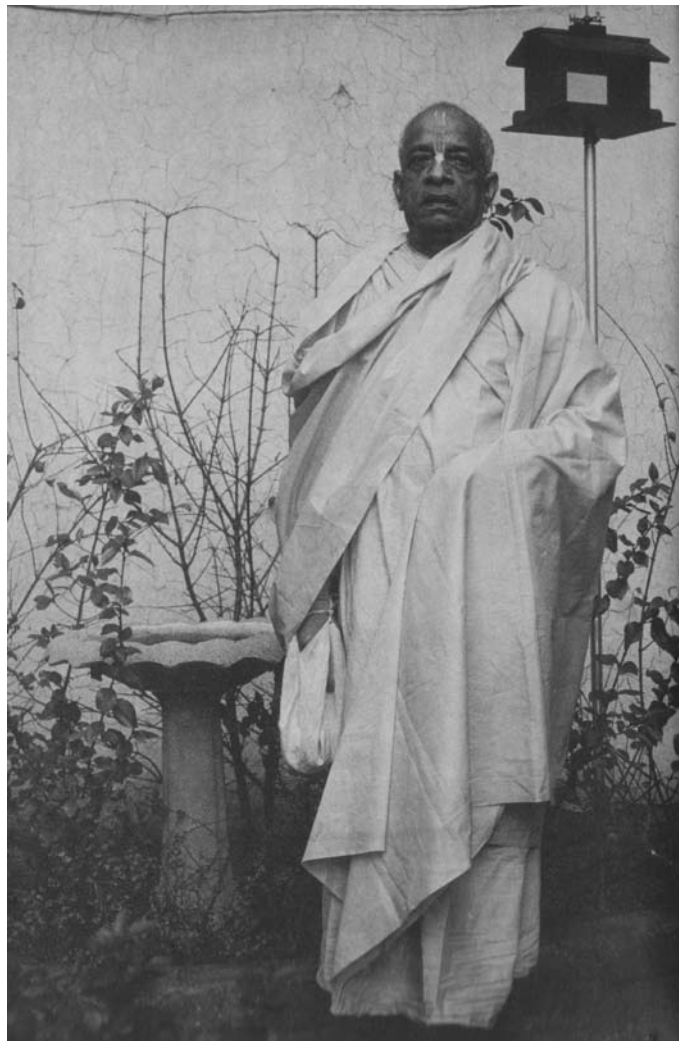


A reply to 'Where the *Ritviks* are Wrong Again'

Where Jayadvaita Swami is Wrong Again



Where H. H. Jayadvaita Swami is Wrong Again



A guru can become guru when he's ordered by his guru. That's all. Otherwise nobody can become guru. [...]

You should know that one can become guru when he is ordered by his guru, this much.

(B.G. Lecture, 28/10/75)



by Krishnakant

Where H. H. Jayadvaita Swami is Wrong Again

A reply to the paper 'Where the *Ritviks* are Wrong Again'

What follows is a response to H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja's paper 'Where the *Ritviks* are Wrong Again'. His paper is a response to a letter written to him by ourselves, which in itself was a response to his previous paper 'Where the *Ritvik* People are Wrong'.

Before we start our analysis of His Holiness Jayadvaita Maharaja's paper we would firstly like to apologise to the Maharaja for any offence, he felt we made towards him in our last response. There were a couple of parts, which were perhaps insensitively worded, and it was certainly not our intention to offend. The remark about the BBT calendar was only meant to inject humour, but was clearly misjudged. We also never meant to imply that Maharaja's total understanding of Srila Prabhupada's teachings on the *parampara* were imagined, merely those non-existent ones which his paper gave the impression contradicted post-samadhi *ritvik*. We had tried to remain respectful. Indeed right at the beginning we said his was the best-written attack on *ritvik* we had ever seen (it remains so). We also said his paper was thoughtfully written; that out of the six arguments he made we only disputed two; we thanked him for using the term *p.s.ritvik* rather than posthumous *ritvik*; and we ended with the following:

"We know you are a sincere follower of Srila Prabhupada, and that you really believe that *p.s.ritvik* is a heresy to be stamped out with papal vigour, but we implore you to pray to Srila Prabhupada for his direction on the matter. If you pray deeply, we are sure that he will answer you very swiftly. ISKCON leaders may not listen to us, but they will listen to you. You could put ISKCON back on track, and thus greatly please Srila Prabhupada."

(from our original response to Jayadvaita Swami)

When a disagreement is as serious and fundamental as that which surrounds the issue of initiation in ISKCON there are bound to be a few harsh words. Certainly, we have tried not to take any of Maharaja's insults and sarcasm too seriously. The most important thing is that the truth is established. In any case our sincerest apologies.

Below we reproduce Maharaja's latest refutation as a series of boxed items. These items consist of him quoting our original letter with his responses. The quotes from our original letter are headed in the boxed items with 'QUOTE' with his responses headed 'RESPONSE'. Our replies to his responses will follow underneath the boxed items.

QUOTE:

"We shall use the term 'Multiple *Acarya* Successor System', or M.A.S.S., when referring to your favoured method of continuing the *parampara* - . . ."

RESPONSE:

Straw-man argument. The focus of my paper is that the *ritvik* theory is bogus. The details of how the *parampara* should continue is a subject my paper doesn't deal with. So they are dragging in a red herring (a fish we shall run into several times in the course of their paper).

Surprisingly Maharaja's paper opens with eight paragraphs on the nature of the guru *parampara*, taken from one of his excellent Back to Godhead articles. Yes the aim of the original paper was to try and show that the *ritvik* theory is bogus, but part of the Maharaja's counter evidence involved proposing a 'plain vanilla' theory for how the *parampara* operated. This is even admitted by the Maharaja in his current paper later on where he explains the 'plain vanilla' concept, the basis of his original paper:

"The "plain vanilla" they're so unhappy about is merely a statement, in the plainest possible terms, of Srila Prabhupada's basic teachings on the subject of *parampara*, the teachings His Divine Grace repeated again and again and again."

(Where the *Ritviks* are Wrong Again)

And in his original paper Maharaja refers again and again to his 'plain vanilla' concept of the *Guru-parampara* system, as evidence against the *ritvik* theory. Here we give just a couple of examples:

"One might argue, then, that since accepting the dictionary meaning of "disciple" would have the unexpected result of requiring the entire system of *guru-parampara* to be put aside, here an interpretation is legitimately called for."

"Anyone can join his school of thought, or, still further, his International Society for Krishna Consciousness. And ultimately one can become not only his disciple in spirit but his "initiated disciple" through the *guru-parampara* system."

(Where the *Ritvik* People are Wrong)

The last quote actually has Maharaja fully equating following the current M.A.S.S. system, in operation in ISKCON, with the eternal '*guru-parampara* system'. Moreover, this completely supports our original statement. There is also the obvious point that Maharaja has himself supported and participated in the *guru* system currently in operation in ISKCON, having initiated his own disciples. Thus, his readers would naturally assume he is defending the system he himself practised. This system we call the 'multiple *acarya* successor system' or MASS.

QUOTE:

"According to your analysis we are supporters of the 'hard *ritvik* doctrine' with a subtle modification (underlined):

"Srla Prabhupada should be the only initiating *acarya* for ISKCON, for as long as the society is extant. All members of ISKCON should, in our humble view, aspire to act as instructing spiritual masters, or *siksa gurus*."

RESPONSE:

J Swami identified only three flavors of *ritvik* theories. But fertile is the mind, and infinite are the possibilities for concoction. So here we have a fourth. And other flavors could surely be invented. Baskin-Robbins, here we come.

(NOTE: After going further down in the paper, we find that their supposedly subtly different theory--shall we call it the "semi-hard" theory?--is really not different from the "hard" one. But that's ok, even if you don't have a different flavor, no harm in advertising that you do.)

Here Maharaja states that there is 'no harm' in advertising that one has a different flavour even if one doesn't. Yet, we shall see that later on Maharaja berates us for this very point, a point which does not in any event address the issue at hand, namely the validity of the P.S. '*ritvik* doctrine' whatever the flavour. Furthermore, we shall also show that the Maharaja's 'flavour' was indeed different from ours all along.

QUOTE:

"All members of ISKCON should, in our humble view, aspire to act as instructing spiritual masters, or *siksa gurus*."

