

Minutes of GBC Meetings held at New Vrindavan, Sept 16-20, 1985

Present: All ISKCON GBC members except Vasudeva and Bhaktipada

Sept 18th.

1. Resolved: Sulocan is officially excommunicated from membership in ISKCON.

Sept 19th.

1. Resolved: If a Vaisnava is approached for initiation or desires to initiate in connection with opening a new preaching field, or is otherwise inclined to initiate, he must first consult with the local temple authorities if he expects to initiate persons residing within the jurisdiction of that temple. In addition, he must consult with three GBC members, two of whom may be selected by him, the third being the GBC member responsible for the area in which he wishes to initiate. Unless he is disapproved by either the temple authorities or by one of the three GBC members, he may take up the responsibility of initiation. Any disapproval must be based upon the Rules and Guidelines established by the GBC (see resolution #6 in these minutes).

Further, any disapproval must be submitted for confirmation to a five-man committee consisting of the three current GBC officers, the current Chairman of the International Temple Presidents Body, and the current Chairman of the International Body of Sannyasis. On receiving such a petition, that body will carefully deliberate the issue in consultation with all parties.

The above committee will then make a final determination as to whether or not the devotee's request to initiate is disapproved.

It is further understood that all ISKCON gurus may only initiate candidates who have been regularly chanting and following the regulative principles for a minimum of one year.

2. Resolved: The GBC body received the resignation of Bhavananda Goswami. However, the GBC decided not to accept that resignation, but rather accepted the privilege committee's prior recommendation that Bhavananda be placed on indefinite probation. That probation is further defined in this resolution as follows:

- a. Bhavananda shall not initiate during the probation period.
- b. Bhavananda shall have no vote on the GBC body during the probation period.
- c. Bhavananda shall not sit on the vyasasana during the probation period.
- d. Bhavananda shall not act as a GBC zonal manager for a particular temple de facto, if that particular temple does not want him to do so.

3. Resolved: The question as to whether or not Harivilas Prabhu's preaching in France and Vegavan prabhu's preaching in Sweden can be accepted as bona fide ISKCON projects that can function in cooperation with the local GBC representatives for those countries (namely Srila Bhagavan and Srila Harikesa, respectively), shall be submitted to arbitration. The system for arbitration will be that in both cases each side will choose a mediator, and that these two mediators will select a third mediator. Next the mediators, in consultation with the disputant parties, shall attempt to resolve the conflict. Only if the mediators cannot resolve the problem in this way, shall either of these cases be submitted to the privilege committee.

4. Resolved: Any ISKCON guru may sit on any ISKCON vyasasana (except of course Srila Prabhupada's) anywhere in the world.

5. Resolved: Photographs of any of Srila Prabhupada's disciples who are initiating gurus, when placed on the altar of any ISKCON temple, shall be placed on a level lower than that of the pictures of members of our disciplic succession (consisting of Srila Prabhupada, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, etc.).

6. Resolved: The following Rules and Guidelines are established for giving approval for an ISKCON Vaisnava to begin initiating disciples..

#### RULES

- a. Must be strictly following the four regulative principles and chanting 16 rounds daily.
- b. Must have been an initiated disciple for at least 10 years.
- c. Must not have had a falldown within five years.
- d. Must have no present record of moral turpitude.
- e. Must not have allegiance to a spiritual authority outside of ISKCON unless approved by the GBC.
- f. Must not be lacking in understanding and knowledge of the sastra.
- g. Must support the GBC.

#### GUIDELINES

- a. Should have a Bhaktivedanta or Bhakti-vaibhava degree in philosophy.
- b. Should not cause doubt about his ability to follow the code of conduct.
- c. Should not be involved in "abnormal situations." An example of this is cited as a disrupted or abnormal family life which could distract a guru from his guru duties or otherwise prove a disruption for him.
- d. Must always be conscientious about presenting proper philosophy.
- e. Must always behave responsibly.

Sept. 20.

1. Resolved: As was decided at the 1985 Mayapur Festival, the GBC body re-affirms its resolve that the Festival Committee for Lord Caitanya's 500th Anniversary Festival at Mayapur is authorized to collect anywhere in the world (including Bombay and Delhi) for the festival.

2. Resolved: The GBC meetings at Mayapur this year will be held before the festival.

3. A committee consisting of Hrdayananda Goswami, Mukunda Goswami, Tripurari Swami, and Rabindraswarupa prabhu will conduct research to establish ISKCON's official position on Sridhar Maharaja's teachings, his movement, and their relationship to Srila Prabhupada, ISKCON, etc. Out of this research will come -- by the 1986 Annual GBC meeting in Mayapur -- a definitive, concise, fact-oriented report that will serve as ISKCON's official position paper.

