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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is a letter of support for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh as a man of exceptional ability in the area of psychology. In his religious discourses, all of which have been published in book form, he has shown an insight into the workings of the human mind far deeper than most professionals that I have met in my career. He has an intimate knowledge of Western psychology, whether of the psychoanalytic, behaviouristic or humanistic schools, and has himself propounded at length his own psychology of the Buddhas, which transcends all of these (see particularly "The Discipline of Transcendence" in four volumes, "The Book of the Books" in six volumes, and "Philosophia Perennis" in two volumes).

He has also shown an exceptional ability as a practising psychologist in his dealings with visitors and disciples who bring their problems to him. The record of these interviews is also published in books form and bears witness to his psychological insight and skill as a therapist. His ability in this area is simply greater than any person's I have come across in the last twenty years that I have been involved with psychology.

Since Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has been in the United States, I have twice had the opportunity to visit Rajneeshpuram, Oregon, where he has been staying; once for the festival last year, and this year for three months. On both occasions I have been deeply impressed by the way in which Bhagwan, through his presence and his silence, inspires his disciples. The concrete expression of this is most startling, in two areas that I have studied as a social psychologist, namely social relations and work productivity.

The social relationships at Rajneeshpuram are characterized by a harmony and freedom from tension or aggressiveness that is unique for a community of such a size. This is particularly clear at the time of the festivals when Bhagwan's presence and silence is felt most powerfully through his daily communion called 'Satsang'.

Harmonious social relations feed into the second area where Rajneeshpuram is so unusual - work productivity. Again, social psychologists have long known that continuously high work productivity is dependent upon good social relations between workers, strong leadership, and a relatively flat hierarchy of management which is accessible to the work force. All these conditions are met at Rajneeshpuram in a loving and unique way: the social relations I've already briefly characterized, the inspirational presence of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, and the horizontal style of management, which is the most open, flexible and effective I have ever experienced. Consequently the work output is phenomenal and the quality of work high. In fact, there is something to be learned from Rajneeshpuram in an economy beset by seemingly constant recession. Although I have not measured work output with conventional scientific indices, it is apparent that buildings get built in a far shorter time than elsewhere. In my judgment this is partly because people are willing to work longer hours, partly because when they work, they work, not seeking the countless opportunities for distraction that I have noticed people taking in other work situations, and partly because there are no disruptions through strikes, arguments, absenteeism and other manifestations of poor social relations.

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Rajneeshpuram means "expression of Rajneesh" and in my opinion that is what is happening here: the social relations and work productivity are expressions of a man who is inspiring a group of people to create something new and unique in the world, and that is his contribution.

My knowledge of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has been gained from reading many of his books relevant to psychology, and direct experience of his presence over the past few years. Many professional psychologists, including myself, have in fact become disciples of this man, largely because of his convincing ability in our own area of expertise.

I have a B.A. in Psychology from Cambridge University, England and a B. Phil. in Sociology from Oxford University, England. I was then a lecturer in Social Psychology at Sheffield University, England and a lecturer in Social Psychology and Psychotherapy at Leeds Polytechnic, England. I am the author of a book entitled "Reconstructing Social Psychology", published by Penguin Books in 1974.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nigel D. W. Armistead". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

Nigel D. W. Armistead