RESPONSE:

A very humble view indeed. Here's Krishna Kant Desai, not even initiated, and Yaduraja Dasa, a second-generation devotee, advising Srla Prabhupada's disciples, including GBC men and sannyasis and Srla Prabhupada's most senior devotees, how they should aspire to act. Very humble indeed. As Srla Prabhupada said,

"Our Krishna Consciousness movement is based on complete fellow feeling and love, but there is a word *maryada* which means respect which should always be offered to the Spiritual Master and elderly members."

(Letter to Jayapataka, 17 April 1970)

As Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu explained (*Chaitanya-caritamrta*, *Antya* 4.130 -131):

tathapi bhak ta-svabhava--maryada-raksana maryada-palana haya sadhura bhusana

"It is the characteristic of a devotee to observe and protect the Vaisnava etiquette. Maintenance of the Vaisnava etiquette is the ornament of a devotee."

maryada-langhane loka kare upahasa iha-loka, para-loka--dui haya nasa

"If one transgresses the laws of etiquette, people make fun of him, and thus he is vanquished in both this world and the next."

And (166): ***maryada-langhana ami na paron sahite "I cannot tolerate transgressions of the standard etiquette."***

But I suppose that this must be an emergency. Srla Prabhupada's philosophy has gone to the dogs (his senior disciples--

woof! woof!)), and only brave souls like Krishna Kant and Yaduraja can save it. Great. But if you're wrong and you're really just violating etiquette and committing aparadhas, may Lord Siva and his legion of ghosts have mercy on your wretched and miserable souls.

Maharaja answers the above himself. At the present time the GBC are in complete disarray over what to do about the MASS, which has become an embarrassing nightmare. At the same time, many senior devotees such as Temple Presidents, Gurus, Sannyasis and even the odd GBC have recognised the validity of following Srila Prabhupada's final order on initiations. We fully understand that Maharaja might find it easier to listen to such devotees than mere upstarts such as ourselves. Even this point is acknowledged in 'The Final Order' itself. Change needs to come from within ISKCON, from the top downwards. Do not forget 'The Final Order' was originally commissioned by the GBC just so they could look afresh at the whole issue and sort it out. We would certainly support and follow Maharaja were he to promote Srila Prabhupada's final order, or prove it should be abandoned. If we are wrong at least we will not have preached that members of the eternal disciplic succession can fall down into gross sinful activity. We are banking on Lord Siva's ghosts having larger fish to fry.

QUOTE:

"Anyone wishing to initiate on their own behalf should do the honourable thing and form their own institution."

RESPONSE:

Among the devotees serving as gurus in service to Srila Prabhupada, how many have expressed a wish to initiate "on their own behalf" anyway? Again, here our friends have defeated only their own straw man.

The Maharaja really knows better than to make the above assertion. It is very clear that the term 'on their own behalf' refers to the practice of initiating disciples in a manner opposed to the *ritvik* practice, which even according to him is done on 'Srila Prabhupada's behalf':

Acting as *rtviks* ON HIS BEHALF, certain disciples may initiate new devotees, who then become not their disciples but his. ISKCON shall follow this system, and only this system, forever.

(Where the *Ritvik* People are Wrong)

If Maharaja is thus insisting that the current guru system in ISKCON involves the gurus not initiating on their own behalf, it raises the following questions:

- 1) On whose behalf are they initiating?
- 2) If the answer to 1) is Srila Prabhupada, then how is it different to the *ritvik* system?
- 3) If the answer to 1) is Srila Prabhupada, then why are the initiated disciples not his?
- 4) If the answer to 1) is Srila Prabhupada, then why is the *guru daksina* not his?

Etc.

Maharaja knows very well that the term 'on their own behalf' was used to convey the obvious point that those disciples initiated will become their own initiated disciples and not Srila Prabhupada's, as would be the case in the *ritvik* system.

QUOTE:

"The type of 'spiritual master' Srila Prabhupada constantly encouraged all his disciples to become, was *siksa*, not *diksa*."

RESPONSE:

An authoritative statement from the Krishna Kant Samhita.

A silly and unnecessary comment since the authority for this statement as given in the very next line, comes from Srila Prabhupada, and is quoted unchallenged immediately by Maharaja himself. (See next item)

QUOTE:

"This is clear from the purports to the '*amara ajnaya guru hana*' section of the CC: 'It is best not to accept any disciples'. (CC. Madhya Lila 7:130)"

RESPONSE:

They chose a great purport but the wrong quote. This one would have been better:

“There is a class of sahajiyas who think that these activities [making disciples and writing books] are opposed to the principles of devotional service. Indeed, they consider such activities simply another phase of materialism. Thus opposing the principles of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, they commit offenses at His lotus feet. They should better consider His instructions and, instead of seeking to be considered humble and meek, should refrain from criticizing the followers of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who engage in preaching.”

Apart from that: It's best not to accept any disciples. That's why Srila Prabhupada accepted 5,000 of them, right?

- 1) The section of the purport Maharaja quotes is of course also wonderful. However, that does not deflect from the fact that Maharaja has no answer for the section we quoted.
- 2) To say Srila Prabhupada had disciples does not change the simple fact that the 'become guru' verse, as applied in ISKCON, means 'best not to accept disciples'. Its right there in the purport as part of the explanation of what the verse means.
- 3) We have never said that preaching, book distribution and bona fide initiations are against the principals of devotional service.

QUOTE:

“To kick off there are two basic assumptions in your paper which we feel are seriously flawed. The first of these is that p.s. *rtvik*, by definition, means the end of the disciplic succession, or guru *parampara*. This is a false assumption.”

RESPONSE:

My paper doesn't assume this at all. In fact, it makes clear that according to the “soft” *rtvik* doctrine, the *parampara* system is supposed to continue, as soon as one or more “self-effulgent *acaryas*” appear on the scene. It would be nice if our friends would argue against the assumptions I made, not the ones I didn't.

With respect Maharaja really needs to re-read his own paper. We appreciate that he is maybe very busy preaching and chanting Hare Krishna, but if he seriously wishes to enter the fray again and defend his paper, then appraising himself of what he originally wrote would surely help:

By this “hard” version of the doctrine, even should an *uttama-adhikari* someday appear, he will never initiate disciples of his own. At most, he will serve merely as a *rtvik*. For according to this hard version of the doctrine, Srila Prabhupada is the final member of the disciplic succession. The succession has come to an end. Srila Prabhupada is the only guru forever after. But for those who subscribe to the “hard” version of the *rtvik* doctrine, such questions no longer matter. For it's Srila Prabhupada forever. The disciplic succession is finished. For the advocates of the “hard/soft” version, too, the questions hardly ought to matter. For Srila Prabhupada will initiate eternally through his *rtviks*. And even if new gurus come along, they will merely be needless appendages. After all, who could be a greater guru than Srila Prabhupada? And why be initiated by anyone else? For the “hard/soft” people, too, “the eternal system of disciplic succession” is essentially over.

(Where the *Ritvik* People Are Wrong)

Obviously since we are 'hard' *rtviks*, only that scenario is relevant. And Maharaja's pronouncements on that scenario DO assume that the disciplic succession ends.

QUOTE:

“ISKCON will only last for 9,500 more years. Compared with eternity 9,500 years is nothing, a mere blip. That is the time period in which Srila Prabhupada shall remain the current link within ISKCON.”

RESPONSE:

So their doctrine is now clear. It's not the “hard” *rtvik* doctrine “with a subtle modification.” It's simply the unmodified hard *rtvik* doctrine, as defined in my paper: Srila Prabhupada is the only initiating spiritual master for all ISKCON devotees, and he shall continue to be so forever. Acting as *rtviks* on his behalf, certain disciples may initiate new devotees, who then become not their disciples but his. ISKCON shall follow this system, and only this system, forever.

Ok, “ISKCON shall follow this system forever” means “as long as ISKCON exists.” But that's obvious, isn't it? Well, I guess for guys who need to be told that “henceforward” need not mean “for all eternity,” figuring ought that in this context “forever” means “as long as ISKCON exists” might come as something of an intellectual breakthrough. Congratulations on your satori, men.

