

Response to the 'Point For Point Rebuttal' of the 'Final Order'



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“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*”- representatives of the *acarya*, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation...”

(July 9th 1977)



by Krishnakant

Response to the 'Point For Point Rebuttal' of the 'Final Order'

In its present form the 'Rebuttal', paper makes a total of 344 points. Some 40% of these points either directly or indirectly rely on appeals to the May 28th tape as irrefutable evidence overriding our modifications A & B from 'The Final Order'. The justification for this heavy reliance on the tape as principal evidence is said to have been proven in the paper 'Disciple of My Disciple' (DOMD). However, this paper was itself comprehensively refuted in our counter response- 'The Final Order Still Stands'- which was itself a post-script at the back of 'The Final Order'. Throughout the GBC's 'Rebuttal' paper it is asserted that the ending of the *ritvik* system and the ordering of *diksa* gurus is proven on the conversation segment from the famous May 28th tape, and yet this very assertion is demonstrated as false in 'The Final Order Still Stands'. Not once does the 'Rebuttal' paper actually rebut any of the points made in our response to DOMD. Thus, at least 40% of the 'Rebuttal' paper is based on a paper which has itself been refuted for over a year.

20% of the 'Rebuttal' paper is spent denouncing some of the 40 objections answered within F.O. (pages 6-20 and 27-50) as being '*straw man*' arguments, since it is claimed the GBC have never collectively raised them as objections to the re-implementation of the final July 9th order. Two points are to be made here:

- a) We never said that these 40 objections **WERE** ever raised by the GBC body, and thus we cannot be accurately accused of using '*straw man*' arguments. These are simply objections we had heard raised in our discussions with senior ISKCON devotees such as Temple Presidents and *Sannyasis*.
- b) If the GBC do not accept that they are valid objections then that's fine with us. It will save a great deal of time in re-implementing the *ritvik* system if we only have to deal with objections arising from the May 28th tape. Indeed such objections have already been comprehensively addressed in F.O. and 'The Final Order Still Stands'.

A further 20% of the 'Rebuttal' paper comprises of points that ignore the substance of what we say in F.O. The author will argue that we are using '*half-truths*' and '*red herrings*', or he attacks what he perceives as '*implied*' or '*suggested*' by our statements. We shall demonstrate that the actual validity of our points in such cases remains nevertheless intact. Thus before we even commence our analysis we can see that at least 80% of the paper is completely irrelevant.

The remainder of the paper comprises of the author himself using '*straw man*' arguments or making claims which are either demonstrably false or are contradicted by other GBC papers (3 of which he refers to in this very 'Rebuttal').

We have not felt it necessary therefore to answer *all* 344 points raised in the 'Rebuttal' paper, (no doubt a relief to the reader), since by establishing - from a reasonably sized sample - that all the points in the paper fall into one or other of the above percentage groups, we will have effectively destroyed its credibility.

The central issue in 'FO' was the need to be given evidence for **Modifications A & B**. In the GBC's '*point for point*' reply to the FO the author has attempted to answer these modifications by stating that they do not actually exist, but are already pre-empted by what occurred in the May 28th tape (from now on all extracts from the current GBC 'Rebuttal' paper shall be boxed):

According to the May 28 conversation the decisions of a) and b) were Srila Prabhupadas own explicit instructions.....

In fact, from the May 28 conversation Srila Prabhupada's desire is clear....

In fact, the *ritvikvadis* themselves claim that the evidence of one word henceforward is enough to over-rule everything Srila Prabhupada had taught his disciples so far, including his very clear instructions in the May 28 conversation.

As we have pointed out previously the GBC have:

1. Offered at least four different transcripts (five if you include the Lilamrita) of this very same conversation.
2. Given at least four different contradictory interpretations of this same identical 'clear' evidence.
3. Through their own investigative expert (Perle) rendered the tape inadmissible as evidence.

Thus, it is some cold comfort to be told that this taped evidence gives 'clear' and 'explicit' support to the GBC's disbanding of the *ritvik* system and the resultant M.A.S.S. Indeed this is now the **ONLY** evidence on offer, which apparently allows the GBC to blithely disregard the conclusions of F.O.

- If this evidence so clearly supports the M.A.S.S. one might ask how it was that the entire GBC operated the bogus zonal *acarya* system for so many years, driving away any dissenters in the process?

'Clear' and 'explicit' are not adjectives, which immediately spring to mind when reading the following extract from H.G. Ravindra Svarupa's paper:

"Many Devotees have spent many hard hours studying this sometimes frustrating and baffling conversation. The parties at times seem at cross-purposes, and pronouns without clear referent abound"

(*Under My Order*, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, 1985)

How can something be 'clear' and 'baffling' at the same time?

It is ironic that in his new role as chairman of the ISKCON protection committee, Ravindra Svarupa is being contradicted by a paper he himself is sponsoring.

It should also be pointed out that the author of the 'Rebuttal' paper later uses a transcript of the tape that differs in two key places from the one used by his sponsor Ravindra Svarupa in his above mentioned paper. In '*Under My Order*' H.G. Ravindra Svarupa uses a transcript which he claims was '*checked and corrected by Jayadwaita Swami*', and was never challenged at the time or subsequently. We noticed that later on the GBC simply changed the transcript to better serve the distorted interpretation they wanted to squeeze out of this brief exchange of words.

'Under My Order' has the lines:

So on my behalf. On My Order, *amara ajnaya guru hana*, **he** is actually guru. But by my order.

The GBC have now changed this to:

so on my behalf, on my order... *Amara ajnaya guru hana*. **Be** actually guru, but by my order.

Above we see significant changes to words and punctuation.

'Under My Order' has the lines:

Who is initiating. **His** grand-disciples.

The GBC have changed this to:

Who is initiating. **He is** grand disciple.

This is highly significant. It demonstrates that deliberate **cheating** is being perpetrated by some of the most senior devotees in the movement, even as we write. How such persons think they can get away with such flagrant mendacity beggars belief, especially given the enormous spotlight currently illuminating this entire issue. It also shows that Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, at least at one time, accepted that Srila Prabhupada **WAS** speaking in the 3rd person, since how is it possible for a *ritvik* to initiate his own grand disciple- '**Who is initiating. His grand-disciples**'.

- When we asserted that Srila Prabhupada was doing this in F.O. the GBC ridiculed us in DOMD, and yet how else can the conversation be made sense of?

Of course it can not, and that is why the GBC are **dishonestly** presenting falsified transcripts to back up their allegedly falsified (according to **THEIR** own report) tape. What a mess!

