

SRILA PRABHUPADA GURU-TATTVA

It is widely known that Srila Prabhupada instituted a ritvik or representative (proxy) initiation system throughout ISKCON as early as 1971 in order to meet the growing need to initiate his disciples worldwide. However what is not widely known is that he instructed his disciples to continue initiating new disciples on his behalf even after his physical disappearance. He called those disciples who performed the initiation ceremonies ritvik representatives of the acharya (officiating acharyas). Below are quotes directly from Srila Prabhupada for the evidence of these instructions as well as explanations, philosophical insights, and historical background.

I. DIRECT EVIDENCE FOR CONTINUANCE OF THE RITVIK SYSTEM AFTER PHYSICAL DISAPPEARANCE

A. Srila Prabhupada's May 28, 1977 ISKCON Governing Board Commission (GBC) meeting.
Notes enclosed in []

Satsvarupa: By the votes of the present GBC. Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

Prabhupada: Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acaryas.

[Srila Prabhupada clearly did not state "diksa-guru" nor "acarya" which is a direct repudiation of the successor diksa-guru accepting their own disciples senario in ISKCON.]

Tamala Krsna Is that called ritvik-acarya?

Prabhupada: Ritvik, yes.

[Srila Prabhupada equates "officiating acarya" with "ritvik" which is the second direct repudiation of the successor diksa-guru senario in ISKCON.]

Satsvarupa: Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

Prabhupada: He's guru. He's guru.

Satsvarupa: But he does it on your behalf.

Prabhupada: Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become guru, so on my behalf, on my order... Amara ajnaya guru haia. Be actually guru, but by my order.

[This is the third direct repudiation of Srila Prabhupada's disciples accepting their own disciples in ISKCON.]

Satsvarupa: So they may also be considered your disciples.

Prabhupada: Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?

[This is the fourth direct repudiation of the successor diksa-guru senario in reply to Satsvarupa's question.]

Tamala Krsna: No, he's asking that these ritvik-acaryas, they're officiating, giving diksa. Their... The people who they give diksa to, whose disciple are they?

[Here Srila Prabhupada ends his conversation with Satvarupa and replies to Tamal's misunderstanding. Tamal's misunderstanding is clearly evident as he repeats Satvarupa's same question which was already clearly answered by Srila Prabhupada. Further, Tamal's misunderstanding is clear in his saying that ritviks and officiating acaryas give diksa which they clearly don't, as they merely are representing the uttama-adhikari diksa-guru. Tamal's misconception of "diksa" and "diksa-guru" is that both diksa-guru and disciple must be physically present for diksa which clearly contradicts Srila Prabhupada's teachings as pointed out in Part III "Philosophical Basis".]

Prabhupada: They're his disciple.

Tamala Krsna: They're his disciple.

Prabhupada: Who is initiating. He is grand disciple.

Satsvarupa: Yes.

Tamala Krsna: That's clear.

[Here Tamal draws his own conclusion and foolishly accepts only the sentence ("There're his disciple.") which he likes or understands. He ignores Srila Prabhupada's clear answers to Satvarupa's previous questions which repudiated the "disciples accepting their own disciples" senario in ISKCON four times and thus Tamal misses Prabhupada's concluding statement as follows.]

Satsvarupa: Then we have a question concer...

Prabhupada: When I order, "You become guru," he becomes regular guru. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That's it.

[Here Srila Prabhupada clearly concludes his reply to Tamal and says that his disciples can become regular guru and accept their own disciples only when he orders them to. This clearly indicates that he did not yet give the specific order for his disciples to become regular (diksa) gurus and accept their own disciples in ISKCON in this meeting. He already repeatedly confirmed this fact with his prior repudiation (four times) in reply to Satsvarupa's original question on what the GBC were to do for 1st and 2nd initiations "when you no longer are with us" as already pointed out. So it is inconceivable that he changes his mind in replying to what is essentially the same question from Tamal vis-a vis, "Whose disciples are they?".

Furthermore, if someone tells you, "When I order, you jump off the cliff" would you jump? OF COURSE NOT! Clearly, Srila Prabhupada's use of the word "when" indicates that he did not yet give that order. A month later in his July 9, 1977 worldwide communique (given below) he gave his final orders on future initiations for Iskcon wherein he named 11 disciples to act as "ritvik representatives of the acarya" to initiate future disciples on his behalf "henceforward".]

