

MUNDANE WELFARE WORK IN ISKCON

By Murari Das

Introduction

The following article was published on the *Dandavats* website on 26th July 2012 (5,533 views). The article appears below in a revised and expanded form with the help of some devotees. Also included now is an Appendix section which contains many more quotes of our founder-acarya, Srila Prabhupada giving his instructions on this matter.

Mission Drift

Next year marks the fiftieth anniversary of ISKCON. Among other activities planned to mark the occasion, one very important feature of observing the anniversary should be to reflect on the direction and position of ISKCON fifty years after its inception and thirty eight years after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance from mundane vision. Are we properly serving the founder-*acarya* of ISKCON? If not, then we risk losing the connection to the parampara and its blessings. For those who have a clear vision of the aim of ISKCON from Srila Prabhupada's books (which he declared as the law books guide for the next 10,000 years), the increased emphasis on *Mundane welfare work* in ISKCON is alarming.

Over time, there has been an increase in ISKCON in activities which, although not supported by Srila Prabhupada, have been gradually creeping into ISKCON and which now are gradually becoming the main focus of attention, activity and donations.

Specifically, I refer to the new zeal and enthusiasm by which devotees are rushing to establish:

- Schools teaching mundane subjects for devotees as well as for free education for the poor
- Hospital and medical aid-oriented activities
- Centers for feeding the 'disadvantaged', 'malnourished' and 'victims of disaster'

All of these were not only never done during Srila Prabhupada's time but were also regularly denounced by His Divine Grace. In numerous lectures, purports, conversations and letters, Srila Prabhupada would explain how Krsna consciousness was the highest welfare work and how all other mundane philanthropy and altruistic activities were incomplete, misguided ways of loving and serving all.

What is more public welfare than Krishna Consciousness? To awaken everyone's original consciousness is the best public welfare in the whole world.

[Letter to: Yasomatinandana -- Bombay 9 January, 1976]

At the present moment groups of people are engaged in welfare activities in terms of society, community or nation. There is even an attempt in the form of the United Nations for world-help activity. But due to the

shortcomings of limited national activities, such a general mass welfare program for the whole world is not practically possible. The Krsna consciousness movement, however, is so nice that it can render the highest benefit to the entire human race.

[Krsna Consciousness Is All-auspicious, NOD]

If anyone is charitably disposed, it will be very good for him to give charity only to Krsna, who is the Supersoul of everyone, regardless of his particular body or individual personality. Krsna is present as the Supersoul in every living being, and if we can satisfy Him, then every living being will automatically be satisfied.

[Krishna Book 74: The Deliverance of Sisupala]

Should a devotee engage in such activities? The simple way to know this is to see whether it is pleasing to Krsna? Srila Prabhupada would quote from Bhagavad-gita about how to best please Krsna:

Here is an explanation of how those engaged in activities for the welfare of others are very quickly recognized by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (18.68-69), ya idam paramam guhyam mad-bhakteshv abhidhasyati. .. na ca tasman manusyesu kascin me priya-krttamah: "One who preaches the message of Bhagavad-gita to My devotees is most dear to Me. No one can excel him in satisfying Me by worship." There are different kinds of welfare activities in this material world, but the supreme welfare activity is the spreading of Krsna consciousness.

[SB 1.5.18 purport]

If one tries to spread Krsna consciousness all over the world, he should be understood to be performing the best welfare activity. The Lord is automatically very pleased with him. If the Lord is pleased with him, what is left for him to achieve?

[Srimad-Bhagavatam 8.7.44]

Srila Prabhupada in the above quote highlights Krsna's words in chapter eighteen of Bhagavad-gita on how to please Him. Not surprisingly, His Divine Grace has outlined that very same activity as the main focus (or rather, what **should** be the main focus) of the worldwide spiritual movement He established: Preaching of the Bhagavad-gita.

If we want to please Krsna, we have to follow the activity that He wants us to do and do what He wants of us. Otherwise that is not Bhakti. We can't concoct our own activities on how we think Krsna will be pleased. Bhakti means serving Krsna the way that he wants to be served as Srila Prabhupada explains:

That is bhakti. Anukulyena krsnanusilanam. Anukulyena. Anukulyena means what is favorable, what Krsna desires. Just like Arjuna. He did not like to fight. He wanted to be a very nice, nonviolent gentleman. But Krsna was inducing him, "You fight." Then later on, he agreed: "Yes, karisyeva vacanam tava [Bg. 18.73]." This is anukulyena. "Krsna wants it. Doesn't matter whether it is violent or nonviolent, Krsna wants it. I must do it." This is called anukulyena, not against the desire of Krsna, but in favor of Krsna.

This is called anukula, anukula-seva. So anukulyena krsnanusilanam bhaktir uttama [Cc. Madhya 19.167]. That is first-class bhakti. Not that "If I like it, then I shall do it." That is not anukula. That is pratikula. You like or not like, that doesn't matter. Krsna likes it,; you must do it. That is anukulyena krsnanusilanam.

[Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.18 -- Calcutta, September 26, 1974]

We may have another idea about what we want to do to serve Krsna and benefit society but Srila Prabhupada makes it clear what the highest welfare activity is and how to please Krsna.

Only a person who is fully in Krsna consciousness can be said to be engaged in welfare work for all living entities. When a person is actually in the knowledge that Krsna is the fountainhead of everything, then when he acts in that spirit he acts for everyone.

[Bg 5.25 purport]

At the present moment groups of people are engaged in welfare activities in terms of society, community or nation. There is even an attempt in the form of the United Nations for world-help activity. But due to the shortcomings of limited national activities, such a general mass welfare program for the whole world is not practically possible. The Krsna consciousness movement, however, is so nice that it can render the highest benefit to the entire human race.

[Krsna Consciousness Is All-auspicious, NOD]

The highest perfectional project of philanthropic activities is to engage everyone in the act of preaching bhakti-yoga all over the world because that alone can save the people from the control of maya, or the material nature represented by kala, karma and guna, as described above. The Bhagavad-gita (14.26) confirms this definitely.

[SB 1.13.46]

What is more public welfare than Krishna Consciousness? To awaken everyone's original consciousness is the best public welfare in the whole world.

[Letter to: Yasomatinandana -- Bombay 9 January, 1976]

As mentioned in the last quote above, Srila Prabhupada repeatedly said that preaching Krsna consciousness is the highest welfare work one can be engaged in. This is the most pleasing to Sri Krsna and thus satisfies all living entities.

Here is an explanation of how those engaged in activities for the welfare of others are very quickly recognized by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (18.68-69), ya idam paramam guhyam mad-bhaktesv abhidhasyati. .. na ca tasman manusyesu kascin me priya-krttamah: "One who preaches the message of Bhagavad-gita to My devotees is most dear to Me. No one can excel him in satisfying Me by worship." There are different kinds of welfare activities in this material world, but the supreme welfare activity is the spreading of Krsna consciousness.

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If one tries to spread Krsna consciousness all over the world, he should be understood to be performing the best welfare activity. The Lord is automatically very pleased with him. If the Lord is pleased with him, what is left for him to achieve?.....

The best welfare activity is raising people to the platform of Krsna consciousness, since the conditioned souls are suffering only for want of Krsna consciousness.....

All the sastras conclude, therefore, that spreading the Krsna consciousness movement is the best welfare activity in the world. Because of the ultimate benefit this bestows upon people in general, the Lord very quickly recognizes such service performed by a devotee.

[SB 8.7.44]

Preaching work is described as paropakāra, welfare activity for others. Those who are ignorant of the benefits of devotional service must be educated by preaching.

[SB 10.31.9]

Regarding other type of welfare work? They cannot be effective as people are destined to suffer or enjoy according to their Karma.

There are different kinds of welfare activities in this material world, but the supreme welfare activity is the spreading of Krsna consciousness. Other welfare activities cannot be effective, for the laws of nature and the results of karma cannot be checked. It is by destiny, or the laws of karma, that one must suffer or enjoy. For instance, if one is given a court order, he must accept it, whether it brings suffering or profit. Similarly, everyone is under obligations to karma and its reactions.

Of course as devotees we don't like to see anyone distressed even if it is result of their Karma, and instead want to alleviate their suffering. But one cannot really help someone by helping the material body, the outer covering. We should desire permanent benefit for someone and help them spiritually. Therefore, His Divine Grace set out clearly what our duty as his followers should be and He proclaimed that as the highest welfare work in the world. What are those activities?

What is the business of these Krsna conscious students? They are busy in chanting Hare Krsna, in distributing knowledge in Krsna consciousness. Therefore they are doing the best welfare work in the world. Other welfare work will be finished as soon as this body is finished. But these welfare activities will not be finished. If one hears one day, one minute, one second, this vibration of chanting, it will act someday.

[Bhagavad-gita 5.17-25 -- Los Angeles, February 8, 1969]

We are supposed to be Prabhupadanugas and Rupanugas. Are we really following these great personalities or our own ideas of how to please Krsna? Is something wrong in the direction we are going towards in terms of the welfare activities we are carrying out? An impartial study of the main activities of many of our projects in ISKCON will reveal them to be based on mundane welfare

activities which are not what our Acaryas taught. I would like to investigate Srila Prabhupada's opinion on three particular activities; Schools, hospitals and feeding the poor.

Schools, Hospitals and Medical camps

In Srila Prabhupada's time there was not a single school teaching mundane syllabus, or hospital, opened and nor was there ever a plan or talk of opening such institutions.

ISKCON was setup to do the highest welfare activity of preaching Krsna consciousness. By that single activity all auspiciousness would follow and all problems would be solved. Thus he rejected the idea of members of ISKCON getting into 'social work' or other work except directly preaching Krsna consciousness, since that was the only thing lacking in the world according to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur.

We are not social welfare worker or political worker. We are worker for Krsna. [break] ...in this world that people are suffering for want of Krsna consciousness. Let us try to make them Krsna conscious. That is our only interest. Otherwise we have no interest in this material world.

[Morning Walk -- January 10, 1974, Los Angeles]

If we indeed decide we want to help people by giving them free medical aid in one form or another, then what about the medical aid for the animals? What about medical aid for other people whom we can't reach out to, for example in other cities or countries? We want to help people and do some good but we can't help all living entities in all places. We end up merely helping a small group of students in a school with free food or feeding a few villages here and there. However, when we serve Krsna the benefit goes to all living entities in the creation and only then can we say we served everyone without discrimination.

You can open a hospital for the human being but where is your hospital for the tiger? Can any man open a hospital for the tigers, for the snakes? And why not? You are compassionate with living entities. Are they not living entities? This is the frailty of imperfect knowledge

[Bhagavad-gita 5.17-25 -- Los Angeles, February 8, 1969]

Therefore, the best thing would be to directly engage in Pure Devotional Service. If we are not able to and rather feel inclined to spend our money on charitable work, then we should give the charity to Krsna as mentioned in Bhagavad-gita Chapter 9 Text 27.

They are very much puffed up, that "We are doing this, opening hospital and school, and philanthropism, nationalism." Is there any such thing in the Bhagavad-gita? Is there any advice that "You open hospital, school and do this philanthropic work"? No. If you have got anything to give in charity, you are charitably disposed, Krsna says, "Give it to Me. If you are so rich and if you have got this good intention to give in charity, give it to Me." Yat karosi yaj juhosi yad asnasi yat tapasyasi dadasi yat [Bg. 9.27]. Dadasi yat means "whatever you give in charity." Kurusva tad mad-arpanam: "Give it to Me. Yes, I am expanding My hand. Come on." But they have forgotten Krsna or Krsna's advice, and they remain puffed up, that "I am engaged in this activity, that activity, this activity." Thousands of millions of such activities may be very

good in the estimations of the fools and rascals, but it may not be accepted by Krsna. That is the crucial point. But our point is that unless accepted by Krsna, it is simply srama eva hi kevalam [SB 1.2.8], simply waste of time. Our philosophy says. We have to satisfy Krsna. We haven't got to satisfy ourselves that "I am doing very nice work in this way." So all these people, they are manufacturing concocted ideas.

