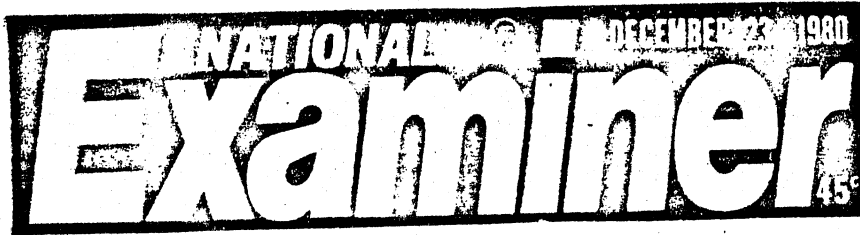


NOTE: We have yet to respond to this article. If in addition to threatening to sue the editor and publisher ^{our lawyers} we threaten to sue Herb Tucker, he could be dissuaded from his campaign against the movement. Md



'It's great to be free again,' says rescued Krishna cultist

A FORMER MEMBER of the Hare Krishna says he felt "like the walking dead" during his five months in the bizarre cult.

The ordeal of Herb Tucker, 22, recently ended when he was kidnaped by a cult deprogrammer as he stood talking to his parents at the Kansas State Fair. His distraught parents had arranged the kidnaping.

"All of a sudden I turned around and here was this guy who looked like a linebacker with the L.A. Rams," Tucker recalled. "He gave me a bear hug and the van door popped open."

Tucker's first thought was that he had been seized by toughs intent on beating up a Krishna.

But his kidnapers immediately tried to calm him,

calling him by name and saying they wouldn't hurt him. They told him they were taking him to be deprogrammed.

Tucker was locked in a room with a guard at the door. Inside, a deprogrammer tried to talk to him about the Krishnas.

The cult orders its members to chant in such situations, so this is what Tucker did for the first hour. Within

three hours, however, doubts began to creep into his brainwashed mind.

The power of the cult which had held him for so long was beginning to ebb.

"Being a Krishna was like seeing the world through a 6-foot straw," he admitted. "You saw only those things the leaders wanted you to see and believe."

For the next few weeks, Tucker's deprogramming went on at secret sites in the Midwest and California, while cult members trailed his parents, hoping to be led to Tucker.

Battle

"They've made inquiries of all our neighbors, at school, and everywhere as to Herb's whereabouts," said the senior Tucker. "I've seen them watching me from parked cars."

Thanks to the determined efforts of Herb's family and the deprogrammer, the Krishnas lost the battle for Tucker's soul.

The thousands of dollars the Tuckers invested in the deprogramming finally paid off when they got a happy phone call from their son, saying he was ready to come home.



● Deprograming stops Krishna cult members cold

Oct 13, 1980

(18?)

'Eat, sleep, drink Krishna'

By Roger Verdon
Staff writer

Herb Tucker could see no escape. He was in well over his head, right up to the prayer beads around his neck.

Later, when it was all over and he was out, he figured he had chanted 27,000 names on his prayer beads each morning before his eyes were in focus and before he took his first cold shower of the morning to reduce his sex drive.

But that was part of the program. Chanting, listening to tapes and speakers praising Krishna, loving Krishna, everything, mind, body and soul, went to Krishna.

"You want to eat, sleep, and drink Krishna," he said, after he was out.

But last April he wasn't out. He was new, fresh from attaining a military discharge from the Air Force based on the new religion he had just embraced. He had just joined the International Society for Krishna Consciousness temple in Denver and a whole process was beginning to work on him.

Now he calls it brainwashing. But in April it seemed much less sinister.

Six years before, Herb, along with his parents Bob and Jan Tucker, and Brian, his younger brother by two years, had answered an advertisement in a West Coast newspaper placed there by the Lyons Chamber of Commerce. The Tuckers figured it was time for a change, and, as luck would have it, there was a need in Lyons for a television shop after the owner had just died. It was right down the Tuckers' alley. They moved to Lyons from California.

Brian, the youngest, did well. Just entering high school, he became engaged in local activities and was assimilated into the life-style of Lyons, a peaceful community of less than 4,500.

