

Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



Vol. 22 No. 11

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



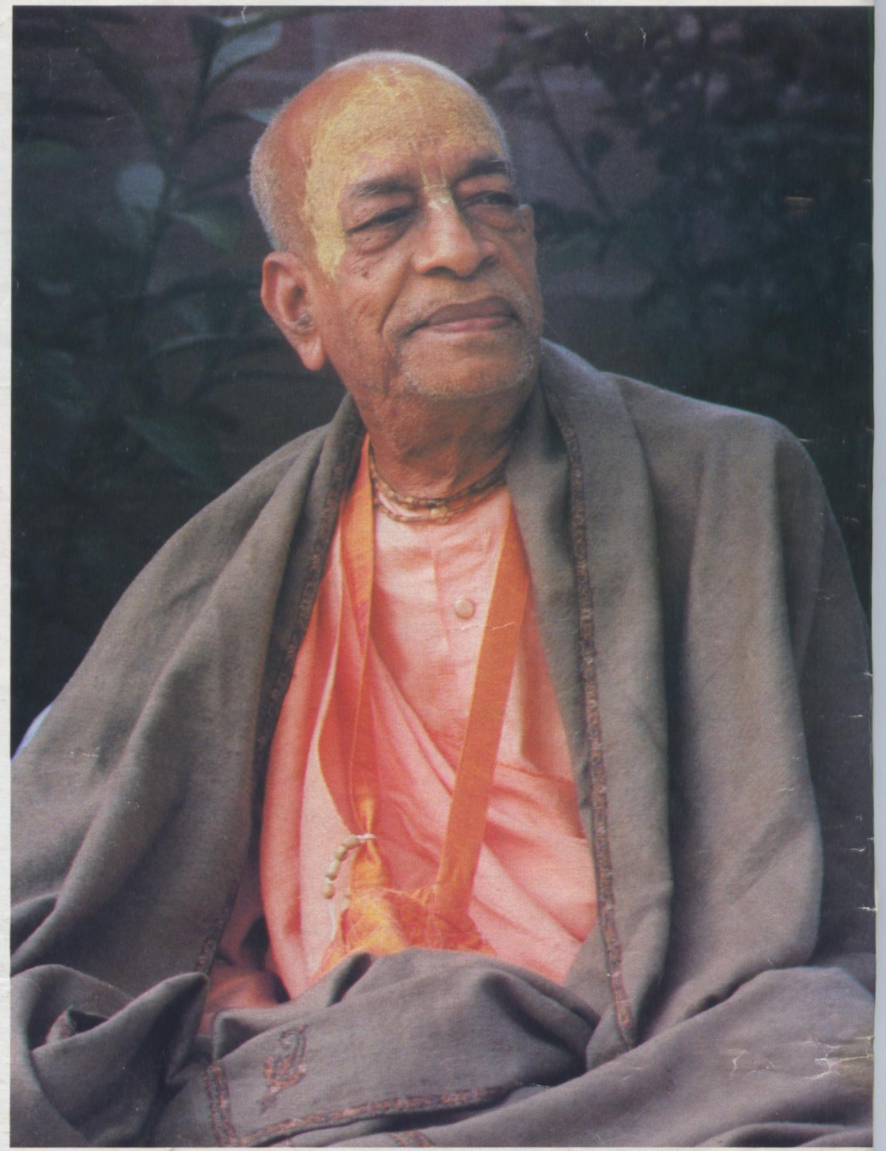
SPECIAL ISSUE:



Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in the USSR



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age sixty-nine, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas*, schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away in 1977 in Vṛndāvana, India, the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.



BACK TO GODHEAD is the monthly journal of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. When Śrīla Prabhupāda began the Society (in New York City, in 1966), he put into writing the purposes he wanted it to achieve. They are as follows:

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.
2. To propagate a consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, as it is revealed in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Kṛṣṇa, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Kṛṣṇa).
4. To teach and encourage the *saṅkīrtana* movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
5. To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Kṛṣṇa.
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, more natural way of life.
7. With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, books, and other writings.

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

BACK TO GODHEAD

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)
His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION. We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **a** like the **a** in **far** (and hold it twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **i** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **e** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce the aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) as in **staunch**-heart, **hedge**-hog, and **red**-hot. Finally, pronounce the sibilants **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

SPIRITUAL NAMES. Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with dāsa (dāsi for women), meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa dāsa* means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

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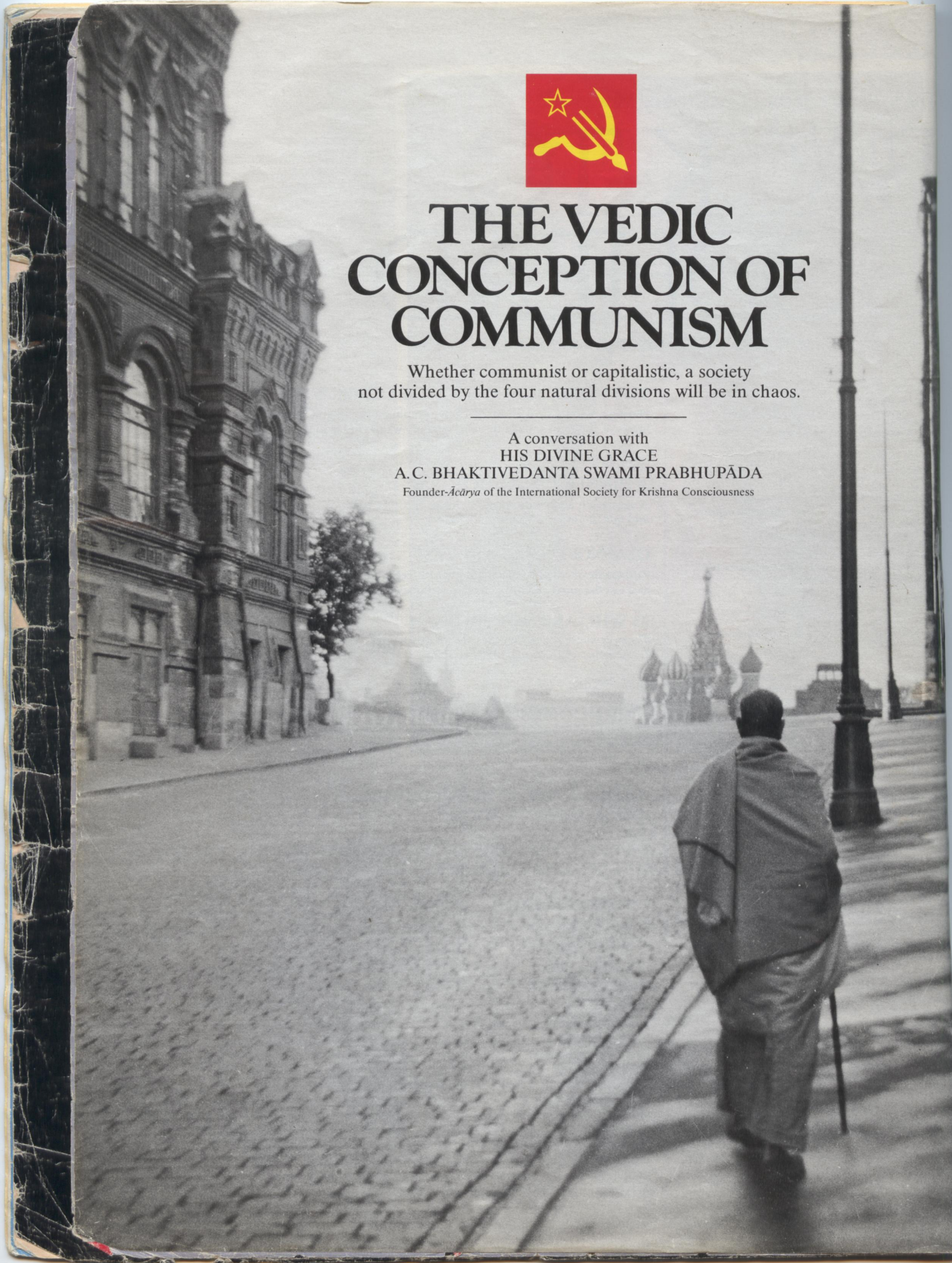
COVER: The sickle and *tilaka* (the sign of the devotees of Kṛṣṇa) symbolize the spiritualization of the communist ideals through Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This month *Back to Godhead* focuses on Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the USSR. Taking advantage of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost* policy, as well as the opening of the Festival of India in Russia, Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees have recently been chanting in the streets of the Soviet Union for the first time in history. Since Śrīla Prabhupāda's visit to Moscow in 1971, the movement has grown from one member to thousands—but not without a struggle. Today the struggle continues, for despite Gorbachev's *glasnost*, many devotees—simply because they want to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness—are incarcerated in prisons, psychiatric hospitals, and labor camps throughout the Soviet Union.