[Bhagavad-gita 2.2 -- London, August 3, 1973]

In this next quote Srila Prabhupada gives His opinion on eye care and where it fits in our duty as preachers of Bhagavad-gita as it is;

In Bhagavad-gita there is no such statement that you take care of the eyes of the people. There is no such statement. That is your manufactured idea. But we are preaching Bhagavad-gita as it is. That is the difference. Our preaching is that instead of giving relief to the eyes, give him relief in such a way he hasn't got to accept any more this body with eyes. You cannot make a solution of the problem. Somebody is taking care of the eyes, somebody's taking of the finger, somebody of the hair, somebody of another, genital, and so on, so on. This will not solve the problem. The problem is, as it is said in the Bhagavad..., janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi-duhkha-dosanudarsanam [Bg. 13.9]. This is intelligence. As soon as you take birth, then you'll have eyes, you'll have eye trouble, vyadhi. Janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi. If you accept janma-mrtyu, then between janma-mrtyu there is vyadhi and jara. You have to accept. You may give some relief, but you have to accept. So that is not solution. The solution is how to stop this janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi. That is solution.

[Room Conversation -- January 8, 1977, Bombay]

The point being made in the quote above is that these are patchwork, temporary solutions for the suffering condition of the living entity in the material world. We need to go to the root cause and help persons to be free of the material body completely, by Krsna consciousness. Otherwise we didn't really help the living entity by giving him temporary reprieve from some suffering condition. Srila Prabhupada terms such a person who doesn't have discrimination of how to do real welfare work as; a sudra, in other words, one who is devoid of knowledge of and the will for self-realization.

No one knows where compassion should be applied. Compassion for the dress of a drowning man is senseless. A man fallen in the ocean of nescience cannot be saved simply by rescuing his outward dress -- the gross material body. One who does not know this and laments for the outward dress is called a sudra, or one who laments unnecessarily. Arjuna was a ksatriya, and this conduct was not expected from him. Lord Krsna, however, can dissipate the lamentation of the ignorant man, and for this purpose the Bhagavad-gita was sung by Him

[Bhagavad-gita 2.21]

It's not that there were no opportunities in the form of manpower or funds for ISKCON to have opened a hospital during Srila Prabhupada's time. As we can see below the opportunities came, but Srila Prabhupada did not want to 'waste the valuable time of human life';

Hrdayananda: You're the only one, Prabhupada, who dares to criticize hospitals and schools. (laughter)

Prabhupada: Yes, so many people came to request me... Even Dr. Ghosh. Eh? You know.

Satsvarupa: He wanted you to open a medical dispensary.

Prabhupada: "No, no, we are not going to waste our time in that way." I frankly told him. We have no extra time to waste like that. What he thinks very big project, we say it is waste of time. (laughter)

Jayatirtha: Yes.

Hrdayananda: Jaya. It is a completely revolutionary idea.

Prabhupada: Yes. I cannot allow anyone he's waste his valuable time of human life. Guru-krpa: You said before that the more hospitals they open that means the more people have to become sick.

Prabhupada: That, more... Yes.

Guru-krpa: To get in the hospital.

Prabhupada: They are very much proud, "We have opened fifty hospitals." That means fifty thousand people have become sick. "We have increased so many beds." That means so many people have more increased their disease. But they're proud of doing this.

[Morning Walk -- July 9, 1974, Los Angeles]

Those who are not devotees, therefore, are interested in so-called humanitarian or philanthropic work, such as opening a hospital or charitable institution. These are undoubtedly good works in the sense that they are pious activities, and their result is that the performer may get some opportunities for sense gratification, either in this life or in the next. Devotional service, however, is beyond the boundary of sense gratification.

[SB 3.25.27]

This is the Lord's last instruction in the Bhagavad-gita (18.66): sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja. "Give up all other processes and just surrender unto Me alone." Unfortunately, foolish men have misinterpreted this prime teaching and misled the masses of people in diverse ways. People have been urged to open hospitals but not to educate themselves to enter into the spiritual kingdom by devotional service. They have been taught to take interest only in temporary relief work, which can never bring real happiness to the living entity.

[Iso mantra 14]

Some argue that opening hospitals in the name of Srila Prabhupada or ISKCON is good preaching as we can preach to the patients. But if we are really keen on preaching then what better way to preach to take a bag of books and distribute them instead? Didn't Srila Prabhupada mention time and time again how book distribution is the best preaching? The benefit of this for the recipient of the books and the preacher would be far more than by preaching through the medical method. Also this act serves and satisfies all living entities simultaneously by virtue of it being highly pleasing to Sri Krsna.

At any rate, why should we be so concerned doing this or that activity to look good in the eyes of the public? Or as Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami would say, as spiritualists we shouldn't be so concerned with pleasing the janata but rather pleasing Janardana. This point is echoed by Srila Prabhupada:

We do not depend on the public opinion -- "This is good" or "This is bad." Our "good" "bad" is: if it is favorable for spreading Krsna consciousness, it is good; otherwise bad.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Room Conversation -- January 21, 1977, Bhuvanesvara

We are not against devotees working in, visiting hospitals, trying to make their work environments Krsna consciousness so as to remind whoever works there or visits there of Krsna. We all go to hospitals and we all try to make our environments Krsna conscious. We are also not against hospitals or clinics operating for the service of devotees. The problem is; trying to present this as an official ISKCON project when Srila Prabhupada forbade it so many times. There must have been a very good reason for this. It will confuse new devotees into thinking medical care and welfare activities performed through the hospital or clinic is actually a form of Bhakti which is a gross misunderstanding of siddhanta. Bodily welfare work is on the mundane platform and it is a form of sense gratification which is a block for Bhakti. Also, again bodily welfare is not the duty of sadhus.

Anyway it seems so disrespectful that Srila Prabhupada spoke so many times against opening a hospital and after his disappearance we open a hospital and call it after him!

Schools teaching mundane syllabus

Regarding education, Srila Prabhupada would continually lambast the modern system of education as the perpetrator of the materialistic demonic way of life, and even refusing to term it 'education'. The familiar terms repeated again and again were slaughterhouse, killer of the soul, making asses out of people, etc. These were the places where young children met their spiritual death, lost their spiritual inclinations and were **trained to be sudras**.

Prabhupada: Yes. The modern education means to create dogs. The dog goes door to door and moves the tail, "Please give me if you have anything." So this educated person with application goes, and they say, "No vacancy. Get out." Therefore they are dogs. Educated means dogs. They are creating dogs. In Vedic culture no brahmana will accept any job. No ksatriya will accept any job. No vaisya will accept any... Only sudras. Only sudras.

[Morning Walk -- November 17, 1975, Bombay]

This modern education system is one of the roots of this misdirected civilization. The establishment of factories, industries and concrete jungles in the form of cities is reinforced by this system. After going through that educational system, ones higher faculties of intelligence, spirituality and emotional balance are eroded and replaced with many negative qualities. It thus becomes difficult for the children to be peaceful in a rural or country setting. By propagating this modern educational system ISKCON is actually working against the very goal of trying to encourage the 'simple living and higher thinking' mode of life so suitable for the practise of Krsna Consciousness.

Prabhupada: Gurukrpa Maharaja, what is the benefit of this modern education?

Gurukrpa: No benefit. It makes them an ass.

Prabhupada: Making them demons, that's all.

Gurukrpa: They become puffed-up, thinking they know something. They don't know anything.

Prabhupada: Not only that, modern educated youths, they are not inclined to come to the farm. So they're giving up their own father's property, farm. They do not come back from city. The farmers' children go to cities for education, and after so-called education the rascals do not come. Here also and in your country also, America and... They want city life and enjoy restaurant and prostitute

[Morning Walk -- January 24, 1977, Bhuvanesvara]

Celibacy, yes. Life of celibacy, controlling the sex desire. This is tapasya. Tapasa brahmacaryena samena damena va [SB 6.1.13]. These things are education. And what is this nonsense education how to become a big mechanics of motorcar parts? This is not education. This is sudra, sudra education. It is not education.

[Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.1.50 -- Detroit, August 3, 1975]

That is real education. We want that you learn from Bhaktivinoda Thakura, you learn from Vyasadeva, you learn from Narada. But why you are learning from Freud, from Darwin and such rascals? Education means you should learn from a person who is authorized, who is without mistake, without illusion, who does not cheat, just like we are learning from Krsna. That is education. And if you learn from rascals and fools, then what is that education?

[Morning Walk -- October 18, 1975, Johannesburg]

Therefore people are restless. He is hungry. What he will do, his cars and this shirt and coat and big building? Why they are committing suicide? Because he is not happy. There is no food for the spirit soul, what he is actually. Is that education? That is not education. So Bhaktivinoda Thakura is right when he says, jiba ke karaye gadha: "This material education means making people more and more asses." That's all. He is already ass because he's in this material world and the so-called material education means keeping him in that condition more and more.

[Morning Walk -- October 18, 1975, Johannesburg]

If this was Srila Prabhupada's opinion about 'modern education', **why are we opening more and more of these slaughter houses in the name of ISKCON?** We want to help the dham-vasis, so we build schools and enrol them! And what will happen to these children 10 years from now after they go through this school system? Will they really want to continue their 'simple living' in Vrindavan and Mayapur with cows and the land? Or will they go to the city to get sudra job as a secretary, engineer or sales girl? Or perhaps raze the agricultural lands in the Dham to make way for shopping Malls, offices and luxury apartments? We are supposed to be moving towards Varnasrama gradually and so the best thing is to be trained in our roles from a young age. The spirit of trying to help the dham-vasis is highly commendable. But we have to see whether we are really helping them by putting them in these

demoniac systems of education. When it was suggested that ISKCON establish a school for educating girls, Srila Prabhupada said it was a mistake and gave an alternative education program for them:

Tamala Krsna: So we're... I thought there were girls in Vrndavana now. They said that they're going to have the girls' gurukula behind the boys' gurukula. Gopala was talking about that.

Prabhupada: No, no, no. No girls.

Tamala Krsna: It should be in another city or somewhere else.

Prabhupada: Yes. They should be taught how to sweep, how to stitch...

Tamala Krsna: Clean.

Prabhupada: ...clean, cook, to be faithful to the husband.

Tamala Krsna: They don't require a big school.

Prabhupada: No, no. That is mistake. They should be taught how to become obedient to the husband.

Tamala Krsna: Yeah, you won't learn that in school.

[Morning Conversation -- April 29, 1977, Bombay]

Yet now years later we are doing that very same thing Srila Prabhupada didn't want. Right in the holy dham!

The whole plan was to establish Gurukuls for the ISKCON members to send their children to where we could control the environment and instil spiritual values from a young age.

You follow that, brahmacari gurukula, that I've already explained. That should be done. Don't bring any new thing, imported ideas. That will not be helpful. It will be encumbrance. "My experiment with truth" -- Gandhi's movement. Truth is truth. "Experiment" means you do not know what is truth. It is a way of life, everything is stated there, try to train them. Simple thing. We are not going to teach biology or chemistry. They are not going to... Our students are not going to... Our students should be fit for teaching Krsna consciousness. By their character, by their behavior, by their knowledge, that is wanted. Biology, chemists, physicists, and mathematician there are hundreds and thousands. We are not going to waste our time that Gurukula should produce a great grammarian, a great geologist, biologist, don't want that. There are many other educational institutions. If you can get a good driver of your car, so what is the use of wasting your time to learn driving? Is it not? If you have got important business, you can do that. Why should you waste your time to learn driving? Better employ one driver, pay him some fare.

[Ref. VedaBase => Room Conversation -- July 31, 1976, New Mayapur (French farm)]

When I say 'Gurukula' here I refer to an institution based on the Vedic spiritual system of education. Not mundane schools teaching mundane government syllabuses with a token amount of time allotted to the odd Kirtan or Gita sloka here or there. Strangely though, even though our education system has

undergone a metamorphosis into mundane institutions we have retained 'Gurukula' in the names thus serving to try to convince others and ourselves that we are indeed running Gurukulas.

A lot of us have come to Krsna consciousness after going through the materialistic system of education, work, etc, and thus found it difficult to take up the process. We have an opportunity to mold the next generation favorably. This is the first education required: Good character. It will give the children a very good start in life. But by again putting them in the 'slaughter houses' we are spoiling their opportunities for becoming Krsna conscious.

There is a Bengali proverb, gancai noale vas, mas korbe tans tas(?): "When the bamboo is green, you can bend it, but when it is yellow, dried, it will crack." So education begins from the very childhood. That is education. Therefore gurukula is required. It doesn't require how much he has learned ABCD and grammar. No. First of all character. That is gurukula living. Let him become danta, guru-grhe. Brahmachari guru-grhe vasan dantah. How to become sense controller, that is first education.

[Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.12.2 -- Bombay, April 13, 1976]

So this was the plan: establish the Gurukula system of education. Not just in one or two places, but all over the world. Not schools.

You have some experience now with Gurukula, so your full-time engagement should now be how to organize the Gurukulas all over the world. Do it very nicely and thoughtfully. So far your plans are concerned for the same, you can have them conjointly approved with the other GBC. In this way, you may make the Gurukula program your portfolio and organize it throughout the world.

[Letter to: Jagadisa -- Honolulu 6 May, 1976]

Now, there were some problems no doubt, when there was a drive to try and establish the Gurukula system. But that doesn't mean we abandon the whole project. That means that we address the problems. If I have an eye problem, I try to get it checked up and then administer some medicine to heal it. But a less intelligent person will just pull the eye out. There are already a few Gurukulas established and running on a small scale by efforts of pockets of devotees here and there. But the whole idea of pushing and developing this idea from a managerial level is completely absent.

At the time when we were having problems with the Gurukula, just after Srila Prabhupada's departure devotees leading the movement had neither the depth of knowledge nor shraddha to afford a causal explanation for ISKCON's failed experiment with gurukula in terms of our siddhantas as received through the parampara. Therefore, they fell back onto mundane psychology and mundane educational theory to explain the failure because that was what they knew best and had faith in. Now that many of our ISKCON members have attained deeper knowledge and realizations in our philosophy and its practice **we need to work towards re-establishing these Vedic institutions of learning once again.**

Establishing Gurukulas was one of Srila Prabhupada's main plans for ISKCON and as followers of Srila Prabhupada and taking shelter in his movement, it behooves us to make efforts to carry out this instruction.

Just imagine what a great asset it will be to our movement to have children brought up the way Srila Prabhupada wanted in the proper system of Vedic Gurukula. Some work and dedication is required but the results will be phenomenal.

Feeding the Poor, Disaster Relief

There is no doubt that Srila Prabhupada wanted Prasadam to be distributed profusely without discrimination. His Divine Grace is also having been quoted as saying that what was the use of a temple if there was no Prasadam distribution. We also have practical experience how people change just by Prasadam distribution and also begin to become attracted by the Sankirtan movement. How is this so? Srila Prabhupada explains how Prasadam helps to give spiritual intelligence by which one can understand transcendental subjects.

One thing though is that His Divine Grace did not want is for us to start running after poor people to feed. He mentions that actually everyone is poor, spiritually and we shouldn't make discrimination. Also the temple should be the via medium for Prasadam distribution, not that we start roaming around here and there with the specific purpose of just feeding people prasadam instead of preaching Krsna consciousness which is the necessity of the moment for everyone. The idea was that we welcome all persons whether rich or poor and give them prasadam as well as preach to them or induce them to chant the holy name. It was in essence a direct effort to make persons Krsna conscious by preaching. If someone was so hungry that he couldn't properly give aural reception to the message, then we invite them all to come and take prasadam in the temple and then we preach to them.

Temple worship means you must distribute prasadam... You should... To the poor. Everyone is poor. Not that the rich man is not poor... So there is no question of, if one is financially poor, he should come to the temple. Everyone should come to the temple and ask for prasada. That is required. So paratma-nistham. The sannyasi should worship the Deity in the temple and feed the poor. Poor does not mean that one who has no legs, no ears, or no... Poor... Everyone who is spiritually poor, he should be given prasadam. By eating, prasade sarva-duhkhanam hanir asyopajayate.....

[Sannyasa Initiation Lecture -- Calcutta, January 26, 1973]

Prasadam distribution means distributing the results of Yajna. Not going out to feed hungry or poor people. By taking such remnants one is purified of past sinful reactions according to the Bhagavad-gita. Is it that only poor people require to be purified of past sinful reactions? Is that rich man not also in material existence and requiring purification of his existence in order to become Krsna conscious?

So far prasada distribution, it is not a question of rich or poor. That will be Karma Kanda. Our program therefore is that we offer prasada to everyone. Make our temple so nice that everyone who comes is offered some prasada. Not that we are after poor men. It is nice that we are feeding 200 daily, but gradually try to increase. But do not advertise, we shall be self-advertising. And do not go to poor areas, this is not our philosophy. Our philosophy is prasada distribution, without discrimination rich or poor. [Honolulu 15 May, 1972]

It is not poor-feeding. It is distributing the resultant action of yajna. This worship is yajna. So yajna-sistasino... If you feed some men, not the so-called poor, everyone, then they'll be freed from their sinful activities...

[Sannyasa Initiation Lecture -- Calcutta, January 26, 1973]

You must construct something wonderful. Otherwise, it will be a discredit to you American boys. That will exalt the position of America in India. And in every temple food distribution must go on profusely with American food supplies. Have the Americans given us the food supplies, is there any tangible donation? Or is it simply promises? If we can supply some proof they have given us such and such amount of foodstuffs, some document, that will help us in all parts of the world as propaganda and for approaching your country's government in other places for supplying us. So if you have got such document, kindly send me one copy. If we open a branch in Madras, actually there are so many poor children there. Spiritual education and food, that is proper. Simply supplying food is nonsense. Spiritual education means just to inject in their ears about our philosophy, externally they chant beads, wear tilak, without any discrimination of Hindu or Muslim or anything.

[Letter to: Gurudasa -- Honolulu 13 May, 1972 This issue of Prasadam distribution]

The issue of Prasadam distribution has now been misused and misconstrued. The general public, being without the knowledge of Srila Prabhupada's books think that the best thing one can do is to go and feed poor people. This is not true and some devotees who know it is not true still do it. Why? It appeals to the general public and therefore makes a good impression on them. Thus, if we say that we are collecting donations for feeding poor people, it would be much easier to collect funds. And experience shows that it is easy to collect money in the name of feeding the poor.

But as mentioned in an earlier quote by His Divine Grace, in carrying out duties and running institutions, we should not be so anxious about public opinion. The mass of people are ill-informed about what constitutes a 'good deed' or what is the best thing a spiritualist can do to benefit a soul in this world. So can we really start trying to pander to the public?

The second group of devotees think that going all out and putting so much effort to feed people who are hungry, suffering from malnutrition, poor, disadvantaged etc is actually what Srila Prabhupada wanted. Yet there is no single quote to support this idea. And yet there are so many quotes saying that we shouldn't just go out and simply feed hungry people. We are meant for giving spiritual knowledge and this knowledge and our system is lecture, kirtan and prasadam, collectively.

We say that we should not..., we are not simply supplying food. Anyone who is coming, he is getting spiritual education. Not that it is a free hotel [restaurant]. No. It is not that. We give them spiritual education. You come here, you take your shelter, you take your food and learn how to be first-class man. That is our program. Don't be implicated in sinful activities. Be God conscious and live here with us comfortably, take your food.

[Conversation with Clergymen -- June 15, 1976, Detroit]

*If we open a branch in Madras, actually there are so many poor children there. **Spiritual education and food, that is proper. Simply supplying food is nonsense.** Spiritual education means just to inject in their ears about our philosophy, externally they chant beads, wear tilak, without any discrimination of Hindu or Muslim or anything.*

[Letter to: Gurudasa -- Honolulu 13 May, 1972]

Today we see how teams of devotees rush of to disaster zones; floods, droughts etc. collecting huge sums of money and using temple resources to perform welfare work. If we have some facility and there are some people nearby having a problem, we may help out since we have facilities. But to make elaborate plans to manage, collect and administer an organization in the name of ISKCON only for the specific reason of feeding poor people or going to disaster zones wasn't the aim of ISKCON. Rather Srila Prabhupada termed it Karma Kanda (see above quote).

Even if we want to help, how many will we help?

Guest (1): But Gurujī, giving those who are in need, is not giving to God?

Prabhupāda: That is your philosophy. That is your philosophy. Everyone is needy.

Guest (3): Now people... There are drought conditions, people are starving. Cattles are dying. There are no rains.

Prabhupāda: Yes, because they are not God conscious, they are thinking like that. Now, suppose in the hospital, there are many patients. They are starving, many patients in the hospital. Do you know that or not? So why don't you give them food? They are starving. Why? Why don't you go to the hospital and you'll find hundreds of patients, they are starving... So similarly, why you are bothering? You are not bothering the hospital because you know that is right, they are starving. That is the physician's prescription. They must starve. So if you know God, then you will understand that you cannot help anyone. They are put into the starving condition under certain condition. So you cannot help them. You are simply thinking that "I will help." There are hundreds and thousands, millions of people starving. What you can do? What you are doing for them? What you can do? You are simply thinking falsely. What you have got to give? Just oil in your own machine. Try to understand God, instead of thinking foolishly, "Oh, what I shall do, this? What I shall do, that?" First, of all try to understand the situation.

[Room Conversation -- September 19, 1973, Bombay]

Srila Prabhupada stressed, time and time again how the real solution to overcome this problem of lack of food due to lack of rain (or any other natural disasters), was sankirtan yajna and not food distribution at disaster zones.

We are, of course, making arrangements to feed the poor on account of scarcity of rain. That's all right, you are doing, but if there is no rain, how long you will go on with this philanthropy work? That is our question. How long? What stock you have got in your store, so that you can continually, you can go on? What you, what is the answer? You must have rain, and produce grain. Now you have got some stock of

grain, you are distributing. That's all right, you have got money, that's all right. But when there will be all stock finished, and still there is no rain, what you will do? Because rain is not in your hand. Rain is not in your hand. It is in higher authorities. So what you will do? But the process is given there in the Bhagavad-gita, *yajnad bhavati parjanya parjanya adanna-sambhavaḥ*. Yajna, but they will not take the yajna. They have made a vow, (indistinct). No, we are not going to make any yajna. We are requesting, that you are distributing, at the same time perform yajna. Yajna, not that you have to expend so much money. Simply this sankirtana-yajna. Yajnaih sankirtana-prayair yajanti hi su-medhasah [SB 11.5.32]. Simply chanting. You are distributing food, that's all right. Why not allow them to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra? What is the loss? But they'll not accept it. They'll not accept it. This is the dog's obstinacy, against Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

[The Nectar of Devotion -- Bombay, January 8, 1973]

This is the Lord's last instruction in the Bhagavad-gita (18.66): *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*. "Give up all other processes and just surrender unto Me alone." Unfortunately, foolish men have misinterpreted this prime teaching and misled the masses of people in diverse ways. People have been urged to open hospitals but not to educate themselves to enter into the spiritual kingdom by devotional service. They have been taught to take interest only in temporary relief work, which can never bring real happiness to the living entity.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Iso Mantra 14

At present so many resources are being applied to just feed people, and many persons who joined this movement for transcendental knowledge are now finding themselves going to ask for donations to feed poor people. Book distribution our main activity has now taken a back seat in many temples since it is not so profitable and might disturb people, whereas it is much easier to ask for funds for feeding the poor. What kind of effect will this have on our Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

In 1972, T. L. Kapadia, Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Relief Fund Committee, wrote to Śrīla Prabhupāda asking for assistance for the drought in their state where there are .."many who are on the verge of starvation". All they wanted was for a collection to be done at ISKCON's programs in the name of the drought. Srila Prabhupada reply?

"...if you want to perform relief work simply by collecting funds, I think that it will not be successful. You have to please the supreme authority, and that is the way to success. For example, due to the performance of saṅkīrtana here, the rain has begun to fall after a drought of two years."

Srila Prabhupada implied here that the real solution was not to make an effort to go out and collect to feed these people but to instead try to please Kṛṣṇa by Sankirtan yajna. Their and everyone's suffering condition in all circumstances was due to their lack of God consciousness. His Divine Grace then finishes off his reply by calling on

"...the leading men of India to accept this movement very seriously and give us all facility to spread this movement throughout the world. Then there will be a very happy condition, not only in India but all over the world."

This reply is consistent with Srila Prabhupada's view on this issue in every instance when He expressed his opinion on this matter. The only way to permanently stop all suffering and problems in this world is to spread the Sankirtan movement and that is our only function in ISKCON. Srila Prabhupada would say how his Spiritual Master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur would say that the only thing lacking in this world was Krsna consciousness (not hospitals, not education facilities, not food supplies).

So what is our duty towards the poor and hungry people as ISKCON members? Shall we form organizations to feed all the poor people?

