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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I have been a disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh for five years. I met him in Poona (India) in 1978. I come from a noble Italian family, my father, Antonio De Gregorio, Prince of San Teodoro and a Knight of the Order of Malta, continues a centuries old tradition in the town of Palermo in Sicily. My family came to Italy in the fourteenth century from the town of Cologne (Germany) with the court of King Charles the Great.

We settled in Italy, and in the course of time many famous men in the fields of politics, arts, sciences and religion came from my family. About four centuries ago, one of my ancestors was elected Pope and my great grandfather of the same name as my father was a famous scientist around 1800 in the field of Botany and natural sciences, on which subjects he wrote several books.

I have studied in the best Italian schools of Christian religious traditions, and studied agriculture for five years at the Universities of Florence and Palermo, specializing in vineyards and the production of wine.

I worked in 1974 and I lived a luxurious life with my wife in my antique villa, breeding beautiful horses and dogs. I had everything the world could offer but I still felt that something was missing in my being. To meet and to become a disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has been and continues to be the greatest experience of my whole life. From that moment my life has changed and is continuously changing in the process of inner transformation, of acceptance, of interior search that is endless.

I have heard many lectures of Bhagwan's in India and it has been an unforgettable experience of meditation and love. I felt right away that this was a man of exceptional abilities in many fields: science, art and most of all in man's psychology. I felt that the core of Bhagwan's teaching was the discovery of our inner nature, like other Masters of the past: Jesus, Socrates, Buddha, Mahavira, who are stepping stones in the religious and philosophical history of mankind.

The help that I received from Bhagwan is that he gives me the opportunity to see my inner space where there is his silence, his truth, his light. He has designed therapies and meditations to decondition man in our age from all the limits given by society. So, in my years of experience with him, I have seen many people flowering from a life of limits and conditioning to another life of inner freedom.

After more than 20 years of teaching, Bhagwan is now known all over the world; his meditations, therapies, books, taped lectures and mostly his disciples have spread all over the planet. Many universities run seminars

on his teachings and, for these things he is considered to be an internationally recognized religious leader.

Throughout history, many disciples have lost their Masters because of the blindness of the collective mind: Socrates lived in Greece, the most evolved and civilized nation of that age, and he was poisoned. At the time of the Roman empire, Jesus was preaching love and truth, and he was crucified. Mahavira in India was stoned to death. These people were living in countries at the peak of civilization for their times and they were not understood. America is today the peak of civilization on this planet. I ask for Bhagwan to be recognized for what he is, so that the ugliness and violence don't repeat themselves again. No, this time I don't want to lose my Master. He is not teaching greed, possessiveness, violence or hatred, but love and compassion.

When I was in Poona, I felt that it was a moment of preparation, training for something much bigger, and this something is happening in Rajneeshpuram everyday. It's happening because of His presence there. His love, His light, His vision, in fact, can only be lived moment by moment from everyone that loves Him. This ranch in Oregon is to me his real book, his real teaching. It is on this land, that was a desert two years ago, that his disciples are writing their silent love that is the Master-disciple relationship. His love is flowering everywhere; it's His light reflecting everywhere in this place; it's his physical presence.

Bhagwan's silence is such a rare and useful occasion in the desert of theories and philosophies; we cannot permit ourselves to miss. This commune is really necessary for the work of Bhagwan. Bhagwan has often said that for a plant to grow, certain conditions must exist: the right amount of light and water, certain weather conditions, the right soil... otherwise the plant will wither and die. He said that for man's growth also a certain climate is needed: the climate of love. That is why Rajneeshpuram attracts so many people from all over the world and is gaining more and more recognition from all countries everyday. It's probably the last occasion that humanity has to take a jump towards self-knowledge, awareness, and consciousness.

I feel now that the true aristocracy is not the one I got from my family; it is the one that Bhagwan gave to me. He makes me discover the aristocracy of the heart everyday. A noble man is a man of the heart, a new man full of compassion and love, not full of greed and violence.

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