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CENTER FOR JAPANESE STUDIES

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

July 15, 1983

To Whom it May Concern:

I have long been a student of religion in Asia and in America. I was the co-director of a major study on new religions in the early 1970s which resulted in a book edited by myself and Charles Glock entitled The New Religious Consciousness, and published by the University of California Press in 1976.

I have never studied the movement headed by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh but have some knowledge of his beliefs and practices from conversations with members of his group and some reading about it. On the basis of my somewhat limited knowledge, it is my opinion that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is a legitimate religious leader widely recognized as an outstanding religious teacher, and with followers in several parts of the world. It is certainly my opinion that his is a genuinely religious movement and deserves the protection afforded by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States to all religions.

That there is controversy surrounding this movement and that some of its beliefs have attracted criticism is not at all rare in American history and by no means justifies withholding the full protection of the law to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his movement.

Sincerely,

Robert N. Bellah
Ford Professor of Sociology
and Comparative Studies

RNB:lhh

EXHIBIT "A-349"