

AFFIDAVIT: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

SUBJECT: Testimony relating to the immigration status of
BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH

I have been a sannyasin since March, 1975, when I first visited the Poona Ashram and met Bhagwan. Since then I've become more and more involved with His work. For the past 5 years I have devoted myself full-time, working for 3 years at the Rajneesh Ashram in Poona and for the past 2 years at Rancho Rajneesh.

Prior to becoming a sannyasin, many choices of employment, with monetary and other rewards, were open to me. I studied Chemical Engineering at Princeton University from 1963 to 1967, served as an officer in the United States Army Corps of Engineers from 1967 to 1970, and studied architecture at the Boston Architectural Center from 1971 to 1972. I've had a small but successful remodeling business, traveled around the world, canoed 600 miles down the Kazan River in the Northwest Territories of Canada, coached YMCA gymnastic classes, was a high school swimming champion for New England and rowed in the United States Olympic Trials.

It was, however, the exceptional personal and spiritual insight of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh that caused other pursuits to pale by comparison. His vision added a richness to my life that had been missing up until that point. Working over the past 5 years within several organizations which were inspired by the life-vision of Bhagwan has been my way to experience the intensity of life as it exists around Bhagwan.

I feel that this time and experience benefited me immeasurably in areas such as understanding of myself and others, acceptance of life and all it brings and development of a reverence for Existence, God, or whatever name one chooses. Specifically because of Bhagwan's vision and understanding and because of His exceptional ability as a teacher and Master, both through speech and through silence, I have been instilled with a fervent desire to experience and, hopefully, absorb something of His teachings.

I feel that the growth that I've experienced myself and seen in others, through Bhagwan, is evidence of the tremendous benefits of Bhagwan's presence. I feel that the opportunity for others to experience Bhagwan's presence is something that the Government of the United States should not deny. He is not for everyone, nor has He ever claimed to be;

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however, I believe that a large number of people in this country should be allowed the opportunity to substantially benefit from contact with this extraordinary religious leader. It has further been demonstrated that His presence at Rajneeshpuram attracts many thousands of visitors from all over the world during the annual summer festival and other celebrations throughout the year. This world-wide interest benefits the local City economy and the economy of Oregon, as well as that of the United States.

As construction coordinator for the Rajneesh Neo-Sannyas International Commune I can report that for construction preparations for this year's festival we have spent upwards of 5 million dollars. This expenditure has been for building and construction materials, largely spent in Oregon, and this amount has been spent in the 3 months prior to the festival. This festival expenditure, as well as the year round construction costs, have significantly affected the economic well-being of many suppliers, contractors and vendors throughout Oregon and the Pacific Northwest in an otherwise very poor period for suppliers of the construction industry. In many cases, employees of these companies kept their jobs solely because of our business. I feel that there is no question that the presence of Bhagwan at Rajneeshpuram has an extremely positive benefit on the economy of Oregon.

Further, I feel that His continued presence in Oregon would again demonstrate the essential basis of America's freedom. After travelling in many countries throughout the world, it is this basic tolerance and acceptance of beliefs and ideas other than one's own for which people throughout the world most respect the United States. I understand also, from having served in the United States Army, that a certain kind of political equilibrium can be maintained from a posture of strength; however, the hearts of people in other countries as well as in our own, can only be won through inspiration. I would suggest that the image of the United States as the birth place of religious freedom is extremely important to the ethical and political strength of the United States.

In conclusion, I would urge those in the position of making this decision that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh be allowed to remain in the United States.

Subscribed and sworn to
before me: Quinn Jones
Notary Public, Wasco
County, Oregon
Commission Expires: 7-18-97

Sincerely,

Devaprem

Swami Devaprem
Construction Coordinator
Chuang Tzu Temple