

ISKCON IN THE 1970s

Diaries

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

GN Press, Inc.

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**ISKCON in the 1970s
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Contents

Introduction	i
1 "Are You Convinced?" April 22–July 25, 1972	1
2 "We Have Only Done 1% of Our Work" June 18–July 24, 1973	20
3 "Kṛṣṇa is Everywhere" January 1–August 30, 1974	34
4 "Adventures in Preaching" September 27, 1974–April 27, 1975	69
5 "Dear Lord, Please Give Me the Strength to Serve You" May 21–August 1975	101
6 College Preaching September 1, 1975–February 4, 1976	125
7 "Why This Party Feeling?" February 5–March 23, 1976	150
8 Chalk Dust Preacher March 26–September 3, 1976	167
9 Preaching and Writing for Purification September 1976–January 20, 1977	197
10 "If You Want to Know My Secret . . ." January–February 1977	228
11 "We Have to Publish Our Own Way and Defy" March 15–May 23, 1977	261
12 "My Dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, If You Desire, Please Cure Śrīla Prabhupāda" May–August 16, 1977	279
13 "These Are My Last Days" August 17–November 1977	300

14	"To Remember Him Eases the Pain"	336
	November 17–29, 1977	
15	"Our Master Said to Preach!"	353
	December 1–29, 1977	
16	"Cooperate and Serve in ISKCON"	379
	January 7–March 30, 1978	
17	"I Am Made of His Mercy Only"	405
	April 1–May 20, 1978	
18	"If I Think I Am a Vaiṣṇava . . ."	426
	May 22–July 28, 1978	
19	Guru and Biographer	451
	August 1–October 23, 1978	
20	"The Heat is On"	470
	October 30, 1978–January 3, 1979	
21	"Praying to Praise Prabhupāda"	488
	January 19–March 15, 1979	
22	"Going Down into the Ocean of Śrīla Prabhupāda"	508
	March–August 25, 1979	
23	Searching for Śrīla Prabhupāda in	536
	Vṛndāvana September 14–October 3, 1979	
24	Rapt in This Meditation of Prabhupāda	563
	October 5–December 29, 1979	
	Glossary	583

Introduction

This volume was selected from the handwritten journals I kept intermittently during the 1970s. I would like to explain why the diary is being published and offered to those interested in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

From the personal or literary point of view, these 1970s diaries are genuine. By that I mean that they were written without consideration of the expectations or tastes of editors or readers. They were written as a means of self-expression, and to help myself cope. However, it often transpires that such private and unguarded writing is of interest to readers other than the diarist himself. In this respect, Henry Thoreau expresses how the most common of recorded events can transform with time into the rarest of treasures:

Of all strange and unaccountable things, this journalizing is the strangest. It will allow nothing to be predicted of it; its good is not good, nor its bad bad. If I make a huge effort to expose my innermost and richest wares to light, my counter seems cluttered with the meanest homemade stuffs; but after months or years I may discover the wealth of India, and whatever rarity is brought overland from Cathay, in that confused heap, and what perhaps seemed a festoon of dried apple or pumpkin will prove a string of Brazilian diamonds, or pearls from Coromandel.¹

However, in order to qualify as valuable literature, writing must be more than personally honest. Even if a book has all the ornaments of artistic grace and power, and it evokes human depth and contains sharp observations of nature, if it lacks God consciousness it will not have ultimate truth. As stated in the *Bhāgavatam*, no one should be a guru or a teacher—or a writer—unless he can free his subordinates from death. This is certainly an elevated precept, but one which is strictly required by the standards of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

¹ *The Heart of Thoreau's Journals*, edited by Odell Shepard, pp. 18–19; Coromandel: An old name, no longer used for the eastern coast of India, thought to be rich in pearls.

A justification for publishing these diaries is that they were written by a limited and faulty practicing devotee—but one who was in regular contact with His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. During all the years that the diary was being kept, Prabhupāda was making history in his Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Diaries have often been used as reference tools in the compilation of great literature. The diaries kept by Svarūpa Dāmodara and Murāri Gupta, two associates of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, became the basis of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's great biography of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In one *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* purport, Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī as saying that it was a shame there were not more devotees' diaries available from that time.² Similarly, the many diaries and memoirs kept by the devotees and disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda served as an invaluable source of information in the production of the *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*. The present volume was taken from my own diaries kept during the lifetime of His Divine Grace.

I lament now that I did not have the presence of mind to keep a more detailed account of Prabhupāda's activities during the time I spent with him. If I could relive that time, I would try to stay as near to him as possible and record everything he said or did. Fortunately, many of his conversations have been captured and are now being published; we are not suffering from a dearth of recorded material spoken by His Divine Grace. I would like to make it clear, however, that the diaries in this present volume were written out of a need to survive; thus their main subject is the diarist himself. They are in no way intended as a studied attempt to make a portrait of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

What they do give of value is a witness's account of participation in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement as it grew during the 1970s. Because the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is predicted to spread all over the world and have such a

² Cc. Antya 14.8

tremendous influence on society, authentic accounts of those early and crucial periods in ISKCON, both before and after Prabhupāda's stay, are of great historical significance to scholars and devotees alike. The diaries also give many descriptions of direct association with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance in 1977, we were no longer able to keep a diary of Prabhupāda's daily activities in the same way as before. Reflecting on Prabhupāda's unique stature in ISKCON and our reliance on him, it should not be difficult to fathom the depth of the struggle faced by the devotees in those years directly following his disappearance. The chronicling of the post-1977 period is crucial, however, for understanding the continuation of Prabhupāda's movement, especially to the degree that it accurately reflects the mood of the movement and the devotees.

ISKCON in the 1970s is one disciple's viewpoint of the growth of an international preaching movement during a particularly significant decade of its history. Aside from the historical perspective, the subject matter, *bhakti-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is timeless in value. This is a diary of how that process works when attempted by a conditioned soul under the guidance of a self-realized master. It is to be noted that the presence and orders of such a self-realized soul, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, permeate the book.

The production of the book began by typing up a massive amount of material—seventeen diaries covering the period from 1972 to the end of 1979. Approximately 30–40% of this material was used in the final publication. We omitted notes taken from classes I was preparing to give and entries that were repetitious or too sketchy, or those that strayed too much from central themes of the book.

Of special importance were any entries in which Prabhupāda personally appeared, or in which his instructions or teachings were given. Also kept were events that offered historical information or entries that in some way linked the reader to Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupāda.

Finally, each chapter was given its own introduction, setting the mood for the reader by enlarging on what was happening within the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement at that time, and especially with myself.

In closing, the author begs the indulgence of the reader in understanding the limits of the book due to the limits of the writer. It is to be hoped, however, that the overwhelming importance of another genuine book about Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be of value, and that the reader will be stimulated to hear fresh Prabhupāda-līlā, some of which has never before been published in any other book or memoir.

“Are You Convinced?” April 27–July 25, 1972

The time span of this chapter is from the month before I was awarded *sannyāsa* until a month afterward. I did not keep regular journals previous to this time, but an account of my first few years in ISKCON is detailed in the book, *With Śrīla Prabhupāda in the Early Days (1966–68): My Letters from Śrīla Prabhupāda*.

By accepting *sannyāsa*, I knew I was making a major change in my life. I was leaving behind for good not only my life previous to joining the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, but also the life I presently had within ISKCON as a householder and manager of the Dallas *gurukula*. Accepting *sannyāsa* meant it was my duty to become a preacher, and this inspired me to set down the notes recorded here.

In 1972, I had gone to Dallas to assist in starting the *gurukula*. While there as headmaster, I heard that Śrīla Prabhupāda thought his GBC secretaries (of which I was one) were sitting behind their desks too much and not preaching. He was inviting us to take *sannyāsa* to disentangle us from management so that we could travel and preach. I wrote to Śrīla Prabhupāda asking permission to be included, and he said that I should go to Los Angeles where he would soon be giving *sannyāsa* initiations.

Because of my duties, I already had been separated from my wife (who was living in New York and painting for the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust Art Department) for over a year. I wrote her a note telling her that Prabhupāda had accepted me for *sannyāsa*, and I went to Los Angeles.

This first chapter is somewhat atypical of the rest of the book, as it contains mostly sections of notes from lectures and talks Śrīla Prabhupāda gave at this time, as well as extracts from letters he wrote. I took down notes from his lectures in order to cultivate an increase in surrender, renunciation, and preaching as quickly as possible. I could see that this was required for one in the *sannyāsa* order. Although Śrīla Prabhupāda's words are inspiring, they may be demanding reading for some. Therefore, I would suggest to the reader who is looking for a more fast-paced, standard-type journal, that he or she skip ahead to Chapter Two. However, there are many interesting things in this brief chapter, and if one has the patience to read Śrīla Prabhupāda's lessons here, they are actually the most valuable instructions of all.

One particular entry seems to warrant some background. In Los Angeles, shortly before the *sannyāsa* initiation, a GBC meeting was held to reapportion the preaching zones. This meeting (which is described in the entry titled, "GBC Meeting—Verbatim Notes from Śrīla Prabhupāda") was one of the heaviest meetings I—and others who were present—had ever had with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Almost all of us present were GBC members. He challenged us by asking, "Do you believe that Kṛṣṇa is God?" He said he believed, and believed on fact, but did we? What he was really asking was, "Are you actually ready to follow me and be strong preachers on behalf of Kṛṣṇa?" It was almost as if he expected us to answer him then and there. No one did. The room was quiet—but tense. He drove us inside ourselves to ask, "Do I believe Kṛṣṇa is God?" I felt my shortcomings. I knew my convictions were untested and theoretical.

I very much appreciated Prabhupāda's own statements of conviction and that he was giving us a glimpse into his own deep Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It was similar to a war-time general looking over his newly commissioned officers, seeing their inexperience and weakness, and asking them, "Are you men ready for combat?" I consulted with other devotees afterwards and they said they had been as uncomfortable as I was.

Also, in this entry, Śrīla Prabhupāda gives a definition of what it means to be a GBC member. This is useful information because it is still sometimes debated. At this time, he emphasized that a GBC member should be a preacher and a chanter of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, at least sixteen rounds daily.

* * *

April 27, 1972

Dallas

The devotee's desire is to execute the Lord's mission. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person. Any emotion can be purified if it is felt in relation to the Supreme Person. For instance, hankering. Hankering in material life, in forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa, is the cause for bondage, misery, but if I can hanker after my sweet, eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, and if in that mood I chant the holy names, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare—then that is the perfection of existence and I will feel ecstatic bliss of love of God, just as the *gopīs* did. Any emotion, when dovetailed in transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, is pure, righteous, and eternal.

Theory and realization—there is a world of difference. What have I realized? What do I know of spiritual life? It can only be as much as I have practiced. Where can I get this engagement? Only from the self-realized pure devotee spiritual master. Go to him. Serve him. He will teach me how to love God.

May 25, 1972

Los Angeles morning walk notes

Śrīla Prabhupada: Our movement in India is pushing on despite so many enemies. The first enemies are my Godbrothers, then the government, then the *brahmana* class. Kṛṣṇa had so many enemy demons. He proved Himself by killing them. We have to prove ourselves and kill the enemies, but we kill by

propaganda, not by assassination. In Bombay they are distributing *prasada* daily for two hundred people, and in Mayapur, two hundred people weekly.

On gurukula:

Let the children play at *krsna-lila*. They can play that one is a cowherd boy and some are cows. Let them eat their food without their hands, off the ground, with their mouths. They'll like it. Let them play like that for an hour and then fifteen minutes for ABC. So it is not *monotonous*.

In the garden:

The *gopis*' love for Krsna was beyond the regulative principles. The last word in regulative principle is to always think of Krsna; they could never forget Krsna. Therefore, no need of regulative principle. Like the devotee who prays, "Farewell my bathing," etc. "I will just sit and think of Govinda." But don't imitate.

Krsna never leaves Vrndavana.

On Life Membership:

For someone in this country, a thousand dollars is not much. Any gentleman can afford a thousand dollars.

GBC meeting

Verbatim notes from Srila Prabhupada

GBC means tour extensively, not sit in one place and pass resolutions. They must be active. They must act like me (an old man traveling everywhere). Travel extensively.

Extensive touring means expanding the mission. (Karanadhara has an extensive field locally in L.A.) Simply touring is not required. Do something substantial to increase the society's interests. One must take multi-responsibilities. We

must expand. The framework of expansion has been done by me. Just like a skyscraper building. So far the framework, I have done it with your help. It is an important movement. It is not a farce. They are kept in darkness about God and we are delivering God. That must be pushed. What is your opinion? They say there is no God, we say here is God. What do you think? We have to push on with conviction. God is a person. We give you His name and address. If you have got any doubt whether Krsna is God, then you cannot do it. . . . If you are not convinced, how you can convince others? Whether you are all convinced on this point (that Krsna is God). What is your opinion? So far I am concerned—I am convinced and therefore I am pushing on. It is a fact I am pushing on because I am pushing on on fact, not fiction. That much I am personally convinced. Whenever someone says, "You believe," I say, "No, I don't 'believe'—it is fact." It is not a question of believe or not believe. God is there. God must be there. Your believing or not believing doesn't matter. People are in misconception. God theories: God is dead, God is impersonal, everyone is God. But it is not theory. We have got positive presentation. With that conviction you have to push on so you have to be prepared in that way. Opposing elements you have to face. By your arguments, by your knowledge. This is required. At least we must have faith in that way. Knowledge comes from Brahma. He said, to Krsna: "Yes, You are God. You appear to be a child but You are God." Brahma is giving support. If we follow Brahma.

*isvarah paramah krsna/ sac-cid-ananda-vigraha
anadir adir govindah/ sarva-karana-karanam*

—Bs., text 1

Vedanta-sutra confirms that He is the source of everything. You must spread your conviction by your literature, argument, preaching, facing opposing elements. Our advancement means the more we meet opposing elements.

The local president and treasurer (of the temple) will manage. The GBC can supervise that things are going on. The first management is that each and every member is chanting sixteen rounds and following the regulations. Otherwise,

where is our spiritual strength? Haridasa Thakura, such an exalted personality, so advanced in his numerical chanting (he never stopped). Therefore he was given *nama-acarya*. Even at the time of his death. Three hundred thousand names daily. He is an example. Sixteen rounds is not a very large number. The lowest in India is twenty. See that the members are chanting. *Then* you do other things.

Otherwise, there will be material desires. *Bhakti* is so pure that it has nothing to do with fruitive or speculative or mystic results. The *gopis* and *gopas* had nothing to do with this nonsense. They were simple boys and girls, but their position is exalted. Kṛṣṇa is everything for them.

The devotees' love for Kṛṣṇa is enormous but not sentimental. If anyone wants to talk with him, he is prepared, "Yes, come on"—that is *uttama-adhikari*.

May 27

Initiation into the *sannyasa* order

Appearance day of Nṛsimhadeva

*etam sa asthaya paratma-nistham
adhyasitam purvatamair maharsibhih
aham tarisyami duranta-param
tamo mukundanghri-nisevayaiva*

I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of darkness of ignorance simply by taking shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Mukunda, who gives all kinds of liberations and was worshiped by many great previous acaryas.

—Bhag. 11.23.57

Srila Prabhupada said there would be adverse circumstances presented by the atheists, but we will get Lord Nṛsimhadeva's protection.

He said that we who are taking *sannyasa* are in our "prime youth" and have ample opportunity to do much more than he did. He said he took *sannyasa* at the fag end of his life, but a little is better than nothing.

He said there were two restrictions in *sannyasa* life. One is that as a preacher, one will meet poor men and rich men, and when meeting a rich man and seeing his opulent wealth, we must not think, "Oh, I have given up everything but I wish I could enjoy these things." The other restriction is that when we see a beautiful woman, we must not think, "I had a beautiful wife and now this beautiful woman—if I could enjoy her." In other words *do not have any regrets about taking sannyasa*. Aside from these two restrictions, there are no others.

Taking *sannyasa* provides special privileges for preaching. That is our only business.

He told me to take my present spiritual name, with "dasa," and add Goswami. Then he asked me my name. I said, "Satsvarupa dasa Goswami." He handed the *danda* stick to me at the ceremony. At the end of the ceremony, while getting off the *vyasasana*, he said, finally, "Now go and preach."

He said he was bold in coming to the U.S. We have to be like that, bold. Even getting off the boat in the U.S. he was thinking, "Where will I stay? But Kṛṣṇa protected me in so many ways." He said he was confident because he had 200 sets of three-volume *Bhagavatams*.

Sannyasa means to travel. He told about a class of *sannyasa* who never stand still. Even if they stand to talk with you, they move back and forth.

Notes on being a Goswami from Srila Prabhupada's taped lecture on Bg. 6.26

This Goswami title (Swami and Goswami are the same thing)—if one takes this title but can't control the senses, he is cheating. Sanatana and Rupa Goswamis weren't Goswamis as ministers in government, but after they met Lord Caitanya.

There are six pushing impetuses. It is like when you have to go the toilet room—you have to answer. There are six pushing agents that have to be controlled:

(1) Talking.

(2) Anger—sometimes in uncontrolled anger one will kill even his own men.

(3) Mind—the mind dictates, “You must go at once”—and yes, immediately you go. Has to be controlled. (Yogis think there is only control of mind, but there are all these impetuses.)

(4) Tongue—tongue dictates, “I want to taste some sweet balls, which I like very much”—this has to be controlled.

(5) Belly—the belly is already filled up, still I want to fill it up more.

(6) Genitals—and when there is pushing of the tongue and belly, the next underneath is the genital—I require sex. If I eat too much, talk too much, etc., then I cannot check the genitals.

One who has control over all these pushing machines and can remain steady (*dhira*)—he can make disciples. Everything depends on training—the whole yoga system means training. *You are going to solve the problems of life and you want it very cheaply? No.*

If you want the nicest thing, then you have to pay for it. By the grace of Lord Caitanya the payment has been made easy: chant Hare Krsna. Everything becomes easy. All this controlling system becomes very easy. Chanting Hare Krsna brings all the perfection of self-realization. That is a fact. In this age when people are so fallen, nothing else is possible. It is practical and easy—one can realize one's self. You can experience how you are making progress just as when you eat, your hunger is satisfied.

Remember *The Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, page 29, “Only the bare necessities of the body should be accepted and putting the bodily necessities second, one should primarily cultivate Krsna consciousness by chanting the holy name of God.”

The preacher is the dearmost devotee of the Lord.

May 28

Notes from Sunday morning lecture

*akamah sarva-kamo va
moksa-kama udara-dhih
tivrēna bhakti-yogena
yajeta purusam param*

A person who has broader intelligence, who may be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead.

—Bhag. 2.3.10

From the purport: no material desire, *akamah*. We have no function but the natural one of serving the Supreme Being, as parts of the body serve the whole.

Srila Prabhupada:

Renounced order means to take leave of material activities, but performing *yajna*, giving in charity, and austerity are never to be given up in any stage of life (Bg. Chap. 18). *San̄kirtana-yajna* is for this age. This means congregational chanting of the holy name.

Saintly persons means they are dedicated to public welfare (no exploiters, cheaters). Just like the Six Gosvamis. They were stalwarts in the society. They took a simple dress, simple way of life for the welfare of humanity. A Vaisnava doesn't stop his activity; he changes it. For example, businessmen are touring all over the world and so are we. They travel to get orders for business; we travel to push on Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Nowadays a governor won't meet with a saintly person. "We are occupied." Ruler—if you purify the central man, the whole population will be purified.

Purify body by rising early, take bath, *gayatri*, Deities, duty. The more the body becomes pure, eating, sleeping, mating, and

defending should be decreased. The sooner we finish our business the better—we are *de*-creasing our life every day. Become detached from matter.

Our only request is that everyone should seriously take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Take it up and life will be successful. It is up to us to spread this knowledge. Don't be stagnant. Go and preach.

Bhagavata is religion in that it comes out of the law of God. It is combined philosophy and religion. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* says to watch out for all cheating religion and supports surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

War with *maya*? No, we are not disturbed by *maya*, so where is the fight? Those who are being kicked are at war. Criminals have fights with the police, but we do not have to fight.

We need Kṛṣṇa consciousness now. If the president is Kṛṣṇa conscious, then it is God's will. Educate American public. Then it will be God's favored nation. (Otherwise . . .)

They are saying there is no God. We are saying, "Here is God." Here is gospel truth, not ordinary literature. Preach cautiously so it will not be contradictory.

Our seriousness will be proved when our books are profusely distributed to scholars and introduced to schools and colleges. We have to take great responsibility. Whatever they have in civilization without God—all zero.

In *Bhagavatam* class, Srila Prabhupada discussed two words, *akamah* and *sarva-kamah*. *Akamah* means one who is freed from material desires. He talked about desirelessness and said it means to desire satisfaction only from the Supreme Lord, by service to Him. Mundane altruism, etc., is a partial manifestation of this same original feeling. He said, "The *sannyasis* are supposed to be freed of all material desires. They have finished it all up." The one who desires sense pleasure has no goal, but desires more and more even up to death. He knew a man, a contemporary of his, who was dying and who pleaded with the doctor to give him four more years to live so he could finish up his plans. What plans? A *sannyasi* is supposed to have finished all foolish attempts at plans and be serving full time.

Love for Kṛṣṇa is enormous but not sentimental. Śrīla Prabhupada is prepared to talk with anyone. He is *uttama-adhikari*, *maha-bhagavata*.

He said, "Give me relief. I will remain in back."

May 31

Morning walk notes, Venice Beach, L.A.

I asked Śrīla Prabhupada whether a *sannyasi* should worship a Deity while traveling. He said a *sannyasi* is not required to worship the Deity. He said, "Lord Caitanya never carried a Deity." I asked about the *danda*. Is it a Deity? "No," he said. I asked if you could offer food to the *danda* (as with a Deity)? He laughed and said, "No." He said that the *danda* means body, mind, and words dedicated to Kṛṣṇa's service. He said *hari-nama* is the thing for a *sannyasi*. The holy name is our only shelter. Always carry your beads and *danda*. The short mantra is to be said before the other *gayatri-mantras*, and the verse from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is to be remembered occasionally.

There will be so many questions and opposing elements. He gave the example how the preacher is the best devotee and gets special consideration from the Lord, just as the soldiers in Germany got butter, even if no one else did.

The first thing is *enthusiasm*. Don't be dead. He said, "*You have to work more than me. Anyone who has life, he can preach.* I say to my Godbrothers, 'You are all dead. You have no strength, no life. What have you done?' Because I am trying my best, blessing is coming from my Guru Maharaja. It is not to be advertised, but seen."

We have to take great responsibility. Whatever they have without God is zero.

Simply touring is not required. By traveling we have to do something substantial to increase the society.

We must spread conviction by literature, speaking, and preaching. The preacher is the best devotee because he is the soldier.

We have to be spiritually strong. If superficially we want to be managers, it won't be good.

We have to work sincerely. We are servants. We have to satisfy the master. Bring back all these fools (back to Godhead).

Don't try to be the proprietor of bricks and wood. That is not life. Preach.

"Go and preach,
Go and preach,
Go and preach!"

Our literature is the "gospel truth." It is not ordinary literature. It has to be cautiously prepared so that it will not be contradictory in any way.

We need Krsna conscious men in public office. If the president is Krsna conscious, then it will be God's will enacted. We have to educate the American public. Then it will be God's favored nation. Otherwise, they are not pleasing God. Lenin with just a few men took over the entire country. It is up to us to spread God consciousness.

Don't be stagnant. Go and preach.

June 16, 1972

Letter from Srila Prabhupada

My Dear Satsvarupa,

Please accept my blessings. I received your letter dated June 15, 1972, and have noted the contents carefully regarding your sannyasi travels. If you require more men and women to teach there at Gurukula, you can send from your jurisdiction as GBC man Central USA zone. You will not be too much involved with local temple management, but for management which will require the larger interests, that will be your responsibility as GBC. So you find out some teachers from your zone and send there. The women are best for teaching small children, especially if they are themselves mothers, and when they become brahmacaris at 5 or 6 years old then they may be instructed by the men. If Stoka Krsna is finding difficulty to manage things then you find out some men to help him from your zone. Let him do all the organizing and be the authority

in charge how everything is running, and let others follow his direction and free him to supervise.

You mention you like to speak now very often, but the first business should be to preach to the devotees. It is better to maintain a devotee than to try to convince others to become devotees. It is the duty of the GBC to *maintain* the devotees, keep them in the highest standard of Krishna Consciousness, and give them all good instruction, and let them go out and preach for making more devotees. Your first job should be to make sure that every one of the devotees in your zone of management is reading regularly our literatures and discussing the subject matter seriously from different angles of seeing, and that they are somehow or other absorbing the knowledge of Krishna Consciousness philosophy. If they are fully educated in our philosophy and if they can get all of the knowledge and study it from every viewpoint, then very easily they will perform tapasya or renunciation, and that will be their advancement in Krishna Consciousness. So first thing is to instruct all of your temple presidents and the other devotees to read daily, just as we have done in our morning class in Los Angeles. You may remember that we were reading one sloka each morning in Sanskrit and reciting it altogether and then discussing it thoroughly by seeing different new things. So you introduce this system and train the devotees first. Don't be too much concerned for the time being with nondevotees, now we must fix up what devotees we have got in the knowledge of Krishna Consciousness, then we will succeed. What good are many, many devotees if none of them are knowledgeable?

You mentioned that you are not yet a very bold preacher, but you will become bold, if you have got sincerity. In the beginning also I could not speak. But Krishna is within you, and when you are serving Him sincerely He will give you courage, boldness, everything. We are not going to bluff anyone or cheat others, and we are delivering the message on behalf of the Supreme Lord, so we haven't got anything to fear and we should be always mindful of our topmost position of occupation of life. To be the messenger of the king is practically as good as to be the king, so the king is the most exalted position. I act like a

king because no one can defeat me, and similarly, you should take your responsibility very, very seriously as being the representative of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Who is God Himself, and always remember that you are one of the few men I have appointed to carry on my work throughout the world and your mission before you is huge. Therefore, always pray to Krishna to give you strength for accomplishing this mission by doing what I am doing. My first business is to give the devotees the proper knowledge and engage them in devotional service, so that is not very difficult task for you. I have given you everything, so read and speak from the books and so many new lights will come out. We have got so many books, so if we go on preaching from them for the next 1,000 years, there is enough stock. Just like we have spent one day discussing one sloka, so you introduce this system in all of the temples, and very quickly the devotees will make spiritual progress by getting knowledge.

So far the children are concerned they should know simply four things: (1) Simply think of Krishna always, (2) become Krishna's devotee, (3) offer Krishna worship, (4) offer Krishna obeisances. These four things should be taught and everything else will follow nicely and they will be learned persons. Give them nice food, let them play. Some can be cowherd boys, some can be cows, like that. Play and take food and be Krishna Conscious. As soon as they begin playing they will be inspired, only one has to direct how to play, that's all. They should attend the regular aratrikas and dance before the Deities, just like the children are doing in Los Angeles, and there should not be separate special aratrikas for the children, although they may also learn how to do aratrika in the class before one picture. They must all go to bed by nine P.M. and arise at four A.M. for mongala-aratrika, and in daytime a little rest.

As for the GBC members, if we study one sloka daily in our classes it will take you more than 50 years to finish *Srimad Bhagawatam* alone, so at least 50 years matter is already there minimum. So we can finish *Bhagawatam* once in our lifetime and the next generation can begin again, like that. From a practical point of view, as I have not yet finished *Srimad*

Bhagawatam and we have got now 100 branches, so by the time I am finished with *Bhagawatam* there must be at least 1000 branches. I have worked alone, now you are so many. Our scope is unlimited, resources unlimited, so we must be exceptionally enthusiastic and sober-minded and responsible for working in that spirit.

I hope this will meet you in good health,
Your ever well-wisher,

Notes on *sannyasa* from *The Perfection of Yoga*, pages 48–50

"According to Vedic culture, there are four stages of life. . . . Finally he gives up both wife and children and remains alone to cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that stage is called *sannyasa*, or the renounced order of life. Yet Kṛṣṇa indicates that for a *sannyasi*, renunciation is not all. In addition, there must be some duty. What is the duty of a *sannyasi*, for one who has renounced family life and no longer has material obligations? His duty is a most responsible one: it is to work for Kṛṣṇa. Moreover, this is the real duty for everyone in all stages of life.

"In everyone's life there are two duties: one is to serve the illusion, and the other is to serve the reality. *When one serves the reality, he is a real sannyasi.* When one serves the illusion, he is deluded by *maya*.

"One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic, not he who lights no fire and performs no work.' (Bg. 6.1) Everyone is working and expecting some result. One may ask what is the purpose of working if no result is expected? A remuneration or salary is always demanded by the worker. But here Kṛṣṇa indicates *that one can work out of a sense of duty alone, not expecting the results of his activities. If one works in this way, then he is actually a sannyasi; he is in the renounced order of life.*"

Everyone serves, therefore better to serve reality. This is the platform of knowledge. By *sannyasa*, *the renounced order of life*,

we refer to one who has come to this platform. Sannyasa is a question of realization, not social status.

"Vasudevah sarvam iti—after many births, when one comes to the platform of real knowledge, he 'surrenders unto Me.' Why many births? If the ultimate goal of life is to surrender to Kṛṣṇa, why hesitate? Why not surrender immediately? When one comes to understand that point of surrender, he becomes a real sannyasi . . . Kṛṣṇa never forces . . . surrender is a result of transcendental love."

July 1, 1972

Los Angeles ISKCON

Letter from Srila Prabhupada

My Dear Satsvarupa,

Please accept my blessings. I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter from Cleveland dated June 26, 1972 and I have noted the contents with great pleasure. Similarly I have received such nice letters from Rupanuga and Hridayananda, and I am very much satisfied that you are all feeling the serious nature of this sannyasi mission. So far you are concerned, I am especially stressing the importance of our Dallas Gurukula for training up the next generation of Krishna consciousness preachers. This is the most important task ahead. I am seeing practically how wonderful the children are coming out. Therefore, we shall be very very vigilant and careful to maintain the highest standard of temple atmosphere and conduct in Dallas. You may install Radha-Krishna Deities and worship Them very, very gorgeously. Simply by associating with the elderly members, the children will learn everything. So the quality of the elderly members must be also very much to the standard of excellent Vaisnavas, otherwise the children learn by example and they will very easily be misguided if their senior God-brothers and Godsisters are themselves neglectful. I shall certainly come there to Dallas to see how things are going on as soon as there is opportunity. We must develop our Krishna consciousness school at Dallas to be the model for education in all the world, and let anyone see our Krishna consciousness

children and they will immediately understand the importance and necessity for such education amongst the citizens at large. Otherwise, the children of your country and other countries they are simply growing up to be sophisticated animals, so what good will their education do? But if they will agree to try to understand our Krishna consciousness education or way of life and allow their children to be educated by us, they will see them come out as the topmost citizens, with all good qualities such as honesty, cleanliness, truthfulness, loyalty, etc. So that is a very important work, and you are especially responsible to make it successful. All other GBC men should give you all assistance for building up the standard there.

You mention that you are no longer much occupied with seeing that the rent and mortgage is paid and that the incense is sold, but GBC means to be occupied with everything in the zone. It is not that now we are preachers we can neglect all other points. No, the GBC member is supposed to know everything and anything about the condition and situation of all matters within his jurisdiction. That is the meaning of secretary. So because we are engaged in many fields of activity, I am especially relying upon that knowledge of my GBC assistants and secretaries to manage everything properly. But if we do not take time to understand how the financial matters are going on, then at any moment we may experience some calamity due to our inattention to these matters. Therefore, you should try to keep yourself always informed how the financial matters are improving and keep your watchful eye on every feature of our Krishna consciousness activity. That is also part of preaching work. I am also preaching daily. But I am at the same time managing everything, seeing the statements of accounts, going to the bank, giving advice on every topic, like that. Just now I have purchased one apartment house with seven apartments just adjacent to the L.A. temple and very soon we shall invest in similar properties. So practically there is no question of my neglecting the financial matters of the society, and similarly, you shall do as I am doing. That is your real business. So far your questions, Yes, it is good we must be able to preach effectively at a moment's notice or under any

conditions of circumstances also. As you begin to study the Sanskrit words, in each word you will find a treasure house of different understandings.

Hoping this meets you in good health.

Your ever well-wisher,

Why are devotees leaving (Dallas ISKCON)?

Gurukula criticisms

- (1) *Prasadam*
- (2) Endeavor
- (3) Management
- (4) Children don't talk *katha* (*Krsna* book about Yasoda and Rohini)

Solutions

- (1) Re-evaluate *prasadam*
- (2) More *exemplary*—endeavor to think of *Krsna*
- (3) 10 A.M. class for all
- (4) Festival

July 25

Letter from Srila Prabhupada to Prahladananda

. . . never mind there are not many devotees there. Our program is to enlist the men with quality for serving Krishna, not for attracting the masses for simply watching and going away. As long as the classes are going on well, the rules and regulations are being observed sincerely, the sankirtan party is going out with enthusiastic mood—if these things are going on, then everything is first-class. You are engaged in Krishna's preaching work, therefore you are being specially favored by Krishna . . . So you may know it for certain that Krishna will give you all facility to improve in every way, according to the sincerity of your attempt to spread Krishna Consciousness in the battlefield of preaching work . . .

**Note from *Bhagavad-gita*, 7.28, purport
"Devotees Traverse the Earth"**

. . . Only those who have passed their lives in practicing the regulative principles of religion, who have acted piously and who have conquered sinful reactions can accept devotional service and gradually rise to pure knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. . . . This elevation is possible in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the association of pure devotees, for in the association of great devotees, one can be delivered from delusion.

It is stated in the *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* (5.5.2) that if one actually wants to be liberated, he must render service to the devotees . . . but one who associates with materialistic people is on the path leading to the darkest region of existence. . . . All the devotees of the Lord traverse this earth just to recover the conditioned souls from their delusion.

“We Have Only Done 1% of Our Work” June 18–July 24, 1973

During these years, Śrīla Prabhupāda had instituted a system wherein one of his GBC members would travel with him each month in addition to his regular party of a personal servant and secretary. The GBC men became his secretaries for answering his mail, and they were supposed to receive personal training by being with Prabhupāda, which they certainly did. However, it was inconvenient for Prabhupāda to have to change GBC men every month.

At this time, I was the GBC secretary for some Midwest temples and had a base at the Dallas *gurukula*. A telegram was sent to Dallas saying that I was to be the next secretary and that I should come as soon as possible to Māyāpur, India, to relieve the previous secretary. This was the first time that I had traveled outside North America since joining the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and I did not even have a passport.

In the spirit of surrender that was prominent in those days, especially if one got the call from Śrīla Prabhupāda, I did not waste any time. I immediately packed up, flew to New York, and went to get a passport. I had no identification to prove I was an American citizen, but I showed up at the passport office with my Godbrother, Viṣṇujana Swami. The woman asked him, “Do you know this man, and has he lived in America for the last five years?” Viṣṇujana Swami said, “Yes, of course.” She then asked him what my name was and he replied, “Sats-varūpa,” which was the only name he had ever known me by. Since it was not my legal name, this caused some confusion, but somehow she decided that I was fit for an American passport.

It was an exciting adventure for me to fly alone to India. I met an Indian man on the plane who took me in a car to the Calcutta temple. The lights in the little outdoor shops and the density of the population gave me culture shock and it all seemed somewhat frightening. We arrived at the temple late at night and I lay down on the floor next to Pañcadraviḍa Swami. The next morning, I took a train to Māyāpur.

Śrīla Prabhupāda seemed to be pleased that I had arrived, and he welcomed me cordially. He said that there were now five *sannyāsīs* in Māyāpur. This gave me a feeling of real belonging, and a good spirit for being a *sannyāsi*.

Māyāpur was very hot at that time; it was difficult for me to adjust to it. When I wasn't actually in Prabhupāda's room taking dictation from his mail and so on, I would be in my room trying to get through the heat. I wanted to ask Prabhupāda some personal questions about my service in America—whether to stay in the Dallas temple or to do more traveling—but I wanted to be a well-behaved secretary. I did not push my personal questions on him until the very end of my stay.

It was during this time in Māyāpur that Prabhupāda translated and gave purports for the *Upadeśāmṛta* (*The Nectar of Instruction*). The work had been suggested to him by his disciple, Hṛṣīkeśānanda dāsa. He worked on this book by dictating it aloud while I wrote it down in pen. I was thrilled to be involved in the production of the book, and impressed at how the perfect purports came from Prabhupāda so spontaneously.

Once, Prabhupāda called me into his room and asked me if I knew any places that were well known for good water. He was having trouble with his digestion. I remember feeling flattered that he had called me in for such an intimate chat, but unfortunately, I did not have any information to help him. I recall other times like that when Prabhupāda asked me something "normal" about the world and I proved my ignorance by not knowing the answer.

During this Māyāpur stay, Prabhupāda also made a visit to see his Godbrother, Śrīdhara Mahārāja, in Navadvīpa. I tagged along with him and it was a very pleasant time.

After about two weeks in Māyāpur, we shifted to Calcutta. My job was to stand as a kind of "friendly wall" just outside Prabhupāda's room and not let intruders in. It was the usual impossible task. Śrīla Prabhupāda's intimate disciples, such as Tamāl Krishna Goswami, would barge past me, and if I got too strong and stopped a few, especially some of the Indians, then Prabhupāda objected to my blockade.

When I became sick, I simply lay flat on the floor right outside his room. There was nowhere else to go. Prabhupāda sometimes came out of his room and saw me lying there helplessly. He advised me to get a shot for cholera.

Not long afterwards, Prabhupāda decided dramatically to go to the Ratha-yātrā in London, even though he was quite sick from dysentery. Syāmasundara dāsa had sent tickets for Prabhupāda's permanent party, but not for the extra GBC secretary. I had my own return ticket, but it was via Bombay. They left without me, although I still had about two weeks left in my designated month with Prabhupāda. I hastened to catch up to him via Bombay.

My short stay in Bombay was nice because I was able to associate with my Godbrothers, Tamāl Krishna Goswami and Girirāja Prabhu. This was still during the early phase of ISKCON in India, and they were glad to see a devotee from America. I was also glad to be with them. I was such a greenhorn in India and they made me feel at home. They were living simply in a hut, but they served me *halavah* and told me some of the inside view of things in India.

Finally, I arrived in England. Prabhupāda was seeing professors and important guests such as George Harrison, and I often sat in. We went on morning walks every day and I continued to answer Prabhupāda's letters. Just before I left, I asked him my questions about what I should do in the Midwest zone. My month with Prabhupāda had given me a spirit for preaching and deepened my admiration for him. It also gave me a first taste of India.

June 18, 1973

**Mayapur—Notes from Srila Prabhupada's
room conversation**

If you preach to the materialistic class of men, but after preaching cannot draw something tangible from them, then your preaching is half successful. They should give money or become a member. *Materialistic men are not interested in Krsna or Bhagavatam, but in family comforts—nice apartment, beautiful wife, children, etc. So if they can give some of their hard-earned money ...*

Preach. If you can't preach, go on chanting. Prabhupada said that at least in his books, the word Krsna appears about four times on each page. Even if the rest is rubbish, at least the name Krsna, Krsna, Krsna is there.

June 19

Went to Calcutta. Had jeep accident. Bhavananda hurt his legs. In the evening, *kirtana* at Calcutta temple led by Dinanatha. Anxious to get back to Mayapur.

June 20

Return to Mayapur. Prabhupada chastised me—"Should have common sense"—for not insisting that the bank accept our checks. They should have written their refusal to us, stating why. Prabhupada decided definitely not to go to Australia for Ratha-yatra. Syamasundara and Mukunda visit. Prabhupada plays George Harrison's new album and says: "Any intelligent man will be able to see he has been infected [with Krsna consciousness]." Wonderful, menial service as secretary to His Divine Grace.

When he heard George Harrison's record, "Living in the Material World," Srila Prabhupada asked to see a copy of *Brahma-samhita*. He had the verse read: "Lowest of all is located Devi-dhama [mundane world]; next above it is Mahesa-dhama [abode of Mahesa]; above Mahesa-dhama is placed Hari-dhama

[abode of Hari] and above them all is located Krsna's own realm named Goloka. I adore the primeval Lord Govinda, who has allotted their respective authorities to the rulers of those graded realms."

June 21

Re a plan to send two men to villages: "But where are such expert men? If you send an ordinary man, what can he do? He will after a few months close it. But development is to send *sankirtana* party. That was a proposal (two men to villages). It takes a very expert man. I was just one man and I opened 100 centers."

June 23

From here, Bhaktisiddhanta Road is a show of silhouettes in hot haze: rickshaw men peddling bicycle carriages, cows, and a buffalo or two being herded along the road by a boy in his straw umbrella hat. Nearby fields, jute, rice, vegetables.

June 24

Srila Prabhupada said we have done only 1% of our work. It is all in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Now we have to demonstrate it. ISKCON is like the appearance of the Varaha incarnation, who sprung from Brahma's nostril in a small size and suddenly grew half the size of the universe. Brahman means bigger than the biggest and still becoming bigger. In every one of our centers there must be *arati* and *sankirtana* going on, or else Krsna consciousness becomes slack. We have to keep alive. Thus, daytime sleep should be avoided. We can take a little rest, but otherwise, if tired, chant Hare Krsna. Our centers are there to invite people to keep alive.

Discussing a book in Bengali about an assembly of sinner who were amazed at the appearance of Lord Caitanya, and lamented that now that Lord Caitanya has appeared, ther

will be no more illicit sex and other sinful activities. He said people in the West think like that about the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement—shocked that we intend to end meat-eating, illicit sex.

June 26–28

Crossing the Ganges in an old wooden boat. Prabhupada sat. People calling out to us, "Hare Kṛṣṇa." He said that wherever we go and people see us, they say Hare Kṛṣṇa. Even when he arrived in a plane stopover at night, they chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Calcutta—Went to the kaviraja's house. He felt Srila Prabhupada's pulse. Then Prabhupada went to another room and everyone in the house came to receive *darsana* and offer fruit. We held Hare Kṛṣṇa *kirtana*. Me, terrible headache, weak from cholera shot, leading chanting in *kaviraja's*, Srila Prabhupada pleased. Big basket of fruit.

Riding in the car afterwards we said hardly anything. Then this morning we visited another man's home, a modest apartment, seemingly mundane things (talking in Bengali), and Prabhupada finally told them to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

I was very sick for two days, now returned to life, eating, digesting, working. Srila Prabhupada ate a *kacauri* yesterday, cooked by his sister, and now he has become sick again. Plans are uncertain now about going to London. Thinking to ask him how I can expand my activities in the zone. I am so saturated with self-interest—if I could only think, "What is best for Kṛṣṇa," then I would get direction how to do big things for the zone. Festivals coming together, parades in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland.

Srila Prabhupada is ill. His sister is coming to see him but not helping. Took picture of Nṛsimhadeva from altar.

Srila Prabhupada subdued us. He called in his big GBC and *sannyasi* leaders—their consensus was go to good climate, Hawaii or L.A., to rest. No, he wanted to preach in the West. All leaders subdued by his calm forceful statement of "strength of mind."

He said, "Strike while the iron is hot. I think that is an English maxim. Then you can keep it in shape."

In the West they are fed up. I want to give spiritual enlightenment. Two very misleading theories: (1) life comes from matter, (2) there is no life after death (so enjoy), everything is matter. As this movement grows, Communism will be curbed.

They try for unity, but this simply means our Ratha-yatra festival. They have no brain to see. By the complicated League of Nations and United Nations, still they fail. This simple method all over the world. Gandhi's method was to cut up India into India and Pakistan, and now who cares for non-cooperation, nonviolence? But by our movement this culture is spread all over the world. Jagannatha means "Lord of the Universe." International God thanks to ISKCON.

July 4, 1973

He criticized Western civilization for ruination of human living. They are thinking there is no time for self-realization. Not only must they work eight hours a day, but they try to save time for spending at naked dancing, vacations, intoxication. Our movement is fighting this. It is not religious sentiment, but trying to save humanity from ruin.

Regarding Midwest zone, he said that since centers are established there, then go into interior—come and go, come and go, some go south, some go north, in this way (cover all the towns and villages). If we make some devotees, we can open centers. Centers should not be opened whimsically, opened one day and closed the next.

I can go with my party and encourage the centers also to send parties; not just to do hard-core book distribution. *Give them direction*—but preach, meet people, hold feasts in cities—go to the interior, chanting in Kansas City, Topeka, Minneapolis, etc.

Riding home in a taxi from the *pandal*, question asked by Jayapataka Swami: "If we gain political power, will we follow *Manu-samhita*?"

First gain power, he said. Then yes, *Manu-samhita*. Actually everything is in the *Gita* and *Bhagavatam* in gist. *Manu-samhita* is based on *varnasrama* and that is in the *Gita*, "I created the four orders." First we would divide society into orders by quality and work, not birth. Someone made a *brahmana* would have to act like a *brahmana* or else he would be punished.

Being asked, he told Pancadravida Swami how to preach to *smartas* in South India who may know Sanskrit:

Learn five *slokas* a month; in six months you'll know thirty *slokas*. That should be enough to present *Bhagavad-gita*. PDS said Hrsikesananda was going to help him with pronunciation. Prabhupada said, this-ananda, that-ananda, be your own person. Do not be dependent on someone else to learn your work for you. When asked how to preach to Shaivites, he said, "Ask them, 'My dear sir, do you accept *Bhagavad-gita*?' They will all say yes. Then quote: 'Those whose intelligence is maddened worship the demigods.' Come to understand *Bhagavad-gita* well, even in English, and you can preach."

About me and getting through international airlines, customs entanglement, "He is doing his best, but he does not have experience. If every month a new man, then I have to suffer." TKG said, "But we suffer when you get angry upon us." He said, "But your suffering is secondary." He was detained three hours in Paris and practically jailed four days from Africa to Australia. "I am coming and going so much. I am a little bit known. I should not have to wait on lines. That is the job of the secretary. He should be so expert that these rascals with all their rules are answered and I am not detained as an ordinary person."

I would say, "It is all right. I have checked everything." He would reply, "You say that, but then I will be stopped at the airport." If everything is not cleared, he is detained.

"You have to have a brain, always alert. One who has a brain has strength."

Giriraja dasa on India

He told me that Prabhupada said six months in India is equal to two years in the U.S. The devotees were comfortable in the Akash-ganga flat and didn't want to move to the *asrama* at Juhu, which has far less amenities. Srila Prabhupada said to TKG, "Don't you want to be purified?" Pancadravida Swami said that the Juhu *asrama* had rats and was run down. His Divine Grace said, "Many people in India live in very simple houses and they keep them clean, but you Americans eat something and throw the dish in the corner for six months—that is why you have rats."

Tribulation is good for advancement. The pain the devotees suffered while Mrs. Nair sometimes turned off the electricity, and when they went eleven days without water, being blasphemed, having the temple torn down—that pain is austerity and makes for advancement. The difficulty of India makes one turn to Krsna (if he is intelligent) as the only shelter.

July 10 London

Went to his room. He said, "At long last." Asked me about my journey from Bombay. "So you were able to break your journey?"

Revatinandana Swami said he was speaking to an Oxford professor who said the *Bhagavatam* was written only 1,500 years ago and can be told by the modern literary style. Prabhupada said, "Ask him what he thinks of the *acaryas*. His opinion is not the all-in-all. Just as he has an opinion, so the great *acaryas*, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Lord Caitanya, they all accept that the *Gita* and *Bhagavatam* are 5,000 years old. This is Indian culture and they are the great authorities. *You* [tell the professor like this], you are nothing in India. You are not accepted."

About the scholar, tell him there is a saying: In private one may say the queen is a prostitute, but one cannot say that pub-

licly. Their opinion is like that, not something they can say publicly.

He said he liked to meet with famous men. At least he can "corner them" and defeat them.

He told a British school teacher that he should not be a teacher if he is imperfect. He said it is like the blind leading the blind. "Yes," the man said, "I think we are all partially blind." "No," Prabhupada said, "not that everyone is blind. Someone has eyes." Then the teacher said that God cannot be described. Srila Prabhupada gave the word "Krsna" as "all-attractive" and as a perfect description of God for everyone.

God does not force us to be obedient. Otherwise, we could not be part and parcel of God. We are the same and yet different, just as with one's mortal father. The difference is that He maintains everyone; everyone is maintained by Him.

God is good. Rejecting Him we are bad. Anyone who is in prison is understood to be a criminal, even though you may say he is very intelligent. Anyone in the material world is bad, a fool, and a rascal.

That verse, "*avajananti mam mudha*," is very dangerous for the demons.

Morning walk, recalling talking with the teacher he said, "The question is who is authority for knowledge? Authority is God. One who represents God is authority. Is it very difficult? If I say this is a cane and you repeat 'this is a cane,' you are authority. But if you manufacture something, then you are not authority."

In his room to Bhagavan dasa and me: "It is not that everyone will immediately accept your Krsna consciousness." We have to meet opposing elements. *The more we successfully meet them, that is the success of preaching.* We have to always win. Yes, we always win *if we have complete faith in Krsna.* Then as we preach and answer, we will always win. Krsna is God. If we are on His side, we will win always.

It is our fault if they are not convinced. Srila Prabhupada is awake, alive by this philosophy, convinced that the soul is eternal. Vedic authority is sound, right before us it is

available—transcendental information—it is more convincing than any other religious system against atheism. We have already accepted it—now we have to become absorbed and alive and convinced. Once absorbed in the ocean of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then I don't think there would be so much worrying, planning, "How shall I best engage? Shall I travel outside the temples? Shall I do this? Why doesn't anyone come to our university lectures? What is the most effective engagement?" If I am absorbed, the answer will be there. Really joyful, really alive, really preaching, convincing.

The devotee also requires to be convinced, not just the non-devotee, the sympathetic or unsympathetic guest. The initiated devotee, the *brahmana*, everyone—one who is alive in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can convince others.

Srila Prabhupada spoke with a French professor who objected to Prabhupada's explanation of "Thou shalt not kill." Srila Prabhupada told him that it is because he is accustomed to killing. "You have to agree on the principle that killing is not good business."

Later, Prabhupada said the Christian religion does not support animal-killing. Jesus first became disgusted with Judaism when he saw they were killing animals in the synagogue. He thought, "What is this?" and went to India to study. He was a great personality; undoubtedly he wanted to give them something sublime. Now the followers are killing. How abominable. And they say, "What have we done wrong?" when no one comes to church. They are trying by flattery to get people to come, but there has to be something substantial. Not that you can make a friend by flattery. You cannot simply cry, "I love you, I love you." That will not create a loving atmosphere. There has to be a sincere understanding for friendship to develop.

Later, he said it is very difficult to accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness on principle because then you are immediately out of this world, in Vaikuntha orbit. They are afraid to try it, but if they do, everything will be all right, they will leave that orbit and go into Vaikuntha orbit.

Srila Prabhupada said that people don't know how they are suffering in the material world. If we can save even one person, it is a great service.

The head of the nation is Nixon, and the activity is killing and throwing away grains. Soul-killing civilization. We have to fight and save at least a few.

Life means high qualities. One who is not Krsna conscious is hovering on the mental platform, which comes from non-permanent things.

July 17

Prabhupada was stressing the chanting of Hare Krsna. Just chant and dance. The boy who the night before was arguing about so many things, yoga, etc., came back the next morning and liked the *kirtana*. People are attracted. American and Europeans become ecstatic. Panditji had lost a book and was looking for it—it was about ceremonies, hymns, etc. Prabhupada said it was not possible to introduce this in the West. He said the fire ceremony we perform is mostly a show only. This is the inner meaning of it. If we simply tell people to chant Hare Krsna, they will not be attracted, so we give them a show. But make it a short-cut show. If you chant Vedic hymns all day, they will not benefit. If you can get them simply to chant and dance all day, that is enough. Chant, dance, take *prasa-dam*, and rest. Don't rest like Kumbakarna (Ravana's brother who used to sleep twelve years), but just to appease the deficient body. Bhaktivinoda Thakura condemned *smarta*-class *brahmanas*. Simply chant Hare Krsna. We should stress this—whenever we have time, chant Hare Krsna loudly or softly, but the tongue should be moving, not officially or blurring it. He told Panditji that to become a *smarta-pandita* with wooden slippers, dressed like them and going to seek *panditas*, was a waste of time. Dance. Even if there is no ecstasy, dance and it will come. Dancing is so nice. Is that all right?

Kirtaniya-sada. Chanting is good in every age. Prahlada preached like that in Satya-yuga. The people in those ages were

proud of material accomplishments, but they could have simply chanted Hare Krsna. Everything else is additional to the chanting. Gosvamis added some of the old procedures just so *smarta-brahmanas* wouldn't reject it as a strange new movement. The main thing is chanting.

July 18

On proposed visit by philosopher Albert Ayer: "What is his philosophy?"

Syamasundara: "He doesn't believe in the existence of God."

Srila Prabhupada: "I will give him evidence. I will ask him what he means by the existence of God and ask him to make a list of deficiencies of God's existence." He proposed how Europe could take to Krsna consciousness. If Christian and Buddhist leaders were convinced to take to Krsna consciousness as the essence, then U.S.A. would follow.

July 21

Mr. Kumar had suggestions and wanted to work for ISKCON, but required money for his mother in India. "No," said Srila Prabhupada, "our men work twenty-four hours a day without a farthing. Even the Indian boys were faltering in pronouncing Sanskrit, but our men know because they are dedicated. All we need is dedication. I am not a Sanskrit scholar, but I am pulling on and scholars say it is good. My Guru Maharaja's spiritual master was illiterate and my Guru Maharaja was the greatest scholar of the day, but when Gaurakisora spoke, it was exactly from the *sastra*."

"Our principle is not to take time to learn something and become expert and then preach, but whatever you know, preach. We have not got time for studies other than class in the morning, class in the evening, and if they read my books, that is sufficient." He didn't like hearing that they were trying to learn Bengali in New York because, "They will learn six months' work in six years; therefore, I do not like this learning subjects." Time is short; we have to use what we have. We just

depend on Kṛṣṇa, not on historical religious history or anything. These boys are not scholars but we are pushing on somehow."

Talk of opening a center in Oxford. He said it was better to avoid one demon there, a famous professor who is against Kṛṣṇa. Go to the students. By getting them we can train one, just as with Svarūpa Dāmodara; then we will kill them with their own weapon.

Go to them, flatter them, make them our friends, and then kick them: "Whatever you have learned is all hodgepodge because you are rascal. Just throw it out and hear about Lord Caitanya." Kumar had a book. Prabhupada said that the *go-svami* author was opening a hospital at the end of his life. Bhaktivinoda Thakura was never interested in opening a hospital.

July 24

Mataji in with complaints. Srila Prabhupada told Malati to treat this older lady as her own mother. She is not coming to beg, but to help. See that she is satisfied and doesn't work too hard.

Prasadam should be taken even if I think it doesn't taste good. Bhaktivedanta Manor should have fifty cows, produce ghee, make *prasadam* always, every guest should get two *puris*, some *halavah* and *pakorās*—at least that much and talk, a dining room to sit down in. Temple life shouldn't be *dry*. Without *prasadam* it is dry, so always be cooking and have *prasadam* for guests at any time. A festival every day.

Q: There are few leaders.

A: Yes, because all these boys and girls never had any responsibility before they came. But we have to be very responsible for this or that.

Asked me to stay in room with him when Mataji came in alone.

“Kṛṣṇa is Everywhere” January 1–August 30, 1974

When I returned to America after having been Prabhupāda’s secretary for a month, I began to travel around in an old bus with several *brahmacārīs* (including Sureśvara dāsa), distributing *Back to Godhead* magazines, giving college lectures, and preaching. Within a month or so, Hṛdayānanda dāsa Goswami joined us and we tried to follow Prabhupāda’s direction of sometimes going to the temples and sometimes going into the interior of the country. Other men eventually joined us, such as Bhakta John (who later became Ghanaśyāma dāsa) and Bhakta Randy (later, Mahābuddhi dāsa). After some time, Hṛdayānanda Mahārāja and I split into two different parties, and we gave up the old bus which had gotten into so many accidents.

I then began staying about a month at a time in either a YMCA or a rented apartment in cities like Madison and Minneapolis, giving lectures and trying to interest new people in practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When the winter came, we moved to San Antonio, Texas. It was while there in December 1973 that Śrīla Prabhupāda called me to become his permanent traveling secretary and servant. I have written about this in *Life With the Perfect Master*.

The first entries in this chapter are mostly notes of what Prabhupāda is saying in formal and informal talks. As I read it again, I get a glimpse into Śrīla Prabhupāda’s power as a preacher and self-realized devotee, and I remember the amazing fact that Prabhupāda was constantly speaking Kṛṣṇa conscious realizations, even as he sat down for lunch or went to sleep at

night. His flow of devotional argumentative preaching is caught here only in a tiny, fragmental way, but I think the diary entries show that Prabhupāda's thoughts were deeply felt convictions, and at the same time, they were the exact conclusions of the scriptures. His spoken thoughts against the status quo: "Riding through industrialized Tokyo he commented how it is all karma, bringing on the next life. Animal life—do you want to live as animals or go back to Godhead?"

We also don't see much difference in Prabhupāda's expressions, whether he is in Hawaii, Tokyo, or on his way to India. When you were with Śrīla Prabhupāda, he spoke *kṛṣṇa-kathā* everywhere. This was not Kṛṣṇa consciousness within a bubble. However, we were always on the battlefield. "He says he knows the art, like karate, of pushing at a person's weak point until he dies." Prabhupāda's philosophy was like Kṛṣṇa's speaking to Arjuna on the battlefield. "Preaching means fighting," he said, "not easy life."

It is always painful to re-read my restlessness at being Śrīla Prabhupāda's secretary. I have confessed it and psychoanalyzed it to some extent in *Life With the Perfect Master* and also in *Journal & Poems*, Volume 3. Let it stand as a testimony against me.

I know that Śrīla Prabhupāda will forgive me if I can do some active service in his mission. The simple fact is that I didn't deserve to be his constant companion, although he kindly invited me to do so. By that kindness, I was able to at least see him every day (although with limited vision). I still see him in my mind's eye: "This morning while walking, he quoted suddenly from *Brahma-saṁhitā* that from Kṛṣṇa's breathing the universes are spinning out."

Also in this chapter there are two references to a devotee named Mohanānanda, which gives us just a glimpse of how Śrīla Prabhupāda was always taking a personal interest in his disciples and trying to fix them in a service which would enliven them. Mohanānanda had been headmaster in the Dallas *gurukula*, but somehow it did not work out. Now he was seeking service in Bombay. So far he had not found anything that he could really get into with deep satisfaction. Prabhupāda, on

thinking of a wonderful project for book distribution in Bombay, thought of how Mohanānanda was a likely person to take it up, and several times he spoke to him about it. Later in this chapter, we see Prabhupāda still thinking of Mohanānanda in terms of yet another project which might interest him. This shows us that all the disciples were on Prabhupāda's mind, and if they were not doing well, it disturbed him, just as a father becomes disturbed when his son is in trouble. The father, of course, carries on with his own activities. He may appear aloof from his child's troubles, but he is always thinking of that son or daughter. This also indicates to me that even if we were given some direct service by Prabhupāda but were unable to carry it out, it is not the end of our relationship with Prabhupāda. We can take another service, even though it may appear only second best in terms of pleasing him. If we can develop that project, it can turn out to be the best way to serve Prabhupāda and to be happy ourselves. I had personal experience of this in my restlessness as Prabhupāda's personal servant in 1974. As a result, I was given the service of the library party, which turned out to be most satisfying to Prabhupāda and myself. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated, "It does not matter in what kind of work one engages, but that work should be done only for Kṛṣṇa." (Bg. 12.6-7, purport)

There is only a passing reference to the BBT library party in this chapter. Some successful attempts had been made to distribute his books in college libraries in New England, and whenever there was a public lecture or meeting of devotees, Śrīla Prabhupāda was pleased to state that his books were being well-received by the American college professors. He said that if the academic authorities were to review his books favorably and use them in their college courses, this would be a great achievement for the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

* * *

January 1, 1974

Los Angeles

On his morning walk, Srila Prabhupada said the comet which is in the sky now is a bad sign. He was asked if it is a symptom of catastrophe or whether it was *bringing* disaster. He said it was bringing catastrophe, just as if a policeman were to come among us searching for someone. He said it is a sign of great catastrophe. He said in 1914 when he saw a small comet, World War I followed. He said it is a planet like others, with living entities on it. When told it had a tail emitting gas, he asked, "Who is supplying the gas?" When told that the scientists are excited about the comet because they think it is made of primordial substance and will give us a clue to the origin of the universe, he said there is an Indian saying, "A goat will eat anything and a madman will say anything."

January 3

Srila Prabhupada was talking of utilization of time. Never do anything without thinking, "Am I eating this for Kṛṣṇa? Am I speaking for Kṛṣṇa?" This is so precious. On the morning walk, he said the park is built simply to waste time. One devotee pointed out that leisure time is a problem and the government is trying to figure out what people could do. Srila Prabhupada said that our task is to engage the people's time in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Sometimes we are trees, sometimes serpents, sometimes demigods. Kṛṣṇa is so kind He is giving us variety. As we get disgusted with the old body, we are given a new, youthful body.

Sex life is the only enjoyment in the material world. Many times he has spoken how sex attraction is very, very strong and only by Kṛṣṇa's grace is one able to conquer over it.

January 5

In the car I asked him, "Can we go back to Godhead in this life?" "Yes, why not?" "Because you have to be free of all material desires." "Kṛṣṇa consciousness means no more desires."

"But if someone asked me if he could go back to Godhead in one life and I said yes, and then he asked me if I am going back . . . " "No, it is not a question of whether I go or you go, but if anyone takes to this he will go back to Godhead. Krsna says. Of course, if we are preaching, it is not that we are exporting them by consignment back to Godhead and we are not going. It is expected that the preacher is going also. Just like with our books, we are selling them but not reading. Our students are very expert at selling but not at reading. That is not good. They should read the books also."

January 9

"You say life is a dream." "Yes," he said, "at night what you have dreamt is gone in the day." And at night, your day's activities (I am married, in my house) are forgotten while you dream. They are both dreams—you are just a visitor to both. The day dream seems more real because it is of longer duration.

The highest vision is that everything is animate. Even in the atom, the soul is there. Govinda is there and where He is, He is not alone. Everything is there. Even in a shoe, in the make-up of the atoms, He is there. It is not dead. In my body there are lots of living entities, but I am predominant because I have the most developed consciousness. I am most fortunate to have the human form of life. Although it is a dream, in this body we are able to come awake. The *Vedas* are addressing, *uttisthaya*, "Wake up, wake up. Now you have the opportunity of the human form of life."

Chanting Hare Krsna is reality. We are in the process. If you know Krsna, you know everything.

January 14

Srila Prabhupada praised Bali Mardan because one boy said he was brought to Krsna consciousness by him. He said, "*If you can convert one person to Krsna consciousness, that is the quickest way to gain Krsna's recognition.*"

A boy questioned whether in ISKCON devotees become too concerned with position and prestige. Srila Prabhupada said those who criticize leave and try to gain the prestige for themselves rather than give prestige to the spiritual master. Everyone wants to be the chief person.

But we have to be obedient and not independent. Do not leave the shelter of the spiritual master. He criticized those who leave the spiritual master when there is some discrepancy in their sense gratification.

On another night in the midst of bank dealings, he said that to deal with such apparently material affairs puzzled his brain. But if he gave it up, then that would not be good either, since it was for pushing on Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

January 16

The government is becoming less enthusiastic about the propaganda value of traveling to the moon. Srila Prabhupada said he stated that going to the moon was a waste of time as early as 1957 in *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, even while everyone, including Bon Maharaja, was excited by it. "How can I (I am just an ordinary man) have predicted rightly long before?" (How, except for the infallibility of Kṛṣṇa and Vedic literature?—*a-brahma-bhuvanal lokah*). He heard that some astronauts had become preachers because in outer space, things seemed infinite. Srila Prabhupada said, "Couldn't they see the infinity from here? Well, better late than never."

Read from Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura's commentary on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Fifth Canto, Chapter Five: *hrdaya granthi*—a knot in the heart is made by sex union. The "lovers" say, "You are my life, you are my life," but that is illusion. They are only after sex intercourse and for the time being they say, "You are my life." Home, family and possessions are another knot on top of a knot.

Sex impulse, being the greatest material attraction, keeps us in this material world.

In the Vedic system a girl has a husband before she even reaches puberty. His Godbrothers criticize him as a "match-maker," but he is only interested in pushing on the Krsna consciousness movement.

"Please save me, Krsna"—be strong against the sex urge.

Think, elder members, how to preserve ISKCON against falling away from the principles.

Regarding organization, it cannot be material. Not by by-laws, meetings, vouchers, but by following the instructions of the spiritual master with sincerity. He said that whatever success he has had is due to his own following of his spiritual master. To one with faith in the spiritual master and Krsna comes knowledge of scripture. Without faith and sincerity, by-laws will be useless.

They promise at initiation to follow the rules and then break—they are not even honest. The *Gita* verse on brahminical qualities states "honesty."

Read the books (what is already published is sufficient to make a man perfect), chant, go and preach—we have enough variety so that no one should deviate. Take *prasada*, read all day. We have so many books.

The secret of success—(1) having a bona fide spiritual master, and (2) following his instructions with sincerity.

In material life one is proud he has cheated the government or another person, but in spiritual life one cannot cheat. That is very bad. It cannot be done.

His Godbrothers, and in the beginning he himself, thought it was impossible to convert Westerners to give up sinful life.

A man came by who does yoga. Srila Prabhupada had me read *Bhagavad-gita* 6.47 and the purport. He said those who differ or do not unite with Krsna cannot be *yogis*. Just as Prabhupada is giving us orders, "and," he said, "if they have a different opinion, then they are not devotees."

There is Satya Sai Baba who performs some magic and produces gold. But if (for the sake of argument) they say he is God for producing a little gold, what about He who is producing millions of gold mines? He is the Supreme Proprietor.

A boy in the hospital who is about to die is chanting. Srila Prabhupada said we have to die sooner or later in this body. This is a nice opportunity that he is chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. We should not lament. It will not go in vain that devotees are risking their lives. Lord Jesus was crucified, and what are we? Kṛṣṇa was always fighting demons.

January [?]

Tokyo

If one serves a spiritual master and inquires, then the spiritual master is very liberal and generous and glad to answer. In Kali-yuga one disagrees even with his spiritual master.

One cannot leave the association of the spiritual master and then claim interpretation of his instruction.

If I say I love Kṛṣṇa but I kick His devotee, what kind of love is that?

If I want to be Kṛṣṇa conscious, I should live with devotees and the Deity, not that I "love Kṛṣṇa" and go live in a train station.

Early morning walk in tiny paths, snowy park. He quoted verses about the life of a mendicant who takes clothes people throw in the street, etc.—the Japanese work so hard to live in nice houses. A mendicant only approaches them for their good. I commented that hippies in Hawaii might say they follow these verses. He said, "Therefore, *vairagya* is useless [without Kṛṣṇa consciousness]. Monkeys also live in the forest and eat fruits, but they have many girl friends and sex life."

Riding through industrialized Tokyo he commented how it is all karma, bringing on the next life. Animal life—do you want to live as animals or go back to Godhead?

Deviators claim they are above the rules and regulations of devotional service. He said we never are. Follow these rules or other rules—we must follow—traffic rules, rule of birth, death, old age.

"Rascals claim they are higher devotees, but they didn't come to see me and pay obeisances."

January [?]

Hong Kong

I asked about splits in the movement. He said there was no such thing—only insincerity. I chant sixteen rounds, follow the principles and preach, and you do also—there is no split, only if one is insincere and doesn't follow.

He appreciated K., who couldn't follow principles and left. Said G. was insincere for falling down, but was going on preaching without his conscience biting.

February [?], 1974

New Delhi

That authority who is everyone's authority is God.

A devotee said another devotee was planning how to take over the world for Kṛṣṇa. Srila Prabhupada said this was very good. "Yes," the boy said, "as long as it is not utopian." No, Prabhupada said, even if it is utopian, it is very nice. After all, who is Kṛṣṇa? He is not an ordinary man. Anything is possible if one sincerely wishes it for Kṛṣṇa. He described how he came to the U.S.A. with no backing. (I was thinking of going preaching to a college to get devotees—utopian wish should be there: "I want these people to become Kṛṣṇa's devotees.") Utopian for Kṛṣṇa is all right.

February [?]

Vṛndavana

He said he wanted to visit Dvārakā as he had never been there, and never been to Hardwar or other holy places all over India. "I was much more serious about hearing from my spiritual master than in visiting holy places. He noted this and he liked me for it."

He said he knows the art, like karate, of pushing at a person's weak point until he dies. In argument he said he finds out their weak point and pushes on it until they die.

A communist said that everything is based on economy, economy is the basic principle, even for Kṛṣṇa conscious people. Prabhupada looked up economy in the dictionary. He said it actually means bodily comforts: eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. We have such economy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but it is not our basic principle. The basic principle is transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa. Please Kṛṣṇa, then the economy problem is solved. Animals have no economic problem either, although they have no big philosophy. Men are all rascals who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious. Communists, capitalists, all are taking and distributing poison by preaching on the bodily platform. If the communist sees material opulence and says, "Everyone should have poison in a gold pot," will a sane man agree? "Here is poison in a gold pot."

We say to everyone, "Come on." Nonsectarian.

A devotee wrote him a letter saying, "You are doubting my business project and so I am not enthusiastic and I am beginning to doubt you." Prabhupada said, "I do not doubt you as a sincere devotee, but I doubt your business capacity as no money is coming in. I am a layman. I don't know the jewelry business, but if I doubt it, what is my fault?" Besides, the spiritual master can say to his disciple: "You are useless, you are stupid, you are a fool." That is all right. Not that he has to flatter the disciple.

Starting out on a morning walk in Vrndavana, a devotee said, "You are like the hometown boy who made good. Here in Vrndavana the people are proud of you." He said, "They should. They couldn't do anything."

On a walk in the *parikrama* area, a devotee saw female peacocks eating, and commented that the males are more beautiful among birds, also fish. Prabhupada said, "Among the humans, the women are." Then, "Amongst Mohammedans, a man with big beard and mustaches is considered very beautiful." The devotee said, "Then we are the least beautiful. We have no hairs." Prabhupada: "Yes, nobody likes us. We are neither male

nor female. No one knows who we are. That is very good. If you are attractive to neither male nor female, then you are liberated."

Q: What is the difference between Goloka and Vrndavana?

A: None—but your mind is in America. Fix your mind at the lotus feet of Krsna and you are always in Vrndavana. Krsna is everywhere.

We cannot execute severe penances. Our penance is to try to reform the poor, crazy persons. *Tapa* means miseries. In any case, even if you try to live for comfort, it will be miserable. And if you think, "All right, it's miserable, but let me enjoy," still you will have to die. One should take the pains voluntarily for Krsna. He comes to save fallen souls; if you help a little, He'll be pleased. He comes Himself, sends devotees, leaves books, but still we are mad for sense enjoyment. Our penance, therefore, is to try to reform (also those who come to ISKCON and are still troublesome).

"Your penance is to work with Caitya-guru dasa" (problem devotee). Take anxiety. *For a sane man to work with a crazy man is not pleasurable, but the service to Krsna is pleasurable.* He described his own case, leaving Vrndavana (now he is in Vrndavana again, but with mind full of problems, ISKCON anxieties), so he took all risk in old age and went far away to the U.S.A.—and now we all have Krsna consciousness. We should do likewise. *The work was not pleasurable, but making so many devotees is very pleasurable.*

February 9

Lecture notes

Test—how much I have conquered over sleeping, eating, mating.

Vrndavana is for *paramahamsas*. You can't see Vrndavana with *visaya*, material spirit, or think you can just come to Vrndavana and be a *gosvami*. One who comes to find Vrndavana with material spirit takes birth as a dog, monkey, etc., in Vrndavana, as punishment. Dogs here are Vaisnavas.

Real Vrndavana is not to eat and mate and sleep, but to follow the advice of Vrndavana-candra and broadcast Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is Vrndavana. Vrndavana-dhama is worshipable. Don't commit offense here. Take it as *cintamani-dhama*, Kṛṣṇa. Narottama dasa says, "To see Vrndavana is not possible with *visaya*." Take shelter of Gaura-Nitai, become cleansed of eating, mating, etc., then see. Don't commit offense; there is special influence in Vrndavana.

Walk

In Vrndavana, whatever service you do has the effect multiplied by one hundred. If you do 1% service, it has the effect of one hundred times that, and whatever offense you commit in Vrndavana has one hundred times the effect. Ordinary persons are therefore advised to visit a holy place for no more than three days because once they get acclimatized to the place, they will begin their sinful activities. Better one becomes purified and leaves on the fourth day. The worst offense to Vrndavana is to commit illicit sex here.

If a gambler is offered profit times one hundred or loss times one hundred . . .

February 12

Lecture notes

The process of chanting is to hear. Thoughts may come, but the process is simply to hear and chant with the tongue. Nothing is very hard in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just do it sincerely as the spiritual master orders. Not hard at all. Understand Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Simply admit this. Why wait for many births? "My Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are supreme. For so long I have forgotten You. Now I accept You." Accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Absolute Truth and your business is finished—if you stay in that position.

Without being free from sins, no one can put their faith at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This is the test.

Remarked: *sahajiyas* walk out during the lecture because they are "so advanced." They just want to hear about embracing and kissing Radharani. They take this as ordinary, but a real devotee wants to hear Krsna being placed in the supermost position. *Krsna-katha* is very pleasing.

Lecture notes

If one satisfies a saintly person, that means he satisfies Krsna.

Because you are educated doesn't mean you can understand Krsna, but if you approach as His *bhakta*, servant . . . Krsna is very rare, *durlabham*, but He is *adurlabham*, very easily handed over by His devotee.

Big devotees keep Bhagavan in their hand. Devotees never describe themselves as big *bhaktas*.

Perfect means to take your subordinate position.

February [?]

Mayapur

His Guru Maharaja never appointed an *acarya*, although they are fighting in the law court over who is *acarya*. As if it can be decided by votes. He talked (his Guru Maharaja) the whole night before his disappearance, yet he never mentioned who should be *acarya*.

All of Prabhupada's disciples should be *acarya*, not just twelve. It depends on if you preach. Bhaktivinoda Thakura said a Vaisnava will be told by how many Vaisnavas he has made.

One *sannyasi* was told that if he doesn't like to take direction from his Godbrothers, he can work independently, but within the jurisdiction of ISKCON. Even Lord Caitanya gave assignments. He told Nityananda to preach in Bengal and Rupa and Sanatana to go to Vrndavana.

The spiritual platform is therefore one of nonenviousness. Materially, we hear one is advanced and we try to curb down. Spiritually, one is glad to see it.

On one walk, Srila Prabhupada was taking the hand of a devotee who was helping him over the rough ground. He said, "The Mayavada philosophy is like this. I worship and take help from you, and then when I am out of difficulty, I don't need you any more."

The way a doctor applies medicine to a horse with four men holding down the horse while medicine is forced down his throat—this is how we apply Kṛṣṇa consciousness to non-devotees.

Example: a man is flying a kite, standing on a roof, and is just about to fall off. We are like that, coming to give the man Kṛṣṇa consciousness to save him from falling into so much suffering in transmigration. But the man objects, "Leave me alone. What are you interrupting me for?"

February [?]

Mayapur walk

He said one should not break the regulative principles except in an emergency, and then with the permission of the spiritual master, not whimsically. *Ahaituky apratihata* means devotional service without impediment: story of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's servant, Govinda, who crossed the Lord's legs to serve Him (massage), but not for his own eating.

Someone criticized that devotees are residing on floors above the Deity at Chandrodya Mandir. For that matter, Srila Prabhupada said, Kṛṣṇa is in every atom, so how can we walk on the road? We do so in service. That building is not even our temple. We asked others to give us shelter while we built our temple, but they refused, so our preaching must go on. If we did not build a comfortable residence for the Westerners, they would not come.

March 11, 1974

New Delhi

He wrote a letter to government men speaking of the necessity of divisions of society by quality and work. The proposition was made for a practical *varnasrama* college, but before we can

teach others of *varnasrama*, our ISKCON has to be divided. Not everyone can study; not all are actually *brahmanas*, but each should understand that they can attain the same perfection by doing their duty. Not that only the *brahmanas* achieve perfection. See *Gita* verses 18.45–47.

March 16

Vrndavana walk

Godbrothers were planning an event in honor of Srila Prabhupada and suddenly canceled it on someone's objection to an article in *Back to Godhead* in which Srila Prabhupada is quoted as saying, "Gosvamis who live in Vrndavana outwardly following rules but secretly sinful, will in their next life become hogs or dogs in Vrndavana." The envious persons have taken it that the statement means all the *gosvamis* of Vrndavana, including Rupa Gosvami.

Preaching means fighting, not easy life. His Guru Maharaja was always fighting the Mayavadis.

He said *gosvami* means one who can control the six urges and make disciples all over the world. And (quoting and translating from the prayers to the Six Gosvamis) a *gosvami* is one who is very conversant with *sastra*. There are no *gosvamis* now, at least none visible. Otherwise, why are there so many religions? Krsna said, "Give up all religion and surrender to Me." An *acarya* has to defeat all bogus religions.

March [?]

Bombay

He was always thinking how he could benefit everyone. As *Gita* says, *sarva-bhutanam*. Unless one comes to this realization, how can he be a representative of God? He said he never had national feeling or human feeling, but feeling for all living entities.

At home as a householder, he was doing some preaching and people were coming, but his family members were upstairs

taking tea. He was very angry with them. He told his wife, "You either give up tea or lose your husband." She thought he was joking. He was determined. He took *sannyasa*; they took it as a great shock. He said now he is fully satisfied—he did not care to talk about them anymore.

He said, "Just think how busy Kṛṣṇa is—He is in the heart of every living entity." I said, "If an ordinary person is too busy, he gets confused." He laughed, "And yet Kṛṣṇa is with Radha-rani and His queens in Dvaraka." Then he said, "This is God." He said his mission is to defeat false *yogis*, *gurus*, so-called incarnations. We have to be a servant, but not of them. They cannot do anything like God. "I may not go back to Kṛṣṇa," he said, "but if I can expose these bogus rascals . . ."

Sannyasis should read and preach all over the world. People speak English everywhere, so defeat the rascals.

Immense field of work all over the world.

I asked if, in addition to my other duties, I should study. He answered, "How else will you progress? You have to have a clear conception of *siddhanta*. People will come [and you have to defend]."

He said when we go to the U.S. again, he wants to visit the *gurukula* and stay for some time. He also wants to start a *gurukula* at Bhaktivedanta Manor.

But disciples are always envious of one another, even important managers. Even big Godbrothers. That is the material disease. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* says *nirmatsaranam*—"for nonenvious." Jealousy starts with envy of Kṛṣṇa, "I am as good as He." That will ruin us.

Nitai told him I was sick. I admitted, "Yes, I have diarrhea from eating at the life members' homes." "Yes," Prabhupada said, "we should not accept invitations. The difficulty is that I accept invitations, but I eat proportionately. You see something palatable and eat as much as you can. A man may give me hundreds of palatable things, but I will only eat what I can digest. It requires restraint.

"You Americans do not know how to eat. You boil a piece of meat . . . Indian eating is very palatable [but spicy, and you eat too much and get sick]."

India's pleasure is eating. Family together and eating . . . and in the temple. At *annakuta* ceremony in Vrndavana they have three hundred preparations. Each province has its own cooking, spices, preparations—and mostly all from grains, ghee, and sugar. Vegetables too.

Girls made him a new set of silk clothes. When he saw them he said, "What is this? This color is not right. I have told them before!" They were bright orange, like the Mayavadis. When I went to gather them up to take them away, however, he stopped me and said, "Who will wear them? Are you going to throw them away?" He is wearing them now because they were made for him.

March 22

Bombay

In an attempt to find out why I am unable to control my senses or relish the words of my spiritual master, in an attempt through writing to find out why I am unhappy although engaged full-time in spiritual life, I will set down purports to various verses of the *Caitanya-caritamṛta*. The main attempt will be to seek earnestly my own self-purification, and it may be of value to readers in that I know the final goal of spiritual happiness—only attained when one is blessed—is to make empowered glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Kṛṣṇa.

(1) "By remembering the lotus feet of the Panca-tattva, a dumb man can become a poet, a lame man can cross mountains, and a blind man can see the stars in the sky." (Cc. *Adi* 8.5)

My bad habits are not horrendous vices, but petty, embarrassing deficiencies which, nevertheless, can, in time, completely surround my growing devotional creeper. Stealing from the spiritual master's stock of sweets is slight enough to seem even humorous, but it has the nature of an offense. More

serious is that I fall asleep during his evening lectures. The point is, how can a person who is weakened by such lack of sense control claim to be a *gosvami*, a representative of Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master? How can he hope to change others' lives toward *tapasya*? How can he chastise others for their own good? One who himself smokes cigarettes cannot tell others, "Don't smoke!"

As for unhappiness, it lies in my lack of enthusiasm. I do not chant the holy name with dependence or even attention, just with deadened duty, as if I am stuck. The example is given of a man who falls into a covered-over well in the field. Far from any people's hearing, he may yell, but who will hear him to help him? I have by myself gotten into these bad habits, lost the taste of enthusiasm and immersion in preaching thoughts, and so my lamentation can't bring help.

While my Godbrothers may consider me a surrendered, humble devotee, I am falling asleep when my spiritual master speaks and more—a whole list of offenses and bad mental habits.

Not immersed in Kṛṣṇa-thought. These things disqualify me as I pray to the Panca-tattva to please grant me life enough to worship at Their feet and to chant the Panca-tattva mantra and Hare Kṛṣṇa with real feeling and attention. That will save me from the swarm of petty vices that have weakened me, and then I can tell the whole world how the chanting of these mantras will save them from their hell-bound path of mass forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa, which is making chaos in the world.

(2) "One who does not accept the glories of the Panca-tattva but still makes a show of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa can never achieve the mercy of Kṛṣṇa nor advance to the ultimate goal." (Cc. *Adi* 8.7)

Everyone requires education in who is the real spiritual master and who is Kṛṣṇa. Formerly the government leaders passed this information down. Prabhupada says we should make this our criteria now for selecting a leader: ask him, "Do you know the *Bhagavad-gita*?" If he says no, then we cannot give him our vote. Gandhi had the idea, as he always used to pose with a copy of the *Gita* under his arms, but actually he never

spoke about Kṛṣṇa and he did not actually know the Gita. People have to study the *Bhagavad-gita*, but not from a professional reciter or professor.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says, "The education cultivated by so-called scholars who do not believe these statements of *Caitanya-caritamṛta* is like the tumultuous croaking of frogs." I know readers may take all this as sectarian. (Actually the existence of many sectarian groups is only because there are no strong *gosvami* preachers. Kṛṣṇa Himself asked only that we surrender to Him and give up all else being done in the name of religion.)

If someone is taking these beggar's notes as views of a sectarian monk, we refer to Kṛṣṇadāsa's verse: "If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply it to the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If you do so, you will find it to be strikingly wonderful." We do not put forward dry, mundane logic. That is not what he means. Not logic of science or philosophy based on the imperfect senses of this material body. If we study impartially, everyone will agree that there is no one who can surpass Lord Caitanya in humanitarian activities, because He is awarding love of God. It requires study. You may think it is sectarian, although quickly, if you listen, you will agree that it is scientific and not bogus.

Srila Prabhupāda once wrote an essay, "Who is Crazy?" The materialists may think we are crazy, but if one is actually living for the pleasures of this body, which is soon taken away—and where we go after this body we do not know—then such a person is crazy. Lord Caitanya is benefiting the eternal spirit soul. Why Lord Caitanya and not Jesus Christ, Mohammed or someone else? Because He is giving love of Kṛṣṇa most freely and He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. His method is most authoritative. Whoever you are, whether you take this as preaching or whatever, please listen, it is for the greatest good. Even though I have admitted so many of my personal deficiencies, and even though you may be already conversant with many high-level understandings of the mind and philosophical thought and experience in the world—please go on studying this Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Prabhupada said his whole mission is just to expose cheaters in this line. Cheaters in the name of *yogi*, self-proclaimed incarnation of God, swami, philosopher—as you study according to scientific principles you find that almost everyone is cheating in one way or another. And no one has a clear idea of what God is. Prabhupada said, "I may not myself go back to Kṛṣṇa, but I want to expose the cheaters."

Srila Prabhupada called me and said, "Keep a book. I get many ideas, write them down and consult with management." He outlined a plan for book distribution here in Bombay: Saturday and Sunday, a *sankirtana* party from 5 to 8 P.M., girls with selling carts on the beach. Also, reprint small books, go door to door, girls selling cookbooks, make good connection with the people. He spoke full of energy. I said I would tell the president here to organize it. "No, you do it!" he said. GBC means to engage everyone and then no one will be sleeping. He then called Mohanananda, who earlier in the morning he told that he had to help himself or else what good was the spiritual master's counsel?—and gave him the whole life-saving engagement to organize printing of small books and the *sankirtana* party going out with books and leaflets.

March 30

As one preaches continually to nondevotees, discusses the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy with devotees, reads, writes, and chants with not too much involvement in business management, a potency develops. He becomes immersed in these activities more than someone who is not so constantly preaching. This I see as the glory of *sannyasa*. Taking advantage of the privilege to preach, he trains his tongue to speak only of Kṛṣṇa and as Srila Prabhupada so often explains, he travels all over the world to spread the message of *Bhagavad-gita*. Austerity, cleanliness, regulated following of principles (early rising, chanting), outer preaching program to distribute Kṛṣṇa's mercy—in battle against Mayavadis and atheists, jolly in spiritual identity, he represents his spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa.

While my Godbrothers are out preaching like that, I am still receiving training as my spiritual master's secretary. Sometimes I think, "Why be so eager to go out and preach? You have no potency." Of course, Kṛṣṇa helps even a neophyte, and new devotees become attracted. As I see my duties, the first thing is to tend to the particulars of my service—writing and filing letters, seeing that Prabhupada's personal needs are met—and then of great importance is hearing attentively on the morning walk and the evening lecture. I have become a hearer rather than a preacher. Let me do it. Let me thoroughly absorb the message from the life of my spiritual master—not just the formal lectures, but everything he says and does. *Let me not become lax in my duties*, or that will breed contempt by familiarity. Let me serve and hear, and that will be my perfection. I should not be agitated that I am being kept by my guru's side as his constant companion. When guru and Kṛṣṇa want me to go and preach, they will send me out. "A dumb man can speak like a poet." Do not think I am losing time by hearing and staying by Srīla Prabhupada. Take the benefit; become pure by personal association. *Be careful in secretarial duties*. Be thankful you are protected.

From Cc. *Adi* 10.92:

When Raghunatha dasa Gosvami approached Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Jagannātha Puri, the Lord entrusted him to the care of Svarupa Damodara, His secretary. Thus they both engaged in the confidential service of the Lord.

Purport:

This confidential service was the personal care of the Lord. Svarupa Damodara, acting as His secretary, attended to the Lord's baths, meals, rest and massages, and Raghunatha dasa Gosvami assisted him. In effect, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami acted as the assistant secretary of the Lord. [italics added]

April 3, 1974

He told Tamal Krishna Goswami that without preaching, ISKCON will become rubbish. Management will be at "our fingers end" if devotees simply follow rules, chant, and take *prasadam*. Preaching is first. He said it is good if presidents and GBC switch around sometimes.

April 4

Devotees asked if they might manufacture incense burners in India. He said no, we cannot manage anything, not even washing our cloth, because formerly we gave up all responsibility. We don't know how to be responsible. There are so many American boys and girls—hippies—America's position is not good.

He then said that he is retired at his age. He cannot manage, but just do some writing.

My main lament is, "Why can't I go out and preach?" Actually, higher than the act of going out to preach on the front lines is doing what the spiritual master desires. If he desires I do his secretarial work, then surrender to that will place me in the blessings of *parampara* more than anything. That will make the best disciple; that will be my success.

He asked me during the massage if there were some place he could go for six months where he could be alone and where no one wanted to see him. I mentioned Tehran and he was considering it. He then thought of New Vrindaban. He mentioned how Gandhi couldn't even get to sleep at night. People would always be after him, even though he always traveled incognito.

Then before his walk, he went to the room where Tamal Krishna Goswami is recuperating. TKG said he was reading the books all day and not sleeping. Srila Prabhupada said, "Very good." "But I'm not actively serving," TKG said. Srila Prabhupada said, "This is active. Active doesn't mean jumping like a monkey. Do something substantial." Then he walked around the *asrama* and discovered discrepancies—found out

some cement was missing and remarked that no one is responsible and that is dangerous.

Last night we received an invitation to go to Paris. He said he could go. I said, "But earlier today, you asked where you could be alone. This is just the opposite." He laughed. "That will not be possible for me in this lifetime. Better [I keep traveling and] die on the battlefield. For a warrior it is glorious to die on the battlefield, isn't it?"

April 5

Tolerating my rascal mind is one thing, as long as I don't identify it as my real interest. To know more and more personally the person who is my spiritual master is the greatest of benedictions. Certainly one can never know the mind of a pure devotee, and familiarity breeds contempt, yet if handled with control, like fire, this opportunity is the greatest that I could ever dream of. There is no greater advantage attainable than to be the servant of the servant of the Lord, to be literally the menial servant of the servant of the Lord.

April 7

As *parivrajakacaryas*, *sannyasis* struggle to find the best preaching program. Kṛṣṇa awards intelligence as they surrender and stay out on traveling *sankirtana*, trying always to best utilize time for reaching people for becoming devotees. That is a great taste and one feels he pleases the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa while in the field that way. But the main thing is to be attached to the guru's feet. Such preaching makes one attached with firm grip to guru's instruction. It is not the preaching per se, but the preaching attached to guru. The preacher becomes purified telling others about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and he becomes more and more enlivened carrying out the guru's orders. And more empowered.

Tamala Krishna Goswami was just pointing out to me that this attachment to guru can also be gained by his personal service and association as servant and secretary. If I ever feel it

is not so, I can ask Prabhupada to release me for preaching. As long as I feel strong by tending him, however, writing his letters, writing for *Back to Godhead*—then I am best fixed doing as he has asked—even if it is not exactly like preaching. It is a different service, but the essence—growing attachment to guru—is there. The full opportunity is there for the sincere disciple.

From Kṛṣṇa book

"My dear Lord, You have very kindly asked what You can do for me. In answer to this I simply request that I may not forget Your lotus feet at any time. I do not care where I may be, but I pray that I may be allowed to constantly remember Your lotus feet."

The benediction which the sage Narada asked of the Lord is the ideal prayer of all pure devotees. A pure devotee never asks for any kind of material or spiritual benediction from the Lord, but his only prayer is that he may not forget the lotus feet of the Lord.

Srila Prabhupada heard that Tamal Krishna Goswami was determined to go and preach in the U.S.A. "Yes," he said, "managers we can get by paying them if we have to, but we can't pay someone to preach. He has to be self-realized."

A song in Bengali says the poet wants only to be the dog in the house of a Vaisnava.

If I learn humility from my spiritual master first hand, then I will be a qualified preacher.

I am too much of a rascal to be appreciative. Still he is keeping me and training me in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, although I am unwilling.

Tamal Krishna Goswami was saying how I was placed highly on the tree of ISKCON, not obscurely, way off. But in comparison to Kṛṣṇadāsa's description of devotees on the tree of Lord Caitanya, I am a parody of the good qualities of pure devotees.

"Satsvarupa dasa Goswami was the personal secretary and servant of His Divine Grace. Within his mind he was always

agitated, preoccupied with the sense gratification of acceptance and rejection according to his own desires, and ungrateful for his good fortune. He regarded menial service as an insult and was never satisfied with his service given to him by his spiritual master. He was lazy and prone to sleep, even in the matter of chanting the holy name of the Lord. He had no patience in the will of the Lord or his spiritual master. Thus he was unhappy and unable to resolve himself in devotional service.”

Finally I presented this foolish case before my spiritual master, who told me it was a concoction—wanting to leave his personal service to go and preach, and being unenthusiastic by such lack of preaching chance. He told me preaching means to be fully engaged in any different capacity in Kṛṣṇa’s service.

As I tried to make a few further objections in his presence and as he strongly countered them, criticizing my whimsical changing of duty, my case seemed ridiculous. “A real preacher preaches everywhere.” His words saved me from my whimsical desires which would only have led away from the real path of *bhakti*, which is to please Kṛṣṇa by pleasing the spiritual master. I myself do not know what is best for other living entities or what is best for me; therefore, I require a spiritual master. He holds the mace, he has the right.

From Cc., *Madhya-līlā*, Chapter 22

The conditioned soul has lusty desires and anger, being used to being kicked by the external energy *māyā*. In this way, he wanders all over the universe until by chance he gets the association of a devotee physician. (Text 14)

The instruction of the spiritual master causes the witch of external energy to go away and the conditioned soul gets in touch with devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa—making progress nearer and nearer to the Lord. (Text 15)

The association of a devotee for a duration of eleven times less than a moment cannot be compared to the profit of being elevated to the heavenly planets or being merged into the existence of the Supreme, what to speak of getting material opulence. (Text 55, from *Bhag.* 1.18.13)

April 8

A devotee wrote that we were being offered donations of land in different places. "Yes, take them," he said. "We can open a center with just one man, as I did in the beginning." He can go to the villages as Lord Caitanya wanted, everywhere. One man can go and sit and talk of Kṛṣṇa and collect locally. He spoke of how the British ruled India with only two hundred top men in India. All the subordinates were Indians. The one man we send, however, has to be without desires for sense gratification.

Tirupati, Balaji

We fly to Tirupati—first time Srila Prabhupada has been here—to see the famous Venkatesvara temple. Three of us, met by devotees, drive into town. Thousands of pilgrims come here. Walk up a seven-mile mountain to the temple. Big, free lodgings. In the cottage, Srila Prabhupada is pleased by the nice arrangements. Two pictures of the Deity with a handkerchief over His eyes. It is all a mystery to me. Whites are usually not allowed to see the Deity in the temple. We will be allowed. During the massage, the secretary went to assure Srila Prabhupada of *darsana*. I asked Srila Prabhupada if Lord Caitanya has been here. "Yes, He traveled all over South India." I asked if Balaji is Kṛṣṇa in His child form. "Yes, the name means child. Kṛṣṇa as a cowherd boy." "Not Vaikuntha?" "No. What do the rascal scientists know of Vaikuntha or Goloka Vrndavana?" Well, I said, they haven't seen it in a telescope or from a rocket. That is imaginary, defective. So many planets glittering at night. What do they know of other planets? They cannot say such a place is not possible. Rascals. They can't get even a vague idea of only one planet. I said,

"They say they are making progress—years ago people thought the earth was flat." Not in the *Vedas*. They clearly say Goloka is round. Maybe in your Bible they don't know, but the *Vedas* knew.

Scheduled for Srila Prabhupada, we will see Balaji. Srila Prabhupada is happy in the cottage.

There are always difficulties in material life. A Vaisnava doesn't complain for himself. Dear Lord.

April 30

Counting blessings: among the first principles of *bhakti*, approaching a spiritual master, taking initiation, carrying out his orders—there is "inquiring from the spiritual master." I have a wonderful opportunity.

May 2, 1974

Bombay

I have been ill. Srila Prabhupada said bile. He recommended sugar cane juice and bitter *sukta* and said it was due to overwork.

Srila Prabhupada: They are keeping Balaji as a stone statue and collecting. I am the only single person preaching that Krsna is God. *No one appreciates or understands, not even my own disciples.* There had been some discussion.

Pancadravida Swami was in to see Srila Prabhupada before his breakfast. He told him that our mission is to make a certain section of the population ideal men. We cannot expect everyone. If by this way or that way you can bring one person to Krsna, He is very pleased to have one of His sons return. Hearing him giving his *sannyasi* disciple impetus like this to go and preach, I felt again the desire to leave my secretarial duties in direct service of Srila Prabhupada and go preaching in the U.S. colleges. I remember how I was doing that before and vowed that if given the chance, I would try harder this time. But I have already brought this up to Prabhupada and he dismissed it as whimsical. I have my present duties assigned to

me. I am trying to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and pray to Kṛṣṇa to treat me as He likes for my betterment, as only He knows. To ask for a certain situation in devotional service is my sense gratification—that is not *bhakti*. The Lord knows my heart and knows all things considered, which I do not know—what is best. *Bhakti* is not for my pleasure, but for Kṛṣṇa's. I have to have more faith in Kṛṣṇa that everything is all right.

Walking on Juhu Beach, reading from the *Kṛṣṇa* Book about Kṛṣṇa stealing the clothes of the unmarried *gopī* girls. Srila Prabhupada said they would do whatever Kṛṣṇa asked. That is love. "You can do whatever You want, still I love You," Lord Caitanya prayed. Otherwise it becomes a business exchange.

As in my miserable case, my spiritual master has clearly asked me to do one duty, but I am thinking of doing another and still pleasing him.

The best thing is even if one doesn't want to do something, if he is ordered by his spiritual master, he should do it. You cannot say that by following the direct order of the spiritual master it will hinder your spiritual progress. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasado*. By the mercy of the spiritual master, one gets the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Without the blessings of the spiritual master, no one can make any advancement. I may think it is very difficult to be asked to suspend traveling and preaching, but if my spiritual master has asked me to do so, then I must.

May 11

Last night I woke up from a confused nightmare and had the feeling of the extreme danger to be independent of the spiritual master's desire. In a graver mood, I am accepting the service I have been given. Without guru's grace, one's place is unknown. Do not gamble with it. Preaching will come as Kṛṣṇa desires.

May 16

As attachment can be invoked by the association of pure devotees, so attachment can also be extinguished by offenses committed at the lotus feet of pure devotees. . . . This extinguishing is like the waning of the full moon, which gradually

decreases and at last becomes dark. One should therefore be very careful while associating with pure devotees to guard against committing an offense at their lotus feet.

Transcendental attachment, either shadow or *para*, can be nullified by different degrees of offenses at the lotus feet of pure devotees. If the offense is very serious, then one's attachment becomes almost nil, and if the offense is not very serious, one's attachment can become second class or third class.

—NOD, p. 141

Also from *The Nectar of Devotion*, Lord Kṛṣṇa's quality of forbearance:

A person who tolerates all kinds of troubles, even though such troubles appear to be unbearable, is called forbearing.

When Kṛṣṇa was residing at the place of His spiritual master, He did not mind taking all troubles in rendering service to His *guru*, although His body was very soft and delicate. It is the duty of the disciple to execute all services unto the spiritual master, despite all kinds of difficulties.

—NOD, p. 170

May 20

*yasya prasadaḥ bhagavat-prasado
yasya prasadaḥ na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

Srila Prabhupada spoke last night here in Vrndavana and said that *bhakti* means to please Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa sometimes appears as a warrior. Why? He could demolish millions of universes in a second. He appears as a warrior for His pleasure. Our business is to help Him in His pleasure. If He wants to fight, we should offer Him an arrow. If He is as a warrior, we shouldn't offer Him a glass of milk.

We have to please Kṛṣṇa, not ourselves or our own idea. Now I am not about to meet Kṛṣṇa face to face, so I must please His representative who is teaching the order of Kṛṣṇa—"Surrender to Me." With this scientific understanding I have taken more heart for the day, not to plot how to carry out my desire for

service, but to obey the spiritual master. Not resent him for thwarting my desire. Not think him ordinary in my anger and enviousness, or that he is giving me tasks not designed for me.

May 23

Arrival in Rome

People ask what Srila Prabhupada's day is like. Since I have been with him, he rises about 1:30 A.M. I am usually asleep, but around 2:00 or 3:00 I sometimes wake and hear him dictating. Once Dr. Patel said to Srila Prabhupada, "Today I rose at 2:30!" Srila Prabhupada replied, "I rose at 1:30!" Gargamuni Swami said to me, "What *sadhu* in India gets up at 1:30 to write books?" It is proof of his authenticity.

In Bombay we set up a small house of mosquito netting for him to work in. Now he is working on *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, so he opens the big volume and with a small desk light on, begins translating the synonyms one by one, clicking the dictaphone "hold" button while he pauses briefly for his thoughts. He works occasionally with the small Oxford dictionary for English.

Once when I was sleeping in the room next to him, I went past him at 4 A.M. and he asked, "What is the word for being bound up in chains?" "Shackled?" I said. "Yes," he accepted. Another time he asked, "What is the word for forgiveness?" I said "atonement," and he accepted. He is confident English will be read by educated people all over the world. Once he heard that a disciple of his in Hyderabad had been arguing with a man about why Srila Prabhupada didn't write in Hindi. The boy said, "I hate Hindi." Srila Prabhupada said that he shouldn't have said it, but actually, Hindi is of small importance. English he finds accepted everywhere.

The translation work goes on sometimes for two or three hours, sometimes less. Then from around 3 to 5 A.M. he sits and chants on his beads. Srila Prabhupada mostly chants on his beads silently, although the moving beads can sometimes be heard in the next room and sometimes, "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa." Then at 5:10 he gets up to go to the bathroom. At that

time I go into his room and put out his *tilaka* and mirror, put away his books and spectacles, and ready things for his morning walk. After the bathroom he puts on *tilaka*, says *gayatri*, and then is ready to go on his morning walk. People often interrupt his schedule at almost any point, but usually no one is up to interrupt his translating except howling dogs, mosquitoes, or electrical failure. His translating is also sometimes interrupted by disturbing thoughts, usually about ISKCON, which make him simply sit at his desk and think and worry instead of translating. For years he has been asking disciples to free him of these management worries.

The morning walk begins just before the sun comes up. In India, Srila Prabhupada says clothing is artificial, it is so warm. In other countries, sometimes he bundles up in big coats and long underwear. He wears only a certain pair of shoes for walks and saves another pair for all other occasions.

In *Kṛṣṇa* book it says a devotee is like a waterfall: sometimes he is silent and sometimes speaking. I asked what that means, and he said the devotee speaks at his will. He is not obliged.

Devotees are eager to accompany Prabhupada on his walks. Sometimes he speaks the whole time. He walks long, usually about an hour and a half. I think he walks a total of 2 miles. If it rains, he "walks sitting down" in a car. This morning we walked through the Borghese Park in Rome. "It is a big park," he said, "like Hyde Park in London. It is bigger than Sunset Park in San Francisco."

Today while walking, he suddenly quoted from *Brahma-samhita* that from Kṛṣṇa's breathing the universes are spinning out. He said the statues in the park were a kind of deification, making ordinary man god.

After the morning walk, we return and he takes breakfast, usually consisting of fruits, ginger pieces, and chickpeas and if the weather is cold, *halavah*. This morning he asked for *upma*. Here in Rome he is holding the morning *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class.

From 9:00 to 11:30 in the morning, Srila Prabhupada usually stays in his room. We try to keep guests out. Because he is

still managing affairs, devotees come and discuss, or letters are answered.

At 11:30 he gets massaged for an hour, then takes bath and has lunch. Once during the massage in Bombay he saw that contractors coming to take coconuts were also taking away leaves, disfiguring the trees and exploiting us. He leapt to his feet and called, "Caitya-guru! I can't close my eyes," he said. "No one else sees. You are being cheated."

He takes rest from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M., has coconut water or juice upon waking. In other words, he eats only twice a day except occasionally at night. Guests come at 5:00 or there is an evening lecture. He takes rest between 10:00–11:00 P.M. after having a leg massage.

Srila Prabhupada said he would leave me in one place during the tour because I "cannot even sit up" due to my jaundice case. This alarms me and I'm determined to get well in the four days before we leave Rome. Otherwise, Karandhara will become the secretary. Prabhupada called Bhagavan in and told him to write a book. The world's problems are solved by *bhakti-yoga*. Every day he is to bring one problem to Prabhupada and Srila Prabhupada will show how it is solved by the *Gita*.

May 27

Rome

I will no more write this dialogue which is like a dialogue between good and evil. I have resigned myself to follow Sri Guru's desires. Now I pray to find a way to expand my services as secretary. My worshipable Godbrothers have suggested I take on various serious writing projects. At present, I have no such desire. I should try for it while being conscientious about Prabhupada's needs as my duty. Take advantage to preach and give classes whenever possible.

June 7, 1974

Geneva

Srila Prabhupada is allowing me to go to the U.S. to lead a traveling party for distributing books to the colleges and libraries. He says it is very important work. It is all happening so positively! He is *very intent* on the distribution of his books to the libraries. Having received one report on the activities of one such party, he is always telling his guests about their success in contacting professors, getting their recommendation and placing the books in the libraries. The other night I simply volunteered to go and he accepted it. Since then, I have been patiently waiting while steps are taken to bring my replacement. But today during the massage, Prabhupada affirmed my leaving. He asked if I had been in touch with the book party in the U.S. I said "Yes, but they had stopped." They said they would start again when I came. I said, "I told them I would be returning." "Yes," he said, "lead and they can assist." He also asked me to recruit Mohanananda to help. "Convince him that this is very important work, distributing books in the colleges." And also Hridayananda Goswami, the GBC of South America, can "occasionally come. Travel all over the country and distribute the books to colleges." Needless to say, this is my heart's desire.

Then he asked if Brahmananda Swami, my replacement, can type. Yes, I said and we began to talk of typists. He said Hayagriva was the best. I said Jayadvaita was very good. "He is also a good devotee. He understands the philosophy, and he is very submissive." He asked me about Karandhara. I said everyone respects him and he will be successful as GBC of India. He was only afraid of getting sick. "No, if he just eats *kichari* and boiled vegetables and yogurt and no spices, he won't get sick. If he is cautious of his eating. You boys eat too much. Indian food is spicy and you can't digest it."

He said now he is translating the *atmarama* verse and Lord Caitanya is showing that everyone is *atmarama* and everyone

is *muni*. All can come to Kṛṣṇa by the grace of a pure devotee. He is explaining the *atmarama* verse from that line. He said, "So when we get to America, you will begin your work?"

July 19, 1974

Los Angeles

By Kṛṣṇa's grace, I now have everything I yearned for in the past months, as recorded above. I have my own traveling party and an excellent assignment fully approved and blessed by Srila Prabhupada—to travel and distribute books to the colleges and libraries. Today I finished an essay about preaching for BTG magazine. I am working in separation from my spiritual master, but I do not feel depressed or sorry about anything. He very kindly and expertly allowed me to transfer to my present engagement. Now I must always pray for the determination to carry on with this present library distribution party in the U.S. because it is a long-term project, as Kṛṣṇa desires.

July 26

San Francisco

Our party is going nicely. Others are pleased with our work. At the same time, there is the opportunity to expand my service by taking on management of the old Central zone. It is a vacant post so I have volunteered for it. We shall see. In this case, whether or not it is awarded, the alternatives are hopeful. I have to deal with myself as a conditional devotee, although His Divine Grace says service should be without condition. Thus my progress, I admit, is slow.

August 20, 1974

I am moved about like a chess piece on a board—Kṛṣṇa is the player through His various energies. It has been settled that I will not manage the Central zone. For the past month I have been thinking about it a lot and for the past ten days I have

actually taken the post under reappointment by Prabhupada through the mail. Now it has worked out that Jagadisa will take back the vacancy which he himself created. Therefore, I am going back to what I have written of elsewhere as the "simple, sublime" traveling library work. It is really suitable for *sannyasa* life. Traveling constantly with a devoted team of *brahmacaris*, successfully distributing books in the college libraries, big cities, and preaching in the ISKCON temples along the way. Dear spiritual master, dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, please let me do it without thinking I should do this or that instead. Let me understand how Kṛṣṇa is letting me serve free of entanglement in this wonderful library party.

“Adventures in Preaching”

September 27, 1974–April 27, 1975

My main impression of this period is how keen we devotees were to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. Since he was personally present, we were constantly going to him to gain approval for our activities. I read it now with the feeling that “I was better then.” At the same time, I detect an over-anxiety in those days, a kind of insecurity. As time goes by, we become more confident that we are surrendering to Prabhupāda. Of course, I still have anxieties!

Along with the positive anxiety to please Prabhupāda, there was also a constant striving among the devotees for recognition. In some of Prabhupāda’s remarks during the festival in India, he criticizes the attitude of a neophyte who always seeks to be recognized: “. . . one should render service his whole life without being recognized . . . But we tend to do business, do a little service, and want to be praised by the spiritual master. That is material.”

As I read of those days again, it seems that I was always dissatisfied. By Prabhupāda’s grace, I had full service and desire to work “to utmost capacity.” They were good old days of youthful energy: one could give five college lectures in a day and simply become enthusiastic to do more of them, more management, more reading, more writing, more travel, and so on. No doubt some of it was motivated by the desire to be recognized as a “big devotee,” but it was Prabhupāda’s expertise to engage us in Kṛṣṇa’s service and to burn up that false ego in the best possible way.

Prabhupāda knew of all my anxieties and insecurities and therefore he comforted me. I don't think he really wanted me to leave as his personal servant, but he convinced me that traveling with the library party was satisfying to him and that it was important service. I felt happy serving him in separation.

What bliss and "luxury" to count on seeing Prabhupāda at least a few times a year! We called that "serving in separation"; nowadays there is no such hope of catching up with Prabhupāda in Atlanta, or at least seeing him once a year in India. We did not know how much we had until we lost it. What we have now, however, is also deep and wonderful and can be filled with Prabhupāda consciousness.

It is hard to describe the group consciousness of several hundred persons present along with Prabhupāda on campus in Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana during the Gaura-Pūrṇimā festival. But these notes capture at least some of his key statements on walks and from lectures. The devotees at these festivals would hang on Prabhupāda's every word, discuss them, and desire to carry them out.

There were inevitable clashes of false ego and power politics among the leaders who sought to be "prominent," although Prabhupāda said that that was material. With an astounding ability to manage us all, Prabhupāda, however, extracted service from each person and kept us together as a more or less harmonious camp. Everything was for Kṛṣṇa and for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world.

For our vision we looked to Śrīla Prabhupāda. We all acknowledged that we could not see, but we had full faith that he could see. He was compassionate toward the suffering of the world; he could defeat the nonsense. No one could defeat him. We walked beside him and behind him on the morning walks like little children, yet as soldiers ready to fight the enemy on his word.

* * *

September 27, 1974

Here I will attempt to write down some of the encounters our party has had with college professors as we try to distribute Prabhupada's books to the university libraries and college courses.

