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Associate Director

I am writing with regard to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and the potential loss that his deportation would mean to me as a professor. My work is as a faculty member in clinical, community and human development psychology. I teach, conduct research, supervise students and participate in the national mental health and mental retardation research network. I am also editor of the Journal of Community Psychology.

I first became acquainted with the work of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh through a colleague of long standing in the mental health professions, Thomas Huffman. As part of his professional training, he studied eastern philosophies. I regularly invited him to lecture to my students when I taught the core course in the history and systems of psychology. He would discuss the relevance of those principles to contemporary psychology and demonstrate meditation as a form of consciousness. His continued work in this area led him to study with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in India. Upon his return to Nashville, he and his wife have established a Rajneesh center where they engage in personal education. I have had some direct participation in workshops and have sent some of my students for work with them.

My evaluation of the work of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is that it is one of the important sources of ideas and inspiration for the revitalization of the U. S. We have, at the local community level, lost much of the sense of community. There is considerable conflict without it being effectively resolved, leaving fragmented groups unable to work together effectively. There is a loss of worth in a higher moral order. I see the Rajneesh work as contributing to all of these points.

Those who become familiar with the Rajneesh group are immediately aware of the sense of community that people feel together. They have developed a large and functional community with vitality, with purpose and with the basic goal of cooperation through conflict resolution and good will. The fact that they have achieved these qualities and are open to share them with the larger society attests to the importance of the group.

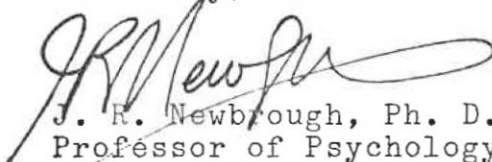
The intellectual contributions go beyond the community ones mentioned above. His is a philosophy that considers the body and the mind as a dynamic unity. This is a clear alternative to the current conceptions in psychology. It more resembles the theories in physics of Capra that have caught professional attention.

Scientific psychology has only recently begun to deal with the matter of consciousness. It has been found that consciousness is a very complex matter, not understood or researched adequately because of the lack of an elaborated theory. Eastern thinkers, like Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, have a special and important contribution in this area. Rajneesh is particularly important as a thinker right now because he understands the American culture in a way that facilitates translation and application of eastern thought to our situation. It seems to me to be in the interest of the U. S. to keep him in this country. He and his group are engaged in a major community experiment. They are open to sharing their information and knowledge. They are not seditious. They have devised ways of resolving conflict in ways that build community. They provide a research and demonstration laboratory that we badly need in this country. Our social scientists will need to be studying it for what can be applied more broadly as we prepare for the 21st Century.

I would find his deportation to be a very important loss. It will make more difficult my access to what they are doing and what he is contributing. My students welfare and education will be diminished, since I use the local Rajneesh center as a resource for some of them. I think that the centers' contribution to the intellectual life of Nashville will also be diminished.

I would be happy to provide further information should that be desired.

Sincerely,



J. R. Newbrough, Ph. D.
Professor of Psychology and
Education