Firstly we were just trying to offer clarity. The way Maharaja has written it above could be taken ambiguously since the word 'forever' as in:

“ ... and he shall be so forever [...] ISKCON shall follow this system, and only this system, forever”

Can imply that ISKCON itself will exist forever, which is not what we say. Thus, we thought there was no harm in removing potential confusion. The following statements from Maharaja later confirmed our suspicions of confusion:

By this “hard” version of the doctrine, even should an *uttama-adhikari* someday appear, he will never initiate disciples of his own. At most, he will serve merely as a *rtvik*. For according to this hard version of the doctrine, Srila Prabhupada is the final member of the disciplic succession. The succession has come to an end. Srila Prabhupada is the only guru forever after. But for those who subscribe to the “hard” version of the *rtvik* doctrine, such questions no longer matter. For it’s Srila Prabhupada forever. The disciplic succession is finished. For the advocates of the “hard/soft” version, too, the questions hardly ought to matter. For Srila Prabhupada will initiate eternally through his *rtviks*.

(Where the *Ritvik* People Are Wrong)

Thus based on the above statements, we were correct in pointing out the ‘subtle modification’, and Maharaja’s sarcasm is exposed as all the more redundant.

BY THE WAY:

Nearly all the *rtvik* people I’ve met have tried to sell me on the “soft” *rtvik* theory (or the “hard/soft” one), in which pure devotees sooner or later reappear and the disciplic succession continues. Those *rtvik* people get no help from Krishna Kant. In fact, he’s their opponent. As our previous paper showed, the “hard” and “soft” brands of *rtvikism* are mutually exclusive. If one is true, the other must be false.

So even if Krishna Kant’s arguments were strong enough (which they’re not) to prove that his “hard” *rtvik* theory is right, they’d also prove that the “soft” *rtvik* theory is wrong. So either Krishna Kant is right and the soft people are wrong, or I’m right and both he and they are wrong. Either way, the “soft” *rtvik* theory is wrong. (The “hard” one, of course, is wrong too.)

We totally agree with Maharaja that the ‘soft’ theory, which is merely another flavour of the M.A.S.S. system, is wrong. We have written papers demonstrating this very point. The IRM stand is hard *rtvik* (with our subtle modification of course). In other words we believe there should be no change. Things should go on within ISKCON just as Srila Prabhupada had left them.

QUOTE:

“Previous *acaryas* have remained ‘current’ within the *parampara* for hundreds or even thousands of years. For example Srila Vyasadeva.”

RESPONSE:

You picked a great example, didn’t you guys?

According to a well-known verse, Vyasadeva is among several ancient persons still alive even today. “Some of the sages, saintly persons, are still living. Still living. They are tri-kala-jna. They have no past, present, future. When this whole universe will be annihilated, then they will go to Vaikuntha or spiritual world personally. So Parasurama, Vyasadeva, and many others, they are supposed to be still living.”

(Srimad-Bhagavatam lecture, Los Angeles, 25 September 1972)

Even more to the point:

Regarding *parampara* system: there is nothing to wonder for big gaps. Just like we belong to the Brahma *Sampradaya*, so we accept it from Krishna to Brahma, Brahma to Narada, Narada to Vyasadeva, Vyasadeva to Madhva, and between Vyasadeva and Madhva there is a big gap. But it is sometimes said that Vyasadeva is still living, and Madhva was fortunate enough to meet him directly. In a similar way, we find in the Bhagavad-gita that the Gita was taught to the sungod, some millions of years ago, but Krishna has mentioned only three names in this *parampara* system--namely, Vivasvan, Manu, and Iksvaku; and so these gaps do not hamper from understanding the *parampara* system. We have to pick up the prominent *acaryas*, and follow from him. There are many branches also from the *parampara* system, and it is not possible to record all the branches and sub-branches in the disciplic succession. We have to pick up from the authority of the acharya in whatever *sampradaya* we belong to.”

(letter to Dayananda, 4 December 1968)

That does a lot to support the posthumous *rtvik* doctrine, doesn’t it?

We never claim that the above quote supports the p.s. *rtvik* arrangement. Rather, as Maharaja has, himself quoted above; we simply use it to prove that *acaryas* can remain ‘current’ for a long time. The above quote certainly supports our point. We never say that the quote supports anything else. The issue was duration that is all. The issue of physicality is addressed separately in our original paper.

QUOTE:

"The second point we need to urgently address is your 'regular vanilla' concept. If there is one feature which most distinguishes *diksa* transmission in our guru *parampara*, it is that it is almost entirely devoid of regularityWe feel the 'regular vanilla' frame is drastically incomplete, and hence potentially misleading."

RESPONSE:

The "plain vanilla" they're so unhappy about is merely a statement, in the plainest possible terms, of Srila Prabhupada's basic teachings on the subject of *parampara*, the teachings His Divine Grace repeated again and again and again. In the rest of their paper, our friends will devote an inordinate amount of effort to trying to pierce holes in those teachings, by coming up with "exceptions," "irregularities," and whatever else they can scrape up. In this way, they will take Prabhupada's teachings--clear, simple, and standard--and try to turn them into something equivocal, complicated, and full of ifs, ands and buts. "Potentially misleading" indeed!

By the way, I said "plain vanilla," not "regular vanilla." "Plain" as in "simple," "clear," "unadorned," "easily understood." They change it to "regular vanilla" so that they can play their little word game of contrasting "regular" with "irregular." Ho hum. Are we having fun yet?

Yet as we will see Maharaja is unable to give any evidence or examples of how we are trying to 'pierce holes' in the 'teachings of His Divine Grace'. Certainly, he would have been better employed finding such examples rather than threatening us with Lord Siva's ghosts and giving us a lecture on the merits of humility.

We do apologise for using the word 'regular' instead of 'plain', yet this is hardly an argumentative or philosophical breakthrough for the Maharaja. Since the word 'regular' can also mean 'unadorned' and 'standard', we do not see how the meaning has been significantly changed, if at all. We fail to see how making an issue of this mistake enhances Maharaja's case. Indeed Maharaja uses the example of 'ice cream' to illustrate the difference between the plain and flavoured variations. Yet the same 'fast food outlets' also use the term 'regular' to convey exactly the same understanding, as in 'fries and lemonade' - 'Regular, Medium or Large'. Still we did misquote him and that was careless; if we possessed the paper on disk then it would not have occurred, so once more we apologise.

QUOTE:

"According to you the regular form of *diksa* involves a guru teaching his disciple everything he needs to know about Krishna Consciousness. The disciple cannot just enquire philosophically from the guru, he must personally approach and serve him as well - (we are not sure if you mean this service and approach must be to his physical body, one to one. If so that was certainly not Srila Prabhupada's modus operandi - many of his disciples never met him physically at all). After the guru leaves the planet, the disciple is connected to him largely through his indebtedness and is immediately free to act as a *diksa* guru, initiating his own disciples."

RESPONSE:

Step one in attacking what JS said: Change it. Step two: Attack the changed version.

"According to you the regular form of *diksa* involves a guru teaching his disciple everything he needs to know about KC."

Well, that's not quite how I put it, is it? Where are you getting this from?

"The disciple cannot just enquire philosophically from the guru, he must personally approach and serve him as well!"

Is that also supposed to be "according to Jayadvaita Swami"? (Hmm. One must surrender to the guru, enquire from him and serve him--those of us who've been at least through the new bhakta program probably recognize the verse that idea comes from.)

"(we are not sure if you mean this service and approach must be to his physical body, one to one. If so that was certainly not Srila Prabhupada's modus operandi - many of his disciples never met him physically at all)."

Of course, you're not sure, because, it seems, you're looking for some sort of hidden meaning in what JS wrote. JS meant what he said, that's all. Why are you unsure whether JS means that the service "must be to his physical body"? Because that is not a topic, the JS paper is talking about.

"After the guru leaves the planet, the disciple is connected to him largely through his indebtedness.. . ."

Again, you're replacing what JS actually said with something of your own concoction. Or reading into his words something he never intended. Well, that's not surprising, is it? For our friends, this seems to be the regular stock in trade: Take an author's words, screw your own meaning from them, and then misrepresent your screwed-up version as being what the author intended.

Well, maybe they can get away with that with Srila Prabhupada, because he's no longer physically present to protest. But,

unfortunately for them, this time the author is still physically on the scene, and here's what he says: "Krishna Kant and Yaduraja, you've misrepresented me. What I really said and what you say I said --what I intended and what you say I intended--are entirely different. You're full of prunes." Free advice: Next time you want to misrepresent an author's intended meaning, do it the way you did with Srila Prabhupada: Wait till he's no longer physically around to say you're wrong.

What JS actually said: The genuine disciple feels everlastingly indebted to the spiritual master and continues to serve him forever. In this way, even when the master leaves this world, the master and disciple are connected.. The author's own explanation: "Yes, the spiritual master and disciple are connected by that feeling of indebtedness. But, more important, they're connected by service. The disciple who sincerely serves the spiritual master is always connected. If you have a problem with that, tough beans."