For 16-year-old Herb, Lyons didn't compare to the West Coast. Anyway, he was more introverted than his younger brother, and was a searcher who read philosophers.

He dabbled in Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, read Aldous Huxley, and became interested in Oriental philosophies. When he heard about books he felt might contain some piece of the whole puzzle for which he was seeking answers, he would read them as well. He looked for a book entitled "Bhagavad-gita" but couldn't find it in nearby libraries. He went on to other reading and

kept the book title in the back of his mind.

Later, after he graduated from high school, and attended a technical school for three semesters, he decided to join the Air Force. It was an opportunity that he felt would provide him cash, travel and experience. And now into his 20s, he was still searching for something.

He went to Lackland AFB in Texas and began his basic training. At the same time, he finally came across the "Bhagavad-gita." He discovered it on his training officer's bookshelf.

Tucker went on with his training and began delving into the book in earnest.

He was transferred to Illinois where he graduated with honors from jet engine mechanics school, and was stationed for a time in Okinawa. After injuring his hand he was returned to the U.S. and spent November and December of 1979 recuperating at Fitzsimmons Hospital. The hospital was based in Denver. So was a chapter of the Krishna group.

Tucker had heard about the Krishnas and knew their philosophy from reading the "Bhagavad-gita." Something about their austere life-style, their lack of material possessions, appealed to him.

Now stationed at Lowery AFB, he decided to attend a Sunday feast at the Denver temple.

There was something about the mood of the place, the intentions, expressed by group members, that they could change the world and make it a better place.

"The philosophy sounded good," Tucker said, "and I wasn't committed to anything." He started to feel as if the search, the thing he was looking for, was finally upon him. He attended more meetings.

Finally, he attended a two-hour class held by the group's spiritual leader. "I called my commanding officer the next day and asked for a week's leave and then I moved into the temple."

He also began earnestly pushing for a discharge based on religious conscience. Within the month he was out of the military and into the Krishnas.

Everything, his guitar, his many record albums, his books, his clothes, a calculator, was given over to the group. In return he was given a complete wardrobe of two saffron sheets each measuring 3 x 9 feet, and a tightly-worn sarong-type affair for underwear.

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Tucker asked if it would be possible to visit his home and was told the group had to get to The Fair and begin working the crowd.

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Tucker put his disappointment out of his mind as the vans headed for Hutchinson. But he didn't know then that in driving south he was also driving to freedom.

(See Deptongramming, page 9)

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The message was simple: Herb said he had left the military to join the Krishnas. He was happy. He had found something to believe in.

Bob Tucker's reaction was immediate. "I couldn't believe it. I disowned him. I screamed at him. I told him never to call."

Herb's mother said, "I cried for like a month."

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But in time their feelings cooled, the paternal-maternal instincts returned. Their son Herb called again, and his parents accepted the calls.

Bob and Jan Tucker knew nothing about the Krishnas, or eastern philosophy, or the cult movement in the U.S. They knew as much as their neighbors, which was little.

Then, like their son, they came across a book, and they read it, absorbed it, and they became less passive about their son's frivolous adventure. The book, "Snapping," by Flo Conway and Jim Seigleman, described cult activity in the U.S. and how it was related to thought control.

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And like their son, something inside of them "snapped." They grew both fearful and angry and began groping around for answers. They also decided they were going to rescue their son from whatever it was that was holding him.

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Through the CFF group, the Tuckers learned a great deal about rescues and deprogramming. But they called no one. They got no names, no addresses. They were told someone would contact them. A message had been transmitted through an underground nationwide network that has arisen as a result of so-called cult activities.

The network is broadbased and crosses all religious denominations. It includes parents of deprogrammed children, volunteers concerned about the growing danger of thought control, ex-cult members, deprogrammers and others.

The reasons behind the cautiousness of those the Tuckers came to know was two-fold: Abducting a son or daughter was a rescue in one sense and a kidnapping in another. Failed rescue attempts have wound up in court with all participants charged with a felony, as in the recent conviction of nationally-known anti-cult activist Ted Patrick. (At one point Tucker called Patrick to hire him as his son's deprogrammer, but because of his court difficulties, Patrick declined the job.)