We do not meet any saintly persons among the professors. Although they are serious about their studies, there is nothing of importance they can pass on to us. Just by meeting a pure devotee, we can be enlightened. Although we have traveled to many universities, no professor has given any enlightenment.

They almost all believe *Bhagavad-gita* is a myth. They do not know if it took place. We are writing firsthand accounts here just to expose their method of research and to expose their lack of realization—so that devotees of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and innocent persons need not be awed or influenced by the non-devotional, academic scholar. He is not authentic.

At a community college in St. Louis, I was allowed to teach a World Religions class. Afterwards the professor asked, "Do you take *Bhagavad-gita* to be a mystical book?" "Yes," I answered. Then he objected and said, "Why do you insist on one way of understanding it so that you even put 'As It Is' in the title?" He went on to say that from the mystical writings of China and other places that he had read, "mystic" meant beyond any one perception, not known as just one way, but encompassing all ways. "That is impersonal," I told him and explained, "The ultimate mystic of mystical objects is God, Kṛṣṇa. The devotee prays before God, taking Him as the Supreme Mystic: 'Lord, You are the unlimited and always beyond my comprehension because You have unlimited potencies. I surrender myself to You and wish to be engaged in Your service.'"

That particular professor had nothing more to say, but the very next day I was fortunate enough to be speaking about this very discussion of what is "mystical" to a professor at Southern Illinois University and he immediately objected in the same way. "I am suspicious of your confidence in thinking you have the key to understanding the truth," he said. He had been raised as a Christian by persons who also thought they knew

the truth, and he was very suspicious of it now. He frankly said that “mystic” to him meant the ultimate void. It reminded me of a third professor, a liberal minded Jewish psychology professor who let me teach a class in San Francisco University—he sounded the same theme. After my presentation, he said he felt Kṛṣṇa consciousness was too rigid in its insistence that the *Bhagavad-gita* be understood in only one way. He said the *Kabbala* is so mystical that it is said the letters of the text mysteriously change themselves over time to adjust to the new truths of new times. I explained to him that Kṛṣṇa’s message in the *Gita* is clear. He is the Supreme Person and He asks that everyone surrender to Him. There is no scope for taking it in different ways. For example, if I say “Give me a glass of water,” you may say, “This can be taken in many different ways.” But isn’t it clear, even grammatically, that I am asking for a glass of water? If you say, “You don’t want a glass of water really. Actually you are saying that you don’t exist and therefore don’t need any water,” can’t I say you are crazy and speculative? This professor was surprised. He said, “You mean you take *Bhagavad-gita* literally?”

Why do they all have this similar disease, taking “mystical” to mean vague, infinitely never-known? It is because they have no information about real spiritual life, and whatever training they have is from impersonalist speculators. One of their students asked me innocently, “I thought *Bhagavad-gita* could be taken in many ways.” They think Srila Prabhupada is presenting something against the standard by insisting on literally believing Kṛṣṇa when He claims He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They have no faith at all. They think the history of Kurukṣetra and Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna is mythical, allegorical, and open to their interpretation. Therefore, they can never understand the *Gita* as it is.

Another time, a professor who was listening to me addressing his colleague about how the *Gita* could definitely be known, interrupted to say, “*Gita* can be understood in different ways. On the one hand, you have Kṛṣṇa saying to Arjuna, who did not want to fight, that the soul is immortal, and therefore you can’t kill anyway. Then on the other hand, He is telling

Arjuna that as a warrior he must fight because it is his duty. The Gita teaches that one's duty is the highest truth."

That is also a typical professor gem. While it is true that Krsna told Arjuna to fight as it was his *ksatriya* duty, the real sense of the duty is that it is his obedience to God. Do it for Me, says Krsna, and there will be no bad reaction. They often put the highest meaning of *Gita* as this "duty," or speak abstractly of "devotion to the God" a million miles away from themselves—"for objectivity's sake." No, Krsna doesn't teach abstract duty for its own sake as the highest principle, or a wishy-washy indication of "devotion to God" (whatever God may be), but, "Surrender to Me. I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead standing before you." This message is for all humanity. That is the real meaning of *Bhagavad-gita*. Just see how they twist it and screw out mistaken meanings to suit their own likings. If they did not do that, they would have to consider themselves in the bright light of self-realization and would have to give up sense gratification, the sense of being the lord, and their insatiable lust for mental speculation.

It was a kind of hand-to-hand combat with a professor of behavioral psychology at Washburn University of Topeka. He was young and dressed like a hippy with a big bunch of curly hair on his head. He told me how in his study, they conduct many, many experiments with rats, and by giving them certain rewards, they observe how they act. I said the data from the rats' behavior couldn't be applied to humans. He said that in a certain controlled environment, human behavior is also predictable—people can be motivated by praise and attention. I informed him that the Vedic literature gives us information of the living entity as spirit soul and his satisfaction cannot be gauged by tests with rats or controlling material conditions. He admitted a human being was different than a rat, but said, as to why one becomes a human being—that is a matter of genetics. (I think his idea was that everything can be ultimately controlled for the satisfaction of the living being as a soulless entity possessed with material desires and fears, which are dealt with in the view of temporary life being the all-in-all.)

He denied that the soul could be proved. I said it can be perceived by consciousness. He said consciousness wasn't a symptom of the soul. I said it was and the soul proper can be perceived when the senses are purified, that it's a science. He said no, it is philosophy. Yes, I said, it is also philosophy, but do not take it as a sentimental faith. He was eating french-fried potatoes while we spoke and I pointed out to him that he was acting in faith that he was not being a victim of food poisoning. He said no, this is a proven thing by repeated data, a habitual practice. Still, it is faith. We have faith in Kṛṣṇa. We are able to experience by scientific *bhakti* methods that there is a soul and this is taught in the *Gita*. Many psychologists are interested in the higher consciousness beyond sense perception—knowing the self as taught in the *Gita*.

October 4, 1974

It is not that I am constantly experiencing difficulty in devotional service, but mostly I write the difficulty in this book so I can see it for what it is. It is only for my reading to help me become satisfied and be obedient to my spiritual master. The record I have left of my thoughts while serving as Prabhupada's direct secretary is therefore valuable. By reading it over I can see my actual state and why I wanted to leave. Otherwise, with the passage of time I might forget my actual motives and lose a sense of reality.

Even when I did not want to stay as secretary (because I wanted active preaching), I knew that if I displeased my spiritual master I would be doomed.

Presently, the service I am rendering—in heading a five-man party in library distribution—is certainly pleasing to Srila Prabhupada. He recently wrote me a letter from Vṛndavana saying he was pleased, that I had Kṛṣṇa's blessings in this work, and that I was accepting what he said. So there is no question of changing it. Traveling GBC. I pray to remain enthusiastic.

October [?]

Beloit College, Wisconsin

I am continuing to collect anecdotal encounters with professors exposing their wrong understanding of Indian philosophy. In the process, I am becoming familiar with their arguments. I have been reading a newly published book on Hinduism by a professor from Ohio University. I would like to write a general essay explaining what is wrong with the academic approach.

When you associate with professors or read their books, you constantly hear the historic approach based on archeology. Vaisnavism is seen by them as a later development based simply on their not having found any archaeological evidence except for a column with an inscription on it about "Bhagavan," and thus they set it at a certain date. They admit they are very vague about real dates and also that the early Indian civilizations did not make attempts to preserve records.

We take it from the evidence of *sastra* itself that *Bhagavad-gita* was being taught 140 million years ago. Vyasadeva says he composed the *Bhagavatam* at the outset of Kali-yuga, some 5,000 years ago, when all the timeless literature was set down. The important thing is the philosophy of *bhakti*, not the attempt to construct dates by foolish and speculative methods.

Another assumption the scholars make is that they cannot accept Vedic literature as a "believer" would accept it. For them to study it objectively, they must withhold judgment. This may be admirable from their point of view, but it definitely excludes them from actually understanding the *sastras*. Only one who has faith in the Supreme Lord and guru can understand. They call it "demytholization" when one ceases to take the scripture as literal truth and tries to see its value by various so-called rational approaches (allegory, sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc.). By this act they are disqualified.

They are so falsely proud in their intrusive approach to Vedic literature (think they possess the understanding by virtue of what past scholars have said, the tradition of archeology, etc.) that they even think Indology study was begun by Westerners. They state things as fact which are always ag-

nostic and demythologized, while thinking all their quoting of other scholars and archaeologic finds and statements of Krsna as legend should be taken seriously. Of course this has only been going on for a few hundred years, but prior to that the *acaryas* accepted, and then there are the *sastras* themselves and the words of Godhead accepted by great devotees.

To speak practically, those who follow develop saintly qualities. Scholars do not have any objection as a group to any kind of sinful practice now current in the modern age.

October [?]

Talk with Professor of Religion Dept., Macalester College

He was teaching existentialism. Had a copy of Camus' *Myth of Sisyphus* on his desk. He commented that the *Bhagavad-gita* couldn't answer some of the questions raised by Camus. I asked for an example. He said the existentialists reject the tradition of theism and try to live in a world which has no meaning. I challenged, "By what evidence do they say life has no meaning?" He agreed that that was their premise, but that the *Gita* has its own suppositions, but he was trying to point out to me what a valuable, serious contribution the existentialists have made. I said that they have not contributed anything, but, it has been said, they spawned the beat and hippie movements.

He repeated how the existential character in Camus' *The Plague* is living responsibly and socially in the world, although it has no meaning.

I told him that that was ignorance and not noble, and was not a contribution to humanity. I said the problems of birth, death, and old age could be solved by the philosophy of the *Gita*. He said the existentialist has given that up. He lives not for a future promised by a politician or scientist or religionist, but now. He has to find his unique self, to be brave enough to know what he is and live. I said, "Yes, he lives just for sense gratification and mental speculation." "No," he said, "he lives responsibly, although he is in anxiety over the world having no meaning." I said their saying the world has no meaning doesn't mean it is fact. The *Gita* teaches us that the soul is eternal.

He said that they would say that is ridiculous. They are free to live their own way, I admitted, but they cannot reject the process of discovering the highest humanism, love of God, by which one solves all anxiety. That they call escape, he said. No, I said, their suppositions don't explain very much; they have chosen to believe like that, but if there is no God, then where has everything in this existential world come from?

He said, "By chance it has come." "No," I said, "nothing happens like that. If you are writing a scholarly article on existentialism, does it happen by chance?" Here he backed down and said actually, he was from a Christian tradition and believed in Christianity. He said there was also a theism of existentialism.

How can the two go together? If the existentialist is a theist, how can he also think the world has no meaning? "Yes, that's the problem," he laughed, "how to reconcile the two." He said the theistic existentialist takes reason as far as he can, but has to face his unique self without relying on doctrine.

"But," I said, "the Vedic tradition tells us the soul is immortal, a divine part of God, and that he has fallen into the material world. His business is to go back to Godhead." "Oh no," he said. He rejected all this. That is not what the Bible says, not what Christianity says, or what existentialism says. I said, "I'm no Christian scholar, but I was raised as a Catholic and always taught that the self was an immortal son of God and that God is the Immortal Supreme." He said it is well known that Catholic thought is influenced by Greek thought. Plato teaches immortality, but in the Bible the self is not a divine spark or soul. I was surprised. I said this isn't theism. Real theism is to believe in God and eternal life. He said no, there were many different interpretations, and even Catholics were feeling free not to accept doctrines from their medieval teachers like St. Thomas Aquinas. He said, "Christianity is getting fuzzier and fuzzier," and everyone is free to make out the Bible as they see it.

Always he tried to come out with something less than the eternal kingdom of God and going there in the spiritual body.

He said the body can't exist without the soul or the soul without the body. I said there is a spiritual body.

Anyway, it just went on like that and I kept losing whatever respect I had left for him. They think they can criticize scripture, and that Jesus Christ never said we were eternal. It seems to me it is all more or less material speculation due to the Bible falling apart under modern scrutiny and their abandonment of the teachers of the past. What do the people have to turn to? He was a nonsense speculative scholar caught up with existential concepts of making your own life based on experience. I prayed that by talking with him, I would not be polluted, and hoped I could pray later to Kṛṣṇa to increase my faith in the great *acaryas* who are handing down perfect knowledge.

October 20

Detroit

I have been hearing of the activities of a demon in the U.S. called the deprogrammer, who is paid by parents of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees to kidnap and torture the devotees into giving up Kṛṣṇa consciousness and returning to nondevotee life. Last night I woke from a dream and felt like I was under a spell or process which was trying to "deprogram" me. It was not one of intellectual argumentation creating doubts of blasphemy, but an incoherent physical machinery, a feeling seducing my being to consider reality as ultimately sense gratification. It was something that also used to happen to me in my sleep when I was a child. Whatever it was, I learned from it that my chanting has not become very thoughtful or full of pleading to Kṛṣṇa. Also, it indicated to me a direction in which my preaching to devotees could be most helpful for them: think of preaching as a strengthening of devotees against all forms of deprogramming sent by *maya*. Prepare the devotees for the fight that is going on even now on all subtle levels. We should be progressing, growing stronger, and should be vigilant against weakness.

Talking here in Detroit with Govardhana Prabhu how Krsna consciousness is not hankering for a position but staying focused on the goal of achieving attachment to Krsna.

November 24, 1974

I have written to His Divine Grace asking what I should do. Now I am writing essays for a book for use in colleges and preaching. I asked His Divine Grace whether I should take on a project more suitable for a GBC man. My Godbrothers, Jagadisa and Rupanuga, indicate that what I am doing is very important. GBC means "ideal Vaisnava" and "keeping the standards." I am satisfied with *sannyasa* life, not attached to any party or faction, but always traveling and studying, preaching and writing. I am aware my course may be radically altered at any moment by the will of the Supreme. "God disposes." I am feeling transcendental pleasure and much freedom in this life.

December 13, 1974

Received letter from Srila Prabhupada

Bombay
28 November 1974

My Dear Satsvarupa dasa Goswami,

Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your letter dated November 20, 1974 from New York. I am very glad to hear of the continued success of the Library distribution program. You know it that I also was selling my books in this way to the schools and colleges and libraries. I would write, then publish, and then distribute without any help. So how much pleased I am with you that you are helping me in this mission. So you go on with your work. Krishna will help you. You are sincere in your purpose. This is very important engagement of visiting the professors, and the colleges and libraries, and getting the standing orders. This is the most important engagement. Do not doubt this.

It is also good that you are trying for the teaching course. What do the others know? Yes, simply they have written non-sense books. There in America is very good field. . . .

December 14

Got a letter yesterday from His Divine Grace. He said going to see professors and getting the standing orders was “the most important engagement. Do not doubt it.” He also said America is a good preaching field. Now I want to be determined to stay with the wonderful devotees in our library party and travel together all over the country doing colleges. When colleges run out, we will have to think of what to do next. At the GBC meeting in Mayapur, I must not look for any new position, but stay with the library work at the colleges and travel, write, preach, be free.

December 27

I have to maintain the library party. Although His Divine Grace emphasizes as “greater preaching” book distribution, I don’t seem to do it well whenever I try. I can’t seem to sell them as a salesman—at least not as well as I can do another service, such as lecturing. I would like to push at the colleges with a vigorous preaching program and at the same time maintain the library party, periodically meeting with them. Hridayananda dasa Goswami said he has lost faith in lecturing as effective *sankirtana*.

January 20, 1975

8 Days Inn

I had a dream that suddenly here at this motel (but the motel was in Europe), many devotees gathered and said that Prabhupada was coming. Then he suddenly arrived with a big *kirtana*. I missed catching a glimpse of him because I was preoccupied with some bit of personal sense gratification. Then

I tried to go see him in his room. I was stopped on the stairs by someone guarding his room. I wrote my message down on a piece of paper. I could not write clearly, but managed to scrawl out "Satsvarupa Goswami is here to see Srila Prabhupada." I remember when writing the word Goswami for my name, I wrote it rather large and was puffed up. Still, the dream is a source of transcendental happiness. I had the dream after first getting up at 1:30 A.M. and reading the verses in the first chapter of the *Adi-lila* about the spiritual master who is non-different from Krsna but who is Krsna's humble servitor.

January 28

Always remember Krsna and serve Krsna. Literature devoid of *krsna-katha* is like a pilgrimage place for crows.

One professor yesterday—Chinese—said, "Who cares about this?" indicating that the important issues are starvation and politics.

They do not know our BBT books can alleviate all suffering conditions.

February 4, 1975

Yesterday I got another important, inspiring letter from His Divine Grace. He said service to Krsna is not stuck up in one particular service (such as book distribution), but depends on sincere service in any of the nine ways of service. Of the nine ways, *sravanam kirtanam* is very important. Lecturing is also *sravanam kirtanam*. I will try, therefore, to put together a preaching program, and at the same time, maintain the library program, which is so dear to His Divine Grace.

Also, the inspiring instruction he gave is that one has to render sincere service—whatever one can do or offer, that is suitable and best. "It is not inglorious" for one to think his own service is best. All departments of service are absolute, but one must try to do his service perfectly.

BECOME CONVINCED—I was recently reading books Srila Prabhupada wrote out in longhand as early as 1955 at the Radha-Damodara temple—"Science of Devotion," "Lord Chaitanya, His *Sannyasa* and *Sankirtana*"—many of which were never published but were forerunners of his later works, *The Nectar of Devotion*, *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*. It is inspiring to meditate on my spiritual master writing so extensively in those days when he was all alone with no big ISKCON movement. I would very much like to write following in his footsteps, out of preaching mood and as *sannyasa* duty for self-purification. He wrote on and on and produced so many works, even then, which are now benefiting thousands of persons all over the world. Srila Prabhupada once wrote me that by always writing, one's language will be sharper when he preaches, and one will always be forced—in choosing words—to think of Kṛṣṇa. Topics later used, early versions of books, bases for philosophic themes are constantly developed as he writes.

February 18

Lubbock, Texas

Preach, preach, preach, preach. Two classes so far today; one more to go. Four tomorrow. The students were responsive, more or less favorable. It is a great challenge to speak *Bhagavad-gita* to groups of classes hour after hour. Now I am also getting them to chant. Professors are expressing sincere gratitude that we are coming. Go on with it.

February 19

Gave five classes today at Texas Tech., the last in Physics. Arguments with scientists. Afterwards I felt a vague sadness and am trying to understand it. It must be that I am sorry I am not a pure devotee and sorry that most people are not taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I must not make myself out to be a special devotee or a special writer, but I should accept as much service as possible. I pray that Kṛṣṇa will continue to engage me in His service and

the service of my spiritual master I feel now that I must continue this college touring and lecturing with undaunted, undisappointed spirit. The real thing is to be absorbed in Krsna.

February 22

Little Rock, Arkansas

Received a letter from His Divine Grace: "*Regarding your lecturing in the college classes. This is a very good program also. Why not continue it?*" (from Mexico, Feb. 15, 1975). Now we are planning to be in Atlanta to meet His Divine Grace there. I have no specific questions to ask him, but I need purification. I am not only a touring lecturer, but a GBC man responsible for all of the society's affairs. Sometimes I feel aloof from management and sometimes I want to get in on it, almost politically, to put myself in a prominent position. That is going on now with the reorganization of our ISKCON Press and *Back to Godhead* magazine. My best course seems to be to seek guidance from my Godbrothers and to try to serve wherever most of them think I should serve. My place is here, traveling as a *sannyasi*, seeing that the library program goes on and my own lecturing program. All this is personal service to my eternal father. Try to read and write not for fame or position, but to become purified and to help others. Don't worry whether it is published.

February 23

Arkadelphia, Arkansas

Tomorrow, at least two classes in psychology. A remote part of the world. Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The spirit spark or spiritual atom, combined with the material atoms, causes the material body of the living being, be he an elephant, a human, or an ant. He mistakes the material body as his self and has to suffer. The real self is full of bliss, eternality, and knowledge. Krsna conscious psychology is to control the mind and concentrate on the spirit-self and the relationship of the self to the Supreme Self. The Vedic process begins by chanting the *maha-mantra* to cleanse the mind. These are some items for psychology.

February 24

Gave one class, two more today. Next one is on "Death." Death means the change of bodies. It is inevitable. Lord Buddha showed one woman that death comes to everyone, so why should she lament over her son? Also, Dharmaraja said it is the most wonderful thing that no one thinks he will die. Kamsa was told by Vasudeva that death can't be avoided. One will get another body, just as plant worms change branches. Death is not the end of the living entity. Our self is steady like the moon in the sky, although reflected as moving and in pieces in the reflected pond.

Where one goes is determined by his psychology. By spiritual knowledge we learn that the self is eternal. He has his present body due to a concoction, just as in dreams one thinks he has a different body. This dream body is due to our past lives or to combinations of experience combined in concocted ways. On waking, the dream body is no more. In the same way the living being, spirit soul, is dreaming he is the possessor of different bodies according to his desires. If you desire to eat flesh and blood, that mental state will award you—under the material nature's supervision—a next body as a tiger.

Pariksit asked, "What is a person's duty, especially one who is on the threshold of death?" Duty is "to hear about Kṛṣṇa." That breaks up our sinful desires and one can be free of inauspicious death. For the pure devotee, death means going back to Kṛṣṇa.

What if one says, "At death everything is finished." How can you prove him wrong? We have Kṛṣṇa's example that a sober man accepts the change of bodies for the permanent self in this life. That one leaves an apartment does not mean he no longer exists.

At death, relatives lament, "He's gone," but his body is still there. This means they have learned he is different than the body.

Let us study what is life as opposed to matter. At death, it cannot be that the body can be repaired and life is restored. "It," "life"—they do not know it.

For the last class today I've been asked to speak on the self.

Students leaving class buying BTG and hardbound *Gita* saying, "It was great," "Far out." Most of them chanted the Hare Krsna mantra along with us in the psychology class in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Surely this is a "very good program also. Why not do it?"

February 28

Atlanta

Srila Prabhupada is here. He called me in and asked why educated men were taking our books. I told him they took them as one of many schools of Hinduism. He seemed amused and understood their condition. Then he said seriously, "Yes, there are many schools (of Hinduism), but only this one teaches love of God. They have no idea of God." I told him the preachers have to be strong and sometimes they get contaminated when the professors say ours is one of many schools. They have to be strong, he said, but again he said, "If they say we are a school, it is all right." I told him we say Ramanuja and they recognize it.

He then said, "Practically the whole world is atheist." We talked of the street here in Atlanta being Ponce de Leon of the Christian Science Church, etc.

He smiled and said our movement was going nicely. The major difficulty, I said, was within, and he agreed.

Later he said even if our effort is teeny, because we have seriously taken up Krsna's business, Krsna will be pleased with us. He will take notice.

I told him I was lecturing in the colleges.

March 1, 1975

Atlanta—in car

Srila Prabhupada said the truth is already known, experimenters come and go and the truth stays. Like Gandhi who said, “I don’t believe there was ever a living person Krsna.” Gandhi is gone now.

Asked how he can write so many books, professors think many persons must write them. “I have an editorial staff,” he said, “but I am also surprised how much I write, what to speak of them [being surprised].”

He said he is in disciplic succession from Krsna and that is how he can write so many books.

Tripurari asked if we get contaminated by contact with nondevotees. “No,” he said, “you are on *sankirtana*, so you are not infected.” A doctor cannot get infected or how can he give treatment? We have to be cautious, “take precaution.” If we get infected, then preaching can’t go on. Tripurari said, “Do you accept our karma on initiation?” “Yes,” he said. Tripurari added, “and sometimes get sick due to it.” “Yes, overloaded.”

March 2

Called me, Rupanuga, and Tamal Krishna Goswami in at *mangala-arati* time. Again he told us to make propaganda against the scientists’ theory that life comes from matter. This is a most misleading theory. Actually, life comes from life. People should know the scientists are only artisans; if they fix a light, it doesn’t mean they are wiser than a spiritual master. They are claiming so many foolish things. Real research is to find the Supreme Scientist. To find oneself.

March 10

Greensboro, North Carolina

Invited by the local yoga bookstore and “spiritual people” of the town. They are following many impersonalist teachings, speak of aura, acupuncture, bogus gurus. Sri Galim and I are

staying at an apartment given for our use for three days. We aim to present them with feasting, chanting, and the pure philosophy of *Gita*.

The boy asked that I speak on practical techniques of meditation. First, what is the goal of meditation? It is to think of God, Kṛṣṇa. To glorify Him. To awaken to one's spiritual self and act in devotional service.

Gita explains one should approach a guru. One will learn from him that he is part and parcel of the Supreme. *No one can concoct religion.*

March 11

Last night 30–40 people gathered in two rooms at the apartment where Sri Galim and I are staying. All chanted, some danced, all listened, feasted, bought \$32 in books.

Some local yoga people came. I stressed that yoga meditation is not possible in this age, only *bhakti*, *hari-nama*. Everything is accomplished by *bhakti*. Please the Supreme Lord. Don't waste life in material pleasure or for attaining *siddhis*. Don't try to become God. Don't banish Kṛṣṇa. Hearing process: from authority.

More people came by in the morning. In friendly conversation, it's hard to reach some of them as they are so much confused already by notions of spiritual energy, getting high by techniques, and they have their sex partners. These *yogis* all could be transformed and engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service. They are wanting to serve us, help us present Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

March 21

London—en route to India

Ten men from the U.S. traveling library party. I resolve to read Srila Prabhupada's books for the rest of the month in India. So much impurity in my mind, even while in association of hundreds of devotees—envy, pride, false ego, clinging to designations. I swing from mundane feelings of inferiority to

mundane pride. Therefore, the plan to humbly read my spiritual master's books is a good idea. Remember, I am a servant of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

March 24

Calcutta

Srila Prabhupada called me. He asked if I was editing.

"No."

"No time?"

"No, I have time."

Then he said, "In the future, anything we publish will be taken as exactly scripture, so there can be no errors in *śiddhanta*," no wrong conclusion. He gave me a devotee's essay and said he would send me other essays to read carefully for acceptance in BTG.

I then told him that Professor Hopkins wanted him for two weeks next fall. He said it would be good prestige to do it, so we're planning it.

He read from the verse *jivo jivasya jivanam*, "One living entity lives on another." He said in every scripture there is sacrifice for eating flesh. Why should there be starvation? There are so many things to eat. He cited Dhruva, who ate only water and then stopped that.

He asked what the latest scientific theory was. I said, "Origin of Life." I told him how they wanted to control the human population. He said the four divisions of society are already there. I mentioned Frankenstein. He said that was only a story.

March 27

Gaura-Purnima

In the *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, *Adi-līla*, Chapter Three, Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja asserts that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Truth. This is stated by Sarva-bhauṁya Bhattachārya, who calls Him *puruṣaḥ purāṇa*—the controller and original person.

March 28

Lecture notes from Srila Prabhupada's class

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the most merciful incarnation to bestow *kṛṣṇa-prema*. There are many incarnations, but His mercy is unlimited and has never been given before.

Keep Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu within your hearts. It will be very easy to understand what is Kṛṣṇa. Then you'll be perfect. Try to understand Kṛṣṇa, *then your life will become perfect*. (Liberated—back to home, back to Godhead.) You boys and girls have taken up Kṛṣṇa so seriously because we are trying to seriously understand Kṛṣṇa through Lord Caitanya. This much is sufficient; understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and spread this cult all over the world. People are suffering for want of Kṛṣṇa. Establish the cult of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Become guru. How? Don't adulterate. Simply repeat the message of Kṛṣṇa as it is, go through the Six Gosvamis, *parampara*. Approach Lord Caitanya through the spiritual master; Lord Caitanya to Kṛṣṇa.

The more you become the servant of the servant, then you are advancing; if you think you have become master, then you are going to hell.

Our mission is to establish Lord Caitanya's desire.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not sentiment, but a great science. If you take it as sentiment, you create disturbance. Those who follow the Vedic literature should be followed, like Rupa Gosvami. Sentiment (spiritual) is good, but know the science. Temporary sentiment will not lead you far.

March 31

Mayapur

Given seven temples to manage. Everything is all right. Srila Prabhupada is our divine master.

Rereading my entries while traveling to the colleges, I remember how purifying it was and how suitable for *sannyasa* life. Now I have willingly taken on management responsibility. At

the same time, I can continue college lecturing—and I should. It can be done by asking temple presidents to set up engagements for me. This will keep me alive in preaching so my preaching to the temples will be effective. I have no writing plans for now. There have been days and days of GBC meetings, which are just now slowing down.

April 3, 1975

In Mayapur, life is simple and sublime. After this, Vrndavana. I have been given my year's assignment, which is to manage seven temples in the U.S. I have taken on this complicated management because it seems the role of a GBC. Otherwise, my GBC service seemed light, only lecturing and aloof from ISKCON affairs. I was not fully confident that the classroom lectures and library party alone were my utmost capacity.

My prayer is to be able to still continue a classroom preaching program and at the same time to manage temples without neglect, write, read, travel, and keep the library party going out. In other words, *the strain to my brain, the interruption to the simple, philosophical preaching mood is good in that I am increasing service*. Pray to remain in fighting, preaching mood, not stuck.

April 6

We GBC men told Srila Prabhupada that the Miami temple was not well-managed. He said some GBC should stay there. Then he said, "Why should Satsvarupa have to stay there? He has to travel." (Of course, I intended to travel even as zonal secretary.) Srila Prabhupada said my main engagement is going to the colleges. It was surprising to hear him say this, since previously in our GBC meetings I had been assigned management of seven temples. (It was as if he were speaking on a deeper level, that it was my *dharma* to travel and preach at colleges.)

Rupanuga explained to him that I was now managing temples and wouldn't be traveling with the library party. I also

explained that I was putting a man in charge of the party. He said, "Then you can stay in Miami." It was not that he didn't want me to manage temples or that I had to travel with the library party. A three-man committee was assigned to investigate Miami's mismanagement, and I should also go there as GBC and "plead and flatter" the president so that he rectifies his way. Also, I should see that the grounds are cleaned up. Our principle, he said, is not to reject someone, but to work with them.

April 7

Prabhupada's lecture in Mayapur on Advaita Acarya

He is *advaita*—non-different than the Supreme Lord, *visnu-tattva*; *acarya*—spreading the *bhakti* cult.

Gosthyanandi—one who is spreading; in secluded place is *bhajanandi*—nice, but not *acarya*.

Acarya means he must spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Increase the number of devotees. *Bhajanandi*—let me do my own business. The more you increase devotees, the more you become recognized by Kṛṣṇa. An *acarya* is identical with the Lord.

You can't jump to Kṛṣṇa without the guru. If we abide by the spiritual master's orders, Kṛṣṇa becomes pleased. When you are 100% following *acarya*—then you can become *acarya*. Don't imitate, but follow, and become *acarya*. If you insult your *acarya*, then you are finished. *Follow strictly, try to do what he says, and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness*. Simply reveal what Kṛṣṇa says, then become *acarya*; it is not difficult—repeat (not like a parrot who doesn't understand). Prepare yourself how to repeat Kṛṣṇa's instructions.

There will be no scarcity of *acaryas*; it will be easy to fight *maya*. *Acaryas* declare war on *maya*. No sinful activities. No one can understand Kṛṣṇa without being free from sinful activities.

Killing has so expanded that they are killing their own children. Then as Kali-yuga advances, they will be eating their children like snakes and other animals.

Don't wait for the next life. Be serious. This life I shall finish my Krsna consciousness and—as in *Bhagavad-gita*—understand Krsna rightly. If Krsna is explaining what He is, what is the difficulty? He is sending the *acarya*, and He is within your heart, if only you are serious. Provided you are serious, you can become Krsna conscious.

Jayadvaita dasa and I went in to see Srila Prabhupada. I asked him about the book I am writing. He said he had read the synopsis, and if I followed that it was good. He said it was all right to quote material authors. Whatever it takes for them to accept our point. I told him about men going to England and Australia from the library party. He liked it, "Very good." Then he said, "About Miami." He let me know that he knows I was assigned to Miami. That was a great comfort—that I know he knows exactly what I am doing. He told me to go to Miami and manage. The grounds look like rubbish, he said. He told me to keep the property. I then said, "You seemed surprised yesterday that I was not with the library party." He said just do the business. You can give instructions and sometimes travel with them. My position is quite clear with His Divine Grace.

It would be better if I would think less of myself and more of spreading Krsna consciousness to please my spiritual master.

He asked for the title of the book. "A Vedic Reader," I said.

"Good," he said. "You have kept the *parampara*?"

"Yes."

"Yes, yes."

April [?]

Morning walk

I asked, "You say sometimes only a very small percentage of the population can take to Krsna consciousness, but yesterday you said millions can." He said, "It depends, then, on our preaching." Our preaching has to be pure without sense gratification. "What about tyagis who don't worship Krsna?" He said they will go up and come down again. If you had to stay eternally in this field (big expanse of agricultural field in Mayapur under a clear blue sky), would you like it? No, it is

not blissful! But in the temple you could stay, Vaikuntha. If you had to stay in this field you would say, "Let me go to Calcutta."

Jayadvaita asked about made-up *bhajan*s. Srila Prabhupada said it was better to stick to Hare Kṛṣṇa and Sri Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. I asked about authorized *bhajan*s during *arati*. He said *jiv' jago* was all right, but "better to stick to Hare Kṛṣṇa."

Then JDB asked, "Sometimes the *acarya* seems to make mistakes." He said that is our imperfect understanding. "You do not know what perfection is." The *acarya*'s perfection is his preaching. See how he is preaching (you have a misunderstanding of his perfection).

I asked how his thousands of disciples can reciprocate with him. He said, "The spiritual master has representatives," GBC and presidents. He was asked, "But what about a personal relationship?" He said, "Their obedience. If they follow the spiritual master's order." One boy quoted Vyasa saying to Narada, "Search out the defect in me as you are as good as the all-pervading Supersoul." He said, "Yes, he found the defect in him that he wasn't glorifying Kṛṣṇa."

I asked, "The Gita says a disciple with a bona fide spiritual master is supposed to know everything. What is 'everything'?" He said it doesn't mean he knows everything the same as Kṛṣṇa. Whatever the guru knows, to that limit he can also know everything. Guru isn't God that he knows Kṛṣṇa as Kṛṣṇa does. If he surrenders to Kṛṣṇa that "You are everything," then he knows everything. Kṛṣṇa is everything.

He said the disciple should be chastised. It is good for him. Lord Caitanya saw Himself as a fool before His spiritual master. We should feel like that. He was asked if he were ever chastised by his spiritual master and he said yes, and that he found it very valuable.

Later, Paramahansa Maharaja asked Srila Prabhupada how he knows of the service of some less prominent devotee. He first said it is not Vaisnava to desire to be prominent or known. Why should he want to be prominent?

As Supersoul is in the heart of both disciples and Prabhupada, will Prabhupada not know? But know or not know, one

should render service his whole life without being recognized (if it so happens). *Anyabhilasita-sunyam*.

He also quoted Lord Caitanya's verse, "Even if He makes Me broken-hearted," and, "I have no desire." He should simply desire to follow the instructions, and it is inevitable he will be recognized. But we tend to do business, do a little service, and want to be praised by the spiritual master. That is material.

We know from the books what the spiritual master wants, and if we serve him accordingly, we will get all opulences, including fame.

It is a wrong desire to want to be noticed by the spiritual master. The duty of the spiritual master is to chastise. It is inevitable if we serve that not only the spiritual master, but everyone, will take notice. Tripurari dasa simply wanted to distribute books, not become prominent, but now everyone knows him. Krsna also wanted Arjuna to be famous.

A devotee should think he is so insignificant that it is impossible he will ever be recognized. He thinks it is his function to serve and not to become famous.

Srila Prabhupada said he came to U.S.A. not desiring to be famous, but as duty: he now has fame and fortune from Krsna, but he didn't want it.

If we pour water on the root by devotional service, everything will take place.

A devotee should not feel, "I desire credit," but, "I deserve to be beaten."

April [?]

Morning walk

I asked Srila Prabhupada, "You say we may die at any moment and should surrender, but also that we should be patient. Is there a way to speed it up, or should we just be patient—if we don't have much time in which to mature?" He said, "Don't think you're mature. So you must finish your business at once." He said something about Romaharsana Muni who was so old he would live until all the hairs on his body fell out, and only one fell out each time Brahma died. The Muni

was to be given a house, but he said it didn't matter, I'm not going to stay here long. I mentioned King Khatvanga, who heard he had only a moment to live. I asked, "When he surrendered, what did he do?" Srila Prabhupada answered, "He surrendered to Kṛṣṇa."

A man mentioned to Srila Prabhupada that big events seem to happen to His Divine Grace every eleven years:

1922—met his Guru Maharaja

1933—was initiated

1944—started BTG

1955—left home

1966—started ISKCON

The man asked what would happen in 1977. Srila Prabhupada told his servant that maybe that would be the end. He said he has finished his mission. We were talking of retirement. He said he was thinking of it. He described he would see no one's face. Otherwise, how will he ever complete translating the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*?

April 19

Vrndavana morning walk

He said that the Ramakrishna mission is doubting our movement will last, but even from the mundane point of view, we are distributing so many books and intelligent people are buying. How can it not continue? It will go on. The book distribution is so important (new devotees will come).

I asked, "They think our devotees won't stick?" He brushed this aside: "Even if they do not stay, these devotees, new devotees will come (from book distribution) and we are raising a new generation of devotees in Dallas."

Commenting on how dry and desert-like Vrndavana is, he said there is no rain at all, the land is so condemned. The West is all green. India is so sinful that they are condemned. I asked, "The West?" "They are not so sinful," he said. "Their tradition is to eat meat. They do not know better. Their offense is not as

great. They have no leaders. Even their priests. The Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill,' but the priests say that it is our tradition to eat meat."

He said when asked a question about Lord Caitanya and the world economic situation at His time of appearance that Lord Caitanya's movement is purely spiritual. It has nothing to do with politics. People are often trying to drag Lord Caitanya down to politics. In India they say we (ISKCON devotees) are CIA. The CIA have become Vaisnavas. The boy said, "But I heard from a devotee."

"From a devotee," Srila Prabhupada said. "That is very dangerous."

April 20

Vrndavana walk

Srila Prabhupada was saying that the twenty-four-hour *kirtana* here is nice. Otherwise, there is devil's workshop. Devils can't preach. You have to become divine, otherwise you'll influence everyone to become devil. Yes, he said, when asked if some of our larger temples could conduct twenty-four-hour *kirtana*. "In batches" (shifts of men).

Today the governor of Uttar Pradesh is coming. His Divine Grace wanted to be sure the cooking was excellent for him. "Yes," a devotee said, "everyone praises the cooking." We may praise, Srila Prabhupada said, that is among ourselves, mutual admiration. Mr. A. says Mr. B. is nice, and Mr. B. says Mr. A. is nice, but we have to get praise from outside.

April 21

He said the temple here has Baladeva. We can pray to Him for strength. One worships Balarama, Nitai—and then goes (next altar) to Radha-Krsna. They are very affectionate brothers. You have seen the picture? Krsna is pointing out to Balarama how the flowers are praising Him.

Our policy is "peaceful penetration." We beg from someone, but actually we are not begging. It all belongs to Krsna. The

father is nicely asking his little boy to return his hundred dollar bill. As Vamandeva came begging, we come. He was proprietor, but begged three steps and took everything. We beg and get them to surrender everything to Krsna. We should always be beggars—whatever we get we spend and again be engaged in begging. His spiritual master used to take a donation a devotee got intended for a certain thing and give it to something else, and then tell the man to go out again.

Tamal Krishna Goswami asked if when Krsna says the most dear is he who preaches to devotees, it includes innocent non-devotees. No, he said, teaching of the *Gita* is for devotees. He said in the beginning he created a spiritual atmosphere for nondevotees by chanting to induce them to become devotees, but the message . . .

An Indian life member said that Hindi should be required of ISKCON devotees in India. Srila Prabhupada said they can't learn anything, neither doll-making nor *khole*-making or Hindi: "Therefore I have advocated you don't have to learn something new, just whatever you have give to Krsna." Mr. Mahadevia said that fear was needed to make devotees learn. He said their teacher should not feed them for three days and then if they want to eat, they will have to talk Hindi. "Then you come and be their Hindi teacher," offered Srila Prabhupada. Mr. Mahadevia said he couldn't and was thus exposed, and the devotees laughed. Then Srila Prabhupada said, "I will not feed you until you become the teacher." In this way he taught we must show by example, not simply precept.

The GBC presented him with a resolution that he should retire and write. First he said, "That I will decide by my own will. That you have passed a resolution means I have to go?" Then we explained that our desire was to help him to write more.

He said he would write more when we publish the books he has already written (some seventeen volumes).

He said that was the only thing keeping him from dictating two tapes a day. He looked toward me and said, "You remember

in New York? I was supplying two tapes a day." Then later he said again, "You remember, I was lecturing twice daily. When the master sleeps, the servants sleep. You are behind, so I am falling behind. I will write when you catch up. Otherwise, so many things happen and I think of them. If you publish these books, then I will again supply you two tapes daily."

Srila Prabhupada: surrender to Me (Kṛṣṇa) "is not for the nondevotee. He will not want to surrender. Feasting, chanting and *prasadam*." I said we can teach him, "I'm not this body." He said this is also for the devotee. We create devotees by the spiritual atmosphere. Book distribution is also chanting. Because they have paid they read: "What is this that this rascal has sold me?" Like that. ("I have paid so much money," so they read.)

April 23

Regarding keeping accounts, he said it had to be done not privately as one devotee suggested. A simple account of receipts expenditure. Don't keep money in the bank. Spend it. Collect and spend it. Enter it as "book collection" and spend it. Books should be bought by temples with thirty days credit, no more—no lengthy unpaid bills. Whatever they order but don't sell in thirty days, that also they should pay for in thirty days.

He indicated we should not form so many committees for discussion, *but should know we have so much to do. We have so much work to do.* We should not waste any time (on unimportant meetings or talks). We have to work hard. Whether it is managing the temples, preaching, studying, chanting, seeing to finances, or printing and distributing books—so much important work.

April 25

Morning walk

Talking of cheaters: Why do people want to be cheated? Because they are already cheated and want to counterattack by being cheated in a different way. Because they have no infor-

mation (it's not taught in any school) of the soul and the next life. Chewing the chewed. Sex at home, but then sex on stage in the night club—a different pattern of sex. Then they are cheated in next life, given the bodies of monkeys for sex. Maya cheats them. A *grhastha* couple has a child and the wife suffers so much and it is such a burden, but rather than not have another child, they immediately try for another pregnancy.

Q: Is *grhastha* life ever recommended?

A: If one cannot avoid it, he can live with one wife.

Q: What does "can't avoid it" mean?

A: It is the force of material nature and one can't resist it. But if one can develop strong Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then he will spit at the thought of sex.

April 26

Morning walk

Srila Prabhupada turned to an Indian *pandita* on the walk and asked him what he thought Gandhi contributed. The man was favorable and said Gandhi sacrificed his life for the whole universe. Prabhupada exposed him. Where does it say that in the *Gita*? He couldn't say, but said, "Gandhi said." Prabhupada asked how anyone can satisfy everyone? Gandhi himself was killed by a countryman. It is a mad proposal. Can you water every leaf on a tree? No, water the root. We serve Kṛṣṇa and are His servants. I never said, "Follow me, I am God. I am servant of God. Kṛṣṇa says this, I say follow Kṛṣṇa." Gandhi didn't believe. Now India is all godless. They couldn't follow his prohibition on liquor because he was imperfect. Could only follow him for a time. He said Tagore was his guru. Do you know R. Tagore?

Devotee: Yes, he was a great poet.

Prabhupada: Poet means young girls. He used to have *mela* with boys and girls dancing and he too would join and take *prasadam* from the young girls. I know, I am a Calcutta man. (Later, a donkey was braying and he said this is the mundane poet. The ass thinks he is reciting nice poetry. We should try to appreciate the poetry of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.)

Devotee: We had an English class and Indian students were coming and reading *Kṛṣṇa* book, but we stopped because none became devotees.

Prabhupada: No, that is a miscalculation. If they are reading *Kṛṣṇa* book, they are devotees, maybe in a lower class. We cannot expect a big seed to at once sprout to a big tree. Have enthusiasm and patience. Fan the spark into a big flame. Don't reject the beginners. If we can't train up new men, we are not good preachers. I fanned, I didn't demand. Later, if they shave their heads that is different. In the beginning, if they read, they are devotees.

April 27

Morning walk

Prabhupada asked one *sannyasi* to argue with him that there are oceans of milk and liquor as stated in the *Bhagavatam*. Pancadravida Swami said the *Bhagavatam* is myth. Srila Prabhupada replied, "To us your science is myth." Pancadravida Swami said, "But the findings of material science can be verified by many persons, whereas self-realized findings rest on the authority of a few. Prabhupada said, "Do we have to believe something just because many asses say so?"

The ocean of liquor is manufactured by the same Personality who manufactures the saltwater ocean. *Vibhuti-bhinna*m—people on those planets are able to be sustained by liquor in the ocean without going mad as we would.

I said the Americans and Europeans are leaving Vrndavana now and are eager to return to preaching. His face expressed approval, "Yes, preaching and book distribution is our business." There was discussion of leaving Vrndavana. Prabhupada said, "You have learned how to keep Vrndavana in your heart."

**“Dear Lord, Please Give Me the
Strength to Serve You”
May 21–August 12, 1975**

This chapter covers a period when Śrīla Prabhupāda was traveling through the U.S. and when our BBT library party managed to catch up with His Divine Grace in a few cities. In those days I was not a regulated diary writer—I was too busy serving, and I had not developed the habit. The continuity of exactly what I was doing at this time is not clear from these pages, therefore, but there are strong glimpses of Śrīla Prabhupāda on morning walks, lectures, and so on. Private meetings were more rare. I was mostly satisfied to see my divine master at least on frequent occasions, and to always bring him news of the library party’s successful sale of his books at the universities. (We tried to schedule our university visits to coincide with the cities Prabhupāda visited.) Little did we know then that his stay with us would be so brief and that this was his next to last tour of the U.S.A.

Here also we get a view of Prabhupāda in argumentation and some of the very rebellious challenges that he met, such as the group of long-haired “disciples” he spoke to in Los Angeles. Sometimes Prabhupāda used to say that he could have stayed at home and loved Kṛṣṇa, but because he saw people were suffering, he traveled; traveling meant to expose himself to many challenges. People may think that Prabhupāda speaks too strongly, but if you get a glimpse of some of the challenges that Prabhupāda faced, you realize that he had to be strong. It was his opponents who resented that Prabhupāda was so strong,

whereas those who wanted to remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness aspired to be led by Prabhupāda's argumentation.

This also helps us to understand Prabhupāda's statement about Christ, "We adore and offer obeisances to Christ." Since he himself was always on the preaching field, Prabhupāda could appreciate how Christ gave everything to preach and yet was always tolerant, even against the ultimate challenges.

The lecture notes from June 31 of Prabhupāda in dialogue, are actually a session with some of his *sannyāsi* disciples. Prabhupāda invited us to challenge him. Gradually, we opened up. For myself, I was actually speaking my own doubts and speculations, pretending to be a speculator challenging Prabhupāda. All of us who were fighting against Prabhupāda in that mock battle were happy as he smashed us with strong and humorous arguments. He was like a father taking on his sons who try to pile up on him, but who are ultimately defeated.

Sometimes the father even has to give a hard slap to subdue a rambunctious youngster. When I challenged Prabhupāda that whatever he said was actually just a presentation of the Vedic tradition, he replied, "What is your tradition, nonsense?"

Seeing my notes in which I half complain and half assure myself to work hard, I draw some solace. I was doing as much as I could do in the spirit of "Work now, *samādhi* later." Prabhupāda's inspirational presence enabled hundreds of us to work hard, assisting him to expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We pray to always be thankful to Prabhupāda for pushing us in those days. According to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, whatever little assistance we offer to the Vaiṣṇava is to our eternal credit.

When Prabhupāda visited Dallas and spoke to us in the garden behind the temple, I remember a special moment which is only partly indicated here. Devotees were reading aloud to Prabhupāda from the Kṛṣṇa book, a prayer by Lord Śiva who declared that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the creator of the material elements. "So," Śrīla Prabhupāda asked, "if we do not accept that Kṛṣṇa made the sky, then who made it?" My diary adds, "There were no answers." There were no answers, but at that moment,

many of us who were seated at Prabhupāda's feet looked up at the big Texan sky, and because of Prabhupāda's presence, we saw Kṛṣṇa as the creator. It was a very simple but profound moment of shared God consciousness. By not answering Prabhupāda's challenge as to who had made the sky, and by humbly accepting what he had said, we were able to see.

Even from a sketchy diary like mine, one can appreciate how Prabhupāda was scattering seeds of spiritual instructions wherever he went. Many of those *bhakti* seeds are still growing; some are waiting to be cultivated by whomever will come forward to do it. For example, from his informal talk one evening in Detroit: "He is keen for an institute of all our philosophy books. Any scholar may come and study and then argue with us, and we shall demonstrate how Kṛṣṇa consciousness is superior." Prabhupāda's lectures are also full of hundreds of seeds—*bhakti-latā-bija*, thrown out to the hearts of the listeners—"The only prayer to make to Kṛṣṇa is, 'Dear Lord, please give me the strength to serve You.'"

Prabhupāda's U.S summer tour was interrupted when he got the chance to visit with India's prime minister, Indira Gandhi. He left suddenly from Toronto. I was able to have a private meeting with him just before he left, and he assured me to stay on the same course of distributing books to university libraries, getting appreciations for his books from the scholars, and lecturing in the colleges.

* * *

May 21, 1975

My present program is to try to do everything: editor of BTG, supervisor of BBT library party, GBC for six temples, trying to finish *Vedic Reader*, and last but not least, college lecturer. So far so good. At any moment I may have to leave my body, although my Kṛṣṇa consciousness is immature. I pray not to be puffed up, top heavy with the externals of too many projects, and forget that the goal is Kṛṣṇa. Read His books, memorize verses. Talk with devotees. Temple classes and *aratis*.

Controlling the senses, anger, mind, words, genitals. I am envious, but fighting it. Traveling in a car, by plane. Not thinking of my spiritual master at every moment, therefore lost. Not chanting my rounds with full attention and submission. Not writing essays anymore. In August I am scheduled to go and become secretary for His Divine Grace. Whatever Kṛṣṇa desires He will do, and I will follow either as a devotee or a demon. I am praying and endeavoring to be a devotee, not a demon.

June 24, 1975

Los Angeles

Srila Prabhupada was being challenged by two long-haired former devotees. (This is not a full report, but just some notes to help me remember.)

He told them that since they wore long hair and did not follow the principles, they shouldn't listen to criticism being made against them by the devotees.

For business they have to wear long hair, they said. He said yes, one can be Kṛṣṇa conscious and wear long hair, but he can't be my disciple. My disciples don't wear long hair. (Send a letter to all centers to that effect.) Later he told them that their business was to do business and enjoy. Don't become Kṛṣṇa conscious is my advice, he said.

They criticized devotees for damning them. Prabhupada said his disciples are neophytes and since these men don't appear as devotees, the neophytes regard them as nondevotees. Wearing Vaisnava dress is the general rule. Lord Caitanya wouldn't see a disciple if he wasn't wearing *tilaka*.

Prabhupada kept saying, "What can I do?" to their demands that he tell disciples they are not demons.

They then asked how to understand that Ugrasena had four billion bodyguards. Prabhupada said it was possible. Then he said he couldn't answer it; that is my fault, he said, I admit it. I am what I am.

Then they tried saying, "How can you preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness if you're limited?" He said, "That we will take care

of it. It is not your concern." "How can you preach to the educated class?" Same—not your concern, we are doing it. You don't believe? Then do not bother about it. We should take it we are wrong if we cannot understand *sastra*. Whatever I know is in my books; I do not know more than this. My disciples speak only on my books.

Prabhupada said that we do not ask why, there is no why. We accept. They said, "How will you convince the world except for a few people?" That is not your business, he said, since you are not my disciples, not following, not shaven.

They said that some devotees told them they would go to hell if they were not Prabhupada's devotees. No, Prabhupada said, one could be Kṛṣṇa conscious and not his disciple; but his disciples don't wear long hair. He said they may be very advanced and not need a spiritual master. The general rule is only by the mercy of the guru can one get Kṛṣṇa's mercy, but that is the general rule. "You are so advanced, you don't need one."

"Are you being sarcastic?"

"No."

"But you took a spiritual master."

"I am not so advanced." Then he would answer no more.

They: "Why?"

SP: "You are not following strictly, you cannot ask why."

June 25

Come out of hiding, come out of retirement, come out of lethargy and false ego, and think always of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness—just write. You have to write to please Kṛṣṇa and your spiritual master. Write your realization of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the benefit of others. Write an essay on some part of the philosophy, such as the authority of scripture.

June 26

I was associating for five days with Srila Prabhupada in Los Angeles and tomorrow he is due here for a week. I am not taking advantage of his presence. We devotees see him mostly

on his morning walk and chanting and dancing in the temple *kirtana*, and then hear him lecture. In L.A., I was always in a non-ecstatic bodily condition, worrying about my body's fatigue, so not dancing with enthusiasm. As for the lecture, I was often falling asleep! Now as I read about the ecstatic pastimes of Lord Caitanya, Lord Nityananda, and Advaita Acarya in the third chapter of *Madhya-lila*, I am enlivened and vainly wish I could feel transcendental pleasure in singing and writing and taking a little *prasadam*.

June 28

Denver—morning walk

We are walking in this nice park, but *padam padam*—at any moment there can be revolution. It can all be fire. They do not know. They are dull. Although Krsna gives a plain example, baby becomes boy . . . Is there any example of a baby remaining permanently a baby? Therefore, our only hope is to distribute books so that someday the people will understand that they are not this body. That day *will* come when these books will be appreciated as valuable.

About Denver center, we said they were distributing books. Yes, wherever you can distribute books is a good place.

Make vigorous propaganda against fake gurus. Guru Maharaji says he's God, so you say publicly, "I kick on your face if you are God. Then punish me with your mantra, your will, or whatever."

He called me in while he was taking breakfast. Asked further about Maharishi's university. How can they teach regular subjects with TM since TM isn't a science? Meditation is, of course, spiritual, but not as he does it, with sense gratification. What use is teaching ordinary subjects? Then he said we could do it—we have so many books. I suggested Gainesville, where we wanted to start our own university to teach only Vedic subjects. He seemed to like it.

One Mayavadi *sannyasi* came. Prabhupada quoted so much *Gita. Samah sarvesu*—yes, but it means the same Supersoul is in each heart.

Kṛṣṇa cleans the heart of the devotee, whereas yogis try to clean their own hearts. You can imagine which is better. *Tesam satatam yuktanam*. Kṛṣṇa sees, "Here is a devotee," and He helps.

June 29

Walk notes

Escapism. We are not escaping just because we do not work like the hog. If a hog eats stool and we don't, are we escaping? A rich man does not work, that is intelligent. There are different classes of work. If a clerk accuses a judge, the clerk would not have a job.

Question: What if everyone became a devotee like us, what would happen to the economy?

Srila Prabhupada: "He does not have to worry; there will always be a class like him." If everyone becomes honest, "What will happen to the prisons?" is their logic. "What will happen to the slaughterhouses and brothels?"

Let them work hard like asses and we will use it. They have worked so hard and only we are enjoying the park. A mouse works to build his hole in the ground and the snake comes, eats the mouse, and lives there. Or a jackal who was sinking in water in a well induced a stag to jump in ("I am dancing"). Then he jumped on his head and got out. We will use it.

"They say we are parasites." No, we are not taking from God. Each man can work his land and have cows. Why work hard like an ass? We live nicely in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Why not join us? But they won't. They will work like asses.

"Nondevotees say humans have the best sex."

Srila Prabhupada: "Is food better in a gold pot than in a copper pot? It is the same."

June 30

Lecture notes

A *sadhu* has to preach. Therefore, he tolerates so much criticism. He has to fight with them. Jesus—*titiksava karunika*—he was merciful. Jesus said, “My Lord, they do not know what they are doing. They can’t kill me, but they think they can and are committing offense.” Christ—“Thou shalt not kill”—be kind to everyone. We adore and offer our obeisances to Christ.

Our library party had met a professor who had heard criticism of Prabhupada by an Indian swami who claimed that genuine *sadhus* and Vaisnavas don’t try to preach to others. I reported this to Srila Prabhupada. His preaching was a failure and now he criticizes Srila Prabhupada and ISKCON.

One point he made was that Vaisnavas don’t preach. Srila Prabhupada turned to the *Gita* verse in the 18th chapter where Krsna says there will never be a dearer servant. Also, Lord Caitanya said, “Become guru and whomever you meet, tell them of Krsna,” and, “In every town and village My names should be known.” All *acaryas* preached—Sankara, Buddha, Lord Caitanya, etc. *Parivrajakacarya*—*pari* means moving. He travels and preaches. Because he has failed at preaching, he is making a “sour grapes” charge against preaching.

Re academic understanding vs. preaching to convert: when Krsna says *sarva-dharman parityajya*, does He mean surrender really, or is it just for academic understanding? He *means surrender*.

He claimed he was in seclusion in a cave. An ant is also in seclusion. My Guru Maharaja said it is cheating to stay in seclusion. Go door to door.

He (the Indian swami) doesn’t stress chanting, but Lord Caitanya was chanting everywhere, and thus he was charged by Prakasananda to be sentimental.

This Indian swami likes to talk of the confidential part of the philosophy as if he is more advanced, but is he more advanced than Krsna and Lord Caitanya? Krsna never spoke of Radharani in *Gita*. When Lord Caitanya met with the Kazi,

He talked of cow-killing, not Radharani. Even with Rupa and Sanatana, He only touched on Radharani; but He discussed it with Ramananda.

Srila Prabhupada: If you don't know the Absolute Truth, then accept mine.

Q: But you may cheat.

Srila Prabhupada: But all isn't counterfeit. If one is giving out gold and you refuse, you can't have it. Tell them, if you don't know the Absolute Truth, accept this—you have to—you can't refute. I can prove it, or if you don't agree, then you present the Absolute Truth better than this. We don't say simply that Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, but what is Absolute Truth? That is Kṛṣṇa, Lord of two energies. You describe it better.

Q: You say God is great, but how?

SP: Is Guru Maharaji great? No, Kṛṣṇa is.

Q: But He is legend.

A: You believe that. We don't. We accept (Kṛṣṇa). There are imitations, but Kṛṣṇa is real. They are blind. All over, they are chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa on my instruction. If they don't feel transcendental pleasure, how could they do it?

You—what is your understanding of the Absolute Truth? You can't live like us (elevated). You don't know the Absolute Truth.

There is Absolute Truth. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* describes that little animals praise the big animal, but that doesn't mean he's not an animal. A jackal fell in dye. The other animals accepted him as a new animal, representative of God, but then he howled and they knew he was a jackal.

(I know I have accepted Srila Prabhupada after being convinced by reason and logic—he knows God better than anyone.)

He says he never cares to go to the class of mental speculators who say there are many different ways of claiming the Absolute Truth and who don't take any position.

I said, "Whatever you say of the Absolute Truth represents a Vedic tradition."

He: What is your tradition, nonsense?

I: None. I just view them all.

He: You are a mental speculator.

I know I have accepted Srila Prabhupada based on the best presentation of God and God consciousness. Now I have to preach it.

"If someone doesn't know the Absolute Truth, then he should accept ours. How can he refuse it?"

July 3, 1975

Chicago

I came here mainly to meet with the library party. I have my own personal party for traveling, earning money, personal assistance (three men). In addition, I want to start a regular writing program.

One conflict is that I yearn to simply follow the library party and preach at the colleges—simple *sannyasa* life, but I have volunteered to do GBC management, so I cannot neglect regular temple visits; my program is the temples, the library party, my writing, and my studying. Sometimes it seems too varied and not centered enough. I'll never be satisfied—until I'm Krsna conscious. I'll never know the bliss of spreading Krsna consciousness until I become myself Krsna conscious. Of course, my own tendency is to write (when?) and lecture, but that doesn't satisfy me unless I can help more to guide our ISKCON. I simply have to surrender and be thankful and relish that I have many different things to do for my spiritual master.

July 13

St. Louis

On considering one *grhastha*'s request for *sannyasa*, Srila Prabhupada said that in our preaching, *we should not do our activities with any sense gratification, but with full responsibility*. That I certainly haven't realized. I am meditating on a preaching program to suit my own needs, one that will bring me the most blissful, philosophic, spiritual, renounced consciousness. That's all right, but it will come automatically out of the

tapasya of hard work for my spiritual master. I have to cease being selfish and considering my activities of preaching, writing, and studying in terms of my self-satisfaction. I have to act for the pleasure of my spiritual master and to help guide ISKCON.

July 21

Houston—notes for giving class (*Bhag.* 1.6.15)

The most typical *sannyasis*, such as Narada and Lord Caitanya, would travel alone and experience all varieties of God's creation, gaining "faith in God and strength of mind" and preaching to whomever they met. (*Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*). Prabhupada writes that *sannyasa* is now forbidden for ordinary men, and this indicates that if one does take *sannyasa*, it is more important in this age that he hear and chant the holy names, even if sitting in one place.

The *sannyasis* created by Prabhupada in ISKCON have been given duties to "travel and preach." That is the essence of the vocational call of *sannyasa* in ISKCON. It is attractive to *brahmacaris* and *grhasthas* to aspire to this, but it must be without the sense gratification of simply touring or avoiding duties and becoming celebrated *sannyasis*. Emphasis is on renunciation, not the change of dress and taking of the *danda*. Srila Prabhupada said recently, "Don't come to me, 'Give me *paramahansa*, give me *sannyasa*.' It is not like that. It is a stage of life." Falsely, one tries to gain worship for himself as a saintly, renounced person. For ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada has recently emphasized that *sannyasis* other than the spiritual master should be offered obeisances only once—when seeing them in the morning. Also, one does not take anyone's remnants except his spiritual master's. A *sannyasi* does not leave any remnants.

We should not simply be cultish about being a *sannyasi* and, like some *babaji*, sit around being renounced of fancy food and cloth. In *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, *Madhya-lila*, Lord Caitanya stresses, "*The real purpose of sannyasa is to dedicate oneself to Mukunda. By serving Mukunda one can actually be liberated . . .*"

(3.8). This “real purpose” is distinguished from the appearance of formality or the change of dress from householder to renounced mendicant with *danda*. *For us in ISKCON, it means preaching, taking leadership by example of projects for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.*

Those interested in serving a *sannyasi* should help him in a protective way to fulfill his vows of renunciation and preaching. They should help him expand his preaching opportunity, not offer him temptations of material life, and not put him in a situation contrary to his vows of renunciation, of womanly association. The *sannyasi* should not take advantage of the faithful householders by eating and sleeping on their good graces. Srila Prabhupada: “You can preach or slough off.” “Always think of expanding your service.”

As I write these lines, I am to spend a month in Srila Prabhupada’s association starting one week from now. I hope to gain more specific instructions how best to expand my service. Although all our engagements are preaching, the *sannyasi* has the privilege especially for unencumbered preaching, which I always somehow think of in terms of philosophic, continual speaking (as Prabhupada does) and management only as directly related to the preaching mission, with emphasis on recruiting and *sankirtana*, rather than on maintenance, business, or married life. Reaching the nondevotees on new frontiers, recruiting, *risking* as opposed to sitting idly in a temple.

July 23

I’m fortunate, as are all devotees. Looking at a letter of three years ago from His Divine Grace, he instructs, “You should take your responsibility very, very seriously.” “Always remember that you are one of the few men I have appointed to carry out my work throughout the world.” Now Srila Prabhupada is calling all U.S. GBC members to him in L.A. to discuss legal organization of our ISKCON. “Get the first plane to L.A.,” Jayatirtha said on the phone two hours ago. I am ready to fly from Houston. The call came at a time when my mind was agitated over lack of enthusiastic drive—taste—for my duties.

If I have been given certain duties, I should accept them wholeheartedly, at least for one year (since our duties are reassigned each year at Mayapur, with no changes supposed to occur during the year).

Perhaps there is nothing more to write—I have my duties—management of six temples as GBC and supervision of library party and BTG—but it seems to me that that impressive list of responsibilities still leaves me unengaged. The above mentioned posts are mostly "watch over" posts. I don't run the temples, I don't work selling books to libraries, I don't put together the magazine—I give advice on these projects (sometimes followed and sometimes not). I mediate disputes and visit and see that things are running smoothly. Lately, I have been feeling like a desk-chair general, not in the fire of fighting-preaching. Surely Krsna is watching me and will do with me as He desires. I am praying not to deviate or set a bad example of restlessness, and therefore pray to be sincere enough to submissively *apply myself to spreading Krsna consciousness* as I am supposed to do with no complaints. I'm somewhat bogged down, not identified heart and soul with a specific project. Please, Prabhupada, give me more to do, and give me the taste and ability to dive into it. The danger is that although I have duties, I am feeling detached from my service.

My discontent is that I think I can expand my service and do more for the Krsna consciousness movement. I don't feel inspired or challenged. I don't have a burden of front-line work. I don't want to give up duties. I want more duties. Could I ask Srila Prabhupada, "May I have some assignment I can take on suitable to my capacities, for spreading Krsna consciousness?" Of course, all this restlessness may be my superficiality, a lack of resolution to do what work I already have.

There are also obvious possibilities: take a *sankirtana* party around the country preaching in colleges while traveling more or less in the area of my zone. Why disturb Srila Prabhupada by asking for more work? If I want more, I can take it.

July 24

Los Angeles

Prabhupada made us admit, looking out at the ocean, that we accept that Japan is there on faith. I asked, "Why do they accept their authorities and not ours?" He said, "Because they are *duskrtina*, nondevotees, their intelligence is stolen away."

Jayadvaita said that scientists say we invent God. He replied that only the devotee can know Krsna. He reciprocates as they approach Him.

When told of the scientists' aim to conquer outer space, he remarked that big, big horses were in a raging river drowning, but a third-class horse thought, "Let me enter." I said, "Scientists can point to progress." He said, "There is no progress if you cannot stop death. All great sages went to the forest to conquer death."

July 28

Dallas

At the airport a reporter asked Srila Prabhupada why he had come. He said, "This is my home. I have so many children here. I have come to see them."

She asked his opinion about ISKCON Dallas's lawsuit for getting permission to sell literature. He said this literature is important. He had read, he said, in *Time*, that the U.S. is concerned about crime; this literature will solve the problem of crime if people will take to it. She asked him about India now with Indira Gandhi. He said he had nothing to do with politics, but anything—political, economical, philosophical, etc.—without Krsna consciousness is all zero. Krsna consciousness puts the one before the zeros, turning them into thousands, millions. He said he thought Indira Gandhi might be inclined to spirituality, and if so, then her rule could be hopeful, but otherwise not. He said her being against democracy is unpopular, but actually democracy is not so good. Even in the U.S. we know that sometimes a man is elected and then pulled

down. That means you have made a mistake. In Vedic civilization, the kings used to rule (for everyone's benefit). Even recently, Gandhi had so much power he was practically the dictator, but the people appreciated. If Gandhi could rule with autocratic powers, that is all right, but it must be done with spiritual knowledge.

In the garden

He found it cooling in the garden—we read from *Kṛṣṇa* book about the *Sivajvara* and *Narayanajvara*. The cold of *Narayanajvara* defeated the heat. In Lord Siva's prayer, he describes that the Lord is the creator of the material elements, etc. *Srila Prabhupada* asked, "If we do not accept that *Kṛṣṇa* made the sky, then who made it?" There were no answers. He said in the *Gita* verse, *bhumir apo 'nalo vayuh*, it states that *Kṛṣṇa* made the sky. We should study like this. *Aham sarvasya prabhavo*—that the sky is the greatest material thing, but He created it. In this way, study *Kṛṣṇa*. Not just with the *gopis*. The more you understand *Kṛṣṇa*, the more you will become His staunch followers. They—unauthorized persons—never paint *Kṛṣṇa* creating the sky. They take Him as support for their own lusty activities.

Gurukula teachers' darsana

Srila Prabhupada explained that the teacher should teach the student to be self-controlled for the guru's benefit, not for his personal benefit. You are working and I am not paying. Why? Out of your love. My spiritual master is my best friend and I must render service to him. On this basis, it is not possible to do this service for \$1,000 a month. Love, no payment. When one is fixed up to *Kṛṣṇa* and His pure devotee, everything is then revealed. Basic principles. *Brahmacaris* are especially under the guru's protection. There is no question of how much he has learned ABCs. Live in the *gurukula* and practice sense control. Live here for the guru's benefit, whatever he orders.

Question: Should we be strict?

Srila Prabhupada: It is all on the basis of love. Strict is not very good. They should do it automatically out of love. Superficially, some stricture is not a good idea. On the platform of love. Stricture, there are so many laws. Do or you'll be punished. They will develop the idea of love.

Jagadisa: Forcing out of love.

Srila Prabhupada: The basic principle should be love. That force is not material. The son is forced by the father, but that is for the son's benefit. That chastisement is also out of love. Children are innocent. As you teach them they will love.

Force, teaching, but all on the basis of love. But it requires experience.

Rules and regs, rising early, etc., will teach him automatically. Hare Krsna mantra, offering oblations, Deity, then automatically.

"Sit down and chant Hare Krsna"—get them to chant like that. Behave yourself strictly and they will follow.

You be a personal example. If you don't practice, but force them, that's not good. . . . If you are too lenient, there will be many faults. If you discipline them, that's good. Don't be lenient. Not out of "love" see our disciples go to hell. That is foolishness. From five to fifteen they should be kept under strict disciplinary order; if they don't follow they should be chastised. After that time don't force them. When they are grown up, fifteen, they should be treated as friends.

Especially concentrate on congregational chanting and individual chanting.

Gurukula means the students are educated as good citizens, devotees, and know the value of life. In other schools they remain cats and dogs. They are not educated, but they learn to become polished dog.

August 2, 1975

Detroit talk

Srila Prabhupada told how seventy years ago there was a "comic book" by a famous author in Bengal, India, about women going to work and men staying home. Women met and one

said, "We have taken over equally in all affairs except we still have to bear children." One woman from East Bengal stood and said, "We are the first in everything. We shall be the first ones to have men bear pregnancy!" All applauded this.

He is keen for an institute with a library of all our philosophy books. Any scholar may come and study and then argue with us, and we shall demonstrate how Kṛṣṇa consciousness is superior. This is the gift of Jiva Gosvami, that he presented philosophy in defiance of all others.

We don't say, "I'm okay, you're okay." If a gentleman comes, we behave nicely, but if he speaks nonsense, then we cannot tolerate. We are gentlemen, but here is milk. If he says it is not milk, we cannot tolerate.

The six other Indian philosophies are all atheistic. Those such as Kanada can't explain the ultimate cause. Some charge that Gita or Kṛṣṇa is not in the four *Vedas*. But do you know the four *Vedas*? In Jiva Gosvami and Ramanuja's writings, each line is backed up with the *Vedas* and *Upanisads*. Great *acaryas* of theistic line have accepted Kṛṣṇa.

The U.S. is the only hope of the world. Countries are becoming Communist—all land taken over by the state. In India we own land as an institution, but if they take it away, it will all be gone. But in your country, the preaching is best.

He said one can argue as an impersonalist or representative of any other philosopher. Sartre was mentioned. He said life is absurd, it has no cause. "No cause? You had no father, mother?" Śrīla Prabhupada challenged. Life is absurd for him, not for us.

We said Brahman has no qualities. It is beyond the senses. He said, "Then you cannot talk of Him." Great *acaryas* and the *sastras* repeat what God says. If God speaks, you say He cannot speak? Who are you? Why do I have to accept you that God has no qualities? You do not know who God is, but we are perfect, we know. If God speaks, then we can know.

August 3

He said while reading aloud from *Caitanya-caritamṛta* that GBC members should become *sikṣa-gurus*. (That means we can become, we should become, not that we can declare, "We are *sikṣa-gurus* now." It is no joke.)

He had me read *sloka* after *sloka* of *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, *Adi-lila*, Chapter 1. He said just by hearing the *sloka*, it is beneficial. We should read like this. Then we read verses, purports. He said hold classes like this. Just whatever is written. If you hear, Kṛṣṇa will help you to understand.

Talk

We have a car, but we're going to the temple and distributing books with it. Anything can be used for Kṛṣṇa. Here is a rich man's son (Ford). We are giving him a little spiritual teaching, but he is happy.

No divorce. Can't separate half of the body.

A big mansion is available here, but it's in a high crime area. Śrīla Prabhupada said get it. We will chant Hare Kṛṣṇa there twenty-four hours, and if a thief comes we will say, "Yes, first take *prasadam* and then take what you want. What do we have?" He said he doesn't care about the bad neighborhood. Make the ruffians devotees. Have the owner give us the building for five years. I lived on the Bowery, he said, and he described how bums were urinating at the front door and lying on the street, but when he came out they would quickly get up and let him pass, saying, "Yes, sir, come on, sir." He would say, "That's all right." They never bothered me, he said. One uptown Jewish friend of his was horrified to hear he was going to the Bowery.

August 7

Class notes

The only prayer to make to Krsna is, "*Dear Lord, please give me the strength to serve You.*" Any other prayer, you'll never be happy.

First, quality association is required. There must be a center where one can get the chance for first-class association. Devotees must be responsible, so anyone who comes into this association will become a devotee.

Don't study Krsna superficially.

Even if he is just talking to a few of us minutes before his massage, Srila Prabhupada's preaching is always profound.

When he first saw this country with all its roads and cars, he couldn't take it seriously. He said that they have no purpose in life other than to build their roads and cars and have sex life.

They think at death it will all be finished. Actually, they will forget this life and (in a sense) it will all be finished. An astrologer said Nehru took birth as a dog. It is controversial: if it is not so, all right, but if it is true, then what is this prime ministership?

Those who keep dogs will become dogs. You cannot avoid nature's law and say it won't happen.

How do the atheists account for all the species of life? They say the environment produces them. But if you say the environment, why are there still so many species? They cannot explain. (They cannot explain and they have no purpose, nothing to do but build roads and die.)

Prabhupada is completely convinced of Krsna. Therefore, to associate with him is the greatest assurance for a devotee. There is no question that he cannot effectively answer. He can give the solution to any anxiety or lamentation because when he says, "Chant Hare Krsna," one is able to accept it: "Yes, if I simply chant the holy names I will be saved." Prabhupada can say, can do, whatever is needed to rescue a fallen, bewildered

soul. He has the cure-all medicine. He is kind, but never materially sympathetic—Krsna's love and exactly how to dispense it and apply it are in his control.

We have just to follow him. Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/ Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare.

It's working; judge by the result. My unwillingness is *tamoguna*, the ignorant mode of laziness, lack of determination, sleep. His order is "new life," "full of strength." Praying for strength: "Dear Lord Balarama, please give me the strength to serve. There is discrepancy in me. Let me deal humbly, ever ready to execute orders with all dedication of mind, speech, and body."

August 8

Prabhupada, my father, my guru absorbed in the Absolute Truth, Krsna, and how to spread Krsna consciousness, a philosophy for all humanity. "No sane man will object." Now he has gone to India to meet with the Prime Minister. "I am concerned about the management of my society." As one of his "ten thousand assistants," I have a particular duty to see that his books are being distributed to the scholarly class. "There are 75,000 libraries," he said again.

Someone wrote and asked, "The *Bhagavad-gita* speaks of reincarnation. Why can't we remember our past lives?"

Why can't we remember our past lives? Because we forget them. Why do we forget? Because we are tiny, conditioned beings. We are every day experiencing forgetfulness; it is itself one of the symptoms that we are limited. We forget from one day to the next and we forget from one life to another, one body after another. Lord Krsna pointed this out to his disciple, Arjuna, in the *Bhagavad-gita*: "Many, many births both you and I have passed. I can remember all of them but you cannot." That is the difference between God and man: He never forgets, we do. Krsna had just stated that He first spoke the *Gita* to the sun-god millions of years ago, and Arjuna then inquired, "But

how could You have spoken millions of years ago since You are my contemporary?" Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna that we are all eternal beings—Arjuna was also present in another identity millions of years ago, but he cannot be expected to remember it since he is not as good as God.

That tiny, forgetful living being is, however, as complete in his eternality as God. Kṛṣṇa states in the second chapter of the Gita, "Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be." Because we are only fragmented parts of the Supreme Being, however, we do not possess the same quantity of omnipotence as He does.

Lecture notes

Don't become another "Christian party." Christ said, "Thou shalt not kill," and they killed him first. They started their life by killing him. Still they are killing, and yet they claim to be Christians.

Don't violate all the rules and still claim to be Kṛṣṇa's. "We must follow what Kṛṣṇa says, then we are Kṛṣṇa's."

Become enthusiastic about the same *parampara* philosophy that has been enunciated, unchanged, for thousands of years—*utsaha*.

I know at least from my "unconscious" dreams that my mind desires and wishes for sex life. I invent, concoct, or relive some seedy adventures in phantasmagoria—leading to sex. *Artha* and *kama* make the world go 'round. How to stop it? Kṛṣṇa says, "Wherever the mind wanders due to its flickering nature, bring it back under the control of the higher self." That I do. It will be conquered. Keep the mind as friend, tighten the rein. Time is running short. All desire has to be vanquished before the end of this body. Full attachment for Kṛṣṇa has to take the place of material desire in my heart.

"Learn to tolerate the senses," Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna. Don't give in to their demands, but learn to tolerate that this flesh and bones will lead me into much difficulty.

Cultivate indifference.

Tolerate means that the senses may call, but tolerate, don't give in to the urges. Perform your duty and tolerate the attacks upon the mind and senses and hold fast to Kṛṣṇa conscious devotional service.

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* we find that revival of love of Kṛṣṇa doesn't depend on "the mechanical system of hearing and chanting, but it solely and wholly depends on the causeless mercy of the Lord." Not that He is dependent like a puppet on the sound of His name uttered by anyone. He gives devotional service to the sincere devotee when He is satisfied with him. He is *svarat* (independent). Even mechanical chanting, however, will reduce the miseries of material desire. He will come and award *bhakti* certainly, but we have to be sincere. Otherwise, it is possible to chant vociferously and not get the benefit, if Kṛṣṇa doesn't care to award *bhakti*. If one chants with too much offense, he may not benefit. One who is desiring to serve Kṛṣṇa—*tesam satatam yuktanam*—will be given intelligence. Real quality has to be there.

Claims of seeing Kṛṣṇa on LSD—"Kṛṣṇa came before me and danced"—are called *prakṛta-sahajīya*, un-bona fide. One has to take to the prescribed route and humbly serve the previous *acaryas*, and it will come out successful.

In verse 1.7.6, *bhakti-yoga* is described as the mitigating factor to all miseries, but the mass of people do not know it. Vyasadeva therefore compiled *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, so now they can benefit. Because Prabhupada is distributing *Bhagavatam*, which was never known in the West, he is the greatest benefactor. The mass of people do not know it. He has said that in the future, the day will come when these books will be known.

(My program to lecture in the colleges is minor compared to the work of the library party who are getting appreciations from the top scholars and having these books taken by university libraries.)

August 12

Denver

I was with Srila Prabhupada for two weeks before he went to India. Before those two weeks, I was with him in L.A., Denver, and Chicago, almost another three weeks. Now I am serving in separation. His Divine Grace told me that my main work was with the library party. I am planning to follow them and do the lecture tour September–October–November. Please give me the strength, Prabhupada, Krsna, to serve you in this way. Prabhupada also said "the magazine" is very important. I must also write regular essays.

He said to mainly travel to the colleges and libraries with this library mission. I can visit the temple *occasionally*. *Jaya Srila Prabhupada.*

There's a theme (like a motif in music), and whenever I hear it again I feel an indescribable yearning. The yearning is more a shadow of a yearning—I yearn to yearn more and live more in the life of this theme. The theme? It is like this: "Those who have developed spiritual knowledge, however, can see that the spirit is different from the body and is changing its body and enjoying in different ways. A person in such knowledge can understand how the conditioned living entity is suffering in this material existence. *Therefore, those who are highly developed in Krsna consciousness try their best to give this knowledge to the people in general, for their conditional life is very much troublesome.*" (from Bg. 15.10, purport)

It's preaching. I have to first realize it—that Krsna consciousness is not just another yoga and that our pride that it is topmost is not just our sectarian loyalty. Realization: everyone is changing their body and Krsna consciousness can put an end to this otherwise endless suffering.

I am trying to be engaged in it. It is very practical: you have to order books, sell books, collect money, meet with many obstacles (not that preaching all takes place in a romantic setting with the new devotee surrendering and the whole world appreciating Krsna, etc.). But that *yearning*.

There has to be *bhakti* realization in the service. How the conditioned souls are being saved by Krsna consciousness, how it can be proved to be the only authorized movement of love of God.

Preaching in ecstasy is the theme. Being absorbed (the false self consumed) in the act of delivering Krsna consciousness.

The theme is, "I want to preach" as well as, "I'm preaching." The theme is, "I want to always travel, I want to renounce material desires and fully serve Krsna." The theme is also, "I am traveling, I am renounced, I am fully engaged in serving Krsna." Yearning and being—in *preaching consciousness*.

College Preaching

September 1, 1975–February 4, 1976

I was able to speak at so many colleges because of the advance work of my Godbrother, Īśa Prabhu. Īśa went two months in advance to book lectures. He was creative, approaching professors in all departments, including hard sciences. He would stretch it a bit, describing me as a Vedic writer and professor, and he would try to convince professors that I had something relevant to say. In that way, he was able to get several lectures in almost any college to which he went. His was a daring approach, and it took daring to follow up on it—to appear in the classroom in saffron robes after the professor had been prepared for something else. Only in one or two cases did the professors feel it was a trick on our part. We really tried sincerely to deliver the message in tune with their curriculum needs. We were confident that Kṛṣṇa consciousness was relevant and had jurisdiction in a sociological study of “the family” or a literature class on the poetry of Walt Whitman. “Professors are all respectful.”

As I read this now, I recall a bit of the taste of that college preaching, especially when there were many, many lectures. It was a test of surrender to constantly face the speculators and with minimum “labeling of the bottle”—billing a lecture “The Family in the *Vedas*,” and speaking on the first chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*—to actually deliver Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not ultimately acceptable in the secular, academic setting, yet we kept trying to insert it; it was a kind of subterfuge. At the same time it is also true that people have become full-time devotees of Kṛṣṇa by first hearing from an

“academic” preacher presenting Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a classroom.

The benefits for the preacher are immediate in that he becomes enriched and strengthened by meeting daily opposition. Then, when the devotee goes to speak to other devotees, he is able to give them much firsthand preaching inspiration and to help them in their similar dialogues with the nondevotees. College lecturing is a sublime engagement if one can do it. Devotees sometimes tease that college lecturing is “spiritual sense gratification,” but even this remark is an indirect praise. It is so much fun. It is also hard work. One is humbled because there are often no perceivable external results.

The college preaching season stopped around the end of the first week of December, and that explains our stay in Santa Cruz for one month.

As this chapter is almost entirely about preaching at the colleges, it reads as a bit of a surprise to suddenly note on January 8 in San Antonio, “We now have a new party of mostly shaky devotees, seven or eight, who form the chanting and book distribution party.” I am reminded of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions to me in 1972 that I should preach mostly to the devotees. It almost seems as if the devotees in the party had been neglected, or at any rate, they certainly needed attention, as I note: “They are often having overt difficulties and doubts.” Soon after Śrīla Prabhupāda awarded me *sannyāsa*, he wrote that it was most important to preach to the devotees who had already joined. He referred to this as “boiling the milk,” which he said was a better process than diluting milk (making too many cheap members). On the other hand, a few months after he wrote me that instruction, I met Śrīla Prabhupāda and he told me that I should also travel with a bus, as another *sannyāsī* was doing, and reach people in the interior of the country. Thus we have to balance maintenance and expansion.

Rereading diaries has several benefits. One benefit is that it reminds you to “count your blessings.” At least during the period of this chapter, I was in the very fortunate situation of being provided with many lecture engagements and keeping

free of too much management. I had a healthy desire to avoid followers and position.

Yet there is the usual creeping dissatisfaction with what I was doing. When you can read a diary and see your life spread out before you like that during a certain period, it helps to convince you to always try to restrain the dissatisfaction. No matter what fortunate situation we have, there will be a tendency for distraction. It is better to see the blessings that Kṛṣṇa is bestowing on us and, at the same time, be willing to change.

In this chapter, Śrīla Prabhupāda is not so directly evident as in my note-taking of his lectures or with his presence before us daily, yet everything was being done to please him, and it was Prabhupāda's books and teachings that were being distributed. Without that, this diary has no spiritual value. "O undying spirit of profit, adoration, and sex life! Will you always follow me like a skull and crossbones? Begone! Therefore, I take shelter in the holy name and His Divine Grace's books."

* * *

September 1, 1975

False pride is a problem. Another terrible problem is my factual low performance in devotional service. On the one hand, I foolishly think I am doing wonderful things and should be praised for my work. Therefore, I am illusioned and sometimes struggling to get out of illusion. On the other hand, the reality beyond the illusion is that my *japa* is poor, my *gayatri-mantra* is done inattentively, I am fearful, I do not desire to preach Kṛṣṇa's glories, I am envious of the spiritual master, etc. What to do?

Amogha-līla dasa was recalling how his college professors tried to defeat God to incoming freshmen. They would describe the corruption of church leaders of the medieval age, beliefs they held which were discredited by science, and cases where they persecuted Galileo, etc. By a few selected examples, they

would try to conclude that God does not exist. Students, having only some Biblical knowledge of God were helpless. Professors were determined to dismiss God in the philosophy class or reduce Him to an abstract theorem.

Actually, He stands over the atheist like a big ax; He will certainly kill everyone as Death.

September 9

Framingham, State College

Just gave my first class in a long while. I hope it is the start of a season full of preaching. The preaching is academic, but it is definitely *the fire*. It is *sankirtana*. They chanted Hare Krsna mantra. They asked questions about death and the next life, not entirely from the clinical point of view. The class was on the family and the caste system. I read from *Bhagavad-gita*, 1st chapter, where Arjuna discussed the importance of the family; then about *grhamedhi* life from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

Another class today in Vedic education. The professor gave \$5.00 and the students also donated. I spoke critically of modern education from *Isopanisad*.

I am just a tiny person. For my own realization and so that I can serve better, I am trying to understand how to argue against those who claim there is no absolute knowledge. I was just reading a book about science. It equated absolute knowledge with the dogmatism that killed Galileo and which Hitler possessed. Physicists have found there is uncertainty in the universe. They put themselves as champions of humanity and say that the horrors of the atom bomb are not the scientists' fault. (Gas did not kill millions of Jews; it was arrogance, dogmatism, etc.—when anyone is certain he is right, that is dangerous. They talk like that.) Of course, that is all right, but the implication is that God has not been empirically observed, so you cannot be certain of Him. Neither logically nor scientifically is He proven, they say. They fall into the trap of so-called speculative humanism, describing that we should not accept the absolute truth of *sastra*. They point to the inhumane crimes of the Catholic Church punishing Galileo for saying

the earth is not the center of the universe, as if that corruption rules out the *sastra*.

The best thing is the purity of the Vedic tradition. It is faith in that which is sublime. Human history is filled with wars, horrors, injustices, and each person also dies. Vedic science is the dissertation on becoming free of all material conditioning. It is possible, although all scientists say the contrary. I prefer the association of saintly persons, the ecstasy of *bhakti*, and the attainment of real progress in that most advanced path to eternal life. No one can defeat the learned Vaisnava. I want to help.

September 15

University of New Haven, Connecticut

Never think, "What a great preacher I am," but somehow try to help this great Krsna consciousness movement. In one class today, I explained Buddha in terms of the *Vedas*. The professor wore a "Keep on Truckin" T-shirt and was like an unclean hippy—so unlike a devotee. I spoke on the verse describing Buddha as an incarnation. I first explained "*avatara*" and how we are rotting in the material world, although we are spiritual. Then I covered Buddha's *ahimsa* (philosophy of non-violence) and His tricking the atheists. The Christians are supporting animal-killing on the same basis today. Then described the incomplete nature of *nirvana* as material. Gave an example of the invalid on the bed. Described the *sat-cit-ananda* realm of the devotee and Krsna. Finally—they were dull with almost no questions—I told them if they were studying Buddhism, not to be so-called Buddhists who are only debauchees and who take intoxicants, and who speak of *nirvana* in between. That is not Buddhism, but debauchery. The shoe probably fit everyone in the room, especially the professor. They chanted a little and bought two or three dollars worth of books. Isa said I was very easy on them.

September 16

Housatonic Community College, West Haven, Connecticut

My lectures are restrained. The professor was satisfied. I contrasted Indian village life with materialistic American life. A boy objected that Indian social life wasn't mobile. I admitted that social escalation for material success wasn't stressed. These kids have no idea of spiritual life. Dull-headed kids said that they had this idea of immortality: not that you can become a dog, but "you live on in your kids." An hour and a half went by easily. Preaching against materialistic culture is natural. They may see the criticism, but they can't see the soul or Kṛṣṇa. One boy said it was nice, but how can it be done in the West, which is so neurotic and geared for technology? I told him to join ISKCON. They bought two dollars worth of books and chanted.

Concerning social elevation, why be so eager to elevate within the prison from third-class to first-class prisoner? Everyone in material life is a prisoner. Vedic society teaches us how to become free and go back to Kṛṣṇa, never mind *sudra*, *vaiśya*, whatever—He takes everyone. But we are more concerned with the prison facilities. No knowledge.

September 17

Another class with Professor Ward on Hinduism. I stressed *bhakti* as the goal, according to *Bhagavad-gita*.

Evening class with rabbi sociologist. The class asked about the soul. Also, "If you say you believe in Jesus, how come he didn't teach transmigration?" I keep describing *varnasrama* division. I keep feeling awkward in the beginning getting them to chant. The simplicity of the spiritual message and its single-mindedness!

I'm becoming enlivened at writing refutations of speculative philosophies that challenge Vedic knowledge. The way I am writing now, it seems I could never get tired! Kṛṣṇa is giving me ideas how to defeat them with our knowledge. We do not

have to kowtow to any materialists. They try to shove God consciousness out of the status of real knowledge, but their logic and scientific theories are not real threats to God consciousness, provided I get Kṛṣṇa's mercy to see their defects and to see where I should attack with the sword of transcendental knowledge. I pray at the feet of my Gurudeva, Srila Prabhupada, for the strength to do some service for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am writing and becoming purified of doubts, better able to preach.

September 18

Two classes with Professor Braune, East Connecticut State College, Willimantic. His classes really chanted nicely. Before the class we spoke some philosophy with the professor.

Everywhere we go we are respected by the professors. They want us to expose their students to the Vedic knowledge because it is so different and is related to their studies. I was preaching as a devotee saying, "Surrender to Kṛṣṇa or you'll remain in suffering." Now and then I would say, "According to Vedic philosophy," in order to set things in the academic, objective tone.

September 19

Two more classes with Braune and an interview with the local newspaper. In the Oriental Philosophy course I spoke on yoga—read from Gita verses on *karma*, *jnana*, *astanga* and *bhakti*. Kṛṣṇa is Yogesvara. The professor was very respectful. Eight lectures for the week.

September 26

Hartford, Connecticut

There are many shortcomings to the college lecture program, but it is also great mercy on me and on the colleges. Professors are all respectful. Students hear for the first time that God is

real, Vedic literature is real, *bhakti* is the purest thing, and perhaps their professors are speculating. Two lectures today—in the last one I covered all Vedic literature and its *siddhanta* and defended *sruti* and the Personality of Godhead. Simply I spoke from “the authentic tradition since time immemorial” as the professor (Miller) said. *Jaya!*

I'm grateful to the Lord and my spiritual master for letting me engage in some service I can do.

September 27

Speaking Kṛṣṇa's *upadesa* is so nice because *at that time*, one is mostly lost of false ego and one's absorption in plans and images of the body. Mostly he is actively attacking and destroying the false concepts and acting in words to glorify the Personality of Godhead. It is a constant attempt of the words and intelligence to persuade listeners to consider Kṛṣṇa consciousness as the topmost goal. Because the lecturing is always *parampara*, one is simply transmitting Vedic sound and becoming purified. The more of such speaking the better.

September 29

It is disgusting—my lack of advancement. An older God-brother of mine suggested to me that my personality is pleasant, in the mode of goodness, and therefore I might have the tendency not to be dissatisfied with *the wrong* in ISKCON and in myself. Satisfied mode of goodness.

I can't seem to get out.

I'm stuck, but not trying hard either.

Anyway, *now I have made a fresh new start in chanting my japa very distinctly as of today, September 29*. This should help.

Life is passing by and I'm on the lower stages of devotional service. I am supposed to set an example. I have no attraction to—*no realization of*—Kṛṣṇa as the all-beautiful Personality of Godhead, yet I'm going out now to preach in colleges in Vermont. My preaching is fighting. I can fight with this knowledge. I'm convinced in Kṛṣṇa and Srila Prabhupada, yet I have

very little realization. Even a fool can speak Kṛṣṇa's message if he tries sincerely and doesn't deviate. I should read Bhakti-vinoda Thakura's poem: I'm stuck in sense gratification, O Gopinātha.

Subtle sense gratification is desire for profit, adoration, and distinction. I want these. Still, I'm being allowed to serve and present this philosophy. If I were pure, it would be so much more effective—Kṛṣṇa would empower me. Just like Lord Caitanya: wherever He went as a *sannyasi*, He converted many into Kṛṣṇa *bhaktas*.

Plymouth, New Hampshire

Professor Haight, who invited us September 30, gave us a cabin to stay in and we talked philosophy with him. He is a TM meditator but seemed eager to hear about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The next day we spoke in three classes, each one an hour and fifteen minutes long. His wife attended each class and he also taped them. We talked in between. We disagreed because he thought the Absolute was impersonal and that his TM took him beyond "consciousness." I pointed out sastric evidence that his meditation was impractical and that personal realization was higher. He couldn't accept it, but he continued to be receptive and appeared to be considering his own values. He kept saying, "That's very interesting," and we felt we were making some headway with him. We preached sincerely to him to explain *Bhagavad-gita* and *bhakti*, hoping to save him from the impersonal dilemma.

After our last class he wanted to talk some more but said that first he and his wife had to meditate. We went off and chanted, waiting for them. After half an hour we walked back to his office. He and his wife were sitting in the front seats of their Volkswagen car, both stiff-necked, facing forward. I guessed they were doing their meditation, so we went to our car and waited. Then when he seemed finished, I went over and told him we would have to leave for our next college in 15 minutes. I could tell he was affected from his meditation, but I

didn't want to discuss it. I felt there wasn't much more we could say to them today.

Then he began talking philosophically again. He said "the personae" are illusion. Then he asked me our view of Jesus and Krsna and made word jugglery that Krsna was not God, but his statements were not clear. I took at first that he was inquiring in his usual scholarly, inquisitive though contaminated way, and gave him the *parampara* explanation. I told him Krsna was not only God but more than God. Then I felt him attacking. He said we were idol worshipers. His wife was smiling, watching. I felt imperiled. He said he was being blunt with us for our own good and that we would have difficulty with all the professors we met. I felt I wanted to leave these two TM characters who seemed "high" and aggressive from the meditation, like intoxicated marijuana smokers. I told him his ideas were speculation. He got emphatic, "Have you transcended? If you haven't transcended you can't speak!" He must have had a real Mayavadi trip while sitting in the front seat of his car.

Due to his being kind to us all day, I felt a kind of attachment to him and wanted to behave as a gentleman. I told him we spoke on the authority of *sastra*, which is spoken by God. Then—I only clearly realized later—he spoke like the stereotypical philosophy teacher, although up until now I had taken him as one who accepts scripture. He had previously led me to believe he favored acceptance of transcendental knowledge. He went into the routine of asking if anyone can then accept any scripture, according to what I had said. I told him first that I didn't want to talk with him, but I answered that there are different scriptures. I really didn't want to get into it. He was riled up and wanted to defeat us. I felt there was no point to it. I told him I can't speak spiritual knowledge to you in this condition. He relented a little, but then attacked again and said he had read all the great philosophers and no one should be accepted. I said, "Yes, they are all mundane." He wasn't listening. We were standing in a public place and I would have had to shout him down. He said he wanted to defeat us as Socrates defeated his opponents, exposing that the opponent couldn't speak with reason. I said, "You haven't said

anything I couldn't logically refute." He attacked some more, then apologized, then attacked. I said we had to go and we walked away from him and left.

It was Krsna's mercy for us to see the demonic results of that TM. All day he had been listening to us speak and had to admit our ideas were interesting. He even said our method was higher. But his TM acted on him, I thought, just like when one smokes marijuana. The drug assassinates all one's constructive character and moral improvement.

October 1, 1975

Yesterday, a total of four classes. Three were with Professor Kroger at St. Michaels in Winooski, then we drove three hours to Plymouth and had an evening program with students connected with the campus ministry. We showed slides.

Today, two classes on yoga and Zen.

I am trying to speak the straight *parampara*. It is sometimes almost painful, since our presentation is so blunt and the Western "intellectual" tradition is to be a mental speculator. But it is best if I find the courage to say it: "Krsna is the Absolute Truth. He is the Supreme Brahman. He is the Supreme Person. We are eternal spiritual persons meant to be with Him in the spiritual world. Everything else is nonsensical if it doesn't lead to love of Krsna. Take to Krsna by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Give up sense gratification."

October 2

University of Vermont

Four classes and one slide show in the afternoon—the week's total is fourteen classes in four days!

Summary: the professors are all speculators. Can't expect them to become devotees, but preaching plants seeds. It is purifying *sankirtana*. Only Prabhupada can save me.

October 4

Boston

I want to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am trying not to serve for praise or following, or for securing material privileges. I want to realize I am not this body. Therefore, I am trying to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa without offenses. Anyone who is not chanting the holy names clearly should rectify his ways and not go on in devotional service for subtle sense gratification.

October 6

Providence, Rhode Island

Yesterday, two classes. Today, one very good one at Brown University. Professor Donna Wolfe, a specialist in *bhakti*, allowed me to speak *parampara* about the goal of the Vedas: *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedya*. I quoted many references (many for me), showing *bhakti* in the Vedas and *Upanisads*. Now in a motel, I have reread my forty pages of manuscript on "Philosophy of Kṛṣṇa," and find it of no particular value. It served a purpose as I felt threatened at first by the philosophers' criticism of God consciousness. I wrote my refutations, which are solid—based on the unavailability of God to impertinent mundane reasoning—but as a literary work it is not much.

Now I am thinking there is nothing worth writing except articles for *Back to Godhead* as they are assigned to me by the editors. If Kṛṣṇa or my spiritual master or the devotees desire they can point me to any other literary task. One likely area would be anything in the context of our modern times, and explaining Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a convincing, attractive way. I am more interested right now in reading my spiritual master's books. Surely I'll get more writing assignments.

Writing for myself as therapy or defeating doubts is another way of writing, and others may benefit as I become a better devotee. The philosophical writing helped me in that way. I was thinking of writing something about sex attraction and sexology in the same way. The Kali-yuga mind thinks sex :

good pleasure and psychologists say that not to indulge in it is abnormal. It might be worthwhile investigating such literature and defeating it.

Aside from that, I want to chant Hare Krsna and do practical service, not as a pastime or as an essentially idle person, but to help push on the Krsna consciousness movement in this degraded age of Kali.

Krsna never fails to let His devotee speak on His behalf. I have to tell the truth. I can't water it down. But it can be presented in proper, philosophical perspective so there is no shortage.

The fear of repetition? No, don't fear—new examples and new lights will come from Supersoul.

October 22 Cleveland

A slower week, but good. Two classes Monday at University of Michigan. One Tuesday at University of Windsor, Canada—a real battle with the Mayavadis. By Prabhupada's grace, I remembered how Lord Caitanya is described as a very strict Vaisnava in His faith, and I spoke without compromise before an "Eastern Religion" group of Mayavadis. Today in Cleveland, nice class before Eastern Religions group. Now I have two new *Bhagavatams* by my spiritual master to read. No other philosophy is needed to help. Total classes this week will probably be eight, but over a good range of area. I wish I could sleep less and chant Hare Krsna mantra better, stay awake and read these books. I wish I could be kinder to my Godbrothers and not envious of my spiritual master, and not forget the Lord at the time of death, and be aloof from fear and sex desire, and surrender to devotional service.

November 5, 1975

A rather slow week in Denver—only six classes. Otherwise, doing GBC management and reading. I'm definitely phasing myself (mentally) out of supervision of temples in a zone. Trying to become satisfied with college and engagement lecturing,

traveling as a *sannyasi*. ISKCON finances, *grhastha* management and politics—I am more and more reluctant to take these up. As a *sannyasi* this is all right, but I am a GBC member, so I am in a special position. I should never falsely renounce. If possible, I would rather be a traveling GBC, maintaining the library party and doing lots of preaching engagements. This is my present mentality and at this rate, I will give up these duties at the Mayapur meeting in March.

I have to manage the library party, which will be shifting in some of their tactics. In addition, my own plans are to go on lecturing. To recruit men is also a great program, as is being done by the Radha-Damodara bus party. I don't seem to want to think so "big." I want to be forced to work—and sending a man ahead to get me lots of speaking engagements is one way. Everyone should distribute books, so by managing the library party, I will keep honest in that way. Krsna will actually decide.

Also, if my book comes out, I may be able to do more lecturing or teaching.

Sometimes, especially in the past, I would daydream that I was a special person meant for a glorious, special engagement. Actually, I have been given such glorious engagements—to lead the Boston *yatra*—although I did it imperfectly—to begin the *gurukula* school, to be awarded *sannyasa*, to be awarded GBC. Prabhupada once wrote me never to forget that I am one of the few he has chosen to spread Krsna consciousness. Yet to diplomatically work with the *grhastha* managers is not to my liking. What does it mean to be a leader? At least now I am thinking I want to go on lecturing on my own, not even with a big party.

The ISKCON leadership in terms of control of the centers or many followers doesn't attract me. The question, "Is my renunciation good, a form of purity, or is it laziness and avoidance of ordeal on behalf of the spiritual master?" If I simply spend the rest of my life traveling and speaking, will that be sufficient? I'm not attached to ISKCON power—anyone who wants to take over my zone can do so. Let me go out and expand preaching and reading.

November 19

Los Angeles

This week a total of nine engagements, brings me to a total of eighty-six engagements.

November 23

Early this morning I had a dream that I was in a hanging machine about to be executed. Then the door was suddenly opened and I escaped, dove down a long hole and came out in my next life—descriptions that I should be a *sannyasi* who has a wife and children, some assurance coming that that was all right—then next life in renunciation. But in that, a humorous attitude toward entertaining some people with humorous talk. No thought of Srila Prabhupada, Krsna, or His holy name—even in the last seconds when I was going to be hanged.

Now I feel more serious, or at least meditative. I am thirty-six years old, older than most of Srila Prabhupada's disciples. I see I cannot trust my mind. But I want to do more in devotional service. I want to aspire to become a pure devotee. I don't think I can turn myself into a book distributor, although the most important work is managing the library party of book distributors. Also, I am an example by what I speak in class and all the time.

Today I am to speak on love of Krsna in the class here in L.A. I have been preparing the lectures. Love of God is sometimes absent even in great sages. Despite so many activities of the *karmis*, they do not think of Krsna or live in love of God. *Jnanis* and *yogis* also—no love of the Supreme Lord. Only in *bhakti-yoga*.

Krsna loves us. There is much evidence in the *sastra* how He loves us. We have to respond. In *bhakti-yoga* we are practicing love of God now in the first stages. We have to strictly avoid sinful activities as obedience. Obedience is certainly a prerequisite to love.

Out of love we should not fight, husband and wife, between Godbrothers, or break rules. Out of love we should try to surrender to devotional service. Preach out of spontaneous love or

at least out of duty (love in deep gratefulness to the spiritual master for what he has given us).

Try to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, not with distracted minds, but in love of God. Sex is engaged in by the *grhasthas* for children, but it has to be in love of Prabhupada to produce nice children. Love is a practical field of practical action, even for us in the neophyte stage.

References: love of the Lord for His devotees—in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Kardama and the Lord. Dhruva and the Lord. Sanātana and Lord Caitanya.

The nature of love of God: it enables you to love all others, stop sins and rebirth, is auspicious welfare work, surpasses the happiness of every other happiness, is rarely awarded, attracts Kṛṣṇa, makes one deride liberation, and is eternal. It is the constitutional nature (*dharma*) of the living being. Without it we are bereft, and when the devotee recognizes that love, sometimes he cries.

November 24

Just read about Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. His renunciation and love for Lord Caitanya are worshipable. Srila Prabhupada is Lord Caitanya's representative. He is setting the perfect example of preaching for us.

Kṛṣṇadasa Kaviraja writes that each Gosvami was given different duties. Prabhupada comments that Rupa and Sanātana were told to preach and Raghunatha dasa was told to strictly follow the rules and regulations. Each devotee has a duty given by the spiritual master and he has to execute it. My duty has changed over the years: work at a job and donate money to support the N.Y. temple, then manage affairs in Boston (for four years), then go to Dallas to help start *guru-kula*, travel and oversee temples in a zone as GBC, then renounced order and a college preaching program. For eight months I was also an incompetent personal secretary and servant to His Divine Grace. Now he is thinking of me as a manager of the library party, which is a project dear to him. He has allowed me to be engaged in it and stated his approval of

college preaching. That preaching is a real niche for me as it is preaching *sankirtana*, which I can do well.

Our spiritual master emphasizes giving up material life by vigorous preaching to spread Krsna consciousness. He has published so many books; now we are distributing them. He has ordered the opening of so many temples; now we are maintaining them. He has ordered us to preach everywhere and make our country Krsna conscious.

I am especially trying to engage in meeting opposition through philosophic lecturing and countering arguments with reason and logic.

November 28

Berkeley, California

In this book I meditate on carrying out the spiritual master's order. I desire to worship that order and also here, I've indicated some results and plans for carrying out the orders.

On reading a recent letter to me from His Divine Grace, I realized I have a responsibility to manage temples in my zone. At the same time, I need the activity of personal preaching by lecturing in classes.

December 8, 1975

Santa Cruz

On a nice preaching mission, holding two feasts for the people here. Engaging local hippies and fringe devotees.

Today we chanted on the streets and distributed flyers. We're staying at a house where they have Gaura-Nitai Deities, so again I've been thinking of worshiping Deities. Usually when I think of this, I'm eventually thwarted because my program doesn't allow proper worship.

Deities should be cared for regularly; the main thing is that They should be taken out for the public.

Now I'm thinking I can do it all. Now that I have an established, two-man team who go ahead of me, and a three-man

team in a van to follow up engagements, it could be done. I am thinking out the details and hoping it may be a way to expand my preaching.

December 14

The Santa Cruz preaching is developing. Mahadyuti wants to stay here and head up a preaching center. I would like to take responsibility for it. There are many people here who like to chant and attend feasts. The library party personnel are staying here for a month while colleges are closed. We are worshipping Gaura-Nitai, going out daily to collect *laksmi*, chanting in the streets, visiting local devotees, and getting an idea of the Santa Cruz scene with an idea to establish a center here. I'm trying daily to study Srila Prabhupada's books. I like this kind of preaching and holding feasts and chanting—the simple basics with no high pressure and good receptivity, but next month I'll go back on the college preaching circuit. I'd also like to incorporate a chanting party. I've been phoning each of the temple presidents in my zone every Sunday.

Just talking with a new devotee, Bhakta B., about how he should commit himself to Krsna consciousness and give up his whimsical attachments. I have already advanced at least that much—that I have committed my life to this movement. Yet I am not advanced. My older Godbrothers are also in this position, having passed an initial stage and desiring to go further. The first steps were dramatic as we gave up sinful habits and demoniac association and accepted Prabhupada as our spiritual master. We have only come a little way, but we do not know immediately if we will be able to go much further. A symptom of our advancement will be our more and more relishing chanting and hearing the glories of the Supreme Lord, and our more and more desiring to effectively spread Krsna consciousness in the world, under the spiritual master's order.

The immediate concern is to execute our present duties nicely and to cooperate with our fellow devotees to push on the movement. In this way, we can aspire to advance further. As

we experience a thrill and auspicious joy on giving up material life and family in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, so there are stages of advancement ahead of us that are certainly as revolutionary as the change when we first joined. We still do not have *svarūpa-siddhi*, or pure, unalloyed service.

December 16

I'm still thinking of Gaura-Nitai Deities. I've written to Srila Prabhupada about Them. I got the suggestion of having a van just for the Deities, so that's nice, but it would be extravagant unless They were taken out on festivals every day at the college. Isa can get me permission to do that, and then we can have a full program.

We need a few more men.

Let me note here: although I am so often in anxiety of oncoming physical pain and also on the mental plane of acceptance and rejection in my devotional service—and never fully surrendered, even in what I can do at present—I am also feeling satisfied by the grace of my spiritual master and Lord Caitanya. I want to increase my activities, now thinking of Deity worship and festivities, but the job of managing these library party men and their Kṛṣṇa conscious association is satisfying. I feel I am receiving Kṛṣṇa's blessings and I am feeling satisfied.

December 18

Notes for talk on *prasadam*, for feast at Santa Cruz

Patram puspam phalam toyam . . .

We are advertising the vegetarian feast. It is not a false advertisement. It is free, there is no meat, fish, or eggs, and today there are opulent *gulabjamons*, sweet rice, *halavah*, vegetables. It is a feast.

One may not know or appreciate, however, how this eating is spiritual and what the benefit is. That is explained in this verse.

Prasadam is a means to eternal bliss and knowledge through eating. Eternal life is gained by our loving relationship with Krsna.

How is *prasadam* transcendental? By being accepted by Krsna, it becomes absolute. He takes the food spiritually and leaves spiritual remnants. How can He appear in brass? Everything is His energy, so even materially the brass is nondifferent than Krsna. Food is also Krsna's energy, and when offered to Him, one engages in devotional service. It is transcendental by His arrangement. We are convinced Krsna takes the offering. This is because we accept *sastra*. There is no medical or chemistry lab test to run on the difference between *bhoga* and *prasadam*, but the difference is there.

December 21

All during morning *japa* my mind was agitated about taking the Deity on the road with a big vehicle. The Deity cannot simply be carried around but has to be taken for daily festivals, and there has to be book distribution. This is already being done on a large scale in our movement by the Radha-Damodara party. Either I should pacify my mind and forget the Deity and festival program, and instead preach in many classes with a couple of assistants, or go for a motorhome-type new vehicle. That venture will certainly drag me into management.

