

The Lord Mayor's Parish Church of
SAINT STEPHEN WALBROOK
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From The Rector, the Revd. Dr. Chad Varah, OBE, MA(Oxon), Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral

August 4th, 1983

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I write as a theologian, psychotherapist and philosopher, having studied mathematics, chemistry, philosophy and psychology at Oxford and theology at Lincoln.

I am best known in the field of suicide prevention, as the Founder of The Samaritans and pioneer of the use of lay volunteers in this field. We have ten chapters in eastern USA.

I hold the Louis I. Dublin Award of the American Association of Suicidology, the Albert Schweitzer Gold Medal for "inspiring youth all over the world in the service of humanity", the Prix de l'Institut de la Vie, the medal Honra ao Merito, and the Order of the British Empire.

I give this information because I am told that the immigration of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is being opposed by certain religious persons or groups who allege that he is not a spiritual teacher.

It is not necessary to agree with the teachings of a religious leader to recognise him/her as such. I, as a Christian priest, do not agree with many of the teachings of Mahomet, Buddha, Confucius etc. but I am bound to recognise that they are spiritual leaders. It is a matter of fact: does the person proclaim a distinctive message, and does he/she have a considerable number of disciples and followers? On both counts, it is undeniable that Shree Rajneesh is a much revered spiritual teacher.

My testimony must be the stronger because I have never met Shree Rajneesh nor am I a "sanyassin" (one of his followers). However, I know of his teachings from books, magazines, tapes, and the personal testimony of some of my friends who claim to have been transformed by his influence, and who indeed in most cases seem to have found a degree of renewal.

In 1983 it is no longer possible to exclude Shree Rajneesh from the list of world spiritual teachers, any more than Billy Graham could be excluded.

(Signed)



EXHIBIT "A-19"