"After the guru leaves the planet, the disciple is . . . immediately free to act as a *diksa* guru, initiating his own disciples."

Well, look in the essay again: JS didn't say that either. Again, the strategy: Modify what the author said, then attack the modified version.

It will be noted that the quote from our paper is not enclosed in quotation marks, and thus it is clear that it is only meant to be a paraphrasing. Thus the issue is to see if we are falsely giving a different meaning to that which was intended by the author; not that it is repeated verbatim. The author claims that we falsely attribute the following statements to him. We will reproduce them, and what he actually said in his original article that was the basis for our claim:

"According to you the regular form of *diksa* involves a guru teaching his disciple everything he needs to know about KC."

This is one of the secrets of the *parampara* system: to be a genuine master, one must be a genuine servant. The student, therefore, surrenders to the spiritual master as a disciple and serves him, and the master responds by answering the disciple's questions, enlightening him with transcendental knowledge. For the sincere disciple who has full faith in Krishna and equal faith in the bona fide spiritual master, all the truths of spiritual realization are factually revealed.

(Where The *Ritvik* People Are Wrong)

"The disciple cannot just enquire philosophically from the guru, he must personally approach and serve him as well."

The method of accepting the spiritual master is explained in Bhagavad-gita: one must surrender to him, inquire from him, and serve him. Inquiry alone is not enough. One must humbly submit oneself before the spiritual master, accepting him as the representative of God.

(Where The *Ritvik* People Are Wrong)

"After the guru leaves the planet, the disciple is connected to him largely through his indebtedness. . . ."

The genuine disciple feels everlastingly indebted to the spiritual master and continues to serve him forever.

(Where The *Ritvik* People Are Wrong)

(Note the words 'largely' and 'everlasting'. We are not precluding a connection via service as well.)

"After the guru leaves the planet, the disciple is . . . immediately free to act as a *diksa* guru, initiating his own disciples."

What I want to focus on here is a simple point: That a spiritual master initiates until his departure and then his disciples initiate next is the normal system.

(Where The *Ritvik* People Are Wrong)

We will leave the reader to compare the two versions. At best the paraphrasing gives an understanding that is the same as what is produced verbatim in the original paper, so that the full meaning is not changed at all. At worst our paraphrasing ability is not perfect in that the understanding given is only near enough such that the essential meaning given is unchanged. In any case pointing it out is irrelevant to the issue at hand, namely - the validity of the p.s. *ritvik* system. And if this is all Maharaja has to contribute to the validity of the p.s. *ritvik* system - that we are not perfect paraphrasers, then so be it. Meanwhile the *ritvik* understanding will go on flourishing unchecked. Which begs the question as to why Maharaja wrote this paper in the first place. Making comments and jokes about our humility, flavours and our paraphrasing ability etc., do not in any way address the validity of what we originally stated - which as we believe was a robust case for the p.s. *ritvik* system.

In the words of the great Bard, Maharaja comes 'full of vexation' (Midsummer Night's Dream) but in the end it was all 'Much Ado About Nothing'!

QUOTE:

"Perhaps we are in deeper trouble than you thought."

RESPONSE:

Yes, we certainly are. You've now completely misrepresented what JS described as "plain vanilla," and you're going to proceed to tear apart the misrepresented version. And some people are going to take you very seriously, not realizing that you are leading them into deep doo-doo.

As we have seen, Maharaja has not been able to produce any evidence for a misrepresentation in the substance of what he has said. Only possibly in style, which is irrelevant.

QUOTE:

"The very first example you give involves interplanetary *diksa*, (*Bhagavad Gita* 4.1)."

RESPONSE:

The authors here begin to argue--seriously!--for interplanetary *diksa*. "We. . . know that as a Mahabhagavat Srila Prabhupada is at least as powerful as demigods like Iksvaku. So transferring or transmitting *diksa* to receptive disciples should present him no difficulty at all, from whichever planet he may presently reside."

Interplanetary *diksa*--does my memory fail me? --is not a course of action Srila Prabhupada recommended. But our authors are very bright and creative people. So why not? Hold onto your hats, ladies and gentlemen! You're in for quite a ride.

As we have seen previously, Maharaja would do better to concentrate on what is actually being said, his undoubted comedic talents notwithstanding. The fact remains that it was Maharaja who gave an example involving inter-planetary *diksa* as evidence for 'plain vanilla'. That's all we stated, and it's a fact

QUOTE:

"[Interplanetary *diksa*] seems to be slightly more mystical than mere feelings of 'indebtedness'. . ."

RESPONSE:

The authors are to be commended for this astute observation.

Thank you.

QUOTE:

"If you really do believe 4.1 is an example of 'regular' *diksa* then maybe we are not so far apart after all. [Some people say] that off-world *diksa* transmission violates sastra. And yet by using 4.1 as your only sastric example of the *parampara* you imply it is quite the thing to do."

RESPONSE:

Huh? I start off quoting the standard verse from Bhagavad-gita, and by the time KK and YD are through with me, I'm implying that people should seek *diksa* from gurus on other planets. Wonderful!

Maharaja's theatricals cannot disguise the following facts:

He quotes 4:1 (B.g.) in support of his 'plain vanilla' concept.

4:1 (B.g.) involves inter-planetary *diksa*. And as mentioned earlier this is all we point out.

QUOTE:

"We have observed that violations of 'regular vanilla' fall into five basic categories, although we do not deny there could be many others:"

RESPONSE:

Again, the strategy is made clear: Take Srila Prabhupada's standard teachings and shoot them down by finding diverse "violations."

Maharaja is mysteriously unable to produce any evidence of how we are 'shooting down Srila Prabhupada's teachings'. Though he does seem to be able to find the time and energy to repeatedly make these vacuous claims.

QUOTE:

"1) Gaps."

RESPONSE:

For our friends out there, "Gaps" affords an opportunity to get creative. For those more sober, Srila Prabhupada's answer to Dayananda Dasa is enough to put the matter to rest. Note also:

This subject of "gaps"--how Srila Prabhupada dismisses it and how our friends seize upon it--demonstrates a clear difference between what Srila Prabhupada was doing and what our *rtvik* friends are up to. Srila Prabhupada was in the business of extinguishing needless doubts. Our friends are in the business of igniting them.

If Maharaja had more carefully read what we stated he would see the point we were demonstrating in this section is that there are variations from the model of the guru initiating until his departure, and the disciple taking over immediately at that point. That is a fact, and that's all we were stating here.

QUOTE:

"These [gaps] are all the occasions when an *acarya* in the *parampara* leaves, and there is no next link to immediately start initiating. Or the person who is to become the next link does not immediately receive authorisation from his spiritual master to initiate on, or straight after, his departure. For example there was a gap of some twenty years between the departure of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta and the next bona fide initiation in our *sampradaya*. Gaps of more than one hundred years are not uncommon between members of the disciplic succession."

RESPONSE:

The logic here is intolerably bad. Srila Prabhupada was initiated in 1933, in the physical presence of his spiritual master. But the fact that he himself didn't initiate until 20 years later is somehow proof of a "gap," akin to the supposed gap between Vyasa and Madhvacharya, and evidence for the cuckoo-bird philosophy of post-*samadhi ritvikism*. Put in another context, the argument would go like this:

Sons take birth from fathers and themselves become fathers. But sometimes fathers have no sons until 20 years or more after their own fathers have passed away. This is clearly a gap--a "violation"--and it demonstrates that a son need not be born of a father. He can just as well be born of his grandfather. Right.

This is a 'straw man' argument from Maharaja. We do not use a 'gap' as evidence for the p.s. *ritvik* theory. But only as evidence against some 'standard' or 'plain' model for how the *parampara* must always be continued. To use Maharaja's analogy (which he misapplies) - the fact that a father does not have a son for many years after his own father has passed away is evidence for just that:

That a father does not have to give birth to a son immediately after his own father passes away.

This was not used as evidence to promote the idea that therefore this proves the father never has children, or that they are born of the grandfather or any other such thing (hence Maharaja's misapplication).