The fact is that I am not sure of my engagement. Factually, for the next month and a half, I am booked with lectures, but no matter how I put aside Deities and an increased party, it keeps coming up.

I have a natural desire to do more. Chanting and feasting at a campus, in addition to lecturing. And new enthusiasm to go out in the afternoon on book distribution.

I think I will get a maxivan with a turtletop and make it a temple for Gaura-Nitai. In this way, with a few men, I'll travel to the colleges, take out the Deities and chant on campus, even with a few men. Mahadyuti dasa is helping me to manage it.

January 1, 1976

En route to St. Louis

I am reading more and not interested in writing down my day-by-day thoughts. What is the permanent value of such diary-keeping? In another book I am writing little essays in *parampara* following Srila Prabhupada's purports. So many external things, passing thoughts, don't seem worth noting. Krsna is in my heart and knows everything. I don't seem to be able to advance more simply by writing things down. In India—two months from now—I'll keep a journal of things Srila Prabhupada says and try to keep my mind clear so that I can follow his orders without self-motivation.

I'm feeling more responsible and capable somewhat for the GBC management of the temples in my zone.

I'm cramming Srila Prabhupada's purports.

In two weeks I start an intensive series of college lectures. I'll try to keep at least a count of the classes and answers to key replies—basic realizations of the nature of that service, as well as the expanded chanting party I'll be taking with me.

I should go to Mayapur with conviction to continue the U.S. GBC *sannyasi* duties given to me, and yet be prepared to submit to any new instruction.

January 3

St. Louis

Ready to fly to Houston. Forming a chanting and book distribution team. Some new men on the team. Waiting for word from Srila Prabhupada whether I can worship Gaura-Nitai. Reading "*Hamsa-guhya*" prayers in Sixth Canto. Trying to remember that which is essential for eternal life. The holy name, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, are certainly perfect for being absorbed in at the time of death, and also any direct plans or execution of preaching work. I must avoid gossip, sleep, loose behavior, sense gratification as they will all be vanquished. Anything

connected with the temporary—trying to get fame and attention—will be vanquished. Stay with the eternal. “I” as this body will soon be finished. The whole universe is temporary.

January 8

San Antonio

We now have a new party of mostly shaky devotees, seven or eight, who form the chanting and book distribution party. They are often having overt difficulties and doubts, so I have to be more tolerant and also preach to them. As I grow older, I seem to become quieter, more easy-going—and (perhaps only because I have not been preaching in the colleges for two months)—less fiery. We are giving the new boys a nice program. My role is to preach the philosophy to them and to inspire them to go on in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Sometimes devotees in my party leave the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We know whatever service one does sincerely is never lost, but it is a catastrophe when an individual *jīva* leaves devotional service and the association of devotees. The leaving or “blooming” shouldn’t be taken lightly even in speech. Mostly the medicine against blooming is preventative. Once a person is talking crazily under the influence of *māyā*, it is too late. The transfer from the protection of the spiritual energy to the merciless beating of *māyā* is the greatest mistake. *Māyā* enables one to trivialize the leaving. Thus one thinks Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a kind of club and his leaving is no great loss to him. This is called *mayāyapahrta-jnana*.

I have never heard a person about to leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness give convincing philosophical reasons. Rather, he sticks to some cliché excuse *māyā* has put in his brain and nothing can stop him. When he has lost his good sense, good arguments are of no avail. We can only counsel such a person to try to continue chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Yet Srīla Prabhupada says that without the association of devotees, even that is not possible. The soldier falls and those who remain can only be solaced that whatever he has done is of permanent benefit, and by Kṛṣṇa’s grace he may come back to devotional service before too long.

For ourselves, we should in no way be weakened in our own devotional service when any Godbrother leaves. We are united in loving friendship by our mutual Krsna consciousness. If someone leaves, we simply remain and increase our enthusiasm.

January 17

Dallas

One class today at Dallas Baptist College on Walt Whitman! I exposed his two doctrines—that the body is as great as the soul, and that the “I” is the all-pervading soul. These are not the teachings of the *Gita*. The *Gita* is real knowledge spoken by the Supreme, as opposed to concoctions of a conditioned, illusioned entity known as a poet. Got them to chant. Gave out BTGs.

January 26

Pushing my temples to hold massive festivals or myself enthusing them to make personal sacrifices and push on book distribution by my personal example or by fiery, managerial passion—driving men like a military general to the front lines—I seem unable to do all this, by psychophysical make-up or lack of spiritual surrender. I am not aggressive, not a stern bearer of the rod of chastisement. I tend to be mild, pleasant, maybe peaceful, and happy to live in Krsna consciousness. These have been described to me in my own case as difficulties of the material mode of goodness.

This is an analysis of myself. I do not even think I should desire to make any radical change. I am trying to be more aware that at any moment I may die and that I have to remember Krsna's name. I tend to think I need a peaceful consciousness to do this remembering. Sometimes Srila Prabhupada's call to the front lines for spreading Krsna consciousness finds me embarrassed as to what to do—perhaps due to my pleasant complacency in “goodness,” unwilling to sacrifice my so-called spiritual well-being for Krsna's cause. I pray feebly, but hope to pray, hope to cry tears of *laulyam* to the Lord one day, to please

grant me more strength. There is so much political conflict and competition with my Godbrothers, and I become attached to my goodness.

Self-centered! I picture myself speaking intimate self-revelation—showing me attractively weak in true Vaisnava spirit—to a few loyal followers.

O undying spirit of profit, adoration, and sex life! Will you always follow me like a skull and crossbones? Begone! Therefore I take shelter in the holy name and His Divine Grace's books.

February 2, 1976

Tallahassee

Waiting in motel for nine men in our party to arrive. I have to assure them they are doing right. I have to see to their Krsna consciousness. Talk with them. And plans—a traveling party. Don't be attached to being an American gypsy traveling in a truck, trailer, or mobile home. No, that's mundane. For productive preaching I can travel, but I have to produce such a party. Someone criticized that I don't train men properly. They are right. Anyway, tomorrow some speaking engagements and managing the collecting and chanting parties.

For Mayapur GBC meeting considerations:

(1) The question of different dancing styles and singing at *kirtana*. What does Srila Prabhupada desire?

(2) Observance of Caturmasya.

(3) Policies for *sannyasis* taking men from temples.

(4) Basic understanding of attitude of *sannyasa* and *grhastha*. Should *grhasthas* do whatever the *sannyasis* ask them?

February 3–4

It is now just before Mayapur pilgrimage and I hope to come back to the U.S. for traveling and preaching, but it is up to Sri Krsna, Srila Prabhupada, and the GBC.

I want to chant and read wherever I'm sent. I have a new notebook ready to record words and acts of His Divine Grace, whom I shall see again in less than three weeks.

Please, Lord, let me stay in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“Why This Party Feeling?” February 5–March 23, 1976

In this chapter we see, among other things, how Śrīla Prabhupāda expertly assuaged a big debate regarding the so-called superiority of *sannyāsi* devotees over *gṛhastha* devotees, which had threatened to form a schism in his movement. We have to admit that there has been a change since Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disappearance. Because he was personally present to sit us all down together before him, he was able to correct the party spirit of the *gṛhastha-sannyāsi* debates. He is not present in the same way now to solve such disagreements, which regrettably still go on among his devotees. This means that now we have to be even more sober, and it is expected that we will be, since we have grown up over the years. If we study Prabhupāda’s *vāṇī*, and if we all act humbly as servants, we can still come before him—at least in spirit—and try to solve our problems.

In some of the ongoing debates that continue in ISKCON, there is often intricate discussion of detailed arguments. We might better take the advice Prabhupāda gives as quoted in this chapter: “When too many questions were asked, he said, ‘Too much detail will make us lose the central thing.’” When hearing both sides as to why *sannyāsis* should be allowed to take men from the temples, or why the temples should not be disturbed by the *sannyāsis*, Prabhupāda kept emphasizing, “Why this party feeling?” Even more important than the rightness or wrongness of the individual arguments was the need to stop the party spirit, which could crack the movement’s unity. Everyone should be a servant, Prabhupada said.

Some of the notes I have taken from morning walks may be available in full tape recordings or in the series of books entitled *Conversations With Śrīla Prabhupāda*. Some of what I have noted here is new because it wasn't recorded. In either case, I find it exciting to read back and see the notes in the context of the diary, and thus get yet another glimpse of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Prabhupāda is like a gem: you can view him from many different sides to see all the attractive, glittering facets. He was so strong and pure that his strong-minded disciples could not drag him into their own party spirit. Perhaps it was Prabhupāda's greatest strength to resist not only the nondevotees, but the foolishness of his disciples as well, and to always set us on the right course. We tend to take it for granted that he was one leader of thousands of disciples, as if he took a figurehead position. But he was the leader—not only as a figurehead, but as the direct manager, the defender, the pure mediator between ourselves and Kṛṣṇa. Catching new facets of Prabhupāda's beauty and strength as founder-ācārya of ISKCON, we can again appreciate that there is no exaggeration in the worship and praise that we continue to offer to His Divine Grace.

This diary, with the inevitable subjective viewpoint of one tiny soul, is actually a diary about the times with Śrīla Prabhupāda when he was present on the earth. Even the subjective sparks have value as they come from the fire of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Someone asked me what I thought at the time when Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Why worry about news articles?" he said. The day will come when they will fire on you. You have to be prepared for it." I remember that I was shocked to hear it. It was over my head, yet I accepted that it might actually come to that one day. I was worrying about bad publicity and the inconvenience it might cause me, but Prabhupāda was ready to face death on behalf of Kṛṣṇa. Did I think it would not come to that? The essence of the meeting in which Prabhupāda predicted that we would be "fired on," however, was not to prepare us for battle with the news media; he had called us together to talk about the bliss of chanting the holy names. Let

everyone come to Māyāpur, he said, so that there are five hundred men here at all times.

The devotees were equally shocked by Prabhupāda's remark, and soon some of the managers began arguing, trying to make Prabhupāda's statement more "practical." The inspiration by which Prabhupāda had called us to his room at that moment, however, was that he was feeling real bliss in hearing the chanting coming from the temple room. He wanted to share that with us, and inform us that there was nothing in the fourteen worlds like the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. This could especially be imbibed in the sublime atmosphere of Māyāpur.

Another feature of being with Prabhupāda at the Māyāpur festival comes from my desire to return home to my preaching field. This desire was also something created by Śrīla Prabhupāda. He gave us the *prabhu-datta-deśa* and the desire to serve there. As for our ambitious natures, Prabhupāda gave us plenty to aspire for: "As I have five thousand disciples, or ten thousand, so you have ten thousand each. In this way, create branches and branches (of the Caitanya tree)."

* * *

February 5, 1976

Mayapur

As we came into his room, Śrīla Prabhupada was seated on the same floor level amid devotees.

He said first on seeing Rupanuga, we have to be Rupanugas to know Kṛṣṇa. He said something to each of us in his expert manner.

He asked about the library party. I read a recent review by a professor at U. of Virginia and a librarian's statement that we never leave without an order. "Did he also take an order?" he asked. Yes.

He spoke of competition. "Heart-breaking," he said. This heart-breaking is good. It is also there in the spiritual world between Krsna's queens and *gopis* also, but he indicated that it should not be a cause of strife and envy.

He spoke how he also was in competition with his God-brothers and went to visit one locally, in his new Mercedes and with a van with loudspeakers. He referred to it, quoting the *Bhagavad-gita* verse how the conches of the Pandavas "broke the hearts" of the other party. He used each Sanskrit word and explained.

In the evening the GBC met with him again. He emphasized books in all languages and countries and inquired into sales. He heard the French *Gita* sold 25,000 copies of the first edition and the second edition was 50,000. Now, he said, the next edition should be twice that. Therefore, my Guru Maharaja told me to increase books, he said.

He spoke of *sannyasa* and said everyone should take, although he also said we make no distinction.

On a walk

One devotee's mother is a biologist and became an atheist. I said, "They say Krsna is 'perhaps,' 'maybe,' just as we say of them." "No, we have evidence [in *sastra*]," he said. I said, "They don't accept our evidence and we don't accept theirs. You don't accept us and we don't accept you."

People (on Mayapur land, workers) are bewildered unless they have their tea early in the morning. One man has worked for us for years without changing. Srila Prabhupada said, "If you wash coal with soap and water, no matter how much you wash it, it will remain black."

When we read results of our GBC meetings, Srila Prabhupada said, "You each be guru. As I have five thousand disciples, or ten thousand, so you have ten thousand each. In this way, create branches and branches (of the Caitanya tree)."

You have to be spiritually strong. This means chanting rounds and following the four rules. Not an artificial show. It

is not a material thing. Chant, follow the four rules, and “pray to Kṛṣṇa for helplessness.”

Enthusiasm. *Utsaha*. If we lose enthusiasm everything will become slack. He said, “In old age I came out from Vṛndavana. I had no money, nothing, but I thought, ‘Let me try.’”

Bhāgavan dasa: “You’re still enthusiastic.”

Srila Prabhupada: “Yes, I am enthusiastic. I do not think I am an old man.”

Bhagavan: “Sometimes we think we’re old!”

Srila Prabhupada: “No one is old. *Na hanyate hanyamane sarire*. Sometimes in old age one is pushed down [but I am enthusiastic].”

He said he was pleased at our resolutions and now he was relieved to do his translation work.

He said we have to follow strictly what we have agreed on this year for the entire year, no changes, and next year we can change again (as necessary).

Srila Prabhupada called for me during *mangala-arati*! As secretary GBC, I got some instructions. Then I asked a personal question. Could I worship Deities? He at once said, “Oh yes,” and shook his head to the side affirmatively.

I explained there was previous confusion that I wanted to worship Deities in a class, which I never said. He laughed and said, “If you have a meeting at the college, what will you do?” I said that I wouldn’t bring the Deities. I started to describe how I would bring them on campus when he said, “You (want to—or will) worship privately?”

“Yes,” I admitted, half-afraid to let it be known I simply wanted to worship Deities.

“Yes,” he said. “Little Deities. Private worship is very nice.”

Then I mentioned that one *brahmacari* was agitated. He played back his dictaphone of the morning’s dictation. It said—a verse—*grhasthas* are also bound by guru and rules and can only have sex on the spiritual master’s order. He preached on this, *grhasthas* have sex only on order. Vedic culture is to make sex nil—also for *grhastha*.

Talked of *sannyasa*-taking as a farce.

Women are dangerous for men and should be in separate quarters, but they can all worship together.

Chanting can solve this problem. Haridasa Thakura is an example. Chanting is powerful. It is difficult to apply the Vedic facts to our ISKCON in the West, but it is important to make sex nil. It entails suffering.

On the walk he inspected the small garage being built for his car. When Pusta Krsna didn't understand his request for a shelf, he said he had no brain.

He brought out the philosophic argument ISKCON leaders have with Siddha-svarupa, who is here. Both sides claim they are right. Srila Prabhupada said, "Let me say what is right. Then you have to follow it, agreed?" "Yes!"

He said a disciple has to obey, follow discipline, or he is no disciple. He has to voluntarily agree to follow, can't be forced. But he has to accept the rule whether he likes it or not. Like C.R. Das of Congress party who didn't want to give up his law practice, but Congress party said he had to.

Walk notes

Srila Prabhupada's Godbrother criticized that Prabhupada has a business background but he doesn't. He has always been a Vaisnava. He was implying that he's a preacher and Prabhupada is a businessman. Prabhupada said yes, and described his preaching as business with four factors: place (America), organization (ISKCON), capital, and brains.

He was asked how Chota Haridasa was liberated by his suicide after his offense. He said Chota Haridasa was the personal servant of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. How could he be fallen? But he was meant to show the example that if you fall down, the only thing is to commit suicide. I asked what about *Nectar of Devotion* which says that devotional service is so pure that one doesn't have to do *prayascitta*? He said it was not *prayascitta*, it was an example. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is as hard as a

thunderbolt, soft as a rose. One devotee said that if in ISKCON we did this . . . Prabhupada said that to fall down is already suicide.

Prabhupada was also asked how 1/11th of a second's association with a pure devotee can give liberation. He said it depends on whether the wood is dry—it can immediately flare up. The process to make it dry is following the regulative principles. But if you make it dry, then again dip it in water, what good is that?

Someone remarked how much more beautiful the land looked now that so many devotees were here. “Yes,” Srila Prabhupada said, “that is why I built this house first. Some criticized, ‘Why not a temple?’ But I thought, ‘Where will they live?’” (A devotee is more important than God.) If there is only the Deity, it is like a stone idol.

He told me not to take on too much temple management. Your most important work is going to the colleges, the standing orders and reviews. He looked at his desk where I think there was a list of the standing orders. No more than four or five temples. You are going and speaking at the colleges.

He said, concerning the GBC being criticized, that it's not that a resolution should be passed that they should not be criticized—but they should be above it: “Caesar's wife should be above suspicion.”

He deplored the *grhastha-sannyasa* party fighting. Sex should be made nil. That is a great victory.

Polygamy? No! No polygamy. We are trying to make sex nil.

When too many questions were asked such as, “Should a *brahmachari* be averse or neutral toward women,” etc. he said too much detail will make us lose the central thing; it is *niyama-graha*, too much attention to the rules and regulations.

He didn't like children “howling and bowling” in the Vrndavana temple. Retired men come there to get away from family.

Men, after a few children, should stop. Not that as a *grhastha* he should have unlimited sex. Then he can separate from his wife. If they live in a secluded place there will naturally be sex life. That is natural. (So, can they live separately

in the temples? Devotees asked many questions. He seemed to approve separation in different temples, but the husband has to pay for the wife.)

Grhasthas should live independently.

March 12, 1976

Srila Prabhupada spoke of flowers and fruits growing and land producing—and offering all to Kṛṣṇa. That is *Vṛndāvana*: everyone is serving Kṛṣṇa. The cowherd boys have already finished all austerities. They don't know about *Vedānta*, they just want to see Kṛṣṇa smile. The *gopis* told Uddhava, "We don't care for your instructions; just send us Kṛṣṇa."

He talked of his early days, rising early, cooking, etc., and in the evening he would "loiter on 5th Avenue." He studied America. I said, "You once said you were happier then, maintaining yourself without thousands of disciples." He said, "Yes, I had no chance to faultfind then."

March 14

Morning walk

Someone asked, "Prabhupada, how did we become so fortunate to come to a pure devotee?"

Ajnata-sukṛti, Srila Prabhupada said. Then there were questions: how does Kṛṣṇa dictate to one to do some accidental devotional service? He said, "A sinful man gives money to a devotee." Then he was asked, "What if the money he gives is misused?"

Prabhupada: "Then both he and the one who takes are implicated in karma."

"But he gave sincerely."

Prabhupada said, "There is no sincerity outside Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

He said the Lord will dictate to someone to do even *ajnata-sukṛti*; ultimately it is His mercy that one comes to do service.

A sinful man will perform some devotional service. The Lord's mercy is there for everyone, but Kṛṣṇa can give to one person as He likes. It is not *karma-kanda*. Causeless mercy.

March 16

Gaura-Purnima—walk notes

Prabhupāda was giving examples of how we could preach in China. He said they believe in revolutions to replace leaders and improve, so if they see an even better leader, they will accept. Find some intelligent persons (what a great man does, others will follow). Like Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He picked up intelligent persons like Sanātana. Find someone like Sanātana Gosvami.

Then our argument is not religion but fact, *dehino 'smin*. I said the fact that we take another body after we die is not empirical. He said, but in this life it is a fact we are changing bodies. Why not after death? Do you just become nothing? Does the blue sky at night become nothing because it's gone? Don't trust what you see. You see the sun in the sky and think it is created? (Beyond what we see is real knowledge. Can't trust what we see.)

Is there any machine for breathing air again once the breath (of life) stops? Someone said that they have such machines, but he said don't be childish and make unnecessary talks (he was very serious). What machine? They admitted a machine can only prolong life.

If you think the guru is mistaken, you are mistaken.

On the way downstairs there was a girl. He asked where she was going. She said to see Hridayānanda Goswami. Prabhupāda became angry and called for Hridayānanda Goswami. Everyone was standing there when he came. Prabhupāda chastised him for calling a woman to see him. They explained it was a misunderstanding, she was coming with her husband to inquire about initiation. "A *sannyasi* should not even talk to a woman." They said the woman did not express herself rightly

in saying that she was going to see Hridayananda Maharaja. Srila Prabhupada said that that may be, but I have to respond as I understand it.

Srila Prabhupada with the GBC

We should see the superiority of a devotee (with no question of whether he is a *grhastha* or a *sannyasi*)—based on whether one is serving. How one is advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This principle. If we follow the standard of dress, we cannot understand who is advanced. It is by his advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (that we can judge).

If we make *sannyasa* and *grhastha* parties, then we'll have party politics. Now you consider this. I see the tendency of parties. That should be stopped immediately. I want dissatisfaction to go away.

Presidents: They must be sincere.

Prabhupada: If we become different parties, it will be spoiled. Why this tendency that *sannyasis* ask men to come join them for spiritual advancement and give up living in the temples? There should be cooperation of manpower both ways from presidents to *sannyasis* and vice versa. Why this propaganda?

Real attachment is not to belong to a *sannyasi* or *brahmacari* group. This is material. Real spiritual identity is "I belong to Kṛṣṇa," I have to work for Him and guru. A devotee is above the other attachments. This is essential.

It is superficial, the distinction between *brahmacari*, *sannyasi*, *grhastha*. We say *prabhu* to everyone. I say *prabhu*, you say *prabhu*, master. Living in the temple is also preaching, it is purifying, cleansing. Deity worship, *sri vigraha*.

Ramesvara: A *brahmacari* in the temple is following you. the greatest *sannyasi*. That is preaching.

Prabhupada: Yes.

Gurukṛpa: But why should he have to stay against his will? They force him.

Prabhupada: In different circumstances there is different behavior. There cannot be any fixed up situation for everyone. *Brahmacaris* can go with *sannyasis*, but not a responsible man.

Now there is a party feeling: you say don't go, they say do go. Why this party feeling? You vote for me, another party votes for me. *But the temple is as good.* If the *sannyasis* need more men, why don't they recruit men from outside? It is etiquette that if you take men from the temple, you have to ask the permission of the president.

The Six Gosvamis were worshiping in the temples. Their descendants were not seminal, by birth.

Generally the management of the temple is given to *grhasthas*. It is by the example of the Six Gosvamis. The facility of management is given to *grhasthas*. It is better they manage the temples and the *sannyasis* preach, and *brahmacaris* either stay in the temple or preach with the *sannyasis*.

The problem is that we are forgetting we are the servant of Kṛṣṇa. He is in this department or that department, why strife of party? The basic quality is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is not hard and fast that only *grhasthas* can manage. Either *sannyasi* or *grhastha*, it doesn't matter. Not that a *grhastha* can't preach or a *sannyasi* can't manage a temple, but generally if a *sannyasi* is free of all botheration, his preaching is very nice. Everything is common sense.

There is no distinction between *grhastha* or *sannyasi*. One should take the post suitable for him. This discussion has no meaning. Bhaktivinoda Thakura was a *grhastha*, but that does not mean Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati was better than he; one was guru and the other was guru.

See how he is serving, how he is eager to serve Kṛṣṇa, how he is looking after Kṛṣṇa's interest.

We are a worldwide organization. If there is such threatening, unusual competition, puffed-up prestige, it is not good. One should always remain as a servant.

March 19

Walk notes

So-called education is condemned; there is no knowledge to produce character. Everyone is after sex life. Even the priests

are supporting contraception and abortion. (Real contraception is to avoid having sex.)

(A girl complained that women in India are slaves.) Better to be a slave of one man than to hundreds.

An educated man is defined by Canakya as one who sees all others as himself. He doesn't want his throat cut, so why cut another's?

Purusa and *prakṛti*: the mother creates the body, but not without the father. Nature needs *purusa*. (A disciple said that modern education says it is not that there is authority to learn from, but one goes to school to learn for himself.) It is a contradiction. Why do you go to college? Why not stay at home? Because you accept the authority. You must accept authority. Vedic education is *sarva-dharmān* (surrender to Kṛṣṇa). Just be quiet, don't talk, but hear from the scriptures.

Everyone, all people in today's world, are rascals. What kind of education is it? All the women are open for sex. The non-devotee needs sex for enlivenment (not the *brahmacari*). He has sex and produces an atomic bomb. What good is this civilization and education? No good.

Prostitutes are useful so men don't corrupt women in society. Some worldly compassionate man saw a prostitute standing in the cold, no customers. He gave her two rupees and said go home and sleep, but Haridasa Thakura's method was to convert a prostitute to a devotee.

If the male is more potent, then there's male child. A *brahmacari* who is life-long trained and then gets married, must have a boy child. Nowadays, all are girls.

He called us in. He was blissful hearing the *kirtana* in the temple. He said everyone should be at Mayapur and chant twenty-four hours a day, there is so much room. The morning class is so nice. Prahlada Maharaja's instruction a million years ago, a five-year-old boy.

The chanting, Bhaktivinoda says, is the only substance, the only solace. It is nothing material, the chanting: Ajamila called the name of Narayana and was saved. Then he said batches of devotees should come to Mayapur so there are always

five hundred men here. A devotee said that in America, they are trying to chant more, twelve hours a day, trying to get a twenty-four-hour *kirtana* schedule. Yes, everywhere, Srila Prabhupada said. This chanting should go on. Instead of meetings, resolutions, dissolutions, revolutions, and no solution, there should be chanting.

He quoted a verse and asked me if I knew it. I said, "Is it *Bhagavatam*?" He laughed and said *sannyasis* should know. He told how in school they were asked to show the route from India to London using three different maps. If one didn't know the maps, he would be bewildered which to read.

Then he had me quote the verse on *sannyasis* who should accept torn clothing (earlier he had said a *sannyasi* didn't even have to wear clothes). Then the purport was read. This is Sukadeva's philosophy. (Civilization is not big roads or skyscrapers. That is craftsmanship.)

He heard of negative news articles. He said they were a good sign. It shows they are feeling pressure from us. I said, "You mean we shouldn't worry about bad publicity?" "Why worry about news articles?" he said. "The day will come when they will fire on you. You have to be prepared."

March 20

New Delhi—Birla Mandir

Several devotees here. Tomorrow morning we leave for Vrindavana. I am eager to return to the U.S. I want to do classroom preaching there. I have been given a year's assignment of managing some temples in the U.S. I'm leaving the festival early to return, visit my centers for management, and then be free to preach.

All of the foregoing notes in this book are from Prabhupada's talks over two weeks. I have tape-recorded his lectures and can study them. Because hundreds of devotees gathered at Mayapur, it was wonderful, but the meeting of the leaders was also a strain. I want to return to my own field now as soon as possible.

As with many others, I have my work to do, given to me by Srila Prabhupada—to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the

U.S.A. It can be fairly said that I am uncomfortable being out of station. There may be negative motives—that I am in bodily consciousness, afraid of falling ill in India, inconvenienced by the heat and lack of technological amenities, etc. (As I write now in a very dim light in this *asrama* cell, there is another guest here—a *pandita* from Kashmir(!) sitting beside me looking through Srila Prabhupada's *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*.)

I think I am mainly anxious that I am not doing my prescribed GBC, *sannyasi* field work. At least for this year I belong to the U.S. field. Five ISKCON centers—seeing that their preaching, book distribution, financial and spiritual life is sound—and more to my heart, going to preach at the colleges.

I feel a little uneasy to observe how attached I am to my particular field and wonder if this is the very bodily identification and lack of surrender that we preach against. I also feel uneasy that I want to leave India when there is still a chance to go on more morning walks and hear classes by Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada himself has said, however, that our work is primary and the festival is secondary. Association with him is restricted due to his having hundreds of disciples with him, and except for the morning program with His Divine Grace, the whole day has to be taken up without the real engagement to which I have been assigned.

Therefore, admitting discrepancies, I still wish to return as soon as possible to my field—not to take up sense gratification, but to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I propose to go to Vrndavana in the morning, take *darsana* of the Deities, and then return in the evening and try to get a flight the next day.

March 21

Vrndavana

Why don't you stay and become purified? Because I want to go preach. Vrndavana is wherever I can think of Kṛṣṇa.

March 22

I delayed one day to go on *parikrama*. Today we first went to Janma-bhumi, the birthplace of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Mathura. People were gathered in a small temple there. They invited us to lead *kirtana*. Then we went to the place which they said was Kamsa's prison. It was still cool in the morning at that time. Hridayananda dasa Goswami said it was almost fitting that a mosque has been built over the birthplace, since Kṛṣṇa was born in the enemy camp (the prison of Kamsa).

We went in taxis, Kṛṣṇa dasa our guide. Next we went to Radha-kunda, where we saw many places, such as the *bhajana-kutirs* of Raghunatha dasa Goswami and Gopala Bhatta Goswami, the tongue of Giri-govardhana (as struck by Raghunatha dasa Goswami when digging a well), the writing place of Kṛṣṇadasa Kaviraja, the five thousand-year-old tree, and the place where Lord Caitanya stayed. Then we took *prasadam* at Kṛṣṇa dasa's place.

Afterwards, we visited the home of Radharani, high on a hill where many poverty-reduced *brahmanas* begged tenaciously of Kṛṣṇa dasa until he gave; then from the roof there we saw the homes of many other *gopis* and saw Nandagram. Then we went to Nandagram.

Now I am back in the Mandir and scheduled to take the Taj Express in five and a half hours, a train which goes to Delhi in a few hours. Sri Galim has been in Delhi since this morning, arranging reservations for my flight back to New York. I am glad I stayed at least one day in Vrndavana.

Everything is up to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Controller. I know my time duration in the present body I have is fixed and one day will be my last, one hour my last, one moment the moment of the death of this body. I have been thinking of that as well as knowing that suffering before death is also due me. I also know all my suffering is reduced due to being a disciple of Srila Prabhupada, and that my death can be a devotee's death. At least compared to a nondevotee, my life, death, and suffering are all auspicious. Among the ranks of devotees, however, I am less than a fly, and I cannot expect to achieve love of Kṛṣṇa in

this life due to my demoniac unwillingness to fully surrender. With the immaturity of my devotional service in mind and sure death before me, I should soberly execute my duties, avoid sinful activities, and practice the symptoms of surrender. Don't act for sense gratification.

On the plane back

Just last evening, driving in a rickshaw to Mathura station, trees full of hundreds of parrots chirping noisily, sky going black, anxiously trying to arrive on time for the Taj Express, a black locomotive-pulled train to New Delhi.

I am going back to preach. *Sannyasa* is not for bodily comfort. In the U.S.A. we have so much material paraphernalia, so we have to use it for Kṛṣṇa's service. The materialistic culture (what culture?) is of no value. It is all a cheating process.

I am a dull devotee and inexperienced in most affairs, but I want to help the temple presidents so that they can be enthusiastic to run the centers as preaching places. Men must go out and preach, distribute books, and lecture at colleges. In the temple, the Deity worship has to be gorgeous and *prasadam* nice, and classes going on for purification of the devotees. Finances have to be kept in order to insure stability of the projects. Let me first sit down in Dallas and help them with these things. They have to get people to come there on Sundays, make devotees of regular guests.

I have to speak not false show, but real enthusiasm for this movement.

March 23

Sitting in the plane, Istanbul

Sometimes (such as now, with food not digested sitting in the stomach), being forced to sit in the plane, the whole physical, psychic process gets bewildering and disgusting due to changes put upon it. I can see then that my spiritual consciousness still depends on material circumstances. At least mentally I cannot maintain clear appreciation of my situation

as the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa when material nature sometimes overcomes me. Lately, this has taken place in dreams, although not by gross misbehavior. It shows me I must appeal to Kṛṣṇa in helplessness. For ten years I've been a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupada, but I am helpless about remaining in that position which I cherish above all else. In this airplane, half asleep, forced to sit, forced to fast or eat food they prepare, to associate side by side with nondevotees in a contaminated atmosphere—I sometimes feel in the grip of physical consciousness, mortal consciousness, brain and stomach and backache consciousness.

The real position of a devotee is to remain always above the three modes of nature.

With the control I do have, I should remain careful not to indulge in any misbehavior, not willingly or purposefully—though admittedly I may be forced to act against my will by circumstances here.

To attain devotion to Kṛṣṇa is possible for me as well as any devotee, provided I (we) work at that which we can do well for Kṛṣṇa. I simply want to preach to attempt to convince the non-devotees.

Goals for the Coming Year

- (1) See the *Vedic Reader* published.
- (2) Successful results of the library party at the universities ongoing, and,
- (3) At the public libraries.
- (4) Doing even more college classes and other speaking engagements than last year.
- (5) Securing a big bus for traveling *sankirtana*.
- (6) Worshiping Gaura-Nitai.
- (7) Having a serious study program of Prabhupada's books.
- (8) Memorizing at least twenty-five more *slokas*.
- (9) Not neglecting visits to the temples in my zone or my management duties there in nitty-gritty affairs.
- (10) Avoiding faultfinding other devotees or party factions.
- (11) Controlling my senses in eating.
- (12) Not falling down.

Chalk Dust Preacher

March 26–September 3, 1976

The subject matter of this chapter is traveling to visit temples in my capacity as GBC man, and college lecturing. There are also several personal *darsanas* with His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda as he travels on his very last U.S. tour. We purchased our motorhome for Gaura-Nitāi at a manufacturer's plant, where it was constructed from odd parts at a low price (\$13,000). By this time, the traveling party was not exactly a simple venture, but comprised of quite a few vans, and it had various duties like collecting funds, selling books, going to the universities to sell standing orders, college lecturing, Deity worship, temple visits and more. Although I make a condescending remark about a disciple trying to catch his spiritual master's eye, I was certainly involved in that kind of competition. Neither was it a bad thing.

At this time in ISKCON there was real freedom for those doing traveling *saṅkīrtana* in America. Money was available, and we had a feeling of complete liberty, at least in our attempts to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We weren't so starry-eyed that we expected mass conversions of people becoming serious devotees, but the desire to go all over this large country was euphoric and really consumed us. It was something to which we wanted to dedicate our lives.

It becomes clearer now why Prabhupāda continued to travel just to maintain his disciples. For the devotees who traveled, as well as for those living in the temples, all we really needed to be able to go on with our service was to see Prabhupāda and be encouraged and assured by him. In this way, Prabhupāda

actually inspired and mobilized the whole nation's preaching through his few, but enthusiastic, followers.

Within the pages of my written diary there is a note that says, "Śrīla Prabhupāda's visit of June 11-19 is described in the other book." That "other book" has disappeared, so I will tell a few details here as I remember them. This was Prabhupāda's first visit to the Fisher mansion in Detroit, which was now operating as an ISKCON center. We drove there in our white motorhome, a rather non-luxurious vehicle with very thin walls and square corners. Its interior was custom-made as a temple, though, and that made it special. We arranged with Prabhupāda's secretary that one day after his morning walk, he would stop in to see the motorhome before entering the temple. We made a temporary *vyāsāsana* for Prabhupāda by covering a pillow with some elegant cloth that the temple president had given us, and then placing it atop the generator. When he entered the motorhome, as many devotees as possible squeezed in behind him. He looked around and said the whole thing was first-class in the American style. He also said it was proper that Kṛṣṇa should have the very best thing. Viśākhā dāśī took a nice picture of Prabhupāda sitting there.

Prabhupāda then stepped forward and we opened the curtains to reveal our Gaura-Nitāi Deities. To my surprise, Śrīla Prabhupāda made full *daṇḍavats* on the floor in front of the Deities. This seemed to me such a kind gesture on his part. He was accustomed to seeing many *mūrtis*, and it would have been sufficient for him to simply fold his hands and nod in obeisance before these small traveling *mūrtis*. That he bowed down in that way made us all aware that the *mūrtis* were actually Gaura-Nitāi and that Śrīla Prabhupāda was actually Their humble servant. He stayed on the motorhome for only three minutes or so, but it was enough to bless us and to endorse our program.

It was also during this visit that Śrīla Prabhupāda asked me to write a book. His servant woke me at 10:00 P.M. one night and said that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to see me in his room in the mansion. When I entered, the first thing Prabhupāda said was, "You are writing a book?" I explained that I had already finished the book, *Readings in Vedic Literature*. He said,

"I want you to write another book." He proceeded to describe that a book could be written about how any endeavor that is attempted without Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot succeed. We continued talking for almost an hour about this and related topics, and due to my excitement, I found it difficult to sleep that night. This scene is fully described in *Living With the Scriptures* in the chapter, "Things Undertaken Without Kṛṣṇa Fail."

In one sense, as Prabhupāda's followers and projects grew worldwide, it was harder to keep in touch with him on an individual basis. Prabhupāda's New York visit, for example, was his tenth anniversary visit to New York from the time when he had started there with nothing. The situation was certainly different from 1966 when one could sit with Prabhupāda in his room without being told by his secretaries that you had to leave. It was unrealistic now to expect to have our Lower East Side Swamiji all to ourselves, and we had also long outgrown that. We were now travelers and preachers with our own programs authorized by Prabhupāda. Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa were fulfilling our hearts' desires to be independent preachers and managers of men and money. Seeing Prabhupāda in New York in these changed circumstances certainly did not diminish our devotion to him, but it was sometimes frustrating to see him always in a crowd and to be ourselves involved with many management details in our own areas of Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement. We had to sacrifice just as Prabhupāda had to sacrifice. More important even than affectionately sitting together was sacrificing everything to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just as we had benefited from Prabhupāda's association, now everyone else should benefit by receiving his mercy in the form of his books and instructions. To keep us going in this self-sacrificing way, we could also cherish the personal moments—the few minutes Prabhupāda spent on the motorhome, his special smile in New York on hearing we would go worldwide with the library party, and his asking me to come forward to sit nearer him in his New York *darsana* room, as if he remembered me from the old days.

March 26, 1976

Dallas

Walked into a desperate situation here, showing that I left India none too soon. It is being resolved by the selection of an enthusiastic, expert president, Vamanadeva. For the first couple of days the burden was all mine and I was struggling (not expertly) to arrange for increasing the income, *sankirtana*, etc. Now a better man is in charge of it. Partly it seems to be Kṛṣṇa's kindness on me, indicating that I am being freed of much temple management, which is what Srila Prabhupada said I should do—to be free to launch the attack on colleges.

I want to get back to an intensity of regulated reading in varied books by Prabhupada. Memorizing verses—*maybe work on a new one early in the morning*, back to reading through *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, *Antya-līla*, and where I left off in my outline synopsis of the *Bhagavatam*—reading starting with the Third Canto and typing up the synopsis. Also, writing an outline, verse by verse of *Gita*—now on the 12th chapter. Srila Prabhupada even gave that as an example that change is good and can be done without disruption; that is, one is reading a particular book and gets tired, so he reads another book. Still, he's reading, but he has a change. Going from *Caitanya-caritamṛta* to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* to *Bhagavad-gīta*, and also if I can get a progressive start into *Kṛṣṇa* book.

March 30

Elkhart, Indiana

We are buying a motorhome. Now I read in a purport Cc., *Antya* 3.52, in a conversation between Haridasa Thakura and Lord Caitanya that Lord Caitanya anxiously inquired how the *mlecchas* could be saved. Haridasa began to answer by saying, "My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety." Srila Prabhupada writes that one who tries to relieve Lord Caitanya's anxiety is a most dear devotee.

Sometimes I think that in America, we are performing Kṛṣṇa consciousness a lot on our own. We get into temple competition, pride, sense gratification of eating and traveling in

expensive vehicles. Yet these can be taken as spots on the moon because the devotees, engaged by the spiritual master, are chanting, taking *prasadam*, and performing *sankirtana* book distribution. We know their sincerity is certain. Srila Prabhupada has stated in letters how important the book distribution is and how we should strictly follow the rules and regulations. Be aware that this civilization is false. Control your senses (especially against illicit sex), sell and read and know the books, work hard for Kṛṣṇa. If we do these things, we can rest assured that we are relieving Lord Caitanya's anxiety and going back to Godhead. As we ourselves were recently *mlecchas*, by ourselves being serious devotees we relieve the Lord's anxiety, and by going out to preach to others we further please Him.

Buying a motorhome is no more sense gratification than buying a big temple. It simply has to be seen that by purchasing it at great cost, the preaching is increased. I am claiming that it will do so—that I shall stay out on the road more and go to the towns and villages to preach there and distribute books, and that by worshiping the Deity, I myself, and those with me, will become more purified. Deity worship is stressed for that purpose. How to manage it, that we have to do, but I should *make it*, not doubt it. I should see to it that the moving temple increases not sense gratification as a soft traveling residence for one so-called *sannyasi*, but that it serves to penetrate more into colleges and towns in America for speaking the message of Kṛṣṇa.

We needn't fear going astray or becoming independent of the spiritual master's order. He has said to use everything material in the Lord's service. His own spiritual master stressed that devotees should have the best cars and buildings for use in Kṛṣṇa's service. Give us the best—it is for the Supreme Lord's service. Let us outclass "the establishment" itself. Let us present Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a first-class way to influence the nondevotees to join us in worshiping, chanting, hearing, and trying to clear away the darkness of ignorance.

April 1, 1976

Detroit

The temple management here is low. The leader has to be changed. They have a grand temple building, but are \$40,000 in debt with leadership, morale, financial income, and *sankirtana* all but disintegrated to nothing. I am anxiously awaiting the arrival of the man selected to be the new president here. Until he arrives, I am trying to understand how best to direct him without making any changes myself.

Today I was talking to a man who lives outside the temple but who has helped a great deal keeping accounts, managing money, and paying bills. He has developed a critical attitude toward the irresponsibility of the childish devotees, and much of it is justified. This man, Don, gave me his analysis that the devotees here are *lazy* (unlike the spirit he saw in the Toronto temple). They are hardly inspired at all by their leader to go out and preach because he himself sleeps and takes no responsibility as the temple disintegrates morally, spiritually, and financially. I am going to bring in a new man with direction to organize by getting devotees out on *sankirtana*. Simply organize the schedules and duties to free people, including nurseries (to free mothers), less Deity preps if necessary (to free cooks), and by your own preaching and example (go out and do books on weekends).

Those devotees who cannot go out for unavoidable reasons, especially mothers, should (with nurseries) clean the huge building and grounds. WORK hard. If they don't, they should leave.

Things here have been lax—he will not do it by a sudden change of force but by inspiration. He should have a treasurer and an accountant (Don or a devotee who adopts his system).

Prabhupada:

You must be expert in all departments. I can do anything (in ISKCON). You should be expert in all parts if required. We can sew Kṛṣṇa's shoes if required, or decorate. Whatever service is required you must do. Not that, "I am this, I can't do

that." Expert doing anything. Everyone is Kṛṣṇa's servant. In the material world there is discrimination (not here).

Just to push my Kṛṣṇa conscious activities on I did anything. A *sannyasi* marrying disciples. (He is a stubborn devotee. To push on he can do whatever is required.) Not to give up rules and regulations, but first is service to Kṛṣṇa. Do whatever has to be done. *Niyamagraha*. Marriages have produced good effects. *Anyone should be expert in any capacity, but generally sannyasis are purely engaged in preaching work without any botheration.*

Sannyasi preaching should not be checked. Settle up party feeling.

Writing Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja homage, I realize I am a poor one to praise the greatest. Even the great Ananta-deva failed to describe Kṛṣṇa completely as the greatest. The spiritual master is as good as the greatest because he is the confidential servitor of Kṛṣṇa, the Greatest. As the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is in everyone's heart as Supersoul, so the Lord is manifest externally as the spiritual master. The spiritual master is more kind than the Supreme, however, and this is acknowledged even by Kṛṣṇa.

Any attention I call on myself, even to describe my lowliness, will in a sense detract from my praise of Srila Prabhupada. If I am totally useless, however, that will be a bad reflection on my spiritual master who has accepted me. Thus on viewing myself again, I find I cannot remain so low in mood because actually I am happy and at peace in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

No outsiders can understand the spiritual relationship of disciple, spiritual master, and the relationship one has with Kṛṣṇa through the spiritual master.

Don't manufacture anything. Surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

What have I realized? I know I owe my life and soul to my spiritual master, who has saved me from the doctrines of material life. I know I am not this body, Kṛṣṇa says so. Prabhupada has made me accept it by his presentation of Vedic knowledge and his devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

He has saved me and anyone else who submits to him from nescience. They do not believe in the next life. They take it that the guru is exploiting by another kind of business, or that he is a kind of religious guide in the same way the priests of other religions are religious guides—not very important. The Kṛṣṇa conscious guru and disciple know differently. The fact is, religion aside, we are changing bodies from boyhood to youth to old age. After the body ends, it is not that the self simply disappears any more than the blue sky and sun simply become nonexistent at night. Because our limited eyes cannot see what is taking place even in the material world, we certainly cannot judge by the senses. We have to consult higher authority in order to know what really happens as the sun appears to “die” at night or as it appears to be suddenly created in the morning. There is such knowledge, and by such knowledge, for example, a man sees differently than a dog. A dog sees water in the desert; a man sees that it is only a mirage because he has knowledge beyond sense perception.

Similarly, Vedic knowledge, which must be received through *guru-parampara*, informs us that after the change from old age to death, the self (*atma*) takes another material body under the laws of nature, controlled by the Supreme. Also, in any form of life we take, there is always repeated suffering, although we try for happiness. There is happiness as there is water—but not in the mirage. The world is on fire.

Therefore, we must approach the guru (*tad vijñānartham*). He is the perfect leader as he follows the Perfect. He is free of the four defects and teaches the perfect system (*bhakti*) to free one from material miseries. We have to submit ourselves in our sinful and ignorant condition to the mercy of his lotus feet and follow his instructions. By his grace we can revive our eternal connection with Kṛṣṇa.

The whole world can be saved from repeated birth, and gain *sat-cit-ananda*, but they neglect it. Kali-yuga is such a bad age. (The mass of men do not know it.) Now they compare our spiritual master with these other groups as “brainwashing” poor disciples into a life which is misleading. The actual fact is that our movement is backed up by Vedic evidence and our

guru is qualified because he teaches only Krsna and controls his senses. The movement is producing people free of the four defects and dedicated to glorifying God by chanting and distributing books of *sastra*. No other spiritual group is doing such work. They are doing only concocted work and their gurus are concocted. They are misleading and the materialistic civilization is another misleading feature of *maya*. They are brainwashed by propaganda either by Darwin, Marx, Rockefeller, Vivekananda, etc., that one can enjoy life thinking he is the body and can neglect his relationship with Krsna. This is the real brain torture, "brainwashing," upon the misguided people. All these classes of leaders agree on these sinful principles and are ignorant of the real fact of matter and self and the Supreme, although it is clearly taught in the *Bhagavad-gita* and all *sastra*. They refuse to see it, having their intelligence stolen by *maya*.

Our spiritual master has certainly washed our hearts and minds clean by Lord Caitanya's method, the Hare Krsna mantra (*ceto darpana marjanam*). We are clean of dirty effects and are going back to Godhead. On this day let us rededicate ourselves with firm faith, not being influenced by the demoniac doubters who try to belittle the spiritual master and the spiritual reality of Vaikuntha. They are like insignificant glowworms and should be ignored. All glories to Prabhupada.

April 18

Detroit

Back from India for almost a month, I went to Dallas (5–6 days) and to Detroit (10–11 days) for temple management as GBC. In Detroit, college preaching began: eight classes in four days, including Professor McGovern at U. of Detroit, Father Madias at Madonna, Indian lady (Dr. Sharma) at Wayne State, Dr. Bajaun also at Wayne, and Professor Stagg at Oakland Community College. Then I went to Chicago and had five classes in two days, including Cox and Grossman at U. of Illinois; also W. Jones (English: Transcendentalism) at U.I.; Wremhoff at Loop College and Bond from Northwestern.

That's thirteen classes. Since then I went to Washington, D.C. for two days with the library party. Now two days in Detroit for GBC visit. The library party is successfully on the road again.

Upcoming: classes Wed.—Thurs.—Fri. in Wisconsin.

April 21

Kenosha, Wisconsin

Gave one lecture today to a group of students who mildly perked up from their sarcastic, dull appearances in the beginning to basic inquiry at the end. Now I'm in the library. Started looking through my purports on "*Hamsa-guhya* Prayers." Now somehow I have come to a mundane book, T. Huxley's book on David Hume. Why am I reading it? Ultimately, I want to gain strong conviction and faith in Srila Prabhupada and Krsna.

Preaching is fighting. "Do you think fighting is easy?" I have not been made to suffer many ordeals thus far, but I am leading a gentlemanly life as a traveling lecturer, speaking on the immortality of the soul to educated (by material standards) groups of college students. I have been trying to speak clearly and convince the students to accept as serious the Vedic *siddhanta* of *bhakti-yoga* as the highest goal. I try to present the philosophy reasonably, humbly, but strongly. Whenever I can I am studying Srila Prabhupada's books—sometimes for a few hours a day. Whatever doubts I have I put them out of my mind and pray to Krsna to spare me from the great danger of falling away from my spiritual master's service. I am now fixed on the course back to Godhead.

Why should I examine Hume? He has given famous arguments against the immortality of the soul. He is a great professional word juggler, thinker of logic and argument, and if I were to attempt to contest him on my own strength, I would be like a fly beside an elephant.

Because he is dealing with the same argument I am giving, however, namely, the cause of all causes, the existence of the

Supreme Being, it may be helpful for making my own presentations more forceful to know what professional, mundane philosophy has said on this matter. Srila Prabhupada has already commented on Hume in the "philosophies" book, but that is not yet available to me.

In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, our arguments might be classified by the professional, great, expert philosophers as popular arguments. My brain is so adverse to following his logic to even understand what he is saying that my so-called study of Hume or any atheist-agnostic becomes a hazard and a headache. Lord Caitanya forbade us to read Sankara's Mayavadi commentary. After all, whenever I am challenged, even by philosophy professors, I am never defeated. Just by remembering Srila Prabhupada's arguments I can stand them off and show as many good reasons to believe in God as they can present to not believe.

We do not say that God can be reached by reason alone. We say, "Have faith in the authority of the Supreme."

"But how do you know your authority is right?"

Because He is perfect. It is spoken by God. He who creates the order of the universes has spoken the *Vedas*. We quote them and that is proof. There is no disproof if you do not accept it because by your process of reasoning, you cannot find the answers.

Hume boldly thought that by reason he had disproved some of the reasonable arguments we offer in our philosophical presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In that sense, it would be valuable to formally refute Hume, not by logic, but by transcendental reasoning and a clearer understanding on my part of the *sastras'* infallibility.

I accept Lord Kṛṣṇa as God on the authority of my spiritual master and the *Bhagavad-gita*. I can fend off any intellectual doubt. I can see with good intelligence that without accepting higher authority, I can never know the meaning of the truth, the meaning of life. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

They who disclaim the Creator by logical arguments are not infallible themselves, but succumb to death like moths in the fire. I want to triumph over death, but more importantly, I want to be the faithful, devoted servant of my guru and Lord

Kṛṣṇa. I am a most fallen wretch. They play the role of sophisticated philosopher and with breath or argument given to them by nature (under whose control, they cannot say), they speculate why God is foolish. I admit I have committed abominable acts in the world. Now I want to approach the Supreme and be rid of my own sinful, material life and also help others. I am weak. One has to know this, that he is a fool, that science cannot save him. This T. Huxley seems to think otherwise. These emotions of one's ignorance and fallen nature seem appropriate to me, and I don't care for the psychologists' theories, which make everything appear mundane.

The claim that our literature is grand imagination cannot be made by one who has gained the conviction of *parampara*: Vedic literature is a great, self-evident science of God. It is simply too impressive and grand and scientific, appealing to the highest instincts of truth. Its very subject matter makes it impossible to be refuted by mundane argument.

If I can gain more insight—just in a day or two—into the skepticism of the great philosopher of doubt, David Hume, then not for the world, but for myself in my college preaching activities, I will be more fixed.

A *Srimad-Bhagavatam* verse and purport gives a nice refutation of Hume's theory that the self is mortal because consciousness of the self, being no more than a series of bodily-related perceptions, will cease at the end of the body.

The pure soul is pure consciousness and is never out of consciousness, either due to circumstances, time, situations, dreams or other causes. How then does he become engaged in nescience?

—*Bhag.* 3.7.5, "Further Inquiries by Vidura"

Notes for Ethics class

The highest good behavior is to follow the spoken word of the Supreme Being, as revealed in the Vedas. I am aware that many Western philosophers have boldly criticized Christian metaphysics and by their own reasoning, have concluded the non-existence of God; or that God is unjust; or that there is God,

but there is another moral consideration besides obedience to Him. By Vedic standards, however, these persons are considered *mental speculators whose perceptions are subject to four kinds of mistakes*. Therefore, we follow God's code. It is not followed blindly and dogmatically. In any case, His instruction is perfect, but in the *Vedas—Bhagavad-gita and Bhagavatam—the transcendental science of God is fully described*. It is significant that most Western philosophers were never deep students of Vedic knowledge in their dismissal of theism, and that if they did read the *Vedas*, it was not according to the authorized method of studying under the guidance of a spiritual master.

April 23

Madison, Wisconsin

In our morning class we read this nice verse from *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*:

*iha yasya harer dasye
karmana manasa gira
nikhilasv apy avasthasu
jivan-muktah sa ucyate*

Anyone who, by his actions, mind, and words, lives only for the transcendental loving service of the Lord, is certainly a liberated soul, even though he may appear to be in a condition of material existence.

The positive definition of liberation here is to be completely engaged in devotional service. There will be no sense gratification for such a pure devotee. Therefore, if one tries to say he is not liberated because, say, his body is growing old, or he is infirm, that is the faulty vision of the non-liberated person. The total positive absorption in devotional service proves liberation. After this body, he will go to Kṛṣṇa—or wherever Kṛṣṇa wishes to send the pure devotee. Liberation doesn't mean one gets two heads or six arms, but he is seeing Kṛṣṇa everywhere.

April 30

Rockford—Illinois campground

Almost twenty men from the library party are gathered to associate together. We discussed this morning how association is important; it should be in terms of the six kinds of exchanges described in Verse 4 of *The Nectar of Instruction*.

The motorhome temple has arrived. Now use it for Kṛṣṇa. We are discussing Rupa Gosvami's verse about how renunciation means to use everything fully for Kṛṣṇa. That means the best things of the material world. This was practically demonstrated by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. Before his time, *sadhu* meant to stay in Vṛndavana with loin cloth and beads. Now we have a luxurious motorhome bus for taking a *sankirtana* party to every town and village and worshipping Gaura-Nitai. The best material goods may be used.

Such renunciation by using costly objects, however, means that one should be the servant and work hard as a servant. On seeing this facility, I at once want to work harder and do everything nicely for Srila Prabhupada.

I would like to be the personal servant of the Deities, Gaura-Nitai, and especially in the beginning, establish the worship in terms of cooking, dressing, and worship.

As for the motorhome in terms of our overall party, we will travel together, Gaura-Nitai and the lecture party, chanting party, as well as the collecting party. We will try to coordinate with the library party more often, but even in separation, it ensures more the stability of our whole party.

May 10, 1976

Minneapolis

Now we are planning to wind up the college lecture party after the first week in June, at least for a while. Our advance man is finding it difficult to get enough classes for both Jayadvaita dasa and myself.

I am so prone to see myself being treated unjustly—meaning not being given the place of honor as the leading preacher of

this group. Needless to say, such lack of humility won't help me or others.

I will in this time of no college lectures concentrate on developing the nucleus of our party—Deity worship, the *san-kirtana* collectors, and also traveling in more regular contact with the library party.

In addition, we will try to form a *harinama* party for daily chanting. For the next four weeks, we will travel according to the lecturing schedule and try to also do chanting.

Everyone is part of the team, and by being satisfied and working as he should, there is overall success. Krsna will be pleased at our little traveling operation and He will bless us with our desire—which is to have more devotees join us and to have more money to expand more and more our preaching. Our desire is also to become satisfied and become His pure devotees.

As leader, if I exemplify a peaceful mind and dedication to duties, the others will follow that lead. I should not be agitated that someone is given any benefit in his service. My own duties should absorb me.

Also, since I have taken the Deity duties, I should not hoard them but let others who are qualified approach the lotus feet of the Deity. I can continue to bathe and dress Them, but others may also learn.

Now we have to prepare for the installation of Gaura-Nitai.

Be happy in simple duties, serving the Deity and serving the devotees.

In Eau Claire—don't forget—I felt bliss in multiple duties (preaching and working on the bus) and also in my non-egotistical position as contributor to the overall party; not that I had to be served by the other parts, but I too am a part serving the whole party with its interest in pleasing Srila Prabhupada by pushing on *sankirtana*.

May 24

Yesterday, May 23, 1976, we installed the Gaura-Nitai Deities in the motorhome. I am enthusiastic to dedicate myself to Their service. *I pray there be no interruption in my service to*

Them. We have been given nice sets of clothes and there is a nice altar arrangement. I prefer to worship *Them* rather than do any big management. It is my proclivity.

June 10, 1976

Tomorrow, His Divine Grace is due to arrive in Detroit. In this notebook, instead of describing my vacillating self, I shall write down the transcendental words and activities of His Divine Grace. My position is to surrender to his will without any attachment, except to do what pleases him most. At present, he seems to like my management of the library party. I can report that they are steadily going on and getting standing orders, and I have built up our party to be a self-sufficient unit, spiritually and financially. There are different departments, all directed toward the selling of books to the libraries and colleges and the collecting of *laksmi* to support it, as well as a program of giving college classes.

Perhaps I could simply ask his blessings and permission to continue the library party at present without change. It would be nice if the library party could have *darsana* with His Divine Grace. Assure him how the program is developing and ask any other questions.

He may send me wherever he desires, but for myself, I will be glad to stay on with this traveling and preaching in the U.S. I think it will develop more and more. There seems to be no need to do something different since the present work—repeat visits to the universities—is resulting in more and more acceptance of his books. As for my restlessness and dissatisfaction, that is definitely chronic and has to do with a lack of Kṛṣṇa conscious realization, a lack of being situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If my program is to study, I will be discontent at not “producing” more by preaching; if my program is active preaching, I will be discontent not to study; if I am managing, I will complain, and if I am not managing, I will claim I am lazy. If I travel as a *sannyasi*, I say I should go beyond being a *sannyasi*, remain in one place, and work hard at a project for His Divine Grace. If I am given a project to manage and surrender to, I will feel stuck in

one place and wish to fulfill my *sannyasa* order by travel and preaching. It is impossible. Presently, I am traveling and preaching with time to study, no heavy management burden, and in the fall, opportunity to preach at colleges. I am responsible for the ongoing library party work, which is beginning its third year.

I don't think in the name of catching my spiritual master's eye I should embark on some new project in a new land in a new field but go on with this. If he would indicate his satisfaction and whether this conclusion of mine is right or wrong, I would feel more convinced and fixed that I am doing what is right.

July 6, 1976

Minneapolis

Summer going quickly by.

Of its own course, the library party project now seems about to change. The members are finding going to the same colleges for a third and fourth time is limiting their engagement. Especially the less inspired members find it difficult. Now we are seriously thinking of all going on a world tour, to do libraries in England, Europe, India, Australia, Japan, etc. One proposal is that I go with them and take a PR man to get me speaking engagements. We will bring this up at an upcoming GBC meeting in New York in nine days.

July 7

St. Cloud, Minnesota

I really don't know what is best for me. Today, vague discontent, irritable with others at least mentally, not enthusiastic or interested in the plans of our party—and not yearning for the college preaching season. But I have been reading *Caitanya-caritamṛta* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* in the library a few hours and certainly this knowledge, this way of devotion to Kṛṣṇa and my spiritual master, is my entire life. The non-devotee's association in material life is simply hellish, gross hell. Life is short. We have to finish our business and become

completely Krsna conscious. Dear Supreme Lord who dwells in everyone's heart, please guide me to help myself. Guide me to clear up this vague malaise which is no doubt affiliated with material desire and sinful activity. Show me the way, put my feet on the path, enliven my senses, because I feel I am a dead man. By turning to You even slightly, even in pretense, I am feeling improved.

July 8

Ekadasi—Minnesota

A good day's studying *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Caitanya-caritamrta*. I cannot remember all I read. Best is to go on reading and speak it and remember it. Chant the name very firmly and depend on Krsna. Do service for ISKCON so that it can be spread in this demoniac age. I feel a little encouraged (as lately I have not—possibly due to inactivity in my own preaching) to go and spread Krsna consciousness, either by my own speaking in U.S. colleges or personally traveling with the library party all over the world as they place books in colleges.

July 11

En route to Madison, Wisconsin

Driving three days straight to N.Y.C. Srila Prabhupada is there, and a GBC meeting. Ghanasyama, Mahabuddhi, and I are going to present our proposal that the library party travel to Europe and India. We are determined to do it, hopeful of Srila Prabhupada's blessings for it. I am surrendered to doing the best thing required of me. (In the midst of plans, at any moment, I may have to leave my body.)

Darsanas with Srila Prabhupada in New York— Recollections:

(1) I went into the room. There were many people there. I sat in the back. Srila Prabhupada said after a while, "Is that Satsvarupa?" and then had me come and sit forward. He asked,

"When did you come?" I said a few hours ago. He asked, "Are you all right?" And I said yes. (Very thrilling, but I immediately became puffed up.) He had Pusta Krsna preaching to two or three nondevotee guests. Mr. Manischewitz (the wine baron) was there. Srila Prabhupada sat back while Pusta Krsna spoke on eternity. When Prabhupada spoke, his voice was a little weak. He later looked at me and had me explain—he gave some Sanskrit. I couldn't understand it. Pusta Krsna Swami said it was the eighth *sloka* of *Siksastakam*. (I felt a desire to know the *sastra* more deeply so I could concisely present the realized meaning).

After the general meeting, Mahabuddhi, Ghanasyama, and I went up close to talk to Srila Prabhupada. Ramesvara Maharaja was asking us to leave, but we stayed. Mahabuddhi was introduced as just coming from India. Prabhupada asked how he was doing and was pleased. They talked of prices. I said that just as we are traveling in America, we want to do the whole world, go to Europe. Srila Prabhupada beamed at me while I was saying this. He was satisfied to hear it and seemed to believe we would actually do something. Then the meeting broke. Mr. Kallman came in. Mahabuddhi asked Srila Prabhupada to write more. He said he would.

(2) The next day during his massage, the three of us went in again. I explained that I had a telegram from Gopala Krsna, who wanted the men back immediately, but Prabhupada said no, India has already been done (somewhat). Now do the rest of the world. Srila Prabhupada referred to it as a "world tour." We explained we would do the U.S. also on a schedule. He approved.

(3) This time was after we had circulated our written proposal. Srila Prabhupada had taken a copy directly from Mahabuddhi. Srila Prabhupada called in GBCs (four of us) to discuss about the fighting of GBC members in India. When we went into the room, he had his reading glasses on and our proposal on his desk before him. He was turning a page. We dealt with the India issue and then he turned to the proposal. "So this world tour seems good," he said. Ramesvara Maharaja said, "We will have to discuss Satsvarupa Maharaja's zone."

"Yes," Srila Prabhupada indicated. No more on that was said, but again it was an approval. (The next morning in the car—I wasn't there—he said Gurudas Swami should travel with me wherever we go around the world and give lectures.)

(4) Another *darsana* was on the roof. Prabhupada was taking massage. Ten GBC members came to report the results of our meeting. When we reported that Jagadisa would take management of some temples in his zone, Prabhupada said no, he must devote himself to *gurukula*. He accepted as good the GBC decision on myself. The library party will go on a world tour, but I will *keep* the temples I was given at the Mayapur meeting and not go with them—except I could fly out for a meeting. We also asked him to stay and rest and not to travel right away and not give classes. He said, "I have no objection," but the next day he decided to travel and he also gave class again.

I also rode in the car with him several times and had many meetings with different GBC members. I feel a little mentally tired from so many New York City-paced meetings, but it was good and I feel I am definitely carrying out my spiritual master's orders: At least I am engaged in authorized duties, although in my heart I know I am not applying myself. I tend to take it easy. Moreover, I am always envious of the ISKCON leaders.

August 2, 1976

Wichita, Kansas

Having a variety of engagements in Krsna consciousness best suits the spirit soul. When fatigued by one activity, do another. Always be engaged in Krsna's service by following the spiritual master's instructions.

Do I want to be placed as the attention-getting leader? No, but neither do I want to fall into complacent "goodness" in the name of avoiding politics. When I have to associate and work with the recognized, dynamic leaders of this movement, I don't care for it, partly because of my envy of their advancement in selfless, enthusiastic service to Srila Prabhupada, and partly

because they are passionately inclined to management and “big, big talks.” Round and round I go. Without help from the Lord and His pure devotees, I cannot make any more significant advancement. “Help” is not the word. They simply have to completely take over; otherwise, I’m creeping at a snail’s pace, falling into duality.

Springfield, Missouri

Reading more notes on Hume’s philosophy in Coplestone’s *History of Philosophy*. Again I have, in my amateurish way, peeked into the professional field of philosophy. Of course, I am no philosopher, but I am convinced that Vedic philosophy can explain everything and at the same time withstand the attack of skepticism from empirical brains, no matter how big those brains are or how influential they may be in the history of philosophy.

Hume’s contention that he lived “naturally” and with customary behavior despite his philosophy of skepticism, proves also that at the time of death, his philosophy could in no way save him. He may have examined everything minutely by introspection and experience, but life remained a mystery. He had his aspiration to be a famous philosopher, but no knowledge of where he would go after the death of that famous philosopher.

August 10

Chicago

Working with temple problems. We may be evicted.

Rolla, Missouri

krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna he
krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna he
krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna raksa mam
krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna pahi mam
rama raghava rama raghava rama raghava raksa mam
krsna kesava krsna kesava krsna kesava pahi mam

August 12

Atlanta

Heard a tape where Srila Prabhupada says your spiritual master is stressing book distribution by any means: the end justifies the means. When the father lies to the son to get him to take medicine, a big moralist may object that the father is cheating the son, but actually he is benefiting him—somehow get him to take the medicine. So it is with book distribution. If you don't follow the spiritual master's order because you are a big moralist and do not like that they are pushing sales, then you make as if you are greater than the spiritual master. He laughed and appreciated how Tripurari Maharaja sells a book by saying, when a lady asks, "Is this about the power shortage?" "Yes, it is." A big moralist may object, but the devotee is thinking: let me give her a book on Kṛṣṇa.

Siddha-svarupa's faction does not distribute many books. Nor do they do elaborate Deity worship, which is needed to keep us pure.

I talked with Ghanasyama, asking him to stop his extreme austerities—three hours sleep in twenty-four, very little eating. He presented many sastric arguments why it was not unbona fide. I agreed and did not insist. As long as he is still working hard, not incapacitated or fatigued, and not in a strange mental state. So far so good.

Last night some demons attacked the temple. Suhotra was arrested by police for cracking the demons' car windshield with an ax.

I am trying to do my service and find time to read. Thinking more that I must go to the front lines and fight, and the only way I feel confident is doing college lectures. Let me do it then, and not become tired of it. I pray for enthusiasm.

Fearful that Suhotra may be imprisoned (fearful of the violence and injustice of this material world), looking for eternal assurance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But I think, "You are in anxiety because this material world is such an unhappy place. Did you think you could be comfortable and live here nicely?" When the anxiety is too great, I cannot think of the assurance

of Kṛṣṇa's all-pervading protection. I am not serving with a hard effort. Am I resting on my *sannyasi* "laurels"? "I am an older, advanced devotee. Do not expect me to do too much. I'll be aloof in good consciousness. Don't get me involved in the strain and anxiety of the front-line grapple with the obnoxious forces of demons who attack and harass. I'm staying back." Therefore, for me at least, always preaching to the nondevotees, even if in the protected veneer of academia, is wanted.

August 16

Remember the phrase from my father, "Dug-out Doug"? I feel like that. So feeble I am. Unless there is a formal class arrangement it seems I cannot preach. Where is preaching? How? Who? Where? When? What? The preacher is bold. The preacher is fearless. The preacher knows no time or limits as stated in the fourth verse of the *catur-sloki*. I think I am some kind of "portrait of the artist as a young man" devotee—as if I'm the only one with a genuine inner life. The only honest soul. The pure self. Just false ego is what that is. Rash creative urge to write of myself, the sin of Thoreaus, Whitmans, and thousands and thousands of past "writers." Get in line, Satsvarupa dasa. Coin your phrases and gild your words if you like, but hoe the straight and narrow. Get your head straight. Don't be either "humble," *humble* or "proud"—get off the false plane. It's nauseating. "Portrait of the devotee as a young, pure saint," portrait of the great disciple—the next guru, the next fall-down, the uncontrolled ego, and the uncontrolled mind.

I, Dug-out Doug, on the back lines of this war against *maya* led by Srila Prabhupada. Devotees fighting with demons on the front. I, brahminical, self-preservative, saddened, sitting down on the back lines examining my egocentricity with oblique diary notes, "He's steady, he's good," "Satsvarupa's a good devotee."

Get behind me, Maya! Even though I'm creeping slow and lazy in bodily concept, I'm not going to make a move for you.

For the thousand thousandth time and praying to do so eternally, I bow at the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Srila

Prabhupada, who saved me from going over the cliff in 1966. Thank you, thank you. Let me serve you. I'm yours in ISKCON. Not worth much, but I'm not going anywhere else. I'm praying you show me how I can feel confident and increase my service. My so-called goodness is not very clear.

Because what am I doing to spread this movement?

Hey, read this diary! Read all about it! A genius and saint is sitting down doing Not Much. Like he's handcuffed. Read the latest. Exposé of timidity.

If I could only control my mind and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra—at least in the *brahma-muhurta* hour.

I just want to be a devotee, but I don't want to pay the high price. Can't I just beg and receive all the mercy and stay on the line for GBC *sannyasa* privileges?

To the front of the line! He's a *sannyasi*, let him pass. He's thirty-seven years old and he doesn't cheat. Let him pass.

Don't let him pass. Who is he anyway? What test has he been through? How was he awarded *sannyasa*? Where is that mood, or is it false sentiment?

"This Bhaktivinoda, with humble heart, desires to go forth and chant the holy name."

Where is that grace, where is that empowered drop of nectar to spread the holy name? The only price is your desire to have it. I even forget—what is the mantra?

"*Etam sa asthaya paratma-nistham . . .* "

Four of us initiated together. Preach.

"Can you please give me a class?"

In hope of self-purification, I write like this. We are all ultimately at the mercy of guru and Kṛṣṇa.

I resolved: if in the classroom I feel, "This is a drag," never mind. Go on. As the soldiers are fighting, let me fight as a chalk dust preacher. Tell them, "You are not this body."

August 17

Day before Janmastami

We are driving to New Vrindaban.

August 18

Krsna's appearance day

Imperceptible advancement. "It is not at all difficult, but don't deviate."

Krsna is not a myth. We go on hearing and chanting.

People think Krsna is only a god or *avatara* of Visnu, but this is the original form of Visnu as stated in the *Bhāgavatam*: *krsnas tu bhagavan svayam*. Brahma also attested to this when asked by Narada who was the Supreme. In the 11th chapter of the *Gita*, Krsna shows that the universal form comes from Him, but His original form is Krsna. In the 10th chapter He declares that the all-pervading Supersoul is but a fragment, the plenary part of a part of Krsna.

Brahma prays, "You are the original Narayana as the shelter of the whole universe (Your expansion), as the shelter of the *purusas* who give all others shelter, and as the Supersoul in each person's heart. You appear as a child, but I know You are God."

In His feature as Krsna, He is most lovable and relishable in intimate *rasas* with His devotees. Even worship of Visnu is less, as it stresses on opulence and regulation, approaching God in awe and reverence. In pure love of God, the devotee becomes Krsna's friend, parent, or lover.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who taught *harinama*, accepted Krsna as the Supreme and taught His followers to perform service for Krsna's senses. Srila Prabhupada has made Krsna known all over the world. Krsna is God. Even though we are not great scholars, by accepting this *parampara* from Brahma, Narada, Vyasa, Caitanya, the Six Gosvamis, we have the richest heritage of God consciousness.

August [?]

Detroit

How to give a good *parampara Bhagavatam* class that inspires the devotees? Sometimes I get an inkling of it. Most of the devotees have already assimilated a good amount of material.

A good class is when the speaker is able to come out with the philosophy in *parampara* fashion.

If the speaker is very sincere and given the right attitude and psychological mental position, he can speak enthusiastically on the old, standard examples and develop them further with other solid, old examples and teachings (not trying to be clever). Then the elusive quality is there: the devotees feel relieved and enter into hearing and discussion on the subject matter.

Inkling of ecstasy: there it is before you, the path back home, back to Godhead.

August 24

Toledo

Serve as Prabhupada has given us duties. Do those duties conscientiously and yet think of Radha-Kṛṣṇa within. (Thus the *sannyasi* is supposed to have no other duties or projects but thinking, hearing, and chanting or preaching.) I am flying to Chicago as the GBC man to look at a new building for Their temple. When talking to devotees, try to speak this "secret" that is on my mind, that we should try to remember Kṛṣṇa as our foremost duty.

The particular project, Chicago temple-buying or selling books, is not material, it is spiritual. While executing it we may have to concentrate on its details (which may also seem worldly), but still our real attachment has to be to Kṛṣṇa, the holy name, devotional service to Kṛṣṇa—and not to the book-selling, buying a building, etc. While buying a building think, "This is for Kṛṣṇa." While chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa pray, "Please engage me in Your service." The chanting should always be predominant, not that while chanting we cannot pay attention because we are thinking of money or sales figures—even if in relation to Kṛṣṇa.

We should not abandon chanting and hearing. Rather, that is the main thing. Sometimes our spiritual master gives us so many practical management duties that it seems he is stressing that, but he never says to do other business at the

sacrifice of regulative principles. Because we cannot simply sit down and chant all day (we sleep if we try it), we have so many active projects. The projects, temple construction, book-selling are pure devotional activities.

Nevertheless, the *sannyasa* order as far as possible should be free of "worldly" management so that the *sannyasi's* brain can be clear to preach the philosophy of the *Bhagavatam*. When his brain is free to think in that way, it is very nice. He should go everywhere and speak about Kṛṣṇa and write articles and help spread the *sankirtana* movement.

August 25

Estrangement from ISKCON is dangerous. Here at this temple, I'm not one of the boys at *kirtana* or on big book distribution, yet isn't this the heart of Srila Prabhupada's movement? I can join more in *kirtana* with my own party, and book distribution also, but ISKCON is, in one sense, growing past me and I am left in the past. Simple *kirtanas* and simply chanting and subsisting on a different consciousness of *sankirtana*.

Aside from this (mostly due to my lack of surrender, material self-pity, etc.) I try to think how I can remember Srila Prabhupada and the philosophy—the great devotees of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the cutting-through-maya teaching of the Gita! A new journal? Is college classroom lecturing enough?

August 29

Philadelphia—class

Preaching is planting seeds, but there has to be some results. Do devotees join as a result? It has been so long since I have seen that as a result of my preaching (remember Santa Cruz). I've got to desire it and preach, especially when I find someone interested. Distribute books at the speaking engagements.

August 30

Miami—summer's end

Soon to New England to start classroom speaking. I'm eager. Want to meditate while preaching on how to make devotees. The more we know of Prabhupada's books, the better for every kind of service. That way we can help other new or old devotees.

Remember the principle that the more you speak about Kṛṣṇa the more you'll want to speak, and the better you'll be able to speak. Don't save it. Give it. Don't think the few good things I know, once spoken, will force me to repeat. Speak with enthusiasm the basic, standard philosophy, verses and examples, and even if you do repeat it, it will be sound, it will be nectar for real devotees—and it will give you confidence to go on and on preaching the glories of Kṛṣṇa, guru, and Vaisnavas.

September 1, 1976

Radhastami—Miami

Ten years ago today I received my first initiation from Srila Prabhupada.

Radharani is the best devotee of Kṛṣṇa. She teaches us how to love Kṛṣṇa. Her example is pure devotion, pure affection.

I had a dream devotees had to go underground. It is also predicted. But here and now there is still a chance for favorable preaching.

September 3

Isa dasa called. He has sixty speaking engagements for me in Maine beginning on September 7th! That means academic preaching. Introducing them to the *Gita*. If you speak to a so-called educated audience who do not know the *Gita*, you have to start at the beginning, verses 2.11 and 2.12, and tell them the nature of the self as transmigrating after the death of the body.

More and more skeptics think the self is either not to be known or not relevant, and they deal only with external phenomena and behavior. From the Vedic point of view, however, the self as the transcendental knower of the body can be known by a different process.

Yoga. When the spirit soul is realized, there is no question of his nonexistence. Without self-identity there is no knowledge; without knowledge, no happiness.

Aside from theoretical, logical speculation that there is no self or that the self is not important—people live for sense gratification in a temporary form of life. Knowledge of the eternal self gives us freedom from the sufferings and temporary nature of life.

People do have a sense of self, but it is a bodily concept: black, white, etc. We think the body is the self.

Where in the body is the life principle? Is it the blood? But blood put into a dead man won't revive him. Or is it the air? A bellows arrangement can't produce a living person. Is it the heart? No, substitute a pump for a living being and you can't have life. (The small achievements of science only manipulate the parts of the body in one who is already alive. They do not create life. That is promised "for the future.")

The nature of life is not open to material investigation. Definite positive knowledge of the self and God is given, and the nature of spirit and matter. The epistemology is also available: how Vedic knowledge is received, nondogmatic but based on the authority of *sruti*, *sabda-brahma*.

How to speak of God? He's the Supreme Controller. I've only heard the scantiest information of modern theories in psychology and have the slightest information on scientific achievements, but I know they are summed up as *avidya*, ne-science, since they are produced by men who suffer from the four defects which prevent perfect knowledge. Their theories also always change. I should not try fancy speaking with reference to modern theories, but speak the original *Veda* and let them contest it with their knowledge. Then I can defeat them in the open on my own grounds (what I have heard from Srila Prabhupada).

Notes from Srila Prabhupada's talk—1968

World can come together under one God in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We know God and exchange with Him in six ways. "The people may not understand, but Kṛṣṇa will be pleased and that is our mission. . . . We must not be disappointed . . . we will say it to the moon because Kṛṣṇa is everywhere."

Preaching and Writing for Purification September [?] 1976–January 20, 1977

Geographically, this chapter ranges widely over the United States, then leaves for London, goes to Amsterdam, and ends at the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda in Bhubaneshwar, India. In the fall of 1976, I was fully engaged with college classroom preaching in New England. We tried a more intensive approach with *bhakti-yoga* classes, working out of Amherst, Massachusetts. By then, the library party members dwindled and I had to go out as one of them selling books. Then the emergency hit—the first “brainwashing” case against ISKCON in the New York courts. On the GBC’s order, I went out to solicit professors for their testimony in favor of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. During this period, I began writing the book that Prabhupāda had asked me to write while he was in Detroit, “Things Undertaken Without Kṛṣṇa Fail.” I became quite involved researching materialistic sources, and then discovered another type of writing: “My real writing strength, if any, is ‘from-life.’”

Later in the diary we will hear how Prabhupāda warned me not to do research in mundane thinkers for writing this book. As for the autobiographical writing, I began attempting a fictionalized account of my own life prior to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, climaxing when I met the pure devotee. Even Śrīla Prabhupāda was a somewhat fictionalized figure. Both these works, *Things Undertaken Without Kṛṣṇa Fail* and the autobiography, were never completed. They began with some groping, some inspiration, many hours of work, but somehow or other they never survived.

Neither could I give up the idea that I had a vocation for writing and that I could actually serve in that way, even though the present demands of ISKCON were (and still are) so urgent. What was especially difficult in the beginning of writing was to adjust the faithful devotional attitude with the attitude of a life-observing writer. I wanted more than anything else to be faithful to Śrīla Prabhupāda and the *param-parā*. At first, I didn't know how to mix this with the creative process. I wound up on frequent detours. I recall working with particular intensity in a room in Amsterdam, just prior to going to be Prabhupāda's secretary. I wrote, typed, edited, re-typed, and talked about it with my editor and friend, Maṇḍaleśvara Prabhu. He encouraged me in this attempt at shooting for the rhinoceros. The library party members, Ghanaśyama Mahā-buddhi, and others were in Amsterdam, and we went on *harināma* together. They also helped me prepare the questions that I should ask Śrīla Prabhupāda on behalf of the library party about how we could continue to distribute books to the scholars.

At the St. Louis convention of the American Academy for Religion, I set up a small table and directly approached people in the lobby asking for signatures. A reporter from the Los Angeles Times noted what we were doing and an article subsequently appeared in his paper. It was regarded as favorable publicity at that time, and Ramesvara and others patted me on the back for my public relations work. It was certainly a case in which I had done nothing expert at all, but just made an attempt, like the little bird trying to empty the ocean with his beak.

The friendly scholars of Hinduism also invited me for an informal gathering at their hotel room one night. I brought pot of *sabji*, *capātis* and nectar drink from the St. Louis temple and acted as a humble servant of the scholars to give them *kṛṣṇa prasādam*. They sat around in a bedroom, speaking either academically about Hinduism, or talking in a most frivolous mood of *prajalpa*. They were, of course, drinking liquor and smoking cigarettes. One of the professors told a long story about how he and his friend, who were high on marijuana in India, imagined

a small puddle to be a big river. Everyone listened and laughed hilariously. One eminent professor held forth his opinion that Rāmānūja was actually an impersonalist and that Vaiṣṇavism had, in a high, sophisticated sense, the same conclusions as Śaṅkara. I had to wince upon hearing this, but I just did not feel it was my place to strongly preach at this gathering when they were all sitting around in such a relaxed, casual mood.

One of the professors, Thomas Hopkins, was the friendliest toward me, and he was certainly the biggest eater of *prasādam*, taking seconds and thirds. Another young professor, a Harvard graduate, asked the group whether they thought that any yoga or spiritual discipline was necessary in order to be learned in Hinduism. His remark was mostly replied to with jokes of various sorts. On the one hand, it was a thrilling occasion for me to be in the same room with many of the big-time Indologists in America, but by Kṛṣṇa's mercy, their frivolousness made a deep impression on me. Since then it has been very hard to take them seriously.

* * *

September [?], 1976

Boston

Our fallen state cannot be over-exaggerated, yet the emphasis should be that we are presently in the liberated condition in devotional service. Kali is a sea of vices but, *hari-nama* is the one wonderful thing.

I remember reading in literature themes of this nature, such as Eugene O'Neill's "curse of the misbegotten," Lord Byron's guilt, and in our century, being born into a legacy of impending nuclear war where we feel the shadow of doom before we even start. There is a tendency when one faces this bad karma to be morose or hopeless. The mercy of the pure devotee is that the fallen soul somehow takes the part of the *mahatma* despite his recent degraded position. This is sometimes controversial. *Smartas* say the Westerners cannot be *sannyasis* and *brahmacaris* or *brahmanas* until the karma and *guna* of our next life.

Narada says it is the symptoms which should be judged, not the birth. Also, the *guna* and karma change as we take *prasadam*.

Our recent sinful activities are absolved. We should not dwell on them. We are not crippled devotees. We are happies, not hippies. This is the transforming power of the *sankirtana* movement.

We find statements elaborating on this in the Fifth Canto of the *Bhagavatam*. It is described there that the *jiva* has his desires and is accordingly put into a body. He has freedom to act, but he must accept a body according to the Supreme Lord's will. He is not carried by blind, cruel destiny or a cruel God, but his own acts put him under the force of karma, under the will of God. (Unfortunately, the doom-conscious "hero" continues to enact sinful life. He does not help himself but sometimes curses his lot and blames God while continuing to be absorbed in material thoughts. He can be free if he surrenders and engages fully in *bhakti*. *Mam ca yo 'vyabhicarena, bhakti-yogena sevate*. If he engages fully in devotional service, he comes to the Brahman platform.)

Prabhupada writes, "All impediments will be cut to pieces. Sex desire may be the permanent disease of the Western people, but we are not 'Western people,' we are Hare Kṛṣṇa people." Don't resent the position we are in due to past karma. You cannot avoid it, but go on with your duties and don't come back again in such a situation.

"A liberated soul—who realizes he's not this body—disregards past activities in such a way that they produce no reactions." The soul can't be known materially; it has to be accepted on authority. In the same way, one cannot see his father as proof that such-and-such man is his father. He has to hear from his mother, the authority.

On the soul in *Bhagavad-gita* 2.29: "Some look on the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, and some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all."

More and more we hear modern psychologists and scientists want to discount the soul. "Soul" was a concept for the self

used thousands of years ago; now there is so-called new information. But still they cannot explain life. They cannot combine the elements of life. "In the future" they say they will do so.

"Perhaps one has no idea that one must think of the soul, and also make a solution of the material miseries." Or they attempt to learn, but are misguided, and they accept the Supreme and the individual soul as one.

They don't know that the goal of life can't be reached as long as one takes the body as the self.

September 13

Back at it

Just gave three classes in World Literature at U. of Maine. The philosophy came out intact: "You are not this body. Hear from Kṛṣṇa of the soul and eternal relation to the Supreme. Otherwise, you waste the human form of life." The students were mostly inert, apathetic. Sold two *Gitas*, a couple of small books. One student signed his name for a mailing list.

When one engages in devotional service, however, completely employing all the activities of the senses in the service of the Lord, the venomous quality of the senses is completely nullified.

—*Bhāg. 5.2.5*, purport

The senses are like poisonous serpents, but if the fangs are broken, the seemingly fearsome serpent is not dangerous.

Devotees, therefore, may see hundreds and thousands of beautiful women with fascinating bodily movements and gestures but not be allured, whereas such women would make ordinary yogis fall.

—*Bhāg. 5.2.5*, purport

Alas, for a person who is seriously desiring to cross the material ocean and engage in the transcendental loving service of

the Lord without material motives, seeing a materialist engaged in sense gratification or seeing a woman who is similarly interested is more abominable than drinking poison willingly.

—Cc., *Madhya-lila*, 11.8, quoted in *Bhāg*/ 5.2.7, purport

One who is serious about going back home, back to Godhead, should not contemplate the attractive features of women and the opulence of rich men. *Such contemplation will check one's advancement in spiritual life.* Once a devotee is fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, these attractions will not agitate his mind.

—*Bhāg*. 5.2.6, purport, italics added

September 15

University of Maine

One class on Cultural Geography. I spoke how people in the East know transmigration, whereas people in the West do not.

Then a seventy-five-minute class in Literature of the Inner Self where I discussed *bhakti*, *nitya kṛṣṇa-svarupa*.

September 21

This week, three lectures already, another week of eleven or twelve. This formal, intellectual teaching is suitable for me, but in this one-time class I am not able to be of much influence over students. Now we are working at trying to have four clubs in four different colleges. If that fails, maybe another attempt, but try to get a repeated hearing with the same group on a straightforward basis, not having to satisfy a professor who is teaching Linguistics or Family Life in Indian Villages, etc.

September 27

Third week in Maine—twenty-three classes in two weeks. Good active preaching, but I'm not satisfied. Next week we start yoga clubs out of Amherst, Massachusetts area.

September 31

Returning from Maine on completion of a three-week classroom lecture tour. This week ten classes (in four days) for a total of thirty-three; we chanted in each class and sold more books. Now heading for Amherst, Mass. where I'll help with a daily program of large-scale *prasadam* distribution out of the Amherst ISKCON center, and *bhakti-yoga* clubs in four colleges including Yale and University of Connecticut. I hope this will be more direct and better for getting people to take to Krsna consciousness. But I have to also desire it, or how can I speak it?

Many things about ISKCON seem, from the so-called objective viewpoint of the scholar, to make ISKCON appear like any other authoritarian, dogmatic religious group. We start with the assumption of divine revelation and demand from our members obedience to scriptures and representatives of the spiritual master. There are many more parallels we could make, mostly detrimental, from the viewpoint of the scientific, unbiased scholar.

The reason that these criticisms of Krsna consciousness are not acceptable is that we have the perfect theistic philosophy and a model transcendental society which is actually working and succeeding in its goals. Whenever we meet persons taking this "impartial" stance, they appear bewildered and ignorant as to the goal of their own lives. We have found nothing to surpass the Vedic goal of a life engaged in devotional service to Krsna, nothing to surpass life in association with devotees. We are firm and faithful. Now we have to enter the arena of intellectual learning and make our version heard with the tools of logical presentation, reason, demonstration—books, journals, communes, farms, services.

Srila Prabhupada suggested a new book to me. "Now that you have finished that other book," he said, "write a new book showing very reasonably that *any endeavor undertaken without Krsna will fail.*" But it seems to demand intensive research in a number of material fields. I should first write to Srila Prabhupada, asking if he wants me to undertake such research.

October 3, 1976

Amherst

This weekend, two men on our four-man library party said that they couldn't go out anymore. They are worn out from trying to distribute books to professors. They said they wanted to "preach" more and distribute *prasadam*. It's quite a blow to our U.S. library party of standing orders, text orders, etc. Srila Prabhupada regards this as the most important. One of the men asked me why I left that book distribution. I admitted it was difficult, but when faced with the downfall of the party, I volunteered to go out myself. But could I last at it with my timid, non-determined attitude? Anyway, I had to try. Then they both reconsidered and said they would go out. I spoke to Ramesvara Maharaja when I thought I was getting ready to go out, and he thought it was a great example.

Now it is not required. Next week, two of the *bhakti-yoga* clubs have their first meetings, at Yale and University of Connecticut. I'll go and try that. If they are not good successes, I can reconsider going out with the library party.

Aside from whether I personally go out to sell the books, I'm responsible to maintain the men and the party, and that itself is more important than staying in one place for two solid months to do the yoga clubs. They need me, even if only on the weekends. At least I have to be with them. I can't abandon them.

Quote from Srila Prabhupada's *Krsna, Reservoir of Pleasure* on hankering and distress:

But if we are situated in *brahma-bhuta*, we will neither be distressed nor will we hanker. We will view equally everyone and everything. Even if we are situated in the midst of fiery turbulence, we will not be disturbed.

Also, Mandalesvara dasa wrote me: "In *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, Srila Prabhupada writes that a regular and successful

practice of the principles of devotional service will enable the candidate to maintain mental equilibrium even in the midst of great trials of material loss or gain."

October 4

I'm not certain what is best now and feel I am being influenced by my dislike of living in this house situated on fraternity row with demoniac neighbors who shout, "Go home!" and threaten more when intoxicated. Srila Prabhupada says we have to be prepared for the day when we'll be shot at for being Hare Krsna devotees.

Neither is this project here mine. I think my path should be guided by the travel of the library party so that I can be with them on the weekends. That would mean for the next three weeks I could stay around here—in this house or traveling in New England with the library party—then go to New York City and south. That means abandoning the *bhakti-yoga* clubs to preachers after three weeks of meetings. I can do that for the library party's interest. Now shall I, in this time, move around with the motorhome?

October 5

The situation changes again. I want to separate my likes and dislikes from what has to be done, and act according to Krsna's order. Krsna is not face to face with me as He was with Arjuna on the battlefield, but I have the spiritual master's direct order: this library party distribution is the most important work; do not doubt it. My duty is not Amherst center or *bhakti-yoga* clubs.

Now I'm getting ready to go out to see the professors. Hard work, mental strain, great demand to mix with polluted minds and disguise as a nondevotee salesman and convince them with a presentation.

October 6

Hartford, Connecticut airport—en route to Chicago for a three-day GBC visit

Last night, only three people attended our Yale *bhakti-yoga* club. This morning I woke in the motel and could not at first remember what I was to do today. I have been preparing myself mentally to see the professors and sell books. I woke thinking of that as my duty. It was a sense of heavy burden, but then I thought, "Spiritual life doesn't mean to wake up and think, 'Today is a holiday. I shall enjoy myself today.' The sense of the pressure of difficult engagement to please the spiritual master is *tapasya* and that is the heart of spiritual progress." Now the success is when the heart is light despite the difficulty, when the mind is calm and transcendently situated despite the difficult challenge of the service.

I take it as auspicious—an increase in my service at a time when it is necessary to personally strengthen the library party, not with inspirational words over the weekend, but going out myself and facing it. Facing what they are facing, facing what I am asking them to face.

I look forward also to personally backing up the others and preventing them from falling into lax habits and nonsense talk.

And if there is any reluctance to execute such a stern order . . . that reluctance should be thrown off.

—Bg. 3.30, purport

October 8

I'm at O'Hare airport ready to fly back to Connecticut and Amherst. This weekend, reform the library party, and out we go on Monday. Thinking, "How can I face the professors in my wig? How can I speak so that they take Srila Prabhupada's books? And aside from a professor of religion or India—can I

presume to tell a professor he should use these books? How can I?" Brush up on the business tactics this Saturday and Sunday—then go.

Thinking of my spiritual master. Please save me, Srila Prabhupada, from calamities, when I may forget to chant Hare Krsna. Please allow me to remain in your service. Please keep me. Now out of my own strength I have to fight in the world to serve you, even in the camps of the demons (so uncongenial to spiritual thoughts), and by fighting and asking and surrendering, you will save me and make my effort victorious.

October 11

Cold feet before I even go out as a library party salesman. But I'm going. Got my wig and suit and book bag. Today as trainee. In this way, do whatever is the needful service. Proud of my important role as a GBC member and party leader. A dangerous attitude. Better do the needful and not try to build a subtle empire of reputed sainthood. This service is humbling. I came to the point where I don't want to surrender any further. Standing in the hall, unwilling to see another contaminated face. But I'm going to try.

October 15

Went out three days, now next week we plan a heavy schedule at New York City colleges and I'm getting ready to go out every day. I wear out by noon and am reluctant to go further. The book bag is heavy for me. It is all good for me and good for the party.

Kali-yuga parents and a district attorney in New York have created nationwide bad publicity against ISKCON, indicting two devotees for "brainwashing disciples and holding them against their will." Absurd charges, but people in general will believe it. Now we are faced with a dangerous case against us. If we lose, devotees will not be safe, either from kidnappers sent

by their parents or by the government. Krsna, Lord Nrsimha, please protect this movement. ISKCON has hired big lawyers to fight it. I pray we win.

October 16

Amherst

Last scheduled day here. Tomorrow, arriving in N.Y. to give the Sunday feast lecture:

In the Fifth Canto, "The Island of Jambudvipa," the demigods pray to be born in Bharata-varsa (India) because it is the land of the *acaryas* and of spiritual knowledge. Historically, also, spiritual knowledge is distributed from India—the *Vedas* predate all civilizations. Although they live in high style in other places in higher planets, they lament the sense gratification that makes them forget Krsna.

Krsna is the Supreme Self, and self-realization means to understand oneself as the soul in relation to the Supreme. If one lives in a place with persons and activities that do not promote this knowledge of the self and the Supreme Self, he is unfortunate. Such a place is condemned.

We have to consider our position in terms of the goal of life. The goal of life is to be free of repeated birth and death. What facility do we have in our present civilization to gain this? None. All over the world there is immense facility for sense enjoyment, but no arrangement to teach self-realization.

One may wander for many, many births in different species before he gets the chance to approach a real spiritual master. The Krsna consciousness movement and Krsna's teachings in *Bhagavad-gita* give us this opportunity, even in the West, where we are not trained or inclined. We are cheated in this human life if we do not get this association.

People in recent years have been appreciating that material success is not the all and all. But they are being cheated even in their desire for spiritual life. This authoritative verse tells us what spiritual life actually is. Hearing—associating in devotional service with devotees—a festival of *sankirtana* (glorification of God).

This is auspicious for the human being. Nothing is lacking, even materially. Where these things are lacking, it is condemned. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we do not waste our time on other topics. Our spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, is delivering the bona fide process from Vedic *śāstra*. Therefore, in this country as well as in India, all the leading authorities praise his work, the translations of *Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Demigods and demons, *devas* and *asuras*.

Prahlada's father asked what was the best thing he had learned. He answered *śravanam kīrtanam viśṇoḥ smaranam*. His father became furious.

Today, there are many tiny Hiranyakasipu who are disappointed that their sons or daughters have given up the way of materialistic society. They should not be disappointed. For a son to become a devotee is auspicious for the parents, but if the parents are demons, if they do not know that preparing for the next life is the success of this life, then they cannot appreciate. When Hiranyakasipu sarcastically asked his son about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Prahlada said, "You can never understand."

A devotee remains humble in this disagreement, but the demon becomes furious. Sometimes he tries to kill the devotee and Kṛṣṇa comes to save His devotee. He assures the world that His devotee will never be vanquished.

When the demon tries to stop the devotee, however, the devotee does not submit. Prahlada did not give up his chanting and remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. He did not cooperate with his father's policy to be inimical to Kṛṣṇa. His father tried every means to kill him but could not.

The method of defaming the Vaiṣṇava with lies is also not new.

Address

Welcome, and we are grateful you have come. Any adverse report of our activities has not kept you away. The charge of imprisonment of a devotee by brainwashing simply isn't true.

sri-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu nityānanda
sri-advaita gadadhara śrivasādi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa, kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
 hare rāma hare rāma, rāma rāma hare hare

Any intelligent person can see we are not imprisoning any one or using brainwashing techniques. People stay in Kṛṣṇa consciousness due to their attraction to love of God.

October 19

In New York temple for one week. Demons trying to destroy our movement by declaring us Communists, taking testimony from former devotees. There is an organized attempt to turn the public against Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Devotees have organized a good legal man to fight back. There are many intelligent devotees involved. A press conference is also arranged for tomorrow. Demons are trying hard, using all legal means of their own to defeat and defame our movement.

Devotees are endeavoring. Now Kṛṣṇa will enact His plan according to His will. Devotees are saying it should be taken as an opportunity to distinguish our movement from bogus groups. Let us stand up and show them what we are. But they are so devious and print slanderous lies. My direct role in it has not been very important, except that I helped to gather scholarly reviews, which are being used in our testimony.

In the library of the New School in NYC

Let me read Srila Prabhupada's books. The library party roster is still shaky. There's plenty of work still to be done. Only some devotees are shaky. I have to travel with them and I'm also going out sometimes. I had to cancel the lecture tour. I'll stay with things at least until December, then visit the temples in my zone. I could go to India early to be with Srila Prabhupada. Maybe February.

October 27

I'm in St. Louis. My engagement has changed again. When GBC members met in New York, I was given the assignment to travel for now, especially in New England and the New York area, seeing professors who will agree to give testimony that brainwashing charges against us are outrageous. Either get them to agree to come and testify in New York or sign an affidavit. This is a more direct role in this emergency.

Now here in St. Louis for a convention of religious scholars. I have a pamphlet to distribute to them, and one of their leaders already agreed to assist. Go in a simple way and do it to the best of my ability and there will be results. But after the convention I wonder whether it will be worthwhile to travel through New England to see these professors. The main thing is to get an immediate list of as many as possible who may go to New York to testify, or at least sign affidavits. Also, try for those in the psychology field, psychiatrists at medical centers. This is "strike while the iron is hot" preaching. We are in danger and the testimonies are needed and I have been delegated. Also, we have an eye-catching, morally appealing case to present to them: denial of basic religious and human freedom. I cannot judge prematurely. It is new. Let me engage as proposed.

October 30

Three days at the convention, attending their meetings (*tapasya*) and talking with the professors. A good handful of them have come forward, and two—O'Connell and Hopkins—have agreed to head up a network of professors who can be called upon to do different things, such as testify. I can have our lawyer get in touch with them. He could call Hopkins, who could either go himself or brief some colleague in N.Y. or elsewhere who would go. I am to supply information to the network of details of the ongoing case and our difficulties and successes in dealing with deprogramming. I'll also send the lawyer a report on how he could call upon the services of this network.

(In addition, we gathered a petition, maybe a hundred names of other professors.)

Now one more morning at this convention, hearing a paper on Srila Prabhupada, and then I can go to my next engagement. Which is? I should call Balavanta, who is heading this GBC alert-to-war strategy. My business-as-usual activity would ordinarily take me to rejoin the combined collecting and library parties heading south. The plan was that they should manage on their own (me planning to rejoin them after three weeks), and in the meantime, I would work the New England-New York area as a representative of ISKCON to seek the help of professors who would cooperate with our network. Romapada in New York informed me that not all professors who sign something will be immediately used, only the strong ones who will testify that ISKCON is entirely a bona fide movement in the Vaisnava tradition. It seems I should go after Vaisnava experts, wherever they are.

Just agreed I'll go now to New York. The fight goes on to establish Krsna consciousness. We are impelled by our spiritual master's desire, which is Krsna's desire. Also, reversely, we are impelled by the demoniac opposition which seeks to defame us. As they make an advance, we have to also.

November 2, 1976

New York

Now we have heard that Prabhupada said we should make a massive protest against this case, with marches, Indians rallying in the thousands on New York and Washington, D.C., picketing. Make it a social, humanistic issue. It appears that Prabhupada didn't get a full report.

Respectable advisors seem to think we should gather a solid legal case, getting whatever evidence the lawyers want. My role has been to solicit professors. The professors themselves are against the massive protest. Massive protest means joining with Moonies, Children of God, Guru Maharaji, etc., for full strength—but that is not good company.

I'm meditating on what is best. I am not a mature thinker. I'm hampered by my small self-interests. I'm afraid I'll be asked to do something too difficult and not in my plans. I feel I should visit with the library party during the last week of November and then visit my temples in December. There will be a big GBC meeting; tomorrow. Then I'll go out looking for more professors.

November 3

At Columbia

Saw one professor and was rather too meek with him. He agreed to do something and said he would certainly attest that we are a bona fide religion. I told him that professors O'Connell and Hopkins would speak with him next, but I didn't inquire into his expertise or conviction. With Proudfoot, the next professor, I'll try to be a little plainer and ask him if he'll testify. Although this guy understood and said he would also testify.

They all agree that we are a bona fide religion.

November 8

Wesleyan University, Connecticut

Finished a week seeing professors in New York. GBC meeting there. Recognition that we are battling an organization that wants to do away with us, a militant parents' group. My part in it is to get interested professors and cultivate them, not just for the New York case, but long-term.

Went to Boston, talked with LDB. We agreed that in this time of peril, we can't prematurely describe our situation in 'score' terms, or to put it more clearly, become too passionate and neglect regulated hearing and chanting. All steps should be enacted to protect our movement in terms of parents' organization, legal, etc., but we cannot forget that we are devotees who need regular hearing and chanting.

Also, got a letter from Prabhupada recommending again that I write the book, "Why Things Fail Without Kṛṣṇa."

Just talked to Professor Zwelling here who accused devotees of being under-emotional, over-spiritual, and too manipulative. He wouldn't give a letter of testimony and feels if we became powerful, we would be intolerant toward the mass of people. A poisonous but challenging viewpoint. I should think how to counter it. He even said Krsna consciousness was so manipulative and sophisticated that we were not exactly like David and Goliath, in relation to our battle with the press and law etc.

November 9

Winooski, Vermont

Just by reading *Bhagavad-gita* I have regained faith and conviction, which I only vaguely sensed I had lost, perhaps by talking to and listening to these contaminated professors, or thinking in relative ways about Krsna consciousness due to this criminal case against us.

I took to reading about "faith" from the index.

There are many faiths and faithful persons, but we have to carefully examine the science of God they espouse. The *Bhagavad-gita's* standard is the highest. There, it is described in the fifteenth chapter that we are all part and parcel of Krsna—that is real religion, performing activities of the soul ("Confidential Knowledge" 9.2)—and any faith taken or according to the modes of nature is artificial.

Krsna consciousness is not sectarian, but is a revival of our original relationship with God. Information about the soul is taught in the second chapter. Then the nature of the Supreme in seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth. It is stressed that only a devotee can know Krsna and one should not hear from a nondevotee. Association is very important.

One of our leaders was stressing that we should preach that ISKCON is a religion, because any religion means obeying God and avoiding sinful acts. By our four rules, we qualify as the most religious. Now I see beyond this, that by *knowing Krsna and the Supreme Person through hearing the Bhagavad-gita ex-*

plained by a pure devotee, then religion becomes topmost, krsna-bhakti.

Now tomorrow and the next day, let me preach this both to professors and students. Don't compromise in trying to gain legal favors from the professors. *Let me glorify the high standard of Bhagavad-gita and encourage them to take it, starting with the soul, dissertation of second chapter.*

Writing a book is also a good way to preach. Srila Prabhupada said I could do research, but I find I must first be convinced in Krsna if I am going to deliver Him. *Bhagavad-gita* is best for that.

Also:

(1) Don't be too sensitive to criticisms and attacks from others. We have to fight them, but don't take on a persecution or martyr complex. Be happy in Krsna consciousness—have enough faith to be sure of Krsna's protection, and be callous toward the criticisms. The nicest thing (Krsna consciousness) is being described as the worst thing, but that can't upset us.

(2) Don't associate with nondevotees. Don't take on their blasphemy or think fearfully that they can stop Krsna consciousness.

November 10

Vermont

Talking to different professors today. At least from their viewpoint, it does not seem that the U.S. government is on the verge of persecuting our movement. At least the professors do not accept that Hare Krsna is a "mind-controlling" or "brain-washing" sect. Today's activities certainly went toward further cultivating them, and I see more and more real value in meeting and cultivating them. They like me to lecture in their classes and this gains further respect for ISKCON. I should keep it up as much as possible.

November 12

Here in Boston on my way south to meet our party—but ISKCON Chicago's problems loom up and I have to go there for at least a week. Then I am due in Dallas. Have to go serve where the most urgent service is.

November 17

Detroit

Thinking of writing again. It is hard work, but I want to turn to it again. How can I find time amid other duties?

November 19

Chicago

Chant Hare Krsna and fight. I want to fight by writing a book, "Anything Undertaken Without Krsna Fails." Where should I even begin the research? What is the structure, the direction? What do I have to prepare myself for?

I spent one day making preliminary notes, trying to find my way in. Then I wrote a short essay in strictly *parampara* style, giving the Krsna conscious basis of the theme: if someone undertakes work apart from Krsna, then it is for sense gratification (limited or extended). He will be baffled by karma. He and his followers will return for repeated suffering of birth and death.

I figure I have to establish Krsna conscious principles before going on to analyze history on that basis. The soul is the self, not the body.

One who acts in his work for Krsna is successful because his work is *sanctioned*.

Maybe I should just start reading Gandhi and history.

November 20

Analyze history, theories of history, the Krsna conscious theory of success and failure based on permanency and whether a person or civilization is God conscious. Then analyze factually the person Gandhi, his era, and other case histories.

(Write to give something to misguided humanity. Fight by such preaching against godlessness.)

Discussing with Chicago temple president our discomfort with each other. He works hard managing and doesn't see any need to seek counsel from me. Says he has time to read "a couple of pages a month" and thinks that is acceptable for a president. Has lots of criticism for *sannyasis* and the GBC. I think he looks on my activities at his temple as doing nothing. It is true I cannot accomplish much in Chicago. At the other temples, they take my counsel as important.

I should not simply defend myself, nor should I think whatever he says is right.

But it has kind of shaken me in my conviction of going somewhere and concentrating on writing. I mean, this president, for one, doesn't take me as "spiritually advanced" to justify my existence in ISKCON by giving advice. The point is, I admit now more clearly, that I am not intensely involved in the details or work of any project. I don't take on any of the burden. That is also good for a *sannyasi*. *I have not arrived at this state of disentanglement from the burden of management of a temple simply out of my laziness.*

December 7, 1976

Yesterday I talked with Mandalesvara. He asked me why I was working with the material scholarship—history, etc. What was the purpose? Not knowing my work, he suggested instead a more pure, straightforward presentation, based on the *sastras*. I explained to him what I was attempting—a work of historical background. I realized that what he said was a challenge. Since he is submissive to me, he accepted the writing project as I explained it.

But his words began to sow doubts. Also, some emergency events in ISKCON took place in the afternoon and I also heard about some future plans of the deprogrammers. My mind was turned away from intensive studies in the "philosophy of history." By today I had lost the taste and determination to go

on reading and researching. I spent the morning instead reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and hoping to get new direction (not just on writing, but in my devotional service).

Around two o'clock, I looked up "Mauryan Empire" in Basham's books on India. It wasn't at all as I had hoped for in my idea of showing the Hindu kings to be *bhaktas*. The most significant king of India, he said, was Asokha.

I could see that it would take exhaustive research to disprove the basic assumptions of Basham and crowd, and without Sanskrit, how could I expect to ever do what he had done? More depressed, I went outside for a walk. Then I started formulating a different idea. I pray to Kṛṣṇa it is the right direction. I started thinking that Mandalesvara was right—certainly the "historical" attempt was a kind of bluff on my part. (For it not to be a bluff would require more scholarship in the area than I could ever hope to attain.)

I thought of writing with different materials, different "research." I should write something, Srila Prabhupada said, for "giving something full of meaning and instruction to the misguided people of this age." I started thinking of it in terms of autobiographical writing. I could write what it really means to be a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee. I recalled the purity of my writing before I came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I employed art and craft, but told the *true* story of my life. Now why couldn't I write with that same utter honesty and convince readers of the superior life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Kṛṣṇa conscious "fiction." I thought of how Thomas Wolfe told his story, then in a different way, Kafka. Why couldn't I do it?

Would it change the philosophy? No, I would write as a devotee. Although I am certainly fallen, my story is dedicated to Srila Prabhupada. I am thinking of it. I have already put aside my two solid weeks of notes and research in the historical area. My real writing strength, if any, is "from-life."

I am not a great philosophic mind, so why attempt to train myself to learn the Western philosophies?

I am praying I can make an offering in this way to Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupada and present it to the world.

“Write slowly,” he said. I want to tell of my faith as a person and defeat crazy notions about Krsna consciousness. I think it will also make me a more human, loving devotee and enable me to *live* the life and problems of Krsna consciousness without trying to avoid them in order to study nondevotional books.

I am thinking of rising extra early while here in Dallas—say 12:30 or 1:00 A.M.—and writing a couple of hours in that best time of the day.

What should I write? How I came to ISKCON? Shall I try to evoke deprogramming scenes of kidnapping, etc., in a novel? Or write pure confession as St. Augustine did? How can it be given to the world at large?

Honesty, purity,
humanness,
parampara, faith.

I can, as before, write two projects at the same time from different areas of my life. One could be a reply to those who have written scholarly works about Krsna consciousness. Let it develop organically, interweaving autobiography with other styles. Try to take direction from Krsna and write purely, as purely as possible. *Don't simply indulge* in self-expression, but write with the same desire to “make” (build) a book. For material, use life experience.