THE VEDIC CONCEPTION OF COMMUNISM

Whether communist or capitalistic, a society
not divided by the four natural divisions will be in chaos.

A conversation with
HIS DIVINE GRACE
A. C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA
Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



This conversation with Professor C. G. Kotovsky took place in Moscow in 1971. Professor Kotovsky was then head of the India Studies Department of the University of Moscow.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The other day I was reading the paper *Moscow News*. There was a Communist congress, and the president declared, "We are ready to take others' experience to improve." So I think the Vedic conception of socialism or communism will much improve the idea of communism. . . . Modern society takes the people as a whole as the proprietor of a certain state, but the Vedic conception is *iśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*—everything is owned by *iśa*, the supreme controller. *Tena tyaktena bhujīthāḥ*—you may enjoy what is allotted to you by Him. *Mā grdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*: but do not encroach upon others' property. This is the *Īśo-paniṣad*—*Veda*. The same idea is explained in the different *Purāṇas*. There are many good concepts in the Vedic literature about communism. So I thought that these ideas should be distributed to your most thoughtful men. Therefore I was anxious to speak.

Prof. Kotovsky: It is interesting that here in our country there is now great interest in the history of old, old thought. From this point of view, our institute translated into Russian and published many literary monuments of great Indian culture. . . . It seems to me that in Moscow and Leningrad libraries we have nearly all the major texts of ancient Indian culture, beginning from the *Vedas*, the original texts in Sanskrit. For instance, in the Leningrad branch of our institute there are six or eight editions of *Manu-smṛti*. This institute was founded in Imperial Russia in Leningrad, so in Leningrad we now have a branch of our institute dealing mainly with the history of Asiatic culture. You will find here an account of what is being translated and what studies are being done on the history of Indian religion and also the state of Indian religion, Hinduism, in Hindu India today.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Hinduism is a very complex topic.

Prof. Kotovsky: Oh, yes. [They laugh.] Really, to my understanding, it is not a religion from the European point of view; it is a way of life—religion, philosophy, a way of life, whatever you want.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This word "Hindu" is

Carrying the eternal teachings of Kṛṣṇa to the USSR, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda walks near St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow's Red Square in June 1971.

not a Sanskrit word. It was given by the Mohammedans. You know that there is a river—Indus—which in Sanskrit is called Sindhu. The Mohammedans pronounce as *h*. Instead of *Sindhu*, they made it *Hindu*. So "Hindu" is a term that is not found in the Sanskrit dictionary, but it has come into use. But the real cultural institution is called *varṇāśrama*. There are four *varṇas* (social divisions)—*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, and *śūdra*—and four *āśramas* (spiritual divisions)—*brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*. According to the Vedic concept of life, unless people take to this system or institution of four *varṇas* and four *āśramas*, actually they do not become civilized human beings. One has to take this process of four divisions of social orders and four divisions of spiritual orders; that is called *varṇāśrama*. India's culture is based on this age-old Vedic system.

Prof. Kotovsky: *Varṇāśrama*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Varṇāśrama*. And in the *Bhagavad-gītā*—perhaps you have read the *Bhagavad-gītā*?

Prof. Kotovsky: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.13], is the statement *cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam*: this system was created by Viṣṇu [God]. So since *varṇāśrama* is the creation of the Supreme, it cannot be changed. It is prevalent everywhere. It is like the sun. The sun is a creation of the Supreme. The sunshine is there in America, in Russia, and in India—everywhere. Similarly, this *varṇāśrama* system is prevalent everywhere in some form or another. Take, for example, the *brāhmaṇas*, the most intelligent class of men. They are the brains of society. The *kṣatriyas* are the administrative class; then the *vaiśyas* are the productive class, and the *śūdras* are the worker class. These four classes of men are prevalent everywhere under different names. Because it is created by the original creator, so it is prevalent everywhere, *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

Prof. Kotovsky: It is interesting that in the opinion of some European and old Russian scholars, this *varṇāśrama* system is a later creation, and if you would read the old texts of Vedic literature, you would find a much more simple and agrarian society. It is the opinion of these scholars that the *varṇāśrama* system was introduced in Indian society in the late age of the Vedic era but not from the beginning. And if you would analyze the old texts, you would find that in the old classical India it was not so prevalent.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: As far as we are concerned, it is mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam*. The *Bhagavad-*

gītā was spoken five thousand years ago, and in the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said, "This system of the *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken by Me to the sun-god." So if you take an estimation of that period, it comes to forty million years ago. Can the European scholars trace back history five thousand years? Can they go back forty million years? We have evidence that this *varṇāśrama* system has been current at least five thousand years. The *varṇāśrama* system is also mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* [3.8.9]. *Varṇāśramācārvatā puruṣena paraḥ pumān*. That is stated in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. *Varṇāśrama-dharma* is not a phenomenon of a historical period calculated in the modern age. It is natural. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the comparison is given that just as in the body there are four divisions—the brain division, the arms division, the belly division, and the leg division—so by nature's way these four divisions are existing in the social body. There exist a class of men who are considered the brain, a class of men who are considered the arms of the state, a class of men who are called the productive class, and so on. There is no need of tracing history; it is naturally existing from the day of creation.

Prof. Kotovsky: You have said that in any society there are four divisions, but they are not so easy to distinguish. For instance, one can group together different social classes and professional groups into four divisions in any society; there is no difficulty. The only difficulty is, for instance, in the socialistic society—in our country and other socialist societies—how you can distinguish the productive group from the workers.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: For example, we belong to the intellectual class of men. This is a division.

