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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I would like to write about the sociological influence of the prominent religious leader Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. I studied sociology at the University of California at Berkeley, and earned a bachelor's degree in 1973. Leaving the US to examine various other societies, I lived and taught school on an aboriginal settlement in northern Australia for a year and then spent 2 years traveling through a variety of cultures from New Zealand and New Guinea to India, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.

I am now living in Rajneeshpuram, Oregon and have come to know Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and His religion by being with Him in the ashram in Poona, India for 3½ years after my travels. I have also been living and working in the commune in Oregon for the past two years with Bhagwan and His sannyasins.

In our society, deluged by mass media, people are looking for a way to enrich their mundane lives, which have grown stale with abundance and jaded by luxury. The idea that "there must be something else" has not only become a possibility in people's minds, but a reality worth pursuit.

Many organizations have been created in the West in response to this interest in "something else." These groups, from Christians to Esalen to Transcendental Meditation, usually leave participants disappointedly unfulfilled after a short time, feeling ripped off or otherwise taken advantage of.

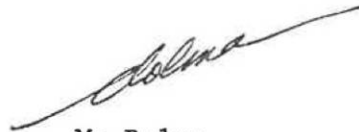
One exceptional community stands out from the crowd, with a remarkable spiritual leader, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Its unique feeling is perhaps due to its motivation towards "a total celebration" of life and an enjoyment of the moment as it is.

EXHIBIT "A-1559"

We have no history in the western world of a society such as this, directed towards celebration and non-competitiveness with no interest in personal financial gain. The Rajneeshpuram Experiment, with the sole inspiration of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, is a phenomenon which merits study, as well as admiration.

In my travels east and west, I have not seen such a social system, based on life, love and laughter, as that at Rajneeshpuram. In our western world, the society openly reflects the absence of any guidance, and it is seen in people's day to day roughness and impersonalness amongst each other, the high crime rate and the number of lonely individuals. In the eastern world, life seems equally void of celebration and merriment. There is an attempt to hold onto the old religious customs in the hope of some guidance, yet these religious people, whether Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or Jain seem the most serious of all.

Both eastern and western society lack the spontaneity, zest for life and ability to appreciate the moment at hand that is being discovered in Rajneeshpuram. This small growing society laughs at and learns from its mistakes in a flexible manner, opens and closes its city council meetings with a joke and is able to playfully approach the project of building a city and celebrating each day.



Ma Dolma