposite extreme that is just as wrong and quite evident to any sober devotee with at least a third grade education.

An AIM should not be necessary but it is because of the terribly troubled and difficult times we currently face. It's justification is that it gives those who are unable to surrender to a living guru a practical way to formally participate in the victorious army led by the master of all mystics Krishna and the supreme archer Arjuna. Srila Prabhupada made similar arrangements for devotees who had difficulty adjusting to the four regulative principals. Although he maintained a high standard in regards to giving initiation, the following instruction clearly illustrates that he was willing to make concessions in order to give everyone a chance to meet those standards.

“So far Ksirodakasayi is concerned, or anyone else who is newcomer, should be allowed some concession. And after some time when he is accustomed to our principle, then we can make the screw tight. I think this point will be sufficient hint to deal with him.” - Letter to: Tamala Krsna -- Los Angeles 20 February, 1970 Lettes.

In fact everything His Divine Grace did was for the sole purpose of restoring the relationship between the independent living entity and the Supreme Lord. Our primary responsibility is to bring others into the service of Lord Krishna. That is what unifies us, not an endless debate over the linguistics of what a few strategic words really mean. AIM is just an additional stepping stone that can be formally offered to the aspiring devotee who is just starting to navigate through the offensive stage of chanting Hare Krishna and developing his Krishna Consciousness.

There are some authors participating in this debate that can't seem to avoid the temptation to unabashedly proclaim the superiority of their arguments and literary competency based on nothing more than a self administered flattering evaluation of their own work and raw hubris. (Commonly known as bragging.) Leaving aside the obvious arrogance of such a self serving habit, it makes the rest of us wonder why these authors feel the need to remind their readers so often of how impressed they are with their own work? Why not just let the readers decide for themselves the merit, substance, readability and validity of their literary presentations, which is the professional standard practiced by most writers? Perhaps these individuals believe their audience is so dull-headed they dare not trust that they are capable of drawing their own conclusions without the author specifically telling them what they ought to be. This appears to be the only rational reason for why we find such a generous use of self proclaimed conclusions like;

*“.. to stand out as the great Muni **he clearly thinks he is**”
“...**our demolition** of his first article”
“...we see that the whole thrust of his article **is already wrong.**”*

“...*the author has yet to produce a single example* where TFO has not presented the ‘facts accurately”

“..what *a confused person* the author is.”

This may be appropriate for those who still believe in FO-Fables, but for the rest of us it is a dismal attempt to keep all the FO-Troops stepping to the same marching drum of a desperately contrived cause. Anyone can declare whatever they want, but when one insists on declaring irrational beliefs, despite overwhelming evidence that the belief has little basis in reality, they are considered to be suffering from Schizophrenic Psychosis, a severe mental disorder.²⁷

Historic Illustration

On February 24, 1991 at 4 AM American ground troops attacked Saddam Huseins army as the last step of the Desert Storm objective to liberate Kuwait. Four days later the objective of the United Nations Allied forces had been achieved. By that time nearly the whole infrastructure of Iraq had been destroyed--specifically bridges, highways, electric power systems, water filtration plants, and airports. Thirty-Seven days prior to the invasion Iraq's ground forces had been terribly battered by severe bombing. During that time Iraq's military installations, communications facilities, air bases, armed forces in the field, missile launchers, weapons-producing factories, and nuclear production facilities were destroyed by more than 100,000 air sorties and by sea-launched missiles from the Persian Gulf.

With uncounted thousands already killed --the number of military fatalities was unofficially put at 150,000--surviving Iraqi troops surrendered by the tens of thousands, and those who stood to fight were quickly and decisively defeated. By February 27, four days later, President Bush ordered a cease-fire. Iraq was beaten and Kuwait was liberated²⁸

Yet just a few days after one of the most obliterating military defeats in the history of war Saddam Hussain was declaring to his few remaining loyal constituents ***that he had defeated the ugly western infidels and driven them out of his country!*** His declarations of Victory became the headlines of the Baghdad newspapers. His press releases were incomprehensible to the rest of the world but that is indeed what he did! The only thing it proved was how pitiful Saddam Hussain is and how pathetic the whole situation is in Iraq.

It seems evident that Saddam's closest associates have the same Napoleonic complex he obviously has. It is also sad to note that some of the innocent citizens of Iraq *needed to believe* the words of their leader to preserve their own concept of national dignity. But the rest of the world saw things clearly from a less regimented fanatical point of view and knew quite well just how ridiculous his press releases really were.

The Final Order Still Stands!

It is understandable why the generals of the RtVik camp feel a similar need to assert victory after every philosophical encounter regardless of how silly it may sound to the greater devotee community. It is their duty to boost the moral of their fledging army of vigilante followers. But we are neither swayed by such hollow declarations nor impressed with the feeble rebuttals they to spoon feed their puerile band of FO-Groupies like a young mother obliged to nourish their infant. Because of their grandiose claims and dramatic proclamations the greater community is able to quickly spot those who suffer from Delusions of Grandeur. Under such conditions the wise

²⁷ “...one of the most common thought disorders among schizophrenics is ***delusion***, an irrational believe held despite overwhelming evidence that the belief has no basis in reality.” - Psychology Today, Fourth Edition, 1979 Random House. Part Seven, Behavior Disorders and Therapy, Chapter 22. Psychological Disorders Page. 520.

²⁸ The Complete Reference Collection. Copyright © 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997 The Learning Company, Inc.

devotes prefers to politely ignore their ranting and raving and carry on with more important concerns.

*“It is said that when there is a thundering sound in the clouds, the mighty lion immediately replies with his thundering roar. **But the lion doesn’t care when all the foolish jackals begin to make their less important sounds.**” - Nectar Of Devotion.*

Chapter 21. Qualities of Krishna, Quality 25. Forgiving

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<i>Guru Crisis – Personal Letter to GBC</i>	(October 15, 1998 - Two Pages)
<i>The Process of Vaishnava Initiation and ISKCON</i>	(October 3, 1998 - 28 pages)
<i>Drop the Bomb and End the War</i>	(December 1, 1998 - 5 Pages)
<i>Whoever Thinks They Can Manage ISKCON is Disqualified</i>	(December 15, 1998 - 4 Pages)
<i>Put The Extremists Where They Belong</i>	(December 27, 1998 - 6 Pages)
<i>“The Art Of War” in ISKCON</i>	(January 7, 1999 – 7 pages)
<i>Fail to Plan is a Plan to Fail</i>	(January 13, 1999 – 5 pages)
<i>Petition for Sanity and Maturity (Powerpoint Presentation)</i>	(January 16, 1999 –17 slides)
<i>“12 Points Toward Unity & Respect” (Mission Statement)</i>	(January 16, 1999 – 2 Pages)
<i>The LA January 16 Reform Show</i>	(January 29, 1999 – 5 Pages)
<i>He Who Knows Has No Need To Shout</i>	(February 22, 1999 – 7 Pages)
<i>Accepting the Challenge</i>	(March 15, 1999 – 10 Pages)
<i>Who Is Changing What?</i>	(March 22, 1999 – 13 Pages)
<i>Did He Or Didn’t He?</i>	(April 12, 1999) - 20 Pages)