B. June 5, 1977 will

Section 3: The executive directors who have herein been designated are appointed for life. In the event of death or failure to act for any reason of any of the said directors, a successor director or directors may be appointed by the remaining directors, provided the new director is my initiated disciple following strictly all the rules and regulations of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness as detailed in my books, and provided that there are never less than three (3) or more than five (5) executive directors acting at one time.

(In order to carryout this section of Srila Prabhupada's will, there must be his initiated disciples present for as long as Iskcon exists, thus necessitating a ritvik system initiating new disciples on his behalf henceforward which was stated in his July 9, 1977 letter to all GBC and temple presidents.)

C. July 9, 1977 worldwide final order to all GBC and TP

July 9th, 1977

To All G.B.C., and Temple Presidents

Dear Maharajas and Prabhus,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your feet. Recently when all of the GBC members were with His Divine Grace in Vrndavana, Srila Prabhupada indicated that soon He would appoint some of His senior disciples to act as "ritvik"-representative of the acarya, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation. His Divine Grace has so far given a list of eleven disciples who will act in that capacity:

- His Holiness Kirtanananda Swami
- His Holiness Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami
- His Holiness Jayapataka Swami
- His Holiness Tamala Krsna Gosvami
- His Holiness Hridayananda Gosvami
- His Holiness Bhavananda Gosvami
- His Holiness Hamsaduta Swami
- His Holiness Ramesvara Swami
- His Holiness Harikesa Swami
- His Grace Bhagavan dasa Adhikari
- His Grace Jayatirtha dasa Adhikari

In the past Temple Presidents have written to Srila Prabhupada recommending a particular devotee's initiation. Now that Srila Prabhupada has named these representatives, Temple Presidents may henceforward send recommendation for first and second initiation to whichever of these eleven representatives are nearest their temple. After considering the recommendation, these representatives may accept the devotee as an initiated disciple of Srila Prabhupada by giving a spiritual name, or in the case of second initiation, by chanting on the Gayatri thread, just as Srila Prabhupada has done. The newly initiated devotees are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad, the above eleven senior devotees acting as His representative. After the Temple President receives a letter from these representatives giving the spiritual name or the thread, he can perform the fire yajna in the temple as was being done before. The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who

has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupada, to be included in His Divine Grace's "Initiated Disciples" book.

Hoping this finds you all well.

Your servant,

Tamala Krsna Gosvami

Secretary to Srila Prabhupada

Approved: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

[Srila Prabhupada's signature appears on the original]

(Note: There is a reference to the May 28, 1977 meeting in Vrindavan in which Srila Prabhupada replied to a specific question from the GBC on what to do for initiations after his physical disappearance. "After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acharyas." This July 9, 1977 worldwide order sent to all GBCs and temples presidents IS that order of recommendation. Also note Srila Prabhupada states three times that the new initiates are his disciples and that there is no mention of any future contingency that would modify, countermand or terminate this order whatsoever in any way. What was stated is "henceforward" which means from now on.

Srila Prabhupada's letters to his ritvik representatives up until his physical disappearance also do not indicate any change in this ritvik instruction. ("Now you have a very good field. Now organize it and it will be a great credit. No one will disturb you there. Make your own field and continue to become *ritvik* and act on my behalf." July 31, 1977). This July 9, 1977 worldwide order to all GBCs and temple presidents specifically on future initiations in ISKCON is the only one given by Srila Prabhupada. Thus it is rightfully called the final order.)

II. OTHER DIRECT EVIDENCE

A. In the Topanga Canyon guru meeting (December 1980) Tamal Krishna confirmed these misconceptions: "Actually, Prabhupada never appointed any gurus. He didn't appoint eleven gurus. He appointed eleven ritviks. He never appointed them gurus. Myself and the other GBC have done the greatest disservice to this movement the last three years because we interpreted the appointment of ritviks as the appointment of gurus." (ISKCON Journal 1990 page 53). Unfortunately, Tamal Krishna also wrote the minutes of that May 28, 1977 meeting and true to form his imperfect senses, mistakes, illusion, and cheating propensities were unfortunately confirmed.