Poor people, so far concerned, that... Are we not taking care of the poor people? That is automatically taken. Who is poor? A man who is poor in knowledge, he is poor. Poor means poor in knowledge.....Why you are concerned about the poor? Who is poor? Poor means who has no knowledge. He is rascal. He is poor. Poor means poor in knowledge. Otherwise nobody is poor. Everyone is getting his food according to his karma. Karmana daiva-netrena jantur deha upapattaye [SB 3.31.1]. These are wrong theories. Wrong means because they are rascals, they are putting something rascal, idea. We want to stop all this nonsense. That is our mission.

[Second Meeting with Mr. Dwivedi -- April 24, 1977, Bombay]

Why Krsna consciousness is the highest welfare activity

Quite simply put, the root cause of all suffering is forgetfulness of Krsna. So the best welfare work is to revive Krsna consciousness.

The sufferings of humanity are due to forgetfulness of Krsna as the supreme enjoyer, the supreme proprietor, and the supreme friend. Therefore, to act to revive this consciousness within the entire human society is the highest welfare work.

[Bg 5.25 purport]

Any effort, short of trying to directly awake a person's innate Krsna consciousness such as alleviating poverty, feeding them, 'educating' them is not really a help to them since they are doomed to take birth again and enter another body which will continue to give them suffering. This means we didn't really help them at all. So only that effort which is aimed at making them Krsna conscious is actual help.

The most important point to understand for anyone wishing to do the best welfare work for all living entities is that Krsna is the root of all living entities. Just as watering the root of a tree is the only way to benefit the whole tree, similarly, serving and pleasing Krsna directly is the only way to serve and please all living entities in the creation.

On many occasions when asked why we don't do social welfare work or similar activities, or just to explain the all inclusive nature of Bhakti as a service to everyone, Srila Prabhupada would use this verse beginning with 'yatha taror mula..' in other words SB 4.31.14.

As watering the root of a tree immediately distributes water to every part of the tree, so an offering made to Krsna, or any action done for Krsna, is to be considered the highest welfare work for everyone, because the benefit of such an offering is distributed throughout the creation. Love for Krsna is distributed to all living entities.

[KB 81: The Brahmana Sudama Blessed by Lord Krsna]

Woman Guest: Does the Krsna movement recognize other types of service to human beings like the social workers? Teaching...

Prabhupada: Yes, this is best service to human beings, to make them Krsna conscious.

Woman Guest: Is there room in the movement for other persons who are indirectly serving Krsna rather than chanting Hare Krsna all day?

Prabhupada: No, the process is, just like if you pour water on the root of the tree, the water is distributed to the leaf, branches, twigs, and they remain fresh. But if you water on the leaf only, the leaf will also dry, and the twig will be also dry. If you put your foodstuff on the stomach, then the energy will be distributed to your finger, to your hairs to your nails and everywhere. And if you take foodstuff in the hand and do not put in the stomach, it will be useless waste. So all this humanitarian service has been wasted because there is no Krsna consciousness. They're trying so many ways to serve the human society, but they're all being frustrated in useless attempt, because there is no Krsna consciousness. And if people are trained to become Krsna conscious, then automatically everyone will be happy.

[Arrival Lecture -- Gainesville, July 29, 1971]

It is impractical and impossible to serve everyone and all living entities who are suffering, there are countless living entities all over the creation. But, since Krsna is the fountain head of everything, when we serve Him then that service is distributed to all living entities. In this way we can serve not only all humanity, but all living entities simply by practising and preaching Krsna consciousness. Without that, the so called humanitarian activity is a waste as Srila Prabhupada says in the following quote,;

Just like, taror mula-nisecanena, if you supply water on the root of the tree, the water is immediately transferred to the branches, to the leaves, to the flowers, to the fruits -- everywhere. Everyone knows it. It is scientific. But if you supply water to one leaf, or thousand leaves, it does not mean that other leaves are also getting the benefit. So, at the present moment, people are captivated for human welfare activities. Oh, what human welfare activities they will do? It is not in your power. You can do something, but very limited. There are living entities, they are not only human beings. There are 8,400,000's of living entities, and the human living entities they are only minute portion. They are only 400,000's these, only. Other living entities, they are eight million. That is not very difficult to understand. If you take a census of the living entities in the city of San Francisco, then the census of the human being residing in this city, they will be very, a small number in comparison to the birds, bests, aquatics, ants, and so many other living entities, so many other living entities. So, suppose a portion of human living entity you serve, then what is the value of service? What is the value of that service?

Therefore, the Bhagavata says, just like watering the root of the tree you can serve all the leaves, flowers, branches, and everything of the tree, just by supplying foodstuff to your stomach you can serve all the limbs of your body, similarly, simply by loving Krsna you can learn how to love everyone. If you don't love Krsna, and if you love the whole universe, it is still imperfect. Imperfect. And, because we are not loving Krsna, therefore we are sectarian.

[Sri Brahma-samhita, Verse 34 -- San Francisco, September 13, 1968 (New-2003)]

Therefore, Krsna consciousness is the way to have compassion on all living entities. There is no other way that one can do the maximum good for all living entities.

You can open a hospital for the human being but where is your hospital for the tiger? Can any man open a hospital for the tigers, for the snakes? And why not? You are compassionate with living entities. Are they not living entities? This is the frailty of imperfect knowledge.

[Bhagavad-gita 5.17-25 -- Los Angeles, February 8, 1969]

So our goal should just be to practise and preach, preach, preach Krsna consciousness. Just by practising Krsna consciousness all other obligations and works are fulfilled. This is the definition of 'faith' according to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

'sraddha'-sabde -- visvasa kahe sudrdha niscaya

krsne bhakti kaile sarva-karma krta haya

"Sraddha is confident, firm faith that by rendering transcendental loving service to Krsna one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. Such faith is favorable to the discharge of devotional service

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Madhya 22.62

Therefore, let us develop deeper faith in Bhakti as the supermost all inclusive activity of auspiciousness for the living entity without any need for other superfluous activities.

Why people are attracted to doing welfare work.

Welfare work is generally not meant for sadhus. Sadhus or devotees are immersed in devotional service as mentioned in Bhagavad-gita 9.30 and they simply distribute transcendental knowledge and try and bring the fallen souls back to Godhead. This has been the case for all Acaryas in our line from time immemorial.

Suppose he begins in philanthropic work, some hospitalizing or opening educational institution. That is nice, but these things are being done by the government and many philanthropic persons. That is not the duty of a sannyasi. A sannyasi, a renounced order of life, his main business is to spread Krsna consciousness, or God consciousness. That is his real business. But if one has not the taste what is Krsna consciousness, simply accept sannyasa, then he will do all this nonsense work.

[Bhagavad-gita 3.1-5 -- Los Angeles, December 20, 1968]

The greatest philanthropists are those transcendentalists who represent the mission of Vyasa, Narada, Madhva, Caitanya, Rupa, Sarasvati, etc. They are all one and the same. The personalities may be different, but the aim of the mission is one and the same, namely, to deliver the fallen souls back home, back to Godhead.

[SB 1.4.17, SB 1.4.18, SB 1.4.17-18 purport]

In the quote above Srila Prabhupada mentions the name of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur as a true follower of and a personality dedicated to the mission of Srila Vyasadeva. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur wrote

The thousands of karmis who have opened innumerable hospitals, old age homes, centers for the poor, and schools, and the thousands of jnanis who have undergone meditation and severe austerities, are insignificant compared to a single kanishta-adhikari Vaishnava once ringing the bell before the Lord's deity. This is not sectarianism, but plain truth. Atheists are wholly incapable of realizing this; thus they become either direct or indirect blasphemers of devotional service, or adherents to the doctrine of harmonistic all-inclusiveness (Amrta Vani 102 – 3; Sri Srila Prabhupadera Upadesamrta 174).

[From Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Vaibhava, page 421]

However this deviation of sadhus opening mundane welfare institutions began with Mayavadis. After giving up the world as 'false' they were not able to get a taste in spiritual life and so came back to the material plane to do philanthropic work. As Srila Prabhupada would quote often;

There are many jnanis or sannyasis who, after taking sannyasa and giving up the world as false, return to the world to engage in politics or philanthropy or to open schools and hospitals. This means that they could not attain the real Brahman (brahma satyam). They have to come down to the material platform to engage in philanthropic activity. Thus they again cultivate desires, and when these desires are exhausted, they desire something different.

[Madhya 19.149]

So why are people attracted to doing mundane welfare work? The desire and inclination for mundane welfare work is a characteristic of the conditioned state of life.

According to text 13 – 15, chapter 16, Bhagavad-gita wherein Krsna describes the nature of the demoniac personalities, one of the demonic tendencies is yakshye daasyaami modishya, "I shall perform sacrifices, I shall give charity, and I shall rejoice." Even demons give charity. But they are attracted to it because of the ishvaro ham aham bhogive. Therefore mundane charity and welfare work not is necessarily a sign of a pious or religious person.

On the pure spiritual platform one is desireless, in other words, he desires only to serve Krsna and eschews all mundane activities. When that higher taste is absent one is attracted to the lower taste of mundane activities.

But those who have not advanced to such knowledge, oh, they think, "Oh, this material enjoyment is very nice. Let me taste it and let me do business in my sannyasi life, and stealthily and privately, let me enjoy." These things are going on. That means they have no taste. They come to hospital-making or this philanthropy.

[Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Ādi-līlā 7.108 -- San Francisco, February 18, 1967]

Srīlā Jīva Gosvāmī has explained this desirelessness as bhājānīyā parama-puruṣa-sukha-mātra-sva-sukhatvam in his Sandarbha. This means that one should feel happy only by experiencing the happiness of the Supreme Lord. This intuition of the living being is sometimes manifested even during the conditioned stage of a living being in the material world, and such intuition is expressed in the manner of altruism, philanthropy, socialism, communism, etc., by the undeveloped minds of less intelligent persons.

[Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.3.11-12 -- Los Angeles, May 29, 1972]

Srīlā Prabhupāda said very clearly where philanthropic, altruistic and humanitarian work stood. These were different guises of māyā. These were avenues for sense gratification. By thinking that 'I am helping these people, 'I am their provider, we usurp the position of Kṛṣṇa.

The show of religion, austerity, penance, humanitarianism, philanthropy, politics, science -- everything is aimed at realizing some material benefit.

[KB 60: Talks Between Kṛṣṇa and Rukmīnī]

In politics, social service, altruism, philanthropy, and ultimately in religion or even in salvation, the very same tint of sense gratification is ever-increasingly predominant.

[DWT 5: What the Senses are Meant For]

When one thinks that he is the best friend to his countrymen, to society or to humanity and he engages in various nationalistic, philanthropic and altruistic activities, all that is just so much concentration on sense gratification.

[SB 3.27.5 purport]

Those who are puffed up by the mode of passion try to lord it over material nature in various ways. Some of them engage in altruistic activities as if they were agents appointed to do good to others by their mental speculative plans. Such men accept the standard ways of mundane altruism, but their plans are made on the basis of false ego.

[SB 3.5.29 purport]

Material enjoyment includes activities such as great sacrifices for auspicious activity, charity, austerity, elevation to the higher planetary system, and even living happily within the material world.

[CC Madhya 12.135 purport]

Therefore, Mundane welfare work is a form of sense gratification, which is an obstacle to Shuddha Bhakti. Specifically it is Karma-misra bhakti. Bhakti mixed with the desire for some personal gratification as opposed to wholly gratification of Krsna's senses. The real welfare work is outlined below by His Divine Grace;

Philanthropy is when one becomes interested in Krsna's interest, that is real philanthropy. Otherwise it is all kama.

[Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.5.7 -- Vrndavana, October 29, 1976]

Conclusion

When an organization or society is set up, it is done so to fulfil a particular goal or aim which is set out by the founder person or group. If certain practices are carried out by any member under the name of the society which is not part of the society's aim then they are either asked to desist from such practice, or to if they are adamant to continue, then to carry it out under a different name. In extreme cases members are disqualified from the society.

ISKCON was set up for the purpose of spreading spiritual knowledge to society. The specific aims of ISKCON are given in the '7 aims of ISKCON'. None of those aims is 'philanthropic' activity.