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KANSAS
Hutchinson News

DEC. -6.1980

Former Krishna warns

By Roger Verdon
Staff writer

Former Hare Krishna Herb Tucker of Lyons called upon local ministers Thursday to inform their congregations about the dangers of becoming involved in "cults."

Tucker, a member of the Hare Krishna group for about six months before undergoing deprogramming, spoke to about 30 ministers gathered at the Forest Park Presbyterian Church, 700 East 25th.

"We should all become involved,"

Tucker said, and advised the ministers that "just giving one sermon in your church on cults" would benefit members.

Using his own experience as an example, he said he had joined the group as part of a self-searching "intellectual quest" which he admitted was a mistake.

✓ He said his involvement reduced his probing spirit and he turned robot-like, and "was never able to step back and view things objectively. I was encouraged never to think, never to question — 'to doubt is evil.'"

"Before we have freedom of anything, an individual must have freedom of choice. Before we have religious freedoms we must have freedom of the individual," Tucker said.

Tucker, who is now working in his family's electronics store in Lyons, briefly summarized his short-lived time in the Krishna temple in Denver before he was taken from the State Fairgrounds this summer and deprogrammed. He now spends much of his time speaking about the cult controversy.

local ministers of cults

His father, Robert Tucker, born into the Jewish faith, told the ministers that the people who aided his family during his son's rescue and rehabilitation spanned all religious denominations. "They never asked what religion we were. This is what Christianity is all about."

Tucker also cautioned ministers against other religious organizations, naming the Church of Scientology, TM, Divine Light Mission, and The Way, which he termed "the most insidious of all of them (cults)." He said The Way, which operates a college in

Emporia, is more subtle in its practices and lifestyle than such groups as the Krishnas, whose members can be identified by their robes and shaved heads.

Herb Tucker added that members of The Way "are the most difficult to deprogram."

The Tuckers and others at the meeting also criticized the media for what was viewed as a lack of, or biased coverage of, so-called "cult" groups. The News was specifically criticized for its coverage of a recent Way convention in Wichita, a subject

which sparked the most questions from the ministers.

Both the Hare Krishna group and Way members have separately denied in the past that their members are brainwashed, and oppose the use of the word "cult" in describing either organization.

Herb Tucker recently returned from New York where he was a guest on the "To Tell the Truth" television program as a former Krishna member. He said he stumped two of the four panelists. The show is not expected to be aired in Kansas.

Student describes life in Hare Krishna

By LAURI DIEHL
Collegian Reporter

Herb Tucker was a member of the Hare Krishna for six months.

Tucker, freshman in physics, spoke Thursday night to a group of about 30 people in Union 213. The speech was sponsored by Students for Free Minds, an organization designed to promote cult awareness and serve as a support group for ex-cult members and relatives of cult members.

Tucker said he became interested in Hare Krishna in 1979 while in the Air Force. He was injured and in an army hospital in Denver.

"It was a classic case of how someone becomes involved in a cult," he said. "I did not have any friends in Denver. I had read some Hare Krishna literature and it had a list of temples, houses and farms. There was one listed for Denver, so I gave them a call."

Tucker said he was not interested in joining the cult after his first contact with the Hare Krishna organization.

"They started calling me," he said. "One day they called and said the Spiritual Master was in town. I

thought, 'what do I have to lose? They cannot control me.'

"I cannot remember much of the first meeting," he said. "It is like after having too much to drink — really vague memories."

Tucker stayed the first night in the temple and didn't leave for six months.

"The whole time I was being indoctrinated, I was never told to do anything," Tucker said. "They only suggested I do things, so it was easy to suspend judgment."

Tucker said he had always believed his mind was inviolate. Later he discovered anyone can be brainwashed under certain conditions.

"In Hare Krishna we had free will but no choice," he said. "They can control all your perceptions, so you can make no other choice."

When he became worried over some aspects of Hare Krishna life, Tucker said, he did not know what was wrong.