The above analogy is also faulty for another reason. The '*ritviks*' do not propose that sons should be born of 'grandfathers'. They say that sons should only be born from fathers. But that Srila Prabhupada is that father. And that until a valid reason is given as to why he should stop being the father in ISKCON, and be replaced by his sons, he will remain the father. For in this spiritual analogy, the father does not have to stop pro-creating as soon as he 'dies', or as soon as one of his 'sons' is qualified enough to pro-create himself. No, Srila Prabhupada set up a system so that he will continue to have sons, his elder children assisting him in the task by acting as 'loco parentis' (*siksa guru*) to their younger brothers.

QUOTE:

2) Reverse gaps. . . .

3) *Siksa/diksa* links. . .

4) Mode of initiation. . .

RESPONSE:

The arguments here amount to virtually nothing.

Further example of the Maharaja's avoidance of philosophical substance in favour of irrelevant peripherals.

QUOTE:

"5) Successor systems.

"This refers to differing successor *acarya* systems within our *sampradaya*. For example Srila Bhaktisiddhanta adopted a 'self-effulgent' successor system. As far as we know Srila Prabhupada opted for an officiating *acarya* system with his books as the successor."

RESPONSE:

As far as you know. We're glad you said that.

Maharaja has yet to demonstrate that anything 'we know' is incorrect on this issue.

QUOTE:

"With such abundant variety as this it is a challenge to identify what 'regular vanilla' actually means."

RESPONSE:

In other words: When Srila Prabhupada spoke of *parampara*, "disciplic succession," he was speaking of something so complex or so obscured by violations and exceptions that we can barely make out what he meant. Srila Prabhupada gave no plain, standard teaching. The real truth is "tutti fruti"--almost anything goes.

Yes indeed. Our friends proceed to argue further along this line. The arguments are just more of the same. No need to waste time on them.

It is interesting that Maharaja justifies his avoidance of pages of pithy arguments, in favour of the inconsequential and vacuous, as a time saving device. More time spent tackling the main issues, and rather less on seeing how accurately we paraphrased him, might have been time better spent. If some devotees have been 'confused' by the arguments in our previous rebuttal, it is hard to see how Maharaja's latest effort will help them in any way.

QUOTE:

"If by 'regular vanilla' you are referring to the general principle of accepting a current link guru who is an authorised member of the disciplic succession, then we are in total harmony."

RESPONSE:

By now it's clear you haven't a clue what I'm referring to.

The rest of your paragraph is just rhetoric. "The p.s. *rtvik* system allows unlimited numbers of people to approach, enquire and serve Srila Prabhupada, who is just such a spiritual master. The mechanics of how such acceptance takes place may vary according to time place and circumstance, but the principle remains the same. This principle is certainly not compromised in any way by p.s. *rtvik*."

Ok, Srila Prabhupada is the *siksa*-guru of everyone. That's not compromised by the p.s. *rtvik* doctrine, any more than it would be by the Telephone Pole doctrine (as long as you accept Srila Prabhupada as your *siksa* guru, you can get initiation from the telephone pole of your choice). So what? Does that mean the p.s. *rtvik* thing is legitimate? No.

If 'regular (plain) vanilla' does not refer to accepting the 'current link in the chain of disciplic succession', then whatever it does refer to must be bogus; for the above principle is straight from the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (2:9:7) as originally quoted in our initial rebuttal paper.

We are not saying that *ritvik* is correct for ISKCON because it does not violate the principle of *diksa* or succession; we are merely pointing out that it does not. The whole point of Maharaja's paper is that *ritvik* violates 'plain vanilla', but as we demonstrated (and choosing our words very carefully) 'plain vanilla' does not factually exist. Since *ritvik*-past-departure does not violate sastra or any principle of the *parampara*, why was it stopped on departure? That is the question Maharaja really needs to urgently address.

If the process of 'approaching, enquiring and serving Srila Prabhupada' simply makes him our *siksa*-guru then verse 4:34 in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which recommends this process, cannot simultaneously be used as the standard example of *diksa* (which it commonly is by those opposed to *ritvik* in ISKCON). It is invariably trotted out as evidence that the *diksa* guru must be

'physically present'. The verse clearly is speaking of *diksa* since the word for 'knowledge transmission' is *upadiksyanti* - 'initiating with'. So our statement stands. The process of enquiring, serving and being initiated by the current link in the chain of disciplic succession is not in any way compromised by the *ritvik* system.

QUOTE:

"According to the cover of the *Bhagavad Gita* (1983 edition), which you yourself revised, Srila Prabhupada is the current representative of the disciplic succession. Despite being clearly stated on your own revised book, when we last met, you adamantly insisted in the strongest possible terms, that Srila Prabhupada was in fact not the current representative of the disciplic succession.

"To justify your dramatic shift in position since '83. . . "

RESPONSE:

The sales copy on the book jacket (and did Jayadvaita Swami write it, or edit it, or even see it?) is now supposed to be a clear statement of his philosophical views.

If the dust jacket does present a major philosophical deviation, and the Maharaja knows about it, then how could he allow tens of millions of copies to be distributed all over the world? Is he not the BBT chairman as well as the editor of the book in question? If Srila Prabhupada is not the current link then the Maharaja will have done far more than we ever have to convince the world that he is.

QUOTE:

"To justify your dramatic shift in position since '83 you invoked the injunction that 'in order to be a current link the guru must be physically present'"

RESPONSE:

What our friends dive into after that is an account of a discussion they had with JS, with a batch of arguments about "current link." Conveniently, our friends are now able to argue against points they selectively remember from a conversation.

But we thought, from their opening words, that they were going to be responding to JS's paper. In that paper, "current link" isn't even mentioned. We don't blame them. If we had to argue against that paper, we'd look for a way out of it too. Anyway, here's what their argument is leading up to. . . .

Of course, we responded to the Maharaja's paper. But as an added bonus we also cleared up an issue brought up during a five hour meeting we held with the Maharaja, which partially led to him writing his paper in the first place- (we also have this section of the meeting on tape). We do not see why briefly mentioning pertinent points from that discussion is an example of looking for a 'way out', since over 95% of the reply does respond specifically to 'Where the *Ritvik* People are Wrong'.

QUOTE:

"As the current link, it is Srila Prabhupada we must approach for initiation. [emphasis in original] "Whether Srila Prabhupada is physically present or not is utterly irrelevant to the transcendental process of *diksa*, as he made amply clear in his books, in his lectures, in his conversations and letters - time and time and time again:

" 'Physical presence is immaterial', (S.P Lecture 19.1.67)" [etc.]

RESPONSE:

What this amounts to, clearly, is an attack on the idea of disciplic succession. According to the dictionary meaning, succession is "the coming of one person or thing after another in order, sequence, or in the course of events." It's this idea of "sequence" our friends have trouble with. Why should the succession go from Srila Prabhupada's spiritual master, to Srila Prabhupada, to his disciples, to his grand-disciples, and so on? Why not just directly from Srila Prabhupada to anyone, now or 9,000 years from now?

Thus, what are friends are arguing for is not "disciplic succession" but "disciplic cessation"--an end to the *parampara* system. Or--to be fair to them--a 9500 year period in which the succession is "put on hold." Followed, in their account, by the demise of ISKCON and, in short, the utter disappearance of Krishna consciousness.

You see, they're not arguing that the disciplic succession should end. Just that it should go on hold until spiritual life on earth becomes untenable and such niceties as "disciplic succession" no longer matter anyway. And that, you see, is what Srila Prabhupada "consistently taught up until 1977." Got it?

Srila Prabhupada continually taught, up until 1977, that we must only approach a bona fide spiritual master in the disciplic succession. He also gave examples of great *acaryas* in the *parampara* who were 'current' for long periods of time, and taught that physicality is not a consideration for transmitting spiritual knowledge. He never taught that the disciplic succession must involve the succession (from one link to the next) always taking place within a certain plain, unadorned time period.

Whether or not Maharaja accepts it, Srila Prabhupada did teach the above. There is nothing that Srila Prabhupada taught which is compromised by the p.s. *ritvik* system.

QUOTE:

"Let us now go to the centre of the controversy. The final instruction.

"Although you optimistically refer to the May 28th conversation as the 'final instruction'; on consulting our fully authorised BBT calendar we find that July actually follows on from May by two months."

COMMENT:

Here the authors are being not only cute but insulting. "You can't even tell time."

If people ten or more years my junior in the Krishna consciousness movement find pleasure in insulting me, I don't mind. I'm sure I deserve to be insulted. I'm also sure they can find ways to "prove" they're being Krishna conscious. Oh, well.

As vexing as it may be to have to explain what ought to be obvious--and as vexing as it may be to know in advance that for every bogus argument knocked down, two more will spring up in its place--here goes: I refer to the May 28th conversation as "the final instruction" for a simple reason: It's the last time in history that Srila Prabhupada is directly asked the relevant question we're discussing--How would initiations go on after his physical departure.

The question, placed before Srila Prabhupada by His Holiness Satsvarupa Maharaja, is as follows:

Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

That's precisely the question at hand. It is asked clearly and unambiguously. And that is the question to which Srila Prabhupada, on May 28, is undoubtedly responding. You would like to believe--and you would like us to believe--that the letter written on July 9th is also a direct answer to that same question.

But why do we have to believe this? Does the letter say it? No. Then who says it? You do. Fudge! The logic goes like this:

Thesis: The "final answer" to Satsvarupa Maharaja's question comes not on May 28 but on July 9.

Q: How do we know that this is the "final answer"?

A: Because July comes after May.

Q. But how do we know that the letter written in July is truly addressed to the question asked in May?

A. Because it is.

Maharaja is overlooking the obvious. Even the GBC themselves acknowledge that the beginning of the letter alludes back to the May conversation. It is clear from the very start of the letter that it has arisen out of a meeting which sounds remarkably similar to the one held on May 28th, and that it is an answer to the question at hand:

Recently when all of the GBC members were with His Divine Grace in Vrindavana, Srila Prabhupada indicated that soon he would appoint some of his senior disciples to act as "ritvik - representative of the acharya, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation. His Divine Grace has so far given a list of eleven disciples who will act in that capacity:

(July 9th, Letter)

Who says so? Maharaja's own GBC EC member, His Grace Ravindra Svarupa prabhu:

"Recently when all of the GBC members were with His Divine Grace in Vrindavana..." This refers back to the May 28th conversation, when Srila Prabhupada was asked specific questions by the GBC on how initiations would be conducted after his physical departure.

(*Srila Prabhupada's Guru System vs. Ritvikvada: The Facts Plain And Simple*, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Dasa)

We hope that Maharaja will accept this statement from his own authority in ISKCON. If he does not wish to accept the GBC's authority, he may wish to note the following:

The opening phrase from the May 28th tape does correspond directly with the opening phrases from the July 9th letter:

Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted. [...] Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acharyas. [...] Is that called *ritvik-acharya*? [...] *Ritvik, yes.*

(May 28th Conversation)

Please notice the correspondence between the underlined words above and the opening sentence of the July 9th letter given earlier:

May 28th	July 9th
'First and Second Initiations'	'First and Second Initiations'
'Conducted'	'Performing'
' <i>ritvik</i> '	' <i>ritvik</i> '
'I shall'	'He would'
'Recommend some of you'	'Appoint some of his senior disciples'
'After this is settled up'	'Soon'

If the July 9th letter does follow directly from the May conversation, then the letter must be an expression of what occurred in that earlier meeting, and be therefore 'particularly' applicable to when Srila Prabhupada is 'no longer with us'. It is quite absurd to assert that a letter which arises out of a conversation specifically concerning post-departure *diksa* arrangements, ends up only spelling out what is to be done pre-departure. Why mention in the letter a previous conversation (May 28) that deals 'particularly' with when Srila Prabhupada 'is no longer with us', when the same letter is supposed to only be applicable to before Srila Prabhupada's departure?

QUOTE:

"You say everyone accepts the July 9th order and the establishment of the *ritvik* system. In our experience most devotees have never read the July 9th letter before we give it to them, and are quite surprised when they do."

RESPONSE:

You are becoming tiresome. How many times am I going to have to deal with statements from you beginning with "You say" and ending with something I never said?

Here's what I actually said:

Now, let's move on to something else that everyone agrees on. Srila Prabhupada himself, in 1977, appointed eleven disciples to serve as *ritvik* gurus, or "officiating spiritual masters." He authorized these *ritviks* to decide which candidates to accept, and to chant on the candidates' beads and give the new disciples spiritual names. The *ritviks* were to do this on Srila Prabhupada's behalf, and the new disciples were to be not those of the *ritviks* but of Srila Prabhupada himself. On July 9, 1977, Srila Prabhupada signed a document that makes these facts unmistakably clear.

Do you see here--or anywhere else in my paper--"everyone accepts the July 9th order and the establishment of the *ritvik* system"? My point was not that everyone has read the July 9th letter, or that everyone accepts your posthumous *ritvik* guru system, but simply that just about everyone agrees that Srila Prabhupada appointed eleven *ritviks*. Yet again, you are arguing with your own straw man, not with me.

Again Maharaja needs to carefully read what we said. As before we will produce what we actually said, what Maharaja said, and let the readers decide for themselves if there is a reasonable correspondence between the two:

"You say everyone accepts the July 9th order and the establishment of the *ritvik* system."

Now, let's move on to something else that everyone agrees on.

Srila Prabhupada himself, in 1977, appointed eleven disciples to serve as *ritvik* gurus, or "officiating spiritual masters."(1) [...] On July 9, 1977, Srila Prabhupada signed a document that makes these facts unmistakably clear.(2)

("Where the *Ritvik* People Are Wrong")

Maharaja prefaces what we have labelled as (1) and (2) as being something 'everyone agrees on'. (1) is the '*ritvik* system'. (2) is the July 9th order.

Again we never enclosed what we alleged Maharaja said with speech marks, and thus it is clear we were paraphrasing. Let us see if we have changed the meaning or the understanding of what you said:

We say:

Maharaja says:

Everyone accepts
Establishment of *ritvik* system

The July 9th Order

Everyone agrees
Srila Prabhupada appointed 11 disciples to serve as *ritvik* gurus
On July 9th, 1977, Srila Prabhupada signed a document that makes these facts unmistakably clear

I hope we all agree so far

Thus we fail to see how us claiming the Maharaja agreed that everyone accepts both the July 9th instruction, and the establishment of the *ritvik* system, is in any sense a 'straw man' argument. We fully agree that the question of whether or not the system applies post-*samadhi* is another matter. However, we never implied that there was any acceptance of this point by anyone. Surely, the Maharaja would not think that we would try and pretend to everyone that he really agreed with post-*samadhi ritvik* all along. Thus once more the Maharaja makes a huge unjustified attack over some minor detail of paraphrasing, whilst avoiding anything pertinent to the issue at hand - namely the validity of the p.s. *ritvik* system.

QUOTE:

"[On May 28, after some "muddled questions about disciple relationships"] Srila Prabhupada then finishes by saying that there would be gurus if he orders them, and should he ever do so there would then be disciples of his disciples. Just see."

RESPONSE:

Notice how faithfully our friends have reported what Srila Prabhupada said. The transcription reads:

When I order, "You become guru," he becomes regular guru. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That's it. [or--an alternative transcription--"Just see."]

But in the hands of our friends, "when" becomes "if." And they have helpfully (that is, meddlesomely) added "should he ever do so."

In sum: They are putting words in Prabhupada's mouth. They do it to me, they do it to His Divine Grace. They do it and do it and do it. By the way, the "muddled questions" they speak of are such as this:

Tamal Krishna Maharaja: [T]hese *rtvik-acaryas*, they're officiating, giving *diksa*. . . . The people who they give *diksa* to, whose disciple are they?

A muddled question indeed! But if you can't accept Srila Prabhupada's answer, then of course you'd like to get rid of the question. Our friends then proceed further with their interpretation of the exchange on May 28th. No need to comment on that here. In a paper by Giridhari Swami, Umapati Swami, and Badrinarayana Prabhu, that interpretation has already been demolished. Only perhaps one more point, in passing: They again assail "your M.A.S.S. doctrine," as if they were attacking something my paper advocated. Again, clearly this is easier than addressing what the paper actually says.

Again Maharaja is purposefully pretending that we are trying to give a verbatim analysis of the conversation rather than just paraphrasing. When paraphrasing the issue is to see if the meaning has been corrupted. In this case we have equated the phrase:

'When I order' with **'If if he orders them, and should he ever do so'**

Do the two mean the same thing? The term **'when'** is used to express a condition that must be fulfilled. That condition is simply expressed by us in other words such as **'if'** and **'should he ever do so'**. These phrases imply the same thing. For the action 'when I order' can only be fulfilled if he gives the order, and 'should the order be given' then what Srila Prabhupada has stated will happen 'when' he gives the order - will happen.