Prof. Kotovsky: Intelligent class, *brāhmaṇas*. And you can also put together all the intelligentsia in that department.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Prof. Kotovsky: And administrative class.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Prof. Kotovsky: But who are the *vaiśyas* and *sūdras*? That is the difficulty. Because all others are workers—factory workers, collective farm workers, and so on. So from this point of view there is a great distinction, in my opinion, between socialist society and all societies preceding socialism because in modern Western society you can group all social and professional classes in these particular class divisions—*brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *sūdras*: intellectuals, productive class, owners of the productive class, owners of the productive system (factory workers, for instance), and menial workers. But here you have no *vaiśyas* because you have administrative staffs in factories, and you

can call them *kṣatriyas*, and then there are the *sūdras*, the workers themselves, but no intermediate class.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is stated. *Kalau sūdra-sambhavaḥ*. In this age practically all men are *sūdras*. But if there are simply *sūdras*, the social order will be disturbed. In spite of your state of *sūdras*, the *brāhmaṇa* is found here, and that is necessary. If you do not divide the social order in such a way, there will be chaos. That is the scientific estimation of the *Vedas*. You may belong to the *sūdra* class, but to maintain social order you have to train some of the *sūdras* to become *brāhmaṇas*. Society cannot depend on *sūdras*. Nor can you depend on the *brāhmaṇas*. To fulfill the necessities of your body, there must be a

Confusion has come to exist because in India the son of a *brāhmaṇa*, without having the brahminical qualifications, claimed to be a *brāhmaṇa*; and others, out of superstition or a traditional way, accepted him as a *brāhmaṇa*.

brain, arms, a stomach, and legs. The legs, the brain, the arms are all required for co-operation to fulfill the mission of the whole body. So in any society you can see that unless there are these four divisions, there will be chaos. It will not work properly. It will be *māyā*, and there will be disturbances. The brain must be there, but at the present moment there is a scarcity of brains. I am not talking of your state or my state; I am taking the world as a whole. Formerly the Indian administration was a monarchy. For example, Mahārāja Parikṣit was a *kṣatriya* king. Just before his death, he renounced his royal order. He went to the forest to hear about self-realization. If you want to maintain the peace and prosperity of the whole world society, you must create a very intelligent class of men, a class of men expert in administration, a class of men expert in production, and a

class of men to work. That is required; you cannot avoid it. That is the Vedic conception, *mukha-bāhūru-pāda-jāḥ* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.13]. *Mukha* means "the face," *bāhu* means "the arms," *ūru* means "the waist," and *pāda*, "the legs." Whether you take this state or that state, unless there is a smooth, systematic establishment of these four orders of life, the state or society will not run very smoothly.

Prof. Kotovsky: Generally it seems to me that this whole *varṇāśrama* system to some extent created a natural division of labor in the ancient society. But now division of labor among people in any society is much more complicated and sophisticated. So it is very confusing to group them into four classes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Confusion has come to exist because in India, at a later day, the son of a *brāhmaṇa*, without having the brahminical qualifications, claimed to be a *brāhmaṇa*; and others, out of superstition or a traditional way, accepted him as a *brāhmaṇa*. Therefore the Indian social order was disrupted. But in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we are training *brāhmaṇas* everywhere because the world needs the brain of a *brāhmaṇa*. Although Mahārāja Parikṣit was a monarch, he had a body of *brāhmaṇas* and learned sages to consult, an advisory body. It is not that the monarchs are independent. In history it is found that if some of the monarchs were not in order, they were dethroned by the brahminical advisory council. Although the *brāhmaṇas* did not take part in politics, they would advise the monarch how to execute the royal function. This is not too far in the past. How long ago was Aśoka?

Prof. Kotovsky: That would be equal to what we call, in our terminology, ancient and medieval India.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Prof. Kotovsky: In old and feudal India—you are right—it was very open, and the major part of the high administrative staff in the legislative department were *brāhmaṇas*. Even in the Mogul era there were *brāhmaṇas* to advise the Muslim emperors and administrators.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is a fact—the *brāhmaṇas* were accepted. They formed the advisory committee of the king. For example, Candragupta, the Hindu king, was in the age of Alexander the Great. Just before Candragupta, Alexander the Great went from Greece into India and conquered a portion. When Candragupta became emperor, he had Cāṇakya as his prime minister. Perhaps you have heard this name Cāṇakya?

Prof. Kotovsky: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, he was a great *brāhmaṇa*-politician, and it is by his name that the quarter of New Delhi where all the foreign embassies are grouped together is

called Cāṅkya Purī. Cāṅkya Paṇḍita was a great politician and *brāhmaṇa*. He was vastly learned. His moral instructions are still valuable. In India, schoolchildren are taught Cāṅkya Paṇḍita's instructions. Although he was the prime minister, Cāṅkya Paṇḍita maintained his *brāhmaṇa* spirit; he did not accept any salary. If a *brāhmaṇa* accepts a salary, it is understood that he has become a dog. That is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He can advise, but he cannot accept employment. So Cāṅkya Paṇḍita was living in a cottage, but he was actually the prime minister. This brahminical culture and the brahminical brain is the standard of Vedic civilization. The *Manu-smṛti* is an example of the standard of brahminical culture. You cannot trace out from history when the *Manu-smṛti* was written, but it is considered so perfect that it is the Hindu law. There is no need for the legislature to pass a new law daily to adjust social order. The law given by Manu is so perfect that it can be applicable for all time. It is stated in Sanskrit to be *tri-kālādau*, which means "good for the past, present, and future."

Prof. Kotovsky: I am sorry to interrupt you, but to my knowledge all of Indian society in the second half of the eighteenth century was, by order of the British administration, under a law divergent from Hindu law. There was a lot of change. The actual Hindu law that was used by the Hindus was quite different from the original *Manu-smṛti*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They have now made changes. Even our late Pandita Jawaharlal Nehru introduced his own Hindu code. He introduced the right of divorce in marriage, but this was not in the *Manu-saṁhitā*. There are so many things they have changed, but before this modern age the whole human society was governed by the *Manu-smṛti*. Strickly speaking, modern Hindus are not strictly following the Hindu scriptures.

But our point is not to try to bring back the old type of Hindu society. That is impossible. Our idea is to take the best ideas from the original idea. For example, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there is a description of the communist idea. It is described to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. If there is something good, a good experience, why shouldn't you adopt it? That is our point of view. Besides that, modern civilization is missing one important point—the aim of human life. Scientifically, the aim of human life is self-realization, *ātma-tattva*. It is said that unless the members of human society come to the point of self-realization, they are defeated in whatever they do. Actually it is happening in modern society, despite all economic advancement and other advancement: instead of keeping peace and tranquillity, they are

fighting—individually, socially, politically, and nationally. If we think about it in a cool-headed way, we can see that in spite of much improvement in many branches of knowledge, we are keeping the same mentality that is visible in the lower animal society. Our conclusion is that this human body is not meant for working hard for sense gratification. But people do not know anything beyond that. They do not know about the next life. There is no scientific department of knowledge to study what happens after this body is finished. That is a great department of knowledge.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.13] it is said, *dehino 'smin yathā dehe*. *Deha* means "this body." *Dehinaḥ* means "the one who owns

Our conclusion is that this human body is not meant for working hard for sense gratification. But people do not know anything beyond that. There is no scientific department of knowledge to study what happens after this body is finished.

this body." *Dehino 'smin yathā dehe kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā*. The *dehī*, the owner of the body, is within, and the body is changing from one form to another. The child has a certain type of body that changes to another type when he is older. But the owner of the body still exists throughout. Similarly, when this body is completely changed, we accept another body. People do not understand this. We are accepting different bodies, even in this life, from babyhood to childhood to boyhood to youth. That is a fact—everyone knows it. I was a child, but that childhood body is no more. I have a different body now. What is the difficulty in understanding that when this body will be no more, then I will have to accept another body? It is a great science.

Prof. Kotovsky: As you know, there are two quite opposite approaches to this prob-

lem. The approach is slightly different according to different religions, but at the same time, any religion recognizes and searches for the change-of-place experience, or transmigration of spirit. In Christian religion, in Judaism, in . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I am not talking religions with you. I am talking science and philosophy. One religion may accept one way; that is not our concern. We are concerned with the point that if the owner of the body is permanent in spite of different changes of body, there should be no difficulty in understanding that when this body changes entirely, the owner of the body will have another body.

Prof. Kotovsky: Another approach is that there is no separation. There are no two phenomena—the body and the owner of the body are the same.