If the reader were looking to the GBC's 'Rebuttal' paper for new information, arguments or answers they will certainly be disappointed since the author is merely repeating what was presented in the first GBC reply to the FO - '*Disciple of My Disciple*' (DOMD), which the author asks us to refer to for further information. As mentioned DOMD has already been defeated by the '*Final Order Still Stands*' and readers are therefore advised to refer to that. In the 'Rebuttal' paper the author repeatedly assumes and claims that the tape '*ordered gurus*' and that the tape '*stops the ritvik system*' etc. and yet we have already clearly shown that this is not the case.

We shall herein show that the 'Rebuttal' paper not only contradicts DOMD, the very paper it relies on to support its central thesis, but also seriously contradicts *itself*. As if that were not bad enough it also contradicts GII, a paper the author also endorses in this very 'Rebuttal'. The author also contradicts other relevant sources, such as the Chairman of the very ministry that intends to publish this reply - H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu. Thus as well as not assisting in defeating the central thesis of the FO, this reply also manages to make the GBC position look even more ridiculous than it did before (if that is possible).

It is now a long-standing tradition that we commence our rebuttal papers with how the latest GBC offering contradicts previ-

ous GBC positions. Sometimes GBC members and apologists argue along the lines of 'so what if there are contradictions, at least we are getting it right now, everybody makes mistakes' etc. The problem is that the contradictions we point out relate to GBC positions that are still accepted as current GBC *siddhanta*. In such circumstances this lame excuse just does not wash. And when the contradictions are in relation to GBC papers that are mentioned as reference for further guidance within the very same papers the contradictions appear, and when these farcical positions are then promoted with fanatical zeal, with dissenters being banned and ostracised, one ends up with a very sick society.

As mentioned this current GBC reply is a continuation of a partial response to FO given earlier called 'Disciple of My Disciple' (DOMD, 1997). The FO itself was written partially in response to the 'final *siddhanta*' of the GBC called 'Gurus and Initiation in ISKCON' (1995).

We will start by showing how the current 'Rebuttal' paper contradicts both DOMD and GII, even though the current paper actually underpins its assertions by asking readers to refer back to DOMD. (All quotes from the 'Rebuttal' paper shall be boxed):

"...but as we have seen in DOMD, Srila Prabhupada didnt conceive of the word *ritvik* in the same way ... [...]This is a lie. See DOMD"

It also accepts we should follow GII. This is only to be expected since GII was put out by H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu, the chairman of the very ministry that intends to release this current GBC reply:

The fact that GII is incomplete does not negate the importance of following Srila Prabhupada's intended order.

Contradictions

"Srila Prabhupada accepted the term *ritvik-acarya* to denote someone who would be initiating his grand-disciples, hence he could not take *ritvik* to mean what the *ritvikvadis* would have us believe."

"The significant point here is that terms such as *rtvig-guru* and *rtvig-acarya* simply do not exist. There is no such term in any Sanskrit dictionary, nor in any recognized Vedic literature, to my knowledge. There is no such term because there is no such concept. In other words, our friends are proposing something that does not exist in Vedic culture. This is the main problem with it."

[DOMD]

- How could Srila Prabhupada have 'accepted' a term that does 'not exist', moreover accept it to 'denote someone who would be initiating his grand-disciples?'
- Why is Srila Prabhupada accepting bogus non-existent terms to describe how his disciples would initiate?
- In addition, since this was the first and last time he was to do so, how would Srila Prabhupada have expected anyone to understand what he meant?

1) "Thus during Srila Prabhupada's physical presence, his disciples should not accept their own disciples, because this is the Vaishnava etiquette, but after his departure they should become "regular guru." This is what we learn from the May 28 conversation, and this would also be consistent with guru, *sadhu*, and *sastra*, and Srila Prabhupada's own teachings. [...] On May 28, Srila Prabhupada said that the *ritvik* system should continue until his departure and that after his departure, his disciples should take disciples. [...] According to the May 28th conversation, the system was specifically set up to run while he was on the planet."

In the present conversation, Srila Prabhupada does not refer to proxy initiations at all, not even in connection with the word "*ritvik*."

[DOMD]

2) "This is simply a lie. Srila Prabhupada expressed his desire very clearly in the May 28 conversation. He never mentioned anything about a proxy-guru system."

In the first box the author is clearly stating that the May 28th conversation speaks of the *ritviks* **NOT** accepting their own disciples, and that the employment of *ritviks* was only for whilst Srila Prabhupada was still present i.e. -'proxy initiations'. DOMD states the precise opposite. Absurdly in the second box we see the author changes his mind and contradicts himself by stating that the tape makes no mention of a 'proxy' system.

This is a *straw man*. No one has argued that Srila Prabhupada ordered only specific individuals to take disciples. He stated that on May 28 by instructing his disciples to initiate new devotees into becoming his grand-disciples.

"There is no appointment of gurus or successors, only a recommendation that certain disciples start the natural process. But a recommendation from the spiritual master is as good as an order, and the recommendation of certain devo-

tees in the July 9th letter is a follow-up to the order that Srila Prabhupada's disciples should take up the work of spiritual master after his departure."

[DOMD]

Both the author of the 'Rebuttal' paper and DOMD clearly state that the order for becoming guru came from the May 28th tape, which alludes only to the '11' who were soon to be named. On the other hand, are they arguing that on the tape **EVERY-ONE** was ordered to initiate, which then begs the question why only 11 did so.

- Or had the order for everyone to initiate **ALREADY** been given, in which case again it begs the question why Srila Prabhupada now made a point of **RE-ordering** only a potential '11' on the tape?

The fact of the matter is that the July 9 letter, was not even written by Srila Prabhupada himself but by his secretary, and it was nothing more than a communique sent out to all the devotees to inform them of an emergency arrangement because Srila Prabhupada had become too sick to travel around and initiate. [...]

There was a temporary system set up to relieve Srila Prabhupada in his last days when he was very sick. It is only the *ritvik-vadis* who have baptized this temporary emergency system of initiation as the *ritvik* system. [...]

Mr. Desai tries to give the impression that the system mentioned in the July 9 letter is a very important system to be followed henceforward, when actually it was only an emergency system set up to relieve Srila Prabhupada in his last days, because he was too weak to travel and initiate new disciples. [...]

Again Mr. Desai argues from the false premise that the July 9 letter is an initiation-manual and not a communique notifying everyone that Srila Prabhupada was too disabled to move around any longer and conduct initiations. The instructions on how Srila Prabhupada wanted initiations to proceed in his absence were already given in the May 28 conversations. If we understand the that the July 9 letter was simply a general announcement to all the devotees to notify them of a temporary arrangement in the face of Srila Prabhupada's illness, there is no need to keep insisting that the July 9 letter contain this reference or that reference. [...]

The system referred to in the July 9 letter was not an initiation system per se, but an emergency system set up to relieve Srila Prabhupada.