December 8

Now on reconsidering, I think the attempt to write as one “enchanted” is false. It will not lead to anything. You cannot simply write whatever you think of. If you really want to write something in Krsna consciousness which can serve bewildered mankind, then think it out and proceed in a patient way. You cannot cross over the ocean by acting like a crazy man, but by patient, deliberate effort. As if I thought the Lord deserved to immediately bless me with a thousand tongues and I would madly write down His dictation as the most blessed writer! I think my feet are more on the ground now. If I actually want to write, that is a different thing. A topic has to be considered, planned, outlined, and begun at the beginning.

The *raison d'être* has to be considered in a pragmatic sense, not romantically. What will be the purpose of the book over which you will spend so much of your devotional time and energy? I suppose I was thinking if it were expertly done, it could be printed commercially or by the BBT.

December 14

Detroit

Now another writing plan. Is this a mirage? Is this Kṛṣṇa's dictation from within? My own desire? Concoction? Is it a modification of the "creative writing" idea expressed and rejected on Dec. 7th? It was rejected as being too much a throw-back to my old writing method by which nothing is held sacred and all used up as grist for the mill of writing. It was like writing with a mystical divining rod, searching for the truth and developing form and story as I went along. Incoherent, independent, dangerous.

I was thinking, rather, to make literature deliberately evoking the life of a devotee. "Ethnic" literature? Isn't that too "staged"? But if you say, "Write a story for life. Never mind a calculated prize-winning, 'life as a devotee' style. Simply write. Because you are a devotee as existential fact and because you are a writer (how good remains to be seen), it will be devotional writing, acceptable to all, because it will be written in the form of literature and will be universally human." Can it be done? Can I try it? Can it be service?

December 19

Kṛṣṇa is very kind to me. I think now I have my subject matter. It is very obvious that I should write about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement—*recalling* anecdotes of Srīla Prabhupāda, the devotees, what it was like.

So far my method has been to sit down and in all seriousness, write at that time. I am open to revisions, deletions, but not making a big attempt at plot. Writing of those days.

And in focus, even as I write ten years after the event, is the highest goal of any endeavor—to glorify the Lord and the Lord's devotees. There is some art in it, selection, etc.

Now I am especially trying to remember the early days.

December 23

Just as I am starting to produce literature recalling the days in 1966, now I will be traveling first to three cities in the U.S. and then Europe and India. Certainly the sedentary, peaceful, controlled atmosphere in which I have been working here will be disrupted.

December 26

Houston

Book-writing is becoming a part of my devotional life. Shall I recall in an autobiographical novel my life in Boston? So many anecdotes. I wonder if it is the best. What else can I write? How else can I write?

Reading Prabhupada's poem on the Boston pier, September 17, 1965—how he prayed to Kṛṣṇa that he had come but did not know how he would succeed; if Kṛṣṇa desired, the people would appreciate. I thought of it in terms of my writing. Is it possible I can pray to be able to perform some selfless service, and although there are so many practical problems to successful composition, Kṛṣṇa can make me successful in rendering service to Him in this way? At least I desired to make that prayer. Otherwise there is no special contribution I can make to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement; I don't lecture with many quoted *slokas* or write Western philosophy or science, or manage temples or do book distribution or finances, or work with lawyers. I will try to fulfill GBC duties as I am now. But without this big writing project, my heart isn't satisfied.

Write for purification. Keep meditating on what that means.

December 31

Dallas

Leaving Dallas after a month and a half of living here as my headquarters. Supposed to return in three months. A *sannyasi* should travel. I would like to learn to write as I travel—Srila Prabhupada does. It will take determination as I meet new people and adjust to new schedules—how to sit down and write.

If difficulty comes in the discharge of duties, that experience of difficulty is not opposed to the satisfaction of guru and Kṛṣṇa. There *will* be difficulty. The material world means difficulty, but I shouldn't despair or give up my duty. My desire, personal advancement, is secondary—first is to carry out my spiritual master's mission. I am putting in considerable thought and time into writing an autobiography *in addition to my regular duties*, so do I want to push on with it? As long as you don't neglect your duties, and you do those duties with dedication and attention, then this writing duty should also not be abandoned and should be asserted by me. Take it seriously. I have been empowered—that is, *told*, instructed, to write. Now, travel. Travel and write. Travel and preach. Preach and write. Preach and preach. Be the menial servant of Srila Prabhupada and try anew to prostrate yourself at his lotus feet. Prepare to approach him anew as the *mudha* menial servant, not proud of my education or writing—and beg for his mercy of onward conviction in his mission, and the strength to carry it out.

January 1, 1977

Minneapolis

Talking with Sivarama. We agreed we could not speculate on ISKCON's future—whether we will be persecuted, killed for being devotees, whether ISKCON devotees will fail after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance, or whether we will become the next world religion in our own time. Talking of it helped relieve some of the anxiety. The most prominent turn of the last year was the parent groups' organized effort to attack us.

January 3

En route to New York by plane

Devotees saying how disease-ridden Kumbha-mela will be with twenty million people, and what will my engagement be there? I never do well under austere conditions in India. At least I am now wondering if it might be better to stay in Europe. In terms of service, I could carry out a writing project. That writing project is certainly on my mind as my main engagement in Krsna consciousness. "He's writing a book." Or should I go ahead as planned and attend the spiritual function held only once every twelve years?

January 4

New York City

Talked with TKG. The situation against ISKCON grows more grave. From the front page in the *L.A. Times* concerning "Legal Deprogramming," it seems our men will also be forced out of the airports. Enemies are tapping phones and rooms (by sonar) in the N.Y. temple. A T.V. serial features a man victimized by Hare Krsnas. If they increase, where will we be safe? Where can we distribute books? One of our devotees went to D.C. to see Congressmen and is even scheduled to meet the President.

This made me think, "What am I doing?" TKG said he'd heard I was paying attention again to temples in my zone. And of course, I'm writing. But a certain extreme, private meditation on the writing as the only reality, and other ISKCON events as secondary, dissipated from this talk. If I am at all faithful to Srila Prabhupada, I have to be concerned and active to fight because now our U.S. ISKCON is under so much fire.

In defense of my writing project, however, I must admit it is also working to defend ISKCON's name. If the public comes to hate us despite all our legal and political attempts, books written by Srila Prabhupada's disciples can revolutionize people's attitudes. "To write such a book, how can they say the devotee is brainwashed?" In terms of my upcoming travels, I

may still try to do some writing before plunging into India (probably not for Kumbha-mela).

Then talked with TKG how the aggressive, "change-up" book distribution techniques are ruining our image. He agreed. He also said that the toll of "what's done is done" will have to be taken, and our defense against that should be our first concern. How to stop from being wiped out? Alternate means of income. I spoke in the *Bhagavatam* class this morning that devotional service is unconditional: "We can write books in longhand if necessary." The appearance that those against us have the upper hand is temporary. The Lord is in control and protects the devotees for their ultimate victory.

Then I did some business with Romapada and as a result, I had a headache. The writing! Try now! Haven't books been written during wartime? Haven't writers been willing to wait years to complete a work?

January 5

I admit that I myself find it hard to preach to a nondevotee audience and defend our book distribution techniques. What do I say, that the complaints are all lies? That we have done nothing wrong? Who will want to defend us and support us if they think we are too aggressive and don't care for rules and laws, and if the vast majority of opinion is against us for these same reasons? How will I convince someone they should support us in continuing these aggressive activities?

It is a considerable spiritual problem because so often Srila Prabhupada has supported a policy approaching "the end justifies the means." Still, he never told us to irritate people, but that we are continually doing. I am hesitant to lead a "crusade" over this because it has been gone over so many times. I do not have the energy to do it. Also, as one who is not very active in book distribution, which Srila Prabhupada has said is the way to please him, I feel I am not in a position to talk about this.

TKG acknowledged that I am right in thinking public opinion is against us for these tactics, but he says it is only partly

due to that. They hate us in general for our renounced, saintly, revolutionary life, and our main problem is how to defend ourselves.

Leave tomorrow for Europe. I have to act as servant, not as enjoyer; I am spending so much of Krsna's money traveling. How can I make it service? (1) By helping the library party however I can. (2) By trying to preach nicely. (3) By going on with my writing project in a service mood. (4) By going to India and serving Srila Prabhupada as secretary and trying to be trained up by him for service in ISKCON.

I have quite a number of nondevotional books with me to help me learn writing. *Be careful of them.*

January 6

7 P.M.

At the airport, waiting to fly to Europe. Nonsense music playing, "pop" airport fare. Waiting room full of Indians, N.Y.C. bound on Air India. The agent tried to give us seats in a smoking section. He said they were "very good seats." I hadn't seen Indians traveling for some time. The children are almost all delicate. One Christian priest among them, a convert from India, a dumpy woman wearing a tight red sweater and a big, gold-colored crucifix. Old gray ladies here and there, wearing sweaters and *saris*. The men mostly dressed Western style, only one with a bright pink turban. This is the first trip for Mandalesvara, the fourth for me.

Just now a dapper young Indian came up and wished to talk. He opposed me. He thinks whoever does not engage in sex life is repressed. He thought the *Gita* said one cannot become less than human in next life. He thought his identity was "human." He even defended masturbation! I said if he wanted to defend masturbation, which is such a waste of God's energy, I couldn't discuss with him. After all his rascaldom, he said he believed in the *Gita* as does his mother and other relatives. While we were talking, one old lady pointed me out to a friend, indicating, I take it, my Vaisnava appearance. At least I got

in some strong preaching against the rascal. But I mostly want to turn to writing. This is the first time I am going to India with such a set mind on a big writing project.

January [?]

Amsterdam

Very good class by Harikesa Swami. One can see he is working hard to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is taking all risks, and is not afraid to suffer. Therefore, he's inspired by his work and inspires the devotees.

Remember: in two weeks I'll see Srila Prabhupada. I want to ask him:

(1) Whether our aggressive book distribution in the U.S. is producing a desired effect. People are more and more seeing us and thinking of us as harassers, out for money on the plea of religious freedom. (2) It is possible that despite so many books being distributed, we are ruining opinion toward us for years to come. (3) Can we change the face of our preaching in the U.S. and do something people will appreciate more? All they see of us is shaking their hands (wearing wigs) and taking money. Should we be more active in another field?

Then academically on behalf of the library party, I want to ask him if he wants only the BBT to distribute *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Caitanya-caritamṛta* everywhere. If so, the field will be closed in a few years. Is the purpose fulfilled there or should an attempt be made to continue for years, supplying professors with other books? If so, there are proposals:

- (1) Sanskrit publications
- (2) Books by disciples and other scholars
- (3) Other translations by Srila Prabhupada

If "Yes,"

- (1) Can we start developing it?
- (2) Should devotees go to school?

(3) *What works* should be done—especially from the Caitanya school?

January 20
London

Tonight—to India. Heard that Srila Prabhupada is ill. I'm a phony literary phony. If you must do this writing, at least try not to be so phony in your speech. Don't bluff that you are a big servant or a big . . .

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna
Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare.

Bombay—Calcutta—Bhubaneshwar—Srila Prabhupada. A boy here asked me to keep a diary of my experiences with Srila Prabhupada.

“If You Want to Know My Secret . . . ”
January [?]-February 8, 1977

I wrote this diary while again serving for one month as Prabhupāda's GBC secretary. My turn began just after Prabhupāda left the Kumbha-mela and went to Bhubaneswar. Bhubaneswar is the capital of Orissa, the poorest state in India. Our land was really out of the way at this time. If you went down the road from town, it was all bare land. Then suddenly on the side of the road there were three tents pitched, and a small, crude, cottage-like building. Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciple, Gaura-Govinda Mahārāja, had made this cottage himself with bricks and whitewash. It consisted of just two rooms and a roof of thatched straw, which wasn't even fit firmly onto the building. Śrīla Prabhupāda was staying in one of those rooms, and the other room was for his servants. Although Prabhupāda had big temples all over the world, he chose to live in a humble way. He liked it because he was not attached to any material facility.

I regard this section of the diary as particularly potent because much of it is verbatim from Prabhupāda, or directly paraphrased. This is the kind of diary I wish I had always kept when I was with Śrīla Prabhupāda. It was a deliberate act on my part to go into the servants' room immediately after being with him, or at least whenever I had a chance, and type up what I remembered. One simply can't remember details like this weeks or years later. If only I had kept a diary like this from the beginning in 1966!

* * *

January [?], 1977

I recently took the antagonist's role of one who doesn't believe what he hasn't seen against Srila Prabhupada. Since then, on a number of occasions he has turned to me to add arguments to those he gave the first time. I am cast in the role of a man who doesn't believe what he doesn't see. What a foolish position it is. You don't see the thought in the mind of the man who is plotting to murder you, Srila Prabhupada said. It would be to your great advantage to know that this man about whom I am talking is actually planning all the details of my murder tonight. It is important information for me and it is going on, but I have no access to it because I cannot see it. You don't see the aroma carried by the flower.

The best argument is that one cannot know who his father is except by the authority of his mother. We insist on this method of knowing; it is our "science" and "logic". It must be accepted that the method of sensual perception is imperfect. Hearing from the authority is perfect. God is speaking and we are hearing from Him. You may argue with us, but at least we have all information; you are in darkness.

Prabhupada took his bath in a little shack by pouring water from a bucket. Afterwards, the water was thrown on a certain plot of bare ground. After about a week of throwing the refuse water there, a little green plant came up. Prabhupada called for me one time just to point this out.

He called me and noted that on the bare ground, some green had started growing. He said it was because for only a few days, someone had thrown water there. *Parjanyaḍ anna-sambhavaḥ*: grains are coming from the water. Why doesn't the scientist produce grains? This is important water. Everywhere there could be green-producing land and everyone could have enough to eat.

This is especially relevant in this barren, impoverished Bhubaneshwar where so much land is bare because there is no water. All we need is water. Why can't man do it?

I said it is too big a job for the scientist. He said he is not against the scientists' achievements, but that they say there is no God. They claim to know everything. Their actual achievements are only childish play—airplanes and cars. These are childish achievements because the real problems of life have been put aside by them, although they are making all claims to have solved them. Their achievements do not even raise them to the level of human beings. A car with four wheels is no better than a dog running on four legs. One has to know God and his self in relation to God. They do not take God's authority but imagine in their own way. We have to accept it?

Expose them. They cannot actually know. For example, all the phenomena of the sky—the sky is so vast—so many stars and planets are there; they cannot know what it is. What do they do? They imagine what it is. This we have to accept—their imagination of something that is too much for them? Srila Prabhupada said, "I'm giving you an idea, now you elaborate." He means we should try writing and realizing these examples in the direction he has indicated.

January 28

This morning in the car, a long line of Indian soldiers approached us at a run as part of some maneuver. Srila Prabhupada spoke about the nation's army and said that it was Kṛṣṇa's arrangement that they should build up and fight. *Vinasaya ca duskṛtam*. After the fight, there will be benefit for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I asked how it will benefit us. He said that these people who are against us, so many demons, will be killed, and it will show the people that the material plans have failed. He said that they will take it as natural law, like Malthus' law that the nations have to fight periodically because of overpopulation. But they don't know that Kṛṣṇa is behind the 'natural law.

A young, local scholar joined us on the walk. He asked Srila Prabhupada about some books which had different versions of

the *Ramayana*. "What different version?" asked Srila Prabhupada. "Valmiki's is the original." He seemed displeased with the man. Prabhupada stated that his Guru Maharaja said it is no good reading many books and carrying them around like an ass. Better to read and know thoroughly a few books. The poor scholar could not raise any decent inquiry about his own spiritual life. He only asked a few more questions about editions and texts and Sanskrit, and Srila Prabhupada appeared gruff in response. I thought, "Srila Prabhupada is simply waiting for you to surrender. Why don't you ask about the meaning of life? Why don't you admit that you are lost and need a spiritual master?"

Just while I was writing this down after the walk, the scholar came up to me to see what I was typing. He talked some more and now I understand that he doesn't even want to translate Prabhupada's books unless he gets paid. When he saw that it was only devotion, he got insulted and left.

Today, Sanjaya Gandhi is coming to town. They have a big banner on the road, something like "Each to Teach," proclaiming that everyone should become literate. Srila Prabhupada, looking out the car window at this poor, barren land, said, "What good is literacy if they are poor and starving?" He said that they come to our evening program to get a little *kichari*, not because it's *prasadam*, but because they are hungry. They will take many years of education, get a little money for their employment, and what is the benefit? Life is not meant for such education. Look, there is so much expanded land. Why don't they work it? They are hungry and poor.

Later, there was a report from Hyderabad about starting a school there and many children coming to learn English. Prabhupada said, "Don't give this much priority." He said, "In India, you can start a big English class, but they will just come, get enough education to become a clerk, and then leave the devotees and leave the farm to get some miserable job in town." He said that it is not that everyone has to learn in an educated way even to read. When he heard the *gurukula* boys (when they walk and chant at Mayapur) he said, "Even if they

never become literate, just that they can do this much (they were chanting *Gita* verses in Bengali), they will become perfect."

Suddenly, young men exercising came running toward us. The people are hungry and poor while others are taking residence in a big house and running. They are running because they have overeaten while others are starving. Educate them and then, as the years go by, they will join the Naxalite movement and kill all the rich men. People have to be properly engaged by working the land. In our ISKCON also, unless people are properly engaged . . . Otherwise, they will be idle brains, fish-fish, sex, and women. (Fish-fish is Prabhupada's sound for gossip.)

When I was in Europe, I heard about a *sannyasi* Godbrother who was preaching to devotees that they should cultivate their inner life. He was speaking of having experiences and visitations of beings from other material worlds—psychic phenomena. Then he showed up here in Bhubaneshwar. He and I went to Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupada told him that his visions are like dreams; you dream of a gold mountain because you have seen gold and you have seen a mountain, and all these experiences are stored up for many lifetimes. The images come up like bubbles in the water. The *sannyasi* told Prabhupada that he had had a vision before ever meeting Prabhupada of a saintly person just like him. When finally he met Prabhupada, it was the same as his vision.

Prabhupada said, "I am a bona fide spiritual master whether you had a vision or not. It is not on the basis of your vision, but on the basis of *sastra*." The *sannyasi* also said that a devotee had gone to Egypt and stayed, and said that some beings had come out of the pyramids and talked to him. "Prabhupada," he said, "I was not thinking, I was awake."

"No, it was all dreaming," Prabhupada said.

When I first went in to Prabhupada, I said the devotees here wonder if you could talk with him because there has been some question in Europe about his preaching. Prabhupada agreed. "There must be some question because he has been associating with those Radha-kunda *babajis*."

The *sannyasi* said that he knows the Radha-kunda *babajis* claim to be advanced, never leaving Vrndavana, but that some are Kali-cela, whose *bhajana* is illicit sex in the name of *prakṛta-sahajiyā*. Srila Prabhupada said, "I travel all over the world and I consider myself not advanced and I am considered by them to be not advanced, but they consider themselves like Rupa Gosvami, but with illicit sex and smoking *bidi*."

Again we talked about "the visitation." Srila Prabhupada said that many people had come to him and told him such things. One life member, a rich barrister, told him that he went to Vrndavana and met a boy there who gave him some sweets. Then when he was leaving Vrndavana, he saw that this boy was running after the train. This means (the man said) that Kṛṣṇa was running after him, having become so attracted. We have to believe this? Another person, a rich man, went to Jagannatha Puri. Because he was rich, he was granted a close circumambulation around the Deity. While circumambulating, they reported that Lord Jagannatha began snatching at his wife's clothing. Jagannatha is attracted to this blackish woman and snatching her clothes. We have to believe this?

The *sannyasi* had also told Prabhupada that in Europe, some person had come to the temple who was a visitor from the subtle plane, and although she talked to one devotee, others didn't see her—didn't know that she was there. Prabhupada fixed on that right away and said, "Oh, he saw some visitation, but others who are there cannot see it? That is bogus."

He said we should tell the devotees, or anyone who claims these things: "Yes, you say you are seeing these things. You must be very fortunate that the *avatara*, or whoever it is, is visiting you. But put it aside and do your duty." He said, "Of course, these things may be happening, that is a fact," but he said as far as he was concerned, he was not so fortunate as to ever see such things. He was only trying to serve his spiritual master. He said his Guru Maharaja had thousands of disciples and only he has become a little successful—although everyone claims to be the favored, the most scholarly, the most advanced, etc. When he thinks why he has become a little suc-

cessful, he thinks it is because he firmly believed in the orders of his spiritual master.

When Prabhupada said that, it was like the conclusion of all he was saying on this topic—or practically any other topic. It was so impressive! We could see that this was Prabhupada's actual unique position, his magic. He said, "I haven't seen any *avatara*, but if you want to know my secret . . ." Then we saw what a rare position Prabhupada had.

Prabhupada said, "I firmly believed in the words of my spiritual master. I believed one hundred percent in the words of my spiritual master and I did not care for some other thing [implying seeing a visitor from another planet or being a great scholar]. I never cared for some other thing besides the order of my spiritual master." Those who claim they are seeing visitors, they claim an advanced status for themselves.

The *sannyasi* had said that one benefit of this psychic phenomena is that they had been preaching to devotees who were feeling discouraged in devotional service. They would feel stimulated to feel that actually something was immediately at hand, which was exciting and relishable. When we explained that to Prabhupada, he said, "If spiritual life is slow and you do not feel progress, you should not demand visitors from another plane or such things, but carry on your duty as assigned to you by your spiritual master."

In India, ISKCON published a book listing all the names of every Indian scholar who supported us and his address. It was suggested that we do the same thing in America for the Americans. I suggested that this might be dangerous in America because our enemies have already taken the names of whatever professors we have published and written to them. They have slandered and blasphemed our movement to try to turn them away from us and it hasn't been good. When Prabhupada heard that, he immediately agreed that it would not be a good tactic to publish a book like that in America. He said, "They will damage us by counter-propaganda. Yes, Canakya Pandita has said don't disclose your secrets. The enemy will take advantage." I asked Prabhupada, "But what about the injunction

that a devotee should treat his enemy so openly that he should be willing to reveal everything to him?" Prabhupada said that the days are different now in Kali-yuga. If the other party are cheaters, I shall cheat; otherwise, they take advantage.

Another morning, we were riding in the car and a devotee came from Mayapur and reported that where they were building the new building (right at the edge of the wall on the other side) was land that belonged to a Muslim man. Sometimes the bricks would fall on his land and he was such a demon that he wouldn't let us touch his land. It was practically impossible to build there without touching his land in some way. He was actually getting bunches of men to come and throw rocks and harass our workers. This was reported to Prabhupada in the car. When he heard this he said, "Kill them immediately!"

Everyone was taken aback at the instruction. The devotee from Mayapur reported a little more about what it was and said, "But really we cannot do anything, Prabhupada, because this man is such a big demon." Prabhupada said we should call the police and let them see what he is doing—how he is obstructing the work.

Another time, Srila Prabhupada asked, "What are some arguments of the opposition party?" I said, "They claim that we take away a person's free will when he joins." Srila Prabhupada said, "If he has free will and he joined us, why do *you* interfere with his free will?" I repeated, "But they claim he had free will, but we took it away." Prabhupada insisted that if he has free will and has joined us, then their taking him away interferes with his free will. He said, "Then apart from that, what do they say about our movement that is bad?"

I said that one thing they claim is that we make a person renounce his connection with his mother and father. He replied, "That is not bad to split up the family if it is already a divorced family teaching a bad example, broken home." I said not all families were like that. He said, "But that is the general life, isn't it?" Then we both agreed that we do not teach that a devotee must give up his relationship with his family.

It is a false charge. But his point was, "What is wrong if it is a bad family?"

Another thing they say is that the new devotee gives up his career and education when he joins. He said, "If it is a bad career and he gives it up, then that is good. If his career was illicit sex, intoxication, and he gives it up . . ." I said that another claim is that one has saved thousands of dollars and on joining we take it. He said he had no such experience of receiving money like that from disciples. I then said, "They claim that we convert them by staring into their eyes." He was surprised. They say like that? "Yes," I said, "Adi-kesava Swami is being charged with mind control." "Then let me look in your eyes, let me look in the judge's eyes," he said.

"Sрила Prabhupada?" I asked. "When I came here, Ramesvara Swami said you had been speaking about how Kṛṣṇa consciousness will rise to power in the United States. I find it hard to have that vision since now it is just the opposite." He said it was true, but now it has only taken its roots. You have to water and protect it, then you will get fruit. You have to give it protection. People must hear about us through our books and we have to talk about the books. I understood better and said, "Oh, so it is not that it will happen overnight?" "No," he said, "gradually it will grow. The seed is there. Now protect it by introducing more and more books in every house."

He asked how much fifty books cost. He was told \$250. Is that much for an American? Make a policy and organization, whereby you introduce the books in every home—a full set in every home. Everyone can afford \$250. The GBC should make such a plan. Print the full sets in every language. You have to use your intelligence. You have to find how to remove \$250 from their pockets and give them fifty books. They won't be cheated. They will gain the greater value for their lives. Don't think your business is finished. There is much work ahead. This is the water of the seed which has already taken root. Distribute more and more books and go on opening more centers. People should hear about us. In this way, you have to protect the seed that is already planted there.

Srila Prabhupada doesn't like that the visiting devotees here are traveling an hour a day to go to Jagannatha Puri instead of working locally to help support the temple by *kirtana* in town. He said their going to Jagannatha Puri is not preaching but sense gratification—they are going to the sea to swim. I told him that the leaders were not enthusiastic about this outpost in Bhubaneshwar. He said, "Why not? This is the capital of Orissa. People are coming here. We have to have centers in every town, and even if it is not a big center, some have to work and stay here. Even if the people are coming every night only to eat *kichari*, that is also preaching.

Then he said that our program for everywhere is *kirtana* and *prasadam* distribution. We distribute books and the collection is to support these things, *kirtana* and *prasadam* distribution. I mentioned that in America over the years, the devotees are not seen in streets shaven-headed, holding *kirtana*. He said it is not necessary to stress chanting in the streets. Distribute books and invite them to come for the love feast. They will see us by coming to the temple and joining in the *kirtana*.

January 29

Odds and ends from Bhubaneshwar

Prabhupada said that when you look at the sky even with a big telescope, you cannot see much. Therefore, they imagine the rest. They imagine so many things. They cannot see the planets or the living beings, so they imagine. We have to accept this?

He was asked how long the people will accept this kind of authority from the scientists. He said that they will stay in power until this demoniac society accepts the Vedic authority. Krsna's whole business was to put the Pandavas in power—and Rama put Vibhisana in power—not that we are interested in politics, but it is for others who are being exploited. If we become powerful, we can take over the government. If you want to be dear to Krsna, then you should take to this fighting-preaching. Arjuna tried to avoid Krsna's order and Krsna chastised

him. For others' sake you have to take botheration. People have forgotten God.

Gurukrpa Swami told Srila Prabhupada that the hippies have a slogan why we should not preach to them. The hippie says, "It's my death, so let me live my own life." Prabhupada said, "But when it is time to die, why do you fly?" He said to ask them to take that as a slogan. You say that it is your death, but when it is time to die, why do you fly (meaning, why do you become frightened)?

Prabhupada was talking about a devotee who became crazy and left our movement. He said he has become like an unripened jackfruit. Sometimes jackfruit ripens, but it is still tiny, so it is ruined. It is like a grown-up dwarf. He's become like that. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati said that if our men become *sahajiyas*, they will be more dangerous than anyone else.

He spoke how Ramakrishna claimed that he was even having a menstrual period in his experiment of being a *gopi*. Ramakrishna's process of religion was to try every kind of religion. Once in a Hindu temple he said, "Now I'm practicing the Muslim religion. Bring me some cow flesh." The proprietors said, "No, you have to leave this temple." Ramakrishna said, "But I am being a Muslim now." In this way he tried to be everything.

The *sahajiyas* dress up as *gopis*. "I am in ecstasy, I am attracting Krsna, I am a *gopi*." He said, "Is Krsna such a foolish person that He thinks, 'Oh, here is a *gopi*,' and it is some man?"

Idea for door-to-door distribution and putting sets of books in every home. He said to send some reviews to a home first, stating that we are enclosing this literature about *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita*. If you permit, we can send our local representative to show the books. You can keep the books for one week. Send to individual homes wherever we have centers or representatives.

He also said that scientists claim that in the future, they will do wonders, but no sane man accepts it. I said, "But we also say Krsna promises that in the future we will go back to

Godhead." He said, "But His authority is reliable." Each party takes its own authority, each believes in some authority. He said, "Therefore, I asked Professor Kotovsky, 'What is the difference between you and us? You accept Lenin and Stalin—we accept Kṛṣṇa.'"

Gargamuni said that sometimes they criticize Kṛṣṇa's character. You can also criticize your mother and father, but he is rascal who does that. You should respect your mother and father. You should respect Kṛṣṇa. If you say, "Oh, my mother and father had sex indulgence and they brought me to life, so I have no respect for them." Sex is there. Otherwise, there is no progeny. Why shouldn't Kṛṣṇa have sex? He has unlimited sex power. Sex is from Him, if we have to accept *Vedānta-sūtra*, *janmadyasyataḥ*. You make God impotent, we don't. God is not controlled by our 'good or bad' concept of how we think He should behave. We don't care for fools who say that. *Avajānanti māṁ mūdha*.

I said, "But shouldn't God act in an exemplary way?" Prabhupada said, "No, God is not exemplary. He is not required to be."

He was telling us not to expect a smooth path; be tolerant. He was saying that the demons make us more enthusiastic to fight them on Kṛṣṇa's behalf. *Apratihataḥ*. The devotee makes progress in spite of being checked. That is a pure devotee. He spoke of three heart attacks—two were on consecutive nights on the way over to America in 1965 on the boat. The third was in New York. He spoke of the doctors' treatment in the hospital, how eager they were to experiment on his brain. Whatever happens to me, he said, don't call a doctor. Then he quoted *matra-sparsas tu kaunteya*. There are impediments in the body, there are impediments in the form of our enemies; we cannot expect smooth, happy-going life. Kṛṣṇa never said I will play magic and there will be no trouble. He never gave Arjuna a tablet.

Kṛṣṇa didn't give as modern gurus do, a magic ash, but He said, "Tolerate." Nor did Arjuna say, "Why do You make me fight, Kṛṣṇa? Give a magic ash." We have to face things as

they are and go on with our duty. Do not expect any ash, any miracle or magic tablet.

In Puri there are many broken houses on the beach. Let them give them to us, he said. We will maintain them. Anyone can stay with us for three days. We will give him lodging and food. If he stays, he has to attend *mangala-arati* and the evening program. After three days, he can stay permanently and be shaven-headed and work as we desire. Organize like this.

Sleeping is *maya*'s influence, Prabhupada told us. Devi has captured everyone. The more one sleeps, the more he is under the control of *maya*. The less he sleeps, the less *nidra*. As in the Gosvami's verse, sleeping, eating, and sex are reduced to nil by them. The more we conquer these, the more we are free from *maya*. Rise early and attend *mangala-arati*; this is necessary. Eat less and you won't feel sleepy. Therefore, we have Ekadasi. We should practice ourselves and teach others. If one thinks he is all right in material life, he is doomed. These rascals think if a man and a woman have sex, a form comes out and they can also eat it. But take a chicken—she makes an egg and then a chick. You take some yellow and white substance and try to make a chicken, you cannot. Therefore, the chicken is better than the scientist. We must be *sadhus*; if we are also dogs and hogs, how can we preach?

Srila Prabhupada was invited by a big *pandita* to speak at an evening program, but when the time drew near, we saw the invitations and it appeared that he was just using Srila Prabhupada's name. The actual cause of the event was not Srila Prabhupada's appearing there, but it was a meeting to inaugurate some book that was published. The book was announced in big letters, and then it said, ". . . and present will be His Divine Grace, who will introduce the book." We disciples didn't like this so much; we saw this invitation for what it was. Anyway, we all went there and it was a big meeting with a lot of people in the audience and strung lights on the beach. There was a big dais built and many different *panditas* were up there.

As soon as Srila Prabhupada started to speak, some people began to protest that he was speaking in English, but he said

he had to speak in English because he had so many disciples. Prabhupada talked about Lord Jagannatha, and then we could realize that he is in Jagannatha Puri; he is the most qualified, expert devotee of Lord Jagannatha.

We may not always think like that about Srila Prabhupada, but because he has introduced Ratha-yatra, or Lord Jagannatha all over the world, we could understand that he is the most knowledgeable, intimate devotee of Lord Jagannatha—more than any of them. He was speaking about the different Ratha-yatras, as Prabhupada loves to do. He told them about the Ratha-yatra in England where the cart was announced in the papers as a rival to Nelson's Column because it was as tall as Nelson's Column in Piccadilly. Then he told about Ratha-yatra in San Francisco. He said that last year, the mayor of San Francisco declared Ratha-yatra a public holiday, Ratha-yatra Day. In this way, he was telling about all the places we have Ratha-yatra—Chicago, Philadelphia, Japan.

Then he said, "But they will not let my disciples enter the temple here. This should be stopped. The *Bhagavad-gita* says *ye 'pi syuh papa-yonayah*, they are sinfully born, but Kṛṣṇa accepts them. The *narakis* do not, but Kṛṣṇa does. Therefore, they are awaiting their punishment."

He was speaking strongly to them (as influential persons) how, in different ways, they should do something about this. He said that those who are directly stopping it will soon be punished and they will go to hellish conditions, not on his opinion—but that is the verse. It says that those who think that a Vaisnava is of a particular nationality are already in a hellish state. Prabhupada spoke as they did not expect him to speak, all about this Lord Jagannatha prejudice. When he was finished, this Sada Shiva got the book that was the highlight of the evening, gave it to Srila Prabhupada, and said, "Now this is such and such book; please speak about it." Prabhupada picked up the book and looked at it. Then he gave the book's name and said that it was being inaugurated tonight, and he handed the book back. Then he looked at some of us and said, "I can go now?" He started a big *kirtana* and got up. The meeting

wasn't over, but we had a big *kirtana*, got up, and left. Although they had planned to use Prabhupada, he took advantage of their meeting instead.

In Jagannatha Puri, there are two different Gaudiya temples—Gaudiya Math and Purusottama Math. After the meeting that same night, Prabhupada and the devotees went to the temples and saw that the Deities were very nice. But, as Prabhupada commented later, the places were nasty. He said they cannot even whitewash the places and nobody was there for *kirtana*. It is hard to imagine a big temple lit only with one tiny bulb, nobody there, and the Deities not being taken care of. Prabhupada's disciples had a big *kirtana* at both temples.

It was pretty late then and we started driving back to Bhubaneshwar from Puri. It was about 8 o'clock and we were halfway back when we came to where the Saksi-Gopala Deity is and got out. It was a bad atmosphere there. All the people are really aggressive beggars. We went in to see the Deity—very beautiful, very black. Later in the car, the only thing Prabhupada said was that Gopala was not dressed properly.

In his room in Bhubaneshwar, Prabhupada said he has been reading that the creation is a mercy of Krsna. Even if there is no creation, still there is suffering. Isn't sleeping a million years a kind of suffering? Therefore, we say that the creation is mercy; it is a chance. The real mercy of the creation is that you can meet a spiritual master. (That is, someone who is fortunate can meet a spiritual master.)

Prabhupada said that when, by his disciple Syamasundara's mistake, he was quarantined for three days for yellow fever, he suffered due to not being able to go out. He said, "I don't go out anyway from this room, that is my practice; but if I am not permitted to go out, that thought is suffering." So, creation is better. "At least," he said, "it lets the fools become active." Rather than having to be restricted to sleep for a million years or confined, at least it is mercy that they can do their nonsense—become active. In that sense, also, it is mercy.

I said, "The philosophers agree that accepting knowledge as we do from authority is sometimes a good method." "All the

time," Srila Prabhupada said. For things inconceivable, you have to hear. Who is your father? You have to hear from your mother. The two main things scientists don't know: how life comes into existence, and how the planetary system is existing. We accept because Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He cannot cheat me. He is perfect, whatever He says. But they accept another authority: Dr. Frog.

This morning, Srila Prabhupada's car broke down and we couldn't go out. He said the car is like the story of the tortoise and the hare: we are sitting here crying, but a dog could have gone a hundred miles—his "car" is not broken down. Therefore, Bhaktivinoda Thakura says that the more you become involved in material progress, the more you are a rascal. The scientist is saying that in a million years he will do what he will never actually be able to do. That is like the logic of the duck seeing the testicles hanging from the bull and following the bull, thinking it is a fish that is going to fall at any minute. But it will never fall. Or it is like the nipples on the neck of a goat that can never give milk.

Gurukṛpa Swami mentioned that nowadays, parents, sometimes take their boy to the homosexual dance and pick him up afterwards. Srila Prabhupada said it is horrible to even hear these things, and these same parents are against us. This should be brought up in court. Then he delivered his instruction to make the presentation of our books our legal defense in court. A famous barrister in India, Mr. Ghosh, once brought into court many, many books, and the judge said, "Mr. Ghosh, you have brought the whole library?"

"Yes, my lord. Just to teach you law."

Prabhupada said, "So we should make a presentation like that. Bring in all our books and make them hear our books." Gurukṛpa Swami said, "They will say you are brainwashing us by making us read these books." "Yes," Srila Prabhupada said, "that is my duty. You are trying to brainwash me, and I you. It is wrestling; you are trying your strength and I am trying my strength. Let us settle up."

January 30

On the morning walk, we saw a violet and white flower and Srila Prabhupada scoffed at the idea that things happen by chance. He talked of philosophers who say that life has no meaning. He said that they say there is no authority, but they are asking us to follow them. That is a contradiction and therefore, rascaldom. It is like selling something, although you say, "Don't buy it." We told Prabhupada that they say, "Well, you should at least not follow any authority blindly." Prabhupada said no, if the authority is good, you can follow. Then one boy said that their response is that they will not take all information and all authority from one person, but different information from different authorities. Srila Prabhupada said, "But if you can find the perfect authority in one place, just like when you go to the supermarket, you can get all your products in one place, why not follow that authority? Krsna is perfect and we follow Him."

I asked, "If we came to power, could a person live in the Krsna conscious state if he didn't believe in Krsna?" Prabhupada said, "No, just as if a boy doesn't want education, he is forced. But," he said, "it is not a matter of Hindu or Christian." We asked if a person said he had some other religion, does that mean he would be punished in the Krsna conscious state? He said it is not a matter of Hindu or Christian. The state has to enforce the standard of God. If one doesn't know the law of God, then he will have to submit to the state and be educated. On questioning further, he said that if one gave up meat-eating and sinful life, he could still follow the Bible, but the state would insist that he actually follow his religion. No bad leader would be allowed to be followed.

We tried to understand how Krsna consciousness is the absolute perfect authority; we kept bringing up democratic objections to absolute authority. Prabhupada said, why do you praise this democracy? Democracy means "demon-cracy." Then later he said it means "demon-crazy." We asked further about how we could enforce Krsna consciousness without much bloodshed and coercion among those who didn't want to take it.

"Sometimes that is also necessary," Prabhupada said, "since Kṛṣṇa comes to save the devotee and punish the miscreant."

I said, "There are so many relative parties and the tendency of philosophers is to recognize no one as right or perfect. It seems that the best thing is not to force one way on the people." Prabhupada said, "But if Kṛṣṇa consciousness is actually perfect and the way for everyone to live for peace and prosperity, why not move to enforce it for everyone's betterment? Those who oppose it are demons because what do we say that is wrong or that should not be instituted? You have to come gradually to power and punish the miscreants; that is also a part of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness program."

Last night, Svarupa Damodara dasa arrived and Srila Prabhupada was pleased to see a demonstration of the scientific lectures he has been giving. Today he said the scientist cannot make his own brain, but someone has made his brain. Why not take shelter of He who made this brain? The true scientist has to recognize the Great Scientist. The present scientists cannot stop their own deaths.

He compared the example of the disciple of Durgā to the scientists who say they are doing many, many wonderful things—they are doing this and they are doing that—but they have to admit that they are not able to stop their own deaths. Therefore, they are like the disciple of Durgā. Durgā appeared and asked, "Are you happy?" The devotee said, "Oh yes, Mother." Durgā said, "You have no complaints?" The devotee said, "Only two: there is no food and there is no cloth. Otherwise, we are very happy." So what is this happiness? So long as they cannot stop death, old age, disease, and rebirth, what have they done?

The charge was made that we don't feed people who are starving. Prabhupada said, "We are giving out what little *prasadam* we can. What are you doing?" He counter-challenged any person who would say that. Why don't you stop death? We are not so anxious for *daridra-narayana-seva*.

Their idea is that the economically poor should especially be taken care of and that this is real God consciousness. Why

worship God in the temple with so much opulence? God is in the street as a poor man; go and feed Him. That's real religion. This sentiment is used, but Prabhupada said, why this attachment only to the poor man? Krsna never says like that. He says that the rich man is also very much diseased and really poor and in need of Krsna consciousness. He is so contaminated that he is suffering and going to hell. Why just this *daridra-narayana*? We say that it is good to serve the poor when serving everyone is the real point. Everyone should get *prasadam* because of the spiritual benefit. To call the poor man God is a great offense to Narayana, who is never a poor man. We don't go for this propaganda that our main business should be to supply food to the poor. We want to supply *prasadam* to everyone and we want to glorify Krsna.

He gave some practical underlying reasons why we are not interested in feeding the poor. We are not so anxious. They are being punished by past karma to starve. If in a hospital a patient is being made to starve, what can you do? If you go to him and feed the hungry person in the hospital who is under orders to starve, you will be beaten with shoes. The question was then asked: "Why be so callous?"

Prabhupada's answer: "I must be callous." We can give the treatment, but we cannot be protected against the doctor. A good patient is grateful, although he is starving.

Those who claim, "Oh, we have helped the starving man," are rascals. They are poking their noses in the hospital where the patients are made to starve. Krsna didn't tell Arjuna to be agitated by suffering, but to tolerate it. Krsna is teaching: "Don't be over-intelligent; submit to God and you will be happy. You will never have to suffer again." All attempts at betterment are pretending to be beyond God's knowledge—this is rascaldom. There can be no change in your position, you cannot change the laws of nature. Whoever thinks that "I know something, I can do something," is a useless person. The laws of nature are working; they are tightly binding me. What can I do? All miseries are summarized in these four words, *janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi*. Do something with these miseries and then talk of having done something.

My position at present means my karma. If I am seated in the plush Bhaktivedanta Manor, I have the same suffering as I do in this hut. (Prabhupada was speaking in Bhubaneswar where he was staying in a hut.) But if I think, "Now I am in the Manor, I am happy," that is foolishness. But that they do. Why are you dying? Stop *that*. Can you, my disciples, help me in my old age? There are so many disciples and I am suffering from disease in my old age. You may try your best, but you should admit that it is beyond your power. As soon as you go back to Godhead, then everything is solved.

February [?], 1977

Today we had the cornerstone-laying ceremony here. Early in the morning, we also looked at a large temple under construction whose owners may turn the temple over to ISKCON. Tomorrow night at 1:00 A.M., we leave by train on a twelve-hour trip to Calcutta. Then, after a day or two, according to Śrīla Prabhupada, "Back to home, back to Godhead, Mayapur."

Prabhupada said it is not good to make religious comparisons, but sometimes we have to. Buddha and Christ wanted their followers to stop sinful activities. Christ's "Thou shalt not kill" and Buddha's *ahimsa* philosophy are practically the same, but their so-called followers could not follow. "I therefore call this society the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. If you don't want to understand Kṛṣṇa, if you want to make some comparison, then you have your own understanding; but we are studying Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Truth."

He was telling Svarupa Damodara that there is *para* and *para* also in the subtle situation. If the subtle situation, which is the *via medium* between *para* and *apara*, is spiritualized, the soul is carried to the spiritual world. They see only the gross situation and think that when it is finished, life is finished. If a man is a high court judge but goes mad, he has no value anymore. Anyone, whether he is Ph.D. or whatever, if he has no knowledge of the soul, he is not credited as a scholar. Śrīla Prabhupada said he knew a great scholar who became so mad that in his craziness he was running naked in the streets.

Who cared for him any longer, although he had been a scholar? The scientists who reject the soul are like that. Srila Prabhupada is very keen that Svarupa Damodara, with other devotee-scientists, write and preach in a scientific way to defeat the "life comes from matter" theory. If we can get the scientists to admit there is God, that will be our great success.

February 3

A man came today, our last day in Bhubaneswar, and saw Srila Prabhupada about publishing his article. I was called in and then later I read the article and discussed it with the man who says he has published twenty-five books. The article had many discrepancies, and after discussing it with the man, went in to Srila Prabhupada during his massage and discussed it. I said this man was a devotee of Sri Aurobindo. Srila Prabhupada asked, "What is Aurobindo's philosophy? You should diagnose, if he has a philosophy." Since the man indulged in comparison of Buddha, Christ, and Krsna, I asked if we should involve ourselves in that. Srila Prabhupada said, "No, only in that Buddha and Christ partially manifest Krsna."

Before that, I mentioned that the man had said Vyasadev failed to capture Krsna completely. Srila Prabhupada said yes but whatever Vyasa did should be followed. We accept that Krsna is infinite, but whatever Vyasa said, you should follow. I said that the man also wrote that Caitanya was only a partial manifestation of the Absolute. "Yes," Srila Prabhupada said "He was a devotee, but follow Him." Then Srila Prabhupada said that Buddha showed *ahimsa*, so follow that. Any *avatara* or religious personality, we can discuss him, but it should be in the sense of how he partially manifested Krsna consciousness or in relation to what Krsna manifested fully.

We discussed Christ. Srila Prabhupada said that Christ followers were so low-class that they killed him. He had no opportunity to preach to the higher class. He taught, "Thou shalt not kill," but they could not be saved. The real situation of Christ is that he wanted to save them, but they could not be

saved. I said, the Christians say that Christ's divine mission was to be crucified.

Prabhupada: Then why didn't he say, "You crucify me!" Rather he said, "Thou shalt not kill," but they killed him.

I said, "People say he didn't resist when the soldiers came."

"Oh," Prabhupada said, "does that mean you should kill him? What rascals."

I said that Christ is described like Vasudeva Datta, as so compassionate that he wanted to take everyone's sins.

Christ is compassionate, Prabhupada said. Everyone knows that undoubtedly, but you are such a rascal that you sin—they are mostly like that.

I said, "Christ is so compassionate that even if one insists on being a sinner, Christ wants to save him." Prabhupada repeated, "Yes, Christ is compassionate, but you are a rascal."

Then this man talked about Kṛṣṇa and suffering. Prabhupada said, as for Kṛṣṇa and suffering, He is God. That means He does not suffer. *Paritrāṇaya sādhuṇām*. He comes, He says, "Why are you suffering?" and He gives the proper medicine.

Then I pointed out that this man said in his essay that although all these different teachers have come and Kṛṣṇa has come, Aurobindo is the first one to transcend death. Prabhupada said, "Then why did he die? When he died, they thought, 'Oh, he is in *samādhi*,' and then after a couple of days when he decomposed, they decided that he had actually died."

Some questions and answers from an evening lecture Prabhupada gave in Bhubaneswar:

Somebody said, "If one without a guru chants the name with devotion . . ."

Prabhupada: There is no devotion without guru. That is the defect in modern society—they imagine you can manufacture their own way. Rupa Gosvami said that the first thing is to approach the guru.

Question: Then all is fruitless without the guru? But it is rare to get a genuine guru.

Prabhupada: Lord Caitanya said in answer to this, *brah-manda brahmite kona bhagyan jiva*. If you are actually hankering within, He will give you a guru, if you are fortunate. Even Lord Caitanya accepted a guru. Why manufacture that you do not need a guru? Do not do this.

February [?]

The Last Night In Bhubaneshwar

I mentioned to Srila Prabhupada that the devotees were planning to put his name on a sign over the door where he was staying, saying that on such-and-such a day, at 2:50 A.M., he began the Tenth Canto. Srila Prabhupada was pleasantly surprised, "You heard me?" We explained how we heard him beginning from the next room. Then he said, "Yes, the Tenth Canto chapters 29–34 are the smiling face of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's flute can be heard in the Tenth Canto."

He then told about Subhash Candra Bose. His was the real movement that gained Indian independence—not Gandhi's nonviolent movement. Only the clerks and some teachers took part with Gandhi, and the British saw it going on for thirty years. They thought, "Let the old man go on with his philosophizing," but when Subhash Candra Bose organized the Indian National Army and his Gurkhas and Sikhs were joining against the British, then the British knew it was all over. Gandhi differed with Subhash and removed him as president of India. Then Subhash Candra Bose went outside India. He tried to induce Tojo of Japan to help enter India. Tojo thought he would enter India, but then kill Bose. Then at one point, Subhash Candra was interned at home, but he disguised himself as a Muslim and escaped to Germany. He made a deal with Hitler and thus organized the INA. Indian soldiers would surrender to Hitler (this was World War II and the Indian soldiers were fighting as part of the British army) and be allowed to join the INA. Gandhi's noncooperation movement was a good trick, but it did not succeed.

The granddaughter of this Nethaji (as he is called), Subhash Candra Bose, comes to visit Prabhupada infrequently. She made a remark that Srila Prabhupada is like Nethaji in that he has gone outside India to organize a movement of Vaisnavas. Srila Prabhupada liked that. He said, "Yes."

He said that we have organized an army now and it is in the right hands. You Americans are resourceful, you can do it. The frame is there, now organize. This mission is *para-upakara*. We don't want to exploit anyone. Today's so-called civilization keeps people in the clutches of *maya*. They are being misled, they are lusty, and they are demons. Our movement is against this. It is really *para-upakara*, to help the people, and you will be recognized by Krsna. Simply go on working for this movement. Take all strategic points for fighting. There is a declaration of war by us against *maya*. No, not actually *maya*, (she is a servant of Krsna). She would relinquish her grip on everyone, but because they remain demons she cannot. That's her duty. Actually, we are fighting not with *maya*, but with the demons.

Now in this American opposition, the demons are feeling our presence. It is a fight and we have to defend. A fight is a fight. My Guru Maharaja used to say, "A fight is a fight, so some of our soldiers will die." Still, then we should fight much more. Fight like brave soldiers. Krsna will help. Do not make a truce with the demons. The Hare Krsna mantra is our weapon. They are afraid of this *astra* weapon. Go on fighting. We are not like Vrndavana *babajis* who claim, "Oh, I am so advanced, I never go out of Vrndavana," and at the same time keep three dozen widows.

The train ride from Bhubaneswar to Calcutta took ten hours. Three of us—myself, Hari Sauri and Srila Prabhupada—were in the first-class cabin. The train left after 11:30 P.M. Srila Prabhupada took rest at 12 and got up around 3 A.M. Then after awhile, he took a little more rest until 5:30 A.M. Then we all got up. As Srila Prabhupada got up, the first thing he said was that Ayurvedic medicine should be taken by us on our farms. That is also a basic part of maintenance, along with shelter and cloth.

The train we were on was an express train, and as it was going past all the stops, Prabhupada asked me to call out the names of the towns. He was remembering them, because he is from the area.

February [?]

Calcutta

A newspaper article arrived from the United States. I showed Prabhupada a January 23rd article from the *Boston Globe* entitled, "The Hare Kṛṣṇa Puzzle." I said it had pros and cons. He asked to hear the cons. I began one statement which described the devotees as parasites. We are not parasites, he said, we are giving the best literature in the world. Does this literature come from illiterate hippies? We are accepted by scholars. Are we parasites? Then the high court judge is a parasite. They do not know what is a parasite. An intelligent person is not supposed to work like a dog or an ass. They work with their brains. Only a rascal sees the judge sitting, and because he is talking a little and getting a high salary, someone may say he is a parasite because he is not working like a common laborer. They do not know the value of using the brain.

I said, "They call us parasites. They are referring to the begging in the streets." It is not begging, he said, it is humility. If a father begs from his child, "My dear boy, please give me back that ten dollar note that you have foolishly taken and do not know how to use"—if I see this and say that the father is begging, that is childish. If I sell a book, is it begging? I said, "Sometimes we don't give books, but only flowers." He said that is also humility. Mostly we give books, so don't bring that in about the flowers. But that is also not restricted, that is humility. In India, highly scholarly persons beg. They are even given the title, "*Bikṣus Tridandi Swami*," which means begging. The *sannyasis* beg to learn pridelessness and humility. In Vedic culture it is allowed. The *brahmacaris*, *sannyasis*, and *brahmanas* are allowed to beg alms. "But what if the culture is entirely different?" I asked. Yes, your culture is different, he said. Therefore, there are hippies and murderers in the name of

religion. Because there is no culture, you have killing—bombing—making the whole atmosphere abominable.

A *brahmacari* begs just to learn humility; even if he is from a big family, he does so in order to become meek. And Christ said, to the meek, God is available. You don't know this culture. You have a culture to kill a child, so how will you understand this higher culture? He said we should learn to defend ourselves like this.

I mentioned to him that the opposition is claiming that it is not a matter of freedom of religion, but that we are guilty of mind control. He said that one whose mind is already in Kṛṣṇa consciousness—they want to control his mind. They are guilty of mind control, not us. They take him, kidnap him, and force him. He asked if the article mentioned Kṛṣṇa. I said, "Yes, many times." "Then it is all right," he said. I said, "The article is called, 'The Hare Kṛṣṇa Puzzle'; they say it is a great puzzle whether the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is good or bad." At least, he said, they are now considering. Formerly they said it was bad. Now we have come to the marginal point, whether Hare Kṛṣṇa is good or bad. Finally they will come to the point, yes, it is good.

We should take these instructions to heart and mind. Sometimes someone may say to us about our dress or something, "Well, that may be all right in India. What you are doing is following some entirely different culture." Then we can say yes, it certainly is a different culture. This culture is a culture of cats and dogs. This culture is a culture where you kill children in the womb. Yes, it is a very different culture, but we are trying to give you a brain so that you can understand real culture. In this way, we do not have to fall into that relative bag of, "Oh well, that may be all right in India to beg, but this is America." We can just say yes, this is America and therefore it is so degraded. We want you to learn what real culture is. This is Prabhupada's example. He never descends into someone else's estimation of us and then tries to defend us on that level: "Please like us." Rather, he says, "You are rascal," and we stay on our Kṛṣṇa conscious platform.

February 5

We went to a rich man's house. Srila Prabhupada began to speak on the Queen Kunti *stotra*. He said later that he wanted to bring out that material wealth is not good for spiritual advancement, but the man diverted him and started introducing his family members and the talk was cut short. Some of the devotees have been staying at this man's house. When we came into the house, the man introduced Prabhupada's own disciples to him and said, "Here is the ladies' branch of ISKCON." Later, Srila Prabhupada said he could understand that the man was hinting that we were living on him. He spoke against this. He said that if we stay with them and eat their food, the mind becomes wicked. He said he was offered by one rich man to stay long, long ago, but he chose to go and live in Vrndavana. Lord Caitanya was also against living with rich men like this.

Someone said that Srila Prabhupada was unlike other gurus in India who have to flatter rich men that they visit. They just make it a regular business. He said his own guru was like that. The disciples, he said, called it his *ax*-preaching. He said, "That is my translation. Guru Maharaja was famous for *ax*-preaching." He even said that the *sannyasi* disciples used to be afraid to bring some big man. They would think, "Oh no, now Guru Maharaja will say something to him; we are depending on him and he will go away." They were afraid to see someone important go in to see him.

He quoted the *Gita* for us, that those interested in material wealth, for them the resolution for Kṛṣṇa consciousness will not take place. They will also lose respect for us if we remain dependent on them. We should watch the example of *madhu-kari*: the bee takes a little honey from each flower. The *sannyasis* do this and do not get a full meal at anyone's house. The householders are thus not burdened. They give a little to each *sannyasi* and then a *sannyasi* gets a full meal only after going to four or five householders. We cannot do this in a practical way now, but do not be anyone's burden.

Do not be captivated by a supply of good foodstuffs, or else you will begin to feel remorse, "Oh, I have left everything." You

will become a *karmi* and all your *bhakti* will be lost. *Jnana* and karma should not touch us or cover us. If one is poor, he can take *prasadam*. There is a saying: "If one is poor, he can take *prasadam* from a friend's house, but he should not live with him."

Hearing a report from a devotee who had just come from New York he said, "America is finished." This Krsna consciousness is the only hope. Such a civilization cannot stand. In India, a rich man at least has some decency, but even the U.S. President was naked with women. "I am confident," he said, "that if we stick to the principles, we will make progress." We have substance. LSD and *ganja* are so dangerous. But still, there is hope in America because the books are selling. The situation is not good. Godlessness means animal life. When a man doesn't understand God, he is an animal. Try to educate an animal to the best of your capacity, but it is not possible. Try to distribute books everywhere. That is our real mission. Temple worship is secondary. If I would have gone and only established temple worship, who would have cared for it? Whatever little success we have is due to book distribution.

He said his *sukta* was well-made (the bitter vegetable). You can make it with bitter melon, but he makes it with *nim* leaves too. He said his maternal aunt was a very good cook. She would use a little *masala* and *ghee* and it would be like nectar. "My wife also," he said, "was a very good cook."

He was asked how he learned to cook. Prabhupada laughed and said, "I am not a good cook, but what I have learned, I learned by watching others. Otherwise, what business have I to cook? Always some wife or mother or servant was cooking," he said. "I have always had the habit of learning by watching. I would watch something and I would learn how to do it." He said, "In this way, I learned how to knit, how to cook, and how to make fireworks. My father encouraged me in everything. He said I was very naughty and whatever I wanted he had to give me. Still I am like that, that is my nature. If my food is not prepared timely, I become angry."

Srila Prabhupada: My father and Guru Maharaja were most affectionate. My Guru Maharaja liked me very much; it is by his blessings, whatever I have done. He was affectionate to all, but especially to me. That was my fortune. Sometimes I would talk freely with him and the Godbrothers would become angry. They would say, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." I thought, "I may be a fool, but what can I do?" With my Guru Maharaja we would talk so many private things. I was only a *grhastha*, but whenever I came, my Guru Maharaja would be very glad to talk with me. I had the world's best affectionate persons in my father and my spiritual master.

February 7

Mayapur

Back to home, back to Godhead. Mayapur and Vrndavana are back home to me, he said. Today we arrived here. In his room, he said that Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati contributed that people could practice devotional service and yet sit in big cars and houses. Especially people from the West who are not used to India's hardships, they have to have this; otherwise, the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not possible nowadays.

Hiranyagarbha showed me a poem that Srila Prabhupada wrote for his Vyasa-puja in 1961 in which he severely criticized his Godbrothers for not preaching and spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Kali-yuga.

The temple and his room here were decorated with hundreds of flowers, all grown in Mayapur. He said the flower is Kṛṣṇa's smile. Don't become a sensualist, he said, but the devotees should live in nice houses, eat nicely—not extravagantly—and be given proper facility. All facility and then chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and go back to Godhead. This is the simple, sublime, perfectly sane program.

He gave an argument against the theory that everything happens by chance: "In the *Bhagavad-gita*, the demons say that things happen by sex intercourse, which is by chance, lust. But sex is not chance; it is based on thinking, feeling, and willing. They say, *jaganisvaram*, the universe happens without a cause,

but if there is a little defect in the kidney, then it doesn't work. Is this body constructed just by chance? It is an absurd theory."

Srila Prabhupada heard that some of his disciples were fighting. He said, "If you fight among the GBC, what can I do?" Whatever is agreed in the GBC's general meeting must be carried out. Discuss in the meeting and whatever decision they make, abide by it. This fighting will spoil everything. I asked, "Is this more dangerous than the deprogrammer?" "Oh yes," he said. "This will break the whole institution."

Just before I was going to take rest last night, Srila Prabhupada called for me. When I went in, he said, "I am thinking of that telegram. How many standing orders did they get?" I repeated that they got sixty-four standing orders in Germany. He said that this was very good, and he was clearly pleased. He had me get the telegram and read it: "Against all odds sixty-four standing orders in Germany in three weeks." He said the standing orders could be used in any of our court cases. I said, "The library party still has much of Europe to go—France, Italy, Spain." "Yes," he said, "you tell them that they can use the orders of Germany as testimony."

Then he spoke about the Mahesh Pandita Ashram we had visited. He said it was very nice and that it was in a peaceful place, but they did not have many devotees. (He was referring to a small *asrama* some *brahmacaris* were keeping where Mahesh Pandita stayed—one of the branches of Lord Nityananda and friends of Lord Caitanya, famous for *kirtana*. A man had invited us out and really pressured Prabhupada. None of us wanted to go, but we went out there just a day or two before all the devotees came and they held a big program. They wanted us to take over the management.)

I said, "It is country out there, but should he have made devotees of the villagers?" Yes, he said, "and I also noticed that he had two ladies with him alone. That was not very good." Even though there were ladies, still, it was a peaceful situation in the jungle. I said, "Even if we have a place in the country like that, it should still be for preaching?" Yes, he said. Then he chanted his beads out loud, "Hare Kṛṣṇa."

Sometimes Srila Prabhupada will not say much to acknowledge even a considerable achievement we have made in our service. We should not expect it. I have seen this again and again. Yesterday, Gurukrpa Swami brought him the new Japanese *Gita*. Prabhupada looked at it and said, "Very good! Now push on." That was all. Gurukrpa Swami made obeisances and left. Prabhupada is transcendental and independent.

Today on the walk he was reading the Bengali script under the paintings on the front wall. Pandu dasa had written something of his own composition. "This is not good," Srila Prabhupada said. "You should not dare." After reading it, he said the sentiment was all right, but, "You should not dare without my permission." Then he read the next one which was a direct quote by Narottama dasa Thakura. "This is all right, but you should not dare." In a lecture this morning he also said, "Don't alter anything and think you have become an advanced devotee."

Yesterday we went to Navadvipa to visit Srila Prabhupada's Godbrother, Sridhara Maharaja. We went all the way by car. We had to take a crazy motorized barge across the Ganges. It was a steel, broken-down contraption and looked as if it were about an inch above the water. Prabhupada willingly took part, but later, when we got back, he said, "I don't want to go there again. That was very dangerous." He said that sometimes cars fall off. He said, "Did you see how close it was to the water?" Then he proposed that he wanted to build a bridge over Navadvipa; it would be a public bridge and we would charge people. In this way, thousands of people would come from Navadvipa, more than they do now. Later, there was an interview with some press reporters and right away, Prabhupada started telling them that we are going to build a bridge from Navadvipa. They started writing it down.

At Sridhara Maharaja's, Srila Prabhupada was at ease. He sat on a chair as the sun shone on him and they both talked in Bengali by the hour. Two other Godbrothers came and joined. He asked Sridhara Maharaja about the position of the planets. He respects him; he is supposed to be a very learned Vaisnava. In fact, the whole scheme of a Vedic planetarium that is going

to be inaugurated on Gaura-Purnima came after talking with Sridhara Maharaja about building such a place. It is also a scheme in terms of the government, because there may be some difficulty if we build a big, big temple. This is not officially going to be a temple, it is going to be a planetarium. He asked some questions about the planets and Sridhara Maharaja talked. Prabhupada was relaxed. They spoke in Bengali and I could not understand the language. Jayapataka told me later that Srila Prabhupada had invited Sridhara Maharaja. He said, "Come and live with me; it would be bliss. I have no one to consult with. You come with me and live with me in Mayapur. It will be nice." Sridhara Maharaja said it was a "tempting proposal."

They continued talking in Bengali and Srila Prabhupada described the glories of spreading Krsna consciousness around the world. Even though it was Bengali, I could hear him telling how much money it cost to run the New York temple per month, how much Los Angeles cost, and how many books. All different facts and figures. He told with such a pleasure, not bragging. It is Krsna consciousness and he showed how it was spread all around the world. Then a Godbrother came and Srila Prabhupada said, "Did you see his face, how envious he was?" He said Sridhara Maharaja was feeling sorry in hearing all this that he did not go out and preach, but he is not envious.

Riding back, I felt fortunate to be with Srila Prabhupada. Once he gestured to me to give him water and actually tapped me to get my attention to open the window. Later that night, reading the mail to him, I was hoping to be steadfast and not become like the envious Godbrothers, but help him in the glorious mission of worldwide Krsna consciousness, which only he has been bold enough to take up.

February 8

When Srila Prabhupada was telling Sridhara Maharaja about ISKCON, I could pick up from his Bengali a number of points. He was speaking of "The Hare Krsna Puzzle" from the *Boston Globe* article that said that one doesn't know whether

Hare Krsna is good or bad. Then he told how in a meeting in Melbourne, he said that the U.N. is a pack of barking dogs. The news commented that Srila Prabhupada has come to "hound" them. Also, he mentioned how many *lakhs* are collected daily and how much the New York temple costs per month to maintain. He also mentioned the brainwashing case. The local Godbrothers are amazed, hearing about Krsna conscious books in so many languages and preaching going on on every continent.

This morning he called in Jayapataka Maharaja and Bhavananda Maharaja and said, on thinking it over, that it was not a good idea to invite this one favorable Godbrother to come and live with him because the other envious ones would come around and they are dangerous. Srila Prabhupada explained to us why he succeeded and they did not. He said, "I had no self-interest." He described that they are like *karmis* and each Godbrother is interested in keeping a separate establishment for his eating and sleeping; there is not much preaching going on.

The Godbrothers were also speaking of forming a committee to organize the Gaudiya Math preaching. They were going to invite Prabhupada to take part in the committee. Prabhupada said, "They know that I will not join them." He asked us what would be the benefit if he joined? We said, "The trouble is that they want you to be on some committee, but they don't recognize you as *acarya*." He has proven that he is the most expert preacher. They should come to him.

Afterwards, we disciples talked among ourselves how these events were full of instructions for our own ISKCON (we already have schisms). We must work together. Srila Prabhupada wants this. Because we are preaching on the level of *madhyama-adhikari*, we have to observe four kinds of people and act accordingly with each. We have to avoid those who are envious. They can cause so much havoc to the preaching. It is on the basis of sastric references that we say this.

Living with Srila Prabhupada, sometimes we go days without hearing much from him and one starts to feel a little left out. Then one night he will call you in, like tonight, and there is more nectar and transcendental knowledge than you can contain in a lifetime.

“We Have To Publish Our Own Way and Defy” March [?]-May 23, 1977

As this chapter mostly deals with my reassignment as editor of *Back to Godhead* magazine, I will give some brief memories of the February-March 1977 meetings in Māyāpur which led up to that appointment. When we got to Māyāpur, I had about a week or so left as Prabhupāda's secretary before the mass of devotees arrived, and during that time, Prabhupāda mentioned at least twice that I should stay in India and manage the library parties there. (He was pleased with the success of the library party work in the Western countries, and I had informed him that it appeared that the work there was largely done.) Some of the GBC men in India had heard Prabhupāda's suggestion and they were also encouraging me to stay in India. Therefore, my future was really up in the air. In my mind, I also had ideas as to what I might like to do, but I wanted to see what would happen in terms of zonal assignments, etc., at the GBC meeting.

What I hadn't expected was that I would become the editor of BTG and be assigned a residence in Los Angeles ISKCON. This started when some of the senior devotees voiced their complaints about the editorial policies of BTG that were being enacted at that time. The L.A.-based editorial group had a vision that BTG was too dogmatic and too easily identifiable as “the magazine of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.” They wanted to make it a bit like a New Age magazine and tie in things like the teachings of Roszak and George Schumacher. They also wanted to speak of “meditation” in a broad way, and to include

as many articles and photos as possible that were not directly Kṛṣṇa conscious, in order to appease the general public. This definitely included no more pictures of Kṛṣṇa on the cover and plans for changing the “old-fashioned” name of the magazine. Some of these suggested changes were already appearing in the magazine, and some were still on the drawing board for the future.

When the complaints become vociferous, it was discussed with Prabhupāda in his room in the presence of many of the *sannyāsīs* and GBC men. Śrīla Prabhupāda was disturbed to hear the complaints and he fully agreed with maintaining the old standard. At a later meeting, the GBC man who was in favor of the New Age policies made all his best arguments to Prabhupāda as to why it was favorable, but Prabhupāda did not accept them.

It was Prabhupāda himself who said that I should become the editor. It was decided and my assignment was settled. I felt a bit guilty that I had left the editorship in the first place to travel and preach, but the best thing was that I received the assignment directly from His Divine Grace.

While still in Māyāpur, I met with Prabhupāda a couple of times about BTG. He wanted it to return to straightforward, Kṛṣṇa conscious preaching. At that time, he was speaking strongly, as usual, against all materialistic follies and speculations. Among these, he exposed the folly of going to the moon and said that actually, he did not think man had gone to the moon. He said that his devotees should protest this and write about it. It occurred to me that this was the kind of straight, hard-hitting article that should go into the “new” BTG. I went to Prabhupāda and asked him if I should write an article about the moon voyage, and he said, “Yes, definitely do it.” I planned this as soon as possible, although some of the devotees said it was too radical an idea.

So with some trepidation about moving into the big, famous, householder community of New Dvārakā, I booked my ticket from India to California and wrote on my luggage tags: “3764 Watseka Avenue, Los Angeles.”

Publishing a diary has its embarrassing moments. I am embarrassed to see that I was so hard-nosed about being a "dictator" as editor-in-chief, but if you are going to get a job done, sometimes you have to be like that and not just be democratic or brahminical. Part of my reforming spirit at New Dvārakā was naive; little did I know how much I was up against. I was also short on compassion and vision of how to engage everyone in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I was not fully aware at that time how the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is an entirely voluntary labor force, although Śrīla Prabhupāda had often emphasized this fact. No one can be forced to do his service to Kṛṣṇa. (This is a far cry from the anti-cult propaganda which portrays ISKCON as a robot culture.) How to actually engage devotees who are at different levels of surrender and realization is a great challenge for ISKCON management.

I was also somewhat bewildered about a group of devotees in L.A. who at that time, had formed a "Conch Club." Their motto was: "The best of both worlds." They were advocating that both the spiritual and material worlds should be sources of happiness to a devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This anticipates what has now become a concern for all devotees, namely how to enact the *varṇāśrama-dharma* culture within the culture of pure devotional service.

It was a difficult situation for me at the time. I was trying to be a strict *sannyāsī* and yet learning to relate with members of a big householder community. I am sure I made mistakes and was offensive to some, and for this I can only beg their forgiveness.

* * *

March [?], 1977

Los Angeles

"We have to publish our own way and defy." (Śrīla Prabhupāda)

My credo.

Don't be affected by others' persuasion. Keep the *parampara* presentation as far as possible, even in examples within the

essays and even in the incidental copy and the ads. Eliminate what is watered down. Gold cannot be alloyed in iron.

March 15

Editor's journal

I had my first meeting with the staff. Today great progress was made in that I moved into my engagement and was accepted by all. Also, we immediately made plans, especially working with Dravida, to put out a new issue according to the principles of a return to a straight presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in *Back to Godhead*. I want to move ahead toward Srīla Prabhupada's hard preaching, exposing the rascals, such as the article exposing the moon shot.

But two of the staff members, Damodara and Dharmadaksa, as well as Ramesvara Maharaja, are still attached to wanting to quote philosophers and mundane psychologists at length and depth. I'm convinced it is not necessary and we can present Kṛṣṇa consciousness on the basis of *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Today we are starting scripture readings at our staff meeting. We have to think more how to produce bold preaching articles. Also:

(1) I wonder how I will adjust to living in New Dvaraka.

(2) Seems I should do engagements where I can preach to people—maybe especially when I travel.

(3) I have to make myself strong in the face of mounting attacks on our society by organized groups, so that I can respond with a confident fighting spirit, dependent on Kṛṣṇa.

(4) Try to rise no later than 2:00 A.M., earlier if possible. Do some exercise, eat simply, attend the morning and evening program.

Proposed early morning schedule:

Rise by 1:45 A.M.—bathe, etc., until 2:00

2:00–2:30—*bhajana*, reading *Brahma-saṁhita* verses or other verses for memorizing, or reading passages in book, or making notes for class lecture

2:30–3:00—make thoughts and notes for the 9:00 A.M. BTG staff meeting and BTG in general

3:00–3:30—*japa*

(Try for another half hour at least of private reading later in the day—now on *Kṛṣṇa* book.)

March 16

4 P.M.

Being given all respect in New Dvaraka, but there is conflict with one BTG staff member especially. I am trying to be sensitive to what he has to offer in *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness, but for now, I will not have any democratic board select the article but will do it myself, with Dravida.

I've come to reform the magazine. That means reform the staff members. They have already accepted for the most part that I am the new authority and that what I say goes. They have had to accept it. Perhaps they still think they can change me or resist my changing the magazine.

For myself, I should concentrate in a determined way to change BTG in the way agreed upon in Mayapur by the *san-nyasis* and GBC resolution—backing me up in my strong disapproval of the current compromise, which depicts New Age trends in BTG.

That means not so much care whether they are convinced as pushing through exactly the kind of articles, copy, and design I see fit. How can I trust them to execute what I want?

Therefore, do not defer so much to a democratic selection of articles.

Holding a staff meeting then seems more for their execution if they have to learn what the policy of BTG is to be.

This diary note helps to clear my own mind.

March 23

As for not discouraging them, I think the best thing is not to preach so much to them to change their ways. Let me work more quietly and not confront them as much.

I am dealing with the staff in a more cooperative way. Theoretically, most of our differences are settled. They agree the magazine should not be trying to engage readers in a compromise.

They all like the proposition to present a fighting spirit against the cheating of the material world.

March 24

My note of yesterday proved too optimistic regarding the staff's cooperation. No one is deliberately uncooperative, but after so long in their concocted way of presenting nondevotional ideas, talking speculation about "how to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness" (meaning, too often, how to approach the masses with a watered-down version that they will find palatable—and this is connected to the reluctance of the same staff members to themselves strictly follow the rules and regulations of renounced life)—after so long living in this viamedium consciousness between strict Kṛṣṇa consciousness and nondevotional thinking, *they cannot follow my thinking in a way I can count on*. Therefore, I cannot enact my thinking through them. If I give them an intellectual assignment such as editing, or give them an essay or subject for their judgment or development, they will not act as an extension of the policy I am trying to enact. They would rather open a discussion as if we are in search of the proper way to preach and do not know how to do it. Surrounded by such opening up of speculation and compromise and their outright disdain of simple, straightforward, Kṛṣṇa conscious gold (they want to alloy the gold in order to sell it better), I became unenthusiastic yesterday and unable to work, estranged in my own office.

I have asked Mandalesvara to join me from Dallas as soon as possible. He can act as an extension of the policy I am trying to enact without speculating how to refashion it. Rādhā-vallabha agreed I am new to this office and eventually can expect to have a staff who are actually working cooperatively with me. These men are independent in their activities and not responsible to me. Let me preach on and look for chances to build my own BTG staff.

March 26

Leaders in L.A. are trying to temper me, thinking I intend to print the philosophy harshly without enough regard for the 500,000 people who will read it. Yesterday, I felt I was being worn down (not encouraged) by such advice, but the result was that I resolved anew to print only strong devotional service and not to water anything down.

For now this means I have to directly control everything myself, unless I entrust something to someone like-minded.

The May issue's literary contents are all decided. I have to stay on top of the progress of the visual design and also of the production schedule. I should be able to leave for the GBC tour when all the design schemes are well under way and all contents are decided upon.

I have to start working up choices for the June Ratha-yatra issue, and especially a major, hard-hitting essay to expose the scientists.

March 27

In my struggle to institute the BTG preaching with the staff here, my understanding of the basic approach to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is being challenged by others who assert that Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be presented in a different way. I want BTG to preach like Prabhupada does in his books, and I say to people who can't accept this that their mentality is more or less offensive. Aside from this struggle, last night I saw myself exposed, at least to my own mind, as an envious rascal. Much of my thought, I understand now, is establishing *myself*. I am trying to have others think of me as the foremost spiritual leader. I may be going at it in my own way, but I am attempting to get that worship. I will accept it and actually, I am happy when people recognize me as such. I am a great fool and envious of others when they do something like putting themselves as foremost. I have no real claim as foremost. That was also exposed to me; that I am not enthusiastic to spread

Krsna consciousness and not potent—I am lacking in so many areas.

The point on this self-recognition is how I can consciously act humble—knowing my inherent rascaldom and craving for worship and respect. Let me preach on this realization to not attempt to speak or act in order to assert myself as the foremost spiritual *sadhu*. Let me act out of service to Prabhupada.

March [?]

San Diego

Came here for the Sunday feast lecture. A fresh change has me appreciating preaching and wanting to learn verses:

*nunam pramattah kurute vikarma
yad indriya-pritaya aprnoti
na sadhu manye yata atmano 'yam
asann api klesada asa dehah*

—Bhag. 5.5.4

After *mangala-arati* and class, I will return to L.A. and a BTG staff meeting. Trying to create a unified purpose—about twenty people altogether are connected to producing the magazine.

Points to inspire them:

(1) To work on BTG is to be part of the “major *sankirtana* party.” It is to work to distribute 500,000 magazines. BTG is the official journal of the ISKCON movement. Think how BTGs are being taken all over North America, Europe, and India.

(2) Aside from the fact that it is preaching to nondevotees and thus *sankirtana*, it is a very important concern to devotees, especially leaders, but all thoughtful and sincere devotees. We are doing something for *all* of ISKCON. That every devotee has opinions and suggestions about BTG means they are concerned. Therefore, it is important, and we are producing it.

3) Editorial policy—print about Krsna and devotees. Preach boldly as Prabhupada does. I'm having some of the troubles of a new man.

This is being brought in with the new management, but you should be assured that this is the bona fide policy. In other words, our engagement is thoroughly authorized, no matter what anyone may think. Srila Prabhupada and the GBC have sent me; I was the editor for five years. I am a new man, and someone may think I have new ideas or backward ideas, but this is the vote of confidence I have.

All suggestions are welcome, but you have to agree on the basic principles!

Put forward Krsna, preach boldly on the devotees, the philosophy, etc. Not a compromise.

(4) Working—put out the magazine on time. This one is late. You may have to work extra hours. Please don't take it as drudgery.

(5) That's the message of this meeting. Preach: no raise in pay, no pay, no office party, no bonus check, no illicit sex life—but very important, nectarean engagement to be producing Srila Prabhupada's magazine, month after month.

Our relation to L.A. ISKCON: be strict—I am aiming for that. There's new work on BTG. Be dedicated and be good devotees; develop some spirit.

BTG is still an embittered field. Thinking of holding a meeting for all devotees related to BTG and trying to inspire them with these points. Not to make myself the center, but to hold fast to the line I am here to introduce: I am a "dictator" because I have not seen so much enthusiasm for it. If you don't share this conviction, then I cannot share the leadership. As we work together, that will be revealed how we can exchange ideas. A democratic forum is good under these conditions.

April 4, 1977

Dallas

Leaving Dallas for L.A. GBC visit for the weekend. I have a headache, congestion, aches. I've got to shake it and do my service.

The first issue of BTG is almost finished.

April 6

Recovering from illness. But this bodily condition has been persisting since time immemorial. When will I take devotional service seriously and understand the literature of the Six Gosvamis?

Trying a new personal reading schedule, a chapter each day from different volumes of the *Bhagavatam*. I didn't account for the fact that I would read with miserable inattention, however.

Already restless at my BTG position. Be patient, I tell myself.

Feeling my youth as a *sannyasi* fading along with romantic notions of myself as a *parivrajakacarya*, wandering and preaching and making devotees, absorbed in preaching to others at all times. Now after years of trying at college classes, I am set as an editor, and all my preaching is within the ISKCON institution. I have lost almost all taste to preach to young persons and convince them to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I have my magazine to edit—a highly professional task. I lecture in the temple, read essays, talk with devotees, answer the phone, eat *prasada*.

Be patient and pray, I tell myself. If you want to be an inspired preacher in Srila Prabhupada's footsteps, simply pray to be empowered and ready to preach—and *be qualified*. For now—especially this entire year—*do the specific duties* given and do not over-lament.

Chant and hear.

Fall at the feet of the *Bhagavatam* pages. Pray to be lifted out of the muck of sense gratification. Pray to inspire devotees

here to be enlivened on the spiritual platform. Pray to be free of envy yourself.

As for my youth, certainly it is passing. But all chance and opportunity to surrender to Kṛṣṇa is still before me.

Let me do *something*, let me go down as being steadfast in my service. Let me serve. Give me courage, boldness, direction.

From 1944 *Back to Godhead*, by Srila Prabhupada:

. . . fear of being destroyed and killed is an outcome of our association with material nature while in reality we are one with the transcendence. As such we have nothing to fear nor to be destroyed. The body is destructible but the spirit is not. The living entity in the darkness of the Absolute Truth, wrongly identifies with the material nature or "Maya" and concludes himself to be destructible. This causes his fear of being destroyed while actually he is not to be so.

April 17

Berkeley

GBC visit here. It occurs to me I'm getting more sedentary, thinking my thirty-seven years in this body ("old age") is partly the cause. If this is the inevitable case, that I'm less inclined to physical activity as the body grows older, then I have to stay active and productive and engaged with my mind and intelligence. Otherwise, I'll pass in a slow sinking into the grave. I have the magazine to edit, I have temples to manage, and more than anything, I have hearing and chanting (reading Srila Prabhupada's books, *japa*, lectures, hearing his tapes).

There is nothing wrong with being more physically retired if I become more and more absorbed in hearing his tapes, the holy name—memorizing a few more verses, and thus in classes assure the devotees more of their Kṛṣṇa conscious life. Of course, there is not much danger of overdoing this (*bhajanandi*) since being GBC forces me to act in many different cases.

The more I am attached to this body and indulge in the enjoying spirit, the more I will suffer pain and anxiety at the

inevitable time of physical suffering, anxiety, and death. Time passes swiftly—I think anxiously of it, but sometimes look for refuge in temporary consciousness of illusion.

April 18

Today it occurred to me that the desire to distribute Prabhupada's books is the sweetest taste and most secure shelter. My connection as editor of BTG is there, but I have to think of BTG more in those terms. Not that each issue becomes a set formula; I have to meditate how to best preach to the suffering humanity through BTG. It is not that I have to constantly innovate in BTG, but neither make a set formula and become complacent, unengaged in mind while the magazine puts itself together mechanically. Be inspired over the details of BTG, so everything is *pakka*.

Then when attention is turned to the temples in my zone, remember the book distribution taste as well as the well-rounded program of Krsna consciousness taught by Srila Prabhupada. Take shelter in attentive, awake, alert, conscientious, menial service, afraid of sense gratification. Being fully absorbed, you have nothing to fear. Krsna is there.

Berkeley, Portland, now Seattle. Tomorrow Vancouver. Traveling in the Northwest.

April 25

Back in L.A.

Fight the enemy. I fight in BTG. They want to smear our movement in the press, jail us, ruin us, sue us, bury us, but we have Krsna on our side. There will always be victory. We just have to be assured. Krsna is there.

April 27

The devotees who have been compromising BTG have been removed, but now they have formed an agitation party. They went to one leader who was sympathetic to them. My mind has

become agitated by this. The leader's question is how to pacify the disgruntled devotees? I say either they should work with me as I am instituting the policy, or take another engagement. This sustained dissatisfaction—they had a meeting in which they complained that I did not print their type of articles—is simply a disturbance.

Let us put out the magazine. I have a faithful staff who are actually putting out the magazine. I'm not sure how to respond to this agitated group. Should I tell them to keep away? Should I just let them talk on and dissipate themselves? I would like to restrain myself and take the latter course. Go on with my work and worship and let them do their worst. I can't conciliate with them or crush them. Let them go on with their party spirit. I will not compromise with them or anyone else here. Let us do the magazine as ordered by the GBC. Srila Prabhupada—who is the only person I have to please—wrote me only yesterday that Krsna is helping me, that I am sincere and the proper person to edit BTG. They will have to remove me before I print wishy-washy articles. Let them not cloud my thinking. Let their controversy rage on. (So far, it has not gone very far.)

As for them, I will not condemn them openly or behind their backs. Let them do what they want as to their engagement here in New Dvaraka. I am protecting the magazine. If they want to, they can help; if they want to agitate against me, they can also do that. They have free will, freedom of speech. Let them do it and take the results.

Krsna is giving me a taste of political embroilment to see how I will react.

Surrender here. Mind agitated with plans—have the BTG staff go on chanting *kirtana* daily, door-to-door book distribution, traveling *sankirtana*—but perhaps none of these plans will be carried out. At least we have our 6 P.M. class. But after reading Srila Prabhupada's 1961 poem chastising his God-brothers for not going out to preach, I feel guilty that I am not directly meeting and contacting nondevotees, but am living completely within the ISKCON world. That's my engagement now, however. I am speaking to the masses through BTG. My engagement is L.A., BTG, I cannot run away from it. But my

duty is also to travel—so sometimes here, editing the magazine all day, busy, and sometimes acting as GBC in the field.

April 28

It's 2:15 A.M. and I'm wondering whether it's right to speak out in class and say what's wrong with New Dvaraka. We are responsible to each other. The best spiritual environment is required to progress. Each person should purify his own activities or his own group's activities as far as possible. These may be dry words, but if we do not speak, silence means approval. As one devotee said in his class, chanting (remembering) is central to our service.

April 29

Just had an enlightening talk with one leader here. Hope I'm not being naive to say this (don't think I am), but I now much better appreciate his vision and management of New Dvaraka and my role in it.

He feels he has to engage people who are not strict. No one else will engage them. "Should they be rejected?" he asks. Those who are strict have to remain enthusiastic, but as our community grows larger, we also have to accommodate others. As long as they don't break the four rules, speak against authority, or speak Mayavada philosophy, he lets them stay—provided they also do service.

I previously felt my preaching and encouraging people to be strict was a criticism against him, but I now see it as complimentary. He said the preaching to be strict is mercy both on the weak and the strong devotees.

I should keep in touch with him when I have further doubts as to what is going on. I don't think L.A. is sinking to ruin—they are doing good book distribution and Deity worship and press work and doll projects and printing and building carts for a big festival.

As for my work, editing is rewarding as we produce a strong, Krsna conscious magazine, which sets a kind of standard for

Krsna consciousness in all the devotees' minds, and also goes out to every town and village—to make people aware of Krsna.

I'm also anxiously awaiting the suffering due to me, afraid about whether I'll pass the test.

I know the Lord knows my mind even without my expressing it. I pray not to be so foolish as to desire anything outside straightforward Krsna consciousness. I want only to live in this movement, do my part, help the movement as a whole, help protect and preserve it, become purified, become detached and unafraid, become bold and able to preach like Srila Prabhupada does to whomever he meets. He actually preaches the philosophy. It is his very heartbeat—the need to take to Krsna consciousness and to give up material life, to fight the atheistic demons who are misleading everyone. I want to enter *ruci*, taste, and then *bhava*—and then love.

May 9, 1977

Traveling in my zone, Dallas. Now to Champaign, Illinois to meet the book distributors. Yesterday, talking with Laksmi-Narayana dasa. My duty is to manage and push on book distribution as GBC and *sannyasi* by arranging for others to go out and giving them inspiration; that is my book distribution. (Also, my BTG duties are a form of indirect book distribution—I prepare the book or magazine for them to distribute). Yet if I would on occasion (my *regular* duty is really elsewhere) go out on the front lines, it would give me more empathy and realization of the fight these boys are experiencing. Tomorrow is such a day—at least I'll go and observe, like a general on the front. What if the enemy fires on me—will I run and hide?

May 13

En route to Berkeley for weekend

I'm trying to be absorbed in my specific assigned duties with no significant diversion in other "private" duties or projects. Our ISKCON is focused on book distribution. I'm going to Berkeley to try to encourage them in this.

I can describe the simple position of Kṛṣṇa's canvasser who has only to tell people to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Whether they do or not, he has to present Kṛṣṇa and he becomes dearmost to Kṛṣṇa.

In order to do this, one has to be surrendered. This austerity is voluntary—if you don't take it, there will be forced austerity that will be difficult.

Thinking aloud. Got the Northwest zone this year and I'm facing a test with it now. Portland. What to do? One devotee has got a really slow program there. Quite a few suggestions were made by visitors to that temple that he should be replaced. It seems the only way the center could really jump ahead. People say it is a good area too, but he does little book distribution and the temple is dirty, the Deity worship poor, loose talk and loose attendance at the programs. Hardly a fired-up preaching center.

I sent BK there to increase the *sankirtana*, but he was discouraged with the few people there and said the present leader couldn't be worked with. BK quit Portland and came to see me with M, who was a kind of catalyst toward replacing the present leader. BK was eager to go at it, but said he couldn't do much unless he went in with some forces. We were speaking how if a strict, inspired "regime" entered Portland, some of the devotees might leave. We were prepared for it, even if the present leader left. Then I thought, "Let Caru and some Berkeley men and women go." I called Caru and he was all for it. The idea also excited me, because they are enthusiastic book distributors and would probably work the optimum increase of the Portland area. They would make the temple come to life. BK said he would like to go and work a *bhakta* and *harinama* party.

Then Rocana heard and called me. He presented the sad story of how Seattle needed the area. Seattle is a good *sankirtana* team—twelve women ready to go out ten hours a day, trained and dedicated. Now they have lost their airport and have nowhere to go. He presented that Berkeley didn't need an extra area as bad as they did. It is hard to turn a deaf ear to his pleas. They are proven good distributors and are in trouble for

work. Seattle itself has become difficult for them, and if Rocana takes the women traveling, that is also difficult for all of them. It also leaves a woman, Mother Padyavali, in charge of the temple for considerable periods. Rocana drew the picture that Berkeley had lots of area to expand, whereas they were pushed up in the northwest and had nowhere to go. He also said if he went to Portland and took charge, he could work with the present leader, who would not have to leave. He doubted that Caru and the others from Berkeley could move in smoothly. I agreed, but also think that Berkeley could make more of a preaching center out of Portland.

Yesterday I went back and forth. At one point I definitely decided on Berkeley, then was moved by Seattle, then again definitely Berkeley and called back Seattle, and then became convinced it had to go to Seattle. I remained disappointed thinking it should go to Seattle and the Berkeley team not be given a chance to really open up Portland.

I have to decide myself. If I ask Caru or Rocana, they give me their self-interested version.

Is there a plan by which Berkeley could take it, and Seattle also gain for their suffering *sankirtana*? In other words, if Seattle were doing *sankirtana* all right, I'd rather give it to Berkeley. Having to remove the present leader is unfortunate, but Portland shouldn't remain as it is, or only slightly improved, just to keep him there. (Berkeley could handle the incense business, which the present leader is now running.)

I'd like to have as much of my cake as possible and eat it too. Is there a way Seattle could gain along with Berkeley? What if Berkeley gave them a few spots in the San Francisco and Oakland airports.

Follow-up—wonderful breakthrough last night. Rocana and Mother Padyavali called. Seattle is getting so bad that they want to take to the road and do fairs. To reduce the temple's overhead, they want to send the Deities and *gurukula* away.

For the summer travel they will do big *sankirtana*—doing books, sending *laksmi* to the BBT, and saving for their legal case to reopen the airport. Their attitude is that they will go anywhere to do the best *sankirtana*.

Their spirit opens up new cooperation. They suggest the whole Northwest zone sit down and discuss how to expand book distribution—including how Berkeley can increase and expand north, how a festival *harinama* party could go on the road with the present leader—how everyone can—not condemning others—do their own service and expand book distribution and preaching.

May 23

England—en route to India

All GBC members have suddenly been called to Vrndavana to Srila Prabhupada, our lord and master. He is very ill.

As stated in *Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers*, the spiritual master becomes ill when his disciples misbehave; he has to suffer the effects of their karma. Otherwise, he has no karma to suffer, and he is not diseased due to material contamination. He becomes ill for the accumulated karma of many, many disciples. It is also stated that he becomes ill to give his disciples the chance to personally serve him in their devotional service.

I do not have intense feelings of sadness over this. Partly it is because our relationship is eternal—I know if Srila Prabhupada departs he will go to Krsna. For myself, I am mostly dependent on the *vani* or relationship of the spiritual master's instructions without his physical presence.

My own devotional life is not threatened; I have the *maha-mantra*, the books, my service to Srila Prabhupada.

But there is much more than this. There is the love for the spiritual master.

I and the others are proceeding on this confidential mission. He has called us. We shall have to see how he'll engage us this time.

**“My Dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, If You Desire,
Please Cure Śrīla Prabhupāda”
May [?]-August 16, 1977**

With the beginning of this chapter, I started what became almost regular commuting between Los Angeles and India. Each time we were called, there was an urgency that Śrīla Prabhupāda was about to leave his body any day, so we always had the feeling that we should go there and be with him. Then once we were there for awhile, Prabhupāda usually seemed to get better, or our service would call us back to the West, or we would just get restless with the Indian heat and “nothing to do,” and we would reluctantly return to the West. We would get into our duties again, but nothing was really the same, because in the back of our minds it was always there. We would be continually haunted with the thought that Prabhupāda was in his last days and inevitably, after a few weeks, we would start getting “the calling” to return again to India. At that time it would build up and become irresistible. It would overcome all considerations of the cost of travel or the inconvenience of manipulating our schedules so that we could be away for a few weeks at a time. Somehow or other, we would beg the fare money and the volunteers to accommodate service, and people would always be willing to help.

My diaries kept during this time are usually on two distinct subjects: one is on actually being with Prabhupāda, and the other is direct note-taking about the writing project I was engaged in. (This was a writing project as described in *Living with the Scriptures*, Chapter XIV, “Things Undertaken Without Kṛṣṇa Fail,” which was to be a book on utopia and *varṇāśrama*.)

We have edited out much of that note-taking, but it is somewhat odd to read now how my diary switched from this literary work to emotional grief and anxiety about Prabhupāda's condition. As I see it now, I turned to the writing at that time as a kind of undeliberate therapy or a way to deal with the stress. In fact, right up to the very last day of Prabhupāda's life, whenever I wasn't with him in his room, I would go up to the guesthouse and start taking notes on the writing project—attempting a “business-as-usual” activity. It was a way of blotting out, at least temporarily, a situation which I could not really handle.

The meeting with Rūpānuga, Balavanta, Bhagavān, and myself about why ISKCON was not preaching took place spontaneously. It wasn't any kind of GBC agenda item, but we just gathered late one night in a hotel room in New Delhi before we were all going to fly off in different directions. Talks like this among Godbrothers are actually wonderful and can lead to real activity, even more so than meetings where things are officially resolved. Everyone was willing to admit their own shortcoming in the area of preaching, and that candor made it an appealing exchange just on the level of friendship. Aside from the topic itself, there was a mood of genuine, personal encouragement of one another. I wish I could take part in more meetings like that without politics or fear of something being taken away. It was as if we were reminding each other of the main responsibility Prabhupāda had given us, which was something that could be overlooked in the burden of office work and management. Prabhupāda himself had that spark of wanting to convince people to become devotees, so it should have been somewhere within us too. Somehow it had become covered over. We spoke excitedly into the night, remembering that the spark was still within us and promising each other in an informal way to try and follow Lord Caitanya's statement, “Whomever you meet, tell them about Kṛṣṇa.”

The mantra or prayer, “My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You so desire, please cure Śrīla Prabhupāda,” was personally given to us by His Divine Grace. Devotees were making up some of their own sincere prayers and some asked Prabhupāda for prayers

that we could make. In response to our pitiful request, he made this prayer. The prayer is admirable because Prabhupāda didn't ask us to demand of the Supreme Lord, but instead included the phrase, "if You desire." It is another example of Prabhupāda's expertise in training us to appreciate that everything is under Kṛṣṇa's control. Otherwise, it is possible that we might have been strongly praying for something Kṛṣṇa didn't want.

It isn't harmful for a devotee to express his deep emotions, as long as he or she knows that Kṛṣṇa will make the final decision. In this matter of whether Prabhupāda would stay with us longer, Prabhupāda himself seemed to wait for Kṛṣṇa's ultimate decision. In a sense, the prayer seemed to reflect Prabhupāda's own feeling that he would like to stay with us, but if Kṛṣṇa desired otherwise, he would also accept that wholeheartedly. Of course, once we began to recite the mantra, our emphasis was on "My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, please cure Śrīla Prabhupāda."

As the saying goes, I really "got into it" with this mantra. Without trying to practice anything such as constant prayer, and without any knowledge of some of the techniques of ceaseless prayer as have been developed by mystics and saints, I actually began to recite this mantra within myself almost all through the day. I did not chant it aloud, but it was always running through my mind, not mechanically, but with real supplication to Kṛṣṇa. It was an ideal, concise form of the sentiment that we all shared about Prabhupāda and how we thought Lord Kṛṣṇa should act in this case. I would wake with this mantra running through my mind like breathing, and it would come in the middle of the night or when driving in a car, or when talking to others. Of course, the mantra was so much geared to the particular situation that after Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance, the mantra also disappeared. I remember, however, what a hold it had on me, and I can only wish for similar attraction and attachment to the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and to my prayers for devotional service to Prabhupāda.

May [?], 1977

Vrndavana

We arrived in Vrndavana—was it a 15,000 mile nonstop journey?—and Tamal Krishna Goswami told us the position. Srila Prabhupada was not eating, not sleeping, and had written out his will. We should pray and chant and sometimes go in turns to his room to chant and read. My own thoughts are so fallen I am ashamed to even note them here.

He told us that Srila Prabhupada said that our motives were pure.

He told Bhavananda Maharaja that he had called us all together because his disease was fatal—he couldn't eat, so his body was finished. Then there are also rays of hope—a special doctor is being called, and today Srila Prabhupada was talking of preaching. He said Vrndavana is a perfect place to live and a perfect place to die. He said that if Krsna desires, he will get his health and be able to go and preach.

That was the point TKG stressed also, that if Krsna desired, Srila Prabhupada could recover. Otherwise, his sickness, which prevents him from eating, will cause his departure. TKG had said to Srila Prabhupada, "Wouldn't it be an easy thing for Lord Balarama, who maintains the whole universe, to give Srila Prabhupada a little strength to recover?" Srila Prabhupada agreed it would not diminish Balarama to do so.

There is no talk of him being disgusted with us. He did tell Bhavananda Maharaja that we should not become another Gaudiya Math and split up and fight.

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class today, Jayapataka Swami repeated how Srila Prabhupada said that if one loves him, it will be proved by how such a loving devotee will maintain his spiritual position and push on Krsna conscious preaching after his departure.

Previously he had been eager to recover—went to Hrishikesh, tried to be cured by taking *nim* with meals in Bombay. Now he has come to Vrndavana, he has said, to die. Of the two courses, one to prepare to survive and one to prepare to depart,

he has been stressing the worst and therefore has called us all to him.

Bhavananda Maharaja told us that he told Srila Prabhupada how they felt mixed sadness that he was departing, but also joy that Srila Prabhupada should be able to leave this nasty material world and rejoin Kṛṣṇa. They said Srila Prabhupada indicated agreement.

On the one hand, he is very ill; his body has "run out," he is going to die. On the other hand, if Kṛṣṇa desires, he can be saved. What is our position as disciples? TKG says we should not discuss management here in Vrndavana, but should chant and hear, and go and pray and chant before Srila Prabhupada in his room.

I feel there is no sense in my praying hollow words. Kṛṣṇa knows my mind. I will try to chant *japa*, read if I can, and follow the morning program at Krishna-Balaram Mandir. I have no sincerity or depth of love to cry out to Kṛṣṇa, "Please do not take Srila Prabhupada away! Without him we cannot live—our ISKCON will fall!"

When I was in his room chanting and he looked over at me—I could see how he is a compassionate soul, a pure devotee despite the suffering in his body—and I remembered how in 1966 he had saved me by that same compassionate attitude and endeavor as Kṛṣṇa's devotee. I felt how he saved me and brought me to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I felt it very clearly and then I controlled the emotion. I am not here to cry emotional tears. I am here to chant and become purified and let Kṛṣṇa accept me as a surrendered soul—see me as a clear, fit receptacle (not a muddy, body-conscious demon)—and bless me to be fit, for whatever happens here, the survival or departure of our beloved spiritual master.

Being inconvenienced by the heat of Vrndavana and the scarcity of certain foods, my body becomes sluggish and I see how much I am still in body consciousness. I am still thinking of how I can enjoy this body. This is not the proper Vrndavana spirit. Let me strive to purify myself here. My *japa* today was not good. I was preoccupied with material thoughts.

May [?]

Third day here

In these last days, our communication with Srila Prabhupada is that we come into his presence, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and "*Jaya sri-kṛṣṇa-caitanya . . .*" (using only very small hand cymbals), and read aloud from the *Bhagavatam*. I gave the class today in Kṛṣṇa-Balarama Mandir and stressed that when Srila Prabhupada departs, we will have to give his pure devotee quality to others. He is teaching us how to do it. In these last days, as he is with us while we chant very simply before him and read the books without any speculation, later when speaking to others, we will remember and Srila Prabhupada will be with us—as we chant simply and speak the books without speculation.

1:30 A.M.–3:30 A.M. Last night, in darkness on the roof, he listened as we read from *Kṛṣṇa* book at his request. Then he had Rupanuga bring deprogramming clippings from Washington, D.C. and Rupanuga read a prayer he wrote to the higher authorities requesting that Srila Prabhupada be allowed to stay.

Srila Prabhupada: Either way I have no objection to stay or leave. My Guru Maharaja was disgusted, but I like your company.

There's a saying if a *dekhi* (threshing machine) goes to heaven, what will it do there. It's business will be the same.

Srila Prabhupada is feeling a little better. We go and chant before him. At least at that time I pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa, "Please Lord of my heart, please let me be prayerful." Srila Prabhupada's situation is dependent on Lord Kṛṣṇa, yet he has said that perhaps our prayers may be heard.

(Two conclusions I draw: (1) Our coming here to chant has made Kṛṣṇa make Srila Prabhupada well by the medicine of chanting. In one sense, it was a miracle. (2) He has made us prepared for his departure. Taught us the method of chanting and hearing again. Becoming prepared.)

May 30

Last summer, 1976, Srila Prabhupada was visiting Deva-sadana Mandir (Detroit temple). I was the local GBC. I was staying in our *sankirtana* mobile home, parked in the temple yard. One night, Srila Prabhupada called for me. I went in and he asked whether I was writing a book. At that time, *Readings in Vedic Literature* had been completed for at least a year, but I thought he was referring to it and I made some brief statement about it. I remember feeling guilty about being so presumptuous as to be writing a book, since that business should only be for Srila Prabhupada. (Of course, he didn't feel that way. My guilt over book-writing was unwarranted. Guilt is due to my rascaldom on so many accounts. For a disciple to write a book without trying to surpass his spiritual master, but as a preaching service, is not an offense.)

Anyway, we established that the "Vedic Reader" book was finished. He said, "Now write another book." What is that "another book" which Srila Prabhupada specifically called for me to tell me to write? It is, "How Anything Undertaken Without Kṛṣṇa Fails." He had been preaching on that point. We discussed it briefly. Different reformers and institutions, missions, planmakers, etc., have introduced to the world grand schemes for betterment, but they have all failed. We must show that they failed because Kṛṣṇa was not in the center. This will show that Kṛṣṇa is needed as the central element. Gandhi is one example. At the time of his demise, he was disgusted that his plans had failed. Another example is the United Nations: they have failed to realize the goal of their charter. The best example, Prabhupada said, is that if you attempt to water a tree by watering its leaves and branches, it will fail. Water must be applied to the root. One cannot be said to be a success who was vanquished by time, and his plans along with him. This is in fact the history of empires, that they have risen and fallen, failed. Now I have to demonstrate by very good argument how these things failed due to lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness (beginning with a lack of knowledge of the

soul and transmigration in all their schemes, and lack of moral practice, lack of knowledge of God).

My immediate response to this order was to talk of it excitedly with my Godbrothers, but to do nothing about it. It sat through summer and fall without my taking action. As I began thinking of it, I thought it would require a great deal of material research. He wanted a serious work that the non-devotees would have to accept as sound. (The "Vedic Reader" is sound because it is based on sastric reference and it argues that materialistic academicians cannot understand the *Vedas*—a sound proposal, even though written out of religious conviction.)

It seemed if I started reviewing Gandhi's career, for example, and showing his faults as lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it would be taken as sectarian preaching and not appreciated as serious. One thing I have gained more recently is a callous disdain for what so-called objective atheists will think of our strong Kṛṣṇa conscious presentation. "Let us preach in our own way and defy." This disdain, say in the preaching of *Back to Godhead* magazine, is a source of energy for the writers. We certainly want to present our philosophy against the godlessness of Kali-yuga, so we simply present it. Call a spade a spade.

I wrote to Srila Prabhupada saying if I were to do this book, it would require material research. He wrote back, "Yes, go ahead and do it; it will be a great service to the world." So many people are making great schemes; he pointed out how the Indian government was trying to make some model city in Chandigarh and failed. He said, "Go ahead, Kṛṣṇa will supply the research material." With that go-ahead, I began research. I read many books on the philosophy of history, Toynbee, this one, that one. I read and took notes and tried to conceive how I could do it.

How could I show how different things in history had failed because of no Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Then how to show things that succeeded because of Kṛṣṇa consciousness? For this, I wanted to show the Vedic society, but then I thought, "They will never believe that such a society existed."

When I looked into mundane Indian history, there was little to go on. My plan was to show in one section of the book an example of a success, and then the modern failure, say of Gandhi. I became discouraged when I saw that my material research was not going to provide me with a model of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Then—this was in Dallas in December and I was dedicating almost my whole concentration to it—I began to think instead of doing this philosophical writing for which I was untrained and which would take me years and years before I could refute the material theories, and I thought, "Let me instead turn to personal writing." I dropped the whole project of researching in history. (My idea had been to study theistic and atheistic ideas of the meaning of history, so I could refer to them as I gave the meaning of mundane events according to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.) I got very much involved in writing my autobiography in Kṛṣṇa consciousness with fictional overtones, studied a few novels, thought to create a great literature, and then—when I finally arrived in India at Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet—I found I had gone rather astray in my hope to create my own literature and my own concentration in something aside from the direct ISKCON preaching. I abruptly dropped the autobiography, and then in Mayapur, I was given the editorship of BTG. That keeps me busy, but I have not done much writing.

Maybe I can think again of the proper approach to this work, "How Things Undertaken Without Kṛṣṇa Fail." I think to be pure, I should not think so much whether the BBT will publish it or whether it will be accepted by persons of a certain academic, "objective" background; I should preach as truly and boldly as I am able to.

It seems though, that when you write how things without Kṛṣṇa fail, you come in conflict with and challenge material knowledge, so it won't do to simply ignore the material explanations of the failure of something. That does not mean I have to school myself in material theories of history, or if I do so, I find myself unable to become such a scholar of that field. I find myself too diverted. One thing I am already thinking of is

that I could present the perfect society from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, without fearfully looking over my shoulder. Present *varnasrama-dharma*. Perhaps I should try a few related essays before going into the book.

Make it straight preaching, your writing. I want to record here some general feeling about that. I know I can write prolifically, regularly, and in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By now, however, I know there are strict rules governing this writing, both from the viewpoint of writing and rhetoric laws, (laws on essays, etc.) and the laws of devotional service, *parampara*, not surpassing the previous *acaryas*, etc. The most important element is enthusiasm. One has to write something which is purely motivated and purely executed, and he has to be enthusiastic to do so. Then to top it off, if he knows how to write well, and also has some natural gift for it, or attains that discipline of presentation, then it is a good service. Published or not, it is a service to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I have to understand that I am not a great realized soul. Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada are all great souls. In the English language (and also Bengali and Sanskrit) they have written many translations and commentaries of major Vaisnava scriptures, and also essays in their magazines.

The world was in dire need of their writings, and they blessed the world's people by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness based on the *Bhagavad-gita*. Now, I am neither a Sanskrit scholar, a product of Vedic culture, nor a trained philosopher of Eastern or Western thought. Neither am I a realized pure devotee. I am one of the approximately three thousand living, initiated disciples of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada, and thus potent to deliver the intact message of the Gaudiya Vaisnava *sampradaya*. Out of those thousands of disciples, say only a hundred have shown inclination or capability to write. It seems proper that I should develop whatever inclination I have to write for my purification and the purification of others. I can write essays suitable for BTG and also any work, long or short, which I can execute in preaching strong Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Since I am not trained in any special way, I can only try to present the philosophy I have imbibed from my spiritual master, *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and try to establish the way of devotional service. Being American, I should also not avoid trying to enter into the modern consciousness, touching on topics which everyone is more or less aware of nowadays.

"How Things Fail Without Kṛṣṇa" must be important to me since His Divine Grace assigned it to me. It may take years to be able to realize how I can present it in a scope I can deal with, research and deliver to the world. Rather than plunge into it, I think I should first try some more modest essays and get into the regulative habit of writing in devotional service. I should write on something I am already interested in and in which there is ready material to draw from, or do research. I can write in the area of the very personal—coming out of myself and my experience; I can write from the typical issues of the world today, commenting on them from the Kṛṣṇa conscious viewpoint; or I can write from the *Bhagavata* philosophy, explicating texts. Those three areas also mix and cross-reference, and explicating texts can bring out social commentary (as in Srila Prabhupada's *Isopanisad* purports). Personal writing can bring out Vaisnava philosophy as well as social issues.

Vrndavana in the afternoon in May–June. It's certainly well over a hundred degrees. Even the fan in my room is circulating warm air. I told some devotees I was writing and they all became enlivened. They lamented that they were not writing and thought of writing plans they could undertake. Most devotees have an urge to preach in writing. As one who is recognized as being able to do it, I took even more encouragement. Got a good idea to start the book on "How Things Fail"—with Srila Prabhupada's letter to Gandhi. Maybe I could read one book on Gandhi's life, not too much. But do him, analyze how he didn't preach or he would have succeeded. Then go on to Churchill (that was Rupanuga's suggestion). I will do that, picking up the letter in L.A. For now, however, while I am sitting in Vrndavana with time on my hands, let me write a simple essay just to get into the swing of it. I suggested to myself the topic of *varnasrama-dharma*.

June [?], 1977

New Delhi

Bhagavan, Rupanuga, Balavanta and I talking in the hotel room about why ISKCON is not making many new devotees. I don't intend to recall the whole discussion, but certain points were personally significant to me. I don't want to forget.

—Rupanuga said that we as leaders have to have a “lust” to make devotees out of whomever comes to the temple as an interested guest, etc.

—I admitted avoiding such preaching and losing interest in it due to other pressing managerial business and developing the habit of associating only with a few “crony” devotees. This is not good.

—Bhagavan acknowledged that we are the most important preachers in the movement (the leaders). If we abandon this field, then ISKCON will lack the preaching spirit.

—Devotees won't be made automatically by the book distribution. Book distribution will attract them, but then we have to preach.