Śrīla Prabhupāda [emphatically]: No.

Prof. Kotovsky: When the body dies, the owner also dies.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. But why is there no department of knowledge in the university to study this fact scientifically? That is my proposition—they are lacking. It may be as you say or it may be as I say, but there must be a department of knowledge to study this. Recently a cardiologist in Toronto, a doctor, has accepted that there is a soul. So there is another point of view, but our process is to accept knowledge from authority. We have Kṛṣṇa's statement on this subject, and He is authoritative. Kṛṣṇa is accepted as the authority by all the *ācāryas*. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is accepted by scholarly and philosophical circles all over the world. Kṛṣṇa says:

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe
kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir
dhīras tatra na muhyati*

"Just as the soul gives up the childhood body and comes to the boyhood body and then to youth, the soul also gives up this body and accepts another body." [Bg. 2.13] This statement is given by Kṛṣṇa, the greatest authority according to our tradition of knowledge. We accept such a statement without argument. That is the way of Vedic understanding.

This propaganda is meant for creating *brāhmaṇas* all over the world because the *brāhmaṇa* element is lacking. One who seriously comes to us has to become a *brāhmaṇa*, so he should adopt the occupation of a *brāhmaṇa* and give up the occupation of a *kṣatriya* or *śūdra*. But if one wants to keep his profession and also at the same time understand our movement, that is allowed. We have many professors following our movement. There is Howard Wheeler. He is a professor at Ohio State

(continued on page 22)

GLASNOST'S B

After fifteen years, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes up from under
by MUKUNDA GOSWAMI and DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA



GREATEST TEST

round in the USSR.



Frustrated plainclothes KGB agents vainly tried to convince Western television and newspaper reporters to turn their cameras from fifty enthusiastic Soviet Hare

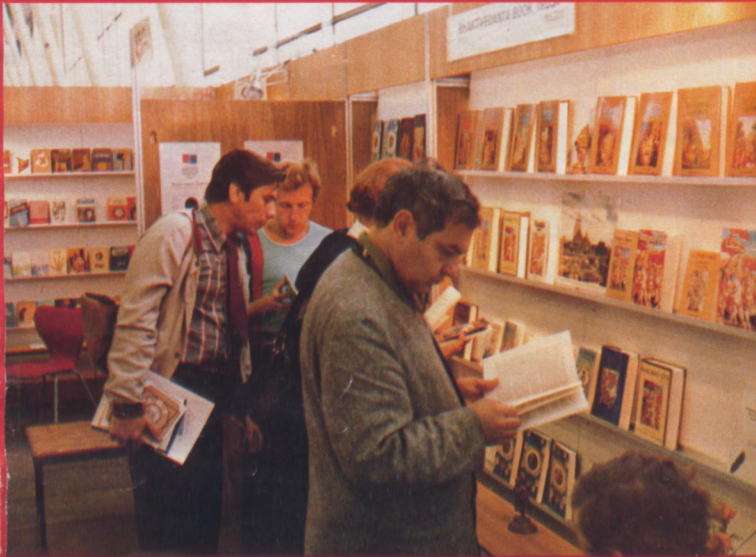
Kṛṣṇa followers surrounded by an even larger audience of totally fascinated Muscovites. For the first time in history Russian devotees were loudly chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* in public, filling the air with the sound of drums and hand cymbals, as if to challenge the limits of General Secretary Gorbachev's new *glasnost* policy.

"Why don't you come across the street? I think you'll find it more interesting," said one of the KGB men, motioning to the cameramen and reporters to direct their attention to the newly opened Festival of India exhibition, jointly sponsored by the Soviet and Indian governments. "We'll be the judge of what's interesting," retorted a reporter from a major London daily newspaper.

The chanting group represented devotees from throughout the vast territory of the Soviet Union. After years of quiet chanting in secret meeting places, they were finally taking their most fundamental religious practice into the streets, well aware that many who had previously done so were now confined to prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric hospitals. Indeed, they hoped this daring gesture would draw the world's attention and thus help win freedom for those in captivity and enable all Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees to openly practice their chosen spiritual path. Miraculously, the chanting has continued for weeks without government interference. The imprisoned devotees are not yet free, however, and the other Russian devotees of Kṛṣṇa are acutely aware that the climate of government tolerance could change in a moment.*

*Since this article was written, the climate *has* changed. See news stories on pages 23 and 24.

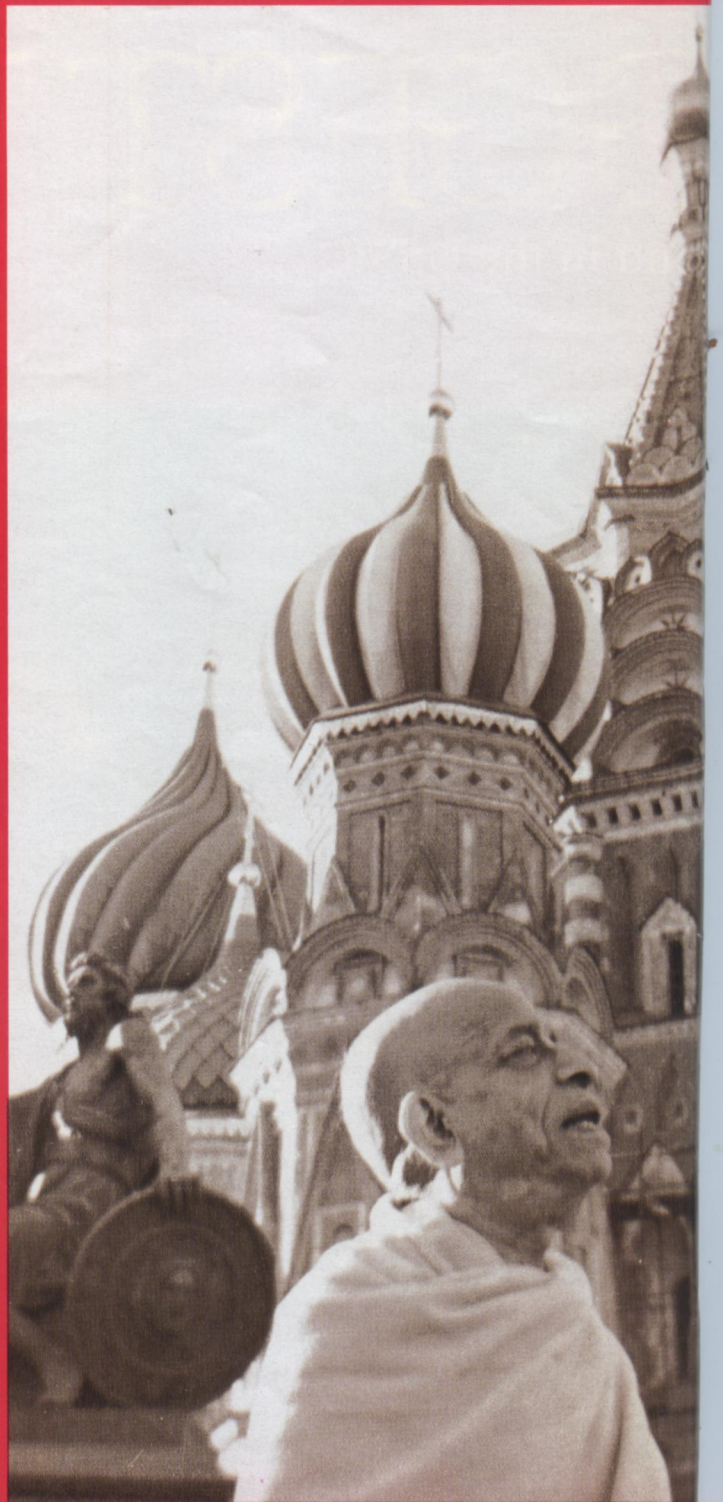
At the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust exhibit (below) at the 1979 Moscow International Book Fair, thousands of Russians were introduced to Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Right, in June 1971, Śrīla Prabhupāda walks near St. Basil's Cathedral in Red Square. As the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement grew in the USSR, small groups like this one (far right) in Moscow gathered regularly in apartments and at other secluded places in all fifteen Soviet republics.