What is the busyness of these Krsna conscious students? They are busy in chanting Hare Krsna, in distributing knowledge in Krsna consciousness. Therefore they are doing the best welfare work in the world. Other welfare work will be finished as soon as this body is finished. But these welfare activities will not be finished.⁶

It is clear that Srila Prabhupada not only didn't approve certain 'mundane welfare' activities but also termed them as useless activities which give temporary relief at best. These activities crept into our movement very gradually. In the beginning there were some exceptions here and there. But over time this seems to have become the main activity for many ISKCON centres. Instead of spreading spiritual knowledge or the holy name by way of book distribution, programs and harinams the full time occupation has become to go and feed people, look after their health or to 'educate' them or to go out and collect for these activities. But as mentioned in the last quote above, these are all temporary solutions and fixes. In a sense, we cannot really call all these activities 'welfare' as real welfare is to remind everyone of their eternal relationship with Krsna and all else is violence towards the living entities.

Material activities that are promised by so many politicians, sociologists, philanthropists, etc., do not produce very good results because the politicians and philanthropists have no transcendental vision; they do not know what is actually beneficial for human society. Ahimsa means that people should be trained in such a way that the full utilization of the human body can be achieved. The human body is meant for spiritual realization, so any movement or any commissions which do not further that end commit violence on the human body. >>> Ref. VedaBase => Bg 10.4, Bg 10.5, Bg 10.4-5

To carry out these activities under the banner of ISKCON is disrespectful to Srila Prabhupada and a diversion from the main mission of ISKCON. This is Mission Drift. It is a deviation of our duty towards Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON.

There are so many people doing these activities of temporary relief yet only one organization has been formed purely for propagating transcendental knowledge to awaken our God consciousness. But if ISKCON also starts doing these mundane philanthropic activities, then who will spread Transcendental knowledge in order for the jivas to go back to Godhead (thus eliminating the need for welfare activity for them forever)? Srila Prabhupada mentioned how the Gaudiya Math lost its potency for preaching due to having diverted from the instructions of

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. Is this the destiny for the present day ISKCON also now, as we are also now drifting away from the instructions of our founder Acharya ?

According to Srila Prabhupada, the aim of ISKCON in spreading Krsna consciousness is the actual welfare activity. No one should feel that just by spreading Krsna consciousness and not doing any other activity, something is lacking. This is the highest benefit for all.

All decent men want to give service to humanity, only thing is they do not have information really what is that service. Hospitals, feeding the poor, Red Cross, these are service to the bodies only, not to the man. Service to humanity means jnana. By giving people knowledge, jnana, that is the highest service to humanity. So we are performing the actual welfare work of society by informing everyone through our literatures who is God, who they are, and what is the relationship. In this way everyone who hears our message gets the opportunity to fulfill his actual position as human entity and become delivered from the clutches of maya.....

So you may understand it that by disseminating our Krsna consciousness propaganda anywhere and everywhere, by selling books, by making publicity, newspapers, television, so many ways there are to spread Krsna consciousness information, you may know it that by utilizing our energy in this way to give everyone access to the Absolute Truth, that is the real understanding of desire to serve humanity. [Letter to: Ramesvara -- India 9 January, 1973]

In writing this article my main aim was to argue that we have to take a serious look at where our movement is heading. So many new 'schools' are being opened, 'food' distribution is going on and 'medical aid' activities are expanding, but we have to ask if that is what we are supposed to be doing. We need to seriously go back to and properly study the teachings of His Divine Grace in order to see what our movement was setup for. I hope this article managed to convince devotees that simply by practising and preaching Krsna consciousness as Srila Prabhupada did, we can gain all perfection and solve all problems of the world. There is no other way to reach Krsna or to do the 'highest' benefit for all living entities in the creation.

If we decide to gradually do away with Srila Prabhupada's guidance on what our activities should be, and instead go our own way, then we won't make advancement, as advancement is made by following the instructions of the Guru and pleasing Him; ...yasya dev e para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau..., ...yasya prasada bhagvat prasado. Further, as mentioned earlier by giving up the instructions of the Guru all potency for preaching will be withdrawn as happened to ISKCON's predecessor according to Srila Prabhupada. The instructions given to us on what our activities should be were simple, and they are all there in Srila Prabhupada's books;

So all instructions are there. If you read it carefully, you get. But don't manufacture in your own way. That will not be successful. Yah sastra-vidhim utsrjya.

>>> Ref. VedaBase => Room Conversation with Alice Coltrane -- July 1, 1977, Vrndavana

Lastly, being the Transcendental personality that he is, it seems that Srila Prabhupada knew how some members of his society would veer into mundane welfare work after his disappearance. This is evidenced in the section below from a purport of Srimad Bhagavatam where-in he begins by giving a hint of His transcendental status, and His mission;

Whenever an acarya comes, following the superior orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His representative, he establishes the principles of religion, as enunciated in Bhagavad-gita. Religion means abiding by the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Religious principles begin from the time one surrenders to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is the acarya's duty to spread a bona fide religious system and induce everyone to bow down before the Supreme Lord. One executes the religious principles by rendering devotional service, specifically the nine items like hearing, chanting and remembering. **Unfortunately, when the acarya disappears, rogues and nondevotees take advantage and immediately begin to introduce unauthorized**

principles in the name of so-called svamis, yogis, philanthropists, welfare workers and so on. Actually, human life is meant for executing the orders of the Supreme Lord, and this is stated in Bhagavad-gita (9.34): "Engage your mind always in thinking of Me and become My devotee. Offer obeisances and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me."

The main business of human society is to think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead at all times, to become His devotees, to worship the Supreme Lord and to bow down before Him. **The acarya, the authorized representative of the Supreme Lord, establishes these principles, but when he disappears, things once again become disordered. The perfect disciples of the acarya try to relieve the situation by sincerely following the instructions of the spiritual master.** At the present moment practically the entire world is afraid of rogues and nondevotees; therefore this Krsna consciousness movement is started to save the world from irreligious principles. Everyone should cooperate with this movement in order to bring about actual peace and happiness in the world.

[SB 4.28.49 purport]

"The perfect disciples of the acarya try to relieve the situation by sincerely following the instructions of the spiritual master.".....At least those who recognize the pure path should continue to serve in ISKCON as Srila Prabhupada ordered and try to avoid getting influenced by these activities and convincing others by trying to understand philosophically why these activities are wrong.

If there is still a doubt that Krsna consciousness can really solve all problems of the world without resorting to other separate endeavours then below is a quote from a letter in which Srila Prabhupada lists the social ills which ISKCON as a movement had managed to combat in the short time that it had begun. It is important to note that at that time there were no ISKCON schools, hospitals, medical aid camps, feeding the poor efforts etc.

The phenomenal growth of ISKCON reflects a basic worldwide need for the type of instruction and training the Society offers. Heads of state, government officials, clergymen, professors and scientists, as well as professional men and businessmen the world over have commended the Society for its substantial, practical work in combating drug addiction, mental disorders, racial conflicts and the general moral decline of today's youth, as well as hunger and disease wherever they are found.

[Letter to: Life Member -- Unknown Place 5 April, 1972]

Your servant,

Murari Das

yasyaprasadad@gmail.com

Appendix

Srila Prabhupada's Quotes On Mundane welfare work in terms of Medical and food aid an relief work

Renunciation Trough Wisdom, 2.9

Following in the Footsteps of Self-Realized Saints

The *mahātmās* are always ready to render such service to the Lord with great determination. In this regard His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura once made this comment in a lecture:

The neophyte Vaiṣṇava devotees' ringing the bell even once during worship of the Deity of the Supreme Lord is a million times more valuable, spiritually and otherwise, than the charitable fruitive workers building many hospitals, feeding thousands of the poor, or building homes, or even the empirical philosophers' Vedic studies, meditation, austerities, and penances.

The *mahātmās* have shown the perfect path of charity: devotional service to the Lord. If anyone ignores this path and instead builds hospitals, his effort to help humanity is a mere pretense. Humanity can never reap any permanent advantage from such activities. Indeed, the number of patients only increases along with the number of hospitals. And as for feeding the poor, this will never eradicate poverty, but encourage it. Frankly speaking, we are not against opening hospitals or feeding the poor, or any other such humanitarian service. But what we have learned from our beloved spiritual master is that when devotional service to the Lord is neglected, every other activity is illusory and futile. Without genuine devotional service, even opening hospitals and feeding the poor in the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa is futile. Spiritual groups that do not strictly follow in Lord Caitanya's line cannot comprehend this because they do not wish to abide by the instructions of the *mahātmās*. They do not follow Lord Caitanya's injunction to be “more humble than a blade of grass.” If they were that humble, they would give up their pride in being the doer of good deeds, the wisest person, the most devoted, and so on.

Those who strive to emulate the *mahātmās* never fall prey to passivity and regression. Their eagerness and determination to serve the Lord steadily increase. Such followers observe spiritual occasions like Janmāṣṭamī and Ekādaśī for the pleasure of the Lord, in the way that the previous *ācāryas* and *mahātmās* have recommended. This is devotional service proper. Because the *mahātmās* are more humble than a blade of grass, they worship Lord Kṛṣṇa and everything in relation to Him. Atheists, however, exhibit a different mentality altogether: they want to flaunt their abilities and charitable disposition. They may pretend to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa, but their aim is “to sit on the Lord's head” once they attain perfection. In other words, they want to usurp His position. Therefore they do not really serve Lord Kṛṣṇa, nor is He their real object of worship. The *mahātmās* never associate with these demoniac people. They are fixed in their resolve to serve the Lord, and thus they always remain connected to Him through devotional service.

Bg 2.2—London, Aug 3, 1973

Therefore the so-called good men of this world, who are engaged in so many welfare activities, humanitarian activities, by mental concoction, they may be all foolish activities in the estimation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are very much puffed up, that “We are doing this, opening hospital and school, and philanthropism, nationalism.” Is there any such thing in the *Bhagavad-gītā*?

Is there any advice that “You open hospital, school and do this philanthropic work?” No. If you have got anything to give in charity, you are charitably disposed, Kṛṣṇa says, “Give it to Me. If you are so rich and if you have got this good intention to give in charity, give it to Me.” *Yat karoṣi yaj juhoṣi yad aśnāsi yat tapasyasi dadāsi yat* [Bg. 9.27]. *Dadāsi yat* means “whatever you give in charity.” *Kuruṣva tad mad-arpanam*: “Give it to Me. Yes, I am expanding My hand. Come on.” But they have forgotten Kṛṣṇa or Kṛṣṇa's advice, and they remain puffed up, that “I am engaged in this activity, that activity, this activity.” Thousands of millions of such activities may be very good in the estimations of the fools and rascals, but it may not be accepted by Kṛṣṇa. That is the crucial point. But our point is that unless accepted by Kṛṣṇa, it is simply *śrama eva hi kevalam* [SB 1.2.8], simply waste of time. Our philosophy says. We have to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. We haven't got to satisfy ourselves that “I am doing very nice work in this way.” So all these people, they are manufacturing concocted ideas. *Manorathena asato dhavato bahiḥ*.... One who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, not devotee of Kṛṣṇa, he has no good qualification. “No, he's a very big man. He has opened such big, big hospitals, big, big schools, big, big, big...” Yes, that may be good from the material estimation, but because he's not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, these are not good qualifications. This one word: *Harāv abhaktasya, harāv abhaktasya*. If one has no devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he cannot have any good qualities. These are not good qualities.

Bg. 10.4-5, Purport

Ahimsā, nonviolence, means that one should not do anything which will put others into misery or confusion. Material activities that are promised by so many politicians, sociologists, philanthropists, etc., do not produce very good results because the politicians and philanthropists have no transcendental vision; they do not know what is actually beneficial for human society. *Ahimsā* means that people should be trained in such a way that the full utilization of the human body can be achieved. The human body is meant for spiritual realization, so any movement or any commissions which do not further that end commit violence on the human body. That which furthers the future spiritual happiness of the people in general is called nonviolence.

Raja-vidya Chapter 7:

Knowledge as Faith in Guru and Surrender to Krishna

It is not uncommon in India for a man to give up all material engagements, to leave his home and family and take the renounced order, *sannyāsa*, and after meditating for some while, begin doing philanthropic work by opening some hospitals or engaging in politics. The hospital-making business is being conducted by the government; it is the duty of a *sannyāsī* to make hospitals whereby people can actually get rid of their material bodies, not patch them up. But for want of knowing what real spiritual activity is, we take up material activities.