B. Gauridas Pandit das's personally witnessed Srila Prabhupada explaining his ritvik system for after his physical disappearance (give URL).

C. Yasodanandan's diary mentions a ritvik system.

D. There is also the recently released video taped interview of Srila Puri Maharaj by Siddhanta das, in which Puri recalls a conversation he had with Srila Prabhupada on the post samadhi ritvik system for after Srila Prabhupada's physical disappearance.

E. Prabhupada's letters to his ritvik representatives to continue his mission.

III. PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF JULY 9, 1977 FINAL WORLDWIDE ORDER

A. Definition of diksa does not require physical presence of the diksa-guru

1. Prabhupada's definition of diksa

a. "Diksa actually means initiating the disciple with transcendental knowledge by which all material contamination is destroyed." Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya 4:111 purport)

b. "In other words, the spiritual master awakens the sleeping living entity to his original consciousness so that he can worship Lord Visnu. This is the purpose of diksa, or initiation. Initiation MEANS receiving the pure knowledge of spiritual consciousness." (C.C. Madhya, 9.61, purport)

c. "The spiritual master can be compared to the lower kindling stick, the disciple to the upper kindling stick, and the instruction given by the guru to the third stick placed in between. The transcendental knowledge communicated from guru to disciple is compared to the fire arising from the contact of these, which burns the darkness of ignorance to ashes, bringing great happiness both to guru and disciple." (SB 11.10.12)

2. Jiva Goswami's definition of diksa "Diksa is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions caused by sinful activity. A person expert in the study of the revealed scriptures knows this process as diksa." (Bhakti-sandarbha 283; C.C. Madhya 15:108 purport)

3. Sri Krishna's explanation for approaching a bonafide spiritual master is to acquire transcendental knowledge:

O chastiser of the enemy, the sacrifice performed in knowledge is better than the mere sacrifice of material possessions. After all, O son of Prtha, all sacrifices of work culminate in transcendental knowledge.

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.

Having obtained real knowledge from a self-realized soul, you will never fall again into such illusion, for by this knowledge you will see that all living beings are but part of the Supreme, or, in other words, that they are Mine.

Even if you are considered to be the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge you will be able to cross over the ocean of miseries.

As a blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities.

In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has become accomplished in the practice of devotional service enjoys this knowledge within himself in due course of time.

A faithful man who is dedicated to transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses is eligible to achieve such knowledge, and having achieved it he quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.

(Bhagavad-gita As It Is 4-33-39)

B. Srila Prabhupada's ritvik system was used worldwide for at least 5 years from about 1972 up until his physical disappearance in 1977 without him ever physically seeing many of his disciples which proves that his physical presence is not necessary for him to give diksa to his disciple even after his physical disappearance.

1. "My Dear [Disciple 1], Please accept my blessings. Just now I have received some more requests for giving first initiation... and now I am receiving weekly not less than ten to fifteen such requests from new students. So it is becoming very expensive to send so many sets of beads such a long distance, and it has become a little bothersome for me also, so I think now you may be appointed by me to give first initiations to new disciples by chanting on their beads on my behalf. In America [Disciple 2] is doing that. So now if there are two of you, that will give me great relief. [Disciple 2] will chant on the beads for new devotees in America, Canada, like that; you can chant on the beads for the European continent, new disciples. They shall, of course, still be considered as my disciples, not that they shall become your disciples, but you will be empowered by me to chant their beads and that is the same effect of binding master and disciple as if I were personally chanting."
(Letter, January 4, 1973)

C. Diksa or transcendental knowledge by which all sin is destroyed can be acquired from Srila Prabhupada's books and following his sadhana-bhakti program:

"So utilise whatever time you find to make a thorough study of my books. Then all your questions will be answered."
(Letter to Upendra, 7/1/76)

"If it is possible to go to the temple, then take advantage of the temple. A temple is a place whereby one is given the opportunity to render direct devotional service to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. In conjunction with this you should always read my books daily and all your questions will be answered and you will have a firm basis of Krishna Consciousness. In this way your life will be perfect." (Letter to Hugo Salemon, 22/11/74)