Thus, there is no question of 'putting words in Srila Prabhupada's mouth' since we have never claimed that we were quoting verbatim. Maharaja needs to understand the basic difference between quoting verbatim and paraphrasing. The latter is a valid technique as long as the meaning is not changed. It was done frequently in our original paper since as we stated right at the opening of our paper:

Since we only received it a few days ago this has been a bit rushed, more something to be going along with, rather than definitive.

('Reply To Jayadvaita Maharaja')

This is why we paraphrased, which is not a crime as long as the meaning is kept intact, which we have demonstrated it was.

We also said in our reply. Right before the part quoted earlier:

We shall be addressing the issues you raise in far more detail in a forthcoming paper, to be submitted as a discussion document to the GBC.

(‘Reply To Jayadvaita Maharaja’)

This turned out to be ‘The Final Order’ where we do quote relevant GBC views and the May 28th tape verbatim.

Maharaja also pretends that the following exchange is not muddled:

Tamal Krishna Maharaja: No, he is asking [T]hese *ritvik-acaryas*, they’re officiating, giving *diksa*. . . . The people who they give *diksa* to, whose disciple are they?

We say ‘pretend’ for the following reasons:

- 1) Maharaja conveniently left out the words in red. This is the point where H.H. Tamal Krishna Maharaja interrupted. H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja missed out the words ‘No. He is asking’. Clearly H.H. Tamal Krishna Maharaja thought there was confusion and the words missed out show that H.H. Tamal Krishna Maharaja was asking the question to clear up a perceived misunderstanding that had just taken place.
- 2) In 1993 in South London, England, H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja gave a class on *ritvik* where he himself stated that the May 28th conversation becomes ‘mergy in the middle’!
- 3) Both Ravindra Svarupa prabhu and Hari Sauri prabhu, in authorised GBC papers, have admitted that the tape has sections, which are unclear. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu’s contribution was highly significant since it was written in the paper that actually brought down the whole zonal *acarya* system:

“Many Devotees have spent many hard hours studying this sometimes frustrating and baffling conversation. The parties at times seem at cross-purposes, and pronouns without clear referent abound”

(‘Under My Order, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, 1985)

After berating us for not respecting our superiors, we are sure the Maharaja will also be keen to humbly respect his authority in ISKCON.

As for Maharaja endorsing the GBC paper ‘Disciple of My Disciple’, he seems oblivious to the fact that it contradicts his own explanation of what Srila Prabhupada did on May 28th:

“The present paper will show that on May 28th, 1977, Srila Prabhupada ordered his disciples to become initiating spiritual masters.”

“In the present conversation, Srila Prabhupada does not refer to proxy initiations at all, not even in connection with the word ‘ritvik.’”

(‘Disciple of My Disciple’, Pages 2 and 5)

Here the paper clearly states that Gurus were set up for the future, but not *ritviks* acting for the present. Maharaja believes the opposite happened:

“Srila Prabhupada did not appoint anyone to be guru for the future, he appointed *ritviks* to continue in his presence.”

(His Holiness Jayadvaita Maharaja, San Diego Debate, 1990)

We have shown how Maharaja has failed to properly read both the paper he is supposed to be replying to, as well as his own paper that he is supposedly defending. To this we would add that he should also read papers that he is now recommending as having given an accurate analysis of the May 28th conversation.

We have already addressed Maharaja’s connection with the M.A.S.S. system (see opening point).

QUOTE:

“The final order” Moving on to the actual ‘final order’,”

RESPONSE:

Again: Why is this ‘the final order’ as to initiation after Srila Prabhupada’s departure? Because Krishna Kant and Yaduraja say it is, that’s why. It is “the final order” merely by their fiat. Phooey!

The paper continues with some brief sophistical arguments not worth talking about. Then. . .

We explain clearly WHY it is the ‘final order’ on initiation - because it was:

- a) An order

b) It was on initiation

c) It was the final communication on this subject sent to the society.

QUOTE:

"From where do you derive the notion that Srila Prabhupada wanted the system to stop at his departure?" [emphasis in original]

RESPONSE:

That's what my paper was about. But while busy jousting with straw men, you seem to have missed it. How much time am I supposed to waste going around in circles with you? For the answer to your question, read my paper again.

Now we have come to the real crux of the issue, and once more Maharaja dodges it completely. He would much rather point out how our paraphrasing differs from direct quoting, or talk about different flavours of ice cream, than where he ever got the idea the *ritvik* system was meant to stop at Srila Prabhupada's departure.

The suggestion that to get the answer to the question we should read his paper again is breathtaking, to say the least. If his original paper contains this sort of explicit proof then why not just have faith in it. Why did his holiness Giridhari Maharaja ask for a new paper to be written? Why did the Maharaja feel the need to bale out his previous writing if he had already given irrefutable proof that the system was meant to stop at departure? Why not just direct us to read his original paper from the beginning and leave it at that?

QUOTE:

"[T]he most important issue, the one which Satsvarupa Goswami and all the GBC had specifically asked him about, i.e the process of initiation for after his departure and on for ten thousand years, he remained utterly silent on. No written instructions to his temple presidents, no orders to the GBC, no signed letter. The absurdity of this proposition beggars belief."

RESPONSE:

Srila Prabhupada speaks to a delegation of his GBC men, and because he doesn't put his words into writing, according to you he is "utterly silent." The absurdity of this proposition beggars belief.

As is clear, we made the above comment in a certain context - we were referring specifically to written instructions. To issue a clear written directive to the whole movement for something that is supposedly only applicable for 4 months, and at the same time issue no written instruction for what is applicable for up to 10,000 years, is just plain unbelievable. To only supposedly speak a few words in a conversation lasting seconds, which the GBC have previously admitted is confused, is in contrast with a signed directive sent all over the world- akin to silence. We must remember that for even minor matters Srila Prabhupada would insist on putting things in writing.

QUOTE:

"If Srila Prabhupada's teachings on how to run the *parampara* in his absence were as crystalline clear as you imply they were, for an entire decade, so clear he did not even need to issue a specific directive to the movement on the matter, why on earth did the GBC send a special delegation to his bedside in the first place?"

RESPONSE:

Again, you are badly missing the point. My paper is not about "how to run the *parampara*." It's about the fact that there's supposed to be a *parampara*. Which--ok, ok--our friends accept. There's supposed to be a *parampara*, a disciplic succession--just there aren't supposed to be any successors. More precisely: For the next 9,500 years, no successors. After that, no nothing.

Just as Prabhupada taught us, right?

Srila Prabhupada never taught that there are arbitrary time restrictions for how long a member of the disciplic succession can remain current. Yes Srila Prabhupada did teach about disciplic succession, but Srila Prabhupada is the current successor. The issue is about how long before there has to be another one. We feel no compulsion to speculate about arbitrary time periods when we have clear instructions to be going on with from the current link.

QUOTE:

"The only examples you can offer of Srila Prabhupada ever mentioning his disciples initiating are extracted from letters to ambitious deviant devotees like Tusta Krishna."

RESPONSE:

Well, I suppose I could offer more examples. But what would be the use? Whatever words from Srila Prabhupada I might offer, you can simply wave them away, as you do here, in this case by a character attack on Tusta Krishna.

If I were trying to defend your argument, and if I were up against such a clear, unequivocal, unambiguous statement as we find in Srila Prabhupada's letter to Tusta Krishna, I suppose I'd be desperate to get rid of it too. You can speculate on Srila Prabhupada's motives. You can try to trivialize Srila Prabhupada's letter by disparaging its recipient. But you can't get rid of it. In fact, here it is again, this time in its entirety.

[Letter follows]

Of course we do not try and get 'rid of it'. It is Maharaja who tries to ignore and get 'rid of' what we actually say about the letter. Here are the points again, with a few more added:

1. The letter was sent privately to one person, and not discovered by the movement until 10 years later and even then only because of the unauthorised activities of a 'ritvik'. Thus what relevance does it have to terminating the July 9th letter in 1977, the issue at hand?
2. The letter was an instruction directed at its recipient. Thus, how is it also applicable as specific authorisation for anyone else in ISKCON?
3. The letter speaks of the principle that the departure of the Guru is the time that succession can take place. How is the instruction that something can happen the same as authorising that it must? e.g. one can drive a car once one is 17 years old (in the UK). But separate qualification and then authorisation is also required. In other words the departure of the Guru is a general hurdle that must be crossed before the disciple can take up the role of *diksa* guru. But it is not automatic. Qualification and authorisation must also be there.
4. If Maharaja believes that Tusta Krishna Maharaja was himself authorised by this letter, it still does not affect the running of ISKCON. He left the movement soon after he received the letter, and is not in any case qualified even now due to his association with Siddha Svarupa, whose philosophy is not in line with Srila Prabhupada's.
5. Also why was this supposed authorisation letter only ever issued to someone who was probably one of the least qualified to receive it, as we have demonstrated from all the other letters Srila Prabhupada sent him.