—We have to preach with conclusive conviction that one should become a devotee.

—Bhagavan says some devotees preach on a “*jnani*” level (of theoretical knowledge) without even asking a person's name or what he does.

—Thus friendly, personal interest in guests as well as new devotees is essential. If it doesn't come from us, it will not come.

—If GBCs become more executive managers and abandon the preaching to convince people to become devotees, the potency will be lost.

—We acknowledged there are many other duties, but one has to have that spirit and desire to make devotees and somehow find time to talk conclusively to people. Ask them, “What is the difficulty in taking to Krsna consciousness?” Or to new men, remind them why they are here—to become initiated devotees of Srila Prabhupada.

—A program to make new devotees was advised by Rupa-nuga: to distribute free books, by preaching.

—They were encouraging me to preach against slack behavior in L.A. We know due to that, the spiritual master becomes ill.

—Srila Prabhupada taught us in intimate exchange the importance of chanting and hearing (in his presence).

I have to be convinced and to preach to others in a missionary spirit. I must encourage them to join this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement to make their lives perfect and to help others. (We are out of practice in this, but we have to relearn it. Not just as "jñanis" in a "take it or leave it" mood, but as missionaries.)

June 6

Back in L.A.

On strict preaching at New Dvaraka:

It is our eternal preaching (to become strict or serious—to inspire the devotees to become so).

We tend to forget the precepts themselves or become lax in their practice.

How many remember the fate of Chota Haridasa? Or Lord Caitanya's injunction to those in the renounced order?

Neophytes even try to change precepts: "There is a letter that says we can have sex with our wives." Where is that letter? Produce it! We can produce many quotes that having sex with one's wife other than for having children is illicit.

We are strict because time is running out and we have to be free of material desire to achieve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. *Vairagya-vidya-nija-bhakti-yoga*.

June 17

News that Srila Prabhupada is feeling better.

June 26

Why not work on writing every day, going to the library as necessary? Time passes quickly and I should try to make a contribution to Kṛṣṇa conscious literature before I pass away. Discipline myself to research, shaping materials, and writing so that I can do it more and more in the future. Not out of attachment, but as Śrīla Prabhupada has indicated, it is a Vaisnava *sannyasi*'s duty to humanity. With this service before me, do not say I have no preaching engagement.

July 1, 1977

Culver City Library, California

I'm seen as a faithful devotee and certainly feel myself a loyal disciple of Śrīla Prabhupada. My journals, though, are always filled with an uncertainty of what kind of service to perform and a feeling of dissatisfaction—mostly in myself.

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement requires a commitment of body, mind, and words. According to Rupa Gosvami, one needs enthusiasm and patience as one's foremost qualities.

I suppose each one of us reaches a certain compromise in his devotional service. Sometimes when I see my lack of greatness, my lack of total surrender, I wish I could go further. Then sometimes I see that further surrender or further greatness is not in my power. Then I take to slow, patient progress, cultivating what virtues I do possess in devotional service. I live as a compromised devotee, a not-totally-surrendered devotee, and there is a humiliating grind to this. Then this grind is endured and seems to produce a kind of self-subdued patience and humility which is also favorable in devotional service. In other words, I'm going forward, but at a second-class rate.

I'm in my dilemma as a top leader, a GBC *sannyasi*, and also a most senior member of ISKCON in terms of years and age. My duties are leadership—but the only way I seem able to lead is by example. What example shall I set? Where I don't set a truly good example it hurts me.

The main thrust of our movement is book distribution. I'm not behind that main thrust. I'm not going out.

What I'm getting to: to turn to book-writing, I would have to put a great deal of energy into it. Because of this guilt at not distributing books, I doubt the writing project and see it partly as an escape from preaching. To turn to writing would bring me even more away from direct contact with nondevotees. My preaching would be all mental.

I think after a time, when years pass, if I can produce something significant for ISKCON—books asserting our philosophy which are accepted by intelligent readers as convincing—that would be a nice offering to Kṛṣṇa.

This would be compatible with the BTG editing. I will have to pray for the determination to do it and come up with a real Kṛṣṇa conscious document, showing welfare work without Kṛṣṇa is all failure.

July 2

Reading Gandhi's religious beliefs is certainly difficult. His statements against Kṛṣṇa are ignorant. He should not have spoken them. He says some things in favor of temple worship, of religion being realized in practice, and he firmly supported cow protection. These things are good, but even they have flaws in them.

Just read a couple of hours. The book will come by Kṛṣṇa's grace. The order came from His Divine Grace, so it is understood it will be successful, as with any spiritual order, if I sincerely try to carry it out. I was even comparing it to book distribution, *tapasya*. It's very difficult and I cannot convince anyone to take a book, but if I persist, Lord Caitanya will send me the right person. Let me persist at trying what seems extremely difficult to do: show that "the great person" did not understand Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. Show that knowledge of the self as spirit soul and Kṛṣṇa as Supreme is not an orthodox Hindu dogma external from religion," but the goal of human life. Gandhi missed it and missed the advanced real-

ization. We are always trying to prove, ultimately, that one should surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

We preach differently according to the audience. Sometime we are only trying to prove there is a Supreme. With Gandhi we are already involved in issues of Truth ("God is Truth") and our preaching has to be cleverly planned to lead step-by-step to the most convincing conclusion that we think we can make (as in *Readings in Vedic Literature*, I introduced Kṛṣṇa through the word "Bhagavan," then through the *Gita*). I have to find a formula in this book to introduce step-by-step arguments. With Gandhi, as with *Readings in Vedic Literature*, the *Gita* can be a key. (I should know his views very well and trip him up as Srila Prabhupada tripped the Sikh Yogi Bhajan in conversation.)

The reader can see I represent a viewpoint, but as I argue it he may have to largely accept it, or at least admire it as a bonafide presentation.

A great deal of practical meditation has to go on here. For now, keep thinking out loud and reading about Gandhi and the others. Kṛṣṇa will reveal the relationships and the form of argument. If He desires, keep that faith. Act on it. The book will be a testimony of my faith, either weakly stated as theoretical or convincing right from the heart—*without* Kṛṣṇa; they have done such wrong! They have to be seen in that light by the reader, as logically in error, devoid of intelligence *mudha*. That is Lord Kṛṣṇa's version. It will require "original inspiration" to present it in this context.

July 5

Looking forward to meeting with Subhananda to organize this book. In the meantime, I have to know Gandhi's thinking in breadth and depth if I'm actually going to discuss him. Know him well so I won't say cheap things against him but can argue clearly what he did wrong—namely, failed to center on Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I have to focus and pay attention to Gandhi. At the same time, I shouldn't

dwelling on him as a mundane critic or picayune "theological" debater would, but manage to preach the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

July 17

Subhananda arrived yesterday. In our first meeting, he suggested a title, "Beyond Utopia," the Vedic ideal civilization. A serious, thought-out complete work on the Vedic view of how society should be, giving all Srīla Prabhupāda has in his books and researching mundane utopias. How specific to get in problem-solving? Chapters on what's wrong in our cheating, animalistic society. My mind is keyed up, anxious to begin this. A major work—it will take a long time to do.

July 28

Lately I've been thinking I should go and be with TKG and Srīla Prabhupāda. I would go if invited for the purpose of writing the biography of His Divine Grace. Otherwise, I'll stay here, writing at least through January.

August 4, 1977

Just received word that Srīla Prabhupāda is "worse than ever" in ill health—dropsy. He has given us a prayer to say:

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire,
please cure Srīla Prabhupāda.

My response is so poor I won't even put it in writing, but I will say the prayer and engage in my preaching. Preaching cures him.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire,
please cure Srīla Prabhupāda.
My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire,
please cure Srīla Prabhupāda.

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.
 My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.
 My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.

August 8

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.

August 9

Thought this morning of going to be with Srila Prabhupada.

Thought of writing an essay for BTG on human rights, especially in the context of President Carter's foreign policy. After recording a few articles on the subject, however, it appears very difficult.

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.
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 My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.

August 11

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
 please cure Srila Prabhupada.

Now I am thinking I should go to India and render service to my spiritual master as he is very ill. Three months ago, all GBC members rushed to his bedside in Vrndavana. Then he

made all legal preparations for his departure. But he appeared to recover a little and thus we left him. New word is that he is "even worse," but we have not been ordered to gather. Everyone is encouraged to push on with the book distribution. Devotees are preaching to each other that we can best serve Srila Prabhupada and show our love for him by cooperating. Our union with him is assured even if in separation of his physical presence.

Still, I think I should go. I heard that a couple of GBC men were going and I gradually grew in conviction that I should go. Why?

I want to see him. I know there is little hope I can make any unusual, rapid advancement, given my reluctance to surrender to any difficult task, but I want to go and serve him as a menial servant of his servants, clean his room, fan him, massage him if allowed, and be with him.

I'm feeling my shortcomings in not being with him at this time, knowing he may disappear at any time and we have the rest of our lives to live without his presence. For now he is still with us, though indications are that he is closer, closer to departing. Let service in separation be taken up later when there is no alternative. Now let me be with my spiritual master.

I am among the privileged few who are allowed to enter into his immediate presence, and if I ask, I will probably not be denied direct bodily service along with his secretary and servant. Now I should also take advantage of this privilege.

Also, I want to be with him in order to intensify my feelings and impressions of him as my master before too soon we have only his books to guide us. We can say it's true that all he wanted to say is in his books, but there is also a time when there is no substitute to relieve the anxiety of not seeing him. He saved me ten years ago, eleven years ago.

The *vapuh* (physical presence) is only sometimes manifest, whereas the *vani* (teachings) is eternal. If the former is temporary, let me serve him while I can! As I write this, I'm more convinced that I want to go.

Tomorrow to Atlanta from L.A. to attend Ratha-yatra. Then Balavanta and I will go to N.Y.—Delhi—Vrndavana. I've made up my mind. Book-writing can wait.

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
please cure Srila Prabhupada.
My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
please cure Srila Prabhupada.

Who cares for the drama of my life? I am insignificant and only of value if I serve without any false prestige the drama of Srila Prabhupada's Krsna consciousness movement.

It is his movement, his books, his ISKCON, his lecturing, his *sannyasa*—all his. He started it, maintains it, upholds the goal. Yes, it is also Krsna. Not just Indian culture which he has turned over to us. But for him, nothing. Still lost without him. Cease to please him, offend him, and even now you can be locked out of Krsna's grace. Everything in our spiritual organization is him or his. No wonder I feel I can be renewed in my sense of connection to service and realization of service if I go to the center and bow at his feet and do for him whatever service he so kindly allows me.

August 15

Atlanta

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire,
please cure Srila Prabhupada.

Leaving for New York tonight, Pan Am flight for Delhi. We are bound for Vrndavana for *darsana* and menial service to His Divine Grace.

August 16

Tehran Airport

Three or four hours from Delhi. We are going to serve Srila Prabhupada. There is so much service to do on his behalf in spreading Krsna consciousness, but we are asking to do some

personal service for him now in his illness. We do not expect that he will be speaking so much. He has paid so much attention to us; we want to pay attention to him and aid him as far as possible. He doesn't need such service; we are asking him further favors—please let us stay awhile, close by you, and do some service with your secretary and servant so that we can be close to you. That is our proper attitude this time in coming to Vṛndavana.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire,
please cure Srila Prabhupada.

“These Are My Last Days” August 17–November 13, 1977

The following section speaks for itself. It is another diary, similar to many diaries that were kept by Prabhupāda’s disciples during the last months and weeks leading up to his disappearance from the world in November 1977.

* * *

August 17 India

Taj Express to Mathura. How wealthy we are with our hundreds of rupees, riding first-class, American bodies. When will I realize I am not this body?

As of now, we do not know the condition of Srila Prabhupada’s health. I fall far short of the proper responses of a disciple. He is the most rare personality in this world. Most human lives do not seem worth much. What do they accomplish in the end?

Prabhupada—*sa mahatma su-durlabhah*. Even saints sometimes fall short. He doesn’t.

Arrive in Vrndavana

Srila Prabhupada sitting on *vyasasana* in the courtyard, *gurukula* boys dancing before him. He asked for us afterwards. We went to his room, dark and cool. He sat on his bed. Madhudvisa and Sruta-kirti were there. Of course, Madhudvisa had

left our movement for some time. Now he was shaved up. “Don’t leave us,” Srila Prabhupada said to him feelingly. He said, “You can stay as a *grhastha*, but don’t leave us.” He also said my name and Balavanta’s.

Then we were called in during his massage and he preached. He said feelingly that he liked “your magazine” (BTG) and liked the column “Srila Prabhupada Speaks Out.” “Now you have?” I said, “Yes, ‘Srila Prabhupada’s Disciple Speaks Out.’” “Yes,” he laughed. “I have given it that name.” He told how Hamsaduta challenged this Dr. Kovoor in a public hall to “produce a mosquito.”

It is a new kind of civilization, he said. Not a single person is any good in the present civilization (he made a sour face). Not a single person. How can they be *dhira*, sober, to understand? *Dehino ’smin*. In India we see a dead body burnt, but the self goes on. They can’t understand it because they’re not gentle. They think gentleman means hat and coat, but if they maintain slaughterhouses, how are they civilized?

“I am stressing the farm projects,” he said. Show ideal life. Brahminical class.

He told us the astrologers said he would live eighty-one years, five months—until February 1977. Tamal Krishna Goswami said that his illness is psychological and subtle. A few days ago he was very bad. Gurukrpa Swami brought a sapphire ring and twelve men with him, and Srila Prabhupada has improved. He was talking of going to the West. TKG said the love of his disciples there would make him well. Srila Prabhupada said, “Yes, I think you are right.”

From TKG:

SP: What is the use of slow death?

TKG: The astrologer said you may live.

SP: Yes, it is possible, but it depends on Krsna’s desire.

TKG: Is Krsna’s desire indicated?

SP: Yes, I think Krsna wants me to live.

When letters were brought he said, “Good news?”

TKG: Book distribution.

SP: That is real good news.

TKG read the BBT newsletter and he listened with full attention to all of it. Very pleased, absorbed, sometimes shaking his head, smiling. Heard entire long letter from Ghanasyama.

Srila Prabhupada is very thin. We watched through the doorway as he ate his lunch. He takes a little of his vegetable on his *capati* and eats here and there. He eats about three fourths of a *capati* and a little vegetables.

Today is the beginning of Jhulana-yatra. Thousands of pilgrims are coming to the Vrndavana temples.

August 18

Suddenly Srila Prabhupada said he definitely wants to travel to the West to the Pennsylvania farm. As for his health condition, he said, "The worst thing that could happen is death and I am not afraid of that." The horoscope allows it as it said he could not travel until August 10, and then only if a physician said he was improved (which he did). He wants a cooler climate. He said he is slowly dying here. TKG said he would like the presence of so many devotees in the West. They are planning to book tickets immediately.

TKG called us in and then we went into Srila Prabhupada's room. It was time to read his mail. TKG said we had been discussing his proposed trip to the West. Srila Prabhupada asked, "So?" TKG said we each had different opinions. Then Srila Prabhupada asked, "What was the conclusion?" TKG said that we agree he would be enthused if he could travel. Srila Prabhupada agreed and said, "Let there be change, good or bad. I've decided. Let me go. I've tried to be cured here for the last six months." TKG said, "This is one cure you haven't tried—going to the West." "Yes," said Srila Prabhupada, "it is 'psychological enthusiasm.'" TKG said, "We have to be your brave charioteers and take you into the battle." Srila Prabhupada said, "Maybe battle, maybe heaven." He said, "I've decided. Now you somehow or other take me there." He wants TKG and Abhirama to go to Delhi and come back with all the arrangements made.

Srila Prabhupada said, "I have still a taste for milk, a little taste, so it is not hopelessness. In the New York farm I'll get sufficient milk." Everyone assured him there'd be enough milk to bathe in. Sukadeva and Madhavendra Puri took only milk. The weather there will be very nice.

Ramesvara Swami's letter was being read, describing that the BBT was prepared to do double printing and double distribution if Srila Prabhupada could translate. Srila Prabhupada said with strength, "It is for this purpose that I am going to the Western countries. I will finish *Bhagavatam* before I come back to India. If I get a little strength."

Last night 3:30–5:30 A.M. was my turn to attend Srila Prabhupada. I helped him get up and go to the bathroom. (He first asked for a "stick" and I didn't know he meant a cane—spent a frantic half-minute looking for a "stick"). Then I got inside the mosquito net with him and massaged his feet and legs for about an hour while he slept. I felt my miserable self becoming purified by this service; it drives away all casual attitudes, speculation over what I shall do next in Krsna consciousness. It becomes obvious—serve the pure devotee.

At 5:30 A.M., TKG came in to relieve me and said that now Srila Prabhupada has decided not to go to the West until after the first week in September, since that is the crucial week according to the astrologers. He wants to see if he can maintain his strength through that period and then he'll go.

August 19

Now again we hear His Divine Grace wants to leave as soon as possible. "I'm disgusted," he said. "These *kavirajas* come, say they will get me well in four days, and then later they say it will take a long time." Srila Prabhupada's "green card" for permanent residence has expired and was not renewed. Now it is a great difficulty to renew it. Still he says he can go to the U.S. "Just get me out of here," he asks TKG. He is now ready to overlook the inauspicious astrology.

Today we went into his room with the mail. He looked around at the six or seven of us who had entered and said

something in greeting. I think he said, "You are all Vaisnavas." He looked at me, he looked at each of us. One devotee wrote a prayer in his letter that all devotees were praying and hoped Krsna would respond. "Surely," said Srila Prabhupada, "I'm practically living on your prayers. I haven't eaten in the last six months. Simply on your prayers."

There was mention of deprogramming in a letter. He said, "This is barbaric—what is this? In America? The country of freedom?"

In response to Ravindra-svarupa's letter to an editor, he said, "We are preaching, 'Become obedient to God. As a good citizen is obedient to the state, so be fully obedient to God.'"

He seemed pleased to see all the devotees in his room. As we were leaving, it was like old times being with Srila Prabhupada. But he has said, "These are my last days." When asked if he should finally be consulted on what kind of building should be built for the museum in D.C., he said, "It is not necessary." I thought, "Now we shall have to use all our intelligence and ourselves fully carry out what he has taught us."

Tonight on the roof, incense billowing out of the clay pot, two devotees were massaging his legs while he lay back in bed, one massaging his head. Later, he sat up. I mentioned to him Berkeley's plan for a Govardhana-puja festival with the live cows and a feast of only milk products. He said it was "a good idea." Then he said the cows should be decorated and ornamented.

He's asking about direct flights to London, but he had to be carried to the bathroom in a chair. No translating for weeks. Balavanta has gone to the U.S. to try to renew Srila Prabhupada's permanent residence card.

August 20

We went in at 2 P.M. while TKG read Prabhupada his mail. Vegavan dasa wrote from Sweden saying that Srila Prabhupada's illness and his relation to it as his disciple was confusing, but he knew he should "stop all sinful acts and

thoughts and engage 100% in your service." Srila Prabhupada nodded and verbally confirmed that this was a right attitude.

Hearing a letter from South America that devotees were praying for him, he said, "I think I will have to stay. Krsna is very kind. He's *bhakta-vatsala*. So many devotees are praying. It cannot be frustrated." "I think this is why I'm feeling inspiration to go out. In this condition, anyone else would prepare for death and I'm going on tour."

"I don't think of it as sentiment," he said. Krsna is actually present as the Krsna consciousness movement. I'm not without Vrndavana wherever I go to our temples. (He gave permission for the Swedish temple to be called New Radha-kunda; it has two lakes.)

Pancadravida Swami wrote that he would exchange his youth for Srila Prabhupada's old age. "We are the same age," Srila Prabhupada said. "Body has nothing to do with *atma*. In Vaikuntha world we are all the same age. New life, new boys, *nava-yauvana*. Outward dress doesn't affect . . ."

He replied to Pancadravida's letter: "May Krsna give you a long life to preach Krsna consciousness. You are our future hope."

On hearing that the authorities in Mexico gave us permission to hold Ratha-yatra: "Mlecchas and yavanas are giving all obstruction. Here they have (however) given all facility. How Krsna is kind."

He gave permission for putting his *murti* on the Ratha cart and a full-size *murti* of him on a *vyasasana*, while another may be put on the altar. It can be treated as we treat his picture.

Vaikuntha spirit—even in the dirt he finds divine spirit.

August 21

The 3:30–5:30 shift consisted of forty-five minutes of massage. Today I went with R.V. and three *gurukula* boys, and we deposited the cremated remains of Jayananda Prabhu into the Yamuna, per Srila Prabhupada's order given last night.

As we entered the room at 3 P.M. to hear TKG read him his mail, Srila Prabhupada said, "If in the world there is one Vaisnava, he can deliver all the world."

I said, "You are that one Vaisnava, Srila Prabhupada."

Srila Prabhupada: You become. Each of you. Why not?

Gurukrpa Swami: We can try.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, try. Do not imitate. Follow, not imitate.

Evening

TKG, Sruta-kirti, and I arrived on the roof where Srila Prabhupada was lying on his back on his cot, wearing sunglasses. TKG said, "I have good news." Srila Prabhupada said, "Bring me good news and give me life." Abhirama had obtained Srila Prabhupada's passport in Delhi, which meant he could now travel to London. Srila Prabhupada was so ecstatic he began applauding, clapping his two hands and crying out. Abhirama had also consulted the astrologer, who reported that for Srila Prabhupada to travel West would be good. He should travel on the 29th and it would be good for him. Srila Prabhupada was extremely pleased to hear this good news and he seemed to take on new life. He began speaking a history of all his preaching in the West.

He said, "I have thousands of fathers in my disciples. Who can take better care of one than his father? An affectionate father. All you boys and girls are so affectionate. It is Krsna's mercy. When you were born and when I was born—no one knew each other. By Krsna's arrangement we are now tied up. You are all praying for my life, and I am praying to live (for you)."

He began to think ahead to London, living it as he spoke. He asked Sruta-kirti if he was there last time "with me." He recalled the Radha-Krsna Deities in London. "An innocent boy," he said about the Krsna Deity. TKG reminded him how they had obtained Him. They were about to open the temple and had no Deity. He was going to use his small Deities. "It was unexpected. We were in a hopeless condition. Krsna said, 'Here, accept.'" He thought of the lawn in front of his room. He

said now that Gaurasundara and Madhudvisa had come, these are good signs. "Mistake there may be, but it can be rectified. At the same time, be very careful not to commit mistakes." (As he spoke, at first his voice was tiny and weak, but it grew in strength).

"Kṛṣṇa never forgets a person who does a little service," he quoted from *Caitanya-caritamṛta*. "Even if there is some mistake. *Kaunteya pratijanihi*—a little service, He'll never forget." TKG said, "You also never forget." Śrīla Prabhupada said, "How can I forget? You have all helped me execute the mission of Lord Caitanya and my Guru Maharaja. I always pray to Kṛṣṇa to give you . . . I am insignificant, I can't. But I pray to Kṛṣṇa to give you."

After installing the Deities in Australia, he said, "I thought these *mlecchas* and *yavanas*, what will they do? But the next time I went there I saw . . ."

"Try to do everything nicely and Kṛṣṇa will help. Whatever I've done (has been on this principle), whatever my Guru Maharaja said, I repeat to the best of my capacity. Especially in L.A. and N.Y., I feel at home in N.Y. In N.Y. I began."

Improved situation as Balavanta reached Calcutta by phone and learned that Abhirama was on the way with Prabhupada's passport, visa, and letter from the Consul granting permission for extension of his green card. Now Śrīla Prabhupada can leave at once. He called me in to re-emphasize that he doesn't even want to wait a full week until the 29th. We cannot communicate this to TKG who is in Delhi, due to the impossible phone system. We think there will be a delay of three or more days to get clearance out of the country for TKG and Upendra, Śrīla Prabhupada's secretary and servant. We suggested that Śrīla Prabhupada could travel to London only with Śrūta-kīrti, who can leave at once. Śrīla Prabhupada immediately approved that. He said he was prepared to go that very instant, as he sat on his bed, ready to go off to London. It was refreshing to see Śrīla Prabhupada so independent. He said, "Yes, Śrūta-kīrti is my old servant. He knows all details, as does Upendra, or any one of you." *Jaya* Śrīla Prabhupada. Kṛṣṇa is keeping him alive, and all the prayers of His loving devotees are influential. Śrīla

Prabhupada's own expressed desire is to go to the West until he can complete the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. It is a great, exciting, transcendental drama how Srila Prabhupada is going beyond the considerations of his weak health, and by sheer spiritual power and prayers is maintaining strength.

"All glories to the Vaisnavas," he said again today when we entered the room to read him his mail.

August 23

TKG returned. Srila Prabhupada is scheduled to leave Saturday, five days from now. Various formalities are required for his entrance to England. Now he says he very much wants to live. I walked him to the bathroom on my shift today. First I had to pick him up in my arms to a sitting position in his bed. He is so weak.

August 26

Srila Prabhupada is scheduled to leave at midnight tonight to catch a 4:00 A.M. plane to London. I'm trying to see him off. I remember once in Boston I said I couldn't go to the airport to see him off and he said, "That is not important." We are planning to drive to Delhi along with those who are traveling with him. My plan is to go separately, after a few days in Delhi, to New York.

August 27

We rode to Delhi in a three-car caravan. Srila Prabhupada was in the second car, a Mercedes, and the entire back seat was made into a nice bed with mattress, quilt, and pillow. There was an enthusiastic *kirtana* at the front gate by all the Vrndavana devotees as Prabhupada was leaving after six months at this temple. By 2:30 A.M. we arrived at Delhi airport.

Bhavananda Maharaja was there from Calcutta. Srila Prabhupada was taken to a private room in the airport, a tiny room in which about ten devotees joined him, sitting on either

side of him and on the floor. His secretary offered Srila Prabhupada to stretch out on the couch. He shook his head no, fingering the beads in his bead bag, silently chanting, sitting upright. He noticed me I think, made a motion with his head. It was a wonderful experience just to sit with him. His feet were slightly swollen, resting in sandals, his hands also slightly swollen. There was no need for him to talk. This was fully satisfactory. He has spoken so long and given us himself in his books.

I sometimes have difficulty in the social, political peer pressure from his close guides, but tonight I concentrated simply on looking at Srila Prabhupada and thinking, "Yes, I am not a very, very important, intimate disciple like them, but my relationship with you, Srila Prabhupada, does not wait upon their permission or their interpretation of you. I have my own relationship with you, and that relationship, having a past and a present, also has a future. You have said, 'How much you love me will be demonstrated by how you cooperate after I leave.' So I *pledge cooperation*. It is also important for me to realize, however, that I can understand my relationship with you and carry out your order, within ISKCON, without it being dependent on—offered or withheld by—any of your disciples. With this understanding I can cooperate with the GBC members and yet weather the differences and difficulties that arise among us. I will try not to speak against or judge others, but let me also go on with my own heartfelt obedience to you, with faith in direction and growth. There is, I feel, so much more to come."

September 2, 1977

Back in L.A., recovered from "jet lag," spent two days of hard work in BTG office getting the magazine into shape. I told the staff today of my decision to spend more time in Dallas for preaching. Now I am planning a Northwest tour: Seattle, Vancouver, back to L.A., and then to Dallas by September 15. Stay on in Dallas with visits to L.A. The reason I want to go to Dallas is to increase preaching.

September 5

Seattle—Janmastami

Please remember! I am a minor personality, a tiny living being. I may have to act big or small before others, but I have to know this myself. I have my own inner life. I exist as an individual, alone in relation to Kṛṣṇa. In that position, not bluffing. I exist in relation to Kṛṣṇa.

Just off alone chanting *japa*. No real feeling for Kṛṣṇa, so why am I feeling nice? It must be the slightest shadow of the holy name.

I'm planning to go to Dallas as a base; shall I go out and lecture, or stay alone and write and read? The answer is both.

It's quite certain Prabhupada wants a preaching movement, a preaching devotee. But "purity is the force."

"Do everything." "Do both." "Do everything as I am doing."

Even when Srila Prabhupada is preaching he keeps his regular schedule with time to himself for preaching, to his servant, secretary, and entourage, and always his two or so hours of solitude late at night when he gives himself to the world by dictating the Bhaktivedanta Purports. Follow this "both" and "everything" philosophy.

September 10

Was planning to go to Dallas. Dravida pleading "don't go." Three women who type BTG write me "don't go." Mandalesvara advises me, "Have heart. Stay and fight it out in L.A. Your influence will win out in the long run. Don't quit." So I think I'll stay. Want to dive into writing.

September 12

I dove. I'm in the ocean. Sure, just at the beach, but it is the ocean. Now if I can swim or man the boat.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire, please cure Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada is so ill and weak he calls himself "a dead man," but he is greatly inspired by devotees preaching and he is also showing us how much he loves us.

September 26

L.A.

Now we hear again that Srila Prabhupada's health is in crisis, "the worst." He is lying on his back and even to turn is a great effort. His secretary has called saying that all GBC men should come to Bombay at the end of October for the grand opening of the temple there.

September 30

Srila Prabhupada is on his way to Vrndavana. "I think I will leave any day. I think it is time. I will go to Vrndavana." The opening of the Bombay temple is postponed. GBC members are going to be with him; more than ever it seems like the last time to see him and be with him. Srila Prabhupada said he had no objection if devotees came to see him. "I have no objection. We have a nice new building. They can live in our *gurukula*." He plans to leave. What about the prayer, "My dear Lord Krsna, if You so desire, please cure Srila Prabhupada?" Now more than ever, pray. Krsna can cure Srila Prabhupada if He wants, but materially speaking it seems to be the end. He is going to Vrndavana with that in mind. I'm leaving from here, Los Angeles, tomorrow morning.

October 1, 1977

I'm in the Air India waiting room—again. Almost no ready awareness or feeling of what I am doing, but moving myself to be with Srila Prabhupada. On the airplane from L.A. I wrote fourteen pages of an essay.

October 2

Vrndavana

We arrived and heard that there is a slight improvement. They thought he was going to leave his body at any moment. Everyone was called to be here at the end. Now it is a little

different. The *kaviraja* came today, looked at Srila Prabhupada, and said his life is finished, but Srila Prabhupada himself has said Krsna may continue his life if He desires. I got here ahead of the others, but they're bound to show up in a few days. Hopefully His Divine Grace will improve in their presence.

TKG showed me a daily log they keep of what "food" he takes and what he passes as urine. He drinks about two glasses of liquid a day. Has not had more than that daily or any solid food for months. I'll be doing some of His Divine Grace's correspondence. TKG says that without a shirt on, Srila Prabhupada is so thin you can see the thumping of his heart. Hardly any flesh. I saw him lying in bed, very thin, but they are more hopeful today than they were.

Talk of a big Vrndavana *parikrama* here around October 15. Rocana and I will have to go back in about two weeks for the trial.

I saw Srila Prabhupada lying down. He is more diminished in his body than ever. He has four servants: Abhirama, Upendra, Kuladri, and Bhakti-caru Maharaja—or Hari Sauri—and one is always with him.

ISKCON leaders will be coming. He may stay on for months—who knows? We wish he may stay and somehow do translating. TKG told us that Srila Prabhupada said the completion of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* can be done by Pradyumna dasa. He will do the translations and if he has something to say, he can write it down.

October 3

*I'm trying to behave and avoid Vaisnava aparadha and dhama-
aparadha. I feel intimidated by some of our big ISKCON
leaders, but at the same time, they are completely dedicated to
Srila Prabhupada and ready to serve him in difficult places in
the world. I am aware that they do not control my devotional
service by their remarks or opinions. At the same time, I
should respect them and do my service with an inclusive con-
sciousness that I am also serving them. For myself, as much as*

possible, I should try to control my tongue so I don't join them when they crudely faultfind others; and don't go from one gathering to another criticizing different devotees according to which group I am with.

Another part of good Vaisnava behavior. The GBC and other leaders were summoned to Vrndavana by an emergency message that His Divine Grace was about to depart from this material world at any moment. I'm one of the first to arrive here, and while Srila Prabhupada's health hasn't improved any, there is some hope that he will continue to live indefinitely. Now when the GBC and temple presidents arrive, they may feel they were called unnecessarily. Srila Prabhupada's departure is not so definite. This produces an awkward consciousness which unless controlled, becomes offensive. The leader thinks, "At great cost and sacrifice to my main preaching work, I have come here because I wanted to be present if His Divine Grace is going to leave us. But now we don't know when he will leave us. We shouldn't have been called." He may even think it would have been worth it if Srila Prabhupada were to actually leave. This almost amounts to wishing he would leave, which is the worst offensive mentality. I'm sure the devotees who come will realize that Srila Prabhupada is weaker than ever, and it is certainly right that they have come to see him out of anxiety that his disappearance is imminent. If we keep having to come see him every few months in India, that would not be wrong. Most of us will stay a week or two and return.

I'm just writing this down here for my own benefit to be very careful not to indulge in fault finding or *prajalpa* with different cliques of devotees, and also to be alert to control my mind so I don't fall into any offensive mentality such as the above-mentioned death wish. Despite any inconvenience to my schedule or plans, I should take the full opportunity of being in Vrndavana with Srila Prabhupada during his last days. Don't feel threatened by others. Pray to Krsna to cure Srila Prabhupada.

Hamsaduta Maharaja said he read a purport where Srila Prabhupada wrote that when the *acarya* comes, he brings order to chaos, but when he leaves, the chaos returns.

Srila Prabhupada is far less active than a month ago. No longer speaking, no walking, no solid food, no positive will to go and preach in the West, no expression of fervent desire to live. We're doing all-night chanting vigils by his bed. Not to mention no more walks, no more work on the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, no touring temples, nor answering mail.

One point I meant to make on starting this entry: although I find some of the top ISKCON leaders to be sometimes crude, they have more potency and direct leadership than I. That's a fact, so don't get too smart. But, I want to keep the position I have, minor as it is. I am not going to be influenced by the big-timers. I want to stay at BTG and the writing, now centered in the Western world headquarters, New Dvaraka, and keep my own personality and manner.

Srila Prabhupada called in the GBC members to chant for him: me, Hamsaduta, and Brahmananda Swamis. He couldn't see us; Brahmananda Swami told him who was present. He lay back and listened. Hamsaduta Maharaja led the singing with little hand cymbals. This went on for an hour. He was asked if he wanted different things to drink; he refused. Hamsaduta Maharaja and Brahmananda Swami cried, because if he doesn't eat or even drink, how can he continue to live?

Suddenly he asked to sit up. He was helped up. Hamsaduta Maharaja had stopped chanting. I began. He said Hamsaduta chanted so nicely. Then he asked Hamsaduta Maharaja what was our position in Ceylon. Hamsaduta Maharaja began to tell him. Prabhupada made more vivid expression than any I'd seen this time. "Then our position is good!" he exclaimed. They were talking of bad government. Hamsaduta Maharaja said we needed *ksatriyas*. Srila Prabhupada said a person like Kṛṣṇa with a sword is required. Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, and Arjuna went to kill Jarasandha. Brahmananda Swami said, "You have come to curb the rascal governments." "Yes," said Srila Prabhupada, "that is my program," but "where is the scope?"

Hamsaduta Maharaja said something about how when he preaches, he criticizes the government. Srila Prabhupada said don't—stay out of politics. Ours is cultural and philosophical.

Brahmananda Swami said Bhagatji heard that Indira Gandhi was arrested. Srila Prabhupada had the person sent for. Srila Prabhupada asked him and heard some details about Indira Gandhi being arrested, but she is popular again.

This was more preaching than he's done in a long time. I was sleepy through the *kirtanas*. Srila Prabhupada lay back and slept. I left. He had not noticed me or said anything about me. I felt properly insignificant. I am doing no sensational engagement. But everyone wants to preach—though writing is effective.

When I first went into the room I felt a sense of attraction and renewal in my relationship with Srila Prabhupada in his presence. He had called us in, myself included, to chant. He showed will to live and preach.

But his body, as he said, is a bag of bones, and he is not eating anything, so how can he continue for long?

October 4

I'm not one of those very intimately involved and relating to him in his last days. Of course, this causes me some pain because I want to love Srila Prabhupada and receive his blessings. Others are taking care of him, giving him medicine, helping him relieve his body, consoling him. Certainly they are receiving special blessings for doing so. There is the case of Isvara Puri who cared for his spiritual master even in the sickness of old age, and who cleaned his stool. I'm not one of his bodily or personal servants, and the tendency is to be envious of them. I am feeling more confident when I think of the lifetime of service I can give to Srila Prabhupada. I want to carry on his BTG magazine, and when the going gets rough after his departure, I want to maintain the strict *parampara* and prove myself a real helper in his movement of pure devotional service.

Now I have to be patient, subdued, and try not to commit offense even mentally to those who are so dedicatedly serving him in his last days. I have to admit their intimacy is spiritual and pleasing to Kṛṣṇa, and surely they will get special benediction. As Srila Prabhupada still has a will to live and

even recover and go on, so I have to pray to Kṛṣṇa to please cure Srila Prabhupada. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. Therefore, we pray, "If You desire"—because He may desire to take Srila Prabhupada back soon. But we pray that He please let him stay, please cure him, because in this condition it is too painful, he cannot work or preach.

Please let him again have strength in his body and translate and preach for twenty more years. For myself, I do not belong, I think, in too much intimate relationship to him in his physical presence. Let me behave without offense or envy of his servants or to his will to live. Let me nurture and prepare to carry out his will, expanding my own service and becoming exemplary.

I'm looking forward to the arrival of all our GBC; most are just devotees like me.

October 5

At 3:30 P.M. we were called in to chant. (I noticed an entry in the servants' log—they log daily how much liquid he intakes and how much urine he passes—a quote: "I'm not hungry. Let me hear *kirtana*.") Gurukṛpa Maharaja, Upendra, and I entered. Srila Prabhupada was sleeping at first; we chanted maybe an hour. I looked through Gurukṛpa's photos while chanting. Then he woke, his head still lying on the pillow, but eyes looking around. He asked to be sat up. Hari Sauri picked him up and put a pillow across his lap. He asked for complant, his drink. He asked for someone to scratch his back. I got up and sat on his bed behind him. I put my hand under his *kurta* and rubbed softly up and down his back, so thin and bony. He held up his hand, (covered, as are his feet, with bright orange turmeric) like a claw, indicating I should actually scratch. I started to do so. It seemed all right. Then he wanted to lie down again. While I was scratching, a big tulasi garland from Kṛṣṇa-Balarama came in and I placed it around him. He tugged at a *tulasi* flower on the garland, pulled it loose, put it in his mouth, and chewed on it. I felt happy to be sitting next to him. It is kind of scary how sick and thin he is—I mean

he is a little scary looking, like Nrsimhadeva was apparently scary looking. I saw he was still his beautiful self, despite gaunt skull and skinny arms and legs. I thought that he can get more and more wasted in his body but still he'll look like Prabhupada. He's *jivan-mukta*. He's *acarya*, showing us how he remains transcendental. I was appreciating sitting on an equal level scratching his back, that although he allowed me to do this, I am still afraid of him, that he will chastise me for negligence. He didn't. Then he lay down. He asked Hari Sauri to distribute his garlands. Gurukrpa got one and Hamsaduta Maharaja—I was the third person in the room. He said to Hamsaduta Maharaja, indicating me, that I should get a garland too, so they gave me one. Getting his garland like that by his wanting to see that I was included—that was satisfying to me. We need that sometimes.

October 6

I had a 4:00–5:00 A.M. shift. Srila Prabhupada's room is dark except for one small light. I'm supposed to help his servant, Abhirama. Prabhupada is sleeping. The room is nice, Srila Prabhupada's room in Vrndavana. There are first-class paintings of Krsna and Balarama and cows and cowherd boys, and pictures of the *acaryas*, all in nice frames. There are book display racks with many English and other editions of his books displayed. His palanquin is there, ready if he feels strong enough to go greet the Deities. He lies in a comfortable-looking double bed; his sheets are stained with turmeric powder. He seems to be sleeping peacefully. Srila Prabhupada is so thin, his skin stretched over the knee and elbow joints, his head gaunt, but he is very much transcendental to the change of his body. It's like he's teaching us to the very end of his stay in this world: "You are not the body. Absorb yourself in Krsna and go to Him at the end of your life." I think of the verse that whoever thinks of the spiritual master's body as material, or the Deity as material, is of a hellish mentality.

I was thinking of why I am not continually praying and pleading to Krsna to please let Srila Prabhupada stay. The

main reason is my lack of devotion. I am still too concerned with my own bodily or spiritual existence. I am trying to put out all nasty thoughts and think of only what will be pleasing to Srila Prabhupada.

Another reason I cannot continually plead to Kṛṣṇa is that Srila Prabhupada appears to be irreversibly diminishing month by month, week by week, day by day. Kṛṣṇa can change anything, but He would have to completely reverse Srila Prabhupada's present course, because even if he continues now to stay in his body indefinitely, he is so weak that he doesn't eat, talk, walk, and there is no question of translating *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. We are getting used to accepting that his direction is more and more toward eventually leaving us. We are coming to accept it. Trying to make Srila Prabhupada as comfortable as possible. The doctor says he has no particular disease now. He is exhausted. His inner organs aren't working. The body is coming to an end. If we pray, then it has to be for extraordinary rejuvenation. To us he is still our spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada. Without knowing Kṛṣṇa's plan or speculating unnecessarily, our job is to continue serving Srila Prabhupada as far as possible. Take his blessings, be with him, assure him. (The other night he called in Giriraja and asked if he thought things would go on without him. Giriraja said, "Yes, if we simply follow your instructions.") Let us beware not to commit offenses, especially at this time and in Vṛndavana. A Vaisnava has to be very well-behaved.

After forty-five minutes, at 4:45 A.M., *mangala-arati* starts and he wakes up. Abhirama goes to him and he asks to lie on his side and have his back scratched. Abhirama moves him and I am allowed to scratch his back. After half an hour he has fallen asleep and I stop. Srila Prabhupada projects a feeling that everything is all right and that he's peacefully situated, so I feel like that too.

There's hope—Sridhara Maharaja said some of Srila Prabhupada's Godbrothers have been in his condition for ten years; the old Sridhara Maharaja of Navadvipa, for example. And recently he was reported as getting a little fatty and attending *arati*. I mentioned this hopeful aspect to Brahmananda Swami

He said "Yes, the *kaviraja* said his life is finished, but Srila Prabhupada said if Kṛṣṇa desires, he can stay." TKG said to Srila Prabhupada, "I am waiting for Kṛṣṇa's intervention." "Yes, so am I," said Srila Prabhupada. He is so weak he can't sign his signature. He can't turn in bed. But it is up to Kṛṣṇa. Brahmananda Swami remarked that when all the GBC men came in May, that encouraged Srila Prabhupada. Otherwise, to simply exist in this condition, it is difficult for him to go on. Similarly, last month he was saying, "What good is this slow death? Get me out of here"—and he tried going to the West. The point is, he continually diminishes physically. That does not mean we should go off permanently and preach depending on his *vani* presence. He requires care, solace, and encouragement to live. If he receives enough, or if we pray to Kṛṣṇa enough, then, "My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire, please cure Srila Prabhupada." We can't be callous and leave him "to die" as you do an ordinary old man. In this light, I feel whatever motivated me to come again this time was right. I have to go back to the U.S. after two weeks., but when required, I must come back again.

More GBC men are slowly arriving.

I was typing at 11:00 A.M. and became aware that Gurukṛpa Maharaja was leading a big *kirtana* in the temple. It suddenly occurred to me: Srila Prabhupada must be taking *darsana* of the Deities. Jayadvaita and I ran out and joined all the devotees in the courtyard. Srila Prabhupada was seated in his palanquin facing the Deities. Everyone was dancing and chanting—*mrdangas* pounding, *karatalas* clashing. Then Srila Prabhupada, rather than go immediately back to his room, had them carry him outside and once circumambulated the temple. We all followed in the bright sunshine. Then he went back to his room. He had some devotees continue a soft *kirtana* with one tiny pair of finger cymbals, while he lay down. I asked Gurukṛpa Maharaja if Srila Prabhupada said anything after we went back to his room. "He ain't saying nothing," he said. In

Kṛṣṇa book, in the chapter, "Description of Autumn," the spiritual master is compared to a waterfall which sometimes runs and sometimes doesn't. He sometimes speaks and sometimes he is silent. He is not obliged.

October 7

In one sense, the future is more important than now, but how we behave now together in his presence will form the way we will be inclined toward each other later. In these days we sit beside him and know which devotees are qualified at serving his body intimately or relieving his mind of last disturbances as far as possible.

Yesterday he received a note from a woman devotee who had woven him a shawl. She said she had been crying while she made it for him. He cried to hear it and took the shawl over his feet. I can't do anything comforting in these last days to compare to the comfort of the close secretaries, servants, singers, etc., and I burn with envy and jealousy over it. Neither am I a giant of service in separation like some of his big world managers who have so many pressing duties on his behalf that they cannot be with him.

In a subdued way, I come to his bedside at different times and chant a little, but start falling asleep soon after. I never lead or initiate any massaging or other care. I'm slow at it. Partly out of awe of him, awkwardness, lack of training, and also lack of love which cares for no convention but wants to please the other. Of course, I'm not the worst offender, but I have to live with myself, not another.

I should accept my "not-most-wonderful-devotee" position and not be insulted when I am treated as less than "the most honorable of senior disciples." That is the hardest. I feel like a snake who is stepped on whenever I'm slighted, although usually I don't show it. I therefore have pretty much a reputation for humility. Humility, honesty, and poor leadership.

In short, if the future of this movement depends much on me as I am at present, then it is lamentable for others as well as me. But as I can't even write this confessional with real honesty, I'll have to stop.

Understanding *vapuh* and *vani* is very important. *Vapuh* is always described as less important and temporary, but now our relationship with Srila Prabhupada is being centered on the *vapuh*.

We are gathering in Vrndavana with him in his last days. After all, we have received our instructions from him personally. His *vapuh* presence came to 26 Second Avenue and saved us. That same person is now lying on his bed in his last days. He can't see me or recognize me. I'm still afraid of him. If he turns to me I still melt with love—and feeling and desire to serve him immediately with my life. Hundreds and thousands relate to him like that.

Is the *vani* like an impersonal spirit of him? Is it an actual separate person, a different person than the one lying in bed? The *vani* is well and eternal and all-pervading in ISKCON, but the *vapuh* is frail and attended to and helped even to turn in bed or sit up. How can one presence be so strong and the other so weak? Then is the *vapuh* more dear because he is weak? But is the *vapuh* even weak? Isn't it rather that in the *vapuh*, he kindly relates to us ordinary souls as if he is also ordinary—and thus moves us to render devotional service?

With devotees in general, we need to see and talk to persons, not just books and instructions. So with the spiritual master. Now with his imminent departure, the most clear, valuable, weak-appearing (vulnerable) *vapuh* will no longer benedict the earth and the devotees. The devotees will soon no longer be able to draw strength from their personal *vapuh* relationship with Srila Prabhupada. Then we will all have to be fixed in our *vani* relationship. The *vapuh* will be a cherished memory, but a memory nonetheless.

Aren't they mixed together? Is the person in the instruction and thus also eternal? Yes, of course. That is the meaning of *vani*: the personal existence of the spiritual master, but in the absence of his living body in this material world. Isn't *vani*, then, not just a memory of a person—but the continued, personal relationship with the guru, despite the absence of his bodily form? *Sastra* states that in separation from the *vapuh*,

the *vani* is more ecstatic, more valuable, indestructible, and eternal.

Now we have to stay close by him, we disciples, and please him, not displease him. He has said, "Your love for me will be demonstrated by how you cooperate with each other after I am gone." After departure, the worst elements will be envy and noncooperation. One may claim to have understood Srila Prabhupada in a different way, and another will refuse to cooperate. On items of dissension, all the devotees will turn to their own understanding of his books and will cooperate with the leaders they feel are the most authorized and exemplary.

What about a disciple who is eager to be tested in a *vani* relationship, and who wants to see the work begin of pushing on the movement in separation from Srila Prabhupada? Let's say he feels, "Srila Prabhupada's real mission is this ongoing ISKCON. It cannot, must not, fail. ISKCON means the continued progress of the devotees in going back to Godhead and the continued effort by those devotees to preach to the fallen souls. Srila Prabhupada's mission is that this must continue and grow. Now his personal effort in this direction—making devotees, ISKCON, temples, book-writing, publishing, distributing, maintaining and guiding devotees in battles against demons as well as among ourselves—his personal effort is almost complete."

In his invalid condition it is practically stopped, but his influence is so great that everything is still intact under his personal grip. My question about being eager to begin the difficult future without him is already answered. Don't jump the gun. It will be soon enough. Pray for his recovery. Behave properly and submissively and positively, cheerfully, without cultivating doubt in others. The test will come soon enough.

As Srila Prabhupada is a person—although I know he is a more-than-cosmic messenger of the Supreme Lord—we should help those who are tending to his care with hopes that he may recover and still live for more guidance and benediction upon the world.

We heard that Tamal Krishna Maharaja told Srila Prabhupada that all the devotees were praying for his recovery. Srila Prabhupada replied, "Don't pray for me. I have to go." Then he asked TKG if there were any further questions that had to be asked. The answer was "No, you've answered them all."

Rupanuga was saying that it's like an ambassador in a foreign country: he may have many affairs, but finally he's called back.

Jayadvaita said Srila Prabhupada has taught us everything and now he is teaching us how to die. We all have to leave our bodies one day. He is *acarya* in this also—for the Vaisnava, death is glorious. It is a great and devastating difficulty. Srila Prabhupada's body is stretched out on what seems a rack of suffering, yet he remains aloof, noble, grave—and makes us all like that as we watch him. We think, "Srila Prabhupada may soon disappear. Then we'll have to carry on by ourselves." But we forget that each of us will eventually have to go through what he is going through now. He is teaching us all by example how to do it while remaining absorbed in hearing the holy name.

October 8

Some of his servants are writing diaries of every detail now. I'm only recording a few things, and so much of it is corresponding to what I hear.

Srila Prabhupada is speaking last words about our mission. Devotees are huddled around his bed. What he is saying is already in his books.

He asked for *caranamrta*. He's drinking very little, more and more it seems like the end. Some predict sooner, some say it's indefinite. All the GBC are not here yet. Some say there are still some questions we haven't asked about who will initiate in the future, but actually, he has said it.

Waiting to cry. Waiting to respond to the crunch of his absence. There will be no pure devotee in our movement—just peers who remember Srila Prabhupada and his instructions. He wants us to cooperate and push on his movement together.

Politics lurking among the devotees for sure, and among the nondevotees, bankers, Communist party in Bengal, envious persons all over—the patience of vultures. Waiting in the wings for the aftermath.

I am standing by his bedside trying to look at his face, but I cannot get into position. I am concerned because I have a headache. In other words, I'm the worst fool, in the bodily concept, weak and wishy-washy, looking to my own little garden and annoyed if someone bothers me. I'm no *dhira*, but I'll take the title guru. "Why not? I'm as good as anyone else. Sure, I'll take disciples. I'm one of the best." In this way things are going on lamentably, but I for one am not suitable or fit to lament his passing or to lament my own foolish rascaldom. It's Ekadasi—we're fasting until 1 P.M., then at 2 P.M. I go in and chant for Srila Prabhupada. I can see his condition for myself.

Is there anything to ask him? No—or anyone—it's too late. He's too weak to hear. I'm not an intimate servant of his bedside and can't get through to him. But I have nothing to ask. He's already tied me to him and for all I'm worth I'll stay his true disciple—I pray—and die before I desert him.

October 9

Another day. 4–5 A.M. I chanted an hour. Only very minor movements by Srila Prabhupada. He mostly seemed peaceful.

Now we are chanting in his room twenty-four hours a day. If he wants to speak, the chanting stops and everyone gathers around as close as possible. It doesn't matter if the crowding near him looks awkward because he cannot see more than a few feet. His arms and legs are very thin. He lies back and his voice is small, but his face can still be expressive. Srila Prabhupada began asking about the *prasadam* here at Krishna-Balaram Mandir. TKG described all the different preparations taken at lunch. Everyone there spoke up and said they liked it. Srila Prabhupada was glad to hear the devotees were taking *prasadam* nicely. He himself has had no solid food in over one and a half months, yet he's concerned to hear how the devotees are eating.

Gurukrpa Maharaja said Srila Prabhupada has better friends than us in the spiritual world. They must be preparing a big reception for him. He will leave us pip-squeaks here. I said, "He's taught us enough, so we can go there too."

1:30 P.M.

Peaceful, sunny day, not very hot. Devotees taking lunch *prasadam* by the blessings of our spiritual father, our guide, our preceptor. Workmen are tearing down the old, yellow brick building in the front yard. Why? They say it's going to be where Srila Prabhupada's *samadhi* will be located. Walking past his room, you hear the soft ching-ching of the finger cymbals and soft chanting in the dark room. Srila Prabhupada is either lying down or, rarely, sitting up. I don't know so much all the details of his bathing or everything he might have said in the past few days.

I heard that four or five of his Godbrothers visited last night. He asked them to forgive him his offenses. "If in the course of my preaching I offended you, please forgive me." They replied, "*Jaya Gurudeva, Jaya Prabhupada*," and gave him proper honor.

Some GBCs are hoping to ask Srila Prabhupada some last questions.

Hridayananda Goswami said that a year and half ago, Srila Prabhupada said his personal association was not very important (we remember a quote from years ago: "Personal association is for fools"). Hridayananda Maharaja says he feels confident he will go on in Krsna consciousness. We both admitted anxiety over cooperation among top leaders and cooperation between the leaders and the mass of devotees. Hridayananda said there are so many pitfalls in trying to spread a worldwide movement—these are only some of them.

Everything is going along peacefully, it seems. Srila Prabhupada says he's not feeling pain. The consensus is that it's a fact he's going to leave, not stay. No one is misbehaving, devotees taking turns chanting. Jokes go on; those who are crude are engaging in the usual loose talks.

I walked into his room at 2 P.M. Many GBC men were already there and he had just spoken to them. Abhirama showed me what he had said. He had written it down verbatim: "You all consult what you want me to do."

Abhirama then asked: "About recovery?"

Srila Prabhupada: "I don't want."

Abhirama: "Recovery?"

Srila Prabhupada nodded yes and said to Tamal, "If I am to survive I must take some food. Otherwise, without food one cannot live. But survival means one complication after another. Therefore, I have decided to die peacefully in Vrndavana. They want me to survive. I want to die peacefully. You consult. Whether I live or die, I will always be Krsna's servant. Krsna wants me to do as I like; the choice is mine. Krsna has given me freedom to do. If I want to live I must take care of this body. We cannot exhibit miracles by not taking cure and living. That is fanaticism. If you assure me this movement will go on without me, then better let me die."

After this, it seemed like the end was at hand. I stayed and massaged his feet. Others went out. Then half an hour later they came back in. Kirtanananda Swami wanted to speak to Srila Prabhupada. Everyone gathered around. He said, "Prabhupada, if Krsna has given you the choice, then we want you to stay. We need you." He was crying and couldn't speak. Brahmananda Swami said, "We want you to stay ten years. Finish the *Bhagavatam*. Your work is only half finished." Srila Prabhupada was affected by what they said. He yawned and said, "All right." After a while he said (with wet eyes), "Thank you very much. Hare Krsna." Then he asked for grape juice and took it. Then he asked for plain strawberries, not juice. He heard Tejas was in the room and asked about the Hyderabad farm. On hearing they grew corn he said, "With corn you can make *capati* and something else—the villagers will like." He was back with us. He asked what the benefit of strawberries was. He was told they brought energy. I think he said, "This is real affection." These wonderful Vaisnava devotees have brought Srila Prabhupada back from death. I am strictly an

outsider to these dealings. I thought, "I should serve these devotees since I am not one of them."

TKG then said to Prabhupada that he promised Kṛṣṇa he would see Him installed in the Bombay temple, and the opening was set for January 1st. He would have to live to fulfill that promise. The devotees were pressuring Śrīla Prabhupada to choose to live, not die, because they needed him. Śrīla Prabhupada asked, "Kīrtanananda? When will the palace be ready?" Kīrtanananda Swami said, "In early spring, just when the weather is nice. You can go to the Bombay opening and then come to the palace. I have letters from fifty to seventy devotees in New Vrindaban begging you to come. They say they can't live if you don't come."

Prabhupada has decided to try to live on. He'll take strawberries. Everyone was gathered around him. I don't think he could see, but he said, "All right, now let me rest. But keep the chanting going on." He had said that to erect a big temple in Bombay after all that fighting was a great triumph.

The whole thing has changed. Later the same day, Śrīla Prabhupada was speaking loudly. He quoted verses, including the verse, "One can live for hundreds of years in that way." He sat up and took a breath. Talked half an hour with Giriraj about bank matters, similarly at length with Ramesvara Mahārāja about preaching in Tehran. The devotees are light-hearted, thankful that Śrīla Prabhupada is going to live.

We have to give him love and affection to impel him to stay with us, the pip-squeaks we are, compared to his friends in *rasnaloka*. A few days ago, talking of going to the palace Kīrtanananda Swami is preparing, he said something like, "We'll have to see what palace I will be going to."

I saw Śrīla Prabhupada being bathed with a sponge. His body like the picture of Rantideva—ribs sticking out, hip bones, extra skin anywhere. To move any limb at all requires a servant's assistance. The question is how can he gain weight.

October 11

4–5 A.M. He was talking to Svarupa Damodara about the scientific conference. Be sure the guesthouse is cleaned. Talk scientifically, not foolishly. Philosophy means *aham sarvasya prabhavo—mattah parataram nanyat*—there's no other philosophy. It's a waste of time. You are scientist, now use it for Kṛṣṇa and it will be your perfection. He referred to Maharishi's levitation as flies in the room—cockroaches in the commode. Travel everywhere with the scientific conference.

October 12

I can't show my emotions, I am too frigid, "on ice." Soul on ice. But I can acknowledge where I am at. A cad. A dog. When Srila Prabhupada said he wanted to die, I was willing to allow him that wish to die peacefully. But "do not go gentle into that good night"—the loving, courageous Vaisnava devotees, Kirtanananda, Brahmananda, and the others came and insisted that Srila Prabhupada not die. Woe is me to be so cold and hopeless, fallen into the false ego existence of my "self." The only solace I find for this emotionless, loveless, death-like, cold heart of mine is to think of my BTG work.

Cold and no love. Also, weak and no fight. No life—I look on at the drama from outside. How has this happened to me? Did I take too much LSD and become devoid of the milk of human kindness (no mercy in the age of Kali due to intoxication)? Or is my soul given to the illusory "goddess" of writing? Face the facts—you're a cold turkey.

But somehow estranged, anti-social, I feel fixed in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. If anyone thinks I'm humble, that's a joke.

I thought, "God, I will need such intense purification and cleansing and fire of ordeal and *tapasya* before I can become a living, feeling Vaisnava disciple like these. I should serve them, but I never will, not in a million years."

October 13

Just moved my room here in Vrndavana. No chair here. Today is Thursday. Counting today, four more days here—then if Krsna desires, I will travel 10,000 miles or so back to L.A. and walk in the door of the BTG offices and pay obeisances to my Godbrothers there and immediately get to work on the December issue. Then I'll get exhausted from the traveling and have to lie down.

Since he has decided to live at our pleading, Srila Prabhupada's condition hasn't changed much, if at all. He has been taking glucose in his liquid. Early today there was some blood in his urine, which has been sent to a lab.

Today, some older women devotees, namely, Sakti-mata and Srila Prabhupada's sister, are here. Sakti-mata cooked full *prasadam* with love for Srila Prabhupada. It includes okra and all kinds of regular food. Kirtanananda Swami has been taking the role of trying to "force" Srila Prabhupada to take vitamins and medicine. Last night Srila Prabhupada submitted to him, but not today. Today Kirtanananda Swami protested Srila Prabhupada taking the heavy *prasadam*. He said, "Srila Prabhupada, you are transcendental and independent, but from a medical point of view, you shouldn't take this *prasadam*."

Srila Prabhupada's voice was weak, but he spoke with stern, firm will, teaching his disciple. He said, "Don't hinder (my taking this *prasadam*). From the medical point of view, you can't make a dead body alive."

Kirtanananda Swami replied, "Your body isn't dead."

Srila Prabhupada said with his unavoidable logic—force, "You say medical point of view. I say, 'Is it possible medically to make a dead body live?' " (This means medically speaking, your glucose treatment can't work either, so why hinder my taking this full meal?)

Kirtanananda Swami repeated that it didn't appear to him that Srila Prabhupada's body was a "dead body."

Srila Prabhupada said, "Then you go to miracles" (meaning if you don't think this body is dead, then you are speaking of it living, but actually it is dead. Therefore, you are speaking of

keeping it alive by miracles. He seemed to debunk miracles. Previously he already debunked the "fanatical" miracles of staying alive without eating and said he couldn't perform that). Then he told us all to leave the room; he would eat as much as he could (without our staring at him) and then we should come back and hold *kirtana*.

We sat in the other room. Bhavananda Maharaja said we should pray to Kṛṣṇa for the miracle. Rupanuga spoke that the fire of digestion was Kṛṣṇa. It will require that very thing—not a miracle—for Srila Prabhupada not to have a bad reaction to eating such food. He hasn't eaten like that in a long, long time. In a sense, he's saying he'd rather die than not eat this. "I've seen such a miracle ten years ago," said Kirtanananda Swami. (He meant when Srila Prabhupada left the hospital in N.Y. after his heart attack, against all medical advice.)

"But this is a close one," said Bhavananda Maharaja. Everyone admits they can't figure out Srila Prabhupada's behavior. Symptoms, materially, continue to be bad. All that is good is praying to Kṛṣṇa for the miracle to let him digest such food. Does he want that miracle? Is he defying the material "medical point of view" because he already has a "dead body?" No matter how you look at it, he is utterly dependent on Kṛṣṇa and is unafraid.

October 14

Today begins the scientific conference, the Bhaktivedanta Institute's "Life Comes from Life." Srila Prabhupada is very interested in it. He wants to see them conduct it all over the world.

Do something "so I can see it before my departure."

Yesterday's events were that Srila Prabhupada's sister arrived and he asked her forgiveness for offenses he may have committed. He said that once she came to see him and his disciples wouldn't allow her, and this was an offense on his part. (He's also been asking Godbrothers to forgive him.) She prescribed he eat a full lunch and he did. Then later, he asked her what else he should eat, and she prescribed puffed rice,

sugar, and cream. He took this also, but said he had "no taste." He had some *sandesa* also. At lunch in the *prasadam* hall, we announced to devotees that Srila Prabhupada had taken more today than in about nine months, but please pray he can digest it. Srila Prabhupada expressed that his body is already dead, so what is the loss if he eats like this?

October 15

Last night, Srila Prabhupada resumed translating work on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. He was hearing his astrological position, which was all bad, weak health, strong disease, the patient may not recover, etc. But it said he should hear chanting. "Yes," he said, "hold *kirtana*." Prabhupada asked Pradyumna to begin reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam* where he had left off in the translation work. After Pradyumna read a verse, Srila Prabhupada asked him to give the transliteration and then the translation in English. After that, Srila Prabhupada began speaking a purport at length. They went on like that for four or five verses. Srila Prabhupada said, "So we shall do this every evening and in this way complete it."

Also, when the astrology was being read, Srila Prabhupada quoted a verse that for a devotee, all reactions are burnt up. I came in at 3 A.M., the dictaphone was on his bed. Rupanuga was rubbing Srila Prabhupada with hot oil. Srila Prabhupada said he was getting rejuvenated from this rubbing. Rupanuga praised Srila Prabhupada for using every ounce of strength for Kṛṣṇa—how it is an example for us. I spoke to Srila Prabhupada noting that for the past two days, he had asked for a full lunch, although he only ate a small portion. He said, "If this rubbing goes on, I think I can eat." Srila Prabhupada is giving out more and more personal mercy. I also got to rub him with oil.

I had to rush away for a court case in America. Now sitting up all night in the Delhi airport.

Bhagavata Asraya and I were discussing in the cab from Vrndavana that:

(1) Srila Prabhupada is showing us that he exists apart from his body. He has become so refined that he is now spirit only—almost no body is left. Bhagavata Asraya has pointed out that all his movements are firm and precise, although extremely limited. He's supremely conscious.

(2) He's showing us how to leave the body as each of us has to. Bhisma's leaving has already been mentioned—the Pandavas were called just to see him give instructions in that condition.

(3) He's showing how every ounce of strength is to be used in devotional service. While lying in bed he's dictating *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, although he's not even able to hold the microphone or click the button.

(4) He's beyond us. His most intimate servants admit they don't know what to think. There are different opinions, but we shouldn't speculate. His activities are certainly wonderful, now also.

October 20

In flight, Seattle to L.A.

I'll be coming back up to Seattle in five days for the trial. I have been reading my journal about Srila Prabhupada—read it both here and in L.A. I *got enamored with my own writing*. It depressed me, but at least I took careful note of it. The writing "game" has to be carefully executed. It's got to be service to Krsna, not vanity of literary craft or literary craft for its own sake or human expression for its own sake. Everything valuable has to be offered to Krsna through Srila Prabhupada. It was good to give to devotees more feeling of what it was like to be with Srila Prabhupada in his personal form. I'm so short of the emotions of a deep, pure devotee.

October 31

We are hearing that Srila Prabhupada isn't pleased that so few devotees are with him.

I just heard a tape of Kuladri talking of what happened with Srila Prabhupada in Vrndavana. He brought out Kirtanananda Swami's intimate relationship with Srila Prabhupada.

Shall I go into a whole description of my lack of intimate relationship? What is the last word in humility for me? Where do I stand with my spiritual master? I really think my relationship is firm. I've already noted in my diary for those days: although I received no attention at all, no head-patting—and although I wasn't at all of the party who begged Srila Prabhupada to remain with us—still, I feel my place is certain. Maybe I am seeing his disappearance as inevitable and mustering my conviction for the test. Also, I have very little emotional content, devotion, at least ready devotion. I feel I'm going to stick to his lotus feet, but I've little political ambition. Sometimes I find within myself a subtle political ambition: "I shall be quiet, unassuming, and faithful in my own way. Eventually, I will be seen as the best devotee." I have to keep hitting myself with a shoe or broom. I have to prove myself. I've chosen a service of editing BTG and writing a book or books.

November 3, 1977

I'm collecting money to go back to India to be with Srila Prabhupada. I'm one small frog but there is room for me: I'm also welcome.

Feeling a little sick at heart over the lack of purity of our devotees. Now we are getting bad publicity. "They are demons," we answer, but we are so far from faultless. Where will it end? The demons want to crush us and we are not even pure. But if it were up to me, we would have a small-time movement—"pure" perhaps, but not the contending, fighting, expanding ISKCON of today. They may lose it anyway—if they (we) lose our reputation. "But Srila Prabhupada says"—different factions claim they understand him. It's a hard world and we have some rather worldly-dealing devotees fending for us. I should try to view it philosophically: immature devotees may ruin ISKCON's reputation as they fail to follow our spiritual

master's instructions. If they do so, then the grand experiment to take over the world will not come about. Some have great faith that we will grow more and more powerful. I don't know.

November 12

Vrndavana

Literary prayer: "Kṛṣṇa-Balarama, please let me write."

When Srila Prabhupada described his plans to travel to *tirthas*, I didn't want to go along. I tried thinking why I felt like that. One reason is I find it difficult to get along with the big leaders who surround Srila Prabhupada. I become insignificant in such a party and there is no real service for me. Better I do service in separation. That is also service to Srila Prabhupada.

Sometimes when the dark clouds clear, as when I go on *sankirtana* or take the feast with other *sannyasi* Godbrothers, it occurs to me that I spend a lot of time under a severe depression of estrangement from Godbrothers. I suffer a lot of estrangement, inferiority complex, paranoia, and egomania—pardon me for the amateur psychiatry, but it really is heavy. I'm a case—always thinking about myself and how entangled I am in material inferiority, inwardness to the unhealthy stage, and inability to relax or relate to others. I suppose I want it this way.

November 13

Get out the desperation pages, Sats has gone nuts. Talking with this side and then that side in a devotee controversy, proving myself unchaste by conceding to each. Me of so-called high repute. Nonsense repute and that is also my respite. Silent partner, yes-man devotee. Oh, they are great, these other devotees, and this and those and these and those . . .

A cat meowing fiercely outside here in Vrndavana. What is the matter, cat? Suffering in the lower species? Get yourself together and write something elsewhere than here.

Don't wish for Srila Prabhupada's departure. Pray he recovers. Hope against hope. TKG says Srila Prabhupada is testing us how much we love him.

The cat meowing . . .

Man shouting on the phone in Vrndavana.

Toads, mosquitoes, monkeys, hogs, orange-billed birds in the dust; trees are living entities, water in the spiritual world is conscious. But are we there? At a cult executive meeting, the deprogrammers have engineered a wrong idea about us. Why am I writing like this as if I am crazy? (The wind creaks the door open, sunlight comes in, Prem Yogi wants to know about his essay.) Lord, Lord, Lord. Help me, Lord, to stay regular-dealing, doing like I'm supposed to.

“To Remember Him Eases the Pain”

November 17–29, 1977

Srila Prabhupāda's disappearance left us struggling to understand exactly how to continue the initiation process. Should we follow Prabhupāda's example and separate from the main institution, setting out alone without any support, simply telling everyone we meet about Kṛṣṇa? How could one presume to become a spiritual master? One thought was that ISKCON was actually the spiritual master; but someone else said, “No, while we all take shelter of ISKCON, ISKCON cannot itself become the guru.” Another opinion was that we should definitely not “leave the institution” and go off as lone preachers, but maintain our father's estate. As usual, I appeared to vacillate between the strong opinions of others. But no one had a last word on it.

In each of these different ideas, there is something valuable. The idea of giving up prestige and support and going like a mendicant from door to door is certainly inspiring, even if it's beyond most of us. As I wrote at the time, “Preaching is the topmost purification,” but the idea that our first duty is to maintain ISKCON is also glorious and is dear to the heart of any true son or daughter of Prabhupāda. It seems that ISKCON will be most successful if Godbrothers are encouraged to follow their own realizations, yet at the same time contribute and submit to the needs of the movement. At least one becomes sympathetic to hear how all the devotees were discussing this, trying to understand what Prabhupāda wanted, and to do the right thing.

Prabhupāda had left us with a wonderful opportunity, a whole and healthy worldwide ISKCON movement. How to conduct it without him personally at the helm? We had yet to

fully realize how much we had actually lost and how much trouble and controversy we would soon find ourselves in. If devotees continue discussing and sincerely trying to please Prabhupāda, then even big mistakes can be corrected. The wonderful opportunity is still before us because what Prabhupāda gave us is so enduring and perfect. And he is very kind.

* * *

November 17, 1977

I am not even sure of the date, maybe the 17th of November, a few days after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance. Tomorrow we go on *parikrama*.

Devotees are speaking about Srila Prabhupada. Should we do a whole BTG glorifying him? Why not a special publication?

"Don't think," Gopala Kṛṣṇa said, "there is no one to please." Srila Prabhupada is still there to please in his instructions.

And now that Srila Prabhupada has gone, is it all survival of the fittest? Is it all vanity? Is there nothing else? Or will this dominating strain never leave? And if I want to avoid it, do I practically have to go alone? But how will I gain followers? I want to be respected. I remember a quote from Charles Lamb, who said, "How I like to be liked! And what won't I do to be liked!" Is it like that? I resent my Godbrothers asserting themselves. Why don't they exalt me? Then everything will be all right? If they just recognize me, then everything will be all right, all will be satisfied and they will be in their rightful places and will be properly appreciated by the true sovereign, namely myself. O miserable delusion of the mind!

November 20

New idea (or the old idea newly presented to me by Hamsaduta Maharaja): those who are now initiating disciples should make their main activity traveling and preaching. I could concentrate on the thrilling adventure of always talking about

Krsna and looking for the opportunity to preach, managing BTG through agents, getting the manuscript in the mail, and visiting once a month. Travel in the Northwest U.S., any zone, with maybe two assistants in a van. The work in L.A. will go on without me.

But what kind of preaching can I do? I remember Trivikrama Swami once said to Srila Prabhupada that he wanted to leave the Orient and go to the West because he hadn't preached in two years. Srila Prabhupada replied, "That means you can't preach. Therefore, you should stay here." But although I say I want to preach, today I walked past three young, American college boys who had come all the way to India and the Krishna-Balaram Mandir and I didn't stop to talk to them. I was afraid. I couldn't get into it. But I think it is because I am completely out of the mood. If I were preaching like that, then I would do it, talking to people about the philosophy day and night, just like Srila Prabhupada showed us. I also want to go out door to door and preach. I could even give up my plans to create some kind of literature and rather concentrate on chanting and hearing and studying and writing, only purely about Krsna. Yeah, I sure would like to have the courage to go out and preach like that with no management, but only speaking and trying to convince people about the philosophy, willing to talk with anyone, but not attached to whether they accept it.

As for writing, I could write simply. I have one assignment yet to do—the editorial. Write it as it comes to mind. Now people are thinking, "What will happen to Hare Krsna?" They think of us as a cult sustained by the charisma of our leader. Are they still thinking we are brainwashed? Maybe they think our brainwashing will come undone and we will be brain-dirtied again. Anyway, we will continue with our spiritual master through the medium of separation.

Don't let Srila Prabhupada deteriorate. Read his books. Don't let yourself deteriorate.

I should think more about Srila Prabhupada, not any trivial thing that passes through my mind (like a sieve). Because "naturally," I won't think of him.

Sometimes I hear devotees make some claim for Srila Prabhupada. Today someone said that although at the end Srila Prabhupada couldn't see, he knew where all his devotees were around the world and he could see them. He knew who was in the room. Now, I don't know whether he could see everyone or not. I mean, one is not supposed to know the mind of the *acarya*. That means one cannot claim extra powers for him; you may claim some power for Srila Prabhupada, but it may be concocted or sentimental, whereas his actual situation may be even more glorious than the concoction you attributed to him. "Don't know" means don't know. But I often don't write down or think about how I feel about these things.

I know I am not thinking much about his disappearance. Jayapataka Swami said today that we shouldn't be dry about his leaving us and say, almost glibly, "Well, *vani* and *vapuh* are the same. It's okay," but we should be very sorry that all the times with him are over. The point is nice, that if I failed to serve him nicely while he was here, nevertheless the chance to serve him, the last chance, is still here. He still knows, still teaches. Do you doubt that he is still here? Or even if you don't doubt, do you know well the science of how he is here in sound? Well, when he was here, he was also speaking the eternal message of Kṛṣṇa, in book, on tape, and this message was retained by the faithful hearers who followed. So after his departure, these things are still going on, the *parampara*, the sound vibration, the chance to use the human form of life by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, he is still here and you can follow. The chance is still here.

Devotees have been saying now more than ever, "Let us read his books." I agree. What more is there to say? Let us take to our duties and go on hearing his tapes and telling of the things he said, and most importantly, living as he instructed us.

I like to remember Srila Prabhupada and talk about times with him, especially the old times when he was so accessible to me. I have to warm up to it with the right people, however. Even when that outright remembrance of him isn't going on, though, there are living and talking and being in his mission, Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I had an idea to live as a *sannyasi* should, to get myself a car and a servant and perhaps commit myself to no other service but speaking to people, holding programs at which I would give a talk, a *kirtana*, and *prasadam*. Surely, engagements would come up. I would get invited somewhere—probably mostly by young people—and preach to them. I don't know what it would be, but it would be a case of throwing myself into an element where I would sink or swim. Hamsaduta Maharaja used the expression that we were like students graduating from high school; we were popular in school, but now we are on our own. We would have to prove ourselves in the real world, show what we could achieve (say, graduating from college). Simply being liked would not be enough, we would have to prove ourselves on our own and we would be judged by what we could do. So he said that what we had to do, especially those who are making disciples, was to go off from managing the institution—let the institution manage itself, or rather be managed by up-and-coming new men. We should go off and preach. For him this also meant making new disciples, as he has been asked to do.

Today I went to Tamal Krishna Goswami about this. He didn't like the attitude of "leaving" ISKCON. He stressed that we should maintain ISKCON as the servant of the guru, the son of the father.

I can see for me to go off and preach isn't practical and would cause deterioration of the magazine. I left it once before and that happened. But I don't like to stay in one place. I had thought, "This is not the business of one training to be a guru." Now I also think a guru is someone who menially serves his guru. My main service is BTG. It should be *more* than that, and should include traveling, but as yet, that opportunity isn't present before me. So let me take up my duty. Although it seems impossible to me to live in L.A. and still preach, maybe I can try to talk about Kṛṣṇa at other times than just in the class, and maybe I can arrange to talk more to the nondevotees, even getting someone to make arrangements for me so I can get out and meet people.

As for guru, I am in no position for that. As for politics—get thee behind me, Satan.

If I could, would I go out and preach? Yes, if I can manage BTG properly, but now going out to preach cannot be done without real threat to the direction of BTG. When I go out and preach, it has to be the preaching of ISKCON, connected with ISKCON. Whenever I did those programs in the past, it was always ISKCON. But even if I started a new preaching center, still I wouldn't make new disciples.

I was just talking with Tamal Krishna Goswami about the business of gurus. The question is, "Am I fit to be a guru and give shelter to a disciple? Or even if I am not fit, for the benefit of ISKCON, should I take disciples?" He wanted to know what was in my heart. I replied I certainly would not take disciples for now. That's when I told him how I was inspired by Hamsaduta's program to travel and preach. He emphasized that we should take care of our father's property, ISKCON. ISKCON is nondifferent from Srila Prabhupada. He spent more than half of his energy in this ISKCON. He was pleased with it at his departure. Why should we think to abandon it? We will stay and work in ISKCON. We have to take care of his property like good sons. The best disciple is he who serves the guru; in fact, the best guru is he who serves his guru.

November 22

In this diary, I would like to keep a record of daily preaching—for example, who I spoke to, what the preaching exchange was, and the outcome. I would like to record how I took the opportunity to preach to that person, or what opportunities I let go by and why. The idea is to try to increase.

Now Srila Prabhupada has departed in his personal presence. I am to begin initiating disciples. At present I don't feel I could give a disciple shelter. I could not tell a soul that if he simply served me nicely, I could take him back to Godhead. In discussing this with a Godbrother, we wondered whether this was similar to when some of us accepted *sannyasa*, although we were unqualified in so many ways. Now we have the mission of taking on disciples. Srila Prabhupada has said that in order to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, *sannyasis* are needed. Therefore, he

allowed men to take *sannyasa*, and by their preaching, they became qualified. The example given is that ordinarily, before a judge can preside on the bench, he must first meet all qualifications. However, the potency of devotional service under the direction of a pure devotee is so great that in devotional service, one *first* sits on the bench of qualification (judge, *sannyasi*), and only once there and *acting* as a qualified person does he gain the credentials. Execution of pure devotional service assures him of becoming qualified.

Nevertheless, I am not yet qualified to take any disciples.

In this journal, therefore, I especially want to note the increase of my preaching or speaking of Prabhupada's teachings both to devotees and nondevotees. I should always be ready to speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Other measures that will help me to prepare myself can also be noted.

ISKCON can give devotees protection. If they live in ISKCON's shelter, they can go back to Godhead. I can initiate and then commend the soul to ISKCON's shelter. I am responsible, but on my power alone, no. The new devotee has to take shelter in Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON program.

But a guru is a person, too. If you become guru, you have to take personal responsibility, not just initiate and say, "Now ISKCON is your guru."

From *Teachings of Lord Kapila*, p. 153

This is called *titiksavah*. At the same time, we have to be *karunikah*—that is, we have to take compassion upon fallen souls by going from town to town to enlighten others in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is a *sadhu's* duty. Those who are preachers are superior to those who go to the Himalayas to meditate. It is good to go to the Himalayas to meditate for one's personal benefit, but those who undergo many difficulties in order to preach are superior. They are actually fighting for Kṛṣṇa's sake, and they are certainly more compassionate.

November 23

Soon some of Srila Prabhupada's disciples will begin initiating disciples. We were raising as the most important point, "Can I truly say if I accept a disciple, I can deliver him back to Godhead if he serves me?" And if the answer is, "No, not yet," then should I accept the disciple anyway because that is ISKCON's need, Srila Prabhupada's request? Tamal Krishna Goswami, with wonderful intelligence, spoke to me today with a realization he had how this dilemma can be solved. It is not that we gurus will claim the stature to have our disciple depend on us utterly for his spiritual life, but we also turn him to the shelter of ISKCON. In fact, Srila Prabhupada made this his own practice for most of his disciples in the last few years. He accepted a disciple, then gave him to the care of the temple president and the movement, with rules and regulations to follow and the association of devotees in ISKCON.

Otherwise, who can say that any of us will ever be *mahabhagavatas*, even if we wait 100 years before initiating? Srila Prabhupada wants initiations, but how can we claim to be pure devotees? Therefore, we don't have to have our disciples live with us or worship us on the *vyasasana*, but they can live in Srila Prabhupada's temple, although they will be our disciples.

Then what is our relationship to them? I remember my ex-wife in ISKCON used to complain, "How am I different than other girls in relation to you?" I suppose the question could be asked by the disciple, "But in what way are you my guru? I do not get Prabhupada as my guru, but neither do I get you." The reply is, "You are taken into ISKCON's shelter, but I am actually your spiritual master and you should take direction from me." When I tell my disciple that he should follow the temple president and the GBC, then he must do that. And I will look out for him. If he is in any difficulty, I can try to recommend what is best for him, regardless of what temple he is in. In this connection, Tamal Krishna Goswami was asking me to immediately initiate two women who were recommended by Vasudeva, the Indian gentleman who is temple president of ISKCON Fiji. All I would have to do is to chant on their beads

and give them names and Vasudeva would go back to Fiji and perform the *yajna*. Vasudeva has real faith in the *parampara* system and came here asking that these two be initiated. Srila Prabhupada has also given instructions that devotees should be initiated liberally in Fiji.

It kind of takes the wind out of the guru's sails. But how ludicrous if you were preparing to assume full guruship exactly like our spiritual master. This seems more like what he wanted—there is certain spiritual responsibility for the disciple, which I don't fully realize, but it is certainly shared with ISKCON in general. This was also Prabhupada's practice. He would initiate, but then sometimes never see the disciple. He would turn the disciple over to the care of the local temple.

I would have to be sure the candidates are ready for initiation and I would require some regular reports from them, say, once a month, to see how they are doing. Or more. They should write to me and I will help them in any way. Or I will come and see them, or they can come and see me whenever they need help. In that way they are my disciples. This means ISKCON itself is regarded as a living *acarya*, pure devotee, guide and sufficient teacher to follow for going back to Godhead. ISKCON is a live spiritual entity, a branch of the Caitanya tree.

One thing that feels nice and harmonious about this is that it doesn't seem an abrupt departure from the past as set up by Srila Prabhupada. It seems like added spiritual duty, but there is a feeling of, "This is what I was already doing." I like it. No daydreams of being worshiped on the *vyasasana*, being sung to by name, etc. (nightmares!). No, "What do we do next?" No bewilderment and neglect of future disciples. As for taking on the karma of disciples (and if he fails I suffer) . . . well, yes, I am risking my life for ISKCON. If the disciples take shelter in ISKCON and are cheated, then I suffer for commending my disciple to ISKCON. I should be ready to save that devotee from any *maya* situation that may develop. And this I am already supposed to be responsible to do.

November 24

Another angle of vision,
discussing with Hridayananda Maharaja

If we do not act as guru to the disciples, how will they be properly fixed in relationship to a guru? You say ISKCON is guru, but is that not a concoction? That is a new invention. Previously, guru had to be an actual spiritual master, a person, and the disciple had to relate to him. How can we say ISKCON is the guru? Where is this stated?

But what about the problem, "How can we claim to be guru?" Perhaps the minimum qualification for the guru should not be considered as having to match up with Srila Prabhupada. He is far more than guru; he is the kind of saint who may not come again for hundreds of years. But guru may mean one who will not fall down, who can instruct his disciples without deviation, who can control his senses, who has knowledge of the science of Kṛṣṇa in *parampara*. I looked it up in Srila Prabhupada's books and he often says it is not difficult to be guru. Somewhere it said that the guru should be an *uttama-adhikari*. So we are considering all sides of this guru issue.

I am thinking of Srila Prabhupada and want to read his books. Sitting in L.A. (when I get there again) is not like being in the fire of traveling and preaching. That I will have to pray for if I want it—a way to discharge my BTG duties and still be in the fire of pure preaching—aside from magazine-managing. Study of the books is pure, but it is not preaching—more like preparation for preaching. Preaching is the topmost purification.

November 26

Srila Prabhupada is everything. It is a fact. When we read the philosophy, where do we hear it except from Srila Prabhupada? We were reading about Kṛṣṇa being eaten by Bakasura. How can we accept this except on the assurance of Srila Prabhupada? You can say, "Well not only Srila Prabhupada, but Narada, Devala, and others accepted it." But how do we know

them? Even Vedic arguments themselves, the *Bhagavatam* verses, the existence and knowledge of Kṛṣṇa—it only comes from Srila Prabhupada. So as a child knows only his mother and father, and from them only does he know the relative place of the sky and earth, so we know only Prabhupada.

He is still with us.

November 27

In a class last night, Brahmananda Maharaja stressed how Srila Prabhupada preached under all conditions. *We must tell everyone we meet to please chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.* He elaborated and revealed that we do not do this. How many people do we meet daily? So many. It is a great challenge. But if you want to be guru, that is the qualification. Know the science of Kṛṣṇa and tell it to everyone you meet.

November 29

7:45 P.M. flight from N.Y. to Dallas

Now I will resume here a regular diary, on return to my U.S. routine. Everything is now dated “after the disappearance of Srila Prabhupada.” For the rest of my life, I want to spontaneously remember that great personality whose pastimes are no longer manifest before us.

We will prepare a special issue of BTG completely dedicated to Srila Prabhupada—but made attractive to all, even non-devotees.

Hare Kṛṣṇa is headed for bad press in America as the media links us to a murder and drug ring. How can we preach purely amid such bad propaganda? The common man hears only bad about us. Without sticking my head in the sand like an ostrich, I should not let my mind get into such anxiety as to forget concentration on Srila Prabhupada.

Remembering Srila Prabhupada

My mood is to try to remember Srila Prabhupada, and without being artificial, to mourn his separation, which has just occurred. I want to understand and feel more what it means that he has left. I want to continually feel his presence and my own memory of him. When he passed away, I hardly cried at all. When the urge for tears came, I checked them because it didn't overcome me—I would have had to induce some. I am regretting this and I am regretting how in the last months, Srila Prabhupada did not pay me much personal attention. I want to discuss these things about myself and Srila Prabhupada so that I can be a better devotee and preacher. By writing, I want to set myself guidelines for conduct. Especially in these months following his disappearance. Every day, write some memories, some *sastra*, and some analysis of the situation.

It is not enough merely to encourage the devotees that everything is all right and that we should push on in his absence. I also want to cry. I have a right to cry because my spiritual master has left. To cry is intelligent and perceptive. So while I would not induce myself or allow myself to cry tears on the day of his disappearance, November 14, 1977, here in the writing *I will induce*—not self-indulgent tears, but a devotional mood. Certainly, devotees will be able to appreciate what I am feeling.

There may be a tendency to lose faith in his teachings now that he is not here, but he said, "If you want to know me, read my books." Still, he is no longer the living embodiment. The person Bhagavata is not personally here for us to serve.

But when he was here, so many times I resented him. I don't want to exaggerate how offensive I was, but offense was there. He was so tolerant that he forgave me. He was, I think, pleased with me when I went off to preach in Boston. Before that, he was pleased that I brought him a mango, that I did his typing. . . . He was pleased that I was trying to develop the Boston center. I have my letters from him. . . . Of course, my early years with him were maybe the most ecstatic; I was ecstatic to get direction from him and it seemed that by a little simple service, I caught his attention (there being so few devotees).

Boston was a mighty effort against *maya* and we suffered attacks. I say mighty, but it was tiny. It was mighty in that it was more significant and effective against *maya* than anything else going on in that city. It was glorious, always a battle, externally and within our camp. Certainly he closely guided us, even by his letters from India. We discussed his teachings in a lively way, his books about Kṛṣṇa, preached his messages, and were eager to hear about his activities. There was also the promise that he would visit again. That was a great anticipation.

Then he was pleased with *gurukula*. He visited. We treasured his words. He visited again or we visited him where he was. Did I eventually obey him or disobey him? I did obey him. Now more than ever, if I pray to serve him, I beg he will please let me know my position in relation to him. Is it like Kṛṣṇa when He disappeared from Nārada's vision? Kṛṣṇa then told Nārada, "I have done this just to increase your attachment."

My *aparādhās* are there, mostly mental. Afraid he would ask me to go somewhere I did not want to go. Afraid he wouldn't give me what I wanted.

I was resentful of serving him, aloof out of shallow attachment, not willing to stay up late and work and get into business arrangements on his behalf. I was even his secretary from January to July one year. I was constantly with him. Another time I was with him for a month in Calcutta and London, and another time for a couple of weeks in the U.S. Yet another time last January. I went all over with him—Hong Kong, Japan. At first I was excited to be his secretary, then I lost the taste and wanted to go out and preach and be on my own. Constantly, *I didn't appreciate his association*. How great an offense that constitutes I am not certain. At least I always wanted to serve his instructions, even when I was too restless to be with him. I didn't want to handle his banking affairs—I hate such things—so my work became reduced to massaging him and typing his letters. In Bombay I got sick and restless. I asked him to let me go. At first he said I shouldn't. He wrote me that note—"You are pure."

But I was always a nonsense with him. That, in a sense, is also proper. I should recognize that always being or knowing that I was a nonsense, that I am a nonsense, enables me to be forgiven and stay on in his graces.

I never want to leave. I am firm. I will never leave. I want to learn how to pray, how to preach on his behalf. Yes, maintain BTG, but increase preaching. I don't think he is extremely pleased with my service at the present and therefore, I want to increase within ISKCON my standard of activity to a stage that would attract him more as I did in the past when I had a big Boston temple presidency.

Dallas gurukula—traveling as a *sannyasi*—then as his servant when at least I was always with him and being personally protected by him.

Then even when I left his personal service, it turned out to be almost my best success of all—by the grace of the library party. He was so very pleased by that wonderful work and our getting the standing orders and reviews. It was personally dear to him, distributing his books (only book distributors can still have that pride and assurance today).

Then the library party went to Europe and my connection gradually lessened. I took up a busy season of college preaching in the U.S., but eventually lost my taste, thinking it not very effective. I traveled with our mobile home—those were happy days, distributing books—and then that party went to Dallas.

Now for almost a year he was ill. I have been in L.A. doing BTG—as I never did it before, right on the scene, a real editor, checking all the work personally and preaching twice a week in the L.A. temple, managing my zone dutifully. Other devotees have been doing more outstanding development, but my work is steady.

He is gone in his personal presence. I am sorry that I didn't and do not appreciate him, but I am determined to keep my relationship with him as alive as possible and I hope a new preaching service will come my way so that I can catch the pleasure of his eye once again, so that (as he wrote when completing *Caitanya-caritamṛta* about his own preaching being

pleasing to Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati) I know my spiritual master is pleased.

Let me have full faith in his words and combat the lack of faith. Let me do what he asked (cooperate with others, preach cooperatively, do something to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness).

Prabhupada-smaranam. Remember Srila Prabhupada. This memorial issue—all Prabhupada—will be a golden opportunity to show devotion to him. Extol his glories. The world will not. We will.

To remember him eases the pain

My inner life treasures are now memories of Srila Prabhupada.

I was remembering times I have spoken to a group in which Srila Prabhupada was listening from the *vyasasana*. The first time was in Brooklyn in Prospect Park—we each spoke for a short time. I remember what he said. He said the park was like Vṛndavana.

The second time was in Boston. I spoke about Kṛṣṇa stealing butter and saying this butter was not even fit for the monkeys—I heard he smiled very broadly.

Another time he corrected me, saying that blasphemy of pure devotees means not just the spiritual master, but all devotees.

When I speak, I try to remember those times and sometimes I feel Srila Prabhupada is listening. This produces a desire in me to be very *parampara* and not try for any crowd-pleasing rhetoric. The most benefit will come if, like him, I speak exactly what I have heard from my spiritual master.

One day in 1966, I decided to become an ISKCON trustee. Srila Prabhupada introduced this. It was a special title for a sympathizer who pledged to give \$200 a month. I think it was during my lunch hour from work that I went over to 26 Second Avenue with the intentions of telling Swamiji I would like to become a trustee. I met him on the street. I think he was coming from the Houston Street direction. I remember standing

behind him while he put the key into the door of his apartment. Then he said, "I am an old man, I will die soon, but you are all young, so you have a long life to give to Kṛṣṇa consciousness." Then he took his sweater off and I remember it exposing his round belly.

I made an argument, "I may not live longer than you. I could die at any moment also." He replied that that would be an accident, but the general material situation was that I would live longer. He was then 72 and I was 27.

I'm reading in his *Teachings of Lord Kapila* about approaching Kṛṣṇa through the Deity. He says we have to qualify to speak to Kṛṣṇa and approach Him through the Deity by rules and regulations. I think if I worship a deity of Prabhupada, I could approach him intimately in the way that I was incapable of approaching him in his last days. If it is trouble to do worship, let me take the trouble. I didn't serve him then; let me serve him now. It is a sentiment, but if I live by it in actions, is it not a bona fide devotional assignment? And not just that I worship, but that I serve him all day in all aspects of the duty assigned to me by him.

While reading *Teachings of Lord Kapila*, when it refers to approaching Lord Kṛṣṇa, I am substituting "Prabhupada" in my mind. Through him I can reach the Supreme Lord.

I remember he sat up in his bed in Beth Israel Hospital in the spring of 1967 and said, "I don't know Kṛṣṇa. I only know my Guru Maharaja." *Guru-puja*. And when there is Radha-Kṛṣṇa-puja, that is only because he installed Their Lordships.

Sometimes I take a critical view of my relationship with Srila Prabhupada, considering my failure and offenses before him. Sometimes I take a favorable view and see my approaching him as more successful. Taking the favorable view, my reluctance and inability to speak to him at the end was due to my awareness of my own position. I didn't remain silent out of my own dislike, but my relationship was to wait for him to speak to me. Because he was unable to see, or not able to speak without difficulty—we had to speak up to Srila Prabhupada. And what

to say? Some intimate encouragement. Such words stuck in my throat. It was not my rascaldom; it was due to my not having a very developed personal, spontaneous affection. Mine is more the servant, the receiver of orders. Now I am thinking that I can still try to approach him. He is not gone.

“Our Master Said to Preach!”

December 1–29, 1977

The main impression one gets from reading this chapter is the bouncing back and forth as I try to decide what service I should do. Sometimes I am thinking it is best to preach by going door to door with a few men, but then I am reminded of my “institutional” duties with ISKCON and the GBC . . . back and forth.

While admitting that my indecisiveness is a weakness, it also seemed necessary to keep weighing the positive alternatives. As one of my Godbrothers advised me, “Don’t expect the satisfaction of completely settling on an either-or basis.” For certain periods we may seem especially resolved, but it does not mean we have come into illusion when we start encountering more decisions to be made. Even the best road suddenly forks into a left and a right and we have to decide which way to go. It is not wrong to be thoughtful about carefully considering the alternatives.

The conclusion of this chapter seems to be that one has to serve ISKCON with all its duties, and that to work only in a certain area would be an impermissible luxury. Yet even when settling on that narrow path, many questions continue to arise as to how best to serve ISKCON. A diarist often uses diary-writing to help him decide what to do, and that function is particularly pronounced in these pages. I hope these exercises will be of help to others. It seems that even the most sincere calling out, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, what do you want me to do?” cannot be answered once and for all except in the broadest sense: serve with undying commitment to his order.

* * *

December 1, 1977

Dallas

I haven't made an entry here every day because I am not going out and preaching to anyone. Hardly a single person. More than ever I have been preaching daily and at night in the temple—filling in the devotees on all I've gathered about Srila Prabhupada's disappearance. I'm preaching how we have lost him in his physical presence and how we have gained a greater opportunity to realize him and increase our attachment to him in his *vani-seva*. Certainly that is also preaching—*bodhayantah parasparam*—but it is not the same thing as approaching the nondevotees. I want the other also. Hridayananda Maharaja said I will have to realize that it isn't an either-or life, but I will have to try to balance *both*—responsible execution of Srila Prabhupada's will within his ISKCON (for me this means working daily at the BTG office, residing in L.A. and preaching in the class there, and preaching in connection with my GBC responsibility for Northwest U.S. zone)—and preaching to nondevotees. But I have no program at all to accomplish the latter.

Yesterday I was thinking, "Oh, you say, 'I cannot preach because my duties do not allow me to have a program for preaching full-time to nondevotees.' Unless I am forced into a situation where I have no alternative (like a person pushed into the water and told, 'Now swim!'), then I'm not able to boldly speak why they should take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness." Then I thought, "What you really mean is that you are not a preacher. If you were really a preacher, if you were really able to preach, then you wouldn't need a P.R. man and this and that full-time arrangement and mental atmosphere and adjusted conditions, special kind of audience, etc. You would preach. Even if you had to divide your time between administrative duties and such preaching, you would still be able to preach. But you can't preach." Is it true?

Lest I forget: last night a man and woman showed up at the evening *arati*. I approached them afterwards. It turned out that he was quite pious and frustrated by material life. He was very

interested in taking to some practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and I answered his questions and tried to guide him. I had to very cautiously overcome his doubts about Deity worship, giving up meat-eating, too much austerity, and attract him to the real possibility for him to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He said he would come back to the temple tonight. I felt blissful after he left, and confident. I felt like a preacher. I felt worthy. I felt the indescribable taste of following Lord Caitanya's instruction, "Whomever you meet, tell them about Kṛṣṇa." I went to the *prasadam* room and the boys coming back from the day's book distribution were relating their scores, collections, and experiences—all very hopeful. I felt I too was a preacher. That is the real taste.

I'm trying to get myself a van and a few men—I don't know how yet. But if I try to do it, certainly Kṛṣṇa will give me some kind of facility. And whatever He offers me I should take and go out and try either to chant in the street or go to someone for preaching, or any such direct program. Do it in the California area and in this way, launch a genuine *sannyasi* program. At the same time, attend to duties in my L.A. office.

I also plan to install a Prabhupada deity in the office.

If the purchase of a van or recruiting of men is somehow frustrated, still I pray now: "Dear Lord, dear Srila Prabhupada, please empower me to go forward, even if lacking in all paraphernalia, even though not qualified as bold, even with no booked program. At the most primitive level if necessary, let me approach the nondevotee regularly and tell him about Kṛṣṇa ("door to door") so that the mercy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be extended and spread and I can be saved by my own absorption in even the tiniest part of the *sankirtana* effort."

For the record: my preaching to the couple last night lasted an hour and the result seemed favorable—the man seemed like his life might have been seriously changed.

Notes from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4.28.30, purport:

The first seven of the nine processes of devotional service are preliminary, part of regulative life. The last two processes,

sakhyam and *atma-nivedanam* are spontaneous. Prabhupada writes that to surrender everything to Krsna is to be a preacher who spreads Krsna consciousness all over the world. No one can be such a preacher unless he is *atma-nivedanam*.

Sometimes I don't want to feel comforted but want to feel the loss. Generally, we are such creatures that we really do not want to feel keen loss. In my own case, even if I want to, it seems I cannot feel what I have lost, what the world has lost. Srila Prabhupada has also blessed us in this respect. He has left us well off. We have Krsna consciousness.

December 5

Should I worship Prabhupada's *murti*?

I don't want my memory of Srila Prabhupada to dwindle with time. When we remember him, it is always jolly, but I always want to feel an appropriate and natural sadness that he left. If that personal attachment to and keen remembrance of his form diminish, then like the vigorous execution of his will, for me it seems less potent. I have to remember him, so I deliberately cultivate remembrance. Therefore, I thought of the Prabhupada *murti*. Perhaps it is too much trouble and will detract from the very execution of his *vani* preaching mission which requires all my energy in reading, writing, preaching, managing. But I'm thinking—no. Do I have faith that Srila Prabhupada is actually present in his *murti*? Then let me serve him *prasadam*, keep his clothes, serve him in his daily schedule as the deity. And taking the time and trouble to worship this deity, if done not as a burden or drudgery—will enable me to still associate with his person. If I really have faith that he is personally present as *arca-vigraha*, then the question only remains (just as it did when he was personally present): "Is there important benefit to personally being with Srila Prabhupada and being his personal servant?" The answer must be, "Yes." While he was present, I had this opportunity, so I will be reliving it. I may not have used that opportunity properly, in real loving service, but it was most valuable. To offer personal

bodily service is as valid now as it was then, but as before, one could be restless even in his presence and consider it a minor service compared to preaching. That mentality could also develop while worshiping his *murti*. I am thinking, "Let me try it and if later I become restless, I can turn the worship over to one of our established centers." But I shouldn't start the full worship and then abandon it, or let the *murti* lapse into being unattended, like a picture. If it could become part of my routine without slowing me down—then what is the harm?

Let me pray and think and prepare myself for the arrival of this *murti*. On seeing him I will probably be excited, perhaps partly by the novelty of it. Or I may think, "Gee, if devotees see me worshiping this deity, they may think highly of me." I have to consider more seriously the pros and cons of worshiping the *murti*. I mostly think of the pros—it will commit me to live in remembrance of his personal presence. That living memory will enliven and personalize my devotional service execution of his orders. The challenge might be, "That order itself is much more important than tending to his form—which is for a fool who can only remember him in that way—and if you live intensively in his order, you will be overwhelmed by his presence." Srila Prabhupada himself worshiped no *murti* of his guru. My answers are—"Yes, I am a fool, and yes, I need it."

Gave a full lecture yesterday at a funeral home as "chief guest" at a wake for a dead Hindu. Unusual, challenging engagement. We chanted and I spoke authoritatively on death and the spirit soul. Then at the temple I gave the Sunday feast lecture to guests, then spoke for about twenty minutes to a very receptive boy, urging him to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Certainly I couldn't complain that I had no preaching opportunity this day.

December 7

On December 6, my 38th birthday, we had a wonderful preaching engagement in Fort Worth. They received us respectfully and we had a program of *kirtana*, a full-length

lecture, and full *prasadam*—at night. I preached about *param para* and the continuance of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I requested them to take seriously to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and never give it up in favor of the illusion of sense gratification. Then they asked me to talk of Srila Prabhupada's last hours.

I had a feeling of what it is to go forward preaching on Srila Prabhupada's behalf now that he has left us. The whole time spoke, I looked toward a picture of His Divine Grace. Even just doing a few engagements like this is enlivening. In order to execute my managerial duties as GBC (settling personal disputes and spiritual troubles in the Dallas temple this week), couldn't simply preach house to house, but I have to work in the ISKCON institution. Going out and meeting nondevotee is the real taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—the preaching in action—but the base is an ISKCON *asrama*.

An ex-devotee wrote me a letter suggesting I leave ISKCON and go and preach outside the movement, and in this way would grow and realize love of God with great freedom and expansion. I took this as the voice of *maya*. Certainly I want to grow, but he doesn't realize that to follow Srila Prabhupada, must carry on the responsibilities he has given me. I must encourage devotees to push on in ISKCON, because Prabhupada is ISKCON. Srila Prabhupada is concerned for ISKCON. Preaching should be done to further the society's aims. In this way, pleasing Srila Prabhupada, my life can be successful.

December 10

Los Angeles

From *Vaisistiyastakam* by Srila Prabhupada, 1961:

29. Oh, shame! My dear brothers, aren't you embarrassed? In the manner of businessmen you increase your disciples.
30. Our master said to preach! Let the neophytes remain inside the temples and simply ring the bells.

Thought it out. I could run around in a car or van preaching here and there—and I will, but if I sat at a camp in association of a few like-minded college preachers and wrote academic monographs, wouldn't that big *mrdanga* go far and wide and spread the message? And if the camp itself is in a vital place (Berkeley), won't there be a good chance to preach to new people also?

December 12

I felt myself losing remembrance. I thought, "Now it's over. He's gone and I cannot think closely of him. To think that way has become artificial. Now it is all *vani-seva*." But now I've realized that though some immediate responses to Prabhupada's disappearance are gone, new feelings in time can churn our feelings in separation.

Anticipating L.A.

It has been almost a month since the disappearance of Srila Prabhupada. Most tears are finished. But are the sober promises to be dropped? Why were sober promises made at that time? Because we could not bear to continue the nonsense. We felt we had failed to be good disciples during his presence in this world and on his sudden disappearance, the loss made us ashamed that we had failed to appreciate the great gift of his teachings. We vowed to live up to being his disciples in earnest.

Now what?

I was remembering him. Still I'm remembering him. Is it changing? To whom can I speak of these things but his own disciples who knew him?

Memory is fading. Of course, we have his *vani*, so one might say, "Stop this artificial cultivation of loss. If it is not natural, then don't provoke it." But if deterioration is "natural," shall we stand by silently?

Someone asked me how to retain remembrance. I said, "By any and all means."

*Aim gurudevaya vidmahe krsnanandaya dhimahi tan no guro
pracodayat.*

“Let me try to understand my spiritual master, who is always in blissful Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Let me meditate on him being enthused just as he enthuses us.”

A phase has passed. The verses stating that one should cry on the disappearance of the spiritual master have already been read several times.

What now?

My only answer, my only hope, is to seek out serious devotee and discuss Śrīla Prabhupada, or at least discuss why we are not discussing him.

See “Just remember Me and fight” verse in the *Bhagavad gita*.

You can cite one verse after another and think of Śrīla Prabhupada.

As far as formal classes are concerned, I have not been satisfied to hear anything except discussion of our connection with the pure devotee. I keep waiting for the speaker to talk about that, or waiting for my chance to talk about that. I cannot be satisfied to hear a Godbrother talk at length about Kṛṣṇa without explaining the basis of his understanding of his spiritual master. But I appreciate any understanding, an advanced one, an intimate one, a historic one—any genuine understanding or emotion or intellectual point.

In other words, there is pain of loss in separation, and also lamentation that the memory is deteriorating and all is almost business as usual—but all these various misfortunes are mitigated by hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord’s devotee.

“It has been a month”—a month is nothing. Pure associates of Kṛṣṇa cried their whole lives, waiting in separation from Him, and they purposely churned their feelings of separation.

Śrīla Prabhupada, November 1977:

Now it is up to you to give protection to the sanctity of our institution.

Letter from Srila Prabhupada to Karandhara, September 13, 1970 (from Calcutta):

Yes, I am so glad that your center is doing so well and all the devotees are now appreciating the presence of their spiritual master by following his instructions although he is no longer physically present—this is the right spirit.

December 20

San Diego

What does Srila Prabhupada want me to do? Does he want me to write academic books expanding on his books for use in colleges? What does he want?

I know he wants me to be a pure devotee, all of us, but what preaching? He wants his temples to all run nicely, but he always stresses that the GBC should not manage locally. Let them think and do what they can. I have to do my own preaching as well. I am choosing this writing.

We are about to get a place in San Diego. I'm supposed to spend half my time here.

Walking on the beach, two different groups of very degraded hippies and rowdies called and shouted obscenities at us because we are Hare Krsnas. It shook me up, although I knew it was purifying.

Tonight we were reading how the Vaisnava is compassionate. I was thinking, "When those boys shouted at us, I only thought of myself. I didn't think compassionately of helping them."

Compassion is a sign of real advancement. Giving Krsna consciousness, feeling pain to see the crippled humanity—not pain for myself, but for those who are not in Krsna consciousness.

I think then—let me travel and preach and be tolerant even in situations such as today at the beach. Let me always be a fearless preacher.

I recounted to one devotee how Srila Prabhupada would sustain philosophical preaching with one guest—holding forth

on his own for hours. Relating to the people on the *Gita*'s terms, on Kṛṣṇa's terms.

When can I surrender and get a little taste of *sannyasa* preaching?

December 21

Now I've stopped giving special classes centering on Srila Prabhupada's passing away and our dealing with his separation.

Does remembrance of him come naturally? No, forgetfulness comes naturally. They are making me a Prabhupada *murti*, but I'm not thinking of him. I am living his instructions. Do I have to think of him personally by cultivation? Yes, but it has to be spontaneous at the same time. He gives us so much service engagement, there is little time to separately reminisce about his pastimes.

There is certainly a different mood from when I first returned from India. "You can't just sit and think of Gurudeva, but you have to do his service as assigned to you. The end of that service is to effectively deliver Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Am I a worker in ISKCON, or am I living at ISKCON's expense? I should be totally the servant of His Divine Grace, even in his 'physical absence.' Better I serve him by preaching than spend time with his *murti*."

I seem to question why I want his *murti*. This is a different mood. I am agreeing that the personal presence is not as important. He is gone. No servants rub oil on him in some camp on earth. No letters, no translation work—he is gone from here. This should make devotees sad. Yet his work goes on unabated. He said at the end, "What is the wrong if I die?" His work goes on. But it is puzzling that he has left us. We were with him very little, especially in the last years. Regrets of misspent time, little surrender.

I am not crying for his articles or for worship of him. We busy ourselves in preaching duties and do not think of him. Not good. Srila Prabhupada, where are you now? It is all sincerity and surrender you require from me if I want to live with

you. But it seems to be fading—the personal connection. I very much enjoy remembering you. That is a delight, but I have to act on your behalf.

It is social status, how much personal relationship one had with you. I have a good deal, not the most—but I can remember by the hour. I have my journals, my memories, my recall of you. Keep it alive!

Now the *murti* will be ready before too long. How much faith do I have that you are present in your form? How much desire do I have to serve your form (or your *vani*)? How much love do I have? Please, I pray, help me. My feelings are poor right now, not even transcendental.

December 22

Now that Srila Prabhupada isn't "physically" present on the planet, there is no one who directly knows and sees Krsna, so we can immediately realize that Krsna is not just theoretical.

How can we do this now? Srila Prabhupada said to study his books. (Like the iron rod in the fire, if we associate with them, we will become pure devotees.) It can be done by a combination of service, direct hearing, and study. A common problem is how much time to direct to study. It is a fact that if we execute duties, there is not much extra time. It is also a fact that our main study is in the morning and evening classes.

I can see Krsna, then, if I serve and read and chant—but will I really see the cowherd boy face to face? Do I even have such pure desire? Should I? Shouldn't I just serve Srila Prabhupada? Yet he wants me as his successful student to go to Krsna.