"Every one of you must regularly read our books at least twice, in the morning and evening, and automatically all questions will be answered." (Letter to Randhira, 24/01/70)

"All questions will be clarified if you simply read our books very thoroughly and follow the simple process of devotional service as we have given it to chant regularly and rigidly observe the rules and regulations. This is our principle that the spiritual science becomes revealed to the devotee from within the heart according to the degree of his surrender to Krsna." 70-07-25

"In my books the philosophy of Krsna Consciousness is explained fully so if there is anything you do not understand, then you simply have to read again and again. By reading daily the knowledge will be revealed to you and by this process your spiritual life will develop."
(Letter to Brahmarupa Dasa, 22/11/74)

"There is nothing new to be said. Whatever I had to say, I have already said in my books. Now you must try to understand it and continue with your endeavours. Whether I am present or not does not matter."

(Vrindavan, 17/5/77)

"One should not partially study a book just to pose oneself as a great scholar by being able to refer to scriptures. In our Krishna consciousness movement we have therefore limited our study of Vedic literatures to *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Caitanya-caritamrta*, and *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*. These four works are sufficient for preaching purposes. They are adequate for the understanding of the philosophy and the spreading of missionary activities all over the world. If one studies a particular book, he must do so thoroughly. That is the principle. By thoroughly studying a limited number of books, one can understand the philosophy." (*Sri Caitanya-caritamrta*, Madhya 22.118, Purport)

"Simply read my books and repeat what I have written. Then your preaching will be perfect." (Letter to Ksirodaksayi dated 9-4-75)

"Whatever is to be learned of the teachings of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura can be learned from our books. There is no need whatsoever for any outside instruction." (Letters 73-12-25)

"There is no need by any of my disciples to read any books besides my books--in fact, such reading may be detrimental to their advancement in Krishna Consciousness. All reading of outside books, except in certain authorized cases such as for example to read some philosopher like Plato to make an essay comparing his philosophy with Krishna's philosophy--but otherwise all such outside reading should be stopped immediately. It is simply another botheration. If my students cannot even read my own books thoroughly, why they should read others? I have given you TLC, what need is there to read Caitanya Caritamrta translated by someone else. You are right to stop such reading." (Letter to Sri Govinda, 20 January, 1972)

His (Brahma's) acceptance of the sound was due to his pure vision of the absolute nature of the Lord. And due to his correct vision, he made no distinction between the Lord and the Lord's instruction. There is no difference between the Lord and sound vibration coming from Him, even though He is not personally present. The best way of understanding is to accept such divine instruction, and Brahma, the prime spiritual master of everyone, is the living example of this process of receiving transcendental knowledge. The potency of transcendental sound is never minimized because the vibrator is apparently absent. Therefore Srimad-Bhagavatam or Bhagavad-gita or any revealed scripture in the world is never to be accepted as an ordinary mundane sound without transcendental potency. (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.8 purport)

D. reading his spoken (audio taped) translations and purports is equal to hearing directly:

"Why distinguish between chanting and book distribution? These books I have recorded and chanted, and they are transcribed. It is spoken kirtanas. So book distribution is also chanting. These are not ordinary books. It is recorded chanting. Anyone who reads, he is hearing." (74-10-19)

"That is the difference, hearing from devotees, the sound vibration coming from the realized person. Reading the book is the same thing . . . tattva-darsana--hearing from one who has seen the truth. Reading or hearing from the realized person there is no difference, but hearing the sound vibration from the realized soul is still more effective, better." (Letters 76-04-16)

Paramahansa: My question is, a pure devotee, when he comments on Bhagavad Gita, someone who never sees him physically, but he just comes in contact with the commentary, explanation, is this the same thing?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. You can associate with Krsna by reading Bhagavad-Gita. And these saintly persons, they have given their explanations, comments. So where is the difficulty? (Morning Walk, Paris 11/6/74)