4. Resolved: Srila Harikesa will draft a blueprint for Varnasrama as Srila Prabhupada indicated varnasrama should be implemented in and by ISKCON. This paper will be presented at the annual GBC meeting in Mayapur, 1986.

5. Resolved: Between now and the 1986 Mayapur Annual GBC meeting, all GBC members will think about, discuss and prepare themselves to discuss and/or present proposals regarding structuring the GBC and ISKCON such that it includes proper legislative, executive, judicial, and ministerial systems as well as other mechanisms that shall provide for an appropriate management structure for the society.

6. Resolved: A top priority for the 1986 Annual GBC meeting in Mayapur shall be discussion on the proposal to change most or all GBC voting requirements from a 2/3 majority to a simple majority.

7. Resolved: The temple presidents and regional secretaries in each zone can take a vote of confidence/no-confidence for their local GBC member when they feel the situation is severe enough to warrant intervention by the GBC body. If the vote is one of no-confidence, the GBC body will review the position of the GBC member in question, in consultation with the appropriate president and regional secretary, with the aim of rectifying the problem. If the GBC body and local leaders are not able to reach an accord, the GBC body, in consultation with the appropriate local leaders, can appoint a new GBC member for that particular temple. They should also consider the suitability of that GBC member to remain on the GBC body. If 75% of the International Temple Presidents Body gives a vote of no-confidence for a GBC member, then the same procedure will apply.

Further, to insure the compatibility of all leaders in the society, especially during the times of breakdown of love and trust, there should also be a vote of confidence/no-confidence

for the regional secretary by the presidents in his area, and a similar vote for the president by the initiated devotees in his temple.

However, if there is a situation wherein a devotee is found to be instigating a situation with an aim to seriously disrupt the peaceful functioning of ISKCON's mission, the GBC body, after investigation, may remove that person from his position.

8. Resolved: The following general guidelines should be adopted by all ISKCON temples, although it is understood that in certain preaching areas of the world, circumstances may have to be adjusted.

- a. No nameplates or engravings of the names of any ISKCON gurus other than Srila Prabhupada's shall appear on any ISKCON vyasasana.
- b. There shall be only one vyasasana other than Srila Prabhupada's in each temple and there shall be no "guest vyasasana."
- c. The non-Prabhupada vyasasana shall be of such a height that when any ISKCON guru sits on it, his head shall not be higher than Srila Prabhupada's chest (Srila Prabhupada here refers to the Deity of Srila Prabhupada on His vyasasana).
- d. Any pictures of ISKCON gurus placed on the non-Prabhupada vyasasana shall all be of the same size.

9. Resolved: Each of the four defendants in the Robin George vs. ISKCON case shall pay US\$5,000 per month beginning immediately. The defendants are ISKCON of California, ISKCON of Canada, ISKCON of New Orleans, and ISKCON of New York. Owing to the extreme danger, seriousness and gravity of the situation, the GBC members, regional secretaries, and temple presidents involved shall be subject to removal from their positions if they do not comply with this resolution. Canada shall be given until Sept. 30th, 1985 to make an alternative proposal to the GBC officers.

10. Resolved: In response to a suggestion from the body of temple presidents, sannyasis, regional secretaries and other non-GBC members present at the New Vrindavana meetings Sept 16-20, 1985, the GBC body of ISKCON has agreed to issue the following statement to all ISKCON members:

The Governing Body of ISKCON recognizes and regrets that many faithful ISKCON devotees have left the service of ISKCON because of difficulties in fashioning appropriate disciple and guru-godbrother relationships after Srila Prabhupada's departure. However the GBC feels that the spirit of the current resolutions made in New Vrindavan on 16-20 Sept, 1985, clearly indicate that appropriate actions are underway to correct the situation. The GBC, therefore, invites all such devotees to return to their service to help us in our determination to strengthen and purify this great movement.

# GBC PETITION

We, the members of ISKCON consider the following resolutions passed by the GBC at the New Vrndavan meetings of Sept. 16-20 to be a positive step forward to resolving the current problems of the society. There is a great urgency to revive the standards of purity and integrity established by Srila Prabhupada. While these resolutions are not the last word in dealing with these complex issues, we feel that they should be ratified and made the basis for further reform, seeing as there seems to be an effort on the part of certain GBC members to have these resolutions rescinded. The resolutions regarding Bhavananda are dealt with in a separate petition.

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THE FOLLOWING ARE EXERPTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE GBC MEETINGS  
HELD IN NEW VRNDAVAN SEPTEMBER 19TH & 20TH, 1985

September 19, 1985

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