Thus we never got 'rid of the letter'. We merely stated that it did not constitute authorisation for the *ritviks* or general devotees in ISKCON to initiate their own disciples. The above are the reasons why. The reasons that Maharaja would no doubt rather 'get rid of' than answer.

Of course, we're supposed to believe that this letter is just a sop for a deviant. The rest of us can blithely disregard it, because--how obvious!--it wasn't published to the world. And what Srila Prabhupada told Tusta Krishna about making disciples was of course something the rest of us had never heard about. As if we'd never read the first verse of *Upadesa-mrta*:

vaco vegam manasah krodha-vagam

jihva-vegam udaropastha-vegam

etan vegan yo visaheta dhirah

sarvam apimam prthivim sa sisyat

A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world. So long as he does it as a *rtvik*, right?

I'm sure there's a Krishna Kant purport to that verse. But here's Srila Prabhupada speaking--secretly? to ambitious deviants?--in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class in Sridham Mayapur (March 6, 1976), 10 days before Gaura Purnima:

[P]eople in general, they cannot understand, but those who are preaching, they must be very sincere, the same way. Rupa raghunatha pade, haibe akuti. They should read the literatures, the instruction, just like Upadesamrta, The Nectar of Instruction. We should follow, strictly follow. Then *prthivim sa sisyat*. Then you'll be able to preach and make disciples all over the world. This is the injunction. It really is.

The quotes merely speak of the qualification required to make disciples. These injunctions have always been there. But to act as *diksa* guru, Srila Prabhupada states that specifically the predecessor *acarya* must also authorise it:

One should take initiation from a bona fide spiritual master coming in the disciplic succession, who is authorized by his predecessor spiritual master. This is called *diksa-vidhana*.

(S:B: 4:8:54)

This verse would be completely redundant if one simply needed to follow injunctions that already existed before (in ISKCON's

case) the predecessor spiritual master even existed. Srila Prabhupada also repeats this principle in response to a question regarding his own status:

A guru can become guru when he's ordered by his guru. That's all. Otherwise nobody can become guru. [...] You should know that one can become guru when he is ordered by his guru, this much.

(B.G. Lecture, 28/10/75)

WINDING UP:

I'm getting tired of this. I've been through ten pages of your piece, full of specious arguments, and ten pages are yet to go, full of arguments equally crummy. Am I supposed to take it all seriously? Your paper doesn't deserve it. Anyone who hasn't figured out by now that your paper and its theories aren't worth two turds in hell would be unlikely to get the message even if I were to write a book as long as the Mahabharata, as tight as the Vedanta-sutra, and with footnotes as numerous as the verses in all the Vedas.

Oh, yes. I can hear it already: "Jayadvaita Swami chickened out. Our arguments were so powerful there was nothing he could say." Fine. You can spend the next 9500 years preaching to the world that Srila Prabhupada has frozen the disciplic line, from now till the year 11,500, by little more than one "henceforward" and three words about property trustees in his will. Meanwhile, I'm getting on with my work.

As we have shown, Maharaja has yet to make any solid points relating to the issue at hand. Even where he correctly pointed out our mistake in using the word 'regular' instead of 'plain', the validity of our argument was not affected in the slightest. Neither has Maharaja been 'through ten pages'. He has simply picked out a small fraction of these ten pages, and even then only tackled perceived faults that have no relevance to the issue at hand.

Maharaja has accepted the principal that *acaryas* can remain 'current' for long periods of time (the example of Vyasadeva etc.) yet curiously he does not consider these personalities as having 'frozen the disciplic line'. No, he reserves that objection for if Srila Prabhupada might stay current, and in that way prevent his disciples from occupying the post of initiating guru. He may argue that in the other cases the *acaryas* were physically embodied, but that is a separate matter. There are two issues here:

1. Does the *acarya* need to be physically embodied in order to remain 'current' in the disciplic succession?
2. Can an *acarya* remain 'current' for long periods of time?

Maharaja has already accepted that the answer to question 2 is YES. If the answer to question 1) is NO, then the issue of time becomes irrelevant by virtue of the answer given to question 2. If the answer to question 1) is YES, then the issue of time is also irrelevant since the *acarya* would have to cease being 'current' immediately he left his body. In order to defeat the *ritvik* idea Maharaja would need to find the following instructions in Srila Prabhupada's teachings:

a) That the *acarya* can only be current if 'physically embodied';

OR

b) If the *acarya* is not physically embodied, he can remain 'current' only for small periods of time, as dictated by the whim of the Maharaja.

We challenge Maharaja or anyone else to find these instructions in Srila Prabhupada's teachings.

Just one more thing. . .

QUOTE:

"THERE IS NO REGULAR VANILLA. . . . [capitals in original]

"In summary, you insist on the following:

"a) The *ritvik* system must stop. &

b) It must stop on Srila Prabhupada's departure.

"Neither statement a) or b) appears in the July 9th letter. They are purely your own invention. An invention inspired by the 'regular vanilla *parampara* system', which, as we have clearly shown is itself another fiction created from your own imagination, with no basis in reality."

RESPONSE:

For some reason, the July 9th letter is now supposed to be the essence of everything, and nothing can be said without reference to it. Nonsense cannot be called nonsense unless Srila Prabhupada explicitly said it was nonsense in a letter on July 9, 1977. A curious restriction on evidence.

We never say what Maharaja has claimed above. We have simply stated a fact. That neither statement a) or b) appear in the July 9th letter. If Maharaja has some other place where a) and b) do appear in Srila Prabhupada's institutional directives or books, we would also consider that as evidence. Unfortunately Maharaja's papers do not attempt to address the issue of evidence for statement a) and b), thus their location is not even an issue. We have never claimed that statements a) and b) cannot be found from another document besides the July 9th letter. We have simply pointed out that they do not appear in the July 9th letter. In fact they do not appear anywhere else either, and that is why we call these statements an invention. We invite the Maharaja to prove us wrong.

Anyway:

For anyone who might think that earlier you were merely being cute, not insulting, this time the insult should be clear. I am supposed to be Srila Prabhupada's disciple, a preacher of his words, yet what I present as his plain teachings, you dismiss as a fiction, an offspring of my imagination. As I mentioned before, I'm sure I deserve to be insulted. But Srila Prabhupada's teachings do not.

And so I am adding as an appendix to this paper my supposedly fictional work, this time with footnotes. However much you say you honor Srila Prabhupada, I don't believe you should be allowed to walk up and punch his teachings in the face.

The quotes you offer in the appendix support a part of your paper we did not disagree with. Everyone accepts the principle of disciplic succession, and that one must approach the current link. We only disagree with your interpretation that this constitutes a 'plain vanilla' version of the *parampara*, and that therefore the p.s. *ritvik* system must be bogus. That is the fiction. Your interpretation. None of the quotes in the appendix mention plain vanilla, nor do they contradict the *ritvik* proposition. So what point are you trying to make? We apologise again for any offence; we fully acknowledge Maharaja's seniority and dedication to Srila Prabhupada's movement. We also respect his extensive knowledge of Srila Prabhupada's teachings, far in excess of our own. It is only on this one issue that there seem to be a few discrepancies. Unfortunately these discrepancies have had serious ramifications for thousands of 'second generation' disciples, and will have serious effects long into the future if something is not done about it. It is for this reason only that we speak so strongly, not out of disrespect.

Conclusion

1. Maharaja has not answered any point from our original paper that related to the validity of the *ritvik* issue, and more importantly the evidence for a) and b) in the second to last quoted section above - the key points. Thus however right Maharaja could have been on everything else he says, he still could not possibly have achieved his main objective. That which caused Giridhari Maharaja to request a new paper in the first place: to dissuade those who were convinced of the *ritvik* argument.
2. As it happens, even on the irrelevant and trivial points Maharaja has tried to concentrate on, he has still not been able to demonstrate that we were incorrect. In fact, the only point he has been able to make with any measure of validity, is that we should have used the word 'plain' rather than 'regular'. But even then the consequence of this oversight is zero since it does not alter in the slightest any of the conclusions we reached.

Please forgive any offence, all glories to Srila Prabhupada.

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