"Here is the remedy for eliminating all inauspicious things within the heart which are considered to be obstacles in the path of self-realization. The remedy is the association of the Bhagavatas. There are two types of Bhagavatas, namely the book Bhagavata and the devotee Bhagavata. Both the Bhagavatas are competent remedies, and both of them or either of them can be good enough to eliminate the obstacles. A devotee Bhagavata is as good as the book Bhagavata because the devotee Bhagavata leads his life in terms of the book Bhagavata and the book Bhagavata is full of information about the Personality of Godhead and His pure devotees, who are also Bhagavatas. Bhagavata book and person are identical." (SB 1.2.18 purport)

"This Srimad-Bhagavatam is the literary incarnation of God, and it is compiled by Srila Vyasadeva, the incarnation of God. It is meant for the ultimate good of all people, and it is all-successful, all-blissful and all-perfect." (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.40)

PURPORT

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu declared that Srimad-Bhagavatam is the spotless sound representation of all Vedic knowledge and history. There are selected histories of great devotees who are in direct contact with the Personality of Godhead. Srimad-Bhagavatam is the literary incarnation of Lord Sri Krsna and is therefore nondifferent from Him. Srimad-Bhagavatam should be worshiped as respectfully as we worship the Lord. Thereby we can derive the ultimate blessings of the Lord through its careful and patient study. As God is all light, all bliss and all perfection, so also is Srimad-Bhagavatam. We can have all the transcendental light of the Supreme Brahman, Sri Krsna, from the recitation of Srimad-Bhagavatam, provided it is received through the medium of the transparent spiritual master. Lord Caitanya's private secretary Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami advised all intending visitors who came to see the Lord at Puri to make a study of the Bhagavatam from the person Bhagavatam Person Bhagavatam is the self-realized bona fide spiritual master, and through him only can one understand the lessons of Bhagavatam in order to receive the desired result. One can derive from the study of the Bhagavatam all benefits that are possible to be derived from the personal presence of the Lord. It carries with it all the transcendental blessings of Lord Sri Krsna that we can expect from His personal contact.

E. Understanding Srila Prabhupada's books (Vedanta-sruti) is more important than having his physical presence:

"I thank you very much and all the devotees for offering me a garland daily as you were doing when I was physically present. If a disciple is constantly engaged in carrying out the instructions of the Spiritual Master he is supposed to be constantly in company with his Spiritual Master. This is called Vaniseva. So there are two kinds of service to the Spiritual Master One is called vaniseva and the other is called vapuseva. Vaniseva means as above mentioned, executing the instructions, and vapuseva means physically or personally rendering service. So in the absence of physical presentation of the Spiritual Master the vaniseva is more important. My Spiritual Master, Sarasvati Gosvami Thakura, may appear to be physically not present, but still because I try to serve His instruction I never feel separated from Him. I expect that all of you should follow these instructions." (70-08-22)

"I understand that you are feeling my absence. Krishna will give you strength. Physical presence is immaterial; presence of the transcendental sound received from the spiritual master should be the guidance of life. That will make our spiritual life successful. If you feel very strongly about my absence you may place my pictures on my sitting places and this will be source of inspiration for you." (Letter to Brahmananda and other students, 19/1/67)

"So although a physical body is not present, the vibration should be accepted as the presence of the Spiritual Master, vibration. What we have heard from the Spiritual Master, that is living."
(General lectures, 69/01/13)

"Such association with Krsna and the Spiritual Master should be association by vibration not physical presence. That is real association."
(Elevation to Krsna Consciousness,(BBT 1973), Page 57)

"If there is no chance to serve the spiritual master directly, a devotee should serve him by remembering his instructions. There is no difference between the spiritual master's instructions and the spiritual master himself. In his absence, therefore, his words of direction should be the pride of the disciple."
(CC Adi 1.35 purport)

"There are two ways of association-by vani and by vapu. Vani means words, and vapu means physical presence. Physical presence is sometimes appreciable and sometimes not, but vani continues to exist eternally. Therefore we must take advantage of the vani, not the physical presence. Bhagavad-gita, for example, is the vani of Lord Krsna. Although Krsna was personally present five thousand years ago and is no longer physically present from the materialistic point of view, Bhagavad-gita continues."
(CC, Antya 5 Conclusion)

"To answer this argument, it is described here that one has to associate with liberated persons not directly, physically, but by understanding, through philosophy and logic, the problems of life."
(SB 3:31:48)

"A spiritual master is the principle, not the body."
(Letter to Malati, 28/5/68)

IV. HISTORICAL BASIS FOR RECEIVING DIKSA FROM A RITVIK REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ACARYA

A. Some Ramanuja sampradaya gurus also use a ritvik system.

B. Due to over one hundred years separation, there was no physical meeting between Narottamadas Thakura and Vishvanath Chakravarty Thakura in our disciplic line.

"Regarding parampara system: there is nothing to wonder for big gaps [...] we find in the Bhagavad-gita that the Gita was taught to the sun-god, some millions of years ago, but Krsna has mentioned only three names in this parampara system - namely, Vivasvan, Manu, and Ikshvaku; and so these gaps do not hamper from understanding the parampara system. We have to pick up the prominent acaryas, and follow from him [...] We have to pick up from the authority of the acarya in whatever sampradaya we belong to." (SP Letter to Dayananda, 12/4/68)

C. First time in known history the complete Vedanta-sruti (Bhagavad-gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Chaitanya Charitamrita, Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu) of an uttama-adhikari in Lord Chaitanya's disciplic succession was tape recorded into English (and translated into other languages), making the knowledge by which all sin is destroyed (diksa) available at anytime anywhere. Thus there is no need for any other translator nor translation of the original sanskrit verses.

D. Invention of the printing press allowed words to be mass duplicated on paper and distributed worldwide for anyone to read (hear) which necessitates a ritvik system for initiations to keep up with demand.

E. Invention of the audio tape recorder allowed the spoken words of the uttama adhikari diksa-guru to be recorded live directly (no misinterpretation) which does not necessitate his physical presence for hearing the Vedanta-sruti from the diksa-guru and thus the transference of transcendental knowledge (diksa).

F. In this most fallen age of Kali-yuga, the uttama adhikari diksa-guru is very rare thus the presence of the above technological inventions makes the ritvik system most practical in a worldwide sankirtan organization, which allows the uttama adhikari diksa-guru's comprehensive instructions (vedanta-sruti) to be uniformly present everywhere in the world, as opposed to the ever changing physically present diksa-guru system.

V. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DIKSA-GURU

"In this verse Srila Rūpa Gosvāmi advises the devotee to be intelligent enough to distinguish between the kanistha-adhikāri, madhyama-adhikāri and uttama-adhikāri. The devotee should also know his own position and should not try to imitate a devotee situated on a higher platform. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thākura has given some practical hints to the effect that an uttama-adhikāri Vaisnava can be recognized by his ability to convert many fallen souls to Vaisnavism. One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of uttama-adhikāre. A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance. Therefore a disciple should be careful to accept an uttama-adhikāri as a spiritual master." (Nectar of Instructions 5 purport)

"When one HAS attained the topmost position of maha-bhagavata, he is to be accepted as a guru and worshipped exactly like Hari, the Personality of Godhead. ONLY such a person is eligible to occupy the post of a guru." (Emph.added) (C.c. Madhya, 24.330, purport)

The guru must be situated on the topmost platform of devotional service. There are three classes of devotees, and the guru must be accepted from the topmost class. The first-class devotee is the spiritual master for all kinds of people. It is said: gurur nṛnām. The word nṛnām means "of all human beings." The guru is not limited to a particular group. (C.C. Madhya 24.330)

VI. PREMONITIONS FOR A RITVIK SYSTEM FOR AS LONG AS ISKCON EXISTS

"Because on the night before he passed away he talked of so many things, but never mentioned an acarya. His idea was acarya was not to be nominated amongst the governing body. He said openly you make a GBC and conduct the mission. So his idea was amongst the members of GBC who would come out successful and self effulgent acarya would be automatically ... and his two associate gentlemen unauthorizedly selected one acarya and later it proved a failure. The result is now everyone is claiming to be acarya even though they may be kanistha adhikari with no ability to preach. In some of the camps the acarya is being changed three times a year. Therefore we may not commit the same mistake in our ISKCON camp." (74-04-28 Letter to Rupanuga)

"I wish that each and every Branch shall keep their independent identity and cooperate keeping the Acarya in the centre. On this principle we can open any number of Branches all over the world. The Ramakrishna mission works on this principle and thus as organization they have done wonderfully." (Letter to: Kirtanananda 67-02-11)

750716pc.sf Conversations

Reporter (2): What will happen to the movement in the United States when you die?

Prabhupada: I will never die.

Prabhupada: I shall live from my books and you will utilize.

April/22/1977 Bombay India

Tamala Krsna: Well, I have studied myself and all of your disciples, and it's clear fact that we are all conditioned souls, so we cannot be guru. Maybe one day it may be possible...

Prabhupada: Hm.

Tamala Krsna: ...but not now.

Prabhupada: Yes. I shall choose some guru. I shall say, "Now you become acarya. You become authorized." I am waiting for that. You become all acarya. I retire completely. **But the training must be complete.**

Tamala Krsna: The process of purification must be there.

Prabhupada: Oh, yes, must be there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu wants that. Amara ajnaya guru hana. "You become guru." (laughs) But be qualified. Little thing, strictly follower...

Tamala Krsna: **Not rubber stamp.**

Prabhupada: Then you'll not be effective. You can cheat, but it will not be effective. Just see our Gaudiya Matha. Everyone wanted to become guru, and a small temple and "guru." What kind of guru? No publication, no preaching, simply bring some foodstuff... My Guru Maharaja used to say, "Joint mess," a place for eating and sleeping. Amar amar ara takana (Bengali): "Joint mess." He said this.

(Note - Did this fact changed in one month?)

VII. THE RESULT OF DISOBEYING THE UTTAMA-ADHIKARI PURE DEVOTEE

The forbidden desire to possess disciples and enjoy being worshiped attracted all of the 11 original ritvik representatives appointed by Srila Prabhupada. Their ambition to imitate the uttama-adhikari caused them to disobey their spiritual masters order to continue the ritvik system henceforward in ISKCON, despite the fact that none of the ritviks were qualified uttama-adhikaris to accept disciples nor were they authorized by their spiritual master/founder-acharya.

77.02 VERY DANGEROUS. Srila Prabhupada: "Our mission is to serve, bhakta vishesha, and live with devotees. NOT THAT YOU TAKE THE PLACE OF GURU. That is all nonsense. Very DANGEROUS, then everything will be SPOILED. As soon as you become ambitious to take the place of guru-gurusu narah matih. That is material disease." (4/21/77)

The direct result of changing the ritvik instructions and replacing the uttama-adhikari diksa-guru with

conditioned neophyte disciples was a severe contamination and corruption of guru authority and leadership in ISKCON. This resulted in a wave of materialistic sahajiyism and deviations which infected the GBC and their appointed diksa-gurus and temple presidents. The entire ISKCON movement lost its original purity and vitality. As the absolute pure authority of guru-tattva got contaminated and corrupt by enjoyers of wealth, adoration and false prestige, the pure transcendental knowledge was gradually replaced by false philosophy and deviation from Srila Prabhupada's teachings. These are as follows:

the "fallen diksa-guru" syndrome (that Prabhupada appointed 11 fallen souls to be diksa-gurus or it is okay for the diksa-guru to be fallen)

reinitiations

the 2/3 voted in or out rubber-stamped (uttama-adhikari) diksa-gurus

definition of diksa as merely a formal ceremony performed by the physically present diksa-guru, not knowledge by which all sin is destroyed

minimizing the words of the pure devotee (vedanta-sruti) as absolutely insufficient for transmitting transcendental knowledge by which all sin is destroyed (diksa) and minimizing the authority of the spiritual master and the Vedas

neglecting the orders of the spiritual master

(Note: These are all gross deviations from Srila Prabhupada's teachings and vaisnava philosophy manufactured by conditioned souls who want to enjoy the title and worship of the diksa-guru which is the cheating propensity. There cannot be the pure manifestation of Srila Prabhupada's mission and his teachings without following his guru-tattva.)

VIII. BENEFITS OF THE RITVIK SYSTEM

The worldwide Hare Krishna movement grows exponentially under the uttama-adhikari spiritual master and founder-acarya (pure via media to the parampara).