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To Whom it May Concern:

Re: Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh / Silent Spiritual Leadership

It is said that the Department of Immigration is attempting to deny Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's application for permanent U.S. visa, which is based on the proposition that he is a spiritual leader of international renown, on the ground that he is not a spiritual leader, being in silence. The purpose of this letter is to serve as a ripple of protest to help wash away that ground.

I became a disciple of Bhagwan in April, 1981, one month before he went into silence. He was then in Poona, India; and while I had been moved by the video tapes shown at the Laguna Beach Rajneesh Center, I never expected to hear him speak in person. Still, no expectation to hear his voice did not in any way deter me from my decision to become his disciple, for that decision was largely made because of the spirit he engendered at the Center, although he was so many miles away.

Many times he said, via videotape, "Don't listen to my words; listen to the silences between them," always hinting that spiritual leadership is not verbal but a thing of the spirit and heart. And common sense tells me now that the only true leadership is silent: not to emotionally manipulate with powerful oratory and provocative phraseology, but to project that undefinable quality to create a strong center for people to gravitate toward, to unite them.

The social organization and works at Rajneeshpuram and the Laguna Beach Rajneesh Center, as manifestations of this strong, silent center, stand as the visible proof.

Sincerely
Arpana Mary