How did it happen that thousands of Soviet citizens have become dedicated followers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement?

The story begins in the early summer of 1971. One day a young Muscovite named Anatoly Pinyayev, a lab technician at Moscow University, and his friend, the son of an Indian diplomat, encountered a strange sight near Red Square—a handsome white foreigner with the shaved head and robes of an Indian priest. Stopping to talk with him, they learned that his name was Śyāmasundara and that he was accompanying his spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who was visiting the Soviet capital at the invitation of Professor C. G. Kotovsky, head of the department of Indian and South Asian studies at Moscow's USSR Academy of Sciences.

At Śyāmasundara's invitation, Anatoly and his friend eagerly returned with him to the Hotel National to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda. Anatoly was immediately attracted to Śrīla Prabhupāda and the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He spent much of the next few days with Śrīla Prabhupāda, asking questions and learning everything he could about how to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



ŚYĀMASUNDARA DĀSA

Prabhupāda saw in this young man an indication that millions of Russian people would be receptive to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He saw Anatoly as a spark that could ignite a great fire in the Soviet Union, and hoped that the training he had given him would be enough to allow Anatoly to not only become Kṛṣṇa conscious himself but spread it to others in the Soviet Union.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's hopes did not go unfulfilled. Anatoly soon became his initiated

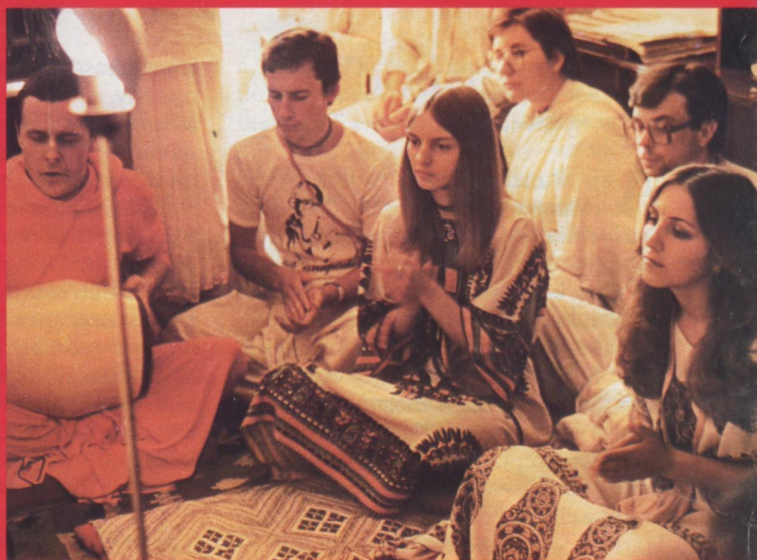


disciple, receiving the name Ananta-śānti dāsa. Over the next several years, he traveled throughout the Soviet Union, and by his influence hundreds of Russians—including engineers, physicists, artists, and musicians—became dedicated practitioners of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In 1977 the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT), the world's foremost publisher of books on Indian philosophy, was invited to the prestigious Moscow International Book Fair, where BBT publications received high

acclaim. The BBT returned to the fair in 1979, displaying all of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, and creating an even greater sensation, attracting hundreds of thousands of book lovers and spiritual seekers to its colorful exhibit.

Although officially no foreign books are allowed to be directly sold at the fair, many volumes nevertheless found their way into the hands of Soviet citizens. One man even pho-



tographed all nine hundred pages of Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. The rare original volumes obtained at the book fair were circulated underground, and each was read by hundreds of persons, while translations copied by hand or published by underground presses reached thousands more.

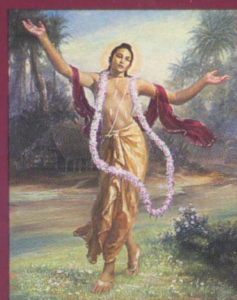
Soviet officials later credited the BBT's presence at the 1979 book fair with giving the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement substantial intellectual influence in the USSR. A Moscow correspondent for *The New York Times* reported (July 31, 1983): "[The exhibit] drew curious Russians, the books spread, and Hare Krishna was on its way in Russia."

The movement flourished, spreading to all fifteen Soviet republics. Devotees gathered secretly in apartments to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, read *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other books by Śrīla Prabhupāda, and feast on *prasādam*, spiritual vegetarian food offered to Kṛṣṇa. Although the movement was underground, it experienced relatively little persecution.

But this was not to last. The rise to power of Yuri Andropov, the long-time head of the KGB, brought in an era of extreme ideological repression. ☐

Every Town

The worldwide activities of the International



And Village

Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

Moscow's Krishna Cutoff

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Moscow (August 19)—For the old Arbat, one of this city's most famous 19th-century neighborhoods, *glasnost* summer has come to mean a daily festival of spontaneous street activity with artists turning out portraits on demand and strolling musicians drawing crowds with ballads that gently mocked the problems of everyday Soviet life.

But perhaps the most extraordinary phenomenon of all was the small band of Hare Krishna believers who every night since early July would gather in front of the Capital Vakhtangava Theater singing . . . mantras and swaying in unison. When they finished their singing, the group members were invariably approached by curious onlookers who wanted to learn who they were and what they believed in. The conversations between atheists and believers, soldiers and hippies with long hair often lasted late into the night.

Then Monday, the tolerance that allowed such a flourishing street life reached its limit. Fifteen of the Hare Krishna followers, who had been celebrating the birthday of their spiritual founder, were taken to a local militia station and accused of violating Article 193 of the administrative code forbidding religious observances anywhere but in a church or temple.

The problem for the Hare Krishna group is that Soviet authorities have never acknowledged them as an official religious sect, even though the group has been applying for this status for the last six years.

"If we are an official group, then we are allowed to worship only in a temple," noted Alexander Dragilyov, a 21-year-old member of the group. "But if we are not an

official religious group, then we should be allowed to sing on the street."

But they are not allowed, according to the message delivered by the militia Monday. The group was told that if they went back onto the Arbat to sing and dance again, they would be arrested and charged under the criminal code, Dragilyov said.

Dragilyov said the trouble actually began Sunday night when a group of youths grabbed one of the Hare Krishna banners and ran off.



He said several onlookers went up to uniformed militiamen standing nearby and asked them to do something about this, and they were told, "It is not our business."

On Monday night, a group of youths Dragilyov believes were the same ones from the night before approached the chanting sect members outside the Vakhtangava Theater and turned their tape decks up to full volume. At the same time, a 15-member military orchestra positioned near the theater began to play. The Hare Krishna mantras were drowned out.

A short time later, a number of

uniformed militiamen came up and took the group's members by the arms, leading them off to a nearby militia station. There they were held for three hours and made to sign documents charging them with administrative violations.

Similar actions have been taken recently against other Hare Krishna groups in the country—in Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine, and in Lithuania, Dragilyov said. According to the group's estimates, there are 2,000 members of the sect in the Soviet Union, of whom 25 are now in prison or in labor camps.

The group's problems are symptomatic of the tenuous nature of the ongoing Soviet experiment with open debate. In the days when they were peacefully singing their mantras, undisturbed by authorities, the reaction of passers-by varied, but most shared the view of one young man who said, "As long as they don't bother anyone, then what is the harm."