Sri Isopanisad, Mantra 14, Purport

This is the Lord's last instruction in the Bhagavad-gītā (18.66): *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*. "Give up all other processes and just surrender unto Me alone." Unfortunately, foolish men have misinterpreted this prime teaching and misled the masses of people in diverse ways. People have been urged to open hospitals but not to educate themselves to enter into the spiritual kingdom by devotional service. They have been taught to take interest only in temporary relief work, which can never bring real happiness to the living entity. They start varieties of public and semi-governmental institutions to tackle the devastating power of nature, but they don't know how to pacify insurmountable nature. Many men are advertised as great scholars of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but

they overlook the Gītā's message, by which material nature can be pacified. Powerful nature can be pacified only by the awakening of God consciousness, as clearly pointed out in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14)... By knowing the material manifestation alone, one cannot be saved, for in the course of nature there is devastation at every moment (*ahany ahani bhūtāni gacchantīha yamā-layam*). Nor can one be saved from these devastations by the opening of hospitals. One can be saved only by complete knowledge of the eternal life of bliss and awareness.

SB 3.25.27 Purport

Unless one has good engagements in spiritual service, it is not possible to get out of the attachment to material service. Those who are not devotees, therefore, are interested in so-called humanitarian or philanthropic work, such as opening a hospital or charitable institution. These are undoubtedly good works in the sense that they are pious activities, and their result is that the performer may get some opportunities for sense gratification, either in this life or in the next. Devotional service, however, is beyond the boundary of sense gratification. It is completely spiritual activity.

SB 3.27.3, Purport

The foolish conditioned soul may think that he is offering charity by opening hospitals for material benefit or by opening an educational institution for material education, but he does not know that all such work is also faulty because it will not give him relief from the process of transmigration from one body to another. ...One who desires material liberation has to turn his activities to devotional service. There is no alternative.

Nectar of Devotion—Bombay, Jan 7, 1973

They are trying to open hospitals. Just like one Sindhi gentleman, he has contributed about five or seven Crores of rupees to start a hospital here. One of his relative came to see me. So I said that “However magnificent hospital you may start, you cannot stop death. That is not possible. That is not possible. You may try in your own way. The whole struggle is now to mitigate our suffering condition. But the suffering condition is continuing. You may open nice hospital, but you cannot stop death. That is not possible. You may invent nice medicine, up-to-date, scientific medicine, but you cannot stop the disease.” They do not see this.

Cc. Adi 1.15—Dallas, Mar 4, 1975

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is teaching all over the world this philosophy, that your first and foremost business is to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. There is no question of so-called economic development, sense gratification. No. These are not important things. There are many missionaries, they open hospitals or similar philanthropic activities, but we never do that. So many friends advised me to open some hospitals, dispensaries. Oh, I flatly said that “We are not interested in the hospitals.” There are so many hospitals. So people who are interested in hospitals, they can go there. Here is spiritual hospital. The disease is the other hospitals, they cannot stop death, but our hospital can stop death.

General Lecture—Los Angeles, May 18, 1972

To give help to the poor, or to open a school, hospital—this is called *karma-kāṇḍa*. Out of many millions of these *karma-kāṇḍa* people, one is *jñānī*.

Morning Walk— Los Angeles, Dec 8, 1973

There are so many people suffering in the human society. What they can do? Suppose they are opening hospitals. Is that guarantee for a cure of disease or no death? Then what is the humanity. You cannot do anything. You may advertise yourself, “I have opened so many hospitals and beds.” But what you can do? Is that guarantee that there that there will be no disease and everyone will be cured, nobody will die. Then what is the humanitarianism. You cannot do anything. ...

Our endeavor should be: If one man can take it up, then there will be immense good for the human (society)... Therefore I say this is the only humanitarian work. This is the only humanitarian... All others (are) bogus. They cannot become success. They are opening hospitals, but there are many millions of persons there without any (hospitals)...., and even if you give good medicine, good hospital, is that guarantee?

Cc. Adi 8.20, Purport

The distinction between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s gift to human society and the gifts of others is that: whereas so-called philanthropic and humanitarian workers have given some relief to human society as far as the body is concerned, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu offers the best facilities for going back home, back to Godhead, with love of Godhead. If one seriously makes a comparative study of the two gifts, certainly if he is at all sober he will give the greatest credit to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Krishna: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Chapter 87: The Prayers by the Personified Vedas

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks in this connection that if *sannyāsīs* (persons in the renounced order of life, who have left their homes for self-realization) do not engage themselves in the devotional service of the Lord but become attracted by philanthropic work, such as opening educational institutions, hospitals or even monasteries, churches or temples of demigods, they find only trouble from such engagements, not only in this life but in the next. *Sannyāsīs* who do not take advantage of this life to realize Kṛṣṇa simply waste their time and energy in activities outside the jurisdiction of the renounced order. A devotee’s attempt to engage his energies in such activities as constructing a Viṣṇu temple, however, is never wasted. Such engagements are called *kṛṣṇārthe akhila-ceṣṭā*, variegated activities performed to please Kṛṣṇa. A philanthropist’s opening a school building and a devotee’s constructing a temple are not on the same level. Although a philanthropist’s opening an educational institution may be pious activity, it comes under the laws of karma, whereas constructing a temple for Viṣṇu is devotional service.

SB 6.3.12-15—Gorakhpur, Feb 9, 1971

Nowadays it has come, *daridra-nārāyaṇa*. “*Daridra*, the poor man has become *Nārāyaṇa*; therefore he should be served.” This nonsensical theory has come up by some nonsense. But actually a qualified *brāhmaṇa* should be given charity. A *sannyāsī*, Vaiṣṇava, should be given charity. That is *sāttvika* charity. And *rājasika* charity means to open hospital, schools. These are *rājasika* charity. And *tāmasika* charity means without any discrimination: a Bowery man given one rupee and (he) immediately purchases a bottle of wine. So this is *tāmasika* charity. By *tāmasika* charity, one is degraded.

Morning Walk—Nellore, Jan 6, 1976

Prabhupāda: They are all foolish. We call them *mūḍhas*, *duṣkṛtino mūḍhas*. So their demand is not legitimate. If a *mūḍha*... If your small child says, “Father, give me a bidi, cigarette,” would you give him? Because he is *mūḍha*. So the father is intelligent—“No.” So similarly, the *mūḍhas* may demand that “Open this hospital.” But we are not going to do that. We know.... Of course, hospital required so far the body is concerned, but there are so many hospitals. The real hospital which is not existing, we are starting. That is our mission, which is not possible for the so-called leaders and politicians.

SECTION-2

Bg. 4.37-40—New York, Aug 21, 1966

Sometimes we find a person leaves all worldly engagements, leaves his family, gives up his family connection, becomes a renounced order, *sannyāsī*, and highest order, and then, after some time, he becomes engaged in opening hospitals and philanthropic work and in politics. We have seen it. Oh, why? You have renounced the world. Why you are hospital-making business? Hospital-making business is there, going on by the government, by the state. You are not meant for making hospitals. You have to make hospital how people can get rid of this material body. That is spiritual activity. We also require to open hospitals. And what is that hospital? To cure this material disease, not this temporary disease. Again we may be attacked. The complete cure of material disease... That sort of hospital will be required. That hospital is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness society.

SB 1.2.7—Delhi, Nov 13, 1973

We have seen so many *sannyāsīs*. First of all they say, “This is false. The world is false. Let me take *sannyāsa*.” And after remaining a few years of *sannyāsa*, then he learns how to eat meat, how to drink wine, how to associate with women. Then he must have some business, that philanthropic work – open some school, open some hospital. Why? If he is full and the whole world is false, why you are interested in opening schools and hospitals and... [break] ...to open hospital and open school. No. They are not very much interested. We are interested to open school if there is education for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as we have opened in Dallas, Texas, small children. That we are interested because that is Kṛṣṇa. There is Kṛṣṇa. But we are not interested in so-called godless education. That is not our business.

SB 1.8.42—Mayapur, Oct 22, 1974

So there is no *ānanda*. Therefore they come down again. *Punar mūṣiko bhava*. Again open hospital because there is no engagement. And he has to raise fund. So this is very easy thing: “Sir I am going to open a hospital. Give me some fund.” Nowadays, especially, it is very difficult to collect fund. If you say, “I am going to open a temple,” nobody will give you. But if you say, “I am going to open a hospital,” he'll give you.

SECTION-4

Morning Walk—Bombay, May 9, 1974

Indian Devotee (5): He says, “You try to find some other doctor.” He told me, “You find out names and addresses of the local doctors, and we’ll pick one of them.”

Prabhupāda: No, no, we cannot divert our attention. It is not possible. Say, “No.” You can say that “We consulted Prabhupāda. He said, ‘At the present moment, unless our building is there, we cannot accept any other extra business.’” Tell him like that. [break]

Prabhupāda: For nothing. No, no, that is not possible. These are for the *karmīs*, bodily concept of life. If government has got so many hospitals, what is the use of opening a teeny hospital by us? Vivekananda’s policy—to collect money by school and hospital. So you can tell him that “At the present moment, we are concerned about the sanction of the building and temple. So when the building is there, then we can consider, not at the present moment. We require money. We collect for this purpose. We cannot divert attention for medicine and other things.”

Indian Devotee (5): Actually I could gather that he just talked because he also said that we should train up some devotees to do bandage and other things like that.

Prabhupāda: (laughs) No, no, this is not...*Daridra-nārāyaṇa-sevā*. We are not all these false things. Doctor Ghosh is also after *daridra-nārāyaṇa-sevā*. [break] We will collect medicine. Our... We shall pay for the expenditure. Our men will be engaged for bandaging. (laughs) Nonsense.

Bhāgavata: And the preaching stops.

Prabhupāda: Ah. They cannot understand what is the meaning of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are such dull headed men. They have no brain to understand.

...

Bhāgavata: ...take Caraṇāravindam from the hospital. So before we left, we had kīrtana. And immediately all the patients became happier.

Prabhupāda: Just see.

Bhāgavata: The whole attitude was very dull and unhappy and morose, that “Oh, we are in the hospital. My body, my body...” As soon as we had the kīrtana, they all got out of the bed and they came and stood around and they watched and some were clapping and chanting.

Prabhupāda: Just see: Immediately life. Oh, just try to understand how much great responsibility you have got.

SP Letter to Dr. Ghosh—Bombay, 17 Nov, 1974

Regarding the charitable dispensary, I am not very much enthusiastic for this enterprise because nowadays to keep a proper dispensary pushing on requires much attention and money also. I have heard from the authorities of the Rama Krishna Mission that their charitable dispensaries of hospitals are mostly run by paid men, as formally no intelligent medical practitioner was joining them to run it on.

Therefore I may suggest that if you are really inclined to retire, you are welcome to live with us. We have got three very nice places in India in Bombay, Vrindaban, and Mayapur. We have spent many

lakhs of rupees for constructing these centers, and if you live with us in any one of them, you are welcome. You can live with your good wife as *vanaprastha*, and when you decide to do so, we may maintain a small dispensary for taking care of our own men. But for the general public opening a charitable dispensary is not in our program at least for the time being...

Further I beg to inform you that all my temples and centers here in India are being managed by my foreign disciples. I want that they should be admitted as immigrants. They have embraced this Vaisnava religion and have given money for constructing these temples and are managing them. Although we have got a few Indians to join, they are neither educated nor expert.

In Allahabad you are known to so many lawyers and judges. Kindly consult with them how my foreign disciples can get immigration status in this country. If they were forced to leave, I will be in a great disturbed condition how to manage all these centers. Kindly find out immediately some good lawyer. I think Sir Tej Bahdur's son maybe helpful in this connection.

Morning Walk—Los Angeles, July 9, 1974

Prabhupāda: *Sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje* [SB 1.2.6]. Unless one becomes a devotee of God, there is no question of religion. It is all cheating. By opening hospital, schools,... There are thousands upon thousands upon thousands upon thousands of years, the hospitals and schools are being opened, philanthropy. What is the result?

Bali Mardana: Atom bombs.

Prabhupāda: Atom bomb. Result is atom bomb.

Hṛdayānanda: You're the only one, Prabhupāda, who dares to criticize hospitals and schools. (laughter)

Prabhupāda: Yes, so many people came to request me... Even Dr. Ghosh. Eh? You know.

Satsvarūpa: He wanted you to open a medical dispensary.

Prabhupāda: "No, no, we are not going to waste our time in that way." I frankly told him. We have no extra time to waste like that. What he thinks very big project, we say it is waste of time. (laughter)

Jayatīrtha: Yes.

Hṛdayānanda: Jaya! It is a completely revolutionary idea.

Prabhupāda: Yes. I cannot allow anyone to waste his valuable time of human life.