The author is making it clear that the July 9th letter only arose as a result of an 'emergency' to 'relieve' Srila Prabhupada because he had become too sick. That the letter was simply a general announcement as a result of Srila Prabhupada's illness. This line of reasoning is interesting since DOMD did not state this at all. Rather DOMD argues that the July 9th letter flows naturally from the May 28th conversation, which DOMD claims speaks only of Srila Prabhupada's disciples initiating after Srila Prabhupada has left:

"The initiations must continue, and this can only be done through Srila Prabhupada's disciples. There is no appointment of gurus or successors, only a recommendation that certain disciples start the natural process."

[DOMD]

Here we see the July 9th arrangement is for certain disciples to start the '*natural process*'. There is no mention whatsoever in DOMD of the *ritviks* filling in, in an '*emergency*'. There is nothing '*natural*' about an emergency.

"But a recommendation from the spiritual master is as good as an order, and the recommendation of certain devotees in the July 9th letter is a follow-up to the order that Srila Prabhupada's disciples should take up the work of spiritual master after his departure."

[DOMD]

Here we see the July 9th letter is a '*follow-up*' to the order to be guru **NOT** an '*emergency*' communique as a result of Srila Prabhupada's illness.

"Srila Prabhupada is promising to do something. He will do it in the July 9th letter, and one of the people that Srila Prabhupada is now speaking to will write that letter."

[DOMD]

Here the July 9th letter comes out of a promise made in the May 28th conversation. Yet, there is no mention in the May 28th conversation about setting up some group to specifically '*relieve*' Srila Prabhupada in an '*emergency*'.

"In short, Srila Prabhupada has stated the principles of post-*samadhi* initiations, and he will confirm his order by naming some people to begin the process."

[DOMD]

Here we see the July 9th letter as the confirmation of the order to become gurus, and the persons who are named in the July 9th letter are those who will begin this process. Yet the author of the 'Rebuttal' paper has us believe that those named in the July 9th letter were actually just some sort of '*emergency sickness cover*'.

The first part of the law states that a disciple must not act as initiating *acarya* in his own gurus physical presence.

[FO]

Mr. Desai argues here on a false premise. Srila Prabhupada does not refer to this principle as **law** but as etiquette. And he says in the letter that they will be specifically empowered. Since it is a matter of etiquette and Srila Prabhupada would be the offended party, Srila Prabhupada could override the etiquette and specifically empower disciples to initiate if he so chose.

Not only does the letter in question state that it IS a '**law**' but so does GII, which was produced by the Protection Ministry chairman, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu:

But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the **law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bonafide spiritual master and spread Krsna Consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krsna very happy."**

(SP Letter to Tusta Krsna, 2/12/75)

"We must assume that as Founder-Acarya, Srila Prabhupada had the vision to set down a **law--a **law** suitable for that unique institution, a **law** we would transgress at our peril."**

('Devotees Initiating Before their Guru's Physical Departure', GII)

Since this was the law, clearly the above letter could not be referring to Srila Prabhupada's disciples initiating on their own behalf: Srila Prabhupada was still on the planet in 1975. We can therefore only conclude that he was already contemplating some sort of officiating initiation system as early as 1968

[TFO]

This is a speculative conclusion, not stated anywhere.

Again it IS stated in the Ministry Chairman's own work - GII:

"In 1968, did Srila Prabhupada expect to leave the planet before 1975? Or was he thinking of creating *ritvik* gurus who would initiate on his behalf by 1975? Whatever the answer may be, when 1975 arrived, Srila Prabhupada took no steps to give his disciples the responsibility of accepting their own disciples. Indeed, his statements on this issue in 1975 (Letter to Tusta Krsna and lecture in Mayapur) leave no doubt that His Divine Grace gave no authorization for disciples to initiate as long as he remained on the planet. In logic, later statements supersede earlier ones in importance."

('Devotees Initiating Before their Guru's Physical Departure', GII)

Please note here that GII agrees with us that there could only be two possibilities - that either Srila Prabhupada was going to depart before 1975, or that he was planning to create *ritviks* who would initiate on his behalf by 1975. GII is still official GBC *siddhanta*. Thus, the GBC are directly contradicting their own *siddhanta*.

The author of the 'Rebuttal' paper wishes to make it very clear that the word *ritvik* has no connection with '*proxy-initiations*' or initiating whilst Srila Prabhupada is still present:

The understanding of *ritvik* that the *ritvikvadis* try to impose, i.e. a proxy-guru, is not in accordance with the standard dictionary definition of the word. [...]The fact is that the term *ritvik* was not even introduced by Srila Prabhupada himself. He just accepted the term when it was introduced by Tamal Krishna Goswami, and from his usage of the word it is clear that he did not take it to be synonymous with the term proxy-guru.

Yet the chairman of the very ministry that has put this paper out, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, insists that the word *ritvik* **ONLY** has full relevance when Srila Prabhupada is present i.e. as a proxy-guru:

"... the selection of *ritvik*-guru has something to do with *diksa* after Prabhupada's disappearance, even though *ritvik* **PROPERLY** concerns **ISKCON ONLY** during Prabhupada's presence."

(Under My Order, H.G Ravindra Svarupa Dasa, 1985)

Please note that the above paper is what dismantled the zonal *acharya* system and launched the current M.A.S.S. system, and thus is considered still very much valid today.

"Srila Prabhupada had not authorized any such gurus,"

[TFO]

Again TFO tries to avoid the obvious. In the may 28 conversation such Mr. Desaiization is clearly given.

And its a fact that Srila Prabhupada never said alright here is the next *acarya*, or here is the next eleven *acaryas* and they are authorized gurus for the movement, for the world. He did not do that.”

(Ravindra Svarupa das, San Diego debate, 1990)

Here the author again contradicts the ministry chairman, this time on the issue of the ‘11’ being authorised as gurus.

“The letter clearly implies that it was only set up for whilst Srila Prabhupada was present.”

[FO]

This is a *straw man*. The GBC does not present this argument, but TFO implies that it does. Thus, Mr. Desai appears to defeat the GBC by inventing a foolish argument and defeating it.

1. In fact a recent GBC approved paper ‘*Timeless Order*’ which the author himself quotes later on in **THIS** paper **DOES** use this argument - they say the fact that the names of the newly-initiated have to be sent to Srila Prabhupada is evidence that the *ritvik* system was set up for whilst Srila Prabhupada was present.
2. Also the ‘*Timeless Order*’ is recommended by the sponsor as a paper we should consult for a more ‘in-depth study’ on the *ritvik* issue in ‘*Srila Prabhupada’s Guru System vs. ritvikvada: The Facts Plain And Simple*’ (H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, 1998)
3. We are very glad therefore that the author has seen fit to overrule the ministry chairman H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu on this point. We now have one less argument to deal with. Thank you Mr. Author, whoever you are.

- a) A half-truth and a lie. Srila Prabhupada didn’t have to issue a subsequent order to stop the *ritvik*-system, because he never established the system in the first place. [...] Second of all, even if it weren’t, it is immaterial, for the *ritvik*-system, as envisioned by the *ritvikvadis*, was never set up in the first place. [...] There was a temporary system set up to relieve Srila Prabhupada in his last days when he was very sick. It is only the *ritvikvadis* who have baptized this temporary emergency system of initiation as the *ritvik* system. [...] Mr. Desai insists on repeating the lie that a *ritvik* system was ever established.
- b) Srila Prabhupada may have given an order to follow a *ritvik* system, but obviously Srila Prabhupada did not understand the word *ritvik* in the same way the *ritvikvadis* do, which is clear from the May 28 conversations.
- c) On May 28, Srila Prabhupada said that the *ritvik* system should continue until his departure and that after his departure, his disciples should take disciples.

In some places, the author is sure that Srila Prabhupada **did not order** any such thing as a ‘*ritvik* system’. In others he hedges his bets and says Srila Prabhupada **MAY have ordered** such a system, but the word *ritvik* is to be understood differently from the FO. And in another place the author accepts that the ‘*ritvik system*’ **DOES exist**, with Srila Prabhupada stating that it should ‘*continue until his departure*’.

Also in stating the above the author as well as contradicting himself, is also contradicting H.H. Jayadwaita Swami:

“Clearly, this letter establishes a *ritvik*-guru system.”

(“Where the *ritviks* Are Wrong”, H.H. Jayadwaita Swami, 1996)

The above contradiction is all the more bizarre since the author quotes the above phrase himself on another point. So to be fair H.H. Jayadwaita Swami had actually ‘*baptised*’ it a ‘*ritvik system*’ even before we did in FO!

The author continues to show more confusion in regards to whether or not a *ritvik* system was set up:

More lies. It is not accepted by all concerned that Srila Prabhupada set up a *ritvik* system to operate from July 9 onwards.

The above contention is again very bizarre since we stated the above assertion based on advice from H.H. Jayadwaita Swami, who had earlier in his paper, mentioned above, explained his understanding of the July 9th letter thus:

“Now, let’s move on to something else that *everyone agrees on*. Srila Prabhupada himself, in 1977, appointed eleven disciples to serve as *rtvik* gurus, or ‘*officiating spiritual masters*.”

(“Where the *ritviks* Are Wrong”, H.H. Jayadwaita Swami, 1996)

The same letter he goes on to say later, clearly ‘**establishes a *ritvik-guru system***’. We think that H.H. Jayadwaita Swami is eminently capable of representing the GBC view on this issue. Further, this paper by H.H. Jayadwaita Swami Maharaja is extremely relevant since it was referred to by H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, the publisher of this rebuttal, for ‘*in depth study*’ in ‘*Srila Prabhupada’s Guru System vs. ritvikvada: The Facts Plain And Simple*’ (H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, 1998).

Thus, in claiming that we are telling ‘*lies*’ the author is also calling H.H. Jayadwaita Maharaja and H.G. Ravindra Svarupa liars too! We think they should be informed so that whoever wrote this paper can be severely reprimanded for his malicious slandering.

The author accuses us of lying on numerous occasions throughout his pathetic tome. So far, with all the external and internal contradictions we have shown, it seems the author and the GBC are the ones who have been lying to themselves and each other.

At this point there is no purpose in going any further since this current GBC reply serves no purpose except to continue to drag the GBC's reputation into *dis-repute* as virtually all the GBC papers to date on this issue have done. We would suggest that the author of this current GBC reply, the authors of DOMD, the members of the '*Ministry for the Protection for ISKCON*' which published this reply, get together to figure out their story, and then come back with a consistent position that actually offers some evidence.

Then the current reply which is nothing but an embarrassment to the ministry can be replaced with something worth replying to.

For completeness please note that this current GBC reply is over 100 pages long and does attempt to answer '*point for point*' the FO. In total, this current GBC reply therefore makes some 344 points of its own.

To reiterate, virtually all of these points are invalid and fall into one of the following 5 categories:

1. Appeal to the Tape

Simply dismissing a point by suggesting a regurgitation of the already defeated arguments in DOMD.

2. 'Straw man'

Arguments that defeat propositions that are not actually stated in the FO.

3. Ignoring the Substance

Here the author attacks what he claims is '*implied*' by our statements, or what else he claims we should have added - a '*half-truth*' - as he calls it, or simply mis-represents what is actually said. The actual validity of exactly what is stated is not challenged.

4. False 'Straw man'

Here the author dismisses our points by claiming that the GBC never made them. However, we never claimed that the GBC did make these points, the '*objections*' posed in the FO are all drawn from various devotees around the world who we have discussed this issue with, including H.H. Jayadvaita Swami Maharaja. Thus, they are not '*Straw man*' arguments since we never **ATTRIBUTED** them to any source - the whole point of a '*straw man*' argument.

5. False Arguments

A miscellaneous category that mops up all the other points that the author makes.

Although we have highlighted the overall ineptitude of the GBC's 'Rebutal' paper, stating the fact that we do not need to reply in full since it does not offer any new arguments or evidence, and is hopelessly inconsistent and contradictory; still some devotees may want to see a complete refutation. To do this would probably take well over 200 pages and would be an over-kill given the enormous flaws already revealed. However, just to demonstrate that the entire paper is of a consistently poor quality we will now answer all the first 35 or so rebuttal points made by the author. Then for good measure we will throw in some other points made in the rest of the reply selected at random.

The First 35 Points of the Reply Answered 'Point For Point'

The points from the FO that the author attempts to rebut are reproduced first and enclosed in " "; and denoted by **[FO]**. The supposed refutation will follow underneath, with the whole thing boxed.

"It would certainly have been entirely out of character for Srila Prabhupada to leave an important issue, such as the future of initiation in his cherished society, up in the air, ambiguous, or in any way open to debate or speculation."

[FO]

If this statement is correct what then is the basis for saying that Srila Prabhupada changed his own teachings on Gaudiya Vaishnava siddhanta with one word - henceforward? With this statement TFO completely ignores the May 28 conversation.

This is an example of category 2 error - 'Straw man'- since we never state in the FO that '*Srila Prabhupada changed his own teachings on Gaudiya Vaisnava siddhanta with one word - henceforward*'. Also how can this statement be '*ignoring*' anything since the FO later devotes a whole separate section to the May 28th conversation, **pages 21-26**.

"This is particularly so in light of what happened to his own spiritual masters mission, which, as he would often point out, was destroyed largely through the operation of an unauthorized guru system."

[FO]

This is a half-truth. The "unauthorized guru system" mentioned by Srila Prabhupada in this connection is a guru system that is not managed by a GBC:

"He [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta] never asked anybody to become *acarya*. He asked that 'You form a governing body of twelve men and go on preaching. . . .None, none of them were advised by Guru Maharaja to become *acarya*. His idea was 'Let them manage; then whoever will be actually qualified for becoming *acarya*, they will elect. Why I should enforce upon them?' That was his plan. 'Let them manage by strong governing body, as it is going on. Then *acarya* will come by his qualifications.'"

(Conversation, Bombay 9/21/73)

This is an example of category 3 error - Ignoring the Substance - since the fact still remains that it WAS an unauthorised guru system - which is all we state. We offer no comment on the NATURE of the deviation since that does not affect the actual point that we are making.

"Immediately after Srila Prabhupada's physical departure, on November 14th 1977, the GBC suspended this *ritvik* system. By Gaurapurnima 1978, the 11 *ritviks* had assumed the roles of zonal *acarya diksa* gurus, initiating disciples on their own behalf. Their mandate for doing so was an alleged order from Srila Prabhupada that they alone were to succeed him as initiating *acaryas*. Some years later this zonal *acarya* system was itself challenged and replaced, not by the restoration of the *ritvik* system, but by the addition of dozens more gurus, along with an elaborate system of checks and balances to deal with those that deviated; the rationale for this change being that the order to become guru was not, as we had first been told, only applicable to the 11, but was a general instruction for anyone who strictly followed, and received a two-thirds majority vote from the GBC body. The above account is not a political opinion, it is historical fact, accepted by everyone, including the GBC."

[FO]

Question: Does the GBC accept this?

This falls into category of miscellaneous. All we can say is that if the GBC does not accept the above account, then it should immediately withdraw the various position papers and resolutions from which we gathered the above. See for instance 'Under My Order', H.G. Ravindra Svarupa prabhu, 1985. In addition, useful source material is 'Several Grievances Against the GBC', 1986, and 'Where the *ritviks* Are Right', 1996, both by H.H. Jayadwaita Swami.

"As mentioned above, the July 9th letter was sent to all GBCs and Temple Presidents, and remains to this day the only signed instruction on the future of initiation Srila Prabhupada ever issued to the whole society."

[FO]

The emphasis on a signed instruction is a subtle form of begging the question. It implies that an order from the spiritual master must be signed, but this principle has not been established. It makes no difference whether an order from the spiritual master is signed or not. What counts is the desire of the spiritual master, no matter in what form the desire is expressed. This is another attempt to negate the order given by Srila Prabhupada in the May 28 conversation.

This is a category 3 error - 'Ignoring the Substance' - what we state above is simply a FACT. Mentioning the fact that it is 'signed' merely confirms its authenticity since many GBC's have argued that it was simply a letter from H.H. Tamala Krishna Goswami only. We never state that non-signed instructions from the Guru can be ignored.

- Also how can it be an attempt to 'negate' the May 28 conversation since we examine the May 28th tape in depth in the FO, and are more than happy to accept any orders which are issued on there?

When we examine the May 28th conversation, we see that *ritviks* were ordered 'particularly' for that time when Srila Prabhupada was no longer with us.

"Commenting on the July 9th order, Jayadvaita Swami recently wrote:

Its authority is beyond question...Clearly this letter establishes a *ritvik*-guru system

(Jayadvaita Swami Where the *ritvik* People are Wrong 1996)"

[FO]

This is an example of selective quoting. Jayadvaita Swami's paper says:

“Clearly, this letter establishes a *ritvik*-guru system. But one may ask where it says that such a system should continue even after Srila Prabhupada’s departure.”

TFO’s selective quoting is an attempt to make Jayadvaita Swami appear to grudgingly concede that the July 9 letter establishes the post-*samadhi ritvik* system, when Jayadvaita Swami clearly says something else.

This is an example of a category 3 error - ‘Ignoring the Substance’ - What the author fails to point out is that straight after we quote H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja we state the very same ‘*question*’ that Maharaja ‘*asks*’. We present the ‘*question*’ in the form of two modifications to *The Final Order*; namely that the appointees should stop acting as *ritviks* on departure (**modification a**), and that they should then become *diksa* gurus, (**modification b**). We say that it is the imposition of these modifications, which lie at the heart of the controversy. Jayadvaita Maharaja chooses to present the ‘*question at hand*’ in a different way, as is his prerogative. It is strange that the author omits to mention this since the very **NEXT** thing he quotes from our paper is:

“The source of the controversy arises from two modifications which were subsequently superimposed over this otherwise clear and Mr. Desai’s directive:

Modification a) That the appointment of representatives or *ritviks* was only temporary, specifically to be terminated on the departure of Srila Prabhupada.

Modification b) Having ceased their representational function, the *ritviks* would automatically become *diksa* gurus, initiating persons as their own disciples, not Srila Prabhupada’s.”

[F0]

This is an example of begging the question. Mr. Desai is presenting these two changes as superimposed modifications without actually proving that they are. He implies that these changes are not based on any order from Srila Prabhupada without having proved his point. This is another attempt to prove that the May 28 conversation does not exist.

Category 1 - ‘Appeal to the Tape’ - We simply state the obvious point that statements **a)** and **b)** **ARE** modifications in relation to the letter, since there is no evidence for **a)** and **b)** given in the letter. This is something, which the author himself later admits:

The letter says “henceforward,” which means that the system should start. It is only that there is no direct indication *in it* of when the system should stop or change. (emphasis added)

We then **PROCEED** to examine if indeed these modifications are based on an order from Srila Prabhupada in the May 28th conversation.

- By actually writing the FO seeking to **EXAMINE** the basis for these modifications how can we be implying anything at this point in the document, since the rest of the document seeks to investigate the basis for these modifications?

“The reforms to the zonal *acarya* system, which took place around 1987, kept intact these two assumptions. The same assumptions, in fact, that underpinned the very system it replaced. We refer to a) and b) above as modifications since neither statement appears in the July 9th letter itself, nor in any policy document issued by Srila Prabhupada subsequent to this order.”

[F0]

Here Mr. Desai tries to establish a false principle. He tries to impose the condition that Srila Prabhupada’s order regarding initiations after his departure must appear in a signed document and come after July 9. There is no such principle. The order was already given orally before July 9, on May 28.

Category 1 - ‘Appeal to the Tape’ - We make the above point in relation to the fact that Srila Prabhupada had sent a policy directive out to the whole movement.

- We are asking **WHY** Srila Prabhupada would omit modifications A & B, which are crucial since they would affect the running of the movement for thousands of years to come, and instead only include details relevant for another few months?

Especially when the whole letter begins by stating that it is a record of the ‘*oral*’ instruction given on May 28th:

“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”- representatives of the acarya, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation. His Divine Grace has so far ...”

