

Division of Management
Polytechnic

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To whom it may concern:

I am acquainted with the work of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh through discussions with professional colleagues, some of whom have visited his impressive new community in Oregon, through reading some of his books and glancing through perhaps a hundred more, and through listening to many of his cassette recordings of answers to the questions of his disciples. While I am not a follower of Rajneesh, or of any single contemporary religious philosopher, I am professionally competent to judge that he is an extraordinarily learned, profound, and widely recognized religious philosopher, teacher, and spiritual leader.

I have been a visiting faculty member at the Union Theological Seminary and a consultant to the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. I have written several scholarly articles on religion, and on religion, the U. S. educational system and religion, and on religion and changing American values, attitudes, and life-styles. Some of this work, incidently, was carried out under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and some under grants from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Most of my work on religious thought was carried out at the Hudson Institute, where I served for 10 years as Research Chairman, reporting to the late Dr. Herman Kahn. During this period I also worked on strategic and long-range planning for the Defense Department, and held a Top Secret clearance. I was also responsible for millions of dollars of studies on long-range planning problems for major U.S., European and Japanese corporations. I mention these facts about myself simply to indicate that it is not likely that my opinions about Rajneesh are affected by naivete or gullibility. He has performed a prodigious task in synthesizing, in original form, many of the most important insights of Buddhism with the Hindu tradition and important aspects of Judaism and Christianity. In addition, he has incorporated insights from innumerable important philosophers, ranging from Socrates to Freud. There can be no doubt about his brilliance and integrity, and his skills as a teacher, as exemplified in his cassettes and transcribed dialogues. Whether one agrees with his view of the world (for example, in many respects I do not) is an entirely separate issue, in which he and his followers are clearly protected by the freedom of religion clause of the U.S. Bill of Rights and the decisions of the Supreme Court pursuant to the separation of church and state, as well as to the freedom of speech---or, when a teacher has spoken and written millions of words and now prefers to continue teaching by simply being present in meetings of his followers, and exercising leadership through those who are closest to him and who manage his organization and community development; then freedom of silence, since his presence is also a communication.

As an expert on urban planning I have carried out many planning studies for particular American cities and metropolitan areas and for the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. I taught this subject, among others, while on the faculty at M.I.T. I served as Chairman of the White House Urban Affairs

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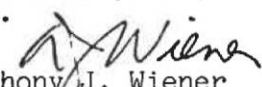
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Research Committee, reporting to the Assistant to the President (Nixon) for Urban Affairs, Dr. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, during 1969 and 1970. Dr. Moynihan had been Director of the Harvard-M.I.T. Joint Center for Urban Studies, and we had become well-acquainted with each other's work before the President appointed him and he appointed me as, in effect, his deputy for all studies and urban planning. (He is now, of ^{course,} the senior Senator from New York.) I mention this to indicate that I am competent to make a judgment on the competence of urban planning and community development. My information about the development of the municipality of Rajneeshpuram, obtained from several sources, leads me to the conclusion that the development is being carried out in an unusually competent, intelligent, and business-like manner, that technical problems such as water-supply are being dealt with expertly, and that the quality of management and the effectiveness and skill of the central management and independent businesses supplying goods and services are all good enough to serve as models for urban development and small business formation and management elsewhere in the U.S., where planned communities including free-market small businesses are increasingly seen as the optimal route to successful new towns.

In conclusion, I believe that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his organization are great assets to Oregon and to the United States, even if their style of dress and some---definitely not all, and nowhere near most-- of their beliefs are unconventional. The U.S. has always thrived on diversity, and religious diversity and freedom of speech are for good reasons constitutionally protected. Moreover, the differences are not as great as they may first appear, and even a casual study of Rajneesh's teachings shows that he fits easily into some interpretations of the Christian tradition, and his synthesis with Buddhism, Hinduism, ancient philosophers, and modern psychologists is intellectually respectable and impressive, and in no way socially undesirable, although differences of opinion as to what is desirable are inevitable and at the heart of American freedom and democracy.

It would be tragic, and morally and legally indefensible, to confuse Rajneesh with the various exploitative or psychotic cult leaders we have seen, though some of these have come from India and one, at least, from South Korea. He is not one of these; he is genuine and very valuable.


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and Public Policy.