Sometimes arguments would break out, as a Communist Party veteran would query the young Krishna adherents about the sincerity of their values and, in Russian fashion, launch debates about Asian versus European cultures and the essence of man's spiritual needs. The gatherings had also begun to attract other religious groups, including members of fundamentalist Christian sects—all this in a society officially wedded to atheism.

Some passers-by began to wonder how long this would go on. "Something seems to be missing," said one young Russian recently, looking over his shoulder for the usually ubiquitous militiamen. Yet for most of the summer, the Arbat was relatively free of uniforms.

According to Dragilyov, the militia's sharp warning Monday is not something the group is eager to trifle with. "We won't sing on the Arbat," he said yesterday, "but we will go there and walk."

Moscow Police Break Up Hare Krishna Gathering

Reprinted with permission of The Los Angeles Times, Copyright 1987.

Moscow (August 30)—Police forcefully broke up a demonstration Saturday by activists of the Hare Krishna movement in the center of Moscow.

About twenty people were dragged, pushed and pulled onto a police bus after they assembled on Gorky St. in a small park opposite Moscow City Hall to press the Hare Krishna's demand for official recognition as a religious group.

Members of the group waved to passers-by from the bus windows and chanted "Hare Krishna" as they were driven away. A mother and an infant child, along with two young women, were among those arrested.

Uniformed police, accompanied by plainclothesmen, swooped down on the demonstrators within minutes after they assembled and hustled them into a bus and a van.

Their actions Saturday contrasted with official toleration of a far larger demonstration recently by Crimean Tatars on the edge of Red Square. The Tatars, seeking return of the homeland they were expelled from in 1944, were allowed to camp overnight in a 24-hour protest outside the Kremlin walls.

Baltic Demonstrations

Last Sunday, demonstrations also were held in the Soviet Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia to mark the 48th anniversary of the Hitler-Stalin pact that eventually led to incorporation of the three Baltic states into the Soviet Union.

Moscow News reported Saturday that authorities detained 86 people in the Latvian capitol of Riga during the demonstrations. It said the 86 were taken into custody for disobeying police instructions, urging people to riot and demonstrating offensive attitudes to people of other nationalities.

Six of the detainees were "punished administratively" and the remainder were released, the paper said, without elaboration.

Soviet officials have accused the Hare Krishna of being "anti-communist" and a tool of the American CIA.

Hare Krishna spokesmen have denied the charges.

A group known as the Committee to Free Soviet Hare Krishnas, based in Stockholm and headed by D. V. Jakupko, said early in 1986 that 25 Hare Krishna members in the Soviet Union were either in prison or psychiatric hospitals because of their beliefs.

A Soviet weekly, *Nedelys*, reported in 1983 that two members of the Hare Krishnas were tried on charges of recruiting new members for the group and disseminating

Krishna teachings. The articles did not indicate the verdicts or sentences, if any, the two men received.

The Stockholm group, however, said that Vladimir Kritski, now 36, was sentenced to 4½ years in a labor camp in December 1982, and then given an additional 4½-year sentence in a strict regime camp for continuing to preach Krishna teachings in jail. His co-defendant, Sergi Kurkin, was sentenced to 2½ years in labor camp and has since been released, the Stockholm group added.

RESOURCES

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"At present, it seems the more 'educated' one becomes, the less he believes in God, in God's law, and in the next life. . . . Thus modern education prepares men to become animals. If there is no education to teach a human being whether or not he is this body, he remains no better than an ass." Read the complete compilation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's words on *gurukula*, the Kṛṣṇa conscious educational system. *Śrīla Prabhupāda on Gurukula* is available from the ISKCON Ministry of Education, P.O. Box 11093, Dallas, TX 75223. \$3.50 plus \$1 postage; \$2 overseas postage.

Note to Subscribers. Planning to move? Let us know when and where so we can keep your BACK TO GODHEAD coming without break.

Festivals & Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees at the Hare Kṛṣṇa center nearest you will gladly tell you more about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Month of Dāmodara (October 8–November 5)

November 2—Utthānā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swamī Prabhupāda. Fasting till noon.

Month of Keśava (November 6–December 5)

November 17—Utpannā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

December 1—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

Month of Nārāyaṇa (December 6–January 4)

December 9—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swamī Prabhupāda.

December 16—Saphalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

LETTERS FROM PRISON

The following letter is from Suren Karapetyan (Sannyāsa dāsa) and Karen Saakyan (Kamala-mala dāsa), who are presently imprisoned in Armenia for practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The letter, written in February 1987 to other devotees in the Soviet Union, was on a tiny piece of paper that was folded many times so that it could be smuggled out of the prison.

Dear devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa,

Please write us a letter and let us know how you are doing. Many unpleasant rumors are reaching us here. We heard that some devotees were arrested as a result of searches of their homes. These stories have not been verified, though. Some visitors told us that Petya's mother died and that he has been arrested. If you do not know about this, then please check into it and see if he needs help. Also, please see about the welfare of Gevork.

Please convey our congratulations to our friends [regarding their initiation]. Jaya, Nityānanda Rāma dāsa! Jaya, Prāṇa dāsa! Jaya, Haridāsa Thākura dāsa! We are very joyful on hearing the news about them and all those who may soon also become initiated.

How are the Armen [Armen Saakyan and Armen Sarkisyan] doing? One man was brought here from the Nork District, and he told us a little about Armen. We were also glad to hear from Arsen and Aram. Please give them our heartfelt thanks and best regards. Kamalamālā and I have been separated. Now I am in cell number twelve, and he is in cell number forty-three, which is on the third floor. Kṛṣṇa always causes the activities of the materialists to backfire. They tried to stop our preaching by separating us, but now the number of people who are discovering the nectar of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has doubled!

It looks like you received our last letter because you did not meet with Sako. You were right in doing so, because we have not received anything through him. We are suspicious of him because it appears that the letter we sent to our aunt has fallen into the wrong hands. He is the most likely person to have done this.

Did you remember to send the English *Gītā* to that person in Moscow? If that has not been done, then please do it if it is not too much trouble for you.

What is going on with our registration

[as a government-recognized religion]? In here we are getting the impression that it may soon become possible. Perhaps it is a good idea to push the authorities again. Maybe we could present a new application for registration. The best plan would be to appeal to the highest authorities. By the way, how is the democratization process going on in the Soviet society, and what is your experience of it?

Do you have any more of that *mahā-prasādam*, especially that rice [from Jagannātha Purī]. If there is any left, please send more. Many people here have tasted it, and we also taste a tiny bit once in a while. But now there is almost nothing left. Please send us small pictures of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa if possible. We would also very much like any information from our *guru*, if there is something—letters, instructions, etc.

We are eager to learn about what the devotees are doing in other cities. What is happening with those who are imprisoned? Have there been any releases? When you have an opportunity, please give our best regards to devotees from other cities. What is the news about Aḍvaita dāsa, Sārvabhauma dāsa, and Śacī-sūta dāsa?

Please tell everyone that by the grace of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is spreading, and also by their grace we manage to follow our *guru*'s basic instructions. It is so nice that Kṛṣṇa sent us to Moscow last year, because now people are coming here from there who have heard about Kṛṣṇa from people we preached to there, as well as other places, during our tour of so many prisons throughout the country.

Dear friends! *Guru*'s mercy is so great upon those who are subjected to horrible circumstances, like prisons, etc. Without this mercy one would leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness immediately. Even within this prison Māyā keeps trying to do her job on us, so we can imagine what is going on outside in freedom. It looks like the time has come when, as the New Testament says, "Only those who endure the sufferings to the very end will be saved."