(July 9th Letter)

Yet the letter does not contain any mention of this supposed ‘*Guru order*’ that was allegedly given in the above meeting.

In addition, the author argues later that such monumental information was to be imparted by the GBC to the rest of the move-

ment. This simply raises two further questions:

1. Why then did Srila Prabhupada not also communicate the trivial '*temporary sickness cover*' arrangement via the GBC? Why did Srila Prabhupada insist on this initially '*oral*' instruction being written down and sent out to the whole movement?
Whatever advantages that would accrue from having this instruction sent out as a policy document to the whole movement would be more relevant in communicating the decision that would determine how initiations would be conducted thousands upon thousands of years into the future. Indeed in H.H. Satsvarupa Maharaja's lecture '*Memoirs of 1977*', Maharaja relates how, after he showed the July 9th letter to H.H. Jayadwaita Swami and told him that he had been appointed a Guru, H.H. Jayadwaita Maharaja wisely advised him that that was not what the letter actually stated, and that if he really thought that he had been appointed a Guru, he should get it in writing.
2. Why then did the GBC **NOT** communicate this momentous decision given in May 1977 to the rest of the movement over the coming months?
Why did they wait until **AFTER** Srila Prabhupada had left to inform everyone of this '*Guru appointment*', first in the BTG, and then more fully at the following *Mayapur* meetings after having received guidance from '*Higher Authorities*' in the form of H.H. Sridhar Maharaja?

If the author can provide reasonable answers to these questions, we will concede the point made here by the author.

"When Srila Prabhupada was asked who would initiate after his physical departure he stated he would "*recommend*" and give his "*order*" to some of his disciples who would initiate on his behalf during his lifetime and afterwards as "*regular gurus*", whose disciples would be Srila Prabhupada grand-disciples.

(GII, page 14)

Over the years increasing numbers of devotees have begun questioning the legitimacy of these basic assumptions."

[FO]

Mr. Desai is begging the question. It has yet to be shown that these are in fact mere assumptions and not Srila Prabhupada's explicit order. From the May 28 conversation, it is clear that Srila Prabhupada wanted his disciples to initiate new devotees who would become his grand-disciples.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal to the Tape' - To move from an assumption to a fact one needs evidence. The author is rather bizarrely proposing that we begin by assuming that something is a fact and then prove that it isn't only an assumption. The onus of proof is on the person who is claiming that something is a fact. An assumption is merely what one is left with by default due to the absence of evidence. It is the existence of such claimed evidence that the FO seeks to investigate. As we later show in the FO and in the '*Final Order Still Stands*', it is not at all clear that Srila Prabhupada '*wanted his disciples to initiate new devotees who would become his grand-disciples*'. In fact, this point has never been '*clear*' to the GBC itself, since they have used many **DIFFERENT** phrases, and different interpretations of these phrases from the May 28th conversation as evidence for this '*clear*' claim.

"One point everyone is agreed on is that Srila Prabhupada is the ultimate authority for all members of ISKCON, so whatever his intended order was, it is our duty to carry it out. Another point of agreement is that the only signed policy statement on the future of initiation, which was sent to all the society's leaders, was the July 9th order."

[FO]

Here is a contradiction in logic. First Mr. Desai says, "...whatever his intended order was, it is our duty to carry it out." Then he says, "the only signed policy statement on the future of initiation, which was sent to all the society's leaders, was the July 9th order." If Srila Prabhupada's intended order must be carried out no matter what, then it makes no difference whether the desire is expressed in a signed letter or in another form. To say that Srila Prabhupada's spoken words are less important than a signed document contradicts the idea that his intended order must be carried out no matter what. This is yet an attempt to negate Srila Prabhupada's words in the May 28 conversation.

Category 2 Error - 'Straw man' - We do **NOT** say "Srila Prabhupada's spoken words are less important than a signed document" in the section quoted, as anyone reading it can clearly ascertain. We simply state a **FACT** - the July 9th letter **WAS** the only signed policy statement on the future of initiation.

"It is significant to note that in GII the existence of the July 9th letter is not even acknowledged, even though this is the only place where the original eleven *ritvik acaryas* are actually mentioned. This omission is puzzling, especially given that GII is supposed to offer the '*final siddhanta*' on the entire issue."

[FO]

The fact that GII is incomplete does not negate the importance of following Srila Prabhupada's intended order. This is an example of a red herring.

Category 3 Error - 'Ignoring the Substance' - Since we do not even suggest that this incompleteness means that we should not follow Srila Prabhupada's order, it is the above assertion which is an 'example of a red herring'. We simply state that we find the omission 'puzzling'. That's all.

"Let us then look closely at the July 9th order to see if there is indeed anything that supports assumptions a) and b) above."

[F0]

Mr. Desai is begging the question. It has not been established that these are only assumptions.

Category 5 Error - 'Miscellaneous' - We have already answered this point twice already. You begin with an assumption. You look for evidence. Then once you find the evidence, the assumption becomes a fact. Assumptions are established simply by default at the **OUTSET** before one seeks the evidence. Our starting point was **modifications a) and b)** in relation to the letter. In relation to the letter only, **a) and b)** are assumptions, as even the author has admitted:

The letter says "henceforward," which means that the system should start. It is only that there is no direct indication *in it* of when the system should stop or change. (emphasis added)

"As previously mentioned, the July 9th order states that the *ritvik* system should be followed henceforward. The specific word used, 'henceforward', only has one meaning. This is both according to Srila Prabhupada's own previous usage of the word and the meaning ascribed to it by the English Language. On the other 86 occasions that we find on Folio where Srila Prabhupada has used the word 'henceforward', nobody raised even the possibility that the word could mean anything other than from now onwards'. 'From now onwards' does not mean 'from now onwards until I depart'. It simply means 'from now onwards'. There is no mention in the letter that the system should stop on Srila Prabhupada's departure, neither does it state that the system was to only be operational during his presence."

[F0]

This is a half-truth. As it was shown in DOMD Srila Prabhupada's usage of the word henceforward is not limited to the meaning suggested in TFO. Neither does the July 9 letter state that the guru-system, as envisioned by the *ritvikvadis*, should continue after Srila Prabhupada's departure. The word "henceforward" is in itself inconclusive. The time limit of "henceforward" in this case is given in the May 28 conversation.

This is a repeat of a point raised by DOMD, and reader might wish to refer to 'The Final Order Still Stands' where it is fully dealt with.

"There were other statements made by Srila Prabhupada, and his secretary at that time, which clearly indicate that the *ritvik* system was intended to continue without cessation (please see Appendices). In these documents we find words synonymous with henceforward such as:- continue, future etc. . Nothing to even remotely suggest it was to terminate on Srila Prabhupada's departure."