SECTION-5

SB 6.2.46, Purport

It has actually been seen that even after achieving so-called perfection, many *karmīs*, *Jñānīs*, and *yogīs* become attached to material activities again. Many so-called *svāmīs* and *yogīs* give up material

activities as false (*jagan mithyā*), but after some time they nevertheless resume material activities by opening hospitals and schools or performing other activities for the benefit of the public.

SB 7.13.27, Purport

Although the Māyāvādī philosophers strive to refrain from materialistic activities and merge in Brahman, and although they may actually merge in the Brahman existence, for want of activity they fall down again into materialistic activity (*āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ patanty adhaḥ* [SB 10.2.32]). Thus the so-called renouncer, unable to remain in meditation upon Brahman, returns to materialistic activities by opening hospitals and schools and so on. ...

Spiritual activities are activities performed according to the order of Kṛṣṇa (*ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* [Cc. Madhya 19.167]). If one does whatever Kṛṣṇa says, his activities are not material.

SB 8.4.13, Purport

Āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ (SB 10.2.32). Although the impersonalist rises to the Brahman effulgence and enters into that effulgence, he has no engagement in the service of the Lord, and therefore he is again attracted to materialistic philanthropic activities. Thus he comes down to open hospitals and educational institutions, feed poor men and perform similar materialistic activities, which the impersonalist thinks are more precious than serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Anāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*. The impersonalists do not think that the service of the Lord is more valuable than serving the poor man or starting a school or hospital. Although they say *brahma satyam jagan mithyā*—“Brahman is real, and the material world is false”—they are nonetheless very eager to serve the false material world and neglect the service of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Cc. Adi, 8.19, Purport

However, since he is not aware of his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and therefore has no spiritual activity, he must come down for further activities in this material world. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32): *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ, patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*. Because Māyāvādī philosophers have no information regarding the transcendental service of the Lord, even after attaining liberation from material activities and merging into the Brahman effulgence, they must come down again to this material world to open hospitals or schools or perform similar philanthropic activities.

Cc. Madhya 19.149, Purport

There are many *jñānīs* or *sannyāsīs* who, after taking *sannyāsa* and giving up the world as false, return to the world to engage in politics or philanthropy or to open schools and hospitals. This means that they could not attain the real Brahman (*brahma satyam*). They have to come down to the material platform to engage in philanthropic activity.

Teachings of Queen Kunti, Chapter 25

Unalloyed Devotion

We see many Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* who say *brahma satyam jagan mithyā*, but after they take *sannyāsa* they return to the material world to open hospitals and do philanthropic work. Why? If

they have left this world, considering it *mithyā*, false, why do they return to take up politics, philanthropy, and sociology?

A Second Chance, Chapter 11

Often big *svāmīs* talk about attaining "Brahman realization" but do not remove themselves from worldly pleasures and pains. They involve themselves in humanitarian activities, thinking, "My fellow countrymen are suffering; let me open a hospital" or "They are uneducated; let me open a school." If someone is really on the platform of *brahma-bhūtaḥ*, why would he accept any particular place as his country? ... The symptom of lamentation reveals that the so-called liberated person has not been cured of his attachment to worldly pleasure and pain. That means he has not become joyful, because one who is joyful does not lament. So many learned *sannyāsīs* have fallen down to material activities because they have not in fact realized Brahman. It is not so easy.

Krishna Consciousness: The Matchless Gift, Chapter 7

There are many examples of *sannyāsīs* who give up the world, renouncing it as false, saying, "Let me turn to Brahman," but they again become entangled in the work of the world when they set up hospitals and perform philanthropic work and welfare activities. If the world is false, why are they attracted to welfare activities?

A Second Chance, Chapter 18

Many so-called *svāmīs* and *yogīs* give up material activities as false (*jagan mithyā*), but after some time they nevertheless resume material activities by opening hospitals and schools or performing other activities for the benefit of the public. Sometimes they participate in politics, although still falsely declaring themselves *sannyāsīs*, members of the renounced order. All these activities are illusory aspects of the material world.

Bg 4.11—Bombay, Mar 31, 1974

Therefore you'll find there are so many big, big swamis. First of all they give up this world. *Brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*: "This world is *mithyā*. Let us take to Brahman. Let us become Brahman." But after keeping some days in so-called Brahman, they again come back to open hospital, school. Because there they could not get anything. Therefore something must be done, profession. So open hospital and raise fund. That's all.

Bg 4.24—Bombay, Apr 13, 1974

Therefore the impersonalists, without understanding of Kṛṣṇa, even if very much advanced, they do not get any occupation. They again come down to the material platform to open hospital, school, college, why? Because the impersonalist says that this material world is false. If the material world is false, why you come down again to the false platform to open schools and hospitals? That means *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ* [SB 10.2.32].

Bg 7.3—Vrindavan, Oct 31, 1973

Big, big *sannyāsīs*—*brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*—they give up this world as *mithyā*, but again they come to these worldly activities: opening schools, opening hospital and politics and sociology, so many things. But if it is *mithyā*, why you are engaged in this?

Therefore Bhāgavata says that “Although they got up to the platform, *āruhya*, after much penance and austerities, they fall down.” Otherwise a common man, he is also opening hospital. And if a *sannyāsī* who has rejected this world as *mithyā*, and if he also wants to open hospital and school and college, then what is the difference between the common man and this learned scholar or learned self-realized *brahma-jñānī*? That means he has not realized what is actually *siddhi*, what is *brahma-jñāna*. Otherwise why he is coming?

Bg 16.6—South Africa, Oct 18, 1975

Therefore sometimes we find that although they say it is *mithyā*, *jagan mithyā*, and take *sannyāsa* and for some days they remain meditation or aloof from any worldly affairs, but later on, when they do not find Brahman, they come again to this *māyā* to open hospitals, schools, as *sannyāsī*. Just like in our country there are many. The beginning we see that... Vivekananda Swami, he took *sannyāsa* and meditation. Later on, after his touring in the Western countries, he came to India to open hospitals, schools, like that. But if the world is false, then why you are coming to open school and hospitals? Because they could not get... And some other *sannyāsī* also, he is now taking part in politics. If *jagat* is *mithyā*, why you are taking part in politics? These question are there.

SB 1.2.20, Vrindavan, Oct 31, 1972

One who does not take shelter of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, he may rise up very high by austerity and penance, but he cannot remain in that position. He may give up artificially this material world, *jagan mithyā*, but he has to come down again to this *mithyā jagat* and open schools and hospitals, because he cannot remain in that impersonal way. That is the experience.

SB 1.8.42—Los Angeles, May 4, 1973

Therefore we see so many *sannyāsīs*, they say *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*. They give up, take *sannyāsa*, but after taking *sannyāsa*, after a few days or few years, they come back again to this material world to open hospital, philanthropic work, school. Why? If you have left this world as *mithyā*, as false, why you are again coming to politics, to philanthropy, sociology and so on? Why you are coming again?

SB 6.3.16-17—Gorakpur, Feb 10, 1971

In our country many very, very big swamis, they attain perfection and realize that he is Brahman. But after a time again he comes down to this material field of worker, opening hospital, schools. So these Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, they say that the world is false. *Brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*. So if the world is false, then why they come down to open schools and colleges and hospitals? That means they could not stay in the Brahman atmosphere for want of activity.

SB 6.2.14—Vrindavan, Sep 17, 1975

Therefore we see sometimes big, big *sannyāsīs*, they gave up this world as *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*, but because they could not get *ānanda*, they come down again. Again they become busy in opening hospital and school and philanthropic work, politics, because they could not get *ānanda*. That is the defect of the impersonalists.

SB 7.9.8—Calcutta, Mar 5, 1972

Just like many so-called *sannyāsīs*, they rise to the *brahma-pada: ahaṁ brahmāsmi*, but because they cannot stay there, they come down again to this material world and they are busy for opening hospitals, schools, and philanthropism. ... That means you have no taste. Actually you have not arrived, the same thing.

NOD—Vrindavan, Oct 20, 1972

We have seen many, many great *sannyāsīs*. They give up this world and take *sannyāsa* for merging into Brahman, but later on they come back again to the material activities for opening hospital, schools, and philanthropic work. Why? ...The reason is they could not get any pleasure in so-called Brahman-realization. Therefore they come back to give food to the poor, to open hospital, philanthropic work...Therefore, if you stick to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you will enjoy blissful, transcendental blissfulness. Then you'll not be attracted with this humanitarian work or philanthropic work. *Param dr̥ṣṭvā nivartate* [Bg. 9.59].

NOD—Bombay, Dec 26, 1972

Prabhupāda: Yes, their position is sense enjoyment. If, by *bhoga*, they are not satisfied, then *tyāga*. *Brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*. Give it, give it up. Again, by *tyāga*, when he does not find any sense pleasure, then again comes back: All right, come to social service, open hospital, open the school. Why are you coming again?

NOD—Bombay, Jan 7, 1973

Thus we have seen many *sannyāsīs*, they give up this world as *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*, but they do not get any benefit out of it. Therefore they come down again to open hospitals and schools and philanthropic work. They fall down.

NOD—Vrindavan, Nov 9, 1972

But we have practically seen many *sannyāsīs*, they renounce this world as *mithyā* and take to Brahman realization path, but after some days, they come down to politics, sociology, philanthropy. Why? If Brahman is *satya*, *jagat* is *mithyā*, false, then why they, from the platform of *satya*, they fall down again in the *mithyā*? This is our question....That means they could not realize the happiness of Brahman....Because they found it better happiness by taking in politics and on political movements or opening school, hospitals. They found better happiness in these activities....

Therefore we see so many learned scholars, *sannyāsīs*, they give up these material varieties as *mithyā* and enter into the impersonal Brahman, but without variety there, they come again to the material variety for opening schools and hospitals. This is the fact.

NOD—Bombay, Dec 27, 1972

And we have seen practically, so many big, big *sannyāsīs*, they give up this material world, take *sannyāsa* to understand Brahman, but because they could not understand Brahman, they again come to open hospital and schools. That is their business. *Āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ patanti adhaḥ* [SB 10.2.32]. But one who is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, he does not come to these material activities again.

Cc. Adi 7.108—San Francisco, Feb 18, 1967

Devotee: Well, I believe you once said that once a conditioned soul becomes perfected and gets out of the material world and he goes to Kṛṣṇaloka, there's no possibility of falling back.

Prabhupada: There is possibility, but he does not come; just like after putting your hand in the fire, you never put it again if you are really intelligent. ... So if one is intelligent enough, if he has got actually the bitter taste of this material world, he'll never agree. He'll never agree. But those who have not advanced to such knowledge, they think, "Oh, this material enjoyment is very nice. Let me taste it and let me do business in my *sannyāsī* life, and stealthily and privately, let me enjoy." These things are going on. That means they have no taste. They come to hospital-making or this philanthropy. This come again. *Sthānād bhraṣṭād patanty adhaḥ*.

Cc. Madhya 22.27-31—New York, Jan 15, 1967

Many *sannyāsīs*, they were very educated, and they have undergone severe penances, but without Kṛṣṇa realization they fall down. How they fall down? Sometimes they fall down, becomes a victim of a woman. Sometimes they fall down for this philanthropic work. Sometimes they fall down in the matter of opening hospitals. Generally they fall down by becoming a victim, victim of woman, and others, they also become victim of this material nature, become attracted by this social work.... why should he come to the social order or philanthropic order? That is his falldown. That is his falldown. He should be situated completely in spiritual order. He has nothing to do. He should simply be engaged in spiritual service, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the perfection of renouncement. ...

Those who are not attracted by the Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, there is every chance of falling down again, because he has no other alternative. Either he has to serve this way or serve that way. If he is not attracted to serve in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then he has to serve in material consciousness. So those who are not fixed up in Kṛṣṇa, however he may be advanced in spiritual realization, there is falldown.

Cc. Madhya 25.29—San Francisco, Jan 21, 1967

"Now I understand *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti* [Bg. 7.19], You are Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa. You are everything." That is the ultimate end of knowledge. And so long one does not come to this point, it is to be understood that he has no shelter. And because he has no shelter, he has to come down again. Again to the opening of hospitals and giving medicine or so many things philanthropic, what the ordinary men are doing. What is the use of your *sannyāsa*, renouncing this world? ...