Clue: great faith and belief in his words is the way to see Krsna. *Faith* that the name and the service and the *prasada*, even though executed by me, are bringing me Krsna. Read and serve and increase faith in the presence of Krsna by voluntary faithful service and submission.

December 23

ISKCON news smears go on. Our *sankirtana* goes on also. Attacks from the demons, fighting back from our side—protection from the Supreme Lord. And I, isolated within ISKCON, all day in different rooms, doing my little bit and sometimes on a quite low energy level of leadership, determination, not shouldering my share of responsibility. Alas, fool, alas. I will bitterly regret not having completed the course—but then it will be too late. Some will pass the course splendidly.

Srila Prabhupada lecturing, from the spring of 1966:

[In spiritual life] you won't feel fatigued. I tell you. This is my practical experience. . . . I am here, always working, something reading or writing, something reading or writing, twenty-four hours. Simply when I feel hungry, I take some food. And simply when I feel asleep I go to bed. Otherwise, *always* I don't feel fatigued. You can ask Mr. Paul whether I am not doing this. So I take . . . pleasure in doing that. I don't feel fatigued. Similarly, when one will have that spiritual sense, he won't feel—rather, he will . . . feel disgusted to go to sleep. . . . “Oh, sleep has come just to disturb.” See? He wants to lessen the time of sleeping. . . . Now as we pray *vande rupa-sanatana* . . .

So sublime and invigorating you won't feel fatigued. You will be fearless. Your life will be blissful. These are the symptoms.

Letter on *Back to Godhead* stationery

December 22, 1977

Dear Hridayananda Maharaj,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

I assume you are still reading and preparing yourself for writing, and I am writing you in the desire to “compare notes.” I must admit I am almost anticipating your saying you are going to give the whole thing up. It is a struggle in that way for me.

One part of the struggle is that I keep thinking about some kind of ideal, independent, "traveling and preaching" *sannyasa* life. Whenever I sort it out in terms of the time and place of ISKCON and GBC duties, and the preaching field in the modern world, I come to the conclusion that I cannot expect my best service to be simply setting out in a van and not knowing where I will spend the night, but with a very keen, "fired up" pure consciousness, literally speaking to everyone I meet about Kṛṣṇa . . . you know. Lately I think that if I really wanted that traveling *sankirtana* preaching consciousness, living on the "front lines," the only way to achieve it is to spend almost all my time doing it. I don't think you can manage or sit down to do book-writing for five hours, and then run out and be a traveling preacher for two hours. You put it well when you told me we had to live without the mental satisfaction of an either-or commitment, but do all the varied tasks that fall our way as Srila Prabhupada's representatives. Nevertheless, this is a kind of struggle: book-writing is so retired and in a sense, sheltered from the contact of preaching and moving in the world of nondevotees that one sometimes feels he is not living up to *sannyasa*. I think I can overcome this without much trouble if I can get into the *fire* of writing—if I can really get into something, then I am so absorbed I know: "*This is the big sankirtana!*"

Another struggle is just the opposite. Facing up to my GBC, BTG, senior ISKCON devotee duties, I have so many responsibilities that it is hard to find the large segments of time required for serious writing. It is a struggle to put aside or "renounce" required GBC visits, time talking with troubled devotees, management, temple life at New Dvaraka, etc., in order to give time and depth in a regular way to a big writing project. Sometimes it is impossible to put many duties aside. Or one thinks, "Should a GBC member indulge in his own preaching-writing and not tend to everything else instead?" The answer to this is again that one cannot think either-or, either writer or zonal secretary and BTG editor. We have to tend to all things. But we can try to put most time in on the study, research, and writing.

Another struggle is meditating and praying: "Is this what Srila Prabhupada wants? Is this the service I should do that will please him most?" I find one encouraging quote on page 74 of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Second Canto, Part One: "The first duty of a person in the renounced order of life is to contribute some literary work for the benefit of the human being in order to give him realized direction toward self-realization." But sometimes I wonder if this is the most pleasing to Prabhupada. Toward the end of his life, as always, he was so interested to hear from devotees like Giriraja, who was managing one of his biggest centers, or from GBCs like yourself who were producing books in different languages. He seemed particularly attentive to what I was doing when I was distributing books on the library party or managing *gurukula* in the beginning. I wonder how much it catches his real pleasure with us when we investigate the world of mundane ideas and defeat the atheists with our own writing efforts. Actually, I have evidence that it *does* please him very much. But this is another struggle: trying to be sure it is the most pleasing to Srila Prabhupada and that I am not on some indulgent trip satisfying my mental whims or desires to be famous, etc.

Another struggle is—when the other struggles are finally put aside enough so that I can get down to work—whether I can actually succeed and produce some work that will be good enough to be read not only by a devotee, but by a so-called impartial reader. We have to preach the Vaisnava *siddhanta* strongly, yet in areas of intellectual concern in which the demands of reason and logic are considered most important, along with data, and where *sastra* is not acceptable. It is a hard struggle to make something sound and readable and complete and thoroughly *parampara*—with fiery preaching spirit and yet reading as a balanced dispassionate work for Western intellectuals. I have done the *Readings in Vedic Literature*, but since then I have suffered a number of false starts and failures (after doing considerable research) so as to make me not exactly cocky that I can do it successfully. A devotee's spirit is to try again, however, with determination.

It is a field not much adored by our ISKCON newsletter world. It is a field full of question marks, doubts, and of course, full of potential *maya*. But the rewards are long-lasting and real if we succeed. When I think how I am 38 years old and may not have long to go, I think, "I had better make a lasting contribution before it's too late." To have managed the Seattle and Portland temples in an intensive way through ten years of troubles, or to write a book championing Kṛṣṇa consciousness acceptable to scholars—which is better? Again, I can't be either-or. *Everything* has to be taken care of! That is Srila Prabhupada's way. I have not even begun my proposed project, "The Vedic View on Death and Dying"—to be the first of a series of small text books.

I secured an apartment in San Diego and may start spending a few days a week down there working on it. I am steering myself to get right into it despite the difficulties. What about yourself? How do you feel about not doing much so-called front-line preaching? How do you deal with the pressure of your other duties? Do you think it is most pleasing to His Divine Grace? Do you think you can actually do something successful in the end? Let me know.

Your servant,
Satsvarupa das Goswami

**From "Humbler than a Blade of Grass," by His Divine Grace
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Maharaja**

Remembering the Spiritual Master

He who tempts us by the sensuous impulses of his words, hands, feet, anus and the organ of generation is a cheat. But Shri Gurudeva has power to save us from all deception. It is, therefore, certainly our duty to worship only the lotus feet of Shri Gurudeva who is so merciful, at the beginning of every day and even at the beginning of every moment of our lives.

It is my Gurudeva who is graciously present in all these different forms. If he is not graciously present in all these different forms, who would then preserve me? Those whom my Gurudeva had made his own are my saviours. But may I never

have occasion to see the face of that wicked person who is a source of evil, who maligns the lotus feet of my Shri Gurudeva or who countenances in any way such a slanderer.

The moment I fall away from the lotus feet of Shri Guru or forget them, I certainly fall away from the Truth. As soon as I fall away from the lotus feet of Shri Guru I find myself encompassed by innumerable wants. I run in a hurry for my bath. I become busy for preventing a cold. I run after other occupations different from the service of Shri Gurudeva. It is the lotus feet of Shri Gurudeva that alone protect me constantly from all this attachment for objects other than the Truth. If I do not remember the lotus feet of Shri Guru at the beginning of every new year, every new month, every new day and every new moment, then I am sure to fall into far greater inconveniences. If I do not do so, I want to dress myself in the garb of the Guru. I become liable to the bad desire of seeking to be worshiped by other people as Guru. It is this which constitutes addiction to other things than the Truth . . .

Where is such constant remembrance? If we command ourselves, "Preach!"? But we may say, "I am already preaching." Preaching is routinized, part of a big institution. Remember him always. How? His *vani*. Everything about it. Read his books, worship his form, recall his activities, live with his devotees, and devote your all to his mission. You have to keep absorbed in him.

Assuming responsibility of being guru

We have taken upon ourselves the responsibility of welcoming this grave charge. All the audience have accepted ordinary seats, I alone have been provided with a lofty seat. All are being told in effect—"Do have a look at a big animal from the Zoo-gardens. What arrogance! So foolish! So wicked! Have you ever seen such a big brute? Garlands of flowers have been put round his neck! What laudations! What bombastic, long-drawn, and hyperbolic adjectives! And how complacently too he is listening to the praise of his own achievements, how intently, and with his own ears! He also evidently feels delighted in mind! Is he not acting in plain violation of the teaching of Mahaprabhu?

Can such a big brute, so selfish and insolent, be ever reclaimed from brutishness?"

I happen to be one of the greatest of fools. No one offers me good advice on account of my arrogance. Inasmuch as nobody condescends to instruct me I placed my case before Mahaprabhu Himself. The thought occurred to me that I would make over the charge of myself to Him and see what He would advise me to do. Then Shri Chaitanyadeva said to me:

Whomsoever thou meet'st, instruct him regarding Krishna,
By My command being Guru deliver this land;
In this thou wilt not be obstructed by the current of the world;
Thou wilt have My company once again at this place.

As the saying goes, "Having started on the dance, it is no use to draw close the veil." I am doing the duty of the Guru, but if I preach that no one should shout "*Jaya*" to me, that is to say, if I say in a roundabout way, "Sing *Jaya* to me," it would be nothing short of duplicity. Our Gurudeva has not taught us such insincerity. Mahaprabhu has not taught such insincerity. I have to serve God in the straightforward way. The word of God has come down to the Gurudeva; I have to obey it in all sincerity. I will not disrespect the Guru at the instance of any foolish or malicious sectarians. Especially as Shri Gurudeva has directed me saying, "By my command, being Guru, save this land." This command has my Gurudeva preached. My Gurudeva in his turn has conveyed the command to me. I will not be guilty of any insincerity in carrying out that command.

On not being envious of more advanced disciples of my spiritual master

I myself should not be polluted by that discord which is always found in the plurality of this miserable manifestation, but I have every inclination to make my friends quite compatible with the All-love, provided you or they count me as one of you or them. I will "therefore" never be hostile and apathetic to those who have a tendency to be devoted to the All-love, but I will reckon them as confidential members whom I should serve with all intimacy and love for their close services to Him in a plane where I have also got a humble position.

Letter to me:

"You write to say 'I am praying that Krishna will give me the power to preach something pure and effective. . . . ' Yes, Krishna will surely give you such power. *As you increase your activities, Krishna gives you more and more power.* So go on increasing in that way. Krishna is unlimited, and service rendered to Him is likewise without any limit." [Emphasis added.]

December 24

I think I am getting a little more realization about my preaching duty. Srila Prabhupada wrote me years ago:

. . . you should take your responsibility very, very seriously as being the representative of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Who is God Himself, and always remember that you are one of the few men I have appointed to carry on my work throughout the world and your mission before you is huge. Therefore, always pray to Krishna to give you strength for accomplishing this mission by doing what I am doing. My first business is to give the devotees the proper knowledge and engage them in devotional service, so that is not very difficult task for you, I have given you everything, so read and speak from the books and so many new lights will come out. We have got so many books, so if we go on preaching from them for the next 1,000 years, there is enough stock.

I was thinking how the men undergo so much austerity to go out and face the nondevotees and collect money and distribute books. By penance and austerity one advances in spiritual life. Suffering in the line of duty is an asset. So I thought, well, what am I doing as *tapasya*? Now in light of the above quote, and also after talking with my GBC Godbrother, Hridayananda Maharaja, I am understanding that *all* my given duties are my work. In the course of them, so many troubles come. I have to always travel and worry about the devotees in the different temples. I have to take it very, very seriously. Prabhupada also wrote me that I should look into all the matters,

including the financial matters; otherwise, there can be a calamity at any moment. I have to set an example. Suffering is there and also comes of its own accord as I try to do my given GBC, *sannyasi* duties. Even writing, although sitting in a room, is great trouble. So many times I have tried and failed in writing projects. I don't have to be guilty and stick pins into myself like a fanatic who thinks he has to be suffering.

It is not that if I am not suffering at every moment, then I am not in spiritual life. I am not leading a soft, bourgeois life either. Go on with these given duties, and be very, very serious. Don't give up the concern on the GBC level for all of ISKCON. For example, I have just been invited to Hawaii where there has been some trouble, and GBC men say they would appreciate my going there to see. Then I have to go to Vancouver this week, and then Dallas. So much traveling is not exactly a picnic, really. But this is my duty and I have to do it and maintain high consciousness. Simply serve Srila Prabhupada as a *sannyasi* and GBC.

Another thing is the upcoming guru business. If we believe in the *sastra* and guru, then as soon as I take a disciple I will be open to all kinds of suffering when he does misdeeds. Suffering will come, and when it does, I should also accept it.

For now, I want to push on in my tiny way on the writing front and to make these visits. Now I have taken on this traveling party, which is very nice, but I see I won't be able to simply be a traveling *sankirtana* leader who never calls in to ISKCON or worries about anything but traveling and distributing magazines. The devotees will have to accept that I am doing diversified duties.

My duty is not just a matter of walking down the road carrying a water pot, or even spending hours in a parking lot collecting *laksmi*. My duties are what they are, maybe more lowly and with less *tapasya*—but they are also the topmost responsibilities of our movement. I think there is no fault as long as I am fully engaged with no shirking of the ISKCON duties given to me by Prabhupada in my GBC-*sannyasa* capacity.

December 26

I have this section of the diary marked "Prabhupada," but I don't write here much anymore.

It's not just that "he's present in *vani*," but even more, I have to turn to that *vani*. So many dangers—gross sensual temptation, atheistic intellectualism and speculation, devotional apathy, living in the temple with little advancement.

Somehow his picture doesn't yield him enough. There are so many pictures. Regular worship of his *murti*. I plan to speak into a tape recorder systematic remembrance of Srila Prabhupada. Anyone who has associated with him should compile all their data—for historical purposes. By doing it, it will enliven me again. I was thinking of doing it early in the morning—a reason to rise early. Sit down around 1:30 or 1:45 A.M. and pray for clear memory. Dutifully put it down and it can be typed.

Sometimes I may have to indulge in memories of what I was doing, because by dredging my own memories of Srila Prabhupada I may unexpectedly find forgotten but genuine anecdotes of the great soul, His Divine Grace. The reader will have to indulge me a little. The main goal will be to remember Srila Prabhupada for the benefit of all the world and all the devotees, including myself.

One should never be envious of the spiritual master and think him an ordinary man.

This may be a new inner direction, even if private, by which I can revive a *keen sense* of actively keeping alive his personal presence. Never let your mind fall to thinking your connection with Srila Prabhupada is an ordinary thing. Others may take their relationship with him lightly, but I must not.

Certainly by vigorous preaching we will live with him. That is the quickest way to attract the attention of Kṛṣṇa Himself. A boy in class today asked, "Is it true that by doing a little thing, something extra in your devotional service prompted by spontaneous devotion, you then get a chance to do increased service and become more empowered?" I gave him the example of how Srila Prabhupada seemed pleased and remembered how I

used to bring him a mango in the early days. It may be considered "a little extra" to continue to cultivate personal remembrance, but it has to be done with love.

Similarly, the sentiment to worship the Prabhupada *murti*. One can rightly say the *murti* worship is not at all necessary or that it could even become a hindrance to preaching Prabhupada *vani*, but no one will object if I actually demonstrate continued day in, day out devotion to this *murti-seva*. It has to be done with love. Love for the spiritual master shown in any genuine way can win us perfection.

I link with him through chanting Hare Krsna, reading his books, living and serving in his ISKCON temples, preaching in the *sankirtana* movement in my capacity as *sannyasa* GBC, BTG editor, writer. This is the essential *guru-puja*.

December 27

I am having a bad day at the library, so I am thinking negatively of the whole writing project. Coming to grips with the mundane field of ideas. I mean, why research and write dealing with their speculation and denial of spirit? Why not spend the time in direct self-purification, reading Srila Prabhupada's books, preaching here and there on our own Vedic philosophy? Why get involved with comparative, mundane ideas?

The obvious answer is that we are meant to fight and defeat the demoniac forces. Don't let the field of education of the masses be taken entirely over by demons.

One could ask, "Isn't this all done by Srila Prabhupada's books? Of course, his books won't be accepted except as definite religious treatises, but why not let it go at that? His books are the undiluted Absolute. He deals blows to all mundaners from his own position and remains victorious. And some books are being distributed, so what is the difficulty?"

Answer: "A new field. Professors are willing to accept us. We can write books to be accepted into the university syllabus." The debate goes on. It is difficult, but it can be done.

In connection with this intellectual writing and researching, I think, "This work—how will it help me become a guru?"

Being absorbed in these fields, solitary writing, how is this getting me ready to take disciples?" What should I do as preparation?

At least let me be aware that the time is coming soon when the *bhaktas* expect to be initiated. Of course, it is a work-a-day arrangement and my life will go on after initiation, as it is going on now. Everything won't change, magically, by the act of accepting a disciple. But it is of the greatest significance that I will take on their karma. I will have to suffer. Before taking such a step, should I prepare myself? I have to strengthen my inner conviction as well as knowledge of *sastra*.

Just took lunch (apple and banana) outside the library and discussed with Mandalesvara. I had the idea—or we had it combined—that it would be better to write this book *without intensive nondevotional research*. Put their books back on the shelves. Better I work only with *Srimad-Bhagavatam* material. Put it into my words. But not "Death and Dying" research.

December 28

Still got their books with me. I don't think I should spend much time with them. But some "poison" will spice up the narrative from their point of view. Let them know I know the mundane field.

Berkeley

Whether I go door to door may not be the crucial factor, but the reason I think of it is I know I have to be more assured *within myself* of my connection to being a servant of Kṛṣṇa. I have to prepare myself for becoming a guru. If I do not prepare myself, still I will be asked to take disciples. What if, under pressure to carry on His Divine Grace's preaching, I accept disciples but feel uncertain within myself? What if I relate only officially, as an institutional formality, to these disciples?

I have to be *acarya*. It is as simple as that. *Acarya* doesn't mean trying to imitate or play the role of guru. It means the opposite. It means being exemplary. Being a devotee—being

real—so that others can follow you. Sure, I am respectable—but what do I really know inside myself? Am I fearless? Am I pure? Do I know Kṛṣṇa?

Caru Prabhu astonished me by saying that a number of devotees would ask me for initiation at Mayapur. On what basis would I accept some and not others? How many will I accept? In my shyness, embarrassment, and awkwardness, how will I act? How will I avoid being artificial?

When I think of chalking out a preaching program for the next two months or thereafter, it should be how to be guru. Is the purification of guru with one or two devotees going into an unknown town doing door-to-door preaching—is that the best? Is forming a traveling party the best? Is management in ISKCON the best? I don't know, but I am realizing more that my decisions should hinge on what will be the most exemplary. Preparing myself for becoming an initiating guru means becoming more humble, but stronger, and taking the most suitable *tapasya*. I have to expect *tapasya*. Of course, suffering reversal and trouble comes of its own accord. I don't have to plan for it. But isn't *tapasya* described as "voluntary suffering"? So in my service activities I should also plan for the *tapasya* that is most suitable for advancement. Pray to realize this and work at it. It is not the ordinary task even for most devotees. I have to beware to do more, to increase. To take a vital engagement, such as one connected to book distribution. And to remain *alive* (to be a preacher you can't be a dead man, especially a *sannyasi*). Seems like a travel program is best.

December 29

Tonight, preaching to the professor on "The Future of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement."

(1) Who will replace Srila Prabhupada?

(2) How will the movement manage to go on?

Answers: First, there is no replacement. We face up to our loss. It is not a small thing to be without the presence of the world *acarya*. Who can replace him? Can some sort of election

produce a great soul? We don't think so. Who replaced Ramanuja? Who replaced Madhva? There is no move for a new head.

But our movement is spiritually assured of continuance. There will be gurus, there will be initiation—the *parampara* will continue. It is not a cult built on one person's charisma and it never was.

Vani and *vapuh*—explain them. Explain the talk Srila Prabhupada gave on his own guru's disappearance day (spoken in 1973).

It is not like a son whose father dies and causes unhappiness. He continues in his instruction. One feels he is present in the heart. The preaching opportunity this evening is his mercy. Our knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, his books, our mission—all his mercy. Guru worship is traditional. *Acāryopasanam; yasya devī para bhaktir*.

We are eternal, the Lord is eternal, Srila Prabhupada is also not dead. "He reasons ill who says that Vaisnavas die . . ."

Describe to them sincerely and seriously the qualification of His Divine Grace. He came and introduced Kṛṣṇa consciousness with great effect. It is the original Vedic culture. Even Harvey Cox admitted this in his new book—that while most groups greatly altered their roots, Hare Kṛṣṇa retains it all.

His greatness is not replaceable. We are trying to carry on what he has given without change. His plans are still to be carried out by us. His Mayapur vision is there. Ongoing book distribution, farm communities for the future, the ongoing spiritual perfection of all members by strict following of rule and regulations, schools, etc.

We are carrying on his legacy. He is not replaced. The arrangement for everything is there. We cannot predict the future. But our progress is good. Our public image is not good but in one sense we expect that. The same troubles we have Caitanya Mahāprabhu also had.

Yet to the people in general, the disappearance of Srila Prabhupada has little meaning. They think it is no loss. The guru of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. If they are already a little curious about the activities and impact of our movement, the

may think, "All right, let's see what happens now to the Krsnas. I wonder if they'll fall apart." The "new" guru or "spiritual successor" question comes up to the mundaner. We have to be sure of these things ourselves. We say the movement will go on without change. But to receive initiation from one of his disciples—how can it be the same as initiation by him?

Answer: For years the movement has been so large and Srila Prabhupada has not been locally available to most students. Therefore, many initiated devotees had no physical relationship with His Divine Grace. They receive his instructions through his books, tapes, and from his leading disciples. Why wonder if it can continue to function with potency in his physical absence? It already is functioning. Another thing that already exists as an unrealized mystery is how, by sending a name through the mail, a student's karma is accepted by His Divine Grace and the initiate is linked in *parampara*. To extend that faith so that in his physical absence one of his disciples does the initiation, is not a cause for philosophic confusion or doubt.

We may ask, "How can the movement go on the same with no jagat-guru on earth and no spiritual leadership?"

When a great devotee of the Lord passes away, there is nothing to be lamented because the devotee is destined to enter into the kingdom of God. But the sorry plight is that such great devotees leave our sight, and therefore there is every reason to be sorry. As the Lord is rarely to be seen by our present eyes, so also are the great devotees. The great *rsis*, therefore, correctly decided to remain on the spot till the last moment.

—*Bhag. 1.19.21*, purport

Who could understand Srila Prabhupada and his position. Except a devotee? Psychologists and almost all Western intellectuals regard everything in the empirical light (or darkness). They would take our appreciation of Srila Prabhupada as mystical. To hell with them. He was extraordinary. He was noble and grave and intent on Krsna and Krsna consciousness always.

I know I failed, but I also know that I am more than ever his disciple and have been given great charge of responsibility. In

his last months he didn't speak or ask me anything. He knew I was there. But I couldn't reach across the distance to try to comfort him. I would like to talk about this with a devotee who could understand me. They are my feelings; my private life. Many are interested in Srila Prabhupada, but why should anyone be interested exclusively in my impressions of him or my failure to reach him and touch him and be blessed by him at the very end? *But blessing was never withdrawn—I know that.*

I am looking for him still. I want time and presence of mind to do this. I wasn't with him when he was here. I want to be now. Few can understand this.

I want to be very honest, more than ever. We can't simply speak and act officially. But by vigorous preaching we will be with him.

This writing-preaching is fine, but keep it pure. Don't get too involved with nondevotees, Ph.Ds, fools. Sometimes I want to be more simple and pure and not read their books at all. But sometimes I know if I stick it out and use their poison, I can produce a book they can use in their courses.

I have to pray for more guidance. I need help. I want to know what to do.

Another thing, not pleasant to admit: in watching a movie last night of Srila Prabhupada walking on Juhu Beach (he was wearing no shirt, his nice, dark skin and form moving), I looked first to myself walking by his side and only next did I notice him. You can say what you like about that being a "natural" reaction, but I say it shows I am mad with false ego and conceit. We have heard the story how Akbar's minister proved to Akbar that a dying man is more interested in seeing a pretty woman than the emperor ("sex enjoyment lasts until the last fag end of life"), but with me, I am looking to myself and not to my spiritual master. This has a lot to do with my attitude at the time of Srila Prabhupada's passing away and a lot to do with my whole life and my present situation. What shall I do? "But that's natural," a voice inside me says. And it's true there's nothing I can do about it. I'm thinking, "At least for now, let me *think of myself as the eternal servant!*" That is my self.

“Cooperate and Serve in ISKCON” January 1–March 30, 1978

This is a picture of one individual trying to fit into the ISKCON movement with all its contradictory opinions as to how everyone should cooperate. In 1978, the concept began that only eleven persons should be initiating *ācāryas*. Much could be said now with hindsight. The diary entries don't give us any penetrating or comprehensive understanding of the issues, which in many ways only became apparent and understandable as time went by. At least it is obvious herein that I was not the one to see a defect in the procedures, and perhaps at first, the defects were only present in seed form.

In the weeks before the GBC meetings, while traveling in America with Jayādvaita dāsa Brahmācārī, I continued to seek the ideal service engagement. Many of these things have changed, but what I see as enduring and sensible was the conviction that my reading of Prabhupāda's books was the most important thing. Another enduring principle is the need to cooperate in ISKCON. Although the terms of cooperation and the issues involved regular change, the spirit to stay and work in Prabhupada's movement is as enduring as reading his books.

Repeated references to feeling shortcomings as a preacher are a painful diary exposure, but to see the shortcoming is to remain alive to it with hope that one will do some preaching. It might also be said that during this time, I had a rather fixed definition of what preaching was. Preaching can be many things, however, including any or all of the nine processes of devotional service. In the succession of great *ācāryas* and in Gauḍiyya Vaiṣṇavism, there are indeed many examples of different forms of preaching, including book distribution, *hari-*

nāma, writing books, distributing *prasādam*, worshipping the Deity in a temple, living as an ideal householder, becoming a great politician for Kṛṣṇa (King Pratāparudra), making money for Kṛṣṇa, etc. This diversity of tasks, as well as acceptance of the different forms as valid preaching, is becoming more prominent in ISKCON as time goes by.

Under the heading, "Some Anecdotes about Factions," I make reference to a disciple who wanted to attack his guru. The actual story was one I heard from Śrīla Prabhupāda on a morning walk. He said that a foolish disciple once heard that if he were to be a true *brāhmaṇa* and act in goodness, he should eat pure food. He was told that the cow was a very pure animal, so he should eat the flesh of a cow, but his guru told him that this was rascaldom and not the basis by which to judge pure food. Then the foolish disciple committed the greatest offense and thought, "Then you, Gurudeva, you are the purest of all, so I shall eat your flesh." Prabhupāda told this somewhat ghastly story and then said that we should not become like that, a killer of the guru. And, he said, one way to do that would be to create or take part in factions which destroy the guru's mission.

Being the chairman and presiding over the GBC meetings pushed me to my limits—and beyond—just by the attempt to maintain parliamentary procedure among so many strong men. Afterwards, one of the GBC men remarked to me that it seemed I had aged a number of years in the course of those days of meetings. I was forced to toughen up.

Being commissioned to write Śrīla Prabhupāda's biography was his blessing on me, and the blessing of his devotees; it was the culmination of all my writing aspirations. I began organizing myself for research, but at each step the task actually seemed to be carried along by a will greater than my own, and certainly by abilities greater than my own. Reading these first beginnings, I am reminded of the monumental task that lay before me, and how the Supreme Lord helps one who makes even a small effort to serve Him.

January 1, 1978

Consulting with Mandalesvara, I decided not to worship the Srila Prabhupada *murti*. The carrying box is too heavy to carry around. The deity of His Divine Grace will gradually be installed in the temples anyway. One reason I wanted to carry him was that it could increase the influence of Srila Prabhupada's presence when I visit, but if they already have the *murti*, and Deity worship is done by the temple, then separate *bhajana* is not so good.

I have at the same time resolved to perform the serious, life-long *bhajana* of reading Srila Prabhupada's books with more determination. It should be done every day. Reading with a plan. Read as worship, read the books in a systematic way. I have divided up a loose-leaf book to make notes of my reading from each book: *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Gita*, *Caitanya-caritamrta*, and others. Now I have to think what system I will use to read, what order, what allotment. The hardest thing seems to be finding the time regularly in the day. I think I have been using too much time on the "Death" book. Not that I even spend time on it, but whenever there is completely free time, I try to spend it all on the book and the reading is put aside. Often I will put the reading of his books aside when something "more important" comes up. But that is bad. My reading is the most important. It will strengthen my lectures and they are the most important service to the devotees. It will increase my conviction and understanding of the *parampara*. I just have to decide on the order of reading, when to do it, and how much time to allot to it—and then stick to it.

January 2

Hearing Prabhupada's 1966 lectures. He says to dovetail with the Supreme Consciousness. One method of the *yogis* is to force themselves to control the senses, and from this so many have fallen down. The *bhakti* method is meant to be so exalted that one *doesn't like to do the forbidden things*. He doesn't mechanically restrict himself. Rather, he has reached the higher

taste. Do something always in service dovetailed with the Supreme. This is *bhakti*. Developing the higher taste. The temptation of the senses and all achievements are gained by the *bhakta*. If one says, "Yes, that is our religion, our philosophy, but how come I am still tempted by *maya*?" the answer is that you have not fully engaged yourself in Kṛṣṇa's service. Be happy, do service that you like, do some work for Kṛṣṇa, but be fully engaged and hear the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* whenever you can. Don't make yourself weak by bad association or eating something wrong. There are so many *anarthas*. Don't be weak-hearted, don't be callous, don't be neglectful.

If I am asked to preach, what can I offer? I can only pray, concentrate, and speak the message that I have heard. Don't be guilty that I am a shirker, but speak—speak the Absolute Truth, what Srila Prabhupada does. Just do it and don't care for honor. *Do and say in his interests*. He has asked you to do the GBC *sannyasa* tasks. Do your service, do what he says for you to do. Chant, *give your association and service to the devotees by preaching to them*, but do business as is required. Tend to details. It is not hard, knowing what is required. And then if death comes or suffering comes, that is not my business. I am simply serving in ISKCON without regrets. I am doing what I can in the allotted time. I am feeling low (not low enough), but let me try to do some service . . .

Notes from Srila Prabhupada's lectures, 1966

Spiritual perfection is not easy. The sages underwent penance for so many years. Buddha, Christ, Caitanya—they attained perfection after undergoing penances for many years, not simply by hearing a nice lecture from a person. No, it is practical, if we are actually serious. It must be in a spirit of sacrifice. In this age, the matter has been simplified. Simply by chanting the holy name of God.

For attainment of spiritual life they had to undergo many years of regulation, but in this age—penance is not at all possible. Without sacrifice, no one has achieved perfection. We must undergo penance. Engage in serving the Supreme Lord.

Dovetail our independent consciousness with Supreme Consciousness.

Control the senses by engaging them in service to the Lord. You don't have to restrain yourself completely, but if you dovetail yourself in relation with Kṛṣṇa, then your *vairagya* is approved. Do it for Kṛṣṇa, not for sense satisfaction. Penance is, "I shall not do anything for my sense satisfaction, but I shall do everything for the satisfaction of the Supreme." That will make me perfect. And controlled.

Engage the senses under the direction of the Supreme, and then you become perfectly spiritual.

One of the most important things is that I am potent for the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class in the morning. This class is supposed to set devotees straight. It should be uncompromising Truth—it is so potent. As Vidura spoke to Dhṛtarāstra or Kāpila to His mother, Nārada to Vyasa, etc.

We may try to rationalize our faults and bad habits by talking with persons who are bad association, or bad association for our own minds, but by hearing the truth of the *Bhagavatam* we will be liberated.

Srila Prabhupada's presentation was like that: to hear him means to be cleaned of all dirty things in the heart and to know, "I must give this life to Kṛṣṇa." Not that after real submissive hearing one looks askance at the guru's instructions and can't follow. That means he hasn't heard.

What is the message? It is surrender completely, trust in Kṛṣṇa, give up all other varieties of religion.

Srila Prabhupada is there. There is no speculating what he wants. Now we have to do it. That specific engagement will take us back to Godhead. Whatever difficulties encountered are *tapasya*.

Fearfulness will always be there proportionally. As much as I get rid of this bodily conception of life, then my fearfulness also decreases, and as long as I am absorbed in bodily conception of life, my fearfulness is greater.

—Srila Prabhupada's lecture, summer '66, Bg. 2.55–56

On any given morning I am liable to go through the most fundamental changes as to what my engagement should be. This morning, chanting *japa*, I thought this book-writing is on the one hand too difficult, and it does not get me out to preach in a surrendered way. It can be a great contribution if it succeeds, but I don't know. In the meantime, I was thinking that *the most important thing is that I obtain remembrance of Kṛṣṇa*. Then everything will follow. I thought, "Let me get absorbed more in Srila Prabhupada's books. My present program is not so good. I stay back and write, but I should travel with a party." Then I started thinking of going into a college town, or a circuit of a few towns, and preaching there.

In the temple I saw Jagadisa, who has a very simple program of going door to door virtually by himself. I asked if I could travel with him. I was convinced that I have to do something to humble myself and to get me to preach, personally meeting with people. It seemed the best possible solution for me. I am always treated with respect in our institution and do not perhaps get the chance to depend on Kṛṣṇa in a helpless way. His humble method of door-to-door preaching is so purifying. I asked him and he was interested to let me join. But we are already trying to form a party that would travel and get subscriptions for BTG. Is that a conflict? Should I give up the book-writing as a distraction, or as something intellectually over my head?

Then a GBC man called me about something, and I sensed his full service as a GBC member. I felt enlivened again to be a full GBC worker with the tasks assigned to me. I thought again of taking up the book-writing because I know devotees consider it important and wish me well in it. but if I write books, how can I go door to door? Unless I go door to door or town to town myself, how will I become truly humble within myself? Change, change, change. I am trying to find the most satisfying engagement. Praying to Kṛṣṇa to give me the intelligence. I think I have so much independence as a leader that it is hard to think what to do; no one can tell me what to do.

A preaching partnership. Combining writing small-sized books on Vedic subjects (academically acceptable but preaching,

like *Readings in Vedic Literature*)—and setting up a place in a college town for preaching and recruiting. We can write. Men out preaching, selling, advertising, getting college engagements. When people come at night, give them a feast.

I will try to live with my preaching partner, *sannyasi* God-brother. Srila Prabhupada liked us to work together, liked us to preach at the American colleges. He liked the *Readings in Vedic Literature* effort—go after the students.

My dear Lord Krsna, please save me from calamities.

Blessed responsibility! ISKCON concern. GBC path. Srila Prabhupada has given us a skyscraper. We have to fill it in. Keep the original orders from his lips. Do what he has so surely impressed on us and cooperate to do it. Patiently talk with the others to find *reason*. We've got to do it his way.

Blessed burden, load it on. Let me take it, bear it, carry it, give me all you can, find me worthy.

January 3

His Divine Grace is all-pervading in our ISKCON, our Krsna consciousness. I was watching movies of him last night, reading his books today, hearing his voice on tapes—writing an essay in his footsteps for his magazine, BTG. The spiritual master—"He lives forever in his instructions and the follower lives with him." We have a dimension in immortality most people don't even know about. We live with survival after death; we know it as a fact in our lives. We simply have to cherish it and keep it up. He is still with us.

Notes from a lecture by Srila Prabhupada

We have to work; don't think preaching is so easy—sleeping, eating, and sometimes chanting *haribol*. That is not preaching. Be ready to implant Krsna consciousness all over the world.

Deity worship is to keep us safe. Otherwise, we will be finished. Deity worship doesn't mean all work is finished. If one worships the Deity nicely but doesn't know who is a devotee, a

nondevotee, or what is his duty to the world, he is material. We have to take responsibility to know who is a devotee, what is our responsibility to the world. Then we become *madhyama-adhikari*, advanced devotee.

These people, "churchianity," without any understanding. Their temples are closing. Similarly, if you don't keep yourself fit to preach, then your temples will also close in due course of time. Without preaching, you will not feel enthused to do temple worship, and without temple worship you cannot keep yourself pure, clean. The two things are parallel. Then there is success.

In modern times, no one is teaching philosophy in churches; they will close.

Devotee: They can draw no good results.

Srila Prabhupada: That is preaching. Therefore, books, our preaching, understanding the philosophy. Hare Krsna will be finished [otherwise] in a few years. There is no life, artificial. How long can you go on chanting Hare Krsna, *haribol*?

Without preaching, understanding philosophy, you can't keep up strength. Everyone must be thoroughly understanding philosophy which we are preaching. This means read thoroughly every day. So many books. *Bhagavata* so perfect any verse you read.

Devotee: We found it hard to put *Gita* in schools, very hard.

Srila Prabhupada: Preaching is always difficult! You cannot take it easy. Preaching must be a fight. You say fighting is an easy thing?

Our movement is in the hands of his disciples? Isn't it idealistic talk to say, "They are in *parampara*," or, "As long as they simply follow his instructions," or, "For years they have been managing anyway"? Without Srila Prabhupada present as the final resource, who can truly say, "Don't worry, there will be no difference"? Who has the power to reassure us?

It is like removing the highest court. He will no longer be available to set all the minds of the GBC as one on a controversial topic such as book distribution techniques, attitudes toward marriage, standards of strictness in the temple. But

hasn't he gone over these enough times with the present leaders so that we all know what is to be done and what is not to be done? But what about "new" problems? Will difficulties arise and will his teachings be applied by different leaders to support different conclusions? These questions tend to get speculative. It begins to sound like a mundaner's thoughts on age-old problems of how a religion perpetuates its faith, grows, changes, etc. We have never followed standard patterns for the evolution of a religion in this world.

In Chicago, a police P.R. officer asked Srila Prabhupada, "Wouldn't Hare Krsna become diluted in the future like the Christian religion we now chastise for its hypocrisy?" His Divine Grace replied that that may happen to us also, but we are saying that *now* we are potent because we chant and practice what we preach. Our job is immediate. We have to continue the purity and vigorous preaching, at least in our own lives, and try to set up as much as we can, a living institution that can go on without us.

These thoughts are more for my own preaching, but what to say to the world?

Tell them what Srila Prabhupada says. *The real question is not what the Hare Krsna disciples will do without the presence of their Srila Prabhupada; the real question is what will the conditioned souls do—as they go on living in the darkness of ignorance.* We are preaching by distributing books and gathering disciples in the Krsna consciousness movement—to save the world from its very dangerous course of atheistic hedonism, sectarianism, ignorance of the soul and transmigration. We have to preach on this. Obviously we are empowered with the potency to continue this preaching. Whether we can do it as a highly organized, complex unit known as ISKCON is the test. That the preaching is urgently needed and that we must transmit it—that we are empowered to transmit it—is a certain fact. That much education Srila Prabhupada has gotten through our dull brains—the world of *maya* and addiction to sinful life is horrible and will lead to more horrible consequences. Chanting Hare Krsna is the life of the soul.

Prabhupada's accomplishment is a living gift. He has not left something that will become useless in time, like ancient emperors who erected stone monuments to themselves. He has left a living, working society of devotees, inspired and determined to preach.

Our legacy is carrying on what he is teaching.

But—

He has been here as a father, and you cannot simply call it "physical presence." Yes, the spiritual presence is fully in his books ("All I have wanted to say is in my books"), but without him, we may refuse to take it. We may interpret it. These are dangers. When he forcefully orders, "Stop this nonsense! Do try. Never mind anything else. Do this"—where is the substitute for that? And when there is a big fight like with the Radha-Damodara party a few years ago, then where is the substitute for his personally dealing with the disputants?

Also, although I stated above that we accept in faith Srila Prabhupada's relieving a new disciple of karma, why don't we have faith in his representative in *parampara*? Well, the difficulty is hesitancy in putting that same faith in his representative. His representative is our peer, a few years ago he may have been a drug-addicted hippie, and even now he is not free of obvious material tinges. Or even if he behaves well, he has no stature as *jagad-guru*, *maha-bhagavata*. How will initiation by him be the same as initiation by Srila Prabhupada? We may have underestimated the power of Srila Prabhupada's "background" presence even in retirement. Where shall we go with these doubts? Who will relieve us? I once asked Srila Prabhupada (1968 morning walk in Boston), "Now in your presence we ask you so many questions for guidance, but when you are not with us, how can we know what to do?" He replied, "When you chant Kṛṣṇa's name, He is present. Do you understand?" I answered, "Yes," although I can't say I understand fully even ten years later. He added, "As long as I am present, you can write me letters for direction."

One way or another, the devotee's life and the preaching mission are established facts. The effectiveness of the ISKCON organization as a world unity is in question. But I have

no heavy questions to ask Srila Prabhupada. I've asked all I could. He has always answered to my satisfaction. Whatever else I want, I know it's somewhere in his books and tapes. I simply have to go on chanting and hearing. Likewise all of us.

Talking to a boy who is asking, "Who is the successor guru?" He says our philosophy of *parampara* demands a successor guru, but I say, "Why one successor guru? Why not hundreds?" And if you say, "Well, all his disciples together don't make even one guru," then I say, "What is your idea of guru?" If we preach to whomever we meet about Kṛṣṇa, then we are guru. If we always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, then we are *mahatma*. This may not be acceptable to caste conscious Hindu *brahmanas* or professional gurus, but this is what Srila Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya have defined as guru. Despite what we lack, we have to go on.

January 21

Now I'm thinking, "Let me read Prabhupada's books. Every day, let me study for a few hours. That way I can best prepare myself for all forms of preaching. Especially in my position—I'm supposed to know Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of course, I still must go out and do lecturing, and even set up a temporary center, but I'm trying to enter a serious resolve to read, and if sleep or other obstacles come, I'll overcome them."

February 5, 1978

Re Narada: A conditioned soul is not free to move on this planet, but "a full-fledged free soul like Narada, always engaged in chanting the Lord's glory, is free to move not only on earth but also in any part of the universe, as well as in any part of the spiritual sky. We can just imagine the extent and unlimitedness of his freedom, which is as good as that of the Supreme Lord. *There is no reason or obligation for his traveling, and no one can stop him from his free movement.*" [Italics added]

Tomorrow, we leave on the road, almost a 2,000 mile journey in which we plan to visit about twelve temples.

I'm admitting a humbling realization that I have no eagerness to preach. Why pray to Kṛṣṇa to force you? If you haven't the desire yourself, how can He force you to be enthusiastic and voluntarily preach?

Unless one wants to help others, he cannot preach. Unless he is tolerant and doesn't mind speaking to diseased persons . . . He is not advanced. I'm not. I'm always saying I want to go out and preach. I pray to be a preacher some day. For now, BTG is also preaching, and I have classes and speaking to devotees reading his books, helping in a tiny way to manage ISKCON affairs.

But I'm no *acarya* stepping off in a *sannyasa* deep desire to tell everyone I meet about Kṛṣṇa. Starting to admit it. It gets me down to think about it, but the honesty may lead to a next step.

I pray. Now I'm going out at least. Preach in the temple and enliven devotees.

February [?] Houston

Arrived here and expressed concern to Jayadvaita that we cannot simply travel to temples; we have to have our own preaching program. He said, "Yes, otherwise we are almost like hippies, just traveling." But, we thought, our preaching is not merely one-on-one talks with nondevotees, but to arrange and manage our own group of men who will carry out some effective program, such as distributing BTG subscriptions.

Helping the preaching in temples is also our immediate concern in this one-month tour. We plan to give four classes a day here, and on Saturday, have a program with Indians. Talk to some problem cases. Making a quick side visit to Dallas. It is not idle—devotees take it as enlivening. As long as we can preach. I feel like I'm just starting out, trying to find out how to preach. I feel like a complete neophyte.

February 18

Miami

I see that the verse I'll be speaking on today is about the tolerance and mercy and equality of the guru. When speaking about tolerance and mercy, one is usually expected to cite how the preacher faces all dangers to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I do not face such dangers. Then I feel guilty preaching it. I think, "I'll glorify Srila Prabhupada for his tolerance and mercy," but what about me? One could say, "Very well, you describe your guru very feelingly, but if he is such a great soul and a fearless preacher, why aren't you?" On this point, it is hard for me to speak out of my own life. As a highly-positioned leader in ISKCON, I can create propaganda that the others should be tolerant and merciful, but what about me?

I just mentioned the above to Jayadvaita. He admitted that our life is easy. He suggested we go out door to door in the next town, Miami. A great idea. *Titiksavah karunikah*.

Later I thought, "This is not my austerity."

No meeting with nondevotees yesterday. No opportunities. What about preaching to interested guests? What is the plan of JDB and SDG for preaching? Tonight we go out and chant in Miami Beach. I can try to distribute some magazines.

Don't sleep and eat too much.

I was reading Srila Prabhupada's letters. He said a devotee always feels inadequate and fallen and that it is his qualification. If I feel like that for the fault or guilt of avoiding preaching, it's not a good thing. I dread surrender. I dread austerity (of a certain kind) and will avoid it instinctively. Then I have to perform another kind of austerity—front-line austerity or administrative austerity, some kind of austerity, and sincere dedicated service. Here in Miami, Narahari dasa insists he's preaching by arranging the beautiful New Naimisaranya forest with trees, plants, flowers, etc. People see it and appreciate it as Kṛṣṇa's. He is convinced, no matter what others may say. What is my service?

Thinking more at least that we'll continue traveling. But *results*. Do something of substance, not simply touring.

February 19

Yesterday appears to be a breakthrough, a landmark. JDB and I decided we are dull-headed editors. There are no hard-hitting topical articles in BTG. We want to write articles answering problems of modern society, defeating the rascals, as our previous abortion and weather articles did. To do it requires that we work at writing and also get out to interview people or attend prominent American events and write on them. More to come on this, but it could well be the answer to my lamentation over isolation and not fighting and preaching.

March 1, 1978

Gainesville, Miami, Atlanta, Tennessee farm, now New Vrindaban. Someone asks what I am doing. I say I'm traveling to temples, me and JDB, planning to do so after Mayapur, doing stories on American socio-political scene. Hard to describe it all here (I feel no need to), but it would be a nice engagement. On the other hand, I may do Srila Prabhupada's biography. Not much inclined to write about myself or my service.

Traveling a lot. Mayapur annual meeting coming up. should be thinking, though, what would be the best service. In : week we go to India. The biography would mean I would stay in India for a few months.

March 3

I've mostly been searching for my personal preaching program, but *as GBC, sannyasi, and soon, initiating guru, my preaching is also to set up others in programs I would like to see* Send them where I would like to go but can't go personally.

The college recruiting a month at a time is always attractive. A leader like Mahabuddhi could go with a man or two who could work with him. I could visit such places periodically; th

whole team together in some prime location like N.C., etc. Anyway, I should think like that, how men could preach under my direction. I would have to give real direction, however, not just "go out there."

I mentioned this, "Let me preach in different college towns by your going there and preaching" to three members of the library party and they liked the idea, but they insisted that I get behind it, really into it, etc. Not that I had to always travel there personally, but give whatever support I can. I have no manpower or money at present, nor did I wish to subsidize it. They'd simply go there under my authority and preach and collect enough to support themselves and be in regular contact with me. Moreover, they would carry out a program whose outline I would give them. It would be: get an apartment, go on campus or into town, and chant for at least an hour a day. Give out fruit or *prasadam* at a table on campus, invite people to a Sunday feast and/ or cooking class, and do an hour door to door at night. Try to get people into chanting and reading and offering *prasada* and make full-fledged devotees. Try to get people meeting on a weekly Sunday basis. Speak on radio, at clubs, and at school engagements.

Three men should go to each center, or two, and do not make an easy-going life. Try all ways to spread Krsna consciousness. They don't have to be attached to the results but should endeavor exhaustively. Cook and distribute *prasadam*, make a nice apartment to welcome guests. Go out and preach and chant and do door to door and whatever. Try to penetrate the university to have a club there, etc.

If they will assist me in this program, it will be good for us and for the conditioned souls as well.

March 8

En route to India

It cannot be repeated too much how Srila Prabhupada said: "*How much you love me will be demonstrated by how you cooperate amongst yourselves.*" Let us preserve. My talk and thought need not be novel. It is, in a sense, predictable. But if

we follow the *parampara* path, then it can also be *predicted* that we will attain pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa and will attain Kṛṣṇa-loka.

The enemies are lust, greed, and anger. We have to personally control our own senses. We have to be satisfied that we are each one small part of ISKCON and not try subtly or overtly to take over as the “lord” (greed). We should avoid anger over our being directed by our authorities. If we can control these enemies within, then we can certainly withstand the attacks of demons.

Now India again—our fifth annual pilgrimage. We are becoming more seasoned. Let us avoid the old pitfalls of mispending our time in the *dhama*.

Srila Prabhupada, you are like Kṛṣṇa, knowing my position, knowing my limits, knowing my individual place. I pray to you, do not let me fall away. Do not let me merely remain here uselessly, but let me have some real, instrumental role in maintaining ISKCON.

Arjuna began to think of the Lord's instructions to him on the Battlefield of Kuruksetra. Only those instructions began to eliminate the tinges of material contamination in the mind of Arjuna. . . . The feeling of separation from the Lord is undoubtedly painful to the devotee, but because it is in connection with the Lord, it has a specific transcendental effect which pacifies the heart. Feelings of separation are also sources of transcendental bliss, and they are never comparable to contaminated material feelings of separation.

—*Bhag.* 1.15.28, purport

Keep a steady flame of faithfulness to His Divine Grace.

March 9

Arrived in Vrndavana. Gurukṛpa Maharaja gave a lecture on giving up sense gratification and realizing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Vrndavana. It is a *dhama*, he said, for hearing from devotees. Wandered here and there, talked with devotees. Bowed down before Srila Prabhupada's *samadhi*. Many devotees here.

I'm skipping breakfast. Feeling lonely and hesitant about what to do, but no deep anxiety. After all, this is my home and these are my Godbrothers; I am also a son of my spiritual father.

March 10

I have to talk on diverse subjects. I can't renounce it. (1) I meet with the men on our library party—before we leave India we have to decide on the next engagement for these important preachers. (2) Sometimes different devotees approach me who are not under my jurisdiction but to whom I have to listen and give some advice—sometimes advice they don't even take. (3) Devotees in my GBC zone are talking of problems in their temples or with themselves. (4) Talks with senior GBCs on different matters such as the upcoming GBC meeting, collecting Srila Prabhupada's memoirs, etc.

It is not that one engagement is my sole field and the others are distractions.

Sometimes I try to put it all aside and read *Bhagavatam* or look at verses. Or I try but grow sleepy.

And what about writing a new article for BTG?

Aside from this, the GBC meeting will decide what I am to do. TKG thinks if they want me to do the biography of Srila Prabhupada, I should look on it as a great honor. How much research in his early years is required, and how to do it? Do I personally have to travel all over India? If required I must—but it disrupts our BTG traveling plans.

Moreover, at any moment, in the midst of any of the above plans or activities, I could be abruptly called without warning by death. A composed death is best, but I can't demand it or count on it.

Chanting rounds daily is the most important.

GBC meeting upcoming. One suggestion is to give up my zonal responsibility and travel as an "impartial GBC *sannyasi*" preaching to uphold the spiritual strength of temples. Sounds nice.

March 11

Leaders are political beneath their rhetoric. I too have desires maybe separate from the best interest. This has to be given up. We have to submit. Srila Prabhupada said there was no “next leader” of ISKCON. He said, “Whoever follows will lead.” Actually, leadership will come if we act purely, not if we feign purity in order to take over. Politics will ruin us. We preach for purity, and although we can’t attain it, it has to be our goal. If I am merely selfish and political, then it will be contagious to you. On the other hand, if you are political and I am not, then I can check its spread. The whole history of the Gaudiya Math stands before us. It almost seems like an arrangement of providence to teach us what can happen to our ISKCON. Thus we have all seen the references in the books how they split apart, how they failed to preach. We may also fail to preach by misrepresenting our spiritual master.

Big guns on opposing sides of political struggles have approached me and told me their side. Now who is right? We have to judge (not *me*, per se, but ISKCON GBC, or, in applicable cases, *each disciple* has to judge *sreyas*, not *preyas*). Lines on book distribution isn’t the issue. It’s honesty to the spiritual master. Giving up the independent spirit. Being willing to cooperate for the highest good.

“How much you love me will be demonstrated by your cooperation amongst yourselves after I leave.”

If I seem to be referring to leadership, I am. In the senior devotees, GBC *sannyasis*, and temple presidents there is so much responsibility. Other devotees should aspire to serve the older devotees, but behave in a way that creates pressure for the highest behavior. No one should blaspheme a devotee of the Lord.

Anyway—push on together.

ISKCON is the way.

Coming in on the plane, we observed that devotees were more seasoned. Let us be more seasoned in all ways.

How to preserve the sanctity of ISKCON?

Religions all deteriorate and institutionalize. They say it is inevitable. Let us delay it. Let it continue. One blooped devotee invited me to leave ISKCON and develop my spiritual life.

Let us stay on this boat and contribute. As ISKCON, let us pull on together and let this counter-current against Kali-yuga (the next 10,000 years) carry us as far as possible. Srila Prabhupada has said that Krsna could give us the world in five days, but we lack the humility to do it.

I cannot see as a pure devotee sees. I can't see as Krsna sees. But I can understand even with my limited vision that this year, a wonderful testimony to His Divine Grace is present here, these vital activities carried on without him, and Krsna consciousness even improving in his absence. This happened in 1966 after he left for San Francisco when he returned and said we had improved, and that this was Krsna consciousness. He gave the example of an apprentice who works under an expert—the apprentice can act as expert. That made me hopeful. Similarly, it made me hopeful when he said we had improved in his absence. This was proof of Krsna's existence, and more than that, proof of His guidance and protection. This is the consciousness: that Srila Prabhupada can still be pleased or displeased. Don't start acting in ways you never would have when he was here to supervise us.

Surrounded by so many sincere devotees who know thoroughly what Srila Prabhupada stands for, I know I can't bluff you. This restraining pressure keeps us honest. Let us yield to this pressure of honest following.

March 12

Went today to Radha-kunda and Govardhana. Discussed Krsna's qualities.

As a GBC I consider the problems of the society, but I am not personally able to alleviate them all. (Understatement!) Presidents are saying they are isolated, etc. The best thing I can do may be to travel and visit them as a preacher. If I get to speak to all the devotees here, what is the most essential, inspirational message?

I was thinking that the leadership should be instructed to be fair-minded, but we must remember that it is an imperfect world. Yet there is a standard. There are four rules. Sometimes I cannot even respond deeply to their expressed dilemmas. We will be all right if we are Kṛṣṇa conscious; if we are not Kṛṣṇa conscious, we will not be all right.

Preach what, then, to the assembled devotees? Am I to say something new? No, rather affirm the predictable. Clever? More than clever—honest and clear truth of Srīla Prabhupāda. If you love me, cooperate.

(1) A report of fighting over men between Australia and Berkeley. Prabhupāda said this fighting amongst the GBC will ruin the society. I asked, "Is this more dangerous than de-programming?" "Oh yes," he said, "it will dismantle the entire institution."

(2) Srīla Prabhupāda wanted to be free of all management, but he said wherever he goes the letters and visitors come. I said we could make a serious arrangement to relieve him, but he didn't really want it. He said, "I want it, but my fear is that the society will—what is the word?" I offered "Collapse." He laughed. "Collapse. No it will not collapse. That would be a great shock to me. But I have created this structure. I would not like to see it ruined by factions. If there are factions, it can be ruined."

(3) In Hong Kong I said to him, "There appear to be splits." He said there are no splits. There is no such thing. There is only insincerity. "I chant sixteen rounds and follow the principles and preach and you do also. There is no split. Only if one is insincere and doesn't follow."

(4) Tell the story of disciple who wanted to eat the guru—"Don't attack me in that way."

Now by pious pleading we cannot make everyone of one mind. Even in the spiritual world there are parties in competition, but they are not envious or inimical.

We are so uncouth and untrained that we fight for position. Sometimes it seems we would fight to the death over it.

Just see. We are peers. There is no single successor. There is no single best party. We are all parts of this great movement. It is less brilliant not having in our midst an undisputed pure devotee, but it is honest also. No one can claim anything. No one can easily cheat. It is futile to try to take over Kṛṣṇa's movement—if *we have any affection for Srīla Prabhupada!*

Unless we cooperate with each other, any profession of love for the guru will be untrue; our dedicating our life to him will be untrue or unfavorable. Rather, we will be attacking the guru. It is like the story of sons massaging the father and fighting: "Your fighting is killing me."

How to practically avoid the fighting? We are different persons and there are differences even spiritually.

One thing is to accept that we are a part of the ISKCON body, just as the hand is part of the body and has to work for the whole. No one is Prabhupada's replacement. Accept that. Also, realize that the offense to a devotee is the most dangerous. (We have to realize, for example, that sinful activities will ruin our next life—similarly, this *siddhanta* has to be acted on—an offense to a devotee will ruin me.)

And we have to desire to become Vaisnavas rather than power brokers or petty bureaucrats. A Vaisnava simply doesn't have the taste for fighting or pushing himself forward.

There are many examples of devotees. Madhavendra Puri fled the town rather than be recognized as a great devotee, visited by the Deity. Some remained anonymous in literary works or asked not to be mentioned.

Somehow we have to do it, for everyone's benefit.

Chanting and hearing and serving Vaisnavas in the *dhama* is also important for this reason—see the unity in the diversity.

March 15

Try to be steady. So little absolute confirmation coming to me from Supersoul. I am not sure. The new duty given us as initiating gurus is a good example of my uncertainty. Everyone

has his own understanding. I can take good counsel, but then have to decide what I will do in this regard.

TKG says he won't do it. HDG says he will. I'm not going to write down a whole exposition on this diary page. I know false ego enters into my case one way or another. What would Srila Prabhupada want me to do? Travel through the U.S. and take many disciples, just as he used to, on the recommendation of the presidents? Or claim, "I am not Prabhupada," and therefore initiate (for now) only very sparingly, in cases where I feel a personal relationship with the candidates for initiation has developed?

We are still playing games of "your territory and my territory."

Preaching is not pure and uncompromised. Whatever the GBC decides, I will abide by it. For my own choice, I would prefer not to have a zone. It makes me sectarian and affects my preaching. I have to protect my interests or speak diplomatically to the presidents. HDG's advice that we leaders must preach transparently is well taken. Travel, write for BTG, initiate?

ISKCON growing pains: awkward gurus, awkward God-brothers, awkward disciples.

Nice schedule I'm following here in Vrndavana. Take rest by 8 P.M., rising at midnight. My sixteen rounds done by 3:30 A.M.

I'm planning to do my own cooking as I travel. Make it simple. Then prepare to observe Caturmasya. I've got to control my senses and pray to receive more inspiration in the heart.

March 16

Living entities in Vrndavana are soon going back to Godhead. If I could also die in Vrndavana, like Srila Prabhupada, that would be perfection. But I think not of dying, but of living. I should live only to serve the lotus feet of my spiritual master. Considerations of what to eat, where to travel, how to preach and write, when to take disciples—should all be decided on the basis of service to His Divine Grace.

Cooperate with and serve ISKCON, GBC, my Godbrothers.

For yesterday and today I've put thoughts of being *diksa-guru* out of my head. Just going as a pilgrim chanting Hare Krsna. Of course, the day after tomorrow I'll be plunged into GBC meetings!

March 17

The usual bewildered condition when I'm put in the midst of many leaders and a social role is demanded. I was also thinking how now in ISKCON, wherever I go there is an honorable reception, but I am possibly meant to be thrown into a pit of snakes and beset with all violence and disease, perhaps in the body of a lower animal. Do not, therefore, languish in the honor paid you amid the Vaisnavas. Cling to the holy name. Chant Hare Krsna as one who is lost and completely dependent on Krsna. That I have to remember—the reality of suffering and death. Countless living beings are now subject to great sufferings due to their karma. By spreading Krsna consciousness they can be relieved.

March 22

Mayapur

Just finished three and a half days of intense GBC meetings. I am chairman for this year. I was given the order by the Vaisnavas to write an official biography of His Divine Grace. Soon I will probably initiate disciples. Thus, Krsna consciousness is not only newer and newer, but more and more serious and responsible.

Being chairman of the meetings, and also gaining understanding of the order to become guru, have increased my seriousness. I desire not to be frivolous and to control my tongue, and of course, my mind.

On Gaura-Purnima I am supposed to give a lecture on the occasion of awarding *sannyasa*. I was thinking of quoting the verse of the Vaisnava taking *sannyasa*. Relation with the spiritual master and Krsna.

*yasya deve para bhaktir
yatha-deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathita hy arthah
prakasante mahatmanah*

—Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.38

Faith. Simple lecture. Speak on how the guru instills faith in the heart of the disciple.

Gaura-Purnima

We must have faith in the *parampara* system as described in Bg. 4.1. Without faith in scripture, one has to stay in the material world. Faith is the first step in hearing from the spiritual master. It requires submission. Not blind, but when the heart is cleansed by *bhakti-lata-bija*, it can begin—the heart is washed clean—if the guru is qualified. Hearing is so important.

*srnvatam sva-kathah krsnah
punya-sravana-kirtanah
hrdy antah stho hy abhadrani
vidhunoti suhrt satam*

—Bhag. 1.2.17

Hearing.

Chant avoiding the ten offenses. Also, second initiation is coming closer to the spiritual master. Do things how His Divine Grace intended them to be done.

Speak as a simple transparent carrier of his instructions. *Sannyasa*.

Two disciples, Murali-Manohara and Haribhakti-vilasa. Biography to write. Let me go somewhere and see how I can write it. In New York there are places I can go to see where Srila Prabhupada lived. His movements there. Have to write

and think of what phases His Divine Grace went through and who he was. Capture in words what His Divine Grace was like. What kind of writing? Researched.

March 28

Calcutta—Dum-Dum airport

Walking, meditating. Big crowd of devotees, but I walk off and think a little by myself, "What should I actually do now?" It occurs to me that to write the biography will take sustained absorption and piecing together material. I should be in peaceful, regulated surroundings. I think that means Dallas. I could also use a close assistant, maybe Mandalesvara.

BTG writing can go on, and periodic visits to L.A.; visits to temples where I am to act as initiating guru. Otherwise, Dallas and the book. I think then I should go first to L.A. and get all the letters. Also, somehow I have to find all the things on tape he has said about himself. I need a full-time assistant to listen a few hours a day to all recorded conversations. Then after, study each period of letters. I should try to understand what he was doing at that period. External chronology. Then meaning. Then aside from the order, things that happened to show his mercy, compassion, fighting strength, worldwide mission plans. "Private" life. This means daily writing in a workbook.

Then field work. Write letters to different persons. Get interviews with Gurudasa, Srutakirti, go to New York City, see Misra, etc., Upendra. Correspond—gather information.

Being guru in a sense is secondary to this immediate work. I'll travel when they call me. Preach in the Dallas area.

I have to be an exemplary guru. I may not bring the devotees to the point of initiation by my preaching (that will come also), but mostly this year I'll initiate devotees who were trained to the point of initiation by others. I am not performing merely a priestly function, however. That is *rtvik-acarya*. I link them to Srila Prabhupada, their *parama-guru*, and that goes at once to Krsna. Now they should also turn to me for

instruction. We have to have an ongoing relationship—they have to worship their spiritual master.

I have talked about this at length with Hridayananda Goswami and I am not attempting a comprehensive essay on initiating guru in this diary notebook. I'm simply noting down a few guidelines for myself, asking myself some questions, etc.

Once I come and perform a ceremony, what then? What the temple leader wants is a nicely initiated man to go on serving under his guidance for going back to Godhead. I do not want the man myself. But I do not want (I dread) to think of myself as a mere priest coming to "bless a few heads" and leave with no inner (only outer) effect on the disciple.

Now the question will be, "What enduring effect do you want?" I want to write to the disciple and to have him turn to me in ultimate matters, even though others are his *siksa-gurus*. The main guru is the one who gives the most instruction, so I have to be realistic about this.

I have to enter being guru, the representative of Kṛṣṇa, gradually. This doesn't mean "method acting" but knowledge, realization, behavior. You have to pray for it. You will no doubt also have to fight for it. It's not going to be all roses and obeisances.

I have also been thinking more that—now more than ever—when I speak in class, I should be a transparent via medium. Whether I give a "great" lecture or one which another could have given isn't of prime importance. The main thing is to repeat what I have heard from Srila Prabhupada and the *sastras*. Quoting verses is important. Transparent via medium.

If I have ever wanted to be a writer, I have now been given the most inspiring subject matter—Srila Prabhupada's life. The senior devotees have assigned me to do it. His life has repeatedly been told in brief. How to expand it at length? What literary form? What glorification? What sources? It will not merely be memories, but . . .

The idea of headquarters is that in order to seriously write a book, I will have to arrange my life around it. If I put the book first, I thought I would gather letters, study them . . . meditate

and write down freely how I might go about this biography. (Wouldn't producing it be more substantial than simply touring temples?) Then maybe after a few months when I had my own idea of shape, outline, chapters, then I could better approach devotees like Srutakirti, Kirtanananda Swami, Brahmananda Swami, TKG, Jayadvaita Swami, etc. Sections on A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada as author of books, as great compassionate soul, manager of worldwide ISKCON, devotee . . . Divisions, nature of elaboration, tone of presentation. Do lots of writing. A writing engagement. Then come out of that to go to temples for initiations . . . and BTG.

Delicate, combustible relationship between non-initiating (*siksa*) gurus and myself. "Grin and bear it" for them. Perhaps we can make an arrangement to avoid me lecturing from the *vyasasana* and the GBC sitting on the floor. I'm willing to forego it, but what about necessary *sraddha* of the disciples? What *sraddha* do they actually have? What *sraddha* in me? I think I have to discuss these things more with Rupanuga and Adi-kesava Maharaja before doing it.

March 30

Back from India—Los Angeles

Busy disseminating procedures on introducing new gurus to ISKCON. It's going well so far. Devotees willing to accept. Leaders cooperating. We refuse to see things in the light of mundane history.

Getting ready to be guru and on the verge of living to write the biography of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada. Dissatisfied with ordinary portraits and ordinary words of most biographies. Looking through such works.

I have to collect his letters. Tell much of it in his own words. Gathering the letters and accounts of himself given in his lectures and purports of his books. It will take years. I can, in this way, meditate on him myself, but the main thing is to present this work at the feet of all the devotees.

Also in L.A. seeing to BTG magazine. Writing my little monthly column.

Even while I gather material on his life, I have to write in a workbook about the book I want to write. I have to decide what I want to do with the facts. I have to think and write out thoughts of what portrait I want to make of my spiritual master.

It can't be one of these "human" portraits full of one's foibles. It can't be "putting him in the historical setting." Neither can it be seen as fable and legend. His acts are facts, as different devotees will testify. I have to manage the whole thing myself with some equilibrium.

Great work given to me, but now I have to produce a mature work out of it. Most fortunate I am to have no zonal duty and yet this writing.

Also . . . chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Mahadyuti in Dallas wants to have me there as guru. It is new to the world, especially the world of ISKCON for whom the words "spiritual master" could only mean Srila Prabhupada.

“I Am Made of His Mercy Only” April 1–May 20, 1978

The two subject matters covered in this chapter are the beginning of writing Śrīla Prabhupāda’s biography and my stepping into the role of guru. Since the chapter mostly consists of my justifications and assertions on behalf of the Vaiṣṇava *paramparā* as I perceived it then, it would be complacent of me now, with all our acquired wisdom over the last twelve years, to simply point out how mistaken we were at that time. When you have the whole society of devotees behind you, naturally you feel confident. Perhaps because of so much confidence, we gradually began to overstep, but the factual position of the guru in *paramparā* as described herein, enunciating the fact that one is linking disciples to Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a correct understanding and has withstood the test of time in many debates.

* * *

April 1, 1978
Los Angeles

On the verge of setting up an in-residence writing situation. Supposed to be going to Dallas in a few days. I will take with me the society’s collection of letters of His Divine Grace. Objectively, it is the ideal way to do it. Gather the material, live in a place where I am at home, where it is isolated enough so I can control the atmosphere, and there regulate my daily routine. Then study Srila Prabhupada’s letters, etc., and do

regular writing to understand how to proceed to write about his life. After all, it is compiling information, but it also entails making meaning out of it and expressing it.

I heard today of someone going off to preach in East Europe where he will go to people's homes and preach. I felt shaky, thinking, "How can I establish myself in one place?" Also, it is going to be extraordinary for me. I am not just going to be a writer there, but I am going to be guru. That is an entire new chapter in my devotional life. Anyway, I am still planning to go through with it. I base my decision on the understanding that writing a biography is my most important service and requires regular, committed work. I think I will only leave if the work itself dictates that I do so in order to do more research.

Also, while I am there I will have to keep in the fire of preaching, sometimes going to some programs to speak to the nondevotees.

April 5 Dallas

Arrived last night. Received as "Gurudeva." In Dallas it was done with all good heart and simplicity of the devotees, yet we observed the etiquette rightly. Today I sat on an improvised *vyasasana*. There are three or four persons who are uninitiated. They are making obeisances when they see me. I read in class the statements explaining the new procedures for initiating gurus. An essay by Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati wonderfully explained it. The guru may appear to be an egoistic brute sitting on raised seat receiving praise, but it is the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu that one be guru and save the land, telling everyone about Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, should the guru desert his chair or refuse to give the purport of the *Bhagavatam* when it is declared that the guru is the direct representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

When a boy makes obeisances and says my name, I am utterly incapable of becoming grave enough. The gravity required is to be immeasurably deep—guru. How can I reach that depth? I have no credit of austerity or purity to do so. I simply wait,

cringe—pray, desire to be truly situated. But there is no chance I can do so. My hope is that Kṛṣṇa will come through me to the disciple. It is authorized by Śrīla Prabhupāda. I *am* his servant; therefore, it is not bogus. But I have to give it dynamic substance!

My Vaisnava Godbrothers have given me the full charge of writing what they have termed, "The official biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda." I have the field to myself. But no one knows exactly what is to be done. I have to tackle it alone. They are behind me, and surely I have to pray to my divine master that I can tell his life properly. Day after day, week after week, I am planning to pray to Kṛṣṇa to give me strength to do it. I am anticipating settling in Dallas and, step by step, entering into the detail and meaning of his life. It is great service, great work, no child's play. I will have to draw on all written sources and also travel to talk with relevant persons who can help me write this life. To start, I will go into it on my own, reading letters, writing in my notebook, establishing the chronology.

I should not be afraid to travel here and there to meet persons who can help me, but first I should be centered in my own impressions. Study the letters and write of the years told there. The letters tell one story.

April 9

How is it that new disciples need me? I am to act as spiritual master. There is no doubt about it. But how to realize how they need me? How to act on it and impart to them the spiritual seed? I can say, "Oh, ISKCON is taking care of them, it is not like Śrīla Prabhupāda taking care of us." How am I linking them up? It is up to individual endeavor, how much of a spiritual master I become. How to go about it? If I become a pure devotee, that is how. Or one could say, become a very active preacher now, knowing that you are guru, go and save the land. Fulfill the verse, "Whomever you meet, tell them about Kṛṣṇa." These ways. My Godbrother Harikeśa Swami said it is a great feeling and experience—you take together all you know of

His Divine Grace and give it to them. Am I doing that? I have my own work and not so much time to give a lot of care and instruction to the new men. But I should impart to them a special relationship and let them know if there is anything they want to talk about, I am available. And I should make myself available to talk with them whenever they have questions. Then I am supposed to meet with anyone who wants to at 5:30. Both concerns have to be there. Be a spiritual master by knowing the scriptures and serving my spiritual master and being exemplary, and then in their individual cases, take kind interest, try to kindle in them the desire to inquire and to understand their need to be trained. They should learn how to approach in the right spirit, which is the spirit of inquiry and service. You have to instruct them in what to do and how to act; they do not know how to do it on their own.

Biography: a question mark. How to give it life?

Feeling blissful in an ocean of Prabhupada's life. Playing. Authorized bliss. Going through his life. Remembering it, as I was there too. Feeling it all around me as too vast. Sitting in this study, beginning to run through his life and have his life run through me. I have been given so much charge. Now just do it confidently. Just go do it. Become drowned, but at the same time become a studious, industrious gatherer and tracker-down of knowledge about him. So much to do. Going over letters month by month.

April 10

I heard an assistant of mine was asking Ramesvara Swami to give him second initiation and not myself. My reaction was like not being chosen in a popularity contest or being turned down for a high school date. I question how deeply I am understanding the charge of guru. Why am I eager to initiate? The main reason is duty to carry on Srila Prabhupada's own plan for expansion of ISKCON. But my own motivations? Garnering worship? And what about my expression of unwillingness to take initiates? Another form of coyness in seeking? Complicated. Mostly lack of real experience and realization. Being

cautious, yet throwing doubt to the winds, let us take the mantle of guru as handed down and fit the post as far as possible with sincere *parampara* following. "Krsna is coming to you through me. I do not know what I have."

April 12

I have to understand how the spiritual master is not an ordinary man. To submit to an ordinary man is tyranny. Now I have been given the duty of spiritual master. My disciples have to be taught to respect their spiritual master as good as God. And who will teach them? I, their spiritual master. This calls for humility, but also taking boldly, in faith, the charge of guru—or else I am doomed. See Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati's essay.

Am I *not* an ordinary man? No, I am a disciple of a pure devotee and I am worshiping him. I can give another my devotion to my spiritual master and my realized knowledge of Krsna conscious *parampara*, my realization of the liberated platform of Hare Krsna. In all humility, this makes me a representative of Krsna. I am a representative of Krsna. Now I have to act responsibly. I don't have to transfer knowledge by electric shock, but speak *krsna-katha*, give guidance. Pray for help to Lord Krsna and Prabhupada! Pray for these new disciples that they may stick. Do it all in *parampara* and personally. Then you will not be show-bottle.

Prabhupada's secret motivation, the one he made public, simple and open: he wanted to please his spiritual master and Krsna by making the world Krsna conscious.

How can I be certain that I am accepting service *on behalf of* Krsna? This is a matter of deep realization. Until I realize it completely I have to accept service by being the sincere disciple of Srila Prabhupada. Be guru on his order—tell everyone about Krsna. Worship by working at the biography and chanting Hare Krsna and speaking in class and guiding devotees in Krsna consciousness.

. . . Transcendental literature that strictly follows the Vedic principles and the conclusion of the *Puranas* and *Pancaratrika-vidhi* can be written only by a pure devotee. It is not possible for a common man to write books on *bhakti*, for his writings will not be effective. He may be a very great scholar and expert in presenting literature in flowery language, but this is not at all helpful in understanding transcendental literature. Even if transcendental literature is written in faulty language . . . [The Lord gives him intelligence from within.]

. . . Unless one is empowered by the higher authorities, or advanced devotees, one cannot write transcendental literature, for *all such literature must be above suspicion*, or, in other words, it must have none of the defects of conditioned souls . . . To be empowered to write transcendental literature is a privilege in which a writer can take great pride. As a humble Vaisnava, Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, being thus empowered, felt very much ashamed that it was he who was to narrate the pastimes of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. [emphasis added]

—Cc. *Adi* 8.39,72, purports

Krsnadasa Kaviraja took permission of his gurus and the Madana-gopala Deity, and when he received the mercy of both guru and Krsna, he was able to write this great literature.

. . . This example should be followed. Anyone who attempts to write about Krsna must first take permission from the spiritual master and Krsna. Krsna is situated in everyone's heart, and the spiritual master is His direct external representative. . . . One must first become a pure devotee by following the strict regulative principles and chanting sixteen rounds daily, and when one thinks that he is actually on the Vaisnava platform, he must then take permission from the spiritual master, and that permission must also be confirmed by Krsna from within his heart. Then, if one is very sincere and pure, he can write transcendental literature, either prose or poetry.

—Cc. *Adi* 8.73, purport

In regards to this huge task of the biography of the pure devotee and *jagat guru* Srila Prabhupada, I have received permission and commission from the advanced devotees, namely

the GBC. His Divine Grace also gave permission shortly before his disappearance. I do not claim to have dictation-confirmation from Kṛṣṇa within my heart, but I am certainly convinced this is my work, and I have arranged my life just to execute this without much disturbance of other engagement.

One encouraging aspect of the above statements about Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is that *transcendental literature is above the rules governing mundane literature. Certainly the biography will have to be transcendental literature, not mundane.* It is to be a biography which all the world may read to appreciate His Divine Grace. As with any biography, including those of the mundane world, it will have to satisfy with dates and places and sequences of events in the history of His Divine Grace. *But it does not and cannot follow the standards of critical portraits of the subject's weaknesses and faults and estimations of him, as if he is a man open to fault. I have to view His Divine Grace as he is, which is as a direct representative of the Supreme Lord.*

Yet his activities can be perceived from the world. *They must not be viewed from the worldly point of view.* So an excellent form of telling has to be selected, and the readers have to be able to appreciate a dramatic presentation of his early struggle in starting the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in Kali-yuga. *But the entire thing has to be governed by the higher authority of guru and Kṛṣṇa, by whose grace I am writing this.*

In this, I cannot be affected by the opinions of professional biographers, literary critics, professors, professional writers, etc. It is a publication of the Bhaktivedānta Book Trust and will be sold by the devotees in public. It does not have to pander in any way. It has to be composed logically and conclusively so that an impartial judge will appreciate it.

Caitanya-caritamṛta is a great piece of literature even for world literature. One may not accept that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Person; still, he will have to grant that this most pious literature is of the highest order. I have to prepare the work in the trust of those who gave it to me and according to my own allegiance and love for my spiritual master. Still, one could say, "If you love him, you should present a portrait so successful that the entire world will come to

accept him from your biography." That acceptance is up to the world. Also, excellent execution could come about only by the grace of Kṛṣṇa.

I have to go ahead, aware that biography is a form which demands that all facts be set down. In this I acknowledge I have to research all the facts of his life. In setting it down, I must be honest and devotional and *not in any way minimize His Divine Grace*.

April 19

Srila Prabhupada repeatedly writes that his disciples are getting the blessings of his Guru Maharaja. I should do the same. "You have received a great blessing from my Guru Maharaja . . ." ". . . nice service entrusted to you by my Guru Maharaja."

Because his Guru Maharaja wanted Kṛṣṇa consciousness spread in the West, similarly Srila Prabhupada had his desire that ISKCON go on strong. Devotees who accept me and take bona fide initiation in ISKCON will get his blessings. He had to leave. They should be confident and take his blessings through his representative.

Stress this to them. Make it my keynote. Isn't it a fact? Srila Prabhupada certainly lives in his instructions for me and I am sustained by him. They too can be linked to him and Kṛṣṇa, not just to Kṛṣṇa.

I can link them to the greatest *acarya* of all, although I am very small. I am loitering on the scene just to link you to Prabhupada. Please accept this arrangement he has made, be happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and receive his blessings.

Let me do this function and give you Kṛṣṇa. Let Prabhupada live in this way.

I am very tiny. My power is to link you to His Divine Grace.

Shut your eyes, they're chanting your name. Look aside, they're shouting your fame. They were not doing so a month ago. Does it mean I have suddenly become worshipable? Why am I accepting it? Because it is my next duty. Am I worthy to be sung of? No, not me, the office.

It's clear in my mind. I am highly posted, praised, worshiped—but not *me*! I have to be the way to Kṛṣṇa through my spiritual master. I am sober, not intoxicated or bewildered, not striving for effect (like Guru Maharajī on his huge throne at the Houston Astrodome, or the Wizard of Oz)—I am repeating Srīla Prabhupada's message *and this is everything*. Faith placed here will go back instantly to Kṛṣṇa. I can be trusted. I am a mailman. I will not take the homage. I may be bewildered and awkward, but I will take your questions and your *pūjā* and *I will put it there at his feet*. I am recognized by him. He will accept it. *He knows me and for this simple but profound office, he has deemed I can do it. Therefore, I CAN do it.* And that's all there is to guru. That my disciples have to understand. I have not come to do something else. That is the only bona fide thing I can do.

He will allow me to realize and speak more, new lights, as he informed Rupanuga and me. I have faith.

April [?]

Miami motel—en route to Caracas

Soon I go to Washington, D.C. and New York, but suddenly I am on my way to Caracas, Venezuela where devotees have revolted against the present GBC authority. They say I may have to become GBC there.

I can't speak Spanish. I would have to travel there at least twice a year, spending maybe a total of a month or more. I will do it if I have to, but it will be an austerity. It would slow down work on the biography. It is looking like it may fall to me. Then I will do it, as I am a servant of ISKCON.

Amarendra cited that once Srīla Prabhupada was challenged whether he was *sama-darsina* (able to see the soul in all creatures). He said, "I may or may not be, but I am exactly repeating the message of my guru, and therefore I am guru."

Caracas, Venezuela

We are on a hill in a very nice house. Before us is the large valley filled with city buildings, and then immediately beyond, mountains.

We came here for emergency ISKCON GBC business. Tomorrow we leave. I'll go back to Dallas. Here I met Adi-kesava Swami and made firm my commitment to initiate devotees in his temple. It means a real commitment to regular visits and living in the N.Y. temple. I can't resent time spent away from biography work. Try to get assistants. But this initiation and training of disciples is probably even more important.

April [?]

In flight—Caracas to Miami

*gurur na sa syat sva-jano na sa syat
pita na sa syaj janani na sa syat
daivam na tat syan na patis ca sa syan
na mocayed yah samupeta-mrtyum*

One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother or a worshipable demigod.

—*Bhag.* 5.5.18

In his purport, Srila Prabhupada writes that each of these persons accepts worship from followers. Now if they do so (Rsabha forbids them to do so) but don't deliver them from birth and death, they will be liable to punishment ("He plunges himself into the ocean of reproachment for his unlawful activities"). Examples are given of disciples (Bali), wives (yajnic wives), and sons (Prahlada) who rejected their elders. What does such birth-and-death-saving entail? It entails taking them back to Godhead.

That is the special function of the spiritual master. We know well the bogus gurus who have come (bogus fathers and husbands are also there). How do we know? Because the *jagat-guru* came and exposed them. He told us the symptoms—that a

guru must be one who delivers one from birth and death by teaching Kṛṣṇa in *parampara* devotional service. I am here to make an eternal connection with some devotees for their going back to Godhead. This is an assignment given to me by my spiritual master. You may not understand it, or someone may not understand it, or you may think that I do not fully understand it, but I do know full well what it is to carry out the order of my spiritual master. He asked me once to go to the IBM company here in N.Y. and ask them to donate machines to us, when I heard they sometimes gave machines to educational institutions. I tried my best to qualify. I preached to them about the king of education and invited them to our temple, but they never came. That was an order; therefore, I went there and knew I had to speak to them.

Then he asked me to type. He used to say, "Do the needful," "Satsvarupa will do the needful." It is a menial task. And one time Brahmananda and the others had to laugh when at the bottom of one letter, Prabhupada said he was enclosing some tapes and they should be given to Satsvarupa to "do the needful." I am here to do the needful.

It may be that I am not familiar with you (new disciples), but that is more or less material. I am here to get to know you. I have not associated so much with Rādhā-Govinda, and I am here for that. But the Kṛṣṇa Deity in Dallas (or wherever I am) is also Kṛṣṇa. Most importantly, I have been asked to do this, so I am seeking your cooperation.

How can our relationship be eternal? Again, I have to refer to my spiritual master. I hope you will not take it as blind faith. It is not blind, but *even if I do not see something myself, if I see by his light, if I use his words to explain mysterious questions, then it will not be wrong. Rather, it will certainly be right.* It is stated, "One who has implicit faith in the guru and Kṛṣṇa will understand the *Vedas*." No one else can.

It is eternal. This means without end. Your relationship with Kṛṣṇa is eternal and it is forgotten; now you have come in contact with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and have regularly engaged for at least six months. The field is fertile for the planting of

the seed. The link with the spiritual master links you to Kṛṣṇa in disciplic succession. Since time immemorial (also eternal) the system of the spiritual master is there.

In a letter of January 8, 1971, Srila Prabhupada wrote, "Sri-man Sai." Sai was saying his followers wanted to accept him as guide. Srila Prabhupada said that's not objectionable. Then he wrote, "My main purpose is to propagate the teachings of Lord Caitanya or Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am not after recruiting some disciples, but for preaching work we want some assistants and if somebody offers voluntarily his service it is welcome."

Letter of January 22, 1971, to Japan about the boy (Bruce) who wanted to work with us but not to be initiated: "So far as recruiting men, we have to create men. Preaching means to recruit more and more men. This process is called *gosthyananda* which means pleasure by seeing increase of followers."

I just had a thought while reading his letters (I'm up to 1972 now). Sometimes he is giving out spiritual names and accepting disciples. That is one aspect of his mission. He is giving instruction, he is pushing his leading disciples to build temples in India, to sell books in America, and himself traveling widely to the temples and holding lectures in and out of the temples. Disciple-making is one aspect of it. That has been handed to us as gurus. Of course, the whole thing has been handed to us, but he has empowered us to take disciples, which means we can act as Kṛṣṇa's direct representatives. Now let us see how much of the other activities we can follow him in. We can sit on the *vyasasana* like him and pick a Sanskrit name like him, but can we travel and convert like him? Can we keep together restless, fighting factions? Each guru or GBC has to act as one part and parcel of the whole GBC, and in this way we carry on ISKCON.

Letter of September 4, 1972: "The spiritual master accepts the sinful activities of his disciples from the first initiation. I may give initiation very easily, but what can I do? I am prepared to go to hell for service of Lord Caitanya."

Yes, we must have a bona fide spiritual master. Still, we are shocked if someone says, "That cannot be His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada." Now there are new spiritual masters. It is a fact, but it is also a fact, isn't it, that he is still the spiritual master for this planet? Yes, but now the necessity is that you have to reach him through his representatives who initiate disciples on his behalf into the *parampara*.

Being assured that Srila Prabhupada can still be one's guide in spiritual life (although he is the grand-spiritual master), then what is the importance of the spiritual mastership of his disciples whom he has appointed guru? The importance is most crucial. Their disciples must accept them as the *via media* to Prabhupada. The spiritual master has to guide his disciples (it really means he has to be alive at the time he gives them initiation. Otherwise, they could continue to take His Divine Grace, or for that matter, Lord Caitanya or Krsna, as spiritual master). The spiritual master is the external representative of the Supersoul. The servant who is appointed guru by this great-*acarya*, perhaps the greatest of all time, has to be accepted by the disciple as the all in all. If we already know of Srila Prabhupada from his books and disciples and accepting him is not a difficulty, then there is no difficulty in accepting his representative because he is the immediate son, the trusted servitor to link his disciples to the founder-*acarya* of ISKCON. There is no difficulty for one who has already approached His Divine Grace with full faith.

Therefore, what appears to be a shock is not a shock, it is the system. It is perhaps the shock of disbelief that he has actually gone, and that is reconciled with the knowledge of his teachings, as was recognized by Krsna's Arjuna who first thought he was lost when Krsna left the planet, and the shock of the *gopis* which was never mitigated. Now we are talking of very advanced stages of attachment to Srila Prabhupada. It is more likely that new devotees who never saw him or knew him have only a distant sense of awe of him, or if they want to increase, still it is through the bona fide representative of Srila Prabhupada, the current initiating guru.

To follow His Divine Grace's teachings, accept a spiritual master in disciplic succession and be serious. You also have all

guidance from other older Godbrothers (we have our local GBC and local representatives who also act as a kind of guru; nothing is lacking). It is not a matter of canvassing for some personal worship. We are carrying out a solemn duty. It is not difficult for us to do. We have been trained to do it in the capacity of disciple, and now the disciple becomes monitor of the younger students, just as a teacher appoints an older student to take care of younger students in the classroom. *Take our offer. It is not a coy matter of our trying to replace our spiritual master or become a material hero in your heart to get your money and worship. For us it is a duty.*

The guru also has to be the first to realize, "I am doing something much different now. *Now my own Krsna consciousness has to stand perfect for these disciples.* I have to be exemplary. It is not the same. *Now I am responsible for others. I am carrying Krsna to them, for them, and I have to help them to reach Krsna.*" Take this big step, but first be sure you are convinced in this system and have faith in the guru who has been appointed. Have faith that he can actually stand in for Krsna and deliver Krsna to you. Understand why you have to follow his instructions and offer your worship of Krsna through him. Everything about the guru applies in this case. Everything about the *sisya* applies in this case. It is going on through the mercy of His Divine Grace. As he would say, it is not a bluff, it is the same thing. We are only saying that we can repeat his word and obey him. We can do what he says. You do the same. You follow us. We are following him. You follow him by following us. It is simple. Don't simply accept it by force of logic, but be enthusiastic, alive, hopeful, and faithful. Realize it. Take to it.

The difficulty is in having the faith, the energy and concentration and purity to have the faith, and the *utsaha* to worship and not take it materially.

The *sastras* are there to direct us. Never take the guru as having a material body. Know the symptoms of guru. Know the mercy of guru, by *sastra*. Hear, and if you have faith, then step forward eagerly.

May 8, 1978

I am glad that you are taking the recommendation of new initiates very seriously, that they are writing essays. Yes, it is a serious matter. Not that let me take a spiritual master as a pet and I can do whatever I want. No, one must be prepared to follow the order of the spiritual master with life and soul.

—Letter from Srila Prabhupada, Oct. 7, 1974

In a little while I will speak to three devotees who are to be initiated in three days. I will be their guru. We are to talk things over. I am asking for their questions. I have been trained to field all questions about this, but is it my cleverness or only a prepared "line" that will save me? If they ask, "Do you see Kṛṣṇa? Can we pray to you to save us?" will my answers be real? How else can I answer?

I am merely the servant of my spiritual master. Although my disciples are picking me to save them, I have no qualification except that I am the servant of His Divine Grace. What a post! It is the greatest charge! It is spiritual—to act on behalf of Kṛṣṇa. How shall I do it? With sincerity, of course, I will come through.

For me it is a great thrill that they will become my disciples. I cannot explain it or ultimately completely understand it, but the same faith that compels me to follow Srila Prabhupada is compelling them to follow me. It is in no way different. I am a young man, my recent past not wonderful at all. Rather, he saved me from hell. I am not a great scholar or a great preacher in driving the *sankirtana* movement forward, but it is the same surrender I made to my guru that they make to me.

I remember when I took first initiation, there was still doubt, yes. I still had some impersonalism. I did not doubt that my guru was the bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa, but I wasn't sure I wanted to surrender to Kṛṣṇa as the all in all. In surrendering to guru you are surrendering to the will of Kṛṣṇa. Now you have to be completely faithful. Those devotees who have gone away into *maya* have done a great disservice. Now you have to surrender completely at the feet of your spiritual

master. I had some doubt, but I went ahead because I had basic implicit faith; I wanted to be saved by Krsna and I wanted to enter *bhakti*. In other words, there was no guarantee that I would succeed, but I was sincere and I have stayed. You will become more advanced. This is the beginning.

When asked any difficult question about some practice, or whether I have real faith, conviction, and realization, I just remember what Srila Prabhupada did or said when confronted with the same issues. I can always remember because I am absorbed in his teachings and his person. Then, not that I simply apply his case to mine, but I apply it with the acknowledged difference of his much greater stature. Nevertheless, by referring to myself, I find the same principle to be within me by virtue of *parampara* and I am able to satisfactorily answer the question by referring to the undisputed guru. Then if someone doesn't accept him, then like him, I too can argue on the basis of *sastra* and logic, as he has trained me. In this way I am learning the ropes of speaking as spiritual master, as no doubt the other gurus are also doing.

There is more to it than this. I have to stand now so faithfully in my basic Krsna consciousness. I *promised* one boy. I have to lead them and inspire them. I have to do something tangible for them. In a mysterious way—to us—the karma is lifted for them. That is tangible. Now I have to do something for them to inspire them. I can't be artificial; I have to produce. As guru, I have to produce. At least it is done by standing faithfully on the basic Krsna conscious behavior and practice. I am drawing them to be very faithful themselves, because this much I know in my own Krsna consciousness. I am asking them to do it and promising them I will be a genuine spiritual master. Now I ask them to be faithful and be steady, nice devotees.

In this way I am trying to rouse their faith in me so that they will be faithful. *This means most important of all that I have to keep more than ever—unto death—my strict practice of Krsna conscious principles and following Srila Prabhupada in preaching in ISKCON.* As a result of this preaching engagement as guru, I am feeling forced to more thinking of my divine master. I am

not the world *acarya* he was, but I am keeping the spiritual life alive by virtue of this guru behavior. Whether as guru or GBC or as menial slave, I am still his servant. Now begin to do the job in a first-class way so the devotees, his followers, will not be apathetic, but strong and happy to fight *maya*. And they *do* respond.

Yesterday I was asked, "Can you know like Srila Prabhupada did, what we are always thinking?" I stressed that Srila Prabhupada himself rarely stressed his claim to this kind of thing. We *know* Krsna talks to him, but how, we cannot speculate. No one knows the mind of the *acarya*. In one sense, aren't they inquiring whether I have a kind of *siddhi* power? Honestly, I do not know that I possess any such power. If by preaching my master's word powers come, or he sees fit that powers are needed in extraordinary circumstances, then Krsna can give them to me. I am certain guru and Krsna can do anything. I don't know if it is required. As far as knowing your mind, it will be easier if you tell me or write me than my having to employ Krsna to do this work. Also, I remember Rsabhadeva saying he would not employ mystic power in devotional service because the mind was very difficult to control; these things are a diversion.

These points lead to general discussion about the realization of the new gurus. I stressed that *we may or may not realize Krsna to a certain degree, but if we repeat exactly the words of our spiritual master, we are fit to be guru*. It begins from the point of realizing that by chanting Hare Krsna, we have been relieved of misery; then we can testify, and therefore we are fit to tell others to try it. *Krsna is an unlimited ocean; how far down I am, why do you want to measure it? Know that I am in the ocean by the mercy of my spiritual master, and if you approach me, not to measure exactly where I am situated, but to derive instruction from me, then you will benefit*.

We just had an Indian engagement. One guest was yelling at me, "You don't have to take a spiritual master!" I tried reasoning with him. The meeting was upset, almost ruined. I thought, "How submissive are the devotees in the temple, the

ISKCON devotees!" Another Indian who had been given Srila Prabhupada's mercy related that even in silence, by his presence and "the vibrations," he knew Srila Prabhupada was a great soul. I thought, *I have nothing but humility*. I am made of his mercy only. I have no powerful vibrations. But I thought, "I have to have devotees who are already submissive, and no doubt my guruship is entirely under the wing of His Divine Grace." I realized it clearly. No kidding about it. *If it were not for him, there would be no devotees to initiate and I would not be guru*. And even these disciples of mine. They asked one to speak and he told how he read Srila Prabhupada's books. They are all under the wing of His Divine Grace. If I am his representative, I can do the job of bringing him solidly under.

In one *pranam-mantra* they had composed to praise me, it described me as humble. I yearned for *that* to be true. That is a great Vaisnava opulence. Let me be humble, truthful. I acknowledge that *the new gurus are creations of Srila Prabhupada*, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. They can call themselves whatever they like, "Divine Grace," "*uttama-adhikari*"—but they are nevertheless expansions or representatives of His Divine Grace. At least in my case, I know I am made only of his mercy. So go and be guru, do the ceremony, take the disciples, and don't forget who you are, or again you will become a mouse.

So much talking of myself. What about them? I say, "Come on, I will lift you up by the spiritual system at his lotus feet. Believe, follow, take shelter in ISKCON and ISKCON gurus. I may not look great, but it is authorized. *He can even make gurus!*"

May 20

Difficult questions:

Are you present in your picture?

Srila Prabhupada said yes, he is present. Therefore, we worship the picture. The principle is affirmed that the spiritual master is present in his picture.

Is it true of me? If we say, "Yes, he was spiritual master, you are also, so it is true of you"—that isn't complete because he was a much greater spiritual master with far greater powers than I have.

But I say yes, I am present, because I cannot be an ordinary person (to the disciple).

"It is up to Krsna." He said yes, he is present, so he has given me all abilities.

Faith. If you cannot pray to me in my absence by looking at my picture . . . then how can you see me as the direct representative of Krsna?

Krsna will hear the sincere prayer of my disciple and make it act.

When I answer, "Yes," I answer on faith. That is my only asset. I accept that my spiritual master is present and Bhaktisiddhanta and Bhaktivinoda—then what is my picture doing there if the parampara stops at me? The same faith I have in the spiritual form of my spiritual master. Don't look on him as material.

I chant on beads, I give spiritual names, I give instructions—how much of this I realize, this is not known to you (my realization in comparison to yours), but it is sufficient.

Krsna appears in the Deity. So pray to my picture, take me as the link, have faith.

“If I Think I Am A Vaiṣṇava . . . ”

May 22–July 28, 1978

With this chapter begin full-blown days of guruship in ISKCON after Prabhupāda’s disappearance. There is more confidence now in terms of outright expression about it in the diary, yet I was engaged in a balancing act between being a guru who teaches his disciple that he is “lord and master,” “the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead,” and simultaneously wanting to maintain the realization of being Prabhupāda’s humble servant. There were no experienced captain to tell us exactly what to do, and although there were charts and maps given by the previous *ācāryas*, somehow they did not seem detailed enough for our immediate situation in our worldwide ISKCON. In the diary I tried to make it clear, at least to myself, what my duties were and what my relationship with my disciples was.

As of this writing there had been no guru falldowns, and the atmosphere was supportive of confident assertions. This section of the diary also illustrates how much we are all shaped by the times in which we live.

There were some passages that made me and my editors wince, but for the most part, we kept them in. We did, however, choose to omit a section such as:

Wonderful reception in Hawaii. *Kirtana* at airport—walking through terminal, fancy car, nice reception at temple—warm feeling, many garlands, *vyāsāsana*.

It seems the guru was basking in the new role, and it was certainly being offered freely by others. Although a few other phrases here and there also caused us to flinch (“somehow I can take the disciples in my spiritual hands and deliver them back to eternity, bliss, and knowledge”), it is not that these state-

ments are in themselves arrogant or philosophically wrong. Still, we wince to read them, knowing what we have been through since then. Therefore, this diary has particular value to be read as it is, both as philosophy and history.

Reference is also made in this chapter to "our inner circle of friends," which sounds more like the concept of an "old boys' club" than anything else. I was sorry that I was participating in faultfinding and wishing that I, and others, could "take it upon ourselves not to discuss each others' faults in our 'inner circle' of friends." Although the reference is brief, I know that such indulgence in faultfinding and party spirit can often take place in the name of intimacy. The intimate dealings among devotees which are described in the *sāstras*, however, are quite different. We hear Rūpa Gosvāmī's recommendation of how devotees should exchange in six loving ways, and in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* we see how the associates of Lord Caitanya acted. There was no backbiting, no faultfinding, no pleasure in hearing that somebody else had fallen down, and so on.

One conceivable way to avoid this might be to not maintain close groups of friends, but that's not the Vaiṣṇava spirit either. I suppose each of us has to take the responsibility for our own behavior and not get sucked into that lax mood which can be started by any member of a close group. We should not tolerate it whenever it comes up—we should either speak against it, or if that's not possible, leave the group. One may think that his inner group is reinforcing and supporting him, but if it is a group of faultfinders, they're actually dragging him down.

* * *

May 22, 1978

Gita-nagari

Separation from my disciples. Wonderful ceremony yesterday—twenty initiated.

Getting tired of being away from my work in Dallas. Body is the source of misery (cough, headache).

Prabhupada material coming in on all sides. I need a very intelligent aide. Maybe Sesa will come. Say *gayatri* now.

May 23

Immortality is our better position. No more birth, no more death, no more old age, no more disease. Thus the guru takes on a very great responsibility. He must guide his disciple and enable him to become an eligible candidate for the perfect position—immortality. The guru must be competent to lead his disciple back home, back to Godhead.

—Srla Prabhupada's lecture Aug. 22 1973, London

Philadelphia

Today, maybe I can work some hours on the biography, reading his letters of 1975. Then tonight, 7–9 P.M., meeting with devotees. I'll have to think of what to speak about. They're giving me honor—I have to give them Krsna consciousness to their satisfaction.

If the spiritual master is considered an ordinary man, the disciple surely loses his chance to advance further.

—*Bhag.* 5.12.14, purport

May 27

Today, travel to Dallas. Then fifteen days of work. Let me work hard, long hours, strenuous schedule—all on the biography. Could I rise at night and work an hour or two writing? Then work through *mangala-arati* and evening *arati*.

Pleasing the spiritual master is the most important principle in spiritual life.

Planning more travel. What about going to Krsnaloka?

From Srla Prabhupada's lecture, November 1966

The spiritual master should accept the students also as his spiritual masters. This is the reciprocation. *Prabhu*. Officially one may be a spiritual master. But on the spiritual platform

there is no such difference. The custom is that the spiritual master is considered in the place of the Supreme Lord and therefore he is given respect. But the bona fide spiritual master thinks, "I am your disciple. I am your disciple." And practical example I have seen. Our Guru Maharaja, when he offered obeisances, he used to return "*Daso 'smi*, I am your servant." He used to return to me this way.

Someone might ask, "Are all the new gurus lesser than Srila Prabhupada?" For myself, I answer instantly, "Lesser, lesser, not fit to touch his lotus feet. Always I am his servant and student, his foolish slave. Therefore, I am qualified to act as guru for those who would approach Kṛṣṇa to learn Kṛṣṇa consciousness as taught by Srila Prabhupada. This is the humbling nature of the *parampara*. The true servant is empowered by the master. He insists you bow down to me because I am his servant, not because I am his equal or master, but I am his qualified representative. Representative means I am his servant. And he (Prabhupada) is the servant of his guru. He is the great servant of Kṛṣṇa, but for himself he thinks of himself as the servant of his guru. Why all these questions of whether the disciples are lesser than the guru?

One boy entered Kṛṣṇa consciousness thinking that one day, Srila Prabhupada would be his guru, but Srila Prabhupada left this world too soon for him. He asked the question, "Isn't Srila Prabhupada my *sikṣa-guru* on the principle that he is the greatest instructor for me? Isn't he my main guru?" Yes, he is your main guru, but guru is one. How can you separate Srila Prabhupada from Narada Muni, for example? Isn't Narada, by his instructions to Vyasa, the main guru in your life? Or isn't Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, by His instructions to Arjuna, the main *sikṣa-guru* in your life? Is Srila Prabhupada isolated or independent as guru? If you persist and say, "But it was he only, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who taught us everything in his books and by his coming here," then I agree.

Yet one of his last teachings was, "Now all disciples after this, after I have gone, they shall come to Kṛṣṇa in this way: my disciples will take disciples and become their spiritual

masters. In this way I want it to go on.” It was he only who set the future *parampara* before us. That is a fact; whatever he said we had to accept. Just as Kṛṣṇa says, “Offer Me these foods” (and therefore we do not offer Him meat; if He said, “Offer Me meat,” we would offer), so Srīla Prabhupada said *parampara* in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will go on in this way.

It is a false sentiment claiming exclusive devotion to Srīla Prabhupada that makes an uninitiated devotee say he cannot accept the principle of continuing guruship in Prabhupada’s disciples. Will that make Srīla Prabhupada pleased? Of course not. One has to be humble. If somehow or other he did not get initiation from His Divine Grace Srīla Prabhupada, although he aspired to, then in humility he has to approach the recognized disciple of Srīla Prabhupada and say, “You are the disciple of Srīla Prabhupada. Please accept my head at your feet and take me as your disciple.” That new guru will be very compassionate and give you everything he possesses of Prabhupada’s mercy. It may be a difficult thing for one who aspired to be *sisya* to the *paramahansa*, Srīla Prabhupada, to accept one of Prabhupada’s disciples as his guru, but when he does so he acts exactly in accord with all *sastra* and guru *parampara* as well as in accord with the personal desire of Prabhupada: *gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah*.

My disciples’ expression of faith in me pushes me to a new place. I have to be careful. It is almost dizzying. I want to pray to Kṛṣṇa and to Srīla Prabhupada for their welfare. In the heart of a sincere disciple, there automatically comes a relationship of love. It demands reciprocation. False motives start in me and I check them. I have a real motive—I want to be their guru. This is real love and faith, not skin love, not the bogus love the false *yogis* and *swamis* always speak of in their impersonalism or their mundane cheating and sex exploitation, money exploitation! No, I am genuine, I can carry the love of Srīla Prabhupada and Kṛṣṇa. It demands so much of me. It is special, very special. There is nothing like it in the three worlds. It is full of duty. It demands the highest integrity. It is a fact that I am the representative of Prabhupada and Kṛṣṇa.

Why worry about foolish, envious things? Let there be more gurus. ISKCON is not sentimental or a place for fighting.

Yet there is no harm in the disciples' love and expression of love for the guru. When a disciple surrenders sincerely, then the purity of the guru is tested: "This soul is yours. Now what will you do?" If there is any pinch of dirty desire, *now* it will come forward. It is a test.

I can't assume that the disciples' love is material and spurn it. Of course, I have to be intelligent, not simple-minded. If a woman disciple offered me sex, I could not think, "This is her way of offering devotional service." No, I would have to instruct her, correct her wrong mentality.

How to know if my love or my disciples' love is improperly motivated? One way is if it manifests in improper behavior, if improper statements are made that are not in accord with scriptures and Vaisnava etiquette, or if within oneself there are improper transformations of the body and mind. What is proper is demonstrated already in scripture and by Srila Prabhupada. You have to deal with it very carefully. No excess or wrong conclusion or behavior or cultivation can be tolerated.

A guru must even be detached from the worship of his disciples—he has to simply guide them to Kṛṣṇa.

Control the senses—then make disciples all over the world. Urges of body, mind, words, tongue, belly, genitals.

The verse today discussed that we have to please Kṛṣṇa and it is not that we have to be pleased. Of course, if He is pleased, then we become pleased because we are His parts and parcels and our original nature is to please Him. It is our eternal nature to serve Kṛṣṇa and to feel unlimited bliss.

The talk turned to pleasing the spiritual master. I am remembering my own feelings, past and present. More than anything is a basic feeling not to displease my spiritual master. A fear? In this sense: I so much feel that I am right only when in his graces, that he is the worshipable guru who is linking me with Kṛṣṇa and who deserves all my worship. If I fail in that I am *lost*. His displeasure has to be rectified. I have been weak and not as surrendered as some of his disciples, but I have never broken his basic instructions. It is very firm within me

that he is my guide, that I am following him as his disciple, I am his. I repeat what he preaches and live for carrying out his order. He is my truth.

How shall I instruct my disciples? I mean, they have not received the instruction to chant sixteen rounds daily only from me. I came late, so to speak, in their training. And even now their daily duties are coming from other instructors.

One boy asked me about this in Philadelphia and I said he should always think that whatever he is doing, selling books, etc., that he is following my order.

To follow the bona fide order, whether given by a local authority, is to follow my order. I am not missing. And you should think it is being done for your spiritual master. That has to be there. With Srila Prabhupada, it is very firm within me that I cannot break the principles because he gave them to me and he linked me with Krsna and I solemnly promised I would be his eternal servant. After all, I wrote essays saying this, and I took vows—so this must be there, the solemn vow, the genuine feeling of indebtedness.

What else? Love. We share the secret of Krsna consciousness. It is an open secret, but we have to take it. I have given you a link with Krsna.

These are the teachings of our philosophy and I realize them in regard to my spiritual master in a very personal way which dictates how I live my whole life. His order should be our very life and soul. It should be with you. You have to cultivate it. It is not, however, a material relationship. You should seek to communicate with me and receive instructions. Different people do so in different ways. With Prabhupada, some devotees (such as Jayananda) felt secure in the strenuous carrying out of his orders and didn't feel a need to be going to him personally. Others simply could not do without taking every opportunity to be in his presence or to write to him, etc. I am saying one way or another, you should be relating to the spiritual master.

It should be one of the proper ways. Nothing improper, nothing material or artificial. Don't let it simply lie there dormant. I should also keep it active. I know that although I

have asked to have a picture of my disciples, it is not of the topmost importance. I am anxious to keep it alive and know you are hearing from me and developing the proper feelings. I am praying to always stand perfect in your eyes by my own execution of duties, even while away from you, so that the link is perfectly intact wherever you are and your offerings to me are going swiftly to Prabhupada and Kṛṣṇa by the *parampara*. I am thus maintaining my own spiritual life carefully so that I will be your via medium. In this we may not always be in regular contact, but you can know I am doing it and I know you are doing it. We have to be patient.

If I think I am a Vaisnava, I shall look forward to receiving respect from others. And if the desire for fame and reputation pollute my heart, certainly I shall go to hell. By giving the remnants of my food, I shall consider myself superior and shall be burdened with the weight of false pride. Therefore, always remaining your surrendered disciple, I shall not accept worship from anyone else.

—Bhaktivinoda Thakura, *Kalyana-kalpa-taru*

Wherever there is a relationship of love of Godhead, its natural symptom is that the devotee does not think himself a devotee. Instead, he always thinks that he has not even a drop of love for Kṛṣṇa.

—Cc. Antya 20.28

I just gave Sankirtana dasa an example that although a family man works away from his family all day and deals with many persons to advance himself at his job and make more money—and it is all done away from home, but for the family—so the *sisya* does all for the guru.

Why do I have a meeting just with my disciples? If I want to encourage *sankirtana*, why not invite all the *sankirtana* devotees? If I want to discuss spiritual progress, why not invite everyone? Of course, generally we have such completely open meetings, but isn't there justification for having a meeting just with my disciples? Yes. What is the difference? They are

looking to me to give them Krsna and have surrendered their souls to me. I have vowed to link them with Krsna.

Now we may not know what this consists of and we are learning that, but it is certainly special. It has great potential. They are expecting me to guide them and give them advancement back to Godhead. I am expecting Krsna to come through me to them.

Don't be "mystical" about it. What do I mean? I mean I want to cultivate and never let lie dormant this special relationship; but I, we, must go ahead according to *sastra*. I have only to remember my own relationship with Srila Prabhupada.

We were discussing tonight how Prabhupada states in a *Bhagavad-gita* purport that the "disciple has to pass the test of the spiritual master." Sometimes that has seemed mysterious. I realized it better tonight. It is service. When the guru sees that the service is performed well and sincerely, then he knows that the disciple is sincere and he feels an ecstatic anxiety to deliver Krsna to him even more than before. If he sees the disciple asks questions but doesn't serve so nicely, then the disciple has not passed the test.

