

IRG's response to Vidvan Gauranga

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This is in response to Vidvan Gauranga prabhu's article, which appeared on CHAKRA recently. We shall quote Vidvan's main points only. Our comments are following.

"Just like I have"

1969 letter from Prabhupada
from Vidvan Gauranga Dasa

Dear devotees,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and the disciplic succession stemming from him! All glories to his (Prabhupada's; not Krishna Kant Desai's) followers! The following quote establishes that Prabhupada wanted his disciples to have *diksha*-disciples, because he uses the expressions "as I have" and "so you have." Prabhupada had *diksha*-disciples and so it is clear from this quote that Prabhupada wanted his disciples to have the same kind of disciples and follow the same system of disciplic succession (not create a disciplic cessation).

ISKCON Bangalore - IRG has never suggested that Srila Prabhupada wanted a 'disciplic cessation'. This is Vidvan Gauranga prabhu's own concoction. **According to Srila Prabhupada's final order he should remain the current initiating acarya for all ISKCON members for as long as the society exists, which is a finite time period.** Thus in what sense is the disciplic succession ended?

"You each be guru," he said. "As I have five thousand disciples or ten thousand, so you have ten thousand each. In this way, create branches and branches of the Caitanya tree."

(Mayapur GBC meetings 1976)

But Krishna Kant Desai and his followers (especially those who happen to be in South India) don't like the above quote from Prabhupada and try to discredit its validity on the feeble plea "it is not available on the Folio."

This is not a 'feeble plea' - it is a fact. The above statement is not on folio. Why can the author not produce direct statements from Srila Prabhupada supporting his thesis? Vidvan Gauranga quotes as if it were taken from some official GBC resolution, and yet it is merely an extract from [Hari Sauri](#) prabhu's diary! Why does he have to rely on hearsay evidence from an author who was an avid supporter of the zonal *acarya* system, the current MASS, and no doubt any future concoction?

Surely if Srila Prabhupada directly ordered the GBC to all initiate their own disciples, and thus create their own Matha's or branches, he would have made it an official GBC resolution, or sent it out as a signed policy directive to all his leaders. Where is the resolution approved by Srila Prabhupada which states the above? Where is the signed statement of policy? Why is it the GBC themselves have never used this alleged order as justification for terminating the *ritvik* system, but rather until now have relied solely on the [May 28th](#) conversation which only supports *ritvik* after departure?

Vidvan Gauranga then quotes a personal letter to Kirtanananda:

'Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I have got my disciples, so in the future these many disciples may have many branches of disciplic succession.'
(Letter to Kirtanananda: 69-01-25)

The above is obviously just an analogy to illustrate a point. Srila Prabhupada is merely giving an example to clear up a philosophical question raised by one of his disciples, (one whom he later appoints to act as a *ritvik* only, not a *diksa* guru). He is not saying that this will happen or should happen. **In fact he uses the word 'may'. Nowhere does the quote mention the *ritvik* system, or how and when it should be terminated;** thus on it's own it cannot clear up the central controversy regarding [modifications](#) A & B. Furthermore:

1. **The GBC have never suggested ISKCON gurus should all represent their own 'branch' of the disciplic succession. Rather they are all meant to represent just one branch, ISKCON. Thus even the GBC would never in their right mind advocate this quote as an institutional blueprint for the future of initiation.**
2. **The quote is taken from a personal letter, which was not published, until 1986, and only then because someone in the BBT was bribed into releasing such material. Thus Vidvan Gauranga is asking us to believe that Srila Prabhupada expected every Temple President in ISKCON to:**
 - a. **Know in detail the contents of all his private correspondence, even though it had never been published.**
 - b. **Know which specific letter was meant to be used to justify the termination of the *ritvik* system, even though they had no access to it, nor did the letter even remotely allude to the *ritvik* system or the conditions under which it should be terminated.**
3. **Even the GBC themselves have never said that they stopped the *ritvik* system because of this private letter to Kirtanananda, which nobody saw till years after the *ritvik* system was stopped. Thus we are still left with the question 'why was the *ritvik* system stopped?'**
4. **There were other occasions where Srila Prabhupada was directly asked about who would succeed him and he gave a completely different impression. Why has Vidvan Gauranga ignored such quotes as the following?**

Reporter: Who will succeed you when you die?

Srila Prabhupada: I will never die!

Devotees: Jaya! Haribol!