Vivekananda came here to preach Hindu religion. Before that he had no idea of philanthropic work. And when he came back to India: "Oh, this is your religion. Oh, so many Indians they are suffering. So many Indians they have no shelter. Oh, give them shelter. Give them hospital." Now he became... And he collected fund. Vivekananda started new religion, *daridra-nārāyaṇa*. *Daridra-nārāyaṇa* means the poor, poverty-stricken Bowery men, they should be served, not Kṛṣṇa. That is their mission. The Ramakrishna Mission means to serve *daridra-nārāyaṇa*. ... So these things are going on. These things are nothing. They are symptoms of falling down, nothing more.

CC Madhya 25.31-38—San Francisco, Jan 22, 1967

Similarly, all these exercises, all this cultivation of knowledge, if they do not reach to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, they are sure to come down again to these material activities. They are sure. Because they have

no taste for Kṛṣṇa, they have to They will come again for opening hospitals and so on, so many activities, material activities.

Āruhya kṛcchrena param padam tataḥ patanty adhaḥ [SB 10.2.32]. This is falldown. *Patanty adho anādrta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*. "My dear Lord, because they have neglected Your lotus feet."

Festival Lecture— _____ Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur
App. Day, Gorakhpur, Feb 15, 1971

Then he becomes a *sannyāsī*, a renouncer. But he cannot live in that renouncement platform. And then he again comes back to this material world and engages himself in some philanthropic work: "Let us open hospital. Let us open schools and college..." If the *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*... If the world is *mithyā*, false, why you are a *sannyāsī*, you are coming again back to this platform? That means he's not satisfied in so-called *brahma satyam*. Practically, he has no realization of Brahman. Therefore he comes back again

General lecture—Montreal, Jul 18, 1968

Many *sannyāsīs*, *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*, "Brahman is truth and the world is false." They take *sannyāsa*, and after some time they come to the hospital opening business. They come down again to politics, hospitals, philanthropy, welfare work. Why? ...Because there is no place. He has no engagement and he wants association. He wants to render some service, but there is no service to Kṛṣṇa. He comes to give service to the nonsense *māyā*... Vivekananda came here to preach in 1893 to Vedānta. Now he learned the business of opening hospital.

General Lecture—Nellore, Jan 4, 1976

We have seen many *sannyāsīs*. They give up this material world, that *brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā*. Then, after some years, he comes down again this *mithyā jagat* to open schools and hospitals. And if this world is *mithyā*, then why you are interested with the schools and hospitals? That means they could not get any Brahman realization.

Sannyasa Initiation Lecture—Calcutta, Jan 26, 1973

so there are so many *sannyāsīs*, we see, they give up the so-called *mithyā* world and come to the Brahman realization by meditation, by meditation, meditation... Then meditation means hospital and school. Because there is no Brahman, there is no reality. So after much meditation, (he) comes to the conclusion that "Now I am a *sannyāsī*. I must open schools, college and *daridra-nārāyaṇa sevā* and goat-nārāyaṇa killing." This kind of *sannyāsa* has no meaning. ... So this kind of false *sannyāsa* is not accepted by the Vaiṣṇavas. Vaiṣṇavas, they accept *sannyāsa* for better activities. For better activities means dedicated life for satisfying the Supreme Lord. *Mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*.

Morning Walk—Bombay, Nov 4, 1975

Prabhupāda: ... Vivekananda, he fell down to hospital. That is fall down. You say, *brahma satya jagan mithya*: "The world is false." Why you come down to false again? That means you did not get any substance in your so-called Brahman knowledge.

Yaśomatīnandana: Vivekananda fell down still further because he said...

Prabhupāda: No, no, further... Not... At least we can see this, that after preaching Vedānta, he came in India. He became captivated with hospital, as if there was no hospital. There are many thousands of hospitals, and ordinary men, they are inclined to open hospitals. Why...? You have realized *brahma-satyā*. Why you come to hospital? And nobody questions. Your progress would have been completed when you, in... *mad-bhaktim labhate param* [Bg. 18.54], if you had been promoted to the bhakti stage. That you haven't got. You come to the hospital stage. That means falling down.

Room Conversation— New delhi, Dec 11, 1971

Here is a rascal, *Vimukta-māninas tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ*. “No. We have undergone so much austerities, penances. Whole life I remain *brahmacārī*, then I took *sannyāsa*. I have followed the rules and regulations very strictly, and still I am rascal?” Yes, you are rascal. “Why” *Āruhya kṛcchreṇa*: because the symptoms are there that you are a rascal.

So you have to understand by the symptoms. What is that symptom? Because you left this world, "This world is false. Brahman is truth," then why you are coming again this false world to open hospital, school, philosophy, humanitarian, all this nonsense?

Room Conversation with a Reporter—Jul 24, 1973

Prabhupāda: So he wanted to stop these material activities. *Jagan mithyā*. *Śaṅkarācārya* never advocated for nationalism, for starting schools or college, hospital... never. Why? Why should he do? If we say *jagan mithyā*, then why should we bother all these things? ...

Just like this, now you are talking of *mithyā*, how do they consider *mithyā*? Because this artificial non-attachment will not stay, therefore, they say it is *mithyā*; but they are accepting it, under a different name—“Now let us start this school, now let us start this hospital...” They're coming to the *mithyā* platform, under some disguise of philanthropy activities. If it is *mithyā* why you are starting a school? It is not *sannyāsī* business. For starting school the government is there, public is there. Why you... That means *brahma satyam* you could not understand; you are coming to the school-starting. He could not perceive that *brahma satyam*; although he tried to do it, but he could not understand. Therefore now he has to maintain himself, eh? So, people will not give him alms; so he must show that, “I'm starting this school, I'm starting this hospital, I'm doing this, give me some *canda*. Give me some subscription,” and taking subscription and become fat, that's all. This is going on.

Garden Conversation—New Vrindavan, Jun 27, 1976

They take *sannyāsa*, but after some time they fall down; again take to other businesses than Brahman in the material world. Just like our Vivekananda. He came to the Western countries to preach Vedānta, and he has advertised that “Whole America has become Vedantist.” The proof of Vedānta is when he returned to India he became very enthusiastic to open hospitals like the Christian missionaries. So if the material world is false, so why he's trying to open hospitals? *Brahma satyam jagan mithyā*. *Jagat* is *mithyā*. So why in the *mithyā* platform he's taking credit by opening hospitals?

Dhṛṣṭadyumna: Well, as long as people are suffering, they can't realize that they are God.

Prabhupāda: So you cannot stop the suffering. You are unable. You are also suffering from the same disease. So don't say that *jagat mithyā*. If they are suffering, that's a fact. Then how do you say it is *mithyā*, it is false? If it is *mithyā*, then why you are affected by the suffering? There are so many questions. That means not realization. Contradictory.

Garden Conversation—New Vrindavan, Jun 22, 1976

So many Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, they give up, “This world is false,” and they merge, so-called merge, but the mastership mentality is there. But in the void, simply spiritual light, he cannot do any mastership; therefore again falls down in this false world, and he wants to be by becoming a leader of hospital, and school, college, a Christian missionary. And our Vivekananda also imitated that. So this, this is the material disease. He is actually servant, but he wants to become master. That is the defect. So he has to give up this mentality, mastership, then he'll be making real progress.

Evening Darsana—Hrishikesh, May 15, 1977

Prabhupāda: If he does not get *ānanda*, if he cannot dance with Kṛṣṇa, then he falls down. *Āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ patanty adhaḥ* [SB 10.2.32]. Again material dancing; again hospital, schools. Big, big *sannyāsīs* could not get any relish. Then... (Hindi) The *brahma satyam jagan mithyā*. If it is *mithyā*, why you are after school?

And so far devotees are concerned, especially in this age, directly, directly engage him in bhakti-yoga, and everything will be all...

Transcendental Diary, Vol.2—May 28, 1976

But *Vaiṣṇava* says, “No, you must have the real thing, then you can cease from this unreal necessities.” Otherwise after living for some time in *brahma-satya*, then you'll come, “Oh, this is useless. I don't enjoy. Let me go again to open hospital, school, engage in some politics,”

Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami, ISKCON in 70's—Jun 18 - Jul 24, 1973

Go to them, flatter them, make them our friends, and then kick them: “Whatever you have learned is all hodge-podge because you are rascal. Just throw it out and hear about Lord Caitanya.” Kumar had a book. Prabhupada said that the *gosvami* author was opening a hospital at the end of his life. Bhaktivinoda Thakura was never interested in opening a hospital.

Science of Self Realization, Chapter 6, part-4: Declaring Our Dependence on God

In 1972, the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh was stricken by a severe drought that affected millions. Hoping that the International Society for Krishna Consciousness would provide assistance, T. L. Kapadia, Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Relief Fund Committee, wrote to Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda responded with this surprising and edifying letter.

Revered Swamiji,

The residents of the twin cities are happy to have this opportunity to meet you and your esteemed followers. You may be aware that due to inadequate rainfall during the last two years and its complete failure this year, more than half of our state [Andhra Pradesh, a state in southern India] is in the grip of a serious drought. With a view to supplement governmental efforts to combat this evil, a Central Voluntary Organization of citizens drawn from various walks of life has been set up. The members of this organization surveyed the areas affected by drought. The situation is pathetic. There are villages where drinking water is not available for miles. Due to scarcity of fodder, the cattle owners are parting with their cattle for a nominal price. Many of the stray cattle are dying away due to unavailability of fodder and water. The food problem is also very serious. Due to high prices of food grains on the open market, purchase of grains at market prices is beyond the reach of poor villagers, with the result that at least five to six million people are hardly having one meal a day. There are many who are on the verge of starvation. The entire situation is most pathetic and heartrending.

We therefore appeal to your revered self to consider how your Society could best come to the rescue of these millions of souls who are in unimaginable distress. The Committee would like to suggest that members of your Society appeal to the *bhaktas* [devotees] attending your discourses to contribute their mite to the Andhra Pradesh Relief Fund.

The Committee is prepared to send some of its representatives along with members of your Society wherever you wish to distribute *prasāda* to the hungry millions in the state.

As *mānava-sevā* is *mādhava-sevā* [“Service to man is service to God”], the Committee is confident that even a little effort by your gracious Society will go a long way in mitigating the sufferings of hundreds and thousands of people.

Yours ever in the service of the Lord,
T. L. Kapadia, Secretary
Andhra Pradesh Relief fund Committee
Hyderabad, India

My dear Mr. Kapadia,

Please accept my greetings. With reference to your letter and your personal interview, I beg to inform you that without pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, no one can become happy. Unfortunately people do not know who God is and how to make Him happy. Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is therefore meant to present the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly to the people. As stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Seventh Canto, Sixth Chapter: *tuṣṭe ca tatra kim alabhyam ananta ādye/ kim tair guṇa-vyatikarād iha ye sva-siddhāḥ*.

The idea stated in this verse is that by pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we please everyone, and there is no question of scarcity. Because people do not know this secret of success, they are making their own independent plans to be happy. However, it is not possible to achieve happiness in this way. On your letterhead I find many important men in this country who are interested in relieving the sufferings of the people, but they should know for certain that without pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead all their attempts will be futile. A diseased man cannot live simply on the strength of the help of an expert physician and medicine. If this were so, then no rich man would ever die. One must be favored by Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Therefore if you want to perform relief work simply by collecting funds, I think that it will not be successful. You have to please the supreme authority, and that is the way to success. For example, due

to the performance of *saṅkīrtana* here, the rain has begun to fall after a drought of two years. The last time we performed a Hare Kṛṣṇa Festival in Delhi, there was imminent danger of Pakistan's declaring war, and when a newspaper man approached me for my opinion, I said there must be fighting because the other party was aggressive. However, because of our *saṅkīrtana* movement, India emerged victorious. Similarly, when we held a festival in Calcutta, the Naxalite [Communist] movement stopped. These are facts. Through the *saṅkīrtana* movement we can not only get all facilities for living, but also at the end can go back home, back to Godhead. Those who are of a demoniac nature cannot understand this, but it is a fact.

I therefore request you, as leading members of society, to join this movement. There is no loss on anyone's part for chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, but the gain is great. According to *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.21), what is accepted by leading men is also accepted by common men:

yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate

“Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.”

The *saṅkīrtana* movement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very important. Therefore, through you I wish to appeal to all the leading men of India to accept this movement very seriously and give us all facility to spread this movement throughout the world. Then there will be a very happy condition, not only in India but all over the world.

Hoping this will meet you in good health,
Your ever well-wisher,
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami