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Bovan Case

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Krishnas File Suit To Erase 'Link'

By MICHAEL PASKEVICH
Of the Daily Pilot Staff

In an attempt to erase alleged links between the Hare Krishna movement and murder suspects in execution-style death of Stephen John Bovan, the religious group has filed federal trademark suits against two Orange Coast businesses.

The suits against Prasadam Distributing, Inc. of Newport Beach and Govinda's restaurant in Laguna Beach were announced Tuesday in Los Angeles by Robert Grant, Western U.S. representative of the Hare Krishnas.

Grant said the "splinter group" which police allege is involved in international drug smuggling, misrepresented itself as part of the Hare Krishna movement after the members had been ousted from the Laguna Beach Krishna temple in 1976.

The suit seeks an injunction, but no monetary damages against PDI, whose principals allegedly used the trademarked words "Hare Krishna Movement" in their business dealings.

In addition, the suit seeks to prevent PDI members from using the name "Govinda's" for the Laguna restaurant at 1750 South Coast Highway. The suit claims the restaurant name is a registered "service mark" of the religious group.

The restaurant is now closed for repairs.

Grant said the splinter group formed in spring 1975 after Roy Christopher Richard was removed as president of the Laguna temple.



Daily Pilot Staff Photo

ANNOUNCES LAWSUITS Krishna Spokesman Grant

The suits call Richard a "self-styled guru who claimed the authority to give new interpretations to the basic principals of the Hare Krishna religion; that you could do anything in the name of God."

Although Krishna officials initially gave their consent to the use of the name Govinda's for the splinter group's vegetarian restaurant, Grant said the formation of PDI marked the beginning of "a systematic effort to deceive the public."

Grant said PDI officials misrepresented themselves as sanc-

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tioned, members of the Hare Krishnas in order to secure customers, loans and "better their position and their business ventures."

PDI officials include four of eight defendants in the Oct. 22 murder of Bovan in front of the El Ranchito restaurant — Alexander Kulik, Joseph Davis, Joseph Fedorowski and Roy Richard. Davis took out the business license for Govinda's last year.

Of the five, only Kulik and Davis have been apprehended. Davis is currently being held in Jakarta, Indonesia. He was arrested by authorities on Bali on Thanksgiving. Kulik is free on bail.

Also in custody are Anthony Marone Jr., Raymond Resco and Jerry Peter Fiori, the alleged triggerman in Bovan's death.

Krishna officials said they only recently learned of "the extent of illegal activity" engaged in by PDI members.

After their ouster, PDI officials made trips to India to visit Krishna founder Swami Prabhupada, who recently died at the age of 82.

Grant said these visits (and correspondence) were an attempt by PDI people "to go over my head and get the Swami's authorization so they could go on with their business."