Stand firm, dear devotees. There is evidence that we may not have very long to wait for better times. When will the time come for all of us to meet our dear Guru Mahārāja? But I must admit that I am not prepared for that event at all.

Our dear devotees, please tell our beloved Guru Mahārāja that both Kamalamālā and I are begging him for one thing only—to please make us worthy servants of His Divine Grace. Otherwise, we do not see any point in living. And it does not make any difference for us where we have to stay—whether in a prison, in a special psychiatric hospital, or in so-called freedom—if we could only surrender to him and serve him to the end of our lives. We do not have any other confidential desire; neither do we hope that this desire we have can be satisfied other than through the causeless mercy of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa.

I have made some *prasādam* for Guru Mahārāja here. Perhaps I will send it out, but I'm not sure whether I should. Let us see what happens. It appears that we are not yet worthy to have the devotees' association, but by *guru*'s grace perhaps we will meet all of you—maybe. In the meantime, we hope you all make nice spiritual advancement under the guidance of our dear Guru Mahārāja.

Your Godbrothers,
Sannyāsa dāsa and
Kamalamālā dāsa

* * *

The following letter is from Yakov Dzhidzevadze (Yamarāja dāsa), who is imprisoned in a labor camp in the Soviet Union for being a Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee.

Hare Kṛṣṇa! Dear devotees,

I was very glad to receive your letter. Thank you very much for sending me the medicine. I am very happy to learn that by the Lord's grace everything is going well with the devotees there. I have heard that the number of devotees is increasing and that the situation for devotional service is becoming more favorable.

Of course, you probably want to know what it is like in our labor camp. Everything is quite well. First of all, I meet many people with whom I have conversations. There are many here who support Kṛṣṇa consciousness and know the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. There are some here who have decided to dedicate their lives to Kṛṣṇa in devotional service. One young man out of these has recently been released.

Not long ago Vakreśvara Paṇḍita dāsa [Ashot Setrakovich Shaglamdzyan] arrived here. He settled himself very nicely

and immediately joined the spiritual program one hundred percent. In all honesty, we have plenty of service to do here for Kṛṣṇa, and we are not at all worried about when we will leave this place. Kṛṣṇa sent us here, and when He will consider it necessary, then we will leave. In this labor camp we feel Kṛṣṇa's help very distinctly. This is due to the great mercy of our beloved *guru*.

Ambariṣa dāsa [Otari Shalvovich Nachhebiya] and Mayūradvaja dāsa [Nugzar Antizimovich Chargaziya] are in a neighboring labor camp. Everything is all right

with them, and the Kṛṣṇa consciousness over there is of the proper standard. The materialists want to eradicate Kṛṣṇa consciousness in our country, but on the contrary their efforts have made the roots of this mighty tree of life (Kṛṣṇa consciousness) even stronger, and while eliminating the weeds (insincere devotees), they contributed to the growth of new shoots (new devotees). In other words, not realizing what they were doing, the materialists were engaged by the Supreme Lord in His plan for spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement on a large scale.

Those whose knowledge is stolen by illusion sometimes try to extinguish fire by throwing fuel on it.

By the way, we have been receiving enlivening news about our Armenian Godbrothers. It appears they are carrying out the mission of Lord Caitanya very effectively. If you happen to get the chance, please offer our most humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of our eternal *guru*. Please say, "*Hari bol!*" to all the devotees for us.

Respectfully, your friend,
Yamarāja dāsa

Discussion

(continued from page 6)

they could alleviate problems caused by high cholesterol and obesity, and would naturally feel more energetic, resilient, and buoyant.

"I'm eating less and less red meat," my friend continued. "I'm not a violent person—I don't like animal slaughter. And I accept the ecological arguments against meat-eating."

"You should tell your readers."

"I think they'll find out for themselves," she retorted, her green eyes casting a glance that made me feel my presumptuousness. "It's like AIDS. You can talk and talk about morality, but people will change only when their immorality starts to kill them. So, as people become more aware of how meat-eating is bad for their health, they'll start to give it up."

"But they need someone to show them how," I said. "It's like smoking. Everyone knows that smoking is bad for health, yet so many people still smoke. But when

someone they look up to quits—and explains 'Here's how I did it, and you can do it too'—then they can follow."

"Look, we had a wine writer [at the newspaper where she works] who became allergic to wine. We can't have a food writer who becomes a vegetarian," she said.

"You have other food writers. Let them be nonvegetarian, and you be vegetarian. Variety is the mother of enjoyment."

"Oh, so you've got it all figured out."

"No, I'm ad-libbing," I said, feeling presumptuous again.

The discussion shifted to other topics and then returned to vegetarianism. I presented what is now common knowledge: "From whatever point of view you look at it—ecology, ethics, economics, religion, health, aesthetics, altruism—meat-eating is insupportable. People eat meat simply for the taste. And what's so significant about taste? It's about as significant as fashion."

"No, it's more significant. It comes from a lifetime of habit."

"OK, it's like an enduring fashion—but it's bad fashion. Yet to convince even one person of that is so difficult."

"How did you become convinced?"

"There were many factors," I said, "but an important one was that the diet appealed to my logic and reason. And when I experienced how satisfying vegetarianism could be, I was convinced."

It was really Śrīla Prabhupāda who inspired my conviction, because not only did he explain the spiritual importance of vegetarianism, he also gave the most satisfying vegetarian diet. Yet, as he pointed out, vegetarianism is not the end of the line. "The rabbits are vegetarian," Prabhupāda said. "The monkeys are vegetarian. What is the great credit for being vegetarian?" So besides showing us how to be vegetarian, Prabhupāda also showed us how to remember God, Kṛṣṇa, while we prepare our food, offer it to Him, and eat it. And he showed us how to make hundreds of wonderful and here-to-fore unimagined dishes—*pañc* being one of the foremost.

COMMUNISM

(continued from page 22)

weapons—the Vedic literatures. So no one has come. Even Christian priests in America love me. They say, "These boys are American, Christian, Jewish, and now they are so much after God. But we could not deliver them." They are admitting it. Their fathers and their parents come to me, offer their obeisances, and say, "Swamiji, it is our great fortune that you have come here to teach God consciousness." So on the contrary, I have been well received. In India also, since you inquired of India, all other sects are admitting that before me many kinds of swamis went to the Western countries, but they could not convert even a single person to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are admitting that. As far as I am concerned, I don't take any credit, but I am confident that because I am presenting the Vedic knowledge as it is, with-

out adulteration, it is being effective. That is my confidence. If you have the right medicine and you administer it to a patient, you must be sure that he will be cured.

Prof. Kotovsky: How many of your one thousand disciples do you have in India itself? How many of your community do you have in India?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In India?

Prof. Kotovsky: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In India there are many Kṛṣṇa conscious persons—hundreds, thousands, millions. In India there is no question. There is not a single Hindu who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Prof. Kotovsky: Yes, I understand.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Vaiṣṇavas. This is called the Vaiṣṇava cult. You have been in India, so as it is commonly known, there are many millions of Vaiṣṇavas. For example, this gentleman [an Indian gentleman present] is the commander of Air

India airlines. He is not my disciple, but he is a Vaiṣṇava, Kṛṣṇa conscious. Similarly, in India there are millions of Kṛṣṇa conscious persons. There are even Mohammedans who are Kṛṣṇa conscious. At Gorakhpur University there is a Mohammedan professor who is a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. So this is natural. It is said in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is everywhere, in everyone's heart. It simply has to be awakened by this process. That is all. It is there in your heart also. It is not that it is foreign to you. In everyone's heart there is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By this process we have to awaken it. It is just like the way the sun rises. It is not that all of a sudden the sun comes from nowhere. It is there, but it rises in the morning. Similarly, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness is everywhere, but some way or another it is now covered. By this process it is reawakened and aroused through association.

