

August 2, 1983

To whom it may concern, U.S. Immigration Service:

I received Sannyas initiation last year--August 12, 1982--several weeks after my first pilgrimage to Rajneeshporem for the First World Festival.

I had considered Bhagwan "my teacher" since January, 1975; in the years after I read his books frequently, experimented with the meditations he designed, and listened to tapes of his discourses--all of which gave me insight and inspiration that aided me enormously in my personal life and in my work, first as an editor of New Age Magazine, and for the past five years as the senior writer on personal and cultural change for Wilson Learning Corporation in Minneapolis, the nation's foremost industrial training company. Bhagwan's clarity and vision also inspired my occasional free-lance writing for the Opinion Page of the Minneapolis Star, Northwest Airline's Passages Magazine, Lutheran Brotherhood's Bond Magazine, and Training and Development Magazine.

Part of and essential to Bhagwan's "message," as I read it for years, was and is that the "words" of the message are only indicators and that the universal human tendency is to let the words suffice--to mistake the map for the territory, to let doctrine substitute for spiritual experience. In other words, even agreeing with him is not really getting the message. This I never fully appreciated until actually being with him in silence.

The experience of joining thousands of sannyasins in Bhagwan's presence, basking in eachother's wordless love, was itself profoundly moving for me and one I count on repeating at least each year. It somehow has made me less egocentric, more innocent and playful, and brought me into greater, more genuine--less merely cerebral--contact with life in my relationships with family, others, nature, and myself.

The rational, theological mind has a certain utility, but does not help us to love, to appreciate beauty, to sense the divine in a breeze or a child's smile. Rajneeshism may have the element of the absurd, but when the belief is that beliefs are not enough, there is certainly nothing illogical about the teacher becoming silent. It is a clear, legitimate, rational, and necessary extention of everything he has taught. In short, Bhagwan "told" his message for years in his innumerable discourses; now, in his silent satsangs and darshans, he is showing it.

Please let him keep doing his work here.

Sincerely,



Swami Dhyan Nirvesh  
(Tom Utne)  
1785 Dupont Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

EXHIBIT "A-662"