"The alarm bells were going off," he said. "But I had no experience to help me deal with it. I just attributed it to my impure nature. After about two weeks the doubts stopped."

Tucker said his fund-raising activities for the group were not

always legal.

"One thing we did was called a change-up," he said. "I would zero in on a guy and before he could react I had a flower on him. Then I told him everyone else had been giving a dollar. I would open the side of my bag and there were a bunch of bills. We started out the day with \$20, so we could give that line to the first person we met."

Tucker said nine of 10 people would give a dollar.

"But that was not enough. Then I would offer to make change for a bigger bill in their wallet," he said.

"All the time I would keep up a line of talk and out of a \$20 bill, I might give them 10 ones."

Taking money was justified by saying it helped the person serve God, Tucker said.

"The Hare Krishnas said people should be made to serve God by any means possible," he said. "If even one penny of their money went to our organization, they would be saved from hell for many lifetimes."

Tucker's parents "kidnapped" him from the Kansas State Fairgrounds six months after he joined the Hare Krishna.

Oct 13(1980), 1980

'Eat, sleep, drink Krishna'

By Roger Verdon
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POST
DENVER, COLO.
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OCT-12-80

Former Krishna Member 'Back Among the Living'

LYONS, Kan. (AP) — Four weeks after he was abducted from the Kansas State Fair by a deprogrammer, former Hare Krishna member Herb Tucker says, "It's great to be back among the living."

Tucker, in a telephone interview last week from the central Kansas home of his parents, said he was "kind of like the walking dead" in the five months he was a member of the cult.

The reformation of the 22-year-old Air Force veteran is the latest development in the war of nerves between the Hare Krishnas and Jan and Bob Tucker.

THEY HAD their son "kidnapped" Sept. 7 as he talked with his parents while on a tour of duty at the State Fair in Hutchinson.

"I was talking with my parents, and all of a sudden, I turned around and here was this guy that looked like a linebacker with the L.A. Rams," Tucker said. "He gave me a bear hug, and the van door popped open."

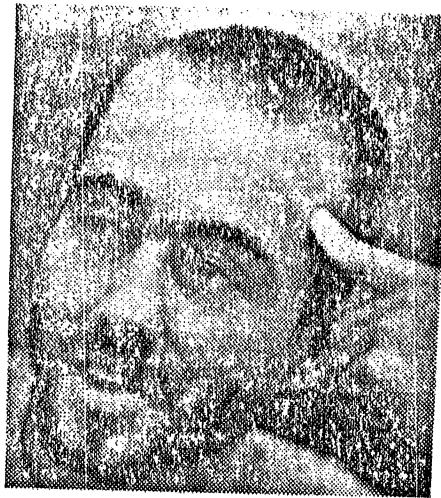
Tucker said his first thoughts were that he had been seized by hoodlums intent on beating up a Krishna. He recalled his abductors immediately began calling him by name, telling him to calm down, saying they wouldn't hurt him, that he was headed for deprogramming.

He said in such situations, the Krishnas have instructed captives to chant, and that is what he did for about the first hour.

He said he was locked in a room with a guard at the door, and a deprogrammer who wanted to talk about the Krishnas.

WITHIN THREE HOURS, doubts began to creep in about his move five months earlier, when he joined the Krishna temple in Denver.

"Being a Krishna was like seeing the world through a 6-foot straw," he said. "You were seeing only those things the



UPI Telephoto

HERB TUCKER

Got advice from Ted Patrick.

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In the weeks that followed, Tucker was deprogrammed at secret sites in the Midwest and California while members of the sect trailed his parents in the tiny Rice County town of 4,400.

"They've made inquiries of all of our neighbors, at school, and everywhere as to Herb's whereabouts," said the senior Tucker. "I've seen them parked on the square watching me."

The Tuckers believe the Krishnas will make some attempt to see their son again, but they don't seem worried.

"I COULD GET a restraining order," Tucker said, "but I'm confident he's strong enough to resist any temptation to go back in there."

The Tuckers say the thousands of dollars they spent to send their son through the underground deprogramming pipeline was made all worthwhile when they received a phone call from California last Friday saying he was ready to come home.