

July 21, 1983

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

In regard to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's application to be granted permanent residency in the United States of America, I would like to submit the following information for your consideration, which can attest to the fact that his presence has brought about a personal transformation as well as the beginning of an environmental evolution in the City of Rajneeshpuram. This city is serving as an example to motivate people in the United States and throughout the world to improve the welfare of all mankind.

Twenty seven years ago I was graduated from the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources. The curriculum included subjects such as ecology, watershed and range management, conservation, forestry, fisheries and wildlife management.

Work experience for me began on the Willamette National Forest in the Cascade Mountain Range which is within sight of Rajneeshpuram. For five years I was employed by the United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, in various capacities of protecting, harvesting and regeneration of the forest environment.

The next ten years were spent with the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company where I began in their Coos Bay, Oregon, operation as a utilization forester. Experience in virtually every aspect of this natural environment was gained in this tenure.

About six years ago I first heard Bhagwan's voice on a lecture tape and from that moment on, the significance of my life was changed. A new awareness, insight, and understanding of existence brought me to change my lifestyle and my attitudes towards work. In 1979 I moved to India to be physically close to Bhagwan and work in the ashram. You can imagine how pleased I was when the community was formed in Oregon and Bhagwan came to the land. What a blessing to have a person of the highest caliber of all time to be right here in this beautiful state and country of religious freedom.

During the past 18 months I have been living at Rajneeshpuram and have been inspired by Bhagwan along with many other disciples and devotees to resurrect the greatly neglected, eroded, overgrazed, and desolate land into an oasis which has already improved the physical appearance of the property along with financially supporting the economy of both the State of Oregon and the government of the United States of America. Millions of dollars have been pouring into this project which have obviously been helpful in assisting the United States economy.

Rajneeshpuram has been incorporated and is an expression of Bhagwan's vision of how man can live in harmony with each other and nature. He has said that,

"Now the greatest challenge is how to maintain the balance of nature, how to maintain ecological harmony Now for the first time, our energy is bigger, far bigger, than the earth's energy to keep its balance".

"The modern mind has been too aggressive against nature, and it has created the ecological crisis. Our whole approach is wrong, it is destructive. We only take from the earth, and we never give anything back. We only exploit nature; we only go on taking, and all the resources are being spent".

"But things have now gone to the extreme. Either man has to drop his aggressive attitude or man has to get ready to say goodbye to this planet".

- Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh -

Through his exceptional ability to marshal human and financial resources from the entire world, this work of balancing man with nature has begun and he is the inspiration for it to continue.

My activity here at Rajneeshpuram has been in developing the section of the comprehensive plan pertaining to the natural environment and implementing the physical aspects of the stabilization, preservation, reclamation, restoration, and general improvement of the natural features of Flora and Fauna.

Prior to Bhagwan's coming to Rajneeshpuram all areas of this land exhibited deterioration of the natural environment caused by man-related activities during the past 100 years. Overgrazing and cattle breakdown of the stream banks have significantly altered the original appearance of the landscape. Large gullies and vertical stream banks devoid of vegetation scar the drainage areas. The native grasses have been so depleted that invader species now predominate.

Residents of Rajneeshpuram have exhibited a great deal of interest and examples in ways to live in harmony with the natural environment, and with the "wise and multiple use" concept adopted by conservationists in the 1930's which is in keeping with their goals. Simply stated, this means that the land will be used in a manner that will provide the highest and best use of all resources for the most people for the longest period of time.

This land that has been entrusted to the care of the residents of Rajneeshpuram has given them the opportunity to be creative in working with neglected and depleted resources. The flora, fauna and land do have needs and will respond to guidance that aids their own natural recovery and stabilization processes.

Under Bhagwan's influence the task here is to combine sensitive observation, a dedicated work force, advice and direction from interested state federal, and local agencies, and the best available technology in order to help reestablish a natural balance. Three highly beneficial measures have been undertaken that will provide great benefits to both vegetation and the wildlife at Rajneeshpuram:

- limitation of grazing to reduce greatly a source of disturbance to the natural vegetative communities;
- the start of a riparian rehabilitation program that will eventually restore the most productive type of wildlife habitat to the ranch;
- the setting aside of open spaces to provide escape corridors and nesting areas which will increase wildlife diversity and density.

In just two years the ecological recovery has resulted in clear streams flowing all year where in previous summers they dried up. Vegetation is spreading out from the creeks and up the surrounding valleys; wildlife has returned and silt that would once have washed away is now being caught further up in the water shed. Check dams have been built throughout the entire length of the creeks which feed the new reservoir. These had the effect of slowing down the flood waters and encouraging the deposit of silt upstream before reaching the lake.

This particular experiment has been successful beyond the most optimistic expectations. The water flowing into the reservoir is pure and sediment-free as the pools behind the small dams act both as percolation tanks and small sanctuaries for the rapidly increasing plant and wildlife. Piles of juniper brush which were left from trimming the logs are giving added protection and safe habitats to small animals and birds.

The early experiences of heavy flooding in 1981 showed a need for reshaping heavily eroded banks. These deep ravine-like erosions were bulldozed into soft contours and seeded with grasses and wheat to bind the fragile topsoil and thousands of willow cuttings were planted. Almost all of these will be trees in a few years and there is already a wonderful sense of rejuvenation happening along the creek - all in keeping with Bhagwan's vision.

The inspiration for me and my associates to continue the daily work which has just begun here at Rajneeshpuram has been and is Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Nowhere on this planet has there ever been such an intense gathering and focusing of energy in positive and creative ways in which all forms of life can exist together in a peaceful and productive manner, sharing time and space with that which is.

I urge you to review Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's application from the perspective that his physical presence is not only an advantage but absolutely essential to carry on this unique work. This may well be the catalyst to convert mankind's destructive and aggressive attitude towards nature into an environmental oasis which could bring accolades to this country from all over the world.

Swami anand Hasyo

Swami Anand Hasyo
(David A. Yates) B.Sc.

Rajneeshpuram,
P.O. Box 10,
OR. 97741