[F0]

A half-truth. The order to stop the system on Srila Prabhupada's departure was given on May 28. TFO tries consistently to ignore Srila Prabhupada's order given in the May 28 conversation.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal to the Tape' - How can an order to stop the system be given on May 28, when the author himself admits that the system is not even **MENTIONED** on May 28th?:

This is simply a lie. Srila Prabhupada expressed his desire very clearly in the May 28 conversation. He never mentioned anything about a proxy-guru system.

Also how can you stop a system that the author claims was never even established?:

A half-truth and a lie. Srila Prabhupada didn't have to issue a subsequent order to stop the ritvik-system, because he never established the system in the first place.

"Once the *ritvik* system was up and running, Srila Prabhupada never issued a subsequent order to stop it, nor did he ever state that it should be disbanded on his departure."

[F0]

A half-truth and a lie. Srila Prabhupada didn't have to issue a subsequent order to stop the *ritvik*-system, because he never established the system in the first place. Besides, even if he did, the order does not have to be subsequent if it was given previously. It is not true that Srila Prabhupada never stated that "it should be disbanded on his departure."

Category 5 Error - 'Miscellaneous' - So please show us where Srila Prabhupada stated that 'it should be disbanded on my

departure'. Of course, he said no such thing.

"Perhaps aware that such a thing may mistakenly or otherwise occur, he put in the beginning of his final will that the system of management in place within ISKCON must continue and could not be changed - an instruction left intact by a codicil added just nine days before his departure."

[F0]

Here Mr. Desai advocates foolish following. Srila Prabhupada had outlined the future of initiations on May 28. To continue the system of management unchanged would have to include following Srila Prabhupada's instructions, which include the instructions that his disciples must initiate. To disregard this instruction for the sake of not changing things would be foolish following.

Category 2 - 'Straw man' - We never state that IF Srila Prabhupada HAD given an order that his disciples must initiate, then this instruction would be overruled by the stipulation to not change anything as given in the Will.

On the contrary, as the author has pointed out, such an instruction would be in harmony with the Will.

"2. Each temple will be an ISKCON property and will be managed by three executive directors. The system of management will continue as it is now and there is no need of any change."

[The Will]

The system of management referred to in the will concerns specifically the management of properties, not initiations, or general management. Of course, nothing Mr. Desaiizes the GBC to change Srila Prabhupada's instructions, but the above example is given to show that TFO relies on misquotations.

Category 5 - 'Miscellaneous' - An identical argument was made in another GBC inspired paper.

We re-produce the reply given then, which has still to be countered:

Thus we are told the line: **'The system of management will continue as it is now and there is no need of any change'** is only a *'straightforward statement'* that *'refers to the way temples should be organised'*. But that is precisely our point. Part of the way Temples were organised was that when candidates emerged who were suitable for initiation, their names would be sent to the respective *ritvik*. Thus, the *ritvik* system was part and parcel of the way temples were organised. In one sense the primary purpose for Temples even existing in the first place was to train devotees up to the standard required for initiation, not just to be able to boast *'three executive directors'*.

It seems the author is making the absurd assertion that the only aspect of temple organisation that Srila Prabhupada did not want changed was the principle of having *'three executive directors'*. In other words, you could scrap everything else, such as having a Temple President or a Treasurer, or donating proceeds of book sales to the BBT or maintaining the Deities, just as long as you proudly keep *'three executive directors'* somewhere in the temple building!

From a purely legal angle:

- a) The clause concerning *'three executive directors'* could only be exclusively linked to the *'no change clause'* if the latter were preceded by the word *'this'*.
- b) In legal documents, only words in the form of clauses have significance, not necessarily the juxtaposition of one sentence with another, unless a word such as *'this'* is used to exclusively link one sentence to another.
- c) Even if one tries to argue a linkage to *'system of management'* based on the occurrence of the word *'managed'* i.e. *'managed by three executive directors'* - we are still left with the problem that no linkage can be established to the first part - that *'each temple will be an ISKCON temple'* - since there is no mention of management here.
- d) In this instance, the two sentences in section 2 are not exclusively linked. Therefore the *'no change'* clause must apply to the Will as a whole.

If the above were not the case then the following point would need careful consideration by the GBC:

The *'no change'* clause only comes in section 2 of the will, not in section 1 which mentions the GBC, so unless it can be applied to the entire will the GBC could legitimately be disbanded.

However tempting the above scenario might sound to some, we could not support such an interpretation of the will since we know it is not what Srila Prabhupada wanted.

We might even muster the support of the GBC itself on this point.

"Surely this would have been the perfect opportunity to disband the *ritvik* system had that been his intention (please see Appendix)."

[F0]

Here TFO avoids of the obvious. The order had already been given on May 28. There was no need to repeat it. This is yet another attempt by the author to pretend that the May 28 conversation had never taken place.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal to the Tape' - We have already answered this point regarding the supposed existence of an order on the May 28th tape 'disbanding the *ritvik* system' above. We also have a whole section in the FO that deals with the tape, to see if it contains any information, that **WOULD** 'disband the *ritvik* system'.

"If the whole methodology for conducting initiations is considered a system of management by Srila Prabhupada, then one element of initiation, viz. the use of *ritviks* to give spiritual names, has to fall under the same terms of reference. Thus changing the *ritvik* system of initiation was a direct violation of Srila Prabhupada's final will."

[F0]

This is word jugglery. Changing the system of initiation was Srila Prabhupada's order, given on May 28, and thus does not contradict the final will or constitute a change in the system of management as long as we consider that the system of management includes following Srila Prabhupada's instructions.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal to the Tape' - As we show in the FO in the May 28th tape section and in '*The Final Order Still Stands*', the May 28th tape does not **CHANGE** any system of initiation, but establishes one. The letter itself states that it is setting out a system of initiation that was mentioned earlier at a meeting rather like the one which occurred on May 28th:

"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 ..."

(July 9th Letter)

"Another instruction in the will which indicates the intended longevity of the *ritvik* system, is where it states that the executive directors for his permanent properties in India could only be selected from amongst Srila Prabhupada's initiated disciples. This is something that could only occur if a *ritvik* system of initiation remained in place after Srila Prabhupada's departure, since otherwise the pool of potential directors would eventually dry up."

[F0]

This is a self-contradiction. By the same logic, the *ritvik* system cannot last because the eleven *ritviks* mentioned in the July 9 letter will eventually leave the planet.

Category 5 Error - 'Miscellaneous' - The statement in the Will states that all future directors must be selected from Srila Prabhupada's initiated disciples. The letter states the '11' *ritviks* had been selected '*thus far*' to perform the initiations. This was a system set up by Srila Prabhupada. It would need to be maintained by the GBC. The Will makes specific provision about whom future directors must be. The letter makes no specific restriction on whom the *ritviks* may be.

- Thus how can it be the 'same logic'?