**Srila Prabhupada: I will live forever from my books and you will utilise.
(Interview, Berkley, 17/7/75)**

Without considering any of the above Vidvan Gauranga tries to build his whole case on this piece of irrelevant and inadmissible evidence. He then states:

Prabhupada also uses the term "these many" here. It is greatly significant. It means that he wants each and every disciple of his to become gurus in the future and have the SAME KIND of disciples as he (Prabhupada) has.

But at this very moment the GBC are urgently discussing how to downgrade the role of the current ISKCON gurus yet further. **Here Vidvan Gauranga is advising the exact opposite, that ISKCON gurus should have the 'SAME' status to Srila Prabhupada.** This would mean they could all write their own commentaries, be worshipped in the temple, have big plaster moldings made of themselves for all their murtis which will fill all the temple rooms of the world. How absurd that Vidvan Gauranga should be proposing the very opposite of what the GBC are currently trying to do, in the name of defending them. He ends by mentioning another quote, which has already been addressed by the IRG.

...he later also expressed in 1975 in a public lecture in Mayapur. Prabhupada says there that this movement is there to "prepare *acaryas*". (This has been very nicely analyzed by Drutakarma Prabhu in one of his articles.) Thus we learn that Prabhupada has in his transcendental mind the program to have all of his disciples become qualified and be gurus.

Prabhupada-Guru-Vaishnava-dasanudas,

With regards the above mentioned lecture:

1. **In issuing his final directive on initiations on July 9th 1977 Srila Prabhupada never mentioned that in order to understand it the GBC would need to rummage through the tape archives and find this particular lecture (or any other for that matter).**
2. **Nor did he say that once found the lecture should be used to validate the termination of the *ritvik* system, and the transformation of the *ritviks* into initiating *diksa* gurus.**
3. **The lecture itself does not refer to the *ritvik* system at all, what to speak of define when it should be stopped.**
4. **At best then this type of evidence can only indirectly imply that the system was meant to stop on departure through some perceived inference that all of Srila Prabhupada's disciples were meant to become initiating *diksa* gurus at that point. But even in this the evidence fails, as the IRG has pointed out previously :**

In the lecture, when Srila Prabhupada actually directly speaks of how his disciples should act in the **FUTURE**, which is the conclusion to the passage, (not how they should act in Srila Prabhupada's presence) Srila Prabhupada states the following:

**"Then, in future... Suppose you have got now ten thousand. We shall expand to hundred thousand. That is required. Then hundred thousand to million, and million to ten million.
*"**

Here Srila Prabhupada states two things that prove that the context **CANNOT be *diksa***:

- a. **He says: 'Then, in FUTURE suppose YOU have got NOW ten thousand'. Srila Prabhupada opened the whole lecture by stating that his disciples cannot have their own disciples in his presence. Thus Srila Prabhupada cannot be talking about his disciples possessing their own disciples, for the context is how they are acting in Srila Prabhupada's PRESENCE - 'YOU have got NOW'.**
- b. **The rest of the statement confirms this:**

"Then, in future ... Suppose you have got now ten thousand. We shall expand to hundred thousand. That is required. Then hundred thousand to million, and million to ten million."

As [Drutakarma prabhu](#) (who has written on behalf of the entire GBC) has admitted, the ten thousand here **refers to SRILA PRABHUPADA'S INITIATED DISCIPLES ONLY**. Thus the expansion suggested is **in the number of SRILA PRABHUPADA'S INITIATED DISCIPLES**. Srila Prabhupada here clearly states that the context of the expansion is the 'ten thousand' that his disciples **have 'got' at that time**. Of course they have not 'got' them as disciples, but only as other members of the Krsna Consciousness movement.

The GBC approved writer Drutakarma spends a large chunk of one of his articles **proving that the 'ten thousand' refers specifically only to SRILA PRABHUPADA'S INITIATED DISCIPLES, and that THIS is what the expansion is required for:**

"So it is abundantly clear that Prabhupada is speaking throughout the April 6, 1975 lecture of *acaryas* who will initiate disciples and increase the current number from ten thousand to tens of millions." (*Drutakarma prabhu, 'The Phantom Order'*)

Above Drutakarma admits that Srila Prabhupada **only wants disciples who will increase the number of SRILA PRABHUPADA'S initiated disciples, for the 'current number ten thousand' refers only to this.** These are the *acaryas* Srila Prabhupada wants, instructing and officiating *acaryas (ritviks)* only. Since Drutakarma's interpretation has been approved by the GBC, and since this is the very same body Vidvan Gauranga das is seeking to defend, then he must also accept this understanding.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada.