

## Bhagwan: My Dance is Complete

LAST YEAR an independent film maker called Bob Mullan visited Rajneeshdham and made a documentary, which was screened in Britain on nationwide Channel 4 TV recently. This was his second film about Our Beloved Master and His sannyasins. Before Bob Mullan became a film director, he was a sociologist at the University of East Anglia and conducted a three-month residential study of the former British sannyasin commune Medina Rajneesh, writing a book and making a film about his findings. Consequently, he has a good deal more factual knowledge of Osho Rajneesh and His work than the average reporter visiting the ashram.

The documentary *Bhagwan: My Dance is Complete* was highlighted by newspaper previewers as the film to watch that night, and viewers were rewarded with some vivid scenes which must have overflowed the screen in many a proper British household. It showed the ten thousand buddhas doing the gibberish and let-go meditation during discourse, with Our Beloved Master's voice saying "Look inwards....gather all your consciousness as a spear....move towards the center of your being." It also showed Our Master telling in His own words how He was poisoned with thallium while in US federal custody, and included a beautiful passage, from which the film's title is taken, in which He says "It does not matter whether death comes this moment or the next... My dance is complete. I am just lingering around for you all to join with me in the great matter of enlightenment."

### Something powerful

Swami Amrito, Osho Rajneesh's personal doctor, is given space for forthright statements about the desire of religious and political vested interests to suppress His radical vision. The ashram comes across as the great thriving affair which it is. Altogether it is obvious that something powerful is happening here, although Mullan does not attempt to explain to the viewer just what that is.

### No explanation

The approach seems calculated. Amrito is shown discussing this very issue, pointing out how the press will never print quotations from Osho Rajneesh and say: "These are His words - judge for yourself." Mullan immediately follows this interview by showing a brief excerpt of Our Beloved Master speaking on the English Poet Coleridge - nothing of Osho's words on the meditations the viewers will see; nothing of His controversial views on social issues today; nothing to give a coherent theme to the documentary.

Not only does Mullan not present Our Beloved Master's thesis in His own words, he gives no other reason why so many educated people come here - not a word that this is the biggest center in the world for meditation and inner work. This omission of Our Master's central vision liberates Mullan to use innuendos to suggest that what is happening is bizarre and good for a laugh.

For example, in the same interview Amrito is shown saying: "People say we are hypnotized. Now, do I look hypnotized? Do I look brainwashed?" The camera cuts to show Amrito doing

cedes the meditation in discourse each day. Such a cut might be justified for dramatic effect, provided there was commentary as to what was happening. But there is no commentary, no explanation that Osho Rajneesh maintains westerners need to precede meditation with a cathartic clearing-out. The inexplicable scene, unprecedented in the viewers' experience, rolls on and on and on and the implication is: "Yes, these people are hypnotized, and here it is happening." Yet Bob Mullan's stated opinion about whether sannyasins are "brainwashed" is very different.

### "Absolutely moving"

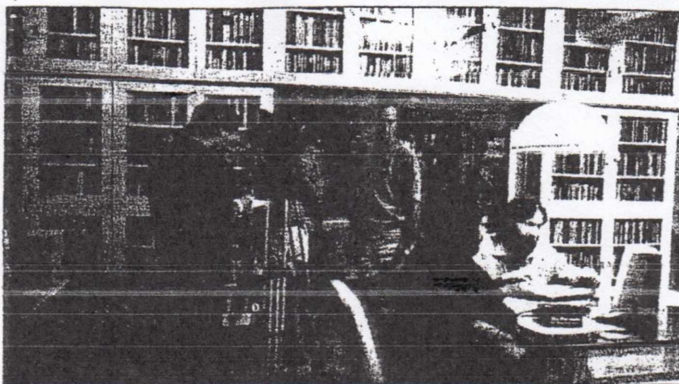
After completing the filming of *Bhagwan: My Dance is Complete* he was interviewed by the *Rajneesh Times International* (issue date December 1, 1988) and commented about his experience of the Medina Rajneesh Commune. He said, "I found nothing but people trying to find some harmony and love in their lives. I found nothing like brainwashing, everyone was totally free and knew exactly what they were doing." [Emphasis added.]

In his film, he calls the security precautions before discourse "paranoid," but he knows that Osho Rajneesh stirs turbulent controversy and has survived death threats, a knife attack, and a poisoning attempt. He also knows how Gandhi died. In fact he had expressed sympathy about the attacks on Osho Rajneesh in his interview with *RTI*. In the same interview he said how moved he had been by Osho's words about the poisoning attempt. "I found the discourse tonight absolutely moving," Mullan said. "Him talking about Ronald Reagan. When He said Ronald Reagan might as well have finished Him...I felt sad. Bhagwan should be cared for, someone should look after Him."

### "I feel privileged"

Many reviews in the British press interpreted *Bhagwan: My Dance is Complete* as a satire of the ashram, and this would appear to some extent to have been Bob Mullan's intention. Yet, during filming he claimed to be thoroughly opposed to this very sort of misrepresentation:

"I feel very warm towards Shree Rajneesh. He is immensely sensible and at times profound. He's an individual and has a right to be heard... Anyone who has a message for people has a right in a democracy to be heard. There is a deliberate misunderstanding of his message because people are jealous... The jealousy is understandable but it doesn't give you the right to



The Channel 4 camera team

can understand why people fall in love with Him. He comes over as extremely loving. I found Him very, very moving. What He said made an immense amount of sense and felt so true...

"I was shocked and surprised at everyone's openness here, it totally amazed me. Most people in the world have closed minds. The film will show the openness of the ashram. I have reduced the commentary in the film because I don't want to be accused of bias. I feel very privileged to get an opportunity to film Him. This will be a very different kind of film, because He is a very different kind of man."

### Hypocritical

Ms Ananda Sarita, the ashram press officer, commented:

"The ashram is open to the public. A journalist, like everyone else with an AIDS-free certificate, can come as a visitor and is free to publish their experience. But very few journalists actually have the courage to stick to media ethics and report the truth. They may experience the openness, intelligence and love emanating from people here and then turn around and edit the material in a way which fits with Christian conditionings. Journalists often find it easier and more profitable to be hypocritical than to be truthful, and this was clearly the case with Bob Mullan. If he should return to film here in the future, I only hope he will have the courage to make a courageous in-depth program that reflects his real experience."

Islam ☐

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Gut Hübenthal  
3430 Witzenhausen  
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West Germany

