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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am writing to express my deep concern about the 'visa' problems now facing Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh whom I, and several colleagues, regard as a teacher of international renown, particularly in the related fields of comparative religion and literature.

I wish, therefore, to establish the following points:

1. Firstly, about myself. As an academic specialist in English and American literatures, I am involved not only with the interpretation of individual texts but also with their application to problems of public morality and universal truth. It is precisely here - at the meeting-point of two disciplines - that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is for me pre-eminent. (He combines an extensive knowledge of world literatures together with extraordinary insights into the real teachings of the founders of world religions in such a way that he can use either discipline to illustrate the other.)
2. My main studies in the University of Southampton have been directed towards the teaching of adults. I have attempted to examine in depth a variety of difficult texts without in any way 'reducing' them or over-simplifying their complexities. In evolving my own methods for achieving this, I have been immeasurably helped by the example of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh who has created special techniques for communicating difficult concepts in a direct and simple fashion without in any way diminishing their subtlety and complexity. (I refer, particularly, to his taped discourses, videos and published works which were first brought to my attention by a colleague in another department of Southampton University. I wish here to stress the great benefits I have gained in my teaching - both in 'content' and technique - from a close study of the aforementioned tapes and books.)

-2-

3. Knowing - and appreciating - the traditions of freedom and liberty that are enshrined in the major works of American literature, may I express the hope that their values will again be confirmed in the decision soon to be made in the case of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh.

W. Howard Jones

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P.S. Please note that I have now retired from administrative duties but that I still teach on a part-time basis for the Department of Adult Education.