I also spoke to one disciple about asking philosophical questions without real practical desire or relevancy. What good is it? If you think (only going through the motions of the *guru-sisya* relationship), "I am required to ask my guru some philosophical questions so he can exercise his position. Let me put some question that is difficult and he will have to give an intelligent answer," what good is that? He admitted that when he asks such questions, he cannot even hear the answer.

It is real and we have to make it real. The guru wants to give everything to a disciple who has passed the test. It requires love based on service. The guru's business is to answer questions, but it has to be real.

This boy is struggling to distribute books. He asked, "How can I stay enlivened when I am doing so poorly and the older devotee next to me is doing well?" That was his real philosophical question. He wanted an answer to help him in his service.

Sometimes the *acaryas* humbly lament their lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupada has said that the lamentation of Narottama dāsa Thākura is a form of purification; he is lamenting in that way for the benefit of unfortunate souls who are fallen, but he is not actually fallen. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Thākura has addressed his mind, "Why are you not a Vaisnava?" We are not to take it that he has an uncontrollable mind. We do not take Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's self-effacement as the true picture of his character. These things I know. But what about my case?

Nasty things do come into my mind, is it not a fact? Shall I say now that I am guru, "No, a bad thought never enters my mind"? Why did Lord Caitanya say that He became agitated when He merely saw the wooden form of a woman? If I say it, it is not the same as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Yet admitting this, I have to deal with it in terms of the growing numbers of disciples who are worshiping me as Gurudeva, the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead.

This admittance makes me grave, but I am not allowing thinking to go over into feeling and willing. I am not doing anything sinful. Some thoughts come. It makes me humble. I am receiving worship, yet sometimes thoughts come. Gravity, control. Dismissing the bad thought and going on with the real business of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It seems with words I can explain everything away.

Within myself I admit I am fallen. This makes me genuinely dependent on Prabhupada and *sādhana*. I am surrendered to the four rules, sixteen rounds, class, *prasadam* regulation, regulation of association with women, etc., and I know I am fallen and in need of Prabhupada's and Kṛṣṇa's protection. Still I must do the job—come forth to battle and accept the honor of Guru Maharaja without apology or hypocrisy. I must accept it; now it is just a matter of not being a hypocrite.

Too many people are depending on me for a good spiritual example. I can't let them down. I can't let down Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupada.

June 10, 1978

Plane en route to Hawaii. I'm to be initiating guru there. Far-flung parts of the world. No speech rehearsals needed. Do the needful. Words will come. I can say what I have come to do. Biography. Have been writing an essay. Now I need to write an homage.

June 11

Satyadeva dasa was saying that in the future, gurus won't have to constantly distinguish themselves from their previous guru. They will come and manifest themselves as Kṛṣṇa's representatives to their own disciples and win their hearts, and their guru's guru will be a little removed to them. We often heard Srila Prabhupada say he was the mere servant of his Guru Maharaja and we accepted it, but we didn't really think of him as being overshadowed by his guru—I mean, we never thought, "I wish I could have taken initiation from his guru, since he recognizes him as greater." We knew that was his humility and his greatness, that he was the servant of his guru—but he was coming as *all-guru*, *all-preceptor* to us, quite on his own.

In my case, as I've said, my only achievement is to please Srila Prabhupada and to be invested by him with Kṛṣṇa's mercy. There is no question of someone staying in disciplic succession thinking, "I am doing nicely and am in association with Prabhupada's books, his service in *sankirtana*, his disciple's leadership"—and yet not being initiated. That is a misunderstanding. The conclusion is, the ISKCON gurus are completely dependent on Srila Prabhupada. He's not just the *parama-guru*; he is everyone's founder-acarya, *jagat-guru*

June 12

Now it is 1 A.M., the morning of first initiation of four and second initiation of three in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. I have a feeling how I am acting on behalf of my acarya,

Prabhupada, to solidify ISKCON. Initiations mean going back to Godhead for the individuals; it is affirming that for them and for others, showing that they can be initiated, showing that Srila Prabhupada empowered gurus to do this after his disappearance. *It shows ISKCON as an ongoing spiritual force.*

My order to these disciples is to work in ISKCON. In Hawaii, especially, there are different philosophies as well as the more persuasive, all-pervasive call of *maya*, but it is all cheap and illusory, whereas the back to Godhead path is real and eternal. Let us conduct it in full faith, in *parampara*.

This preaching detracts from work on the biography, but Prabhupada was distracted from the *Bhagavatam* in the same way. It must be done and is equally important.

I feel the need to read more if I can find time. Memorizing verses is also a desire—so preaching is *parampara*, more enriched. There has been talk of war again, devastation of the world. At any rate we don't know the future. As a servant, I am taking on responsibility of guru. A disciple simultaneously saves himself and works to save others. The way is very strict in its own *siddhanta*. It cannot be taken another way. Yet it is not sectarian. *Gita* and Prabhupada, Lord Caitanya's *san-kirtana* are spiritual realities. There are other names of God, other expressions of going back to Godhead, but this is the strongest, most direct. As I am committing these disciples on the promise of their vow before Krsna, so for myself also.

Be true to the great personality who brought pure love of God, be true to yourself who desires pure life and freedom in love of Krsna, be true to this highest mission for the world's welfare. In other words, I realize I cannot force them and they have to withstand *maya* on their own, but if they will only follow these instructions they will be safe. Otherwise, all is danger, implication; caught in the web of action-reaction.

June [?]

Dallas

Sesa is here. Suggests I write the biography from my own viewpoint. Can't expect to please everyone. I'm interested in

what he says. Surely readability is increased when I write of Srila Prabhupada from my own feeling. When I let another speak his feeling, however, that is also interesting. My own version can be the background. When I express myself, it is not so much authoritarian as real experience—that will be appreciated.

I feel threatened that I have to abandon any concentrated work due to my other duties.

Have to learn to write one and a half hours from 12:30–2:00 A.M.—be damned if I get tired later. And at least for an hour during the day, prepare myself for the next night's writing.

Let me finish that Introduction essay at least in its first draft, and go on to trying to actually write his life.

June 19

Krsna is in control. This body may be finished at any moment. Not only “may” but will. The moment will occur after which “I,” as I am now in this body, will be gone. The page will remain a few years after me, and then that will also crumble. The eternal is what counts. That is what I am, the eternal spirit soul, servant of Krsna; this we have to learn. Soon all will be gone. Then why bother at all with maintaining and endeavoring in this world? It is for the purpose of preaching. That is Krsna's mission. To preach. The building is temporary, the car, the book, but Krsna consciousness is eternal. We have to try to give it to others, and we have to become Krsna conscious by whatever means are available to us. Thus we have to engage this body in different ways. Especially in the beginning, we have to dovetail our work and material desires in Krsna's service.

As for Srila Prabhupada's biography, it is something that will glorify our spiritual master; therefore, it is very important. I have to consider the importance of it. Let the world know the glory of the pure devotee. He himself told me it was not very important. I feel more now that this was his humility. Also, during his presence it was more appropriate *not* to write it, but *now it is a must*.

Tomorrow morning, if Krsna desires, I will start the narrative, beginning with the boat trip to the U.S.A. in 1965. I will note down whatever I have now and hope to fill it in later. At the same time it will be a time for me to put these events into expression in a free-form way, some of which will be retained until the last draft. This is the developmental method of writing craft. Write freely whatever you can now without worrying. In this case, it will only be the facts encased in "suitable" expression. I am also thinking that I can recall at any moment in his life things he himself did, said, etc., which are relevant to the particular item I am describing in the strict chronology. In this way, I get the benefit of strict chronology and yet the freedom to write what I please, as I am inspired to, by the most inspiring personality, Srila Prabhupada. I should be blissful executing this. I should not be restrained, bored, taxed, unenthusiastic. Research has to go apace, but I have to live in the feast of presentation of his life. I have to be recalling him on all sides, all his glory.

I will begin by offering my obeisances to him and praying to the Lord to enable me to truly execute it. Then I will begin with the boat trip.

My dear Lord Krsna, if You desire, please let me glorify Srila Prabhupada. Let me write with no false ego, no motive but his proper glorification, and let the facts be gathered and go down for all people of the future. In the process, I may be purified and serve him more humbly and more enthusiastically.

June 21

In so many ways I see myself as an ordinary devotee, yet I am never to be seen as such by my disciples. What is that? It is the position of guru. As we were (and are) disciples of Srila Prabhupada, they should be to me. Somehow I have to receive worship and not be unworthy of it; my feeling—or being—lowly, is not my disqualification. If I am strictly following the four rules, chanting *japa*, and taking these duties as service from my spiritual master, then I can act as their spiritual master.

Prabhupada, I am a little on your trail now. I am walking behind you in 1965. Of course, I cannot do anything like you, but I am appreciating, worshiping, and trying to put together the entire story of your pastimes. I want to know what you were doing. I want to tell the world what you were doing. I will quote from your letters. If I can tell the actual story, Kṛṣṇa will be glorified by glorifying His servant. You always liked that. You liked to see praise of your activities. You were very openly pleased by that because you are the eternal servant of your Guru Maharaja. I want people to see a little of your wonderful qualities. (I say "a little" because that is all I can expect to produce, but I will try my best.) This is the purpose of literary work, to bring you forward, to bring Kṛṣṇa forward. This is the purpose of writing, the purpose of the typewriter and my taking time. This is my preaching. I want to tell your story. If Kṛṣṇa desires, I can live in this world to do this kind of work. I am attracted to it. I must serve the devotees who are more actively preaching on the front lines, but this kind of work although prepared in quiet on the back line, goes in the form of a book or article right to the front. I am making the spear which will be thrown into the demons' side. Sometimes I will have to throw the spear myself. Anyway, I will be finished sooner or later, as the Lord desires. I have not done anything wonderful except whatever I have done that has pleased you. Divine Grace.

Now sentiments of my own disciples are coming in and have to reciprocate in kind with them also.

I don't know what is ahead, what shocks, setbacks. I have no strength. I am trying to arrange a life to do this work, but it is up to the Lord. Please let me praise you and find out what you were doing.

I am begging Prabhupada and Kṛṣṇa for more and more realizations of the *guru-sisya* relationship. I realize that the guru has to inform the disciples how he (the guru) is the lord and master of the *sisya's* life. We pray this every morning. It is told to us *sisyas* by guru, *sastra*, and *sadhu*.

Now if one becomes a guru, he has to become that lord and master. It is not material, as if he needs a certain forceful "master" personality. He has to be able to reprimand, lead, and inspire the devotees. That direction and guidance will be dictated to him (the guru—it is not only the *sisya* who needs direction) by the Lord in the heart and by the instructions he has by now well-received from *his* spiritual master.

Tell them, "The spiritual master is like this—he has to be your life and soul." They and I will understand "the spiritual master" means me. Srila Prabhupada preached like that. He wouldn't say, "Surrender to me," but, "Accept a bona fide spiritual master."

While reading something about Srila Prabhupada (and I had the same feeling recently while passing over a picture of him), I had a flash of feeling that I am slighting my spiritual master. If it is true, I am in serious trouble. Maybe it is only the beginning of an offense and I can correct it. It is a kind of irritated indifference, a lack of realization of who he is, a lack of caring.

I guess at some reasons for it. One is that Srila Prabhupada has become, in addition to my eternal guide, a kind of commodity to me in that I am writing his biography. I have to pass over many reminiscences of him and ascertain whether they are authentic. Sometimes someone expresses their heartfelt sentiment about him, and I wonder whether the story is actually authentic. I am also exasperated at my inability to remember him or to gather material for a comprehensive telling of all his days on earth. He is eluding me despite the proliferation of pictures, letters, memories—and I become frustrated. Maybe I become *unjustly* irritated with *him* for being so impossible to write about! Anyway, there is something involving my working on the biography and dealing with a great deal of material about him that may lead to insensitivity.

Another reason is connected with my other main service this year, acting as initiating guru and taking disciples. We have to educate disciples that the new gurus are in themselves

bona fide. People can no longer take initiation from Srila Prabhupada. It seems that for ourselves (initiating gurus), we have to at least externally sometimes act more as gurus than as his disciples. This business has a certain effect, I suspect at least with me, that is taxing. It encourages arrogance. There is no one to turn to in this arrogance. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati has described that he will be willing to be an arrogant brute in order to be spiritual master, which he has been ordered to do by Caitanya Mahaprabhu. But it is taxing. And one form of the difficulty may be in the loss of the simple service worship of Srila Prabhupada.

These things have to be immediately corrected. More than anything I need to be the loving, simple servitor of Srila Prabhupada. I am telling my disciples that they have to recognize me with awe and reverence as the representative of Kṛṣṇa, but I also have to worship my Srila Prabhupada in that way. How to correct this hurried, irritated, too-busy, superficial, *lack of really understanding Prabhupada*? How to get in touch with him? Was I ever in touch? How? Where is he? What am I doing wrong? What am I to do? Reading his books seems a good idea. Slowing down and remembering him carefully. Not trying to do so much? No, I have to go ahead. I am not doing much at all. I have to keep my unique relationship with him carefully, and there is the danger that I will be so absorbed in being guru that I will abuse my position as disciple. Isn't it also the best preaching to the new devotees to show them and tell them that I am simply the disciple of my guru? Work at it, think it, write it, pray it, keep it. If I lose it, then I am lost. I repeatedly tell the people, based on the philosophy, that they have to accept and follow their spiritual master, but that goes for me too. Not just execute duties, but remember and worship him. Am I not in the best position to do so because of the biography? Yes, in a certain sense. But because of the demands of accuracy and completeness, his life is for me not just something to savor and relish; it is like a huge mountain that I am supposed to conquer. Go at it humbly, just as you advise others. You cannot conquer his life. Tell it humbly. Gather what you can. *Write as his disciple.*

I am prostrate on my hands, body flat like a rod before him, not just to show an example to my disciples, but because I am always a fool in Krsna consciousness when I appear before him.

June 26

In six consecutive early morning sessions, working with extensive documentation in the form of letters, I wrote off a very workable draft of Prabhupada's activities from September 1965 until April, May, June 1966. It can be filled in with more feeling, insight, etc., but I have laid down a foundation which will stand even until the last draft of the biography. It was also perhaps the first time anyone ever took those documents in hand and wrote the story, so I was "flying high," feeling some deep sense of pleasure in accomplishment. I credit the arrival of Sesa dasa with his encouragement toward helping me break loose from mere gathering, "researching," into actual writing. But now I am stuck again.

Now I am standing before the awesome activities of summer 1966. We've heard so many tales. The witnesses are still around, they can pool together their memories, but they do not remember everything. I know it is not to be done sentimentally or simply by evocative emotion. As the other period, 1965, was built on a solid foundation of his comings and goings, *it seems 1966 at 26 Second Avenue should also be built on a solid foundation of what happened, one after another.* Both have to be there. The feeling, the life, which is not found simply in dates and locations and bare accounts, but the actual activities, figures, dates, etc., must be there. I think you may want to swim into it in many different ways, maybe all at the same time. Maybe make a list of occurrences and simply free-write into your own feelings. I was thinking of presenting myself before the reader for the first time in these pages. Something like Boswell, when he first enters the life of Johnson. Myself as his disciple, although that should also be expressed earlier.

Part of this is the need for cold, steel-girded facts, but I am facing this period not simply with historical lapses, but with shallowness of feeling.

Where is Prabhupada? Where is my heart for Prabhupada? Where is my memory? Here is the storefront, Matchless Gifts. It is not for everyone. It is not imagination. It is a place, 26 Second Avenue. Shall we enter? Who can enter? Can we enter, or is it now shut, and only in our imaginations can we enter a false 26 Second Avenue?

Some poetic evocation, like the above, "It is a fact, we cannot go back there exactly as it was and take off our shoes and enter and say ISKCON has been legally formed today, July 13, 1966." I can do it—this kind of evocation has its place in the biography. The reader is up to such things. We are not dry. "Do whatever you can," I would say. I do not have so many documents, but I have records in the mind. I was there, and others also. I think I should line up the memories of others that I have. I do not have them all now, but writing in this way is also nice. Call it novelistic. Actually, it is responsible, and in a sense, the only way, because it is in the memory. Tell it again and again. Tell it once and for all. *Bring in Prabhupada as he was then*—as much as I can see of him.

July 1, 1978

Leaving for L.A. to interview for the biography. Gone only a couple of days.

Been thinking of my inevitable destruction in this body. Each one of us alone. Pass unto death, "fear and trembling." Turn to Krsna. Who can be proud before Time and Death, who take everything away? Do the book before I die.

Someone has to represent Krsna and Prabhupada. The young devotees, the devotees in general, in this senseless, dangerous material world have turned to Krsna's shelter. Now they go out and face difficulty for Krsna's sake; they give up so much . . . they don't do this for payment from the spiritual master. (Therefore, they say, "brainwashed"—how else could someone work for someone else?) Then, one person is worshiped as the emblem of pure devotion and through him, it goes to the Lord. Therefore, this office of guru is all important. If the guru

misbehaves consciously or unconsciously, then he's damaged and how can he go on? They don't know and never should have to find out.

July 8

Buying a Dictaphone today. Trying to work on the road with the biography. I need materials, and without them I can't write. Today, interview with Brahmananda Swami. Should go after Hayagriva also.

July [?]

Washington, D.C.

I have been having quite a few hours of meetings with devotees, sometimes four hours a night. I had presentations and plenty to say at first. Sometimes, though, I am in anxiety when asked a question; I am afraid that I will reply merely with something I have said too often before. I am afraid it will be a thing not full of *sastra* (no quote), or too academic, lacking in my own experience of it, and not inspiring to the devotees. I know of no recourse for this anxiety over "performance" except that I could give some reading material instead of simply speaking, or ask them for questions. There should be some sort of presentation, not that I have called for them and I have nothing to say.

Wake up! They are my disciples. I should have something to say to them! What does the guru have to say to the disciples? He wants them to be Kṛṣṇa conscious. He is heavy and full of Kṛṣṇa. He wants to impart it. I could speak about seeing Dr. Mishra today, how he spoke as a Mayavadi, but that is not the point.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, my dearest master Srila Prabhupada, I have to do as you did. You would *speake the parampara*. I do not have to manufacture some crowd-pleasing attitude. For so often it has meant reading something. We want to understand the relationship between *sisya* and guru. It seems appropriate to

talk about this. How you can draw life from the guru. Why not read some passages on this subject?

Increased confidence, increased role of instructing them how to approach and regard their spiritual master.

July [?]

Baltimore

Right now I'm sitting in my room in Baltimore temple, dazed with headache pain. Is it now due to disciples' misbehavior?

July [?]

Gita-nagari

Prabhupada is in me in my current preaching—not as a physical presence, but all I say is what he said (or the purport of what he said) in my own words. I am following him, worshipping him, but aware of little love for him, a failure in surrender.

Got a glimpse today while standing before my spiritual master's picture that *I can still realize much more about my personal relationship with him.*

Unfathomable. I thought working on the book would be good for further realization of Srila Prabhupada. That's a fact. Thinking of him. My own preaching—I always recall him. Be sensitive to his presence in separation. Preach.

July [?]

Flying to San Francisco

In the beginning of this journal, I was confiding to myself here and struggling to understand how I could actually fulfill the purport of guru. How could I accept karma—or realize I was doing that?

Now I seem to have less time to “indulge” in writing down such self-searching analysis. I'm busier actually holding meet-

ings as guru for my disciples, now numbering seventy. I'm not sure how much good was gained by the self-searching, as recorded.

We have to be guru—there's no backing out. That's an order from my guru. Then make it real. At first my preaching to disciples and other devotees was *apologetic*. "Don't do that," I was advised. The disciples were more willing to accept me on the authority of Prabhupada, GBC, and senior Vaisnavas. I have gone forward.

Krsna is behind me and accepts the karma through me. On my acceptance of disciples, it is done. Sure, I don't realize everything yet, so I'm not jumping ahead and making extravagant claims. I'm careful not to say, "I don't know, I don't know," too much. I describe whatever I can authoritatively and say the rest is not easily known by us now. Neither did Srila Prabhupada ever tell us much (about how guru comes back for his disciples). I'm stressing loving connections.

I have to admit I'm new at it. After six years as a *sannyasi*, I am again dealing with and talking to women (as my disciples), and it is still taking time to learn to deal with it carefully, yet as real guru. (Remembering him: "Do as I am doing.") Accepting and even demanding worship, speaking of a bond which is the greatest bond in the life of my disciples, and teaching them I am their lord and master—certainly my realization is coming along, but I feel how I am coming into it. How can we honestly say we are eternally guru? Now we are eternal guru, as desired by Prabhupada, and it is a great wonder, another genuine miracle, but it is taking time for all to realize and develop—disciples of Prabhupada, our disciples, our GBC, ISKCON.

We are going today, three GBC men, to one guru's residence where there is question that he is thinking himself beyond all law and guidance based on his being appointed guru. If it is true, it is bad.

Realizations are individual, but the philosophy is the standard (sastra). We have our guru's instructions that we cooperate and work in ISKCON together. We are pleading to you (the

independent-minded guru) not to come to your own understanding, but to follow the *parampara* standard, which must be maintained by all. If “individually” I start saying I am Kṛṣṇa, I cannot be allowed to do so. If I persist, I can be censured by my Godbrothers. It is a matter of *siddhanta* and also cooperation, submission.

Individual means that we all agree Kṛṣṇa is in the Deity, although we may realize it to different degrees. But the object as well as symptoms of advanced realization are known—combination of Prabhupada’s purports, verses of *sastra*, and Srila Prabhupada’s teaching and spiritual will for GBC and ISKCON.

A guru can be dictated to if he teaches something wrong.

Points of contention

(1) We have to show our love for Srila Prabhupada by cooperating to push on ISKCON—certainly gurus have to be the best examples of this.

(2) The theory that the gurus don’t have to obey GBC injunctions is not to be put forward as a conclusion by one guru. It is such a major consideration, it can only be decided by the GBC. (Just as last year, we went to Mayapur not knowing how we would provide for more gurus and established a resolution. Anyone could have had an opinion, but we had to agree and cooperate.)

(3) At present, we have to obey resolutions of ’78 Mayapur, which were accepted by gurus as well as other GBCs. Gurus have to be mature and not renegade to the principle of cooperation to maintain ISKCON.

(4) The philosophy that all devotees, including second initiates of Prabhupada, have to accept zonal *acaryas* as their own gurus (“because guru is one”) is not upheld in *sastra* or Srila Prabhupada’s directions. If a guru contests this, it still has to be decided on by group ISKCON what shall be good for ISKCON.

(5) To claim infallibility and defy ISKCON law is a contradiction. Our guru told us to follow and cooperate as a group.

This is a test of knowledge of Prabhupada's books and realization, conviction, being alive, being a watchdog for ISKCON, Prabhupada's man, defender of the movement. Friend, humble. Willing to hear and talk.

We are three GBCs gathered with some urgency. Basically, we feel you have said some things that are not authorized teachings and directions, and they are different than what was given to us by Prabhupada.

July 28

Intense rivalry among top Godbrothers. My own quest for supremacy. Foolish. Time being wasted. Death approaching and still I do not call out the holy name in desperate helplessness. Still I have not avoided another material body.

R.S. in class this morning stressed the pleasure Krsna feels in the spiritual world and encouraged us to use our lives to please Krsna. But we are not feeling ecstasy at every moment. My own unique quality, each one's own unique quality—where is it? We are alone, individual, confused by even a little dealing, my small self grasping for true humility, and at the same time, distinction. Can't I simply repeat the words of my spiritual master and be content with that?

But I can speak, and ecstasy is there in *parampara*. Let me learn from our Sanskrit authorities. Let me relish and speak and pray and take disciples and tell them how the system is working in their favor to deliver them back to Godhead.

Pray you don't fall down. I was aware today of many cross-currents of possible faultfinding. One criticizes me (behind my back), I criticize him back. We hear another has fallen down. Where is charitable behavior? We should take it upon ourselves not to discuss others' faults in our "inner circle" of friends.

Many subtle laws exist of which we don't know of by perception. Eating at a nondevotee's house, a nondevotee touching a devotee's feet—in fact the entire accumulation and recording of karma by Supersoul as well as the awarding of the next life are beyond material knowledge. Krsna and the soul and the

spiritual world are all beyond material knowledge. Therefore, the taking or neutralizing of sin by a bona fide spiritual master on accepting a disciple is also spiritual and can be seen only by the spiritual vision of *caksus-sastra* or *brahma-sabda-pramana*. Thinking of this as we approach Vancouver where I am to be a spiritual master. Old challenges, "Can such a young man, a disciple of Srila Prabhupada, actually be spiritual master?" Yes, yes, yes.

Relishing reading the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Proceeding on faith, "a wing and a prayer."

Marobi rakhobi—jo iccha tohara—O Lord, I fully surrender unto Your lotus feet. Now, as You desire, You may protect me or annihilate me. You have the full right to do either.

—Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Guru and Biographer

August 1–October 23, 1978

More wincing here as I read this years later—phrases like, “disciples have to worship me,” and, “I am standing as their guru.” The situation has become humbler now, and one also speaks with more tact, doesn’t speak of himself in terms of “I” and “me” in guru-disciple relationships. But I should not presume too much to judge what I was going through in those 1978 days. The courage and dependence on Prabhupāda is also admirable in some ways. No doubt, the job was too big to take on and the service too demanding, but Prabhupāda wants us to do as much as we can.

I was fortunate in having the combined services of acting as spiritual master and worshiping Srila Prabhupada through the biography. The ecstasy of diving into the biography, organizing materials, and seeking inspiration for lifelike writing kept me from deviating during difficult times.

I’ve heard many times that when authors are very much absorbed with writing a novel, they become obsessed with the thought of completing it. I was no exception. Unlike the materialist whose compulsion to complete the work is a futile meditation, however, I had an assignment that was important for the whole world! Now I sometimes think that one of the most important reasons for me not to end my life in a shameful way is to keep up the prestige of the *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*. At any time, awareness of death (such as is contained in some of these chapter entries) is 20/20 vision.

In this chapter, there are a number of references to the concept of “mission” in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At that time, my mission was to write the biography and to preach to disciples.

In retrospect, it may sound a bit grandiose for an individual disciple to speak of “my mission.” In fact, we are all within the big mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda, which is the mission of Lord Caitanya: to bring the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra to all the conditioned souls in Kali-yuga. Inevitably, devotees will have their own services, and those smaller missions must all work in a co-operative way within the big mission. Otherwise, if a follower gets too strong-headed an idea of “my mission,” it could lead to something separate from the whole.

Another subject covered in this chapter was my struggle to find the time and concentration to work on the biography. Śrīla Prabhupāda is the accomplished master in being able to do this—to take time out in a busy day and plunge into *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports.

Sometimes Godbrothers would try to encourage me by saying, “Prabhupāda was able to work every day on the *Bhāgavatam*, so just do like he did.” But this is another example of how we cannot imitate His Divine Grace. I can only imagine how he was able to keep so many things on his mind and the anxiety of spreading and maintaining the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, and still rise at 1 o’clock and compose the Bhaktivedanta purports, deep in the center of the transcendental realm.

I was often frustrated, but yearning to “enter this meditation on the ocean of the activities of my spiritual master.” As with any service, Kṛṣṇa helps us when we sincerely try, so the biography was actually completed during years in which I had many other duties. The desire for the concentration to remember the activities of the spiritual master and follow his mission is not something that only a writer seeks but all devotees. I can’t claim to have learned the secret over the years of how this can always be accomplished, how one can always think of Kṛṣṇa or guru. I have to conclude that there is no alternative but to grope and struggle and to keep alive the desire to always enter that “ocean” whenever possible—in every hour of every day. In those years of writing the biography, by grabbing at every available opportunity, I eventually found the optimum

times for this work, the early morning hours, and sometimes I was able to write throughout the day for weeks in succession. Finally, Kṛṣṇa arranged that I was able to use most of my time for the desired project.

* * *

August 1, 1978

Air Canada—en route to Edmonton for initiations

Our process is that two initiations are required. Although *harinama* is sufficient, Jiva Gosvami has said that in this age we are restless and require *pancaratrika*, Deity worship. Two initiations, *gayatri*—this was nicely presented by the devotees in Vancouver in their papers to me. They said, “I want to take brahminical initiation because I want to go back to Godhead. *Gayatri* is facility, the acceptance of second initiation.”

The main thing is not the intricacies of Vedic culture, but the transcendental system of Vaisnavism.

August [?]

Edmonton preaching center

There is a statement in *Caitanya-caritamṛta* by Lord Caitanya that *dikṣa* or *purascarya* isn't needed for chanting the holy name. The purport to the verse dwells on the requirements for initiation (*purascarya*) and the need for initiation.

How are we to take the statement that initiation isn't needed? It means one can begin chanting (as we did) from the lowest platform, even before initiation or its requirements.

No one can defy the initiation process. The statement that the holy name doesn't wait on initiation is to give us the estimation of how pure this process is, but it is understood that one must give up sinful life and chant without offense. Who can do this without worshiping the Deity and living under the guru's instructions?

Diksa is generally considered the second initiation, so spiritual life is complete after the first, but the second is required. Jiva Gosvami has said so.

“What has this to do with our daily service?” Service is rendered to the spiritual master. By your vow to your guru, your service is being rendered to Kṛṣṇa.

August [?]

Over Pacific—en route to Hawaii

I’m coming to Hawaii to see my disciples. It is necessary. A devotee is able to travel to Hawaii by Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement, whereas the nondevotees work hard and go once in a lifetime. I am not coming for a holiday, but to strengthen personal relationships with disciples. Preaching to disciples, “Be faithful, be attached”; to *bhaktas*, “Stay in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and realize it, progress, live, don’t leave”; and to older devotees, “Reform bad ways or preach by books, by *prasadam*, by money-raising, child-raising, by example—be ideal. We are drinking nectar and at the same time taking away the poison from humanity.”

“You have to withstand *maya* on your own, my disciples, but I have come to see you and strengthen you in your own conviction.” Inspire them to be true. Don’t cheat. Don’t take it cheaply.

These disciples have barely been serving the required time. That is weighing on me somewhat. Being a spiritual master is described as difficult business. As the book distributor preacher is praised for his willingness to endure all trouble for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the spiritual master is praised for taking disciples who may even cause him trouble. It is not as immediately felt, but with every disciple, it is a further burden. It is not simply counting numbers of followers and thinking, “Now I am greater and greater.” No. Is it a matter only of suffering reactions in the form of disease and bad dreams? No. I should become more grave to know that so many souls are dependent on me. I should feel it. I should be enough of a devotee that I also feel the happiness we speak of that is coming to them. I

should not merely feel happy that “Now more followers, more worship, more business.” No, but like the book distributor, more souls in contact with Kṛṣṇa. In my case they are not merely buying a book, but they are being linked with Kṛṣṇa. It is my happiness as a genuine member of the *sampradaya*—specifically the disciple of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami—to see more devotees coming forward even after his disappearance. This is my happiness. Glad I can fulfill the post or role of *via medium* to help them. I have to convey that, not simply that I should give them the heavy sense of obligation.

As for the haunting worry that they may leave, that is the chance we (both they and I) take. As in any endeavor, soldiers fall, but if one takes great care, he can protect himself from falling. He can avoid being a casualty.

Preach to them that I am happy they are being picked out of the material ocean. Now they have to begin it in earnest, but their getting out is guaranteed if they follow. I have to be there. I have to be convinced, I have to know Kṛṣṇa, I have to represent Prabhupada. He didn't care for himself; he was working for Kṛṣṇa and supremely confident of His grace.

Therefore, I must write here in all humility how small I am, and in a matter which has nothing to do with material joy or lamentation—I have to humbly act to bring them back to Godhead. It is a little soon for them, but we are doing it, and there is precedent. *The key note is mercy. It is mercy in any case.*

Even after one has been a devotee for a year, *it is not that he has earned so much. It is a safeguard for the guru, but it is still sheer mercy that he is delivered. For me, I am happy on behalf of Srila Prabhupada. It is not to my account.* They should be happy that such mercy is being given to them, although it is not a matter of their deserving it. They should be grateful. They are only young boys and girls, but they have been attracted, and at least they are showing sense control and following with faith and belief enough so that they are being recognized. Mostly it is indiscriminate mercy and they are receiving it. Be honorable, be worthy. Worthy to me and Kṛṣṇa. Be blessed and remain in disciplic succession. I can only pray for them and try to guide

them as Kṛṣṇa's trustee, "Please take this mercy and be good and worthy. It is the most wonderful thing."

So I wish I were worthy to hand it to them, to bless them with *his* mercy in such a way that they feel tangible blessing coming directly from me. That is happening, but it is not by a wizard show on my part or the manifestation of my own complete beatitude and obvious state of blissful blessedness. I pray to be true. *Profound blessing coming to fallen souls. Acting earnest roles on behalf of the Supreme.* All I can think of is merging into the consciousness of reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, chanting, falling to the ground and praying for mercy and realization—avoidance of all material desire which clouds my vision as guru—and taking courage to speak the truth as given mercifully to me by the most perfect spiritual master.

In this connection, the slow progress of the detailed movements of my master in his biography seem so inadequate and I feel I am not sufficiently glorifying him. *Caitanya-caritamṛta* glorifies Lord Caitanya at every step. I should attempt to glorify Prabhupada more. Telling of him and commenting on his events means to praise them and present them to the reader, not like a newspaper does, but like the pure devotee-poet does in *Caitanya-caritamṛta*.

A humble happiness. Humble partly because my happiness is not full and blissful enough for them to bathe in because of my fallen nature. Let me at least be true.

Yes, "new" guru, be true and humble; you have to be. Considering how to give more Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupada to my disciples. Pray to improve not in some performance, but in realization, in the *ability to give*. Be concerned so that I can *really be sincerely concerned*. Pray for energy. How can I have love and real concern for so many disciples? Srila Prabhupada had thousands! See them in each place and with no material aspiration, help them, guide them.

What about the fact that my preaching is directly to attach them to me personally? That is all right. But you have to be such a real *via medium* that you can do it without standing in the way or enjoying worship. The sin of accepting worship for yourself! The sin! The guru is not the enjoyer of facilities pro-

vided by his disciples, but a father, a transcendental professor who teaches them love of God. He may accept service on behalf of Kṛṣṇa as His ambassador, but he has to immediately surrender the service to Kṛṣṇa through his guru.

August 12

Ratha-yatra in Hawaii

9:00 A.M.—Heard a demon with a hammer attacked the cart, broke the stairs and part of the *vyasasana*. That will always happen. Hearing of the violence, I lost appetite for breakfast. Whatever comes is Kṛṣṇa's mercy—any pain to the body. When such things come, I pray to remember Kṛṣṇa and if possible acquit myself with good behavior.

Ratha-yatra a success. Streets lined with people.

August 14

Dallas

Staying eight days or so in Dallas. Trying to think deeper about the biography.

Next thing is to have a management meeting with my assistant, Sesa dasa. Where do we go from here? See ahead the periods in his life we intend to cover. See what materials we have to use in covering it. Decide what we have to do to get more materials. (Basically, even if we do not have much, we have to go ahead. Make clear signs of what we have to get to enrich it later). Ultimately, a period is not complete unless I have some personal memory, or a memory of another, or it is very much covered by letters or other authoritative knowledge of the period. We have to see what is coming ahead and how slim the coverage is or how full. By plotting ahead we may also estimate in how much time we will cover the periods.

We can also plan how we will gather the needed material. Then thinking ahead further, see if we personally have to do work in India. Plan when I will go to India before the festival and what I expect of interviews with ISKCON leaders there.

What will my approach be? Jayapataka, Bhavananda, Tamal Krishna, Giriraja, Tejyas, and numbers of others can tell us about Srila Prabhupada in India. It will be a matter of making tapes and inserting them in the proper time periods as before.

August 21

Biography. Before I leave for N.Y.

Is Srila Prabhupada fading as a person for me? Am I trying to become that person? Am I able to revive my "memory"? But what good is memory? Is this uneasiness grief and separation? Is it my own death also, as I too go on in time to the jumping off point known by materialists as death?

Headaches almost every day. *Brahmacari* meeting tonight. Tell them to avoid the misery of sex life. Aware I'm shallow in thinking of Prabhupada. Get ready to go to New York.

I thought I should be very strict and careful about my association with women. Soon I will have so many disciples and they will be drawn to follow and worship me by virtue of the transcendental system. I have to stress not only attaching them to me, but the stern side too.

Then there was the feeling that to date, I'm not positively sure I'm doing what Prabhupada does and wants, but I have to use my own intelligence as to what he would have me do as far as I am able.

More certainty is possible. *Do as he did*. Pray, *behave*, and the possibility of his intimacy (for biography blessing, assurance of importance of your work, ability to write about him intimately) and his empowering you are much more than is realized at present. You are not in any real trouble at present—except that you could be so much more! He could be with you. Your prayer for more intimacy is a sound one. Keep it up. Cry, call for him. Prabhupada can visit you in dreams. He is a real force. He is waiting, observing everything you do.

In being guru to my disciples, I am to them the direct servant of God. But within myself, I remain the servant of the servant of God and my guru. My disciples become servants of the servant.

Prabhupada remains *jagad-guru*. From his earliest appearance, he was involved with Radha-Kṛṣṇa worship.

Guru is one, but Prabhupada is always our guru and we are always his disciples. The plans he started as founder-acarya are to be carried out by us. Founder-acarya is not merely a pioneer who started something crude. He said we had to obey him by continuing to carry out *his* instructions. His disciples have to go on feeling the separation from Prabhupada at the same time they cheer on the new gurus. The new gurus don't suddenly become their Godbrothers' gurus as if the Godbrothers have lost substantial guidance in the particular instructions of Prabhupada and now need to hear everything from one of the new gurus!

August 23

En route to New York

I read in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* that one must take a guru; the guru engages one's senses in the service of Kṛṣṇa. My question is, "ISKCON, Prabhupada, and the senior devotees of this temple are the instructors. How am I also the instructor? How can I forcefully speak as if it's me since I haven't been here in five weeks? And even in my absence, how are they relating to me?" Those are the questions, at least right now. Of course, I am not totally absent, but I have to instill attachment because they have to relate to me to go through the *parampara* to Kṛṣṇa. How great is my realization that I am in fact receiving their service and prayers, and have taken their karma? I want them to report on how they have been worshipping me, but how have I been serving *them* as guru? Sometimes they even ask that—"Do you hear our prayers?"

Of course, by serving Prabhupada and going here and there and always preaching, writing the biography, *by my service* and my worship of my guru, Prabhupada, I am standing as their guru. I have to understand as much as possible and relate it to them, according to *sastra*.

SOLUTION:

(1) When you speak, cling to the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada and say what you have heard and read from him. No other apology or explanation is required.

(2) Being a dumb man, pray to Kṛṣṇa to let you speak in devotional service.

Prepare essays, sketches, lunges at the lotus feet of Prabhupada-remembrance. Create perpetual memorials, movies of him in words, write on all you can.

August 24

A disciple wrote of helping my mission. What is my mission? It is to assist my spiritual master in a small way in the great mission he has given us, a plan so great it goes on growing after his disappearance. It is the mission of ISKCON—to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this world. I feel immediate responsibility to maintain the spiritual life of those disciples who come to me and encourage them in going back to Godhead. Encourage them to take to the process of pure devotional service as I am doing. Then, as they are sound, they should engage in ISKCON under local direction. This is my program for now. I do not have a Mayapur project or big similar project that is mine. I am a writer and there is one small U.S. temple, Dallas, directly under me. My mission is to individually see to each of them and to hear from them as they serve in their ISKCON centers. My mission is to keep them personally devoted to their guru. Give them guru, *sastra*, and *sadhu*.

My own mission is writing the biography.

August 28

Different thoughts while chanting *japa*, August 28, 1978, New York. Why are there so many thoughts instead of hearing the holy names? "Unfortunately, I have no attraction for Them."

O wonderful honest one, who attracts me even more than Sri Kṛṣṇa and my spiritual master, who is aloof even to the

charms of women, forbidden “wonderful” one, I seek to kill you, but what will be left after your demise? I speak of you, false ego, self-mind, not yet the pure servant self, crawling on literary pages, waiting for the rewards. . . . False ego, are you still here? The illusions become more subtle. No one can understand. Whatever I speak must be simple and straightforward.

August 30

On a commuter plane, props, headache, en route to Gita-nagari from New York’s Radha-Govinda Mandir.

Now I’m supposed to stay two weeks at Gita-nagari and get deeply into the biography of Srila Prabhupada. Pray to Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupada to please help me. Radha-Damodara, please help me. My heart is full of envy and similar dirt. Please allow me to remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Disciples depend on me. I depend on thee, Gurudeva, and to write of your glorious life is my great ambition, a task bestowed upon me by your mercy.

August 31

Gita-nagari

Woke at 1:30 A.M. and dictated twenty-five points on the Dictaphone. Try to get up at 12:30 and use your life for Kṛṣṇa. Now it’s late morning and I’m making comical attempts to work. Flies in my room. I went outside and thousands of gnats attacked me. Now back in my room. People talking sounds through the thin walls from the room next door. Now with electric fan on, flies are gone. As of this moment it is also quiet next door. But then my mind . . . go ahead and do it! Commit yourself to writing!

Dictating. But when I have no material, is there some other way to write about him? I had a feeling that in order to actually “commit myself to writing,” I should be in a state of

consciousness of immediately feeling the presence of His Divine Grace. Today at least, I was doing that. Looking at his picture and writing while in the mood of feeling his presence. I don't like to be out of that mood, especially in writing.

September 3, 1978

GBC management suddenly enters here, breaking up work. It's okay. It shows me that this place is no special area where I can work like nowhere else.

I would not like to stay here as a permanent base. I can work anywhere, provided Sesa is with me and we have material. At least in a tiny way, I would like to follow Srila Prabhupada's example of writing while traveling for preaching purposes.

I very much like my commitment individually to my disciples. It is a full-time life commitment to see them wherever I go. (1) New York, (2) Boston, (3) Philadelphia, (4) Baltimore, (5) Washington, (6) Dallas, (7) Vancouver, (8) Hawaii, (9) Gita-nagari. Travel and write—who needs permanent headquarters?

September 5

Feeling good, feeling energy. I should not be afraid of death. This body will be cut down and sure, my time is diminishing, but let me work vigorously in eternal devotional service in this body until that time. Enthusiasm is not dampened by my oncoming demise. Prabhupada always worked on his spiritual master's behalf. He wanted to work day and night. Me too—not for my fame, but to serve. But the service—preaching to my disciples—makes me so happy, and as I am happy and convinced, so they will also be happier and more convinced. As I am pleased, so I can be concerned more to enliven them, and can do so by my words and actions. Hare Krsna, please engage me in Your service.

September 9

New York

Came to N.Y.C. I spoke on arrival that even the spiritual master, although independent, acts in cooperation with his older Godbrothers who sometimes impress on him the will of his spiritual master. Thus it is required that we all act together as instruments of the previous *acaryas* to push on ISKCON. "Your love for me will be proven by how much you cooperate amongst yourselves after I am gone."

Radhastami

I was given first initiation on Radhastami 1966. I was living in an apartment around the corner from 26 Second Avenue. Srila Prabhupada accepted me only a few weeks after I met him. I wasn't even shaved up, but he saved me—and today I beg to remain at the lotus feet of his service.

5:30 P.M.

I have to pray and beg for confidence to speak to my disciples. Sometimes I think, "Why do they insist I perform a certain way?" Why not? A guru is supposed to speak strongly all day and night, what to speak of for a few hours, but the point is, he is so immersed in *kṛṣṇa-katha* that he is not "performance-oriented" or feeling at all that he has to dance like a bear for his disciples or anyone. He preaches and they listen. If they cannot pay attention, that is their fault. There is no reason for your lack of confidence. You can speak—you only need to open your mouth. You can remember the words of your guru. The other day, disciples came and I spoke how Kṛṣṇa consciousness was the only happiness—marriage is needed perhaps, but it cannot make you happy. Only Kṛṣṇa can make you happy. I spoke easily for an hour. Do not be afraid of that.

I'm determined to be a real guru, not make an image, false show, fake claims, garner worship—but take serious care of my disciples. Serious preaching with real compassion that they

can “take or leave.” Man or woman, black or white, I’m going to serve and preach as guru to the best of my knowledge, as Prabhupada would have me do.

September 17

It is the anniversary of Prabhupada’s appearance in the West, in Boston, September 17, 1965. I’m in Boston today. Gave class reading his poem written at the pier and commented on it. Ecstatic, thick feelings of Prabhupada’s mission.

I’m not a bold preacher, I’m a writer, and my mission is to construct his biography, to glorify him, my spiritual master.

September 20

Gita-nagari

Work at Gita-nagari really goes forward. In one day I dictated 100 points on the machine—that’s an acceptable three days’ work. My assistants are also working nicely.

September 29

If I give up all bravado and show—what devotion will there be left? Guru must show devotion. If I show what is there, I fear there is almost nothing. But perhaps it is better to *show that almost nothing*.

Anyway, speak; speak what you have heard. It is standard.

Preach, preach—means *talk—about Kṛṣṇa*. Urge others to hear topics of Kṛṣṇa from the right person. If they do so, they can be freed from the repetition of birth and death.

Talks of Kṛṣṇa (in *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*) go on between the spiritual master and the disciple. The spiritual master and disciple are satisfied in Kṛṣṇa topics only, knowing He is everything.

Hearing frees us from the bondage to material activities.

Two classes of men are not attracted—butcher and suicide.

Medicine to stop birth and death. People generally can't give up sinful acts and desires, but *krsna-katha* is potent medicine. Dhruva gave them up. "... young boys and girls in the Krsna consciousness movement have given up their long practice of bad habits ... Because Krsna consciousness is so potent that it gives them full satisfaction, they are no longer interested in material sense gratification." (*Bhag.* 10.1.4, purport)

Fourth wave of interruptions—GBC meeting scheduled Friday–Saturday in Detroit. Maybe after that I can work on the biography.

October 3, 1978

En route to Dallas

Hope to work on Srila Prabhupada's biography. There is work to do. Prabhupada is waiting. Devotees are waiting. The death of my body is not so long ahead either. While there is life, we have to do some good to others. This is what is behind the *sankirtana*.

October 4

Dallas

Anything that comes up draws me away from meditation on the biography. The book is not simply pasting things together; it is concentrated thinking. *No one else can do the final thinking. Let me do it, please, please, Srila Prabhupada, please, Krsna.* Let the workaday effort flow, and let us combined workers put out the material. *Let me also enter this meditation on the ocean of the activities of my spiritual master.* Oh, how much I am trying to think of him (not much), but I am now desiring and praying like that. *Please let me enter the ocean of Srila Prabhupada.* Please let me be alive and live in here. *I am already dealing with the material, but let it not be like file drawers and papers. Let it be living.* It happens by prayer to Radha-Kalacandji.

Naturally, I am suffering from the same separation as other disciples, even though I am compiling the book of remembrance

of him. Feel I haven't caught up his message, nor can I vividly hold his remembrance in me.

Employing a pushing and inching technique in the rewriting of the biography. The life I lead has to be centered around this. I want it; I have to give up the fire of traveling and preaching, but I think the end results are better for everyone if I stay at this. (A kind of transcendental *sreyas* and *preyas*, Stambha said.)

Rewriting, I take what we have and try to see into it and ask the questions: what did this episode in Srila Prabhupada's life really mean? What was shown here? Where does something giving the meaning have to be inserted? How to insert it? How to say it? How to express what we don't have direct records of? If he didn't say it, how to give it to the reader? How to know what it means?

"Little drops of water wear away the stone, in this way I have written all these books," said Srila Prabhupada. By that method I also progress on the book, praying for the peace and well-being to complete such literary endeavors.

The ache of separation from Prabhupada is there. I want to write that. That is needed. But so much research is needed! I cannot write the final version or even the second draft until ample facts are in, and I have as many details as possible.

Now I am trying to rewrite the section on Butler. I have some feeling about the ride there . . . he said it showed him that *America was a passionate country*. They were passionate. Passionate means endeavoring hard, working hard, at tremendous breakneck pace, in order to obtain sense gratification, *especially sex life*. He saw it was all passionate. The signs on the highway we know very well are for sinful activities, at least from the standard of Vrndavana. *Even if you go to India for six months and return, it is a shock to see so much emphasis on sex*. Of course, all this is coming to India too, but there is still no comparison. Vrndavana is especially free of that. There is no material build-up, and there is no advertising full of sex life. On the road to Delhi there are almost no signs, just land, streams, temples, farmers, etc. People pass and say, "*Jaya*

Radhe." You might see a woman with part of her body bare, but she is not loitering in the street, she is working hard carrying something and her body is hard from labor. Not the same. Besides that, *he is not simply an Indian citizen*. He is coming from Vrndavana. He is immersed in this spiritual world, in Krsna. What is going on in America is called *ugra-karma*, bitter work, hard work in the name of enjoyment, all rushing one way and the other way. It is a shock. It's called culture shock. *The very things advertised on the signs are what he is coming to preach against*. He is all alone. *He's depending on Krsna all alone*.

Let us remember him. He brought Krsna. Krsna is not a simple commodity. He came to the U.S. bearing Krsna. He had to deliver Krsna on the order of his Guru Maharaja. Krsna is also presented according to a systemized philosophy enunciated by the Gosvamis of Vrndavana. Knowledge of Krsna is not an easy thing to attain.

Talks with Hridayananda dasa Goswami were wonderful. He helped me solve the very thing I was struggling with (how to deal with disciples in temples where I am not GBC). Don't think in a stereotyped way that I have to have a certain affectionate, intimate, all in all relationship. It is a fact that ISKCON shares the responsibility for them. The process itself works by itself, and they are certainly linked to me by the initiation process, even if they are doing well on their own without being obviously dependent on me every day at every step.

He said that even more important than being guru is to strive to be internally pure and to think of Krsna, to chant Hare Krsna, and to write. Then, we may come to external consciousness and deal with the disciple. As a father, if the disciple is doing well, that is encouraging; not that he has to be reduced to dependence all the time. He writes them when they write him. This is very helpful.

Chant and meditate on Krsna. Not so much management, don't make material demands on disciples, but be a kind father asking them to follow the four rules and to chant sixteen rounds.

Admit that there are other devotees in our disciples' lives. There must be love, but it cannot be a jealous type of love. There are millions of pure devotees in the spiritual world. Disciples want faith in Kṛṣṇa as God. We have to give them this. We can't be the one to push them too hard. (These notes require a special reading or they may be misunderstood.)

Again and again I think, "So many devotees are depending on me. Please, Lord, protect me from falldown. As I pray they be saved, so let me be saved for the benefit of my disciples." Simply, blindly dependent in faith on Srila Prabhupada's will.

Preaching means I have to read the books and realize Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but the biography is my special work. Because of it, I have to forego other preaching. I am prepared to do it. In the future I can go out more and preach and try to recruit new members. But I feel everyone is waiting for this biography. It is so momentous and I am so fortunate to have the assignment; I cannot really imagine it. I have not understood how important it is. I do think, however, that it is the most important reason for me not to die for the next few years. Otherwise, my life is not that important for the world. I think like that. I must not die. Kṛṣṇa must preserve me, if He likes, so that this big task can be completed nicely and delivered to the world. I see everything in relation to the biography. The holocaust of nuclear world war should hold off until the book is written and delivered. Why? Prabhupada has to be glorified. I have been asked to do it. That is sufficient reason. He is my guru, he is gone from our presence, and I have to write about him. That is the reason, the purpose, my reason to be.

October 20

I wanted to write on and on in constant inspiration about my beloved Srila Prabhupada. I don't seem to be able to do that now. I am praying for that. I want to do that even at the neglect of other things. I am praying for that and waiting. I have to work at it too. Pray and endeavor.

October 23

In Pittsburgh waiting for plane to Vancouver via Chicago

We don't want to take this position of worship. It is conferred duty.

Closing out this diary. This book's end is the next book's beginning, but all such pen-scratching will end. Let me finish this diary, let me finish this life. Where is my complete success? Where am I? Where is my original Krsna consciousness?

October [?]

Vancouver

Sometimes I think, "Did I really know Srila Prabhupada? Did I really meet him? Did it really happen?" The world is so ordinary and relative. Let me not think with time, "Yes, I met Prabhupada, but the world is still ordinary." No, his extraordinary presence must instill in me pure love of God and make me work my whole life in his service, adoring him. Let me glorify him for years now in this biography.

His Divine Grace Abhay Caranaravinda
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
is so kind

he made me from earth and fire
and water and air
into a spiritual devotee.

He gave me the holy name, Krsna,
he put a *brahmana* thread across my body,
then a *sannyasi* he made—
from householder to *danda*-holder.

Now Devakulya, my disciple, can write,
"Srila Prabhupada is so kind that
he allows us to worship your lotus feet."
Unless he is here

I am not
and you need guru,
so I am Krsna-sent, by Prabhupada.
All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

“The Heat is On”

October 30, 1978–January 3, 1979

The temptation seems to only increase as this diary progresses to make remarks with hindsight, but it seems to me too easy to do that—to say that it was an obvious mistake to try to first collect millions of dollars before we could start simple village life at Gitā-nāgarī, or to say it was a mistake to think of myself as the “father of two groups of devotees—on the farm and in Baltimore—who need my support.” The fact is, we have learned our lessons with time and some devotees feel bitter indeed about the cost of learning those lessons. At least, to respect the integrity of the diary as history, we have to read it as it is. That sympathetic reading will include a kind of compassion for the somewhat blind way in which we always work in the immediate moment. If it reads like a series of mistakes, then we can also use it as evidence to remind us of what happened.

It is said that wise men learn by other men’s mistakes, fools by their own. We should understand that our “wisdom” is due to experience. We should certainly be humble when looking back, and willing to feel some of the weight of our mistakes. Sometimes we are moved by the fact that we might even have been able to see through a mistake as it was happening, but because of lack of courage or conviction, we did not act on that flash of awareness.

We also have to be kind to ourselves, knowing that until we are liberated, we are bound to make mistakes even though we are trying to follow the perfect instructions of the spiritual master. The answer to being “mistake-proof” is not to say, “Well, Prabhu, you just have to follow what Prabhupada says.”

Everyone is trying to do that, but we still make mistakes—it is our tendency.

When we read the diary and see that we made mistakes, it does not teach us that we now know all the answers and will never err again. Rather, we can probably assume that we are still making mistakes and should therefore be humble in the present and try to follow Prabhupāda to our best abilities. We should be willing to hear openly from others who have opinions different from our own in order that we may at least improve in the way we make mistakes. In this way, we may prevent mistakes being made so fraudulently, on such a grandiose scale, and in such a puffed-up way. And it may also be that by becoming more humble and open-minded, we will learn how to catch ourselves in mistakes and rectify sooner than we have in the past.

* * *

October 30, 1978

My new engagement (as yet not completely confirmed, but we are going ahead as if it is): set up farm finances by starting a collecting party, then go to the farm, live there, write there, and try to understand what it means to make Gita-nagari—a preaching, working, spiritual community. I plan to ease in and with time, get the vision of it and effect changes as they come. Plan to combine this with some outside preaching. If I do so much, however, how can I write?

On the road to Gita-nagari. Kṛṣṇa's farm. Showing the world how to live without hellish urban build-up. Actually living in practice how to take your quota from the cow and the land. *Varnasrama*. Prabhupada's "next phase," which he never taught us fully. Can I stay here and develop spiritual life? Writing, writing the biography.

We were met by a wonderful reception. Devotees across the road, chanting. Men, women, children. When our car pulled up, standing ahead was Paramananda with two oxen hitched

to a sled and a cushion on the sled. I got on and we proceeded. Then Isvara-pati dasa let the cows out of the pasture and they went ahead in procession. We went to the house. I spoke and told them that the Radha-Kalacandji Deities were with me. Now this is our GBC zone. I have everything to learn. Going around each day with Paramananda to see the farm, hearing how the cows live, how corn grows, how the devotees have planned village life. Heard a tape by Prabhupada: "Kṛṣṇa lived like this . . . follow Him and go back to Godhead, living simply in the village, protecting the cow."

I thought, "I must stand and be steady for all their sakes. I am no free agent." Different devotees are urging top ISKCON leaders to get out from behind their desks and to preach in the field. I could do it, but it seems I've just been put even more as father of two groups of devotees—on the farm and in Baltimore—who need my support. I want *them* to live together and do *sankirtana* and support Gita-nagari. That means I have to be on hand to directly care for them and give them the vision of support for Gita-nagari. I cannot be mostly off somewhere preaching. Stambha dasa will go to Penn State University to do that.

Biography? I worked today. A few solid hours in the morning, mostly rewriting. Me and Sesa, slow but sure.

November 6, 1978

Farm thoughts—making some progress on the biography. Writing about Srila Prabhupada is a lifetime project. I want steady ecstatic engagement in it, and a steadily finished product.

Gita-nagari is a big project. So far I haven't thought much about it. Now it is my project and I am beginning to think about it. What is the purpose of living on that land? As yet I am reciting the answers without realization. "The Master Plan" is there, multi-million dollar, very high-class. Maybe village life should be different. Why should someone have to live in a \$20,000 house? We don't want weak devotees or loafers and ne'er-do-wells on the farm, but can't a family man come

and build a simpler house? Mandalesvara is a nice devotee to live here and talk with about this.

How shall I progress in understanding my own mind on this? (I'm so easily influenced, as usual. There are different concepts of village life.) Study Srila Prabhupada's statements concerning this. Live there, attend board meetings, hear and give your opinion. Assume guruship there and deal with the project as it evolves.

Question: Why do we have to struggle for huge amounts of money (millionaires' donations) before we can grow? Bring up some questions like this at the board meeting.

November 10

Today I spoke on the phone to Adi-kesava Maharaja in New York (at least twice); Rocana in Seattle twice; Bhagavan Maharaja from France; Hamsaduta Maharaja from Germany; twice to Kirtanananda Maharaja in New Vrindaban; I've been trying to reach Ramesvara Maharaja in Denver, and Tamal Krishna Goswami in Dallas. Satyadeva called from Hawaii. It's 4 P.M. and I'm still going strong.

Four Tylenols today, four yesterday.

Being spiritual master means taking a headache for Krsna. Just arrived at Gita-nagari, but I have to leave in two days. No time to settle in and write on the book. Early morning writing of impressions—Sesa encourages me to go on. I was about to stop. I was getting intense feelings. I think I'll try again. It gives my day meaning, especially if the balance of the day is all management.

My time is running out and I have to write down my impressions about Prabhupada. Anyone could do it, but I was asked to do it. I am not a great poet, but I was asked to do it. Before I die, put as much down as possible. Yes, it is the biography, but it is not only an official work, it is living his memory. I have to do it and let those in the future, who will not be able to see him, read it. This is real tribute, is it not? Leaving him in strong word impressions which they can read

far into the future. Dedicate yourself to one person. That is my job. I am his disciple. My disciples can also see their guru praising the greatest.

November [?]

En route to Detroit GBC meeting

Two days (three counting this one) at most. Then Saturday in Baltimore; Sunday, leave for Puerto Rico. Six days there, maybe peaceful for writing. Then New York, Boston, return to Gita-nagari, Baltimore. Praying to the Deities to let me write. GBC meeting is a demand—some men are problematic, doing things their own way, *trying to take over*.

And the biography tells us, Prabhupada then did this and then he did that. The significance of this was “X,” as previously seen in case “B,” and thus he went on and thus we follow him. In addition, these persons were witnesses. Just see how it is. Prabhupada also wrote letters.

O Srila Prabhupada, it was like *this* because we *remember* you. Not only did you do these things we report in the biography, but we feel them. I desire to recount your life. You are guiding each of us—even if we saw only a little of you, each of your disciples. We are recalling you to never forget that you guided us and conducted this movement. It is simple how you wanted us to push on, but complicated to work together without fighting and breaking up. That faction-fighting, envy, resentment, competitive strife among ourselves is far, far more dangerous than any deprogramming. It can dismantle the whole institution.

November 17

Detroit

Just made my prayer to the Deity of Radha-Kunjavihari: “My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, if You desire, please let me write Srila Prabhupada’s biography. Without Your mercy it is not possible.”

Strain of meeting. Management. I have thoughts too private to write down here. Inferiority complex, inferiority reality, but a devotee is supposed to feel inferior. I resent, however, their "might is right" conduct. Shouting back and forth, but responsibly managing the world movement. We have to cooperate. "Tremendous pressure to become a pure devotee, to spread Krsna consciousness, to compete." Sometimes it is materially tinged. Unless you speak loudly and shout, you will not be heard. Diplomacy.

Prabhupada, your form on the altar, your voice on the tape, me praying before the iron gates. We can't have subjective, "Vyasa-puja"-type poetry in the authorized biography. It's got to be conservative, deep, and not "created or exaggerated."

Sesa said the story of where he was and what he said and did as told by the witnesses is a mere background, not revealing what phase of his life Prabhupada was in (in contrast to other times). How will it all get done?

Let me enter the ocean of his activities. He did this, he did that; he was this, he was that. Prabhupada *ki jaya*. Can't start from nothing. Put down some activity of his personal life or some achievement of his, and then you can expand or comment or generalize.

November [?]

Puerto Rico

Everyone wants to know how to chant *japa* with devotion and keep the mind under control. I only know clear, loud chanting, mind fixed on the sound of the name. Keeping the mind controlled, staying awake early in the morning, these are all very difficult to perfect. Strict behavior counts toward offenseless chanting.

The strategy for the biography hasn't really been worked out yet. More feelings of shortcoming now. Had more striding confidence in the beginning. Keep going.

Thoughts for upcoming birthday—my birthday was never celebrated like this. But it is the heaviest of my birthdays. I am bound to 115 souls as their spiritual master for bringing them back to Godhead. I can't go anywhere irresponsibly. This is forcing me back to Godhead and you with me.

November 28

Boston

I am in the snow of Boston and newspapers are mentioning us in the same context as "the cults," one cult having killed 900 members—too much like my proposed BTG column of slaughtering chickens and comparing it to the condemned state of city life. Am I too affected now about what people may say lest my statements appear like that of a strange cultist? If that is so, it is not good. We have to preach the truth and not be concerned about pleasing people. We are not hurting anyone. We cannot fairly be compared to any killers or suicide fanatics.

November 30

Just reflecting how there used to be (a few months ago) a more enthusiastic spirit of being immersed in Prabhupada's pastimes. It was "a good time," knocking out the first draft of the biography at a rapid pace. I had little idea how rough the first draft was. I think I may have considered it more or less final. Now I regard it as simply the rawest material. I used to read regularly from the manuscript to guests at night. It was better, they said, than anything—even *Caitanya-caritamṛta* or *Srimad-Bhagavatam*! I don't read anymore because I'm aware it's all rough draft.

Does this mean my work is dropping off? Not necessarily. Now the monthly installment is coming out and I am much improving things, but that great production of material (300 pages and it hasn't been much added to in months) is not going on. I think some kind of free-writing accumulation is needed; it helps me to keep in the fire of inspiration-in-his-memory.

I have to praise him somehow or other.

Good idea.

Nectar references:

"Although I am the lowest . . . the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu), who has given me the chance to write these books." (Cc. *Madhya* 19.134)

"As soon as one is favored by the mercy of the spiritual master and the Lord, one is immediately given all the power necessary to write books and propagate the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement without being hampered by material considerations." (Cc. *Madhya* 19.135, purport)

Reading this, I pray to be empowered to write about Srila Prabhupada. Only if I truly worship him and desire only to glorify him will the Lord allow me to do it. No self-motivation.

At least let me begin, I think, some free-writing on him (or rewriting).

Speaking as guru you might think (it being such an overwhelming responsibility and me being so new, and so immediately after Srila Prabhupada) I would spend all day meditating on how to do it. But no, I just go about my duties as always. Work, chant, etc. But how to improve as soon as possible? What else can I do besides this? Besides this, I can only weep. So I push on, basically obedient and curbing my rascal mind. When I speak, that is special—whatever imperfections are there in behavior and knowledge, I fall (in my mind) at the feet of his teachings and beg to be able to speak with force (both meanings); forced success, forced *parampara*, forced purity; purity is the force.

December [?], 1978

Plane from Boston to Harrisburg—Gita-nagari

Saw Srila Prabhupada's picture in the second volume of 7th Canto. That worried, compassionate look, he who saved us. Soft look, one of many moods. Another showed the corners of his mouth turned down, roof of Bombay, bare arms. You must try to evoke him, try again and again. What do you lose? At the least you remember him. At most you may strike major gold for the biography. In the meantime, rewriting goes on, Sesa's

forward-gathering goes on, research in nondevotee biographies goes on (limited); and living on this land, the place where the *Gita* is sung. I have still to learn what *Gita-nagari* is.

December 4

Gita-nagari

Ravindra sent me suggestive material on "Epiphanies" of Joyce, which may lead to epiphanies of Prabhupada. Things he did that revealed so much (that I cannot reveal by talking about him). I thought to collect them, with hopes of later using them in the biography. I can work at them *I cannot simply observe happenings. I have to remember.* Catch memories, observe the past, but where is it to observe? In my head, heart, books, others, pictures? What is memory? Where is that past? That past is also as real as the present, it had (or has) its own streets, faces, facts, only they exist in a different time. Still, they are observable to the sensitive. (Seems I need ideal conditions to help me remember him).

Observe the past by first recalling it. Iconography—not aimlessly stabbing here or there, but attempt to capture images of him and to describe his paraphernalia. The memories will come, since I do not think you are yet a dead man.

It has to do with my commitment to him. Imagine I'm describing his voice. It is the voice of an old man, very scholarly, old-fashioned, almost always speaking the philosophy in a lecture. The sound portion of him, the most important. He pronounces words, I guess, in British (or almost Irish? Welsh?) accents. It is unmistakable and not like any British-trained Indian. It is different. I keep thinking of the damned cultists and bogus yogis and how we must say things that only apply to him—not my description of cooking *capatis*, which could apply to millions of Indian housewives. (At one point, won't I have to write in India, live there I mean, to be with the people and places most like him? Yet it is difficult to write there.)

December 5

6:30 P.M.—Just took a walk down the road. Black night, moon like this ☾, stars like this ☆☆, saw the farm houses from a distance. Walking into myself by walking down the road alone, crisp-cold, like old times. Peaceful farm, me also peaceful, feeling my place inside as I walked, devotee of Kṛṣṇa; doubts, desires falling away. I think my main thoughts were about the biography. A phone call is just coming in now breaking this reverie. I really need to be alone and think slowly, day by day, toward the biography. *It will only happen by Kṛṣṇa's grace and Prabhupada's grace.*

(The phone call was from Hridayananda Goswami. We agreed to spend a week together in India prior to the GBC meeting in March.)

Guru—but I truly feel simply duty-bound and—is it ordinary? I am small, certainly empowered only in the simple direct sense that I am Prabhupada's vassal. Guru is another vassal duty I owe to him. It is not different than the first duties I did for him, going to Boston, etc.

Now I have to write about him, not only an affectionate close portrait, but an objective capturing of him. Paraphernalia and iconography.

Kṛṣṇa can make it happen. He is unlimited. So many reasons why I have poor memory, inability, but He can make it happen. He can manifest Prabhupada in me. Not by James Joycean technique, but Supersoul and Prabhupada. I pray it will happen.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada, who lives eternally.

December 7

1:45 A.M.

I've risen to the alarm clock and become absorbed describing a little his gestures and words. So many things may threaten us—bad propaganda, sometimes I think of the destruction of our manuscripts and everything—but we have no alternative but to try to write in glorification. The result is up to Kṛṣṇa.

I have been reading Hari Sauri's diary. It is wonderful. He served so nicely, as late at night he would massage His Divine Grace. I was a fallen servant. Maybe that is why now I cannot write the biography. What is my qualification to do so? What good is it that I have read James Joyce and followed that crowd? I don't even know English. What's worse, I will not be able to capture this great personality, but I am proud and will not relinquish it to anyone else. Maybe I will just work hard and pray and the Lord will make something come out. I have to be humble in approaching others and ask them to help with the biography. Try to put down whatever you can and work hard.

Sometimes we are amused at his activities. Of course, we love and respect him; the amusement is our affection. Even our sadness—at least we can remember him. I am asking for authentic memory.

Reading the sustained accounts in Hari Sauri's diary I thought, "What is the importance of my little memories after the fact? Certainly those diaries are important, but they shall also be only the basis I will build on, as Krsnadasa Kaviraja did on the diaries of Murari Gupta and Svarupa Damodara." What that building is will be revealed by Krsna's mercy. Go on recording, compiling, trying, failing, collecting.

December 11

Last night, HK Maharaja was making four and a half sides of a taped interview (45 minutes each) on Srila Prabhupada. Very interesting, but in no way does it constitute a biography. I think, "How will I be able to write his life, especially in places for which I have little feeling?" I also felt my own relationship lacking with Srila Prabhupada for reasons of my own lack of surrender. Threats according to astrologers of great material disasters in 1979 or '80, '81, '84—war. Gives you the feeling your work will be threatened or blown up along with everything else. Therefore, as soon as possible, I have to complete this—but it will take years, maybe even until 1984, until it is all done. The news media are writing slanderous stories about the Hare Krsna movement and at this moment, a mouse in the wall is

making loud sounds, scratching and gnawing. That alone makes concentration impossible as the condemned creature tries to save himself (or is he trying to enjoy?) by carving through a barrier of wood with his fangs and claws: a terrible existence for a spirit soul. What is my position? I think I'll have to pace the floor and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa on my beads.

December 17

Just had a talk at Gita-nagari with Ravindra-svarupa. He encouraged me to "sweat it out" with the biography. It will jell at one point, he said. Liked my notes on Prabhupada's traits, clothing, gestures, etc. I have to work at that again. He agreed it was difficult and I would have to decide myself what form the book will take (the episodes already published are satisfying, but I can't continue that way as his life gets more complicated). We talked of the material he gave me on Joyce's "Epiphanies." He said the best thing about Joyce was his descriptive power in writing.

Whether to boil down my witness' reports into narrative, or to give readers the source-person talking? Or both, and the author darting in and out commenting objectively on Srila Prabhupada?

Now I'm alone with it. Radhavallabha coming to organize what interviews have to be done. Show him what you have in the files.

December 21

I am now participating directly in the research and don't have time immediately to sketch and try to catch Prabhupada separate from the collecting of the facts about him. When did he go to Vrndavana? What was his daily life like there? What are his unpublished writings? What do they say? Who is there left to interview? Who will do it? Who will type the tapes? Who will read the transcriptions? What questions do I need answered in India? I have to read what we have. Who can decipher the India material?

What form will put it all together? How will the chapters be arranged? Will I attempt to tell what happened in each place? Where are more workers to help me? What can I do until the research is done?

Suddenly I am facing such questions and working with the material we have gathered, trying to become familiar with what we have and what we don't have. Let me gather everything. Then I can form it and put it down. Perhaps I have to realize more that I am simply a menial worker, a kind of journalist, a compiler, not a poet, although there is time for that also. But don't be extravagant about His Divine Grace. Let him speak for himself. That is the great new possibility of the commitment to added research we are undertaking: that we can give the reader more of him in his own words.

How to handle the immense amount of material so it is summarized and some used and some not used? What are the criteria? What is the dramatic story? What is the basis of exclusion and omission?

Also, I thought partly of my desire to write some new evocation as my yearning to feel him again as he was, to live my loving relationship again with Srila Prabhupada and not the *vani*, but all—his whole presence. Tonight I was thinking, "Actually, you have to acknowledge that he is gone in that form and your words will not bring him back. Your words will bring back a kind of evocative symbol of him in remembrance, and that can be done by the facts and his words."

You have to face the fact that you cannot bring him back. Your words are not so powerful as to perform such a miracle, but what you can do in remembrance—according to our *vipra-lambha* philosophy—is as good. Yes, he can come back in an authorized biography filled with facts and remembrances by devotees of the different wonderful things he did. My job is to put them all together, weld them, reject things, fix things. There is time and place for expressing and explaining and adding from the material world as well.

It will not be the same Prabhupada who was here, but the facts will be a great contribution to our movement, as people will be able to know him.

December 22

That old question is still there in regard to my disciples in New York. What is special about *diksa-guru*? He takes their karma? What realization do I have of that? Well, I may know or not know, but it is happening through me. *It is simply a happy occurrence when it (the special loving relationship) is there.* With those for whom it is so, it is happy for me and happy for them; the more it is so, the more happy and inspiring it is. There is no exaggerating the importance. Why not make that relationship with me, since I am your guru; to neglect it is not good. This is expressing things a little raw, "Why don't you love me?" But if I can refine it, the message is valid. I want to say this to them: when it really occurs, it is good. It is not a matter of just greeting or gift-giving, but confidence in going to, reverence in listening to. Give the example how I am listening with new attention to Srila Prabhupada and studying his words and life. So they have to study the words of their own guru. I want to speak frankly about this. What is the harm?

Srila Prabhupada wrote that there are many practical obstacles on the road to devotional service, and when I first read that I thought it was very profound.

Be honest and present this, but be sure you stay in the *parampara*. The more we have the real relationship, the better. I want you to take advantage of being able to hear from many gurus, that is the privilege of serving in this great center. It is an austerity and this is one of the rewards. So many exalted persons come through.

December 23

Baltimore

Last days of Christmas book distribution marathon. At my word, devotees have doubled their usual.

I should express thanks. The guru's sincerity is required as much as the disciple's sincerity.

I am speaking to devotees, *sisyas*, who have been performing great austerities on *sankirtana* book distribution, going out in adverse conditions and getting donations.

I am the *via medium*. Within my heart I have genuine appreciation. They are doing this for my benefit. I am *via medium*.

This means the offering made to me I have to immediately, lovingly, give to my guru and Krsna. I have to be expert to accept it. (Of course, the guru not only accepts the offering, but he has to direct it.)

December 25

In flight—D.C. to N.Y.

I have come to New York to collect the money they have collected, at least those who are my disciples were to have collected for me. I would like to have it, please. I offer your offering to Krsna—I am *via medium*, a peon, a mailman, and I get the return information from Krsna. I am coming to tell you that Krsna is pleased. (That we see from *sastra*.)

I have no capacity or confidence to tell them. They are all *mahatmas* and I am *duratma*, but they don't want to hear that. Old *duratma*, appointed out of Prabhupada's mercy only.

Krsna, allow me to speak something. *Via medium*. How I know Krsna is pleased.

Joke with them to turn over the money. (This will hit the point I want.)

I was meditating on the plane why it was important for me to attend the ceremony. It is not to thank you myself for the service, as if I have a large enough heart. I am not Krsna that I am everywhere and I know your hearts. No, not even of disciples?

Am I just the driver of the Brinks truck? More than this. I will deposit your "money" with Krsna.

December 26

Strain. Strain to see disciples and out of extemporaneous condition, speak instruction.

All devotees feel unworthy. I feel more unworthy still since I am their guru and so much more is expected of me.

Anyway, be true to what you know. Tell them what you know. (I fear they are more advanced than I, as they perform austerities so bravely and are very concerned to chant their rounds. I am supposed to be immensely more advanced. I feel they are.)

I am also realizing that as spiritual master, I am alone. Who can I turn to? If I confide in someone I later feel, "No, it is not possible to get total relief from anyone but Prabhupada." Of course, that doesn't mean someone can't help you partially on something that disturbs you.

The voice inside crying my inadequacy! I can chant my rounds and behave and preach by writing my book and traveling (or I'll do some other service, whatever I have to), but can I face difficulties? Then I think *this* is a regular difficulty. Bearing the subtle but heavy weight of having more than a hundred disciples.

They want to see me and I feel the pressure of performance. They should feel instant effect. But I am poor. So *here*, just as they are forced to be humble and do their duty, I too show them that I am strictly yoked to following my spiritual master. They find me yoked and I tell them, "You stay yoked." They must find me *brahma-bhuta prasannatma*. I am sometimes feeling anxiety to speak jolly and scholarly to them. There is a performance demand. If I follow it, I will be close to Srila Prabhupada. If they follow, they will be close to me. What can I do for them? Am I able?

Now tonight, the whole group. Tell them about Prabhupada's *mercy*—his *mercy* is all that I am made of. Does mercy mean just being kind? Sometimes kind, sometimes hard. The devotee is always serving his spiritual master and we must not demand that the mercy take a shape we want it to. Of course,

Srila Prabhupada was the *guru-tattva*, the guru principle, but for us he is a guru as person we knew who filled the bill gloriously.

Otherwise, there are examples, but they are historical or theoretical.

I just read that worship of the spiritual master is essential to Vaisnavism and is the difference between personalism and impersonalism, but how can I recommend them to worship me? (I always say worship by following my instructions.) I am their guru, I have to be their all in all. As for my "humble" feelings, it doesn't help if I say and convince them I am completely ordinary. It is a position and I hold it. *Parampara* blessings. Do I have some wrong understanding? Do your duty, guru.

December 29

Sometimes I think calamities will come. Kunti says to let them come. A time of testing. How will they not come? So we are bonded together as ISKCON and that is Srila Prabhupada's will. I am expected not merely to hang on to his instructions, but to lead others. I also need the association of devotees.

While things are going peacefully, let me try to make literary plans for his biography, writing about him one way or another.

December 31

I just had a dream showing me that one can transcend the life of birth after birth and material misery by reciting the names of God.

Now I have taken this work of glorifying Srila Prabhupada. I don't have to feel all other work has to be excluded, and at the same time I have to find time and do it. Gita-nagari is now. Prabhupada wrote anywhere. As long as he could rise at night, it was peaceful. This early rising is part of the austerity.

January 3, 1979

I'll make this my last entry in this book.

I feel a little encouraged because I rose at 12:30 A.M., picked up the nearest pen and paper, and began writing with complete confidence. What I wrote was no finished product, yet it was a major step. (I also felt certain that everything I wrote was true. That's a blessed state I always want.)

"The heat is on," Ravindra-svarupa said. Many articles against us, slanted, making us appear like crazy, dangerous cultists. Society—or the media, I should say—has attempted to brainwash the people and really stereotyped us. People are still joining and books are being distributed as much as ever or even more.

Let me live to glorify my spiritual master, as Krsna desires. I pray for the courage that I lack, to go on in the duty given to me by Prabhupada. Now I, who was his tiny spiritual son, have become a leader of his movement. Please, Lord Krsna, if You desire, give us all strength to carry on.

“Praying to Praise Prabhupāda” January 19–March 15, 1979

In this chapter, the biography is not quite underway, but help was starting to come in the form of serious workers such as Śeṣa dāsa, Maṇḍaleśvara dāsa, and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa dāsa. Soon more were to come, including typists. As for myself, I still didn’t yet know the “voice” in which I wanted to assemble the material into some kind of bona fide and readable biography. The chapter shows some of the frustration of trying to find time to write and trying to find a way to bring together the gathering mass of material.

It was really too early to begin writing the chapters because much of the interviewing hadn’t been done, but it was a good time to make a “prayer to create the biography” and place that prayer at the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I had begun to read some of the first interviews we had gathered, such as extensive ones by Mukunda dāsa, Yamunā dāsi, and Govinda dāsi. It was a touching experience to read the sincere, loving feelings of these devotees, and it was embarrassing for me, as the supposed biographer, to see how these devotees were able to enter intense states of remembrance of Śrīla Prabhupāda. As yet, I had no such ability to think of Prabhupāda in that way. There was hearty encouragement from all devotees in the movement, however, and this certainly helped me to think that Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa really wanted it done.

In the middle of this chapter, I had to go off for the yearly GBC meetings. The GBC was also supportive of the biography work, yet somehow, in the association of so many dynamic preachers, and while hearing of worldwide expansion, I began to lose confidence in whether the biography was actually a bona

fide, full preaching engagement. The idea seems ludicrous to me now, as I realize the biography-writing was the best preaching I was ever allowed to do. But the mind is tricky, and one can fall into that kind of self-deception. It was especially liable to happen to me since I had not yet entered deeply into the biography-writing. Why do we plague ourselves with such doubts, even when we have assurance all around from guru, Vaiṣṇavas, and the Supreme Lord? Surely, the answer is, "It's *māyā*."

At the Māyāpur meeting, some of my senior Godbrothers also gave encouragement in the form of their advice as to how the biography should be executed. No doubt each devotee would want to do it in a slightly different way. Even the *ācāryas* who comment on the *sāstras* do so from different angles of vision. When I was in the beginning stages, this kind of advice was simultaneously stimulating and a bit bewildering. Gradually, however, when I actually began to work along with a biography staff, everything became clearer.

* * *

January 19, 1979

Washington, D.C.

I have to be grave and simple. When a frivolous thought or word comes to mind, an entertaining air—put it aside with a second thought, and with a more serious, reserved commitment. In this way, see, hear, speak, act, eat—the second thought: "Is this for Kṛṣṇa?"

Along with simple desire to repeat his message is endless verbal ability and realization to preach, especially to my disciples. I do not have to perform: simple surrender will bring *parampara* to my thoughts and speech, since surely I have been trained sufficiently.

Here a few days, following duties of initiating guru. Typically, however, I am resenting the loss of my time toward writing the biography. *It requires more than grabbing an hour here or there.* It requires concentration and a regular schedule. All

right. If there is time when I cannot work at that, then let me hear Srila Prabhupada's tapes and read his books for an hour here and there. I am waiting to get back to work, however long it takes.

Thinking also I have very, very far to go in understanding how I am spiritual master to these souls.

Placing the garland on Srila Prabhupada's *murti*, I suddenly felt my devotion to him. It came as a remembrance that I must execute the glorification of his life in the literary form of his biography. I should especially realize the value of that literary *samadhi*. A pure devotee has attained the great, rare mystery (*rahasyam*), *love of Godhead*, and he can impart it to others. So how am I to do that? Now I think of glorifying Srila Prabhupada as my proof of seeing Kṛṣṇa and loving Him. I love His servant. I want to carry out His servants' will, although I am hardly able (*nija jati, nija sangi . . .*)

Sastra says it's rare, far rarer than the eight-fold perfections. As a touchstone is rare, it is rare to find a pure devotee. I know such a rare *mahatma*. Serve him, yes—but *remember him*. Be rapt in that Prabhupada mood and remembrance.

January 20

Rupanuga said the biography will be the most important ever written. It will also be for the persons of the modern day with events up to 1977 (but with saintliness and pure devotion of the same as in *Caitanya-caritamṛta*). He said Srila Prabhupada will be present in its pages when it is done, if I succeed; Prabhupada's humility, kindness, warmth, and his preaching power will be revealed in many incidents and accounts not known to most people.

"Think nothing of it," Prabhupada said when the Agarwals ate meat. He tolerated on Kṛṣṇa's behalf.

Even Americans can appreciate his "rags to riches" success.

My ongoing devotion to Prabhupada is to develop as the biography develops. Seeing him was as good as seeing Kṛṣṇa.

January 22

TKG just suggested I extend my early morning sessions to two and a half hours like Srila Prabhupada did. Rise at 12:30 A.M.—write until 3:00, then bathe and chant from 3:30–5:30, and I can still give class. I could even nap *a little* after breakfast and then of course, one and a half hours in the afternoon. The rest of the morning I could regularly dedicate to other things, like letter-writing. This could be revolutionary toward helping me write in any condition, and at the same time not be in anxiety when during the day, I am not able to dedicate myself to writing time. Nor should I be unwilling to do other duties like discussing management or writing letters.

TKG also said he regards his disciples not only as disciples, but as members of the ISKCON institution, and thus their needs are also taken care of by other leaders, some of whom he regards as the *siksha-gurus* of his disciples (they also have Prabhupada's books). In this way, he said, our relationship with our disciples is different than ours was with Srila Prabhupada.

I just read some reminiscences of Srila Prabhupada by Govinda dasi, Bob Lefkowitz, and Mukunda. Sweet feelings of his presence. Now while some leaders can take this as less important preaching and stress instead the carrying out of his work, distributing his books, making devotees, etc., I alone have this charge of recreating his life.

Govinda dasi was talking of being able to enter a consciousness of being in his presence, but it caused her too much grief to leave that state. I don't find such access to intense states of remembrance. Even if I do—as when sometimes I write out feelings in an attempt at free verse—I have to first ask myself if it is a kind of indulgence, or is it seriously contributing to the biography project? I have to work with others' memories, facts from the past, *and reconstruct*, but I have to also keep intense feelings in the completed work. It has to be objective and solid. Ravindra-svarupa mentioned that too many of the others' memories I recorded said, "It was wonderful . . ." "It was the most wonderful thing . . ." etc. Still, it all has to be there.

Up until now in what I'm writing, there are no adoring disciples, no one has great admiration for him or great appreciation. When that comes, I will have to try to include it. I have to orchestrate the whole thing, include everyone's praise of Prabhupada (and including my own) and still maintain a kind of aloofness of control. The writing cannot be *uncontrolled*. If only Kṛṣṇa would take control. That is my hope—that He will. (Not that I sit back: "Kṛṣṇa, You write the biography of Your pure devotee.") He will help me as He made everything victorious for Arjuna.

Lord Caitanya said to Advaita Acarya and Nityānanda Prabhu, "May Rupa Gosvami, by Your mercy, become so powerful that he will be able to describe the transcendental mellows of devotional service." (Cc, Antya 1.57) I'm all balled up in frustration how to proceed with the biography. This will always happen. I must not forget that it is simply by Kṛṣṇa's mercy that I can do any of this. I have to keep trying by His mercy, asking Him to reveal to me the proper path to approach this work. I am making an outline of contents.

Rupa Gosvami had a dream in which Satyabhama asked that a separate drama be written about her. Rupa was formerly planning to include in one drama Kṛṣṇa's activities in Vṛndavana and Dvaraka. Then, when he was with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Jagannātha Puri, the Lord told him, "Do not take Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, out of Vṛndavana." Rupa understood that this was a confirmation of the order given to him by Satyabhama—to write two separate dramas: "Let me think deeply about the matter and then describe two different sets of incidents."

"One day while Rupa Gosvami was writing his book, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu suddenly appeared."

From *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, Antya 1.139: (quoting from Rupa Gosvami's *Vidagdha-madhava*):

O learned devotees, I am by nature ignorant and low, yet even though it is from me that *Vidagdha-madhava* has come, it is filled with descriptions of the transcendental attributes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, will not such literature bring about the attainment of the highest goal of life?

Although its wood may be ignited by a low-class man, fire can nevertheless purify gold. Although I am very low by nature, this book may help cleanse the dirt from within the hearts of the golden devotees.

Praising Rupa Gosvami's verses, Ramananda Raya said, "What is the use of a bowman's arrow or a poet's poetry if they penetrate the heart but do not cause the head to spin?" (Cc, *Antya* 1.195) Both Rupa Gosvami and Ramananda Raya were experts in poetry and composing dramas, and both knew all the technical considerations and rules.

Srila Prabhupada quotes *tesam satata-yuktanam* and says, "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu bestowed His special favor upon Srila Rupa Gosvami because Rupa Gosvami wanted to serve the Lord to the best of his ability. Such is the reciprocation between the devotee and the Lord in the discharge of devotional duties."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu praised the metaphors and other literary ornaments of Srila Rupa Gosvami's transcendental poetry. Without such poetic attributes, He said, there is no possibility of preaching transcendental mellows.

—Cc, *Antya* 1.198

Ramananda Raya said, "Anyone empowered [by Lord Caitanya to describe the transcendental pastimes of Vṛndavana] can bring the entire world under Your influence." (Cc, *Antya* 1.205). Like the "*kṛṣṇa-sakti*" verse (*Antya* 7.11), an empowered devotee can give the whole world Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (Here we see that literature can also accomplish this preaching purpose. My low position and the most auspicious opportunity of the biography don't go well together, yet Kṛṣṇa can allow me.) These realizations, while reading the sweet dealings of the Lord with Rupa Gosvami, don't suddenly make my literary struggle disappear, but I should know that it is in this direction that my inspiration will come. By reading mundane biography or by sheer force of my limited energy and skill, it will not happen. When Kṛṣṇa is pleased to work through me, only then will it happen.

I'm thinking the early rising and working from 12:30–3:00 should be most seriously undertaken by me. It is the best hour, and tapasya itself is a prayer to the Lord to please keep me. It is not out of vanity or for glory that I attempt to do this. If it is successful, my "pride" will be the glorification of Srila Prabhupada and knowing people are being convinced of him.

January 27

Philadelphia

A little realization which may help: when I get in terrible anxiety and have fits of lack of confidence about this biography project, better I keep a cool head and even turn to studying his books if possible, or something else, until Krsna allows me to make further progress more easily. Yes, work hard on a regular basis, but this mental hair-pulling and gnashing of teeth seems too much like I'm trying to be the doer. It has to come as mercy from Krsna that I am allowed to work, and I have to work in the simple consciousness of inching along as He allows me.

Sometimes I lament that my feelings are not grief-stricken or rapturous or reaching for him with cries of love and lost feelings. But in this also—I, as others, *are assumed to be* totally dedicated in all we do to His Divine Grace. Now in a cool-headed way, let me work to build the literary memorial. The deeper emotions are always contained and can come out at the right time.

January 31

Gita-nagari

Just read to the devotees here about the chastisement of Junior Haridasa. When Lord Caitanya banned Junior Haridasa, the other devotees became fearful and stopped talking with women, even in dreams. Illicit connection may be fanned even in intimate talks or thinking about the attractive features of a woman.

I pointed out that Prabhupada taught that we may speak to women for important business. Half of my disciples are women. I must be careful. Even if I *do* something with good intention and no sinful desire—if it appears like a breach, it may open me up to criticism. At the same time, I have to encourage my disciples who are women. I needn't think I have to encourage them by a sentimental bond. They may look up to me as guru, as spiritual father, but I cannot try to *enliven* them in a sentimental way. I must always pray for Srila Prabhupada's protection and the protection of the disciplic succession in this matter.

I bowed down before Srila Prabhupada's *murti* and remembered how he said to Satadhanya Swami, "Don't think this won't happen to you"—meaning his sickness and leaving his body. I thought of myself with a sickness unto death, lying on a bed and people gathering by me and considering me as a spiritual person. But after my death, where would I go? Not certain. I cannot expect to join Kṛṣṇa in His topmost planet.

Walking slowly up the stairs I thought, "Each act goes on deliberately, and with advanced age, one's movements become slower (one doesn't run up the stairs, he walks), and yet time doesn't slow down. Rather, it seems to speed up because the end is coming closer and closer." My main sentiment is, "Get some work done in what time is left." Prabhupada's blessing is on me. Let me work my way to Kṛṣṇa, although I am very slow to give up all material desires and my spiritual desires are small.

I thought of people displaced from their homes, millions of refugees on the road. Our society is still stable and the devotees are well cared for. Someday the other may be true. We should not speculate over the future. Make the future bright by remaining steadfast in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

February 1, 1979

As evening approaches I worry whether in the early morning when I rise, there will be inspired employment and results, something to show. Look! I found Prabhupada. I recalled some

trait of his, I was given a gem by Krsna worth bringing immediately to everyone's attention. These kinds of demands.

I have to keep it alive. I have to be confident that we are making his life, recreating his life, that it is coming together and that I am in touch with it, expertly evaluating and constantly adding to the dimensions of it. It is very large and vast and I have to always, I feel, be doing *something* significant.

Rise at 12:30. Please, it is very valuable. No other time is *nearly* as good. It is worth the effort. The chance comes only once in twenty-four hours. Write on, and damned be he who first says, "Hold, enough!"

Rough or pure, Prabhupada
mining is valuable, to be used
later somewhere in biography.
Poetry going now.

We were discussing envious feelings among Godbrothers. I woke this morning with such things on my mind. I had a dream Prabhupada was with us again, walking in different places. I wasn't very prominent. He walked with many devotees and came to Madhudvisa's house, who has left the Krsna consciousness movement. It was an emotional meeting. Madhudvisa took Prabhupada's hand. Then Prabhupada had to sit down against a fence (as if overcome and exhausted and suffering from Madhudvisa having left him). It seemed to make Madhudvisa appear so important. Then they went inside Madhudvisa's house. I stayed outside. Other devotees came, leaders and I and others were very keen to see how each was doing and how Prabhupada felt about them.

Now I am awake and not feeling very wonderful, not as if I had just dreamed about my spiritual master. I feel more the rivalry and the ambitiousness of leading figures. I'm careful not to fall into cliques and think badly of others.

Devotees who have left usually fall into sense gratification and disobey the guru's orders. They no longer take part in his movement. But the leaders sometimes seem prominent by their

ability to collect money by any means (the more money, the better the leader). And numbers of books distributed is the sign of spiritual advancement. Prabhupada always encouraged the competition and increase, but sometimes it seems like material ambition. A devotee should be humble. I seemed forced to take that position by my activities.

Without going into it further or criticizing others, the result right now (12:45 A.M.) is that I have to approach the writing on chanting in the park in '66, but I'm hampered, thinking it is not front-line preaching, it is historian's work. Yet it is very important work and it is my tendency. *I have to not criticize and yet not be unduly affected by others' attitudes, who may not appreciate this work. I have to understand it myself, and even without their support, execute it.*

Feeling inadequate. "There is no strong man among you. You are all children." This especially applies to me. Now in the last year this biography project which I have taken up—even at that one thing I am not adequate. I try to work, but there is no mastery. Trying to be productive.

Reading memoirs of people who came early and left when his movement began because they thought it was dogmatic. I also was against anything dogmatic. How is it that I have accepted him, and how is it not dogmatic? Aside from the philosophizing, what made me stick? What about him? I want to understand more the parting of ways, why some could not take it. I want to be assured of the nondogmatic nature of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and more realized in my relationship with him. Assured we have a growing life of the mind, and far, far to go before realizing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in our lives.

February 10

Gita-nagari

How to be the spokesman for Prabhupada's greatness? I have to meditate on this. It is Kṛṣṇa's mercy, and also the cumulative effect of an accurate telling of each stage of his life. Not that I have to constantly make generalizations about his

greatness, but I write on with full faith that if I tell it rightly, evoking him with us in each place through evidence, memoirs, letters, his own words, and accurate accounts of the situation and himself, then his own greatness will come through the page, not on my own account.

I did not write down many things while he was here, and now I am reconstructing, but it can be done. Weave it together by Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

While I am in India, if I can meditate on that and write it down: what Prabhupāda was doing, what was his mission. Write down fresh, try to appreciate, put down people's statements when you hear them, as if you are a reporter. Prabhupāda before he came to America and when he went back in 1970 and thereafter. We may pick up books that show the time when he was a child. Recall incidents even of that time which show him as a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. You can write about him full of your praise for your spiritual master. As said of the praise of Sati for Siva, it was done out of partiality, but it was also factual. Praise as fully as you can in an account while you are in India. Collect different ways of praising and cite examples. Later you can contain it more, edit it, tell it as it suits the biography in final form. *But you have to be able to feel and know these greatnesses, not just think of how to write them without feeling and knowing.* Keep a regular diary just of these reflections of his greatness. Didactic, if you will, full of eulogy, yes. No room for anything else. You should not be distracted by other things, including meditations on yourself and how you are faring in comparison to your Godbrothers. What is the use of that? Things are in Kṛṣṇa's hand; my own voice is very tiny in regard to things like, "What are the best techniques on book distribution?" Yes, I have to take part in all ways. But especially this: *meditate on his greatness. Only then can you write it.*

Greedy for more, wish I could do it,
write in new notebooks,
one for rambling penetrating attempts
to think of his greatness as constant
meditation wherever we travel in
India this upcoming visit,
another notebook for an ongoing
(forever?) epic poem of him, him,
him stationed at 26 Second Avenue and
me extolling his greatness from that
view also. And then gathering all
data and evidence and interviews and
in the sober journalism of history,
fact, theme, prose narrative, giving
the story in *the biography* which more
than any notebooks is the fruit, the
cumulative results and contribution of
my life.

I pray to praise,
I pray to praise Prabhupada.
I don't care for verses neither
reading them nor writing
in feet measured beat or obscure
arts. No one has anything to say
direct beyond what the poet Vyasa
has said. We are interested in that
poet, and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, and
my spiritual master.

So call it what you like, that form
is also nice and right now I am
wishing I could pray better and
go on evoking him in anecdotes.
Prabhupada why do I want to do it?
I do not praise you so I can be praised.

No, I want it to come nice and beautiful, not so I may sit back and like it, but so you can be praised. Let me do it and see you smile. Let me know more it is right and you want it, I feel you must have it out of me, in better and better attempts, I am jealous, possessive, that's not right, but still I want to sing and make you known everywhere in greatness. I want to dedicate all to this. You walking, you talking, but the memory, the ability, the gift, the inspiration? Therefore *prayer* more than poem, call it rightly prayer, supplicating to Krsna for the service to express devotion to you and objective proof of your stature, that is biography, prayer to create the biography.

February 13

How is it that people have to relate to Prabhupada? Can't they relate to Krsna? Or to Srila Prabhupada's disciples? Yes, but *Prabhupada* is that saintly person who came and delivered the message as it is. Krsna consciousness without Prabhupada's purport: what is its value?

Well, shouldn't we just speak the purport without having to mention him? Why his life or biography? Because the person has to be appreciated to sense the nobility of *his mission for the world*. It is Krsna and Lord Caitanya's mission and teaching, but as carried by Prabhupada in the 20th century. His "interpretations," his ISKCON, means his teachings have to be appreciated, and to appreciate them, the lessons of his life must be studied.

Prabhupada used to cite how Lenin started a revolution and how he was worshiped later along with Karl Marx. We worship Krsna. The revolution was started by Prabhupada. How are his

life's events important to his followers? More than the historians' interest? Answer: is history important just to historians? No. The life of Lincoln is not to be separated from his contribution to the nation. Without such great men, we would have no great nation. Similarly, Gandhi, etc. Important for me, important for them—take it as *his* teachings, the teachings of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement—*parampara*, all *acaryas*, authority is not just Prabhupada, but the *Vedas*. Yet in the West he is the *parampara*. It is his great gift if we appreciate and dedicate ourselves to becoming devotees as *he* taught; it will be the greatest benefit for us and for the world.

I am trying to distinguish how my loyalty to Srila Prabhupada is something for me or for the whole world. It is for the whole world. For my disciples, obviously, yes, but all others. Also, *his authority, if examined, is utterly unquestionable, but has to be broadcast through his own books and a book about him*, by devotees who truly understand his mission and live up to it. Much of what we do is not simple Vaisnavism, but delivered to suit the time and place by Srila Prabhupada:

- (1) Sixteen rounds
- (2) "four rules"
- (3) the position of women
- (4) emphasis on book distribution
- (5) overall language
- (6) temple worship, ISKCON
- (7) Westerners can take to it —the whole world, not just India

"Preaching is the essence." Each day I prepare to speak in class on one part of the slogan, "Books are the basis . . ."

Today I spoke of learning the books. Tomorrow, the need to go and preach. People are suffering. If one says, "So what? It serves them right," he has no kindness. A Vaisnava is not like that.

Original kindness comes from Kṛṣṇa. He wants to save them. The *Vedas* personified pray to Him, "Please save them

out of Your mercy." The idea is there in humanity, though in this age mercy is gone.

Knowing what they need, the devotee helps. It is our belief that as we worship God, so we serve man by giving him God. We don't help him materially, but spiritually. *This is not conversion.*

February 17

I couldn't believe it at first—yes, tonight I leave for India. Complete change of location. GBC duties at meetings. Guide, cooperate (not simply politics, diplomacy) to please our spiritual master, our worldwide ISKCON.

My Godbrother Atreya Rsi speaking to me. Very interesting points. I have to think them over. He was stressing that I should preach to nondevotees. He was also saying we should be humble about being gurus and should feel we have much advancement to make. We should be afraid *maya* will capture us. We should hold everything up to the test of guru, *sastra*, and *sadhu*, based on our own intelligence, and not be swayed by any other ideas of success. He stressed honest talks between Godbrothers based on taking the other as a devotee and friend, being able to speak honestly to one another, and not afraid of another in terms of his zone or material idea of competition.

If I don't go out and preach, I should make my disciples become innovative how to "passionately" spread this movement. Unless we expand, we die. We cannot maintain, we have to expand (like a bird who has to keep flapping his wings to stay up at all). As guru, go on the radio and smash the civilization, which is dead and going to hell. Speak out, be powerful, depend on Krsna.

I told him I was trying to accomplish my aims by writing. He didn't say it was wrong, but I should hold my activities up to the standard of guru, *sastra*, and *sadhu*, and not do anything else, not cheat by doing it my way and trying to make the *sastra* fit into it.

We spoke of the GBC meeting not stressing spiritual principles. He had a theory that we are so insular that we take our

hate and anger and disgust out on each other. He's against an insular life.

Humility. Expansion. Two wings of the flying bird. He must maintain an inner life of purity and striving to do better, afraid of falling into *maya*.

I'm thinking it over. I am aware that I am insular. I have done plenty of speaking engagements before and should do more, I suppose. But still, I think the real life of revolution for me is to prepare the book on Srila Prabhupada. He said for that, I have to get at the depth of Srila Prabhupada's relationship with his disciples.

Plane stuck over two hours now on the ground.

Is the biography important preaching? Yes, people will learn of his greatness and respect more the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Don't doubt it. I will be praying for this conviction. It can't be just my loyal devotion—"a labor of love"—and yet it is out of the imperative of love. Moreover, it is compassionate preaching.

See the greatness and purity of our leader.

I am a follower of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. I believe his teachings. He said we must preach. It is not enough to simply behave properly; we must be compassionate to the conditioned souls. This is the desire of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. A grand center like the Hare Kṛṣṇa Land in Bombay is for grand-scale preaching. Each preacher has to take part.

February 19

Bombay

Everything is comfortable in this magnificent preaching temple. Giriraja Maharaja is making tapes about Prabhupada's struggles here.

He told a gem. He said Srila Prabhupada was inviting Mrs. Nair to surrender to him and promising he would protect her. Giriraja thought that if by surrendering she could immediately be protected, what about him, why doesn't he take advantage of the opportunity?

February 20

Bombay

Went for a walk on Juhu Beach. It's winter. We went too early; dark as night. Feeling some dedication to our biography project. Let the others manage; I have to do this. It's "inward," but it requires many research facts. It has to be externalized, Prabhupada's activities. (My unheard and dry inner sobbing—does it even exist? Crying that I never loved him or adored him or serve him even now—"crocodile tears"?) Here we are—now get Bombay dates. Can I write about him?

February 22

Note in haste—New Delhi

Think I will not expect to get any serious writing done in India. If I can get interviews with GBC, that's plenty.

"One who does not have sense control is called *godasa*, or a servant of the senses, and cannot become a spiritual master."

Be careful of *maya*. Repeat *parampara*. Act *parampara*. Practice humility, nonviolence, especially toward devotees.

Plans: on return to the U.S., read all my letters from Srila Prabhupada to meditate and write down his essential individual instructions to me so I can better feel my relationship with him and the particular desires he has for me. (This came by the inspiration of Giriraja Swami's stress on taking the order of the spiritual master *as that which we must do* in submissive faith.)

Big GBC meetings, talks on guru etiquette, etc. Personal behavior toward others in a noncompetitive way. There has to be more than mere officialese.

Possible "parting address" as 1978 GBC chairman: when we act in material competitiveness, in harshness, or violence toward one another, it is noticed by everyone present (as well as other witnesses—Prabhupada and Krsna). The result is that everyone starts inwardly to hate these meetings and in a subtle way to hate each other. At least it checks the possibility to

love in exchange when we are together. This lack of love is also noticed by other devotees besides us.

We cannot simply maintain with official allowances, political blocs, protection rackets, promised favors, etc.

I suggest we hold as standard that which is best for this movement and try to be surrendered to that. That is the ideal vision motivating this meeting: Srila Prabhupada's pleasure. Sometimes he would personally reverse our decisions to express his own desire for a particular person. That appeal we don't have. Therefore, we have to try to reach the same conclusions on our own. That takes extra sensitivity to *his wishes* given to us in his instructions. If we are not sensitive in obedience, we will hurt the collective creeper of the GBC plant of devotion and intelligence for following his order.

Now let us get down to business, but do not be cynical to this ideal vision that each of us is a surrendered servant of this GBC body. Therefore, great care and responsibility is each one's duty, in conducting himself at this meeting, in speaking, and in voting. Think, "What is best for the GBC and Prabhupada?"—not cleverly (and we are all a little clever, some more than others)—"How can I get my own desires?"

February [?]

New Delhi—Leaving for Vrndavana

My responsibilities:

- (1) Biography
- (2) Visiting N.Y., Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, D.C., Vancouver, Puerto Rico—to see disciples and to correspond with them.
- (3) Gita-nagari-Baltimore management.
- (4) BTG magazine with plans to move it to N.Y.

These are my heavy responsibilities and I cannot see much room for additional service (since BTG itself will be additional this year), nor scope for sudden change, such as GBC of somewhere in India or Hawaii, etc.

To previous list of responsibilities add: (5) Reading Srila Prabhupada's books and memorizing verses to be able to preach effectively in classes and to remain in Krsna consciousness.

Also, beyond the biography—which is the singlemost important literary project of my life—I am thinking of supplementary writing for my disciples, such as the poem about Srila Prabhupada in 1966. Responsibility: rising extra early, chanting rounds, writing before chanting.

It is all part of the attempt to surrender. My activities, whatever they are, will be ended, and I have to become pure. Give up material attraction.

March 2, 1979

Vrndavana

I am a fool. I am not a powerful preacher in charge of many men and distributing books.

Very little energy.

Yet they think I'm something.

Can't do anything. Writes a few lines and calls it quits. Doesn't even worship his Godbrothers but sees their faults. What hope is there for one like me? Let me assist this ISKCON mission in any way I can. You keep removing yourself from nitty-gritty management. Be willing to work at the GBC meeting, chairman, secretary. Preaching.

March 4

10,000 years is come and gone
and then the movement ends
and Kali-yuga goes
full steam
don't be here then
back to Godhead
but you've got to preach
I cannot organize
even a line of a poem
and to manage a word
is very hard.

March [?]

Mayapur—on the roof

Symptom of an advanced devotee is that he is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa and how to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. (“All over the world” also means cooperate with ISKCON, the established worldwide mission.)

Cooperate.

Enemy within: competitive jealousy and envy. I can offer humble suggestions to my Godbrothers (giants) who form the policies of book distribution:

(1) Please find a way to do it with cleaner lines and cleaner money exchange.

(2) This is the one thing that is actually harassing gentlemen who are inclined to us.

(3) It used to be that purity provided impetus to leaders who applied the whip. We have to apply the whip, and at same time, inspire confidence that we are directly in touch with Kṛṣṇa.

March 15

Calcutta airport

Devotees asking, “Are you going to Vṛndavana?” We are not. We plan to go back to the U.S. because I want to work long and productively at *my service*—Srila Prabhupada’s biography (“Your Ever Well-Wisher”). That is why I have decided to go back rather than spend another week or two in Vṛndavana. It might be nice to associate further with the large group of devotees and certainly it would be spiritually enriching to be in Vṛndavana, but the work awaiting me seems more urgent. I am a poor, lost soul, but seeking shelter in this authorized service to Lord Caitanya’s *sankīrtana* movement.

**“Going Down Into the Ocean of
Śrīla Prabhupāda”
March 15–August 25, 1979**

In a brief reflection within this chapter, I remark wonderingly about the whole purpose of keeping a diary: “I will be gone too, and do not know why I am writing these lines for a future reader. It is mostly, I tell myself, to express myself and to get rid of obstacles to clearer expression. That is required for the biography.”

Whether or not I knew why I was keeping a diary in ISKCON, it was not so much a deliberate act but an intuition, or one could even say, a kind of nervous reflex.

The fact is, I really wasn’t writing for future readers. One of the most voluminous diarists of all time, Henry David Thoreau, said that the motto of his diary was, “Says I to myself.” Thoreau also understood that although the journal was just for himself, yet it must excel in some respects his other writing. An editor of Thoreau’s journals writes about it: “By it the sap ascended; in it he grew newness of thought and feeling, and shook off inspiration ill-disposed.” Other purposes for Thoreau in his diary writing were practice: “He practiced his ways of observing, his laments, his methods of composition, and his sentences.”

Almost all the diary entries in this volume, as well as those not published, were done quickly and with the sense of making a report to myself. And, as mentioned in this chapter remark, the diary also served as a basis for practicing for the more important works, in this case, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s biography. It is therefore a writer’s journal.

A reader may well ask, however, "If you actually wrote for yourself, why are you now publishing the journals?" The answer is that probably every diary writer has at least some notion, even if faint or secretive, that in the future, people will read his diary. The anticipation of this "ghost" of a future reader is very different from real live readers or editors whom the writer imagines looking over his shoulder with all their demands and expectations. When one is actually writing a diary, he need only set down what is important to him at the moment, his own truth, and much of it will conform to no standards of publication that he is aware of at the time. The Kṛṣṇa conscious diarist also has other hopes, although they may be hidden even from himself. He hopes that his writing down of his spiritual master's words, and even his gropings to try to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, will somehow help people in the future in their attempts to practice spiritual life. Otherwise, like the hooting and shouting at a baseball game, everything that exists at present, including one's own life breath, "Lasts a brief while, then is gone . . . I will be gone too."

During the course of this chapter I had completed my work on Volume Two of the biography. Volume Two, beginning with Prabhupāda's coming to America, was the first volume written because the research material was more accessible, and it was also the most accessible to me emotionally. In one sense, it was the most difficult of all the volumes to write and it underwent many revisions with the assistance of Maṇḍaleśvara Prabhu, who always encouraged me to try to make it better. From a literary point of view, one might say that we had finally discovered the "voice" for the biography series. As it turned out, Volume One was to have its own unique voice, and as far as I'm concerned, each volume of the biography came out with a particular flavor of expression in glorifying Śrīla Prabhupāda; each volume had its own story of struggle.

* * *

March 15, 1979

En route to England—U.S.A.

I began to worry that the plane would not make it over the ocean. They refer to this as “an unlikely event.” Sooner or later the equivalent will come to pass: our plane will crash, or disease, or old age unto death. *Sastras* say the most wonderful thing is that one thinks it won’t happen to him. But it will.

I thought of conveying this to the young devotees in the N.Y. temple. We are trying to attain love of God and get out of this material world.

Giriraja Swami said something that Srila Prabhupada once told Yamuna. She asked about the advanced stage where a devotee follows a resident of Vrndavana: “Does this mean you?” Yes, he said, it could mean the spiritual master. These things cannot be conceived of yet; how, for example, we can have simultaneous love for Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya. *We have far to go* (but how much time?).

Srila Prabhupada told devotees like Gurudasa who wanted to retire in Vrndavana that they should first “work like an ass” (on behalf of their spiritual master) and then think of retiring; “First deserve, then desire.” Stress my attraction (what there is of it) to Srila Prabhupada’s charm, his ways, his activities—that is the way to love of God. His activities are eternal. Although he does not eternally open the storefront at 26 Second Avenue, he eternally preaches. Srila Prabhupada gave the example once that as he played with a *ratha* cart as a child, so he later held big Ratha-yatras around the world. Similarly, he is preaching here or there. But 26 Second Avenue is also part of his eternal preaching. Philosophy without religion is dry impersonalism, just as religion without philosophy is fanatical or sentimental.

There should be deliberate cultivation of his activities, and at the same time, carrying out of his instructions. He told me in '66 not to just do the work automatically, but do it with love.

If you serve the spiritual master in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even if you cannot understand the spiritual master, Kṛṣṇa will

reveal Kṛṣṇa consciousness to you. Service to the spiritual master will not go in vain.

Arrival N.Y. airport, now waiting

Some kids are here to meet their (non-ISKCON) guru. I spoke to one. He said his guru was "a realized master." I asked him who the realized master's guru was. He replied with the naiveté of a lamb about to be slaughtered, "I don't think he has one." Obviously, he had never thought about it. Then the master (a young American in yogi pants, hippie-looking) came and kissed them and embraced the girls, greeting the dozen followers. I already know enough about their philosophy to reject it. Master without a master—what that means is *he's God*. Who else is the Master with no master but the Supreme? In this way, bogus gurus are presenting themselves as God. One who realizes Brahman, "I'm not this body," concludes that he is as good as the Absolute and thinks he's above the devotee who worships God (devotee doesn't yet realize he is God). But the devotee *does* realize he is God; he is a qualitative spark of God. This is in *sastra*.

We are servants of Prabhupada. Servants a hundred times removed. Durvasa insulted the servant of God and had to flee the Sudarsana-cakra until he fell at the lotus feet of that servant.

March 29

Gita-nagari—12:02 A.M.

I dreamt a crazy dream. The outcome was that I was informed of the passing away of my own mother. In the dream condition, I wept profusely. When I awoke, I sincerely thought, "I wish her well," recommending her soul to Kṛṣṇa.

Then I thought of my own work for Prabhupada, his biography. Every one of his disciples wants to praise him, and of course, all sincere praise is well-received by him (even now somehow), and by Kṛṣṇa. For praise to be effective, however, that is rare. Praise is also effective only if the Prabhupada

praiser is obeying Prabhupada's orders, like sixteen rounds and the four rules and preaching, believing in Kṛṣṇa and studying the *Gita*, not the Bible or the Koran—but *Gita* and *Bhagavatam*—not *God* consciousness but *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness, not vegetarianism but honoring *prasadam*—because how can there be love of “God” without love of Kṛṣṇa? How can there be love of Kṛṣṇa without obeying Prabhupada?

Praise of Prabhupada is not cheap if we can remain simple and obedient. Then our lives as Prabhupada's children will be living testimonies that he could change the coarse meat-eaters into saintly persons. We should want to make our contribution to his cause, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, which will add to his praise even after our passing away. Every effort is important in that ongoing movement.

Rupanuga said that the people in general have to approach guru and then Kṛṣṇa, and guru means Prabhupada. When they (the masses) praise him, then our praise will have been effective. Let us make ourselves monuments to him and let us build monuments for the future in praise of Prabhupada.

April 9, 1979

Vancouver

How can I be a spiritual master? So much talk of a devotee remaining tolerant even in suffering (*tat te 'nukampam*). I think, “I am going to be smashed and put into great trouble sooner or later.” How can I stand for all these devotees as their guru? I momentarily caught a glimpse of how I could be insignificant and fallen and at the same time, stand as their spiritual master. (That revelation eludes me now.) I felt unworthy and I felt emotion for Prabhupada. Then I began to cry. I was aware that I was standing before many people. “It won't hurt them to see me do this,” I thought. I have a kind of long-standing vow not to cry. I let it in. It came for awhile. Did I indulge in ecstasy? You could say it was ecstasy of a sort. It was nothing terribly wrong.

So much continual planning and thinking of the events of Śrīla Prabhupada's life. Sometimes it finally results in some genuine ecstatic feeling for him. And *we do want our readers to cry in ecstasy remembering him.*

I keep wanting to write more spontaneously about him, yet at the same time, I don't want to abandon the responsibility of hard work to produce the biography.

April 11

In writing your honest poetry, the real question is whether this is the proper Kṛṣṇa conscious activity for one in your position. The small, inner voice expressing imperfection—will it inspire your disciples? What choice do I have? Well, you don't have to do it if it is not proper, or you can censor it. What is the Kṛṣṇa conscious purpose? I think it is to inspire genuine feeling in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to give vent to a direct cry in verse, assuming I am Kṛṣṇa conscious and sincere and paving the way to a future in which I could write better verse praising Kṛṣṇa that people could sit up and notice. Also, its purpose is self-purification and it gets me going. The biography has to be pushed forward with life.

My point about verse-making is, the next time you try it, try coming to grips with the problem of whether such expression is Kṛṣṇa conscious. That would be a verse of real substance at least. Use the poetic art of expression to search this very problem out. Do you already know the answer? Partly. If you can make a Kṛṣṇa conscious verse, then it is Kṛṣṇa conscious. If not, then it is a waste of time, sinful. So how do you know it is Kṛṣṇa conscious? Do you mean just risk it? Isn't there always a certain risk? Be sincere. Use verse to pray to Kṛṣṇa. Don't be smart or concentrate on aesthetics or corruption or mumbling to your mind, but speak sincere Kṛṣṇa conscious prayer with feeling. Then it is okay.

Mainly, try to contribute to making Śrīla Prabhupada's biography. That's the real proof of your life now.

About to speak to a group of second-initiated disciples. I am speaking for my own purification and further understanding. Don't speak to make propaganda in their minds to sentimentally incline them toward you.

Coming back from the morning walk, Bahudak told me that Srila Prabhupada once said everyone should go out preaching at least one hour a day, and Bahudak said there is nothing as good as the taste of personally facing the nondevotee and trying to give him Krsna consciousness. This was inspiring to hear. I was trying to preach to the devotees about *sankirtana*.

Just before class I realized some feeling about Prabhupada's preaching and my own preaching of writing his biography. Perhaps what I realized is that the biography is preaching and that his life is 100% a life of preaching. I became excited to work at his life story and felt some light and power to be able to do it. Nothing is stopping me. Let me simply write about holding the *kirtana* at 26 Second Avenue. I could go ahead and do it, I thought. It will be possible—just write it. Srila Prabhupada's life is not so hard to report in one sense—just tell how he was always preaching. Be in the preaching spirit yourself; write how he was preaching.

Later—long distance calls, quarrels among ISKCON leaders, seems I am always talking to someone's manager—that's *varnasrama*. Even the *sannyasi* and guru is involved. How did I get stuck in this stuff? Where is my equilibrium?

Dead moments like this—I cannot write. Different interruptions don't help. No work done all day. Tomorrow may be the same. Life is passing. A *sannyasi*'s brain is better clear of this or else how can I go back to the storefront? How will I do it anyway? Krsna, I do not know anything but Prabhupada. I do not know what I am doing now. Please protect me from *maya*.

I could fall into "a whole trip" of false pride over being the compiler of the pure devotee's biography! "My vision is only of Prabhupada. I am better than the other preachers in the world who are working at temporary activities." Rather, each of us

has some duty to perform. Each can please Śrīla Prabhupada by sincerity. These are realistic considerations of disciples who are pleasing by taking on great responsibilities.

If I wanted to write my free verse lines on what I am feeling most, then it would be desires and prayer concerning biography work, and of my responsibilities to Prabhupada in taking my own disciples and thus becoming guru.

Some days I work every spare minute on the biography, never taking any time to read Śrīla Prabhupada's books. (They can be read by walking back and forth and reading out loud, even if you are in a sleepy state.) Then, at an evening meeting with devotees, I wished I knew the books better. I'm already pretty familiar with the different sections of the books and the basis, but it could always be better. Maybe some deliberate time should be saved for it.

Then also, while talking to a group about Śrīla Prabhupada, I sensed that his mission is so profound for saving humanity from barbaric conditions—it is beyond me. I think, “These things—this profound significance of Śrīla Prabhupada—has to be brought out.” That means more time on the biography. Reading his books and preaching and managing and ISKCON dealings all help me to realize better his person so I can present him in the biography.

April [?]

Vancouver—last morning

Heavy rain. Hope I don't die today. What day would you like to die, Satsvarupa dasa? Years from now, after the biography is finished. I know I am a fool desiring name and adoration, so dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You know best for me. I am so fearful, but pray to live and do this great work in the world and all else given to me, and try my best to cooperate with my Godbrothers in ISKCON. I claim to love Śrīla Prabhupada. Then that will be tested by how I cooperate.

April 29

Philadelphia

They say they want to help me work here. Sounds good, but I am out of practice.

I was stuck, but now I am moving along. Excited to continue. It doesn't come out perfect the first time. Afraid of disruptions from friends and enemies. Is it wrong to pray like this, desiring to fulfill my own plans in Krsna consciousness? (Disaster may happen, disrupting use of normal amenities, electricity, well-being, solitude, etc.—who knows?)

We have to live with the present situation. *In any event*, this life is temporary. Still, we don't lose heart. We have to write Prabhupada's biography in whatever time we have. The world or my own body may be destroyed today or tomorrow with a "bang" or a "whimper."

No broken-hearted poetry for me, I am pushing storytelling in pleasant recollection, the glorious deeds of His Divine Grace.

In the context of life being lived, I want to save my time. Sleep the minimum and do your work.

I can do only a little at a time. Begging for more. Krsna wants to see how badly I want it, perhaps. Or did I think it would be delivered on a silver plate like my guru lunch?

April 30

Last night I spoke on Prabhupada's importance and I myself was impressed to hear it. "Why don't I put more of this into the biography?" He was bringing Krsna consciousness to the whole world, creating a whole society of devotees. He was feeling great compassion for everyone and wrote all his books and delivered devotees in that spirit. I have to speak of this greatness. It's not that this all-auspicious welfare began only at some later time in 1971 or 1973. No, it was there in 1966, and it was also there when he was alone in India.

When he was alone in New York, I evoked the feeling of how he was struggling to bring Kṛṣṇa to New York to solve the world's problems—now write something like that.

Everyone wants to be understood. That means understood and appreciated in the way he wants to be. I want to be appreciated for devoting myself to the biography. It helps me if others around me share the importance of this work for the world. They protect me and encourage me: "You must get this done. The world is waiting for this." I have to go within and work on the re-creation of the memory and evocation of the existential, transcendental fact of Prabhupada's greatness. If others don't appreciate, or they think, "Why is he spending so much time in the past thinking of Prabhupada? Why doesn't he take part with us in the issues we are dealing with daily in the real world as we establish ISKCON?" then it can be detrimental. Recently there has been some encouragement.

It is, in my mind, like going into a kind of bathysphere, a round submarine-like vessel that goes incredibly deep into the deepest part of the ocean to discover the depths of that ocean. The men who go down in that vessel take great risks and require financial backing and even logistic support so that they can live and breathe below. If no one cares about their results or is indifferent to whether they live or die, or even obstructs them, then it becomes difficult in addition to the difficulty they already face in plumbing the depths!

I am going down into the ocean of Śrīla Prabhupada. No one ever tried to fully chart it. No one has ever gathered as many facts as we have. We are expected, being fully authorized, to make a full, glowing report. We are expected to do a good job because I am a recognized devotee. Therefore, I am expected to evoke devotion, to give the nectar of his life, and to report facts to the world in such a way that the unconvinced will objectively read his life as great.

I am going forward with memory and with biographical art, like trying to preach carefully to a certain group and not offend their particular sensibility. At the same time, I am begging that the material keep coming and that it come alive.

May 2, 1979

Baltimore

Going to Gita-nagari tomorrow, May 3rd. I should have three weeks there before I have to leave. Hope to work there. I write what I can about Prabhupada, spend a little time hearing his tapes, reading his books, writing letters to my disciples, taking part in daily activities at Gita-nagari. Maybe some important guests will come this month to Gita-nagari. Try to spend most time working. Evening class I can give on *Nectar of Devotion*.

Meditating on how to bring out the essence of Srila Prabhupada as well as the external facts.

Room is still now, 6:30 P.M. Time for evening *gayatri*. Foolish children outside shouting and hooting in their baseball game in the nearby field. It lasts a brief while, then is gone. Then they will also be gone. I will be gone too, and do not know why I am writing these lines for a future reader. It is mostly, I tell myself, to express myself and to get to rid of obstacles to clearer expression. That is required for the biography.

May 4

Gita-nagari

Was thinking today and admitting factual shortcomings in my relationship with Prabhupada. I sometimes had my own plans for preaching (other than his plans), such as when I wanted to leave his service as personal servant. If I had only known then that I would dedicate myself to his biography. Yet even while I was with him, I was never attentive to writing about him. I don't want to make it sound worse than it was. Besides, although I limited my own opportunities to be with him, it doesn't necessarily limit me in approaching him now. By research and devotion to this task of understanding him and presenting him in literary form, I can worship and serve him in a wave of solid service. This biography could conceivably be the most solid service I have yet to offer him.

I am working in a contrite spirit, not exulting in pride that I am his greatest lover and disciple, but trying to make up for my failings and offenses by now offering a most solid service to him and ISKCON. Similarly, even though I may have displayed unsundered behavior in removing myself as his servant, the service I went on to take, with his blessings, proved to really please him as solid service—the library party. I felt better to be a solid serving preacher with GBC capacity, traveling and preaching on behalf of His Divine Grace, than to be doing the menial duties as his personal servant, yet I had to admit being his servant demanded certain tolerant and humble qualities that I lacked.

May 10

Working at Gita-nagari

Hungry for more hours and attention span to do my work. At the same time eager—or desiring to be eager—to read his books.

Sometimes I find the sentence among many in a lecture or interview or letter that reveals the most, and I center on that in presenting Śrīla Prabhupada. Just as in this diary, there is perhaps a line or two that reveals best the inner truth of my situation.

I have to dictate for Prabhupada's pleasure. He has to like this. BTG also has to be like that. We have to develop a feeling that he is present, and of course he is, at least by his teachings as we find in his books. Then execute work to please him who is hearing. Cultivate his presence and please him. Always think, "Would he like this?" and study his statements carefully for what he wants in BTG. Don't part from that. Deliver the *maha-mantra* to the people as the prime means of benefit in this age.

May 23

About to leave Gita-nagari. Next chapter is not as if it were all unknown. I want to write the last phase, the history of the success of Hare Kṛṣṇa in New York in 1966. It is not the only

thing that happened and millions of New Yorkers were taking to it. They had Vietnam and Southern civil rights to think about. From nothing becoming something on the Lower East Side, the few followers saw with confidence (Rupanuga voices this) that the movement was the most important thing in the world. It went forth on the sea of history. It was happening.

This history is there, especially in this upcoming chapter, and I want to show Srila Prabhupada and how he felt about this. I can get this from the witnesses and from the few things he said at this time, show him strong and healthy even in his advanced age playing on the drum, making the movie, "Happiness on Second Avenue," and always present for his followers in those happy vintage days.

I have the events to tell about, and although my own memory is faded, I was also present for many of the events I am talking about, so it will not be difficult to get the outlines of it down. As I pause, suddenly not as productive in day-to-day output as I have been the last three weeks, I want to give more of a portrait of him, his particular speech, the things that tell about him personally in life. I need more research and Kṛṣṇa will, if He likes, grant me more transcendental art to be able to do it.

May 25

Baltimore

I pretty much reached an important decision in the biography. I will not write "I" and therefore not "we" and "our" and "us." Superficially someone may say, "No, put yourself into it; don't be an impersonalist. We want to hear about you and Prabhupada, we want to hear 'your' Prabhupada." As far as that is concerned, the entire biography is "my Prabhupada." There is much to be gained by leaving myself out, and not much lost.

My own memories of Srila Prabhupada are near and dear and I have written them down. They may be used in the biography or even published separately one day. But this work can now go on with greater freedom, I think, as I can objectively

describe him. I used the word Prabhupada in "isolation." I want to see him alone with Kṛṣṇa. I want to describe him "objectively," to make a mature portrait of him for the reader. Him, him, him. I want to merge into him. My sensibility will remain individual, but I will be the instrument to describe him, and those in relation to him will be described for the qualities they bring out about Śrīla Prabhupada.

Spiritual master. Going to N.Y.—now eleven more disciples. It is becoming obvious that I am a tiny figure. So many persons turning to me for a link to Kṛṣṇa. What is the meaning—what is most important?

I am performing my duties to my spiritual master.

I am unable at a certain point to protect them from *maya*, and the whole process is that they stay engaged in the Lord's service. Once Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Thākura cried when the wife of one of his *sannyasis* came and took the man back "home" by the ear. Śrīla Prabhupada also lost disciples, and sometimes cried over the loss of a son or daughter. *Maya* is very strong.

The empowered state given to guru in link with Kṛṣṇa is stronger. It is the case of the man who has to catch onto the rope from the dark well. The well is a hopeless condition and the rope is strong enough to get him out, but he has to catch on.

I have to inspire them: they only have to stay in devotional service and tolerate their minds and senses. It is self-interest.

I am thinking of Abhilasa, who recently left. More may succumb. Now there are so many. We have to fight *maya* to our best ability.

Daivi hy esa guna-mayi.

June 8, 1979

New York

Read a little too much in mundane books, *In Cold Blood* and biography of Roger Fry, trying to get ideas for Prabhupada's biography. More harm than good. Now I have become unhinged

from the steady sweet flow of my dedication and written words describing Prabhupada. Of what use is it to learn techniques if I lose my attraction and taste for describing the activities of our beloved Guru Maharaja? How to get it back? Words on the page strike me this evening as tedious. Craft and technique demands overwhelm my natural sense of wonder and appreciation. It will come back, I'm sure; I have to be careful with my sensibility though. It is an instrument like others, and has to be used carefully.

Back into the flow of devotional service and appreciation for the written word used in glorification of the Lord's pure devotee.

Discussing the compassion of the Vaisnavas, from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, First Canto, Part One

K. gave class here citing the mood of Prahlada, who had compassion for the *vimudha*, even his father. We have to go out and preach to save them. That is the anxiety of the devotee. This is a well-known sentiment.

M. asked, "How do we know if we are feeling compassionate? There are different services, not just book distribution." K. answered, "All are compassionate in the ISKCON movement. All services go toward the preaching—cooking, cow protection"—and he said that we have to start with ourselves.

Later, he asked me how I would have answered concisely. I said, "One may not actually know whether he is compassionate, so he follows the order of the spiritual master, who engages him in compassionate activity. He tries to please the spiritual master." Also, I thought, a compassionate devotee doesn't advertise himself as such, or even think that he is compassionate. He acts to go to the *vimudha*, and encourages other devotees too: "We must be compassionate on them." But he doesn't think he is compassionate, just as he doesn't think he is humble, pure, advanced, a lover of Kṛṣṇa.

Follow Prabhupada's preaching about compassion. Save the most fallen. Preach all over the world. He didn't mean that the devotees in the temple where he was preaching should all get

up and go preach all over the world; rather they should take compassion on the people in their own area; the *sannyasis* can preach all over the world, but the others should go out in their own city and distribute books and *prasadam*. Yes, this is compassion.

Your philosophical remarks will always have to bear on this practical situation.

I was thinking to give not just some extra scholarship to the devotees, but stress the inner states of satisfaction, strength, the ability to control the senses, spiritual pleasure. This should be done, not just pep talks, newsletter ratings. And not just unrelated philosophy in which you say Suta was compassionate without relating it to now.

July [?], 1979

New York

Tomorrow is the big Ratha-yatra festival. There is nothing to say without Prabhupada. By myself I am not interesting. All I think of is him. Or I am wishing I could think of him. Devotees are following his instructions. I'm thinking of him.

How are honest talks possible? How are they presentable to 300,000 readers in America?

Some ecstasy
we are feeling
relief from
fear.

Same ecstasy
we are feeling
and the dull head
dull body
about to live
a little longer.

Kṛṣṇa in sight
but not yet
not yet
love of God.

Talking about it
touching sometimes
Prabhupada
is the key.

Krsna is God
we accept
and speak
and hear and
chant.

When
can we surrender
more?
When
we serve more,
then. Pray, bent,
please let me serve.

Thoughts while riding on the Ratha-yatra cart: so many of my thoughts are of inadequacy. Passing through crises of feeling fallen. Passing through to better feelings.

My feelings are not so great. I'm usually tired and just want to get back to the temple. Then I feel unworthy and think in solace of my service—Sрила Prabhupada's biography—he was in New York.

But I cannot really think of him. A man brought photos of Prabhupada.

All I have is yearning. No real achievement. Without that yearning I would be dead. Yearning to go back to Godhead and yearning that the people of this city get Lord Jagannatha's blessings. Tell briefly how the Ratha-yatra took place with Lord Caitanya.

84-degree weather according to the MONY tower. I just went to the lot where the men are building the *ratha* carts. In a dark car lot, three colorful Jagannatha carts. I stay a few minutes to encourage the workers who will stay up all night. They are daily in their work clothes, assembling the colorful carts

for Kṛṣṇa to ride in. (It is an ancient tradition.) Three hundred devotees are coming from Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Washington. Anticipation for tomorrow.

In the car, we talked of a girl who joined the movement today and whose mother came to the temple weeping and creating a Puerto Rican mother scene. The girl remains with us.

I'll be riding on the cart with Brahmananda Swami. I'll have my own reflections on it.

Can I write about it?

July [?]

The day of the festival

No sooner did I sit down on the cart when I saw a peacock fan beside me. The Prabhupada *murti* was there, so I began fanning him and kept it up the whole time. That was for me.

Later I told the crowd some history of Jagannatha and Lord Caitanya and Prabhupada in New York City—told them to save themselves. The cops seemed to eye me curiously. I certainly eyed them curiously—all mustaches, blue shirts, and dark blue pants stuffed with a waist-load of gun, handcuffs, club, pad—our official protectors. They did their job by civil code, and for once they protected the devotees, walking the whole route peacefully, silently, once stopping a heckler—"Let the Kṛṣṇas parade."

Lord Jagannatha, You rode today with Balarama. One cart didn't make it. The crew failed. Two carts, tops billowing out with wind, one yellow and red and the other green and red. Old festival, I told them.

Prabhupada, you appeared in your *murti* form in nice shiny silks and I fanned you all the way from Columbus Circle to Washington Square. I never stopped.

We got good coverage on T.V.

Evening after the parade

Warm, 90 degrees. Proud, futile Empire State Building—top floors lit up with flood lights. Saturday night. But the

town seems different, a warm feeling as if the beast has a heart, the sinful machine has a soul within somewhere and it has been touched by Ratha-yatra.

All glories to the ISKCON family, boys and girls chanting sincerely, distributing books, taking part in the spiritual energy.

August 2, 1979

Baltimore

Heard '66 lecture by Prabhupada: (1) Vyasa gave us stories for the fallen souls of Kali-yuga. These days, we like detective, war, and killing stories. They are popular. Vyasa therefore told the story of a battlefield. The *Puranas* are stories.

(2) Sages go to the forest, but are thinking of the welfare of the fallen humanity and making some plan how to rescue them. The Six Gosvamis sat in Vrndavana, not for easy-going life in the name of renunciation—eating and sleeping—but they did *research* work in the scriptures to present the conclusion of Krsna consciousness in books.

These two points are quite relevant to our work on the biography as: (1) validity of literary and fictional techniques in presenting Prabhupada's life, and (2) the strong preaching feature of the biography work, even though it appears to be "sitting down."

Discussed today about past material desires and how they may rise again. It frightened me and sobered me to consider I too could fall down. I have to pray to the Lord and to Prabhupada to spare me from falling into *maya*. I must chant my rounds very carefully and not go to *maya*.

August 4

Soon to leave by plane for Vancouver. Everything is in Krsna's hands. I am supposed to speak endless knowledge at every

occasion. That can be done by repeating the words of Prabhupada and *sastra* as I have understood them. Believing, accepting, repeating, surrendering. We are taking our biography work with us.

Writing about Prabhupada.

Vancouver

When the guru comes, they offer flowers and sweet words; he in return speaks *kṛṣṇa-katha* and gives transcendental instruction. That instruction is also pleasing to hear. He expresses himself learnedly but humbly.

But sometimes he gives stern admonition if he feels his instructions are not being followed or if he feels his place is minimized.

If he is humble and inclined to sweet words, then why be stern? Why demand certain respect? Because he is responsible for his disciples. How will it benefit them if they do not follow or if they minimize him?

Not following—for example, not following “no illicit sex,” or not following renunciation—what is the use of taking a guru? And why honor him with flowers? It is an insult. Flowers are sweet when there is actual obedience, devotion—then there is affection. Not simply some ritual.

Offenses

Sometimes we hear that we may be suffering from offenses and not able to do our service.

Give the “Poison Tree” example. By not telling the offense, it becomes the killer of oneself and one’s friend. By telling, it can be cured.

Not just telling, but telling for purpose of rectification. We have to reveal our minds with that humble purpose in mind.

These really are weighty and subtle things.

We have heard of the transfer of sins incurred by eating in a wicked place, by touching the feet of a holy person.

When Saubhari Muni offended Garuda, he fell down. When Daksa offended Siva, he fell down and was ruined. When Amogha offended Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he got a disease. Gopala Capala offended Haridasa and his nose fell off. If we offend the holy name . . .

Haiku

I have a book on haiku and the aesthetic attitude may be valuable in presenting my cherished subject: Srila Prabhupada.

For me, he is all varieties of nature, and I want my reader to see him.

Let him come through. Haiku stresses not saying, "How beautiful," "How sad," but showing through concrete images.

The idea of not commenting on Prabhupada as much as showing him . . . try collecting such images of him without adding phrases like, "This shows his kindness."

But can a person be described without such adjectives?

Taking a look at the role of the guru

Sometimes we may think, "What is the need of taking a guru?" Certainly most Christians take this view. They think the guru in the heart is enough. One Quaker I spoke with was very glad when I told him of our belief in the guru in the heart, the Lord as *caitya-guru*, but he could not accept the other "rail of the train tracks," the guru as the spiritual master.

But he is needed. Why refuse him?

We have to proceed scientifically. All the *sastras* say there is a need.

One main understanding is that spiritual life means to make your connection with Kṛṣṇa. Yoga means to link. It is a personal relationship we are seeking with Kṛṣṇa. The goal of yoga, of austerity, of everything is Kṛṣṇa (nice verse in the First Canto on that point).

Then how to establish that relationship with the Supreme Person? By doing it His way. You cannot see the president your

way, but it has to be his way. His way is through His devotee. Love me, love my dog.

(When I speak these things, my motive must be not to simply trot out the teachings as if they need an airing by me, and not to glorify myself with an inescapable conclusion given to my audience that I am indeed that guru; therefore, they should know my wonderful qualities and treat me better! No, the goal should be thoughtful instruction, as they are mostly juniors, in fact, disciples . . . Teach them!)

Kṛṣṇa says you have to approach Him in this way. That is our goal. *Ye me bhakta-janah partha/ na me bhaktas ca te janah* . . . he is not My devotee who says he is, but he who is a devotee of My devotee.

Who is that guru? If it is necessary, then who shall it be? Is it arbitrary? Why should one person want to take so much praise or burden, or how could one person expect to be able to relate to so many persons? Is it only a symbol? A figurehead? How can it become a practical reality?

This we are all trying to work on. This is the work Prabhupada gave us. Somehow we have to succeed at this.

I could go on with this, it depends how subtle I want to make it. Make it mostly general. Keep it off the very personal level. Make it mostly that they have responsibility and cannot be neglected. Love and respect. Guru is also a person.

Sanat-kumara said, “I am very nicely questioned by you. Such questions are beneficial for all living entities.” Prthu was expert at questioning.

Sometimes one of our Godbrothers or disciples also asks a question that is so nice and pertinent that much truth comes out of the speaker which would not have come out if that penetrating inquiry had not been made. There is a definite relationship between the level of instruction that can be given and the audience. This is acknowledged in a purport in the First Canto and it is the whole basis, for example, of why Jesus Christ did not teach elevated instructions—his audience was low and antagonistic. The speaker becomes the servant of the

sincere inquirer, and a combination of them produces such good teaching that the whole world benefits for thousands of years.

We may not anticipate such wonderful questions and answers out of our humble attempts here. One doesn't think that by asking a question in the *Bhagavatam* class, his life will suddenly change, his devotional service will improve for good, and he will be free of *anarthas*. But it is possible, if one is submissive and if the speaker is authorized.

I would like to discuss a little about inquiry in relation to the disciple and the spiritual master. First of all, what is an *acarya* in terms of his preaching? He is one who does not invent anything. This is the real point. He repeats what has gone before. This is the whole fault of bogus teachers. They are not in *parampara*. They have no effect, despite creating a following. They cannot deliver. *Acarya* is like the pharmacist in a drug shop. He is authorized to give a certain medicine. Otherwise, on your own you cannot know what to take. No one on his own can know even, "Who am I?" *Acarya* has to tell you, as a druggist has to give you prescribed medicine; it's not that you take just any medicine. Only he can give you what you need for your particular ailment.

Guru is authorized.

It seems that in the few days that I'm here, I should speak what I have realized about the ISKCON guru.

August 13

Vancouver

A devotee is not supposed to ask anything of the Lord (*akama*), but I pray for ability and endurance to finish this volume and all the rest scheduled to glorify Srila Prabhupada in his biography.

On what basis do I pray that I should be the one who does this work? If I am replaced, surely Krsna can send a better writer and devotee to do it. How can I claim it is not for me selfishly, but for the world? I cannot. It is true, I am tainted.

Then I pray, "Lord, make me pure to do this book since I have begun it. Stick with me, but make me more fit."

Give me patience to work hard, divine inspiration to find the ways and means in words to make his divine life "come to life" for the world's readers. Grant me devotion to remember Śrīla Prabhupada day and night and set down accurately his words, gestures, and deeds.

Let me grasp his preaching mission and express it to the full extent. Let me learn from others what I cannot grasp about him myself. Grant me work a day determination to make a careful work rendering. Grant good fortune to my associates who are working with me on this.

Is it wrong to pray in this way? Is this *sakama*? I pray for protection and guidance to do this, and whatever you do with me, I pray to accept it in the spirit of *tat te 'nukampam su-samiksamano*.

Janmastami

7:00 P.M.

Fasting. Now go and chant before Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha-Madana-mohana.

*krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna he
krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna he
krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna raksa mam
krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna krsna pahi mam
rama raghava rama raghava rama raghava raksa mam
krsna kesava krsna kesava krsna kesava pahi mam*

*hare krsna hare krsna krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama rama rama hare hare*

9:00 P.M.

Bahudak singing *bhajan*s, explaining to Indians sitting on the lawn that fifty years ago, everyone in India would hear *krsna-katha* in the evening, not turn on the color television. Pointed talks for them. One quite old Indian has bleached blond hair. He's singing or making comments. I also led *kirtana* and preached a half hour on Brahman, Paramatma, Bhagavan.

Now Bahudak is reading how Brahma heard the message from Krsna (Visnu) that the Lord would appear.

Some children here run wildly. I'm up in my room. Any minute they'll come in and we'll have our own reading, then break fast.

The reason I left the program on the lawn is that I wanted to avoid the woman dancer who is supposed to perform at 9 P.M.

August 16

Vyasa-puja

They expect me to speak something about Srila Prabhupada.

I have proof that I am a rascal, and therefore how can I speak of him? I know I should arouse love, but feel I cannot (so many worthy, worker-disciples are praising him that I feel, "What is the point of also raising my voice!" Not a very noble feeling).

Overcome it. Is it so *difficult* to praise Srila Prabhupada from innumerable different angles? No, it's like diving in the ocean. I may not be the best diver or swimmer, but by his grace, I will be able to float.

Bahudak said that because they feel I'm sincere, they appreciate *whatever* I say. That's my point:

(1) I have not proven myself to be a very worthy disciple.

(2) Although it's easy to talk of him, it is at the same time difficult. Actually, again it comes back to the point of love. If I love him, I should be able to speak, and just my affection alone will be worth hearing to those already inclined to Srila Prabhupada.

The most blessed event! Let me realize!

The day he came into the world to save us. And we Godbrothers, we should be pleased at each others' devotion, not envious of each other. For myself, let me acknowledge the more advanced achievements of my GBC Godbrothers.

Feeling almost let down since becoming somewhat disengaged from the more intense labors of the biography. Eager to get myself into greater challenges of meditating, researching, and working on the next volume—his years in India.

I pray to discharge my duty and speak of him.

I feel unable to write of his life.

I feel—how can I deliver souls back to Godhead?

How can I completely relinquish sex desire, desire for praise from others?

Fear. Pain.

Please, Gurudeva, give me the strength to bear "all trials and troubles," and yet I am Gurudeva myself. *How can it be? How can I possibly be reciprocating, be "merciful" and "compassionate" to the degree described and desired by my disciples?*

We are demanding from them: don't minimize the guru. On your behalf, he performs his own service; he accepts your service and offers it to Kṛṣṇa.

August 17

Heading at 30,000 feet back to New York. I have definitely left my deep absorption in the 1966 volume of Śrīla Prabhupada's biography. Now I am overseeing its editing and (here and there) rewriting.

Otherwise, I am beginning to look toward my next project—the pre-America years of His Divine Grace. I want to concentrate on his spiritual heritage in India—the Gaudiya-sampradaya—centered mostly in Vrndavana and Bengal—coming down from Śrī Caitanya. This is the heritage he brought to the West. The life of his Guru Maharaja should be given, and of course, Prabhupada's relationship with him.

In upcoming months I should read what I can on the Gauḍiya Math since Caitanya and Bhaktivinoda—a history—and plan an outline—how to deal with his childhood, his youth and business years, family life, and renounced life. Focus on him in Vrndavana? Opening the whole book with 1975 inauguration of Kṛṣṇa-Balaram Mandir?

When you know better how you want to do it, then consider the need to go to India.

Chicago to New York

As the plane took quite a steep bank on takeoff, I thought, "At the last moment of my life, I will have to show my keenest desire." If I consider in this sense: "You've been a good devotee, what do you want?"—what would I choose? Is it enough to say, "Whatever You want, Lord?" How strong is my desire to stay in Prabhupada's service?

As the plane rose, straightening above the buildings, I felt an empty sense of my insincerity as proven on so many occasions when I went before my spiritual master with less than a purely surrendered will.

Then I thought, "Yeah, but his other disciples are like that too; they have *their* faults." Another distasteful realization came: my tendency to find fault and to talk critically of my Godbrothers.

How can I speak if I am ridden with such deep-seated attitudes? I wish I could give up the tendency to gossip and find fault with genuine servants of the Vaisnavas. I wish I had the strong, clear desire of what is best to think of as my ultimate spiritual desire.

Despite so many discrepancies, proofs that I am no pure soul, I go on confident and sure that I must represent our beloved Prabhupada.

August 18 New York City

I think I'm going to India(!) to research and write the biography, Prabhupada's early years.

Disciples

Evening meeting with devotee women—"How do we do austerity? How do we think of the spiritual master?"

He shouldn't be used as a means to do the *yajña*—an aid in doing the *yajña*—but he gives aid. One has to know how to take it. He may not know how he is giving the ability, (Oh, come

on! If he doesn't know, then how is he giving it?) *He feels very humble that they are doing so much on his behalf!* Yet there is strength from him if they will take it. He is aware of it and yet feels that personally, he has nothing to give. Still, he knows he is giving.

Then if that is accepted, can the guru give instruction how a disciple can take that mercy? Yes, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. It's the same advice, but there is potency in his words. His words have to be your command.

August 25

Gita-nagari

Going into India research. Still I don't chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with *laulyam*—intensely. Is it possible after so many years to still be chanting rounds only to get them done?

India, Prabhupada. The lost Prabhupada. Hidden years—and India is the most difficult place for me. No good communications, everything difficult, people speaking extravagantly, my being a foreigner there. I don't know what to make of it, whether they speak truly or not. And bugs—bugs internally and externally, but also *gurukula* boys, Deities, hogs, Vṛndavana. I want to go there soon, write about Prabhupada, and purify my devotional service. Serve both purposes: go there and simply write. Is it possible? Long hours, writing, writing, “cooking, interacting.”

Search the “lost” years—their essence—of my spiritual master. Let me go and do it.

Searching for Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vṛndāvana September 14–October 3, 1979

In the writing of this diary chapter, one can gradually see how I worked through the external culture shock of Vṛndāvana to a softened view, and then finally a more reverential appreciation of the mysticism. Although it may not seem so to the reader, everything that I wrote at this time was a preparation for the descriptions of Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vṛndāvana which appear in Volume One of the *Śrīla Prabhupāda-lilāmṛta*. Prabhupāda is not directly described in this diary chapter—he is elusive to me—partly because of my own false ego, but also because he cannot be easily attained except by pure devotion. And besides, these were just impromptu notes written down while the more serious literary work of gathering interviews and writing the versions of the biography chapters that we now have in *Śrīla Prabhupāda-lilāmṛta* was going on.

Readers of *Śrīla Prabhupāda-lilāmṛta* may take for granted events such as the date Prabhupāda moved from Delhi to Vṛndāvana, when he moved to the Vamśi-Gopāla temple, when he moved from there to the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, what time the first volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was published, and then the second, when he was in Delhi, and so on, but all those things were not known to us at this time. It was like detective work, and it was very exciting as gradually, bits of information came in. It wasn't that everything came directly from the interviews either. We had to cross-check the different persons we interviewed and guess their motives as to why they said certain things. Often, for example, Indian gentlemen that we

met said, "I was the one who told Swamiji to go to the West," or "I gave him the money to go to the West." We had to decipher from people's self-praise what was the actual truth of their connection to Prabhupāda.

While this was being written, the book distribution "warfare" was reaching a high intensity, especially in American airports. Deceptive lines and techniques were being exposed by television and newspapers. I was feeling twinges of conscience about this, even while in Vṛndavana. Although I myself was not one of the book distributors, we all felt the results of being accused as flim-flam artists. This impression of the Hare Kṛṣṇa members gradually and deeply took hold among the American public. There is no point trying with hindsight to justify my feelings of criticism toward some of the dubious book distribution techniques, but the diary records some of the naked feelings of unrest and guilt, fear and helplessness to change it—and worry at what would become of our movement if this continued. Even while in Vṛndāvana, you worry about other things.

Our whole research team went to India in September of 1979 and we divided up the land as follows: Kuṇḍali went to Calcutta; Śeṣa to Bombay; Baladeva to Vṛndāvana and Delhi; and I was given the assignment of Jhansi. Most of our initial contacts were names that we had picked up from Prabhupāda's early correspondence, which sometimes led to dead ends. It often took a lot of diligent work to track down our sources, and there was always the "India factor" to deal with in terms of travel and the normal austerities for Westerners in India. When I went to Jhansi, I was received cordially by some of the persons Prabhupāda formerly knew there, although on one occasion I was served meat and had to politely refuse it. I also met with some of the ladies of the social club who had originally put pressure on Prabhupāda to move out of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in Jhansi and I was surprised to find that they still held the same opinion—that their work was more important than Prabhupāda's.

Everyone who met Prabhupāda certainly had respect for him, although some were surprised at how such a humble person had

gone on to do such tremendous work in building a world religion. It was an almost universal response from those who had met Prabhupāda that he was a great preacher of *Bhagavad-gītā*, which they usually knew by attending some classes he had held in their area. This, of course, was not limited just to those who knew him after he had become a *sannyāsi*, but as far back as we found people, they all said he was a preacher of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

* * *

September 14, 1979

Plane's flying to Delhi. Going with four men to research. That means trying to find the order of events in Srila Prabhupada's life.

Head groggy from sitting in my plane seat, passing out unconscious, having snatches of dreams, sleeping sitting up in the chair. In one dream I signalled to a man in the street. He came up and I thought, "I will preach to him." But it was difficult because, I thought, "I have been so long out of practice." I asked him, "Do you believe in God?" He replied, yes. I wanted to ask him something further, but my mouth couldn't form the words. He looked at me, "Oh," as if I were retarded. I struggled to speak but could only repeat my first question, "Do you believe in God?" He started to walk away. I was ineffective.

Waking, my head against the window, my eyes carefully avoiding the sex and violence on the in-flight movie, I thought, "Why this dream where I could not preach?"

I turned impetuously to thoughts of the biography research ahead in Vrndavana: "What is this research? Why are you doing it?" I thought critically—how do you know Prabhupada wants you poking after these facts in his life? Is it really important to do this? Think of the other bold preachers!

Despite the criticism, I'm fixed. Writing his biography is important. We should not, however, put forward things in his life that appear mundane or make him look mundane. The presentation and selection are very important.

Certainly I must select many more facts, and thus the reason for our journey to Vṛndavana, five of us.

Mortal flesh, life temporarily kept within the vessel of this body. At any moment, by jarring or poking, the life can run out. Then by karma, another birth in another vessel—some of them horrible, stunted lives, all of them suffering. Ignorance brings sin brings reaction. This science I know.

Serve Kṛṣṇa for His happiness. Don't even pursue your liberation. Just aspire that He always keep you, life after life, as the servant of His servant.

But the mortal anxiety: when it comes, will I pass the test? Will I think of Kṛṣṇa and pass over to the side of freedom?

Engaged constantly in chanting and hearing about Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *sādhus* do not suffer from material miseries because they are always filled with thoughts of My pastimes and activities.

—Bhag. 3.25.23

September 15

Arrived in Vṛndavana. Delhi arrival 1:00 A.M., Lokanatha Swami with garlands and a big *kirtana*. Crowd stood around. Lokanatha Swami preached to them after the *kirtana*. Only in India. No official to stop us.

Then rode in car, still dark night.

First light of dawn, we saw pale violet flowers shaped with trumpet-like morning glory flare. They grow on vegetable-like bushes on the roadside.

Earlier, outside Delhi, homeless groups sleeping by the road, on cement on a bridge. A cow lying in a gutter either asleep or dead, calves awakened in the middle of road by an oncoming car.

Lorries approach us on the road head on—eerie green or yellow light like a third eye in its center and a picture, usually of Lord Siva, lit up—head on and then we veer to the left, almost

off the road and pass each other. Light traffic because dozens of trucks lined up on days-long queues, waiting for diesel fuel—shortage now.

Arriving at Krishna-Balaram Mandir; mostly *gurukula* boys led us to our room, the former Nama Hatta Room 44. Guest-house repainted very nicely. No doubt Bhavananda Goswami's care is pleasing to Srila Prabhupada.

I spoke to boys gathered in my room; it was 6:30 A.M. Said how I have come to research Prabhupada's activities and to write. I asked to just be kept in a corner of the activities here so I could work in peace.

Then we went to greet the Deities. They greet so quickly here and I was distracted and didn't take proper, prayerful *darsana*.

Then I spoke until 8:25.

Talked afterwards in my room with Lokanatha Swami until 10:00 A.M. I told him of recent events in the West.

September 16

3:10 A.M.

Chanted six rounds circumambulating the temple. It's different now that Srila Prabhupada is not here in his physical form, but he is certainly here in his teachings. I always recall the difficulty of politics when he was present—politics, not his, but some of his leaders. And most unfortunate to admit, the demand of his presence, his finding me most unworthy and unable to surrender to his command in his own eyes. I mustn't mistake it—but without overdoing it and piling guilt on my head. Nevertheless, there was a failing on my part. I live with that now, and possibly live in some hope of making up my failures to him with some new service and turning out in the end a better devotee. I am staking all on the biography. Praise him and establish his greatness. That is our objective.

5:30 A.M.

Chanted thirteen rounds. The Deities were beautiful at *mangala-arati*. The *kirtana* hall darkened, Śrīla Prabhupada on his *vyasasana* with a light there and bright red curtains surrounding him as he overlooks the *kirtana* and the Deities of Gaura-Nitai, Kṛṣṇa-Balarama and Rādhā-Syāmasundara.

After *arati* I wanted to go out alone with my men. Some confusion occurred and all of a sudden, five men, mostly strangers to me, were accompanying us. I again felt like an institution leader and lost all joy for the pre-dawn walk.

Was I on a *sahajīya* trip? I thought not. I was being cautious and yet I was yearning to search out a more personal, solitary Vṛndavana of my own. There was a glimpse of it. I just wanted to see things and enter them without having to speak. My words are so poor and there is more to feel. This land is the land where Kṛṣṇa walked. Prabhupada, when he walked here with us, never discussed these things much. He planned for practical preaching and trained us and worried about his worldwide movement. Yet we felt he knew Vṛndavana's secrets.

Was it wrong that I yearned to enter in my own mood, without distraction, this most holy land? Can I go wandering in Vṛndavana?

I said, "It's too dark. Let's turn back." We walked back. Lightning flashed in the sky, but there would be no rain. It has been like this all year: drought. Now no electricity for much of the day. I commented that nature here is severe: last year was a flood. Rupa-vilasa said that sometimes when he goes with the boys to the Yamuna, they see a corpse and vultures picking at it—they don't have illusions about the "pretty" material body. Not in Vṛndavana. Hearing that jarred my aesthetic mood. Is my solitary seeking for Vṛndavana itself a "pretty" illusion? I think not. I just want to walk alone and see things with my own eyes and show the same to a couple of disciples who will be very glad to accept whatever I feel, and I don't feel constrained with them.

Walking back to the temple, the tall Guesthouse coming into view. I thought, "Śrīla Prabhupada lives readily for us in

his magnificence in this temple—the Prabhupada before he went West to preach almost seems a smaller, lesser figure.” Yet it is not so. I want to sense his particular greatness. It is there. Him alone in Vrndavana with no followers, plans for a worldwide movement, writing, absorbed in Vrndavana.

There is some connection in my mind with my wanting to go out and see Vrndavana “on my own,” and my seeking for Srila Prabhupada when he was also living here and there in Vrndavana.

Jaya Prabhupada. You have so many dimensions!

You are the child of a long-ago memory who performed Ratha-yatra in Calcutta, and you are the force and order and inspiration of this year’s grand Ratha-yatras in Los Angeles and New York.

You are the child whose father taught him *mrdanga*, and you are all-pervading as all the *mrdanga* players in ISKCON (regardless of whether many others learn *mrdanga* outside of ISKCON).

You are all-pervading and all-knowing in ISKCON. You are here in the Deities’ worship. In the disciples . . .

I am trying to find the particulars to present the story all together of all your years, all the incidents once and for all told in the best possible way.

I feel the possibility at this moment to make great profit of my time in Vrndavana, if I can maintain my meditation on Prabhupada.

I am especially after pre-America Prabhupada. In each era his greatness is there; we have to express it and let it be known—we have to find it first, realize it.

7:00 P.M.

By Krsna’s grace, I managed to accomplish something today. Just wrote a rough draft about Prabhupada’s birth and his connection with the Mullik family. It’s rough and after it’s typed, I will make up a sheet of questions to be answered for gathering more material on it for a later draft. At least I was

working, and in a way, that contributes to this long, grand, gradually maturing project.

More on that, and at the same time I have to push on the research of Prabhupada as a *sannyasi* in Vṛndavana. Today—right now—Sesa is investigating at Radha-Damodara, Kundali is seeing Bon Maharaja. We'll meet tonight and confer.

September 17

Anniversary of the day Śrīla Prabhupada
arrived in the U.S.A.

6:00 A.M.

Seated beneath sandstone tower of Madana-mohana. Made *dandavats* before *bhajana-kutir* of Sanatana Gosvami while old men who lived there watched us. One was pulling the rope on a well that Kṛṣṇa was supposed to have used.

Flies are covering me as I write. Birds cheeping. Peacocks special beep and cat-like meow. Sky is coming lighter.

We left Kṛṣṇa-Balaram Mandir an hour ago in the dark and walked an old *parikrama* trail to get here.

I spoke to Baladeva and Gaura-Purnima, my disciples(!) without pretension, about how I am trying to understand Śrīla Prabhupada's *sannyasa* years here. He was absorbed in writing purports and articles.

I explained how Śrīla Prabhupada was always so cautious with us in Vṛndavana so that we wouldn't become *prakṛta-sahajiyas* and claim to see Kṛṣṇa, etc.

Yet he has written that Vṛndavana is so nice; even today one goes there and automatically feels separation from Kṛṣṇa.

It's run down, bricks in rubble piles, the 500-year-old temples falling apart, no modern hygiene (sewers running open on the curbside); but absence of Western violence, Western police cars, heavy institutions, heavy sex-call, T.V., and the demand to work hard for material things or else steal, take drugs, read newspapers, talk nonsense.

It's run down, but the average man, although abjectly poor, wears *tilaka*.

Whatever technology the Indians have introduced is faulty . . . radio sounds . . . some slow singing . . . birds, birds, birds, sky coming clear, we sitting on steps of the Madana-mohana temple.

Where is the trade? Where? Why Vrndavana? The material mind demands. What is the purpose of this town? It is for remembering God.

If that doesn't ring a bell, you are already too far gone in T.V. land.

Death is here
it is not a fantasy land.
Krsna lives and the
material world is
corpse-and-vulture.

Now a faint, red, smudge-like fire beginning to burn through a wall as the morning sun rises. Soon it will be hot. We should start walking back.

Where is Prabhupada? Think of him.

Don't be lazy.
You have to work and always be parampara.

September 18

6:10 A.M.

Sitting before the *samadhi* tomb of Rupa Gosvami at Radha-Damodara temple.

I was bewildered while approaching here as we confronted several packs of street dogs. One dog jumped up on a porch and caught a rat in his jaws. Sewers drain open and are visible coming out of openings in houses into the open drain. Entrance to Seva-kunja—as many monkeys as people, man feeding dogs. I had forgotten how conditioned I am to my so-called antiseptic, finicky Western ways. So skittish, so intolerant—now flies and ants crawl over my cloth and I cannot think. It takes a while to accept these things.

Sensibility flooded with Vṛndavana, but I am still at the stage of being shocked by material poverty or drinking in exotic impressions, almost intoxicated by the adventure. Suspect I am not a good devotee or . . . let me stop here. Nothing good to say about myself. Nothing to report.

We were at Rupa Gosvami's *samadhi*. Ants were on me and I was too consciously writing something for a special use. Anyway, chattering women came in numbers as pilgrims and our Godbrother, Venkata, came and reported that he had been robbed. I have to give a class. We saw piles of mud, stool, a crow sitting on the back of a hog. Black hogs, gray hogs, hog's udder, dog running down a sidestreet with a rat in its mouth, the same street we choose to go down. He drops the rat off for us to see its corpse. *This is not spiritual vision.*

Like a ticker-tape from my mind, these word impressions come forth; *sadhus*, nice to see them, wisdom in one man's face; another is a Mayavadi. Prabhupada has taught us everything, there is nothing to see, no one else to hear from for learning the truth. That has come from him only, and no one else could deliver us but our spiritual master. In fact, no one could be our spiritual master but his divine self, a million times more aristocratic than we, and yet of *this* India—familiar with the poverty and (what seems to me sometimes shocking) dirt—shocking only because I cannot see properly and am a finicky 20th century product. But I am earnest. I want to stay some days at the Radha-Damodara temple and the Kesi-ghata temple. The story is starting to become clear as to when Prabhupada stayed at each place.

I could tell the devotees in class: I am certainly a tourist to Vṛndavana, but I am trying to understand. Service is the important thing. Transcendental knowledge he taught us. I am feeling free from false concepts. Or at least I know the way to become free. Write this book about Prabhupada. Repeat the *parampara*.

September 19

In courtyard of Vṛndavana's Rangaji temple. A good-looking cow eating; must be cared for.

I'm exhausted from walking.

Spiritual life is in our temple, in Prabhupada's books. This is outside stuff—all neglected, filthy, crippled with poverty. And generally not even *parampara*.

ISKCON has wealth and knowledge.

Still, this is spiritual. But so much neglected.

We sit in the courtyard of Rangaji. We can go no further; Westerners not allowed.

From here, we can see the Govindaji temple. We went there. Many, many monkeys, including babies being carried; useless reproduction, useless sex of the monkeys. Govindaji *kirtana* hall spattered with bird stool, bats above—neglect, neglect. I think of the glorious *mangala-arati* at Krishna-Balaram Mandir. How beautiful everything is there.

Now we will go back. I am so fortunate as to be able to give the *Bhagavatam* class there. When the verse mentions the mercy of the devotees as greater than God, I know what it means in terms of Prabhupada. To apply it to me seems a farce; but if I keep in strict *parampara* from him, it can be done. The vital life of *parampara* is from him.

He is kind, the Lord. He sends the devotee and the devotee proclaims His glory and instructs us. In this age ISKCON is vital. I have to have faith that our course will straighten out. The public so dislikes us for our book distribution in the West. Here in India it is different.

But in both places, spiritual life is neglected, discredited.

Biography is preaching to establish Prabhupada as a great personality. I should push on and produce it carefully, but as soon as possible.

I pray our leaders (I am one, but only one, and less powerful in terms of saying what goes) will not unnecessarily worsen the public's thinking of us. Krsna is guiding us. They are sincere, Prabhupada himself has so much pushed the book distribution. What is ahead?

Let me be responsible for my part in ISKCON. Speak up and inquire from the others.

Mainly do the biography.

September 20

6:00 A.M.—Radha-Gokulananda temple

On our way here we stopped at a temple—maybe a Manipuri temple, I couldn't say—but it had a nice Jagannatha with arms open, as if to embrace the worshiper. And Radha-Kṛṣṇa, and yellow Gaura-Nitai, Gaura and Nitai in two separate, original poses.

Light increases slightly now as Kṛṣṇa's nature brings the sun on the earth. Colors of old beaten houses in town were otherworldly in soft, barely-dawn light. What am I looking for in these walks so early that even the monkeys and dogs aren't rousing yet?

Thoughts of ISKCON. My writing the biography as service. Self-conscious view of writing a diary to be read to the folks back home.

All value has to be seen in terms of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Go today at 2 P.M. to see the room Śrīla Prabhupada stayed in at Kesi-ghata temple from 1956–1961. Important place.

Writing of his childhood is coming nicely.

September 21

To some small degree you have to see his vision to go to the West and distribute books: you have to see how he was here in Vṛndāvana when the order of his spiritual master was speaking to him in the night hours and in the day. As he moved here and there preaching in India, successful at least in publishing three volumes of *Srīmad-Bhagavatam*—printed privately—going here and there alone, trying to direct the vast continent, the newly independent nation who was not really so receptive.

The other possibility living in him, to go to the West. (As early as 1958 he had a promise.) It seemed very hard to go because of his visa and money situation, and how could he expect to effect something? But something was calling him. We now know that was the genuine promise, because now we know he succeeded beyond all good expectations, not only to sell some

books among the Westerners, but to create a worldwide movement of dedicated followers of Kṛṣṇa in the midst of a very bad age. (The positive vision he implanted in us then has to be living in us still, or how could we appreciate and believe in Prabhupada?) Of course, his hopes and plans regularly grew; and as little successes came, he pushed for more and more.

It is not merely for our own liberation. Eternal service means saving the *jīvas* in this world and making many, many people into devotees. If that still doesn't live, what good is it? Hope that big change can come about.

Believe that his original pure mission still lives purely in the hearts of his followers.

(Myself, I share and carry only a small part of it. I'm especially concentrating on the purity of his life.)

Those who are more responsible and influential in directing the movement, do I want to speak something to them? Do I have a message? Do I think they have gone off course in their distributing books so forcefully in such an increasingly alien atmosphere and bad publicity?

Or am I lacking the very faith I speak of—faith in Prabhupada's vision to distribute books—which so fills the heart of Srila Ramesvara and the others? I have approached them before about it. I am not taken very seriously, that's a fact. Why bother? And anyway, what is my message? What is my plan?

Is the growing alienation of the U.S. public against us merely a media attack, and therefore we should not change anything? Or if we admit the need to change, what change is permissible in order to continue paying our expenses and distributing books? Even if there is a decrease in books, maybe we need to change. Rupanuga seems to have analyzed it.

I can write letters, but my main mission is to push on here and compile the story of his life. I can inquire of my God-brothers in real humility (admitting my tiny role), but I also share the burden for carrying his mission and I have to believe in the leadership and direction of the *sankirtana* movement.

Even to write his life, this faith is required, or how can I portray with full faith what he did if I feel it went astray?

5:45 A.M.—to the banks of the Yamuna (dawn of a moonless night)

Approaching here on *parikrama*. In darkness we make out some shapes, dark masses, then in their center a sudden glow of a cigarette—it is a driver with two water buffalo. They pass us, buffalo snorting softly.

Now at Yamuna. Ancient bicycles and men dressed in old pajamas. Poor people. Today is some special day to bathe in Yamuna. Came from Mathura. Sometimes unusual color combinations. Before me a brown man with pink *kurta* and plaid *lungi* down to his ankles. Now a dark man with long black hair and beard, and dark, dusky orange robes.

Pilgrims wading through Yamuna tributary on way to Yamuna.

We are sitting on an embankment, watching. Getting some stares, but people are all peaceful. (So many people in the West, it would be louder, more display of false ego with men and women.)

Men and women mixed here but all are subdued, going to the Yamuna. Some of them carrying small *lotas*.

Sometimes chanting in the distance. Landscape is flat. Sandy embankments, below which is the river. On the way here, farmers' lands with walls built of earth to contain agricultural field. A clear water well along the way draws people to stop. Old bicycles parked. Three buffalo crossing the tributary en route to the Yamuna.

Why are they going? Why have they come? For spiritual purification. Religious observance.

Ordinary people. Now as dawn lightens, they are talking more, less subdued. Coughing, someone spits.

Sitting, squatting, conversations.

The sky with no clouds, expanse of gray-blue.

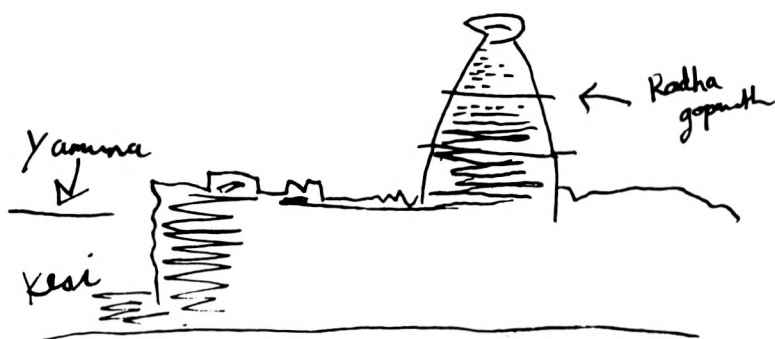
Men wearing simple turbans. No clothes are washed with brightening detergents, so everyone becomes dull. Still, there are nice white shirts, a blue shirt, a light green turban.

Some ladies in a group singing, sound like children.

Kṛṣṇa's Yamuna gathering, He is the background.

Haribol, Haribol.

And in the distance I see the tower dome of Radha-Gopinatha temple and Kesi-ghata. It is there that Prabhupada stayed in his rooftop room at Vamsi-Gopala temple. At this time he might be on the roof, looking.



He didn't take part in extensive Yamuna bathing—went resolutely alone from place to place intent on his writing and printing. Chanting *japa-mala*, following some plan to contact big men. After all, he was an educated man. Many people here are simple and uneducated. Far less read English than, they say.

September 22

Just spoke about our investigations to devotees (mostly *gurukula* boys) in Prabhupada's room.

Spoke of Mahant Gopal of Vamsi-Gopal temple, and Prabhavati of Radha-Damodara temple. It's good to speak of it. There is real nectar in Prabhupada's activities.

I'm trying to speak something of the meaning of these years—how no one suspected he would do what he did, nor could anyone else do it, nor could anyone in Vrndavana even dream of such a thing. He went and conquered the Westerners.

I hear him singing now over the P.A., circa 1975 or so. He becomes grander, more magnificent than he was in 1956. He

grew more and more. But he was already a pure devotee. We have to show him in that dramatic tension of the present with the future still unknown.

How did Śrīla Prabhupada feel about Vṛndavana as he lived here?



Again 6:00 at Radha-Damodara temple

Doors to the altar were latched. One old lady opened them, spread water with her hand over stone, and placed small white flowers on the water, one beside another, then a separate pile inside the Deity room. Then she left. Taking *caranamṛta*. When she approached the Deity she threw up her arms and gave a typical cry the old women give before the Deity, an emotional, broken-voiced kind of supplication—"Jaya Radhe" (or something similar); but sad, surrendered, old woman cry.

I prayed to Radha-Syamasundara of ISKCON that I be able to write an appreciation in *parampara* of the eternal Kṛṣṇa conscious knowledge, its entrance into this world, and the *parampara* of the *acaryas* right up to the birth of Śrīla Prabhupada. Its tone would have to be very special—not drawing attention to itself, yet not at all condescending or "academic." Putting together *parampara* history as leading up to Prabhupada and thus explaining his roots. You could do it in an ordinary fashion, but I want to do it somehow so it will be very wonderful. That means I have to realize it. Best reading to prepare for this is *Caitanya-caritamṛta* and *Bhagavatam*—see

how the authors wrote *sastra*. You shouldn't deliberately do something less. The language is modern and you are, of course, a small figure in *parampara*, but *siddhanta* must be there.

Street scenes

A dog with two front legs in pitiful bandy shapes, probably from some disease. An animal like that would be destroyed in America so that people would not have to look at him. Here, he walks the street, a stark reminder of the ugly side of material life. It is all ugly, but here the bandy-legged dog spells it out vividly: sin and you may become like me.

Other horrible sights with dogs having sex in pain and fighting with other dogs at the same time. I won't even mention it, it was so horrible.

And the big sow—even her little piglets were having sex.

The point is, we can describe how material nature shows miseries here. Vrndavana cultures higher consciousness, stresses Deity worship, and at the same time, shows us the human being having only misery in his temporary existence—and worse misery if he takes an animal birth.

In the West they claim sometimes that the Indian is inclined to spirituality *because* of his poverty—he has it so bad that unlike us, he turns to the heavens for relief. But that is a Western illusion—that we “have it made” because of a “high” standard of living, and therefore don't need spiritual life. It's not that there are no birth deformities in the West, but we are trying to hide them.

Another contention is that the celibate doesn't face up to the reality that sex is the primal force of life. He is a fantasizer and they doubt he ever really transcends. But we say, “If you really want to face facts about sex, then see here how the pig has sex, and the fighting dog. Look at it—apart from your pornographic pinup or movie sex star or your ‘love’ affairs—it is the same as what these animals are doing.” When one sees so much animal sex, he isn't really inclined to do it himself as much as to aspire to the special prerogatives of human life that go beyond this. Man spurns the lower sex

drive and aspires to see the Lord out of his natural yearning for higher life—of which he is capable in the human form—rather than to degrade himself like the humping pig and dog. Those are the real facts of bodyhood, motherhood, and sexhood—it's the same as the hogs. As for primal force, that means creation, and humans can use it in that way in the Lord's service, but first let them establish themselves as servants of the Lord, as more than this body.

In the biography I couldn't get into such didactic remarks, but tell what I see as well as show it; or expertly "show" it so it is telling.

I thought: soften the portraits of misery I see here. At least don't dwell on them. One can see all, the red flower high on the tree, the red dawn and sunset—and the fighting dogs and filth—in overall sight, but as an artist in portraying a scene finds some aesthetic essence and conveys it, so the essence of Vṛndavana is certainly beyond a merely empirical description of its woes. That is what I meant by describing the woes, but with a "softened" rather than harsh use of words. Be sympathetic to Vṛndavana. This is one of the keys to my understanding the real secret of Vṛndavana—Goloka—which is covered by this external, dirty Vṛndavana.

September 25

I recall vaguely some line by Blake that if the fool only persisted in his folly, he would become wise. I think how one could excuse me of so many deficiencies for preferring to spend so much time alone reading and writing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If I were really completely absorbed in studying the *Bhagavatam* and *Caitanya-caritamṛta* and writing down genuine realizations—so much so that I forgot all else, forgot to sleep and eat and simply went further and further into this—wouldn't it be valuable preaching and an example, and couldn't I better satisfy so many devotees' hearts?

Remember this next time you feel anxious about why you don't do other things more or why you have "sacrificed so much" to become a writer in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You have not

begun to sacrifice; you have not begun to be intensely absorbed in this culture of knowledge.

Do so. Persist in this “folly” of your own path as much as possible, keeping guru and Krsna in the center.

September 27

6:00 A.M.—Madana-mohana temple

On this sacred spot I disavow my wicked mind, which drags me down. This morning I could not write on the new section, the philosophical history of Krsna consciousness, and my mind tried to make it a cause of great general dissatisfaction. Plotting to leave Vrndavana, to admit failure, lamenting, criticizing everyone, every sight, every smell, and even imagining illness upon myself.

I curse that mind. There are obstacles, but surely I can overcome them.

I don't have to be writing every minute *or else*.

But that new section? It just needs your life and enthusiasm. Approach it. If something is wrong, work it out. Try to solve. Try to think it out and make it live.

Eagle on top of Madana-mohana temple. Pigeon below like New York City pigeons—same cooing, same everything.

Sacred land, please reveal what I should do here. The facts of Prabhupada's life are being gathered and I am supposed to be writing a rough draft. Please help me do it, O Prabhupada, O Krsna, O Vrndavana. Let me serve.

September 28

Now I've made plans to leave Vrndavana in about six days. Still, in this time I can tape-record impressions of neighborhoods that Prabhupada walked in and other general impressions.

I was wondering about the town and social life, the social divisions, places of intellectuals, etc. Prabhupada especially appealed to more educated men with his BTG—get that from

talks with long-resident devotees and also men like Bhagatji. This is another level of the reality of Vṛndavana.

Prabhupada kept to himself while living in Vṛndavana and writing. He said he was perfectly situated there, and yet his ambitions in preaching were so great.

Also, I think I should carefully study his writing for this period—because his main absorption was writing, and he would also visit the temples. Visit and write—a sublime atmosphere.

Heat, sickness—all concentration and inspiration gone. I can hardly read a word, can hardly eat, but can't sleep either. Precious time passes. I seem to be killing time. My golden days wandering the paths of Vraja have suddenly ended and I cannot work here. There are some days left here and I may still be able to contribute important data to the research and the inspiration.

I pray to write down impressions and inward thoughts on the biography volume as a whole—while staying in the Radha-Damodara room. I'm a fool, a fool, a fool.

Radha-Damodara temple—Staying in Prabhupada's rooms

From the doorway, when the Deity doors are open, I can see only the Deity on the far left, Kṛṣṇa as worshiped by Kṛṣṇa-dasa Kaviraja, Vṛndavana-candra.

Measurement of the main room is seven feet by fifteen feet; floor is cemented in stone tiles. Flat surface is easy to clean with water.

Now writing by candle as electricity is out, as it often is in Vṛndavana. It's 7:25 P.M. Someone is playing "whomper" cymbals.

On porch or veranda, soft light and shadow. Looking out the door at maybe ten feet of porch (stone square) floor, and then Prabhupada's kitchen with its five-foot-high door.

His original *danda* is here.

Slight curve to the left of floor in room and porch.

Sounds from town are distant. The street is off the main business congestion, but right near it. Radha-Syamasundara nearby on this street.

Shadows of people walking by. People's voices come from different directions.

Street dog can be heard distantly.

While writing, a dry, old-looking frog just appeared in the dim light. All these things were easily part of his life in 1961–65.

Room doesn't seem at all secure. If one were to leave anything here and go to Delhi for a couple of months, it would be easy for someone to break in. Doors at either end. They are double doors with a latch, but very flimsy.

Over door there is a recessed section in which a picture or articles could be put. A similar shaped one is on the side wall with another large one under it.

Someone is chanting Hare Krsna with whompers, very melodic, not the simple tune Prabhupada brought us, and the beat is different.

A man came and stared at the doorway. He was tall, old, dressed in white. We both seemed startled. He said nothing and finally went away. He is staying in the room next door.

While here, try to get round-the-clock details.

September 29

1:45 A.M.

Most of the night there were noises, especially voices of men and women exchanging (something I don't ever hear in an ISKCON center). Late in the night, even at midnight, I still heard it. And voices other places. For me, it's all Hindi.

Here especially, I am too much in the present and my own ego and body to communicate directly and get confirmation or direction from Srila Prabhupada, but I am getting the data of the size of the room and description of the *mandira* grounds. I like the room itself.

He wrote a great deal when here. Why can't I? I have a whole project, but I'm here for only a couple of days. Let me record the data and see for the rest.

5:30 A.M.

I put some observations on tape of very early morning activities here, and even a reflection on Srila Prabhupada's staying here.

I wrote in some notes—"see it through his eyes." That is possible by the techniques of presentation based on what we know of his views and situation at each given period. I can safely say, for example, that he chose to come to Radha-Damodara temple because he sought the inspiration of working and living in a place of the great souls, Jiva and Rupa Gosvamis. That is seeing through his eyes without speculation. Details of temple life here can also be presented "as if" he is experiencing the dawn, he is seeing the Deity. The reader is introduced to phenomena through Srila Prabhupada.

In America, we pictured me in this very place writing by candlelight and here I am.

The old men cry, "Jay-o!" as they approach the Deities. It is different than the ladies, whose "Jaya Radhe" is a womanly, broken-voiced cry or sob sometimes, and yet expression of love and dependence. The men's is also full of supplication.

The old man with long, wavy gray hair down the back of his neck, wrapped in a completely faded, once-white wrapper and *dhoti* bottom, old, seemed almost too feeble to hold the gong.

Some men are not so broken and approach with a loud, courtly, gentlemanly address, "Sri Sri Radha-Damodara?" greeting their King at the dawn *darsana*.

There are varieties of supplications.

Prabhupada was often hearing the *maha-mantra* at this temple, the same *maha-mantra* he would bring to the West. He had plans beyond dying here and going back to Godhead. He wanted to save the world.

I can openly state that he had that spirit and document it as the spirit of his Guru Maharaja. Show the *preaching* spirit of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, how he even had a daily newspaper for ten years, Nadia Prakash, and presses, etc.

Show the vital preaching record and spirit of Gaudiya Math while he was present. Then it died out amid quarrels of inner dissension.

That spirit resided in Prabhupada even while he lived here at the Radha-Damodara temple. He was writing and getting subscribers for BTG, and finally decided to go himself.

7:00 A.M.

Back at ISKCON

At least I'm pondering some right questions:

What is it like for *sadhus* to live here with no plan of leaving to preach? What is the positive side of that? Can they actually follow Rupa Gosvami today and live here in increasing Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

The beauty—the secret, completely otherworld saturation here of Kṛṣṇa. Nowhere else in the world. Dirt, disease, weather—one adjusts to it. It is an extraordinary place and you have to grasp some of it to know why he left.

5:00 P.M.

Again in Srila Prabhupada's room—Radha-Damodara temple

The life in this room is open, especially to sound. I shouldn't complain since Prabhupada didn't, but I can note it factually about this place. He was writing alone, determined, renounced from family, but it was a noisy place at certain times of day—*open to sounds*.

Radha-Damodara look very beautiful tonight, nicely dressed and faces decorated. We went out to Radha-Ramana and saw Him—conchshell eyes like sunglasses, short pants, shiny black legs with ankle bracelets, dress and crown of Radha beside Him. It was a special day and He was moved forward for closer view.

Then we went to Sri Sri Radha-Gokulananda. The *pujari* pointed out the smallest brass Kṛṣṇa as Gokulananda, as worshiped by Visvanatha Cakravarti; Radha-Vinoda bigger (black) worshiped by Lokanatha Swami, and Vijaya-Kṛṣṇa by Baladeva Vidyābhusana.

After *arati* at Radha-Damodara
 each Deity named
 and then *ki jaya*
 then Rupa Gosvami *ki jaya*
 Sanātana Gosvami *ki jaya*
 Jiva Gosvami *ki jaya*
 Gaura-premananda *Hari Haribol*

September 30

Srila Prabhupada's room—Radha-Damodara temple

I have been seeing Srila Prabhupada as untouchable, saintly beyond my recognition, in those years in his “undercover” appearance as lone writer in India. Then I felt this: the real method to realize Vṛndāvana's secret and the secret of how to present Srila Prabhupada in those years is to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *japa*. Lord Caitanya's eight prayers should be my motto, especially *tmad api sunicena, taror iva sahisnuna*.

These two things struck me as conclusive, as a reward given to me for the earnestness of my traveling here to stay at this holy spot, and as the means to best gain the ability to write of him.

Coming through the door into the courtyard where Rupa Gosvami's *samadhi* is (through a hall where the six Gosvamis lived), the sight in early morning is sanctifying. It is a downhill, brick, broad walkway. At this time of year, one sizable tree is completely stripped of bark and stands white. Rupa Gosvami's *bhajana-kutir* is white.

The sky is light, and the total effect—because of *knowledge of these great souls' practices in this spot—becomes beautiful, purifying dawn. Their history, safety from maya—a remembrance of*

their love of Kṛṣṇa—all in a wordless form enters your mind and transforms you.

Be receptive to Vrndavana.

But after I leave, how? Do you have enough to remember? And how can you remember or describe the different seasons?

(In the 26 Second Avenue book, feeling was always possible by my own memory. Now it's something else. Decorate my room with all the *old* pictures of him.)

Pray to praise—write of him by reflecting on his own words, the facts, the interviews, the pictures.

October 2, 1979

almost 9:00 P.M.

Tomorrow is my last full day in Vrndavana. I am not even trying to write anymore. It is simply “last day” consciousness. Also, the almost romantic quest for the real Vrndavana is not my pursuit and neither am I even jotting down things I see. I like Vrndavana more than ever, and I want to walk and see the forests, the water, trees, birds, and the Lord in the many temples, but the main thing for coming here was to research. On that level, it has been mostly done; we seem to have whatever was there. On other levels, such as being able to give descriptive scenes of Srila Prabhupada, I don't feel entirely expert, but I can do some of it and I have a plan to get others to go on compiling scenery and seasonal changes for me. The idea of getting direct inspiration from Srila Prabhupada here in direct communion? I had some of it. That one night in his room I woke up thinking I would find it by nicely chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and by studying the prayers written by Lord Caitanya.

Soon I will be back in New York, then Gita-nagari. Then will I think, “Oh, you cannot know what it was like for Prabhupada without being in Vrndavana. You should be in Vrndavana”? I think I will be able to do that by meditating. I don't think I am leaving here prematurely.

October 3

About to leave to give a last lecture at Radha-Damodara temple; Prabhupada did that also. So many present demands, 1979, it's hard to drift back to then, me anonymous, beside him—not really possible, but imagined.

His figure then, certainly the same saffron as anyone here, *japa-mala*, eyeglasses we have seen in photos. Walking the streets, sitting down to write. (How different he seems than after he became leader of a world movement—yet he did not change essentially, but seemed to take on more grandeur and beauty to fulfill the office.)

In the last hours, some nice friends here asking me to extend my stay. But after a week, big leaders will start arriving and it will surely be difficult to stay in the mood of Śrīla Prabhupada when he was here in 1956–65. Seems I could better stay in that mood by meditating on it at Gita-nagari.

I will go. Maybe I am feeling a little separation from Vṛndāvana. It is shelter. I saw the Madana-mohana steeple and thought, "This is the last time for me." Then I thought, "What if I lived here permanently and knew I would always see that tower?" It seems a place of real shelter. Even a coarse man, a coarse gesture here does not have the obscene snarl and violent attack of the same thing in the West. Walking back, I passed the row of *nim* trees.

Walking back chanting. I am with the *gurukula* boys. Being with them is also shelter. We have to leave this world; why not do it in Vṛndāvana?

Back to the nasty West. Do I get a feel in the tiniest for Prabhupada leaving here? At 70 years old, leaving Govardhana and the Yamuna and Radha-Damodara, the place of all the great Gosvamis who stayed there until their last days. He risked dying in some strange faraway place where he might never see Vṛndāvana. As he wrote on the boat, "Feeling separation from Their Lordships, so far from Vṛndāvana."

The whole town is Kṛṣṇa conscious. Pictures of Kṛṣṇa everywhere. Pilgrims coming, some very countrified, religious, enthusiastic to see Kṛṣṇa. Many kinds of people. In town, no

hygiene by our standards—food cooked and sold—*pan* leaves, those quick hands preparing them for reddened mouths.

A thousand sights a minute. Anyway, my words fail, especially in the town sights. Old Vrndavana has more quiet, country mood. Worship, renunciation, simplest life, Yamuna, and going back to Krsna.

Rapt In This Meditation on Prabhupāda October 5–December 29, 1979

This was really a special time. I felt great ecstasy while living in the cabin at Gītā-nāgarī and writing Volume One of the biography. I would work with Śeṣa Prabhu on a daily basis. He would make an outline of the facts which had been accumulated from many research hours, and then, toward the end of the day, I would use that outline to prepare myself for early morning writing. Once everything was readied, I would take rest, then rise around 12:30 and begin. By the end of December we had completed almost 200 pages.

Also notable in this chapter is the installation of my Śrīla Prabhupāda *mūrti* in the Gītā-nāgarī cabin. I had hoped that it would help in my meditation on him and that I would be able to pray to the *mūrti* for good fortune in writing the biography. Once, Jayādvaita Swami visited and saw the deity of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and he quoted from one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books where it says that a devotee can sit down before the Deity and write many volumes of books. It was encouraging to hear that. It made me feel that Kṛṣṇa's mercy was at work every day, that Kṛṣṇa Himself was revealing how to put that first volume together. The first volume is special in the way it keeps so close to Prabhupāda. One reader said, "It's as if the reader is sitting on Prabhupāda's shoulder like a little bird, watching everything as he does it." That kind of faith in the writing of the biography in those times was very humbling; it was a sense of being close to Prabhupāda and being guided by the Lord. Those were the "Volume One ecstasy days."

It has become customary in television and newspaper journalism to have some kind of year-end or decade-end review. Mundane writers characterize the 1960s as a time of sexual and cultural revolution in America. The 1970s were marked as the "Me Decade," with "flower power" and "peace, man" making way for the more mercenary attitudes of career-building and getting ahead. For the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, however, the 1960s and 1970s were the decades when Srila Prabhupāda, our founder-ācārya, personally arrived and led his devotees to tremendous expansion all over the world and in all areas of preaching.

In one sense, the division of time into decades, emphasized by journalists to create copy for their magazines, is actually somewhat artificial. Kṛṣṇa consciousness sees all time from the eternal point of view, in which a decade or a century is just a blinking of Brahmā's eyelash, or even less than that. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is eternal, and the appearance and disappearance of the spiritual master may also be viewed in that way. Similarly, whatever participation we have in Lord Caitanya's movement is also eternal, never suffering diminution or loss, and it cannot be confined to a footnote of material history or as an event of the latter part of the 20th century.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's prediction that one day Bengalis, Americans, and Europeans would all gather in Māyāpur-dhāma and chant, "Jaya Śacīnandana," actually became fulfilled under Prabhupāda's personal presence and inspiration in 1974, at ISKCON'S first annual Māyāpur festival. And in the 1970s, Lord Caitanya's prediction that the holy name of Kṛṣṇa would be known in every town and village was well on the way to becoming a reality. The 1970s also saw almost all of Prabhupāda's books published, and he personally said that in the future, everyone would recognize that these books had saved the world from barbarism. Less auspiciously, the '70s saw the rise of the first anti-cult activity to challenge ISKCON; but even that, Prabhupāda told us, had its place in the total scheme of things. He said the movement would first be laughed at, then become an object of persecution, but finally it would pass into a period of fuller acceptance.

Everything was stirred and agitated to the greatest pitch in the 1970s by Prabhupāda's personal presence, almost the way the Lord agitates the living entities and throws them into the cosmic situation. Although the '70s ended with the shock of Prabhupāda's disappearance, ISKCON itself was healthy and continuing to grow. For me, it was a time of struggle and coping to survive; of trying to serve more and to get the last personal association with Srila Prabhupāda.

This particular diary volume concludes here at the end of 1979, but I was to continue my journal writing practices. In one sense, everything after 1977 may seem anti-climactic because I cannot write about new meetings with Srila Prabhupāda. Yet in the post-disappearance period, we had, as a movement, to go through many changes to try to understand Prabhupāda's will and how best to serve him. The story of his devotees trying to do that is itself historically important. Even in separation from Prabhupāda, one is able to be with him, and in fact, according to the philosophy, it is not supposed to be lesser, so the effort is to do that. As Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura wrote in his essay, "Humbler Than a Blade of Grass":

The moment I fall away from the lotus feet of Shri Guru or forget them, I certainly fall away from the Truth. As soon as I fall away from the lotus feet of Shri Guru I find myself encompassed by innumerable wants. I run in a hurry for my bath. I become busy for preventing a cold. I run after other occupations different from the service of Shri Gurudeva.

* * *

October 5, 1979

Plane en route Frankfurt to London

I left Vrndavana out of anxiety that I was not writing on the biography but more just "staying" in Vrndavana. Now let that anxiety propel me into concentrated writing—I can study his BTG and also *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and see how I can com-

ment on them. *Get into meditation on Prabhupada then—especially his preaching, and that means his writing. He was writing without a dictaphone. Whatever facts we have are important—but his spirit and will to write and how it was coming—that I have to give in my appreciation.*

October 12

Gita-nagari

I was just doing some admitting to Laksmi-Nrsimha of New York. We were talking about how to encourage my disciples there. Myself as guru, how different from Srila Prabhupada! He started this movement, provided everything for it. What have I done? My only qualification is that I surrendered to Srila Prabhupada. Working on the biography makes me see it clearly: he did everything. I came in a wretched state and was saved by him. Now we are carrying on his movement. He built a skyscraper and we are filling it in. He did it. *So let my disciples be inspired by the fact that I am granting them bona fide initiation in disciplic succession.* What more can I claim? I am a boy he picked up and favored. My qualification is that I brought him mangoes, I am doing services for him. And even those services I am doing are faulty. I cannot even assist him or glorify him without making some mistake and bringing about the opposite effect I intend. And yet our problem: hundreds are approaching me as guru. They cannot worship me the same as they worship Srila Prabhupada because I am not of his stature. Whatever stature I have, still, I have many God-brothers who are at least equally good and serving and leading. *"My disciples" should be indebted personally that I am extending his mercy to them, the mercy of Krsna in parampara, granting them initiation, granting them shelter through the via medium connection.*

October 13

Requirements for intensive reading session of Prabhupada's books: a light, eyes, a book, a brain of course.

But also—not falling asleep. The mind has to work. It has to be active; and receive.

Deep inside, an attitude, “Please keep coming in, O knowledge of these purports. I am hungry for the solace and enlightenment of these pages.”

Inevitably, I doze sometimes. Then ! require tolerance. Keep going.

Time—Give yourself as much time as possible.

Faith—Faith is being restored by this reading. And initial faith is also required.

As stated by Prabhodhananda Sarasvati, “O learned person, suspend your knowledge and kindly hear about Lord Caitanya.” Keep at a distance the contamination of other forms of *jnana*. Do not read mundane books at the same time.

Within, take the reading as very important.

Now I must read again. Pushing, persistent, reading again a page I have not been attentive to. Going back if needed, a whole chapter, reading just the verses this time. Noting and appreciating knowledge that is new, coming to you for the first time. This requires keenness. Yes, you have seen Srila Prabhupada give that quote from the *Gita* before, but never in this exact context. Appreciate.

Look at your watch. Time is running out! Observe time. Restrict yourself; use as many of the minutes as possible, not that you and time and the book drift together down a stream of semi-consciousness.

Where is Kṛṣṇa? Where is the key to my own lamentation? *Everything* is in these pages, be sure.

The Vaisnava *kavi* prays, “When will the day come when I will relish the literature left by the six Gosvamis?”

Srila Prabhupada also said that if you feel mentally tired from one book, then read a different one.

How will you become philosophical unless you read his books? And if you are not philosophical (I mean, as a bhaktivedantist), how can you be Kṛṣṇa conscious? How can you be saved from death? How can you be a preacher?

This is an aspect of the spiritual master. As Srila Prabhupada says, he is a transcendental professor.

Remember going to see Prabhupada seated behind his desk very early in the morning after he had been dictating his purports—his spectacles on, reading one of his own books (which he said amazed even him because he did not write them—Kṛṣṇa did). At those times, how his knowledge of the *sastra* kept away all ignorance. A guru *must* know. And he was writing these books and reading the *acaryas'* commentaries for many years. "Let anyone come and talk on the basis of philosophy and logic, we have these books. No one can defeat us."

Now two years and more after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance, do you want to know him intimately? Then know his books. His ecstasies. "Cram my purports."

Most people can't appreciate *Bhagavatam*. It is too deep. But we are fortunate. As devotees, we already have the requirements to enter this knowledge. They are for you, they are written for you. No one else can understand them but you, the devotees.

The goal is love. "In all circumstances one should try to develop love of Godhead, and that will solve all contending problems."

Am I saying that just by reading Prabhupada's books, love will develop? Yes, if you *act* on what you read. If you remember, then you can act on the basis of *bhakti*. If you do not hear (*sra-vanam*), then how can you chant or preach (*kirtanam*), and how can you remember Kṛṣṇa (*visnoh smaranam*)?

You have nothing to remember unless you have read the *Gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and you will forget unless you regularly read. Therefore, my dear disciples, please read Srila Prabhupada's books whenever you get a chance. Develop a passion for them.

October 15

The Absolute Truth is Sri Kṛṣṇa, and loving devotion to Sri Kṛṣṇa exhibited in pure love is achieved through congregational chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all bliss.

—Cc. *Adi* 1.96

Nothing is sacred for some persons, but for me there is sacred. I have accepted Kṛṣṇa. Let the smart people talk what they will. I have got Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and there are many devotees. We understand that God is great and more from the Gita. We have been made devotees by Srila Prabhupada.

Balavanta phoned. A little encouragement goes a long way. He likes the articles from Prabhupada's biography in *Back to Godhead*, and when I told him about the research we did in India, he liked it and said he always wanted to hear of Srila Prabhupada's life before coming to America. I became enlivened talking about Srila Prabhupada. Balavanta said, "Yes, even in his household life, Srila Prabhupada was a devotee preaching."

Kṛṣṇa save me! Let me stay at this biography preaching.

October 20

I'm starting to relish the special feature of Prabhupada's early writings. Rather than see it as a big chore ("I have to read the early writings"), I hope they never run out.

That relish will enable me to feel and express something. Read slower and with appreciation. As you do, you'll be able to see him in those early days. Connect the writings with the facts known of his life, then combine the India research with what is revealed in these writings. The trip to India was an intense foray of research work, but now we'll have to see—when the smoke clears—what we've actually got and what more we have to learn from India.

Don't be too proud to take full contributions from Sesa and Mandalesvara, etc.

October 22

Govardhana-puja

Think you'll write here about how Kṛṣṇa lifted the hill? No—you are only thinking, "How do I look now? How am I feeling? How can I make up for my losses? Alas, woe is me."

A million words in vain. A hundred years of regulation—the self, the self. But what about Kṛṣṇa? I mean at heart, not just officially.

There are different moods a person passes through, just as one day it is gloomy weather and the next day sunny and like summer, even in late October.

Now what about the article for *Back to Godhead*, which is due in a week? I want to write something that I don't have to research, but that comes out of my own experience. In a sense I am saying, "Why should I read up on something? I am forty years old. Don't I know anything yet? Do I have to look something up?" But I am supposed to be writing some essay about our philosophy. Prabhupada wouldn't write aimlessly like this. I do it, I say, because I am not convinced, I am not realized like him. He lived and breathed the *Gita* and the conviction of preaching.

October 25

Disappearance day of His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

When I return to Gita-nagari, I will have a simple ceremony of *abhiseka* to install my Prabhupada *murti*.

As there are two types of Deity worship, mine will be the shortened version, as prescribed for householders worshipping at home, where offerings are made according to their needs.

But I will attempt a standard regulation.

As Kṛṣṇa kindly appears in His Deity form, so does the pure devotee spiritual master.

Don't think of him as stone. Worship of the form of the spiritual master is described in the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa*. It is not concocted. (While his absolute presence is a fact, nevertheless, everything depends on the attentive worship of the disciple.)

"Every worshiper must remember that Kṛṣṇa is personally present. He is simply kindly presenting Himself before us in a way that we can handle Him. That is His mercy; otherwise, He is unapproachable."

Worship enhances preaching. Ours is a preaching movement. Worship in the temple without going out to preach is a show, but that worship is absolute. It is necessary. Both of them go together, *bhagavata-vidhi* and *pancaratriki-vidhi*.

Meaning of his disappearance. Whatever I know I am speaking.

My taking to worship of Prabhupada's form is admitting that I am of a low order of disciple. It is not required. One can worship the spiritual master by chanting and following his order. I am in need of more. I feel it will strengthen my remembrance of him. So in *humility*, I take to worshiping his form, admitting I am not on the standard where I can worship him fully otherwise by my preaching and active service. I think it will help in meditation on him as he lived among us as our guru, and thus help the biography project. *Arcye visnau siladhira*.

He (guru) is not an ordinary mortal prone to death. He is present in a form made of elements, but the elements are made spiritual by the grace of God. As God agrees to appear in His Deity form, so this deity form also. As we approach him.

November 3, 1979

Walking in backyard, fields stretching across many acres to the woods and hills, great expanse of clear, cold sky. Often I hear rifle shots—it's war against the deer.

Thinking—whatever I do in this short life (rifle-fire reminds me of my own death coming), I must preach to increase the number of devotees.

If I write, or travel and preach, or try to improve my *japa*, or read more deeply—it has to be for increasing the number of devotees.

A good BTG is for that end. If I can become a sincere, pure devotee and realize the Lord, that will automatically work to that end—of increasing devotees. And in this interim between one volume of biography finished and the second not begun—if I want to write something (yielding to the call of the creative urge) it should be to contribute to that end.

My Vyasa-puja—I am not a great person. I am being honored for my place in *parampara*. That means I am like the tax collector on behalf of the king. I think you will agree and accept this analogy. Therefore, on this day when you give special tribute to me as guru (tax collector) I request on behalf of him:

Do not leave.

Do not go away.

“Live, not leave.”

Chant and follow the four rules.

Five kinds of ignorance which are cured by Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda:

- (1) Accepting the body to be the self.
- (2) Making sense gratification one's standard of enjoyment.
- (3) Being anxious due to material identification.
- (4) Lamenting.
- (5) Thinking that there is anything beyond the Absolute Truth.

November 19

En route to Vancouver by plane

Reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, I note that Srila Prabhupada has addressed all problems that might come up. There is nothing new under the sun. We have to apply it, but it is all there. For those on this path, there is no solace like the transcendental knowledge in these books. He has given us love of Krsna and it speaks to us in these sacred literatures. He could have done it with more or less scholarship, but he did it as he had to, knowing that after he left, the books would speak with permanent value to the whole world. Take this literature and learn it and distribute it. That is my message to my disciples and well-wishers on my birthday. “Satisfaction is the beginning of transcendental bliss.” Go on to service; preaching is the best service. Krsna said, “There will never be one more dear to Me than he who spreads this message.” Am I not a disciple? Am I not a guru by being a good disciple? Nothing should be done for

one's own honor or self-advancement, but to carry out the order of the guru.

As we advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness we become more dedicated to the guru and love him, and the more we love him and are dedicated, the more we advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Dream: they were preparing a ceremony to burn me to death. It was auspicious, like yogis who go up in dried cottages in a fire produced from their meditation. When I saw the straw chairs, like thrones, in which we were to go up in flames, I thought of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* pictures of such burning yogis. About three or four were being readied. We were administered some slow-acting poison in the thumb, I think. I was trying to concentrate and meditate to accept the end in the right way, but I don't remember chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

I think I must be concerned that I die in the right way, afraid I may go in an inauspicious way like murder or an accident with no chanting. Also, I got the after-dream feeling that a strong will to live is good, provided it is seen in terms of the service I can perform in this body, such as the biography.

November 20

Vancouver—class notes

Vamanadeva and Bali Maharaja. Sukracarya warned his disciple that Visnu would take everything away. This warning is also given by one's friends and relatives—Kṛṣṇa will take away all your possessions and even your mind. It is true. Hari means He takes away inauspicious things. But this is good. Srila Prabhupada felt this in his own life, and the verse *yasyaham anugrhnami harisye* is applicable. That is the Lord's kindness on Bali, on Srila Prabhupada, on anyone who wants Him but is attached to material possessions.

Sukracarya said, "Lie to Vamana." Then Bali rejected him. He gave good reasons why we should give all we have to Visnu. He is not guru who teaches other than surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Things will be taken away at death. Why not give them now?

Bali rejected his false teacher and surrendered. Then Vamana-deva expanded as the Universal Form and took all Bali owned. When He demanded more, Bali offered his head. The Lord was punishing him by making him completely bereft. Bali was grateful that he had been tricked or forced. Bali prays, pointing out the danger of man's life. We have to be ready to give everything to Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise, if we die in material consciousness, everything is wasted. No one should consider as an alternative to being a devotee that he *not* be surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and enjoy for himself. The folly of that is pointed out by this *lila*: how Bali rejected such life, seeing its danger, and how he was saved from it by the mercy of the Lord and Prahlaḍa Maharaja.

Why does one leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness? (1) For gross material opulences that are denied him here. (2) He leaves for freedom in sense gratification. (3) He doubts the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa and guru and the soul, etc. (4) He wants to be with his "own people."

He who comes to convince me to stay is very merciful to me.

November 22

Finished out loud reading of the Volume Two manuscript. I have very little work left to do on it. While here in Vancouver, I was thinking of doing a good amount of free-writing, trying to express what I intend to do in this first volume. I can also read the books I have with me on Indian times.

In class today we spoke how one gets the benediction of the Lord to carry out his service successfully. He must be an instrument of the Lord, must persevere and be austere, be submissive. The point is that the service is aimed to please the Lord. Sincere. Thus one has to please Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's representative. Sukracarya was asked, "What was the fault for which you cursed Bali? Did he break some rules?" There are many rules, especially in doing *arcana*, but he pleased Viṣṇu! What rule matters? (For myself, I only know pleasing guru. *Yasya prasadaḥ*.) They must be obedient or they can't chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and please the Lord. They have to please the guru. Obedience and behavior is standard, but one has to personally

please the guru. If he is displeased, we fail. He will not be whimsically displeased; he is completely in line with Kṛṣṇa's will. If he is therefore displeased, then Kṛṣṇa is displeased.

November 25

Victoria

Just reading a book about writing and writers. It occurs to me that I know a real writer—Srila Prabhupada. Brahma-nanda Swami once said that Prabhupada was not an author, not a J. D. Salinger. The point was well made. Srila Prabhupada was not interested in literary expression, words per se, private vision—except to glorify Kṛṣṇa and present the *parampara*. But a writer he was. He rose in the middle of the night and composed on the Dictaphone. Before coming to America (and in America for the first year) he wrote with pen or typewriter. Once he stayed up all night in Santa Fe, New Mexico, writing on a wooden table. The sound of his pen pushing across the paper and onto the table kept his servant awake in the next room.

In Vrndavana, those who knew him or saw him at all said he was always typing. He said, "If you want to know me, read my books," and he said something to the effect that his books were more himself than he was, that he would live for hundreds of years in his books. If that isn't a writer, I don't know what is. He was a writer for Kṛṣṇa, however. He was not a writer in the sense of a fiction writer or one who expresses his own speculations. He repeated *parampara*. Like Sukadeva, who in repeating Vyasa's message made it sweeter, Prabhupada created a new, transcendental literature. He expressed things for the common man. (Vyasa already gave us the *Puranas* for the less intelligent, but in Kali-yuga, the common man is becoming more commonly degraded; and Srila Prabhupada extended mercy even to today's common man.)

He also expressed his own personal experience and realization as the *acarya* of ISKCON. He wrote of his dealings with his disciples, with various governments, and gave arguments

out of his own personal encounters with professors, scientists, hippies, disciples, mothers, and fathers. He was always a mouthpiece for Kṛṣṇa, but he wrote unique revelations.

Yes, he was no J. D. Salinger, he was Prabhupada, but author and writer he was in the best tradition of Vyasa, Rupa, Sanātana, and Jiva Gosvamis. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

November 26

Sesa knows many more details of Srila Prabhupada's life before America. When the interviews are typed up, he thinks I can gain the same knowledge. Srila Prabhupada was always actively preaching, even after his spiritual master passed away, which was immediately followed by a split in the Gaudiya Math, etc. I have to decide on a series of scenes to dramatize the events. For example, meeting his spiritual master. There can also be sections of expository narration of his business ventures in Allahabad. We have talked about some passages giving the history of Vaisnavism after Lord Caitanya to Bhaktivinoda Thakura, etc.

November 28

They have this little house, like a one-room (small room) greenhouse, made of clear plastic and lined with insulation for the winter. I'm going out there. It's in the backyard, far off in the little woods behind the house. It's nice and solitary, although cold, but it has an electric heater. I am a tiny being. I am trying to write about Prabhupada and to plot out the next volume.

November 30

L.A.

Vision of the plot for the first volume comes to me. Now I think of researching with it in mind. It is simple, how his whole life was one of trying to carry out his guru's order.

Especially in the 1920s and 1930s, it was in many ways not possible. In the '40s he wrote more, but the tension and conflict of wanting to do even more built to a head as business and family became a burden. As he increased his service, the obstacles pressed him more. Finally, Kṛṣṇa took everything away and left him free in the 1950s.

Freedom meant being materially bereft. That presented difficulties. Free to preach was one thing—freedom is one requirement for preaching—but to succeed at it in the world was difficult. It is a story of one difficulty after another, yet of his having the growing drive to preach in all cases, in all years. That much I will try to present (and more) of Srīla Prabhupada's greatness, even to the non-initiated reader. He was always trying to carry out his guru's order. I can show the facts. I will.

December 3, 1979

Baltimore

Dictated letters for an hour or so: moved the mountain of mail down to a size where I can think of other things. Read half an hour in *Fiction Writer's Manual*. I (and all devotees) have the greatest responsibility to never forget Kṛṣṇa for a moment, even while doing a seemingly ordinary thing.

December 6

Haribol. Arrived at Gita-nagari last night. Rose 12:30 A.M. and dictated until 2:15! Rough draft begun! My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, I pray bombs don't drop and civilization doesn't collapse as You let me be rapt in this meditation on Prabhupada. My memory is going, my devotion was never great, but I contend that the biography is service to him.

December 8

New York Times being sent here now. I read it only briefly in five, ten minutes, no more, then throw it away. It's as if I wish the material world could be washed away. I know the fourfold miseries are there and one should be aware of their evil, but in Kṛṣṇa consciousness we are happy because we are liberated from these conditions. Yet we live in *maya*'s kingdom and should be anxious to conduct our mission and keep it strong. Anxiety comes as we try to keep our reputation and have our movement grow. It becomes a fragile entity in the hard material world, yet it is growing sturdy. My body will be cut down, war or no war. If, as a society, we have to give up our holdings, as society goes we will also go—rich or poor. Preaching will remain.

I try to keep at my work, consciousness fixed in worship by gathering his history and compiling it in hopes that books can be published and the world benefited. Motive is pure when, like Prabhupada, I desire to help the world by serving his movement. You must be a transparent *via medium* and then Kṛṣṇa and *parampara* will bless you to compile the *Srila Prabhupada-lilamṛta*. Otherwise, it will fail.

December 12

Many times I have written of personal inadequacy although I am guru. Guru has to repeat the message of Kṛṣṇa unchanged. Bhurijana said my writing the biography was like the way Prabhupada started this movement—from scratch, not sure at first how it would all develop. The difficulty of this volume is that Srila Prabhupada is not that manifest in the early years in his full potency. The reader may ask, "Why doesn't he join and live with his spiritual master right away? Why is he doing business?" The answer to the question is an esoteric one. Kṛṣṇa had His plan to prepare His pure devotee and send him to America at exactly the right time, which would be in 1965. I am so far not writing in such a way (as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja was) as to explain esoteric meanings. His

earliest childhood of worshiping Radha-Govinda is already recorded and I won't be shy about bringing it up and making a connection, but in the way I am compiling things now, I wouldn't come out and say he was detained all the years in India in family life because of the inscrutable plan of the Lord. Nor will I come out and say he was a divine *avatara*, the one among all the disciples of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura who would go to the West and do so many great things. That is a way to do things, and some biographies are done in that way. I could look more at samples of the different ways to do it.

December 13

Gita-nagari

I claim I hunger to write always about Srila Prabhupada, and yet I do not. Other leaders engage in other ways, especially at this time when ISKCON is trying to find its footing anew and recapture some good opinion from the public who have dubbed us a cult and money-hustlers. They do not think of us in any other way, and neither do they hear from us as respectable persons. Leaders branch out in different ways. Just today, Rupanuga said he wanted to go to Cambodia to distribute *prasadam* to the starving refugees. He said he has to preach. He said our leaders tend to be "holed up," not out preaching. No one wants to hear from us due to the bad opinion they have of us from our book distribution methods, and no one can preach unless we devise some new way to gain credence by the people. It is a time of searching and trying to reach out in a way to preach that will move the people to our side, and not that they think of us as the lowest class of people.

Here I am wanting to be alone to write and struggling. To put together the biography with some uncertain time clock in my brain, wondering when and if Armageddon is coming to put an end to my papers and typewriter and send me out of the buildings and into the forests with guns. I am trying to be ready for that with ultimate detachment, but at the same time, working with the publisher and the proofreader and hop-

ing these books can survive holocausts, with hope and faith that they will actually do something to incline people toward Srila Prabhupada. They will come to love devotees in that way.

December 19

To the GBC: it does appear that we are faltering in the discharge of this great mission. We are against those who oppose us and it is a fight. In the fight some will fall. Our prayer is that we will not let this mission fail. There are some signs of faltering to understand *unity*. Unity doesn't mean politics of centralization as opposed to politics of regionalism. It means we can cooperate without being hampered by a foolish mundane spirit of sectarianism. We are often told glibly about the split-up of the Gaudiya Math. Two parties claimed single acarya-ship, something Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati didn't ask for, etc. Lessons aren't obvious to me and man doesn't seem to learn by history's lessons.

I see a degradation in devotees sometimes being less than strict about the four rules. Why has a taint of drug-dealing and illicit sex come to us except that our followers are so weak? But can't we control it? And can't we talk honestly and deeply with one another? This produces skepticism. Sectarian concerns have to be put aside (see Prabhupada's 1961 prayer). Help each other work to save this movement. I am weak and powerless to do anything about a strong GBC. I have always been so. But I have been an instrument for His Divine Grace and seen him in unquestionable purity and with the vision of his spiritual master intact, guide this world movement, gathering together the discordant leaders and purging the decadence. Now can we do it in his absence?

December 24

Krsna kindly let me write something early this morning, four pages of a new "Notes from the Editor" and about five pages of rough draft on the biography. I felt confident that writing is my preaching. I kept thinking, "How well I wrote! It

will long be remembered!" Now I have a headache. Near the end of the day, I am again a beggar, uncertain when Kṛṣṇa will allow me to write further. I want to keep pushing. The biography will tell the world about Prabhupāda.

Also, I want to write more memories of him as they come, even if they are not "new," and save them.

December 29

I'm reading "Father Sergius" by Tolstoy. It just took a strange fictional turn. I have another chapter to go. How well he has exposed falsity in a religious monk! How it touches me and my case! The monk's pride at being regarded as saintly, his lack of real inner ecstasy, his lust always beneath the surface, his doubts in God and His existence. In my case, I am not fallen in any "falldown" misbehavior, but neither have I been tested by a prostitute at night. While reading, I longed for an inner purity. Am I really doing service to gain self-esteem?

Mechanical prayers, lusty thoughts, service rendered for praise by men. (Service to God is done without thought of reward.) Admit that rascal thoughts pass through my mind, but don't settle with this as the status quo. Don't live by these thoughts. What about admitting to myself these faults and still not getting rid of them? "Oh, it is impossible to be free of sex desire. Let me simply keep myself free of any situation where a falldown could occur."

Tomorrow is the first of the year. Then we take a day of celebration here—lecture, initiation, festivities. Go in a day to Detroit for association with my GBC Godbrothers. A total of five days away from biography work, but if the Lord desires, I will come back more determined than ever to work at the biography. 179 pages of the first draft are done and the road ahead seems clear. There is much work, but is not this work great pleasure?

This is the secret of devotional service. Kṛṣṇa has been very, very kind to me. I should not envy anyone or be in the slightest ungrateful. I have received great mercy. I want to describe Prabhupāda's life as a service to the Vaisnava community and for

preaching to the whole world. I am being allowed to do it. I am very thankful. I pray to be allowed to go on with it; for that reason I pray there be no disturbances to the work of *Srila Prabhupada-lilamṛta*. I can take these five days without anxiety that I am away from my main work, but even in this time, if there is a chance, let me read my research materials and try to work at it. *Jaya* Prabhupada. Let me write more and more from all periods about you, and mainly the work in progress, but I beg to have an overrunning cup of your pastimes constantly flowing like the creek water in my backyard and the spring water in my front yard.

Glossary

A

- Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by his personal behavior.
- Ārati**—a ceremony for worshiping the Lord with offerings of food, lamps, fans, flowers, and incense.
- Arcā-vigraha**—the Deity form of the Lord in the temple.
- Āśrama**—a spiritual order: *brahmacārī* (celibate student), *gṛhastha* (householder), *vānaprastha* (retired), *sannyāsa* (renunciate).
- Avatāra**—lit. “One who descends.” An incarnation of the Lord.

B

- Bhakta**—a devotee.
- Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.
- Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu**—a manual on devotional service written in Sanskrit in the sixteenth century by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.
- Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service
- Bhāva**—ecstasy; the stage of *bhakti* just prior to pure love of God.
- Bhīṣmadeva**—the noble general respected as the “grandfather” of the Kuru dynasty.
- Brahmā**—the first created living being and the secondary creator of the material universe.
- Brahma-saṁhitā**—an ancient text recording prayers offered by Lord Brahmā to Lord Kṛṣṇa; rediscovered by Caitanya Mahāprabhu in South India.
- Brahmacārī**—a celibate student living under the care of a bona fide spiritual master.

Brāhmaṇa—those wise in the *Vedas* who can guide society; the first Vedic social order.

Buddhi-yoga—another term for *bhakti-yoga*, indicating it represents the highest use of intelligence (*buddhi*).

C

Caitanya-caritāmṛta—the biography and philosophy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Caitanya (Mahāprabhu)—lit. “Living force.” An incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in the form of a devotee to teach love of God through the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Caitya-guru—the Supersoul.

Capāti—a whole-wheat, griddle-baked flatbread.

D

Daṇḍavats—lit. “falling down like a rod”; offering prostrated obeisances.

Dhāma—abode, place of residence, usually referring to the Lord’s abode.

Dhoti—Vedic men’s dress.

G

Gaudiya Math—the spiritual institution founded by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

Gauḍīya-sampradāya—the chain of spiritual masters coming from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Goloka—Kṛṣṇaloka, the eternal abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Gopi—a cowherd girl; one of Kṛṣṇa’s most confidential servitors.

Gosvāmi—one who controls his mind and senses; title of one in the renounced order of life. May refer specifically to the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, who are direct followers of Lord Caitanya in disciplic succession and who systematically presented His teachings.

Gṛhastha—regulated householder life; the second order of Vedic spiritual life.

H

Harināma—lit. “the name of Lord Hari”; usually used to refer to the congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord.

J

Japa—individual chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra while counting on beads.

Jiva—the eternal individual soul.

Jiva Gosvāmī—one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

Jñānī—one adhering to the path of spiritual realization through a speculative philosophical search for truth.

K

Kali-yuga—the present age which is characterized by quarrel and hypocrisy.

Karma—fruitive action, for which there is always reaction, good or bad.

Kirtana—chanting of the Lord's holy names.

Kṛṣṇaloka—the supreme abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

L

Līlā—pastimes.

M

Madhvācārya—a thirteenth-century Vaiṣṇava ācārya who preached the theistic philosophy of pure dualism.

Mahā-mantra—the great chant for deliverance: Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.

Mahātmā—great soul.

Māyā—the external, illusory energy of the Lord, comprising this material world; forgetfulness of one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

Māyāpur—a town in West Bengal, India, where Lord Caitanya appeared.

Māyāvādī—an impersonalist or voidist who believes that God is ultimately formless and without personality.

Muni—a sage or self-realized soul.

P

Paramātmā—the Supersoul, Lord Kṛṣṇa in the heart.

Paramparā—the disciplic succession of bona fide spiritual masters.

Prasādam—lit. "Mercy." Food which is spiritualized by being offered to Kṛṣṇa, and which helps purify the living entity.

R

Rādhārāṇī—the eternal consort and spiritual potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Rāmānujācārya—a Vaiṣṇava ācārya who appeared in 1037 AD. He expounded the philosophy of *viśiṣṭādvaita* (qualified nondualism):

Rasa—the spiritual essence of a personal relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Rūpa Gosvāmī—one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

S

Sādhana—regulated spiritual practices.

Sādhu—saintly person.

Samādhi—trance; complete absorption in God consciousness.

Samsāra—the repeated cycle of birth and death in the material world.

Sanātana Gosvāmī—one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

Śaṅkarācārya—an incarnation of Lord Śiva who, ordered by the Supreme Lord, propagated the impersonal Māyāvāda

philosophy, which negates the distinction between God and the living entity.

Saṅkīrtana—the congregational chanting of the holy name, fame, and pastimes of the Lord.

Sannyāsa—renounced life; the fourth order of Vedic spiritual life.

Śāstra—revealed scripture.

Smaranam—devotional remembrance (of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His pure devotee); one of the nine basic forms of *bhakti-yoga*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the *Purāṇa* or history written by Vyāsadeva specifically to give a deep understanding of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śruti—the original Vedic literatures: the four *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*; scripture received directly from God.

Svarūpya-mukti—the liberation of attaining the same bodily form as the Lord.

V

Vaiṣṇava—one who is a devotee of Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa.

Varṇāśrama-dharma—the Vedic social system, which organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*).

Vṛndāvana—Kṛṣṇa's personal abode, where He fully manifests His personal qualities.

Vyāsadeva—the original compiler of the *Vedas* and author of the *Vedānta-sūtra* and *Mahābhārata*, and the author of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