This is illogical.

"Furthermore, every time Srila Prabhupada spoke of initiations after July 9th he simply reconfirmed the *ritvik* system. He never gave any hint that the system should stop on his departure"

[F0]

Here TFO tries to avoid the obvious. This is again an attempt to overlook the May 28 conversation, in which Srila Prabhupada gives clear directions how he wants initiations to take place after his departure.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal to the Tape' - This is just repeating the same point that has already been answered above.

"or that there were gurus, waiting in the sidelines, ready to take on the role of *diksa*."

[F0]

This is called character assassination. The phrase "waiting in the sidelines" implies that the future gurus were lustfully hankering after that role. Thus, Mr. Desai is trying to imply that Srila Prabhupada's intimate disciples were eagerly waiting to take over his role as guru.

Category 5 Error - 'Miscellaneous' - Unfortunately history shows that these 11 individuals were indeed eager to take on the

role, unauthorisedly installing big *vyasanas* etc. Indeed the sponsor of this very paper, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu, very incisively wrote about what someone in the future would write about what happened:

“But just after his passing away, his leading secretaries made plans, without authority, to occupy the post of *acarya*. The single international society established by Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada gradually split up into many small, local movements, each headed by a single self-made *acarya*. Consequently, all these factions were *asara*, or useless, because they had no authority, having disobeyed the order of the spiritual master.”

(“*Under My Order*”, 1985, H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu)

If the author feels that ‘*waiting in the sidelines*’ is heavy, maybe he needs to have a few words with his sponsor!

“Thus, at least as far as direct evidence is concerned, there appears to be nothing to support assumptions a) and b) referred to above. As stated, these assumptions - that the *ritvik* system should have stopped at departure, and that the *ritviks* must then become *diksa* gurus - form the very basis of ISKCONs current guru system. If they prove to be invalid then there will certainly need to be a radical re-think by the GBC.”

[FO]

With the word “assumptions” Mr. Desai is begging the question. It has not been established that Srila Prabhupada’s disciple would not initiated disciples of their own. In fact, from the May 28 conversation Srila Prabhupada’s desire is clear. This is yet another attempt by the author to ignore the order given on May 28.

Category No 1. Error - ‘Appeal to the Tape’ - Again the author just keeps stating the very thing that needs to be proven -

- DID Srila Prabhupada order the *ritviks* to go on and initiate their own disciples after he departed?

As we show in the FO, the tape does not reveal any order for the *ritviks* to initiate their own disciples, or for the *ritvik* system to stop. Plus this statement by the author ‘*It has not been established that Srila Prabhupada’s disciples would not initiate disciples of their own*’ is a ‘*classic argumentative blunder, a textbook fallacy*’, in the words of H.H. Jayadwaita Swami:

“One must support one’s views by evidence, not by assertions that a lack of counter-evidence makes them true. Enough said.”

(“*Where the ritvik People are Wrong*”, H.H. Jayadwaita Swami, 1996)

Maharaja also teaches the same point in his ‘*Strong Speaking, Clear Thinking*’ course. One does not need to establish a negative. That will always be the normal state of affairs in the absence of any evidence. Thus, the onus is on the other side to present that evidence. The FO and the ‘*Final Order Still Stands*’ have already established that such evidence does not exist on the tape.

“The above sets the scene. The instruction itself, supporting instructions and subsequent instructions only support the continuation of the *ritvik* system.”

[FO]

This is a lie. There is nothing to support the continuation of the *ritvik* system, as imagined by the *ritvikvadis*, on Srila Prabhupada’s departure.

Category 5 Error - ‘Miscellaneous’ - The absurdity of this statement by the author is proven by the existence of the words ‘*continue*’, ‘*for the future*’ and ‘*henceforward*’, which have all been used in conjunction with the July 9th instruction. All these words mean a continuation. Whether or not that continuation exists past Srila Prabhupada’s departure will depend on whether or not the author can provide any contrary evidence to bring about a dis-continuation of the system at departure. All the author has done is ask us to accept the already defeated arguments that were presented by ‘*Disciple of My Disciple*’ originally. A paper that he himself contradicts on several key issues, as already demonstrated.

“It is admitted by all concerned that Srila Prabhupada did not give any order to terminate the *ritvik* system on his physical departure.”

[FO]

Another lie. It is not admitted by all concerned.

Category 5 Error - Miscellaneous - DOMD has already admitted that the *ritvik* system is not even MENTIONED on the tape:

In the present conversation, Srila Prabhupada does not refer to proxy initiations at all, not even in connection with the word “*ritvik*.”

[DOMD]

- How then can there be an order to terminate an entity that is not even mentioned?

Of course, DOMD argues that Srila Prabhupada established gurus for after his departure, and by implication, this would **SUBSTITUTE/REPLACE** the *ritvik* system. However, our original statement remains accurate - No order to **TERMINATE THE *ritvik* SYSTEM** is given on the tape - and this is accepted by DOMD.

"It is further accepted by all concerned that Srila Prabhupada did set up the *ritvik* system to operate from July 9th onwards."

[F0]

More lies. It is not accepted by all concerned that Srila Prabhupada set up a *ritvik* system to operate from July 9 onwards.

Category 5 Error - Miscellaneous - We have already answered this point in our '*contradictions*' section above by quoting from H.H. Jayadwaita Swami's paper. The very paper that the chairman of the protection ministry responsible for dealing with this issue on behalf of the GBC, who is also a GBC executive member, has said we should refer to for evidence on this issue. Thus this point is accepted by the GBC and us.

Maybe the author is representing some 3rd organisation like the Gaudiya Matha, in which case we would have to withdraw our statement.

"The onus of proof will naturally fall on those who wish to terminate any system put in place by our *acarya*, and left to run henceforward. This is an obvious point; one can not just stop following the order of the guru whimsically:"

[F0]

Here Mr. Desai is shifting the blame. The onus of proof falls on the *ritvik* people because they are ignoring the May 28 conversation. Also they are suggesting we institute a system that has no basis in guru, *sadhu*, and *sastra*. Clearly the burden of proof is on them.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal To The Tape' - The author has tied himself in knots here:

1. We do **NOT** ignore the tape as has been pointed out repeatedly.
2. If the tape **DID** terminate the *ritvik* system, then the matter would be settled. There would be nothing left to prove for either side and thus '*onus of proof*' becomes irrelevant.
3. Thus until the tape **CAN** be shown to be terminating the *ritvik* system, the onus of proof has to be on those who are proposing to change the order of the *acarya* - a change that the author has already admitted is not mentioned in the letter:

It is only that there is no direct indication in it of when the system should stop or change.

Therefore, the author is admitting that in presenting the tape as evidence for change the onus is on HIM. Whether or not the evidence is valid is another issue, but the author has tacitly agreed that