In good weather Soviet devotees sometimes meet in the countryside, as in this setting outside Leningrad. Here they can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa as loudly as they like. In their apartments a complaint could lead to harassment or even imprisonment.



At Home With the Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇas

An Album of Photos From the USSR



In order to be more free to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness, many groups of Russian devotees moved from the cities onto small farms. This one, however, was later closed by the KGB.

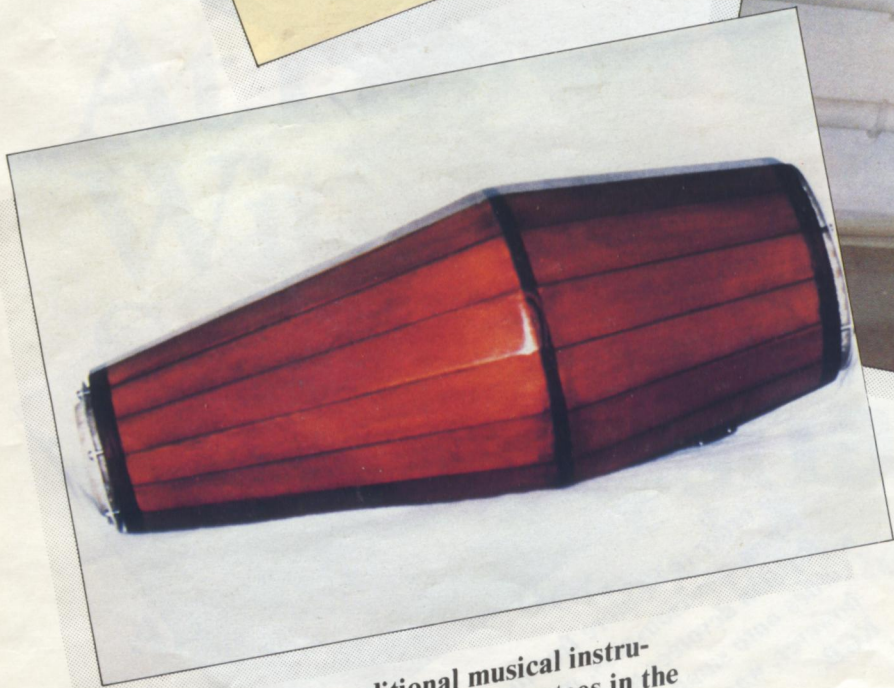


Devotees crowd a small Moscow apartment for an evening of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, reading scripture, and feasting. Most will stay until just before one o'clock in the morning, when the Moscow underground trains stop running.

A drawing of Lord Kṛṣṇa by a Russian devotee.

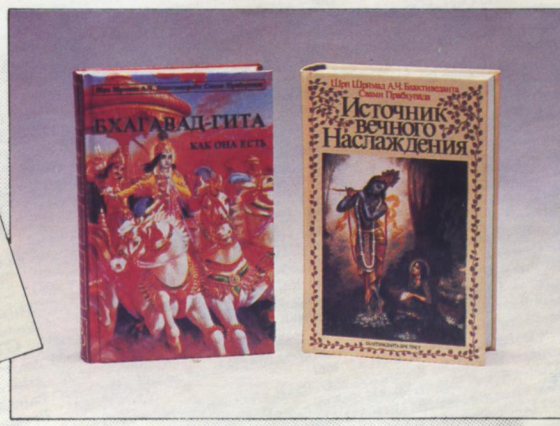


Sanātana-kumāra dāsa (Sergei Aleksandrovich Priborov) gives his son Sergei a mṛdaṅga lesson in their Moscow apartment.



Unable to import traditional musical instruments from India or the West, devotees in the Soviet Union have manufactured their own, such as this wooden version of the mṛdaṅga.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Bhagavad-gītā As It Is and Śrī Īsopaniṣad (below, left) were produced in the Soviet Union by samizdat (underground press). Each book is read by as many as twenty people a month. Two Russian editions of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books (below, right) were recently published in Sweden: Bhagavad-gītā As It Is and Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.



Deities of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu (right) and Lord Nityānanda (left) in a Soviet devotee's home. Lord Caitanya, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, predicted that the holy name and village of the world.

Dear Mr. Gorbachev,

The worldwide campaign to free the



AMOGHA DĀSA

At a press conference in front of the Soviet consulate in Sydney, Australia, Prahāda dāsa, the thirteen-year-old devotee whose song Mr. Gorbachev, Please Let Our Friends Go was released last year by EMI, one of the world's largest record companies, reads a statement requesting freedom for the imprisoned Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. EMI was so happy with the song's success and so sympathetic to its message that they went on to record Prahāda's album, *Through the Eyes of a Child*, promoting it with a rock video

of the song *We Want to See the 21st Century*. Proceeds from record sales are funding a drive to collect a million signatures on petitions demanding that the Soviet government release Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees held in prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric hospitals.

In the same spirit, devotees and friends are gathering petitions in many other countries, and the Kremlin is receiving tens of thousands of postcards bearing photos of the imprisoned devotees and requesting their release.

Let Our Friends Go!

Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇas gathers momentum.



Kṛṣṇa devotee Marie-Anne Farrow, dressed in her bridal gown, announced on August 15, 1985, at a press conference in front of the Soviet embassy in Stockholm, Sweden, that she would fast there until Soviet officials released her fiancé, Vedavyāsa dāsa (Valentin Z. Yurov), from a psychiatric hospital in Moscow. Swedish newspapers gave her hunger strike daily front-page coverage, and her image appeared on nightly television newscasts, generating tremendous sympathy among the Swedish people. In September the Soviets finally capitulated and put Vedavyāsa on a plane to Stockholm.

Since then, Vedavyāsa has traveled extensively throughout the world speaking out strongly on behalf of the Soviet devotees who remain imprisoned.



At the site of the November 1985 Reagan-Gorbachev summit meeting in Geneva, Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees staged massive demonstrations that drew worldwide media coverage.

At the November 1986 meeting in Vienna of the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the international organization that monitors compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki accords, Hare Kṛṣṇa members again called attention to the plight of imprisoned Soviet devotees.

The Committee to Free Soviet Hare Krishnas organized protest demonstrations and staged a well-received exhibition at a human rights conference organized by Paris-based Resistance International. The committee's U.S. delegation later submitted to Congress a detailed account of Soviet violations of the human rights of Russian Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees. Amnesty International continues its vigorous support for the persecuted Russian devotees, willingly providing assistance in locating arrested devotees.

CHANT!



Moscow, 1987: A devotee of Kṛṣṇa from Kiev chants the holy names while displaying the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra in Cyrillic.

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

Tap into the reservoir of pleasure. By chanting the names of God, you'll immediately be in touch with the source of all pleasure. The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive person," and *Rāma* means "the supreme pleasure." *Hare* is a word addressing *Hara*, God's devotional energy, to whom we pray to be engaged in the Lord's service. Because God is unlimited and absolute, He is fully present in the sound of His names. So, just as darkness cannot stand in the presence of light, miseries cannot affect us when we chant God's names.

Because we are spiritual and eternal, our natural state is one of unrestricted happiness. But forgetting our original positions as loving servants and devotees of Kṛṣṇa, we suffer the pains of material life. By chanting God's names, we become purified of all material desires, which separate us from Kṛṣṇa, and we regain entrance into the eternal, blissful, spiritual realm. The spiritual realm is not restricted by time and space; it's always within reach. And you can experience it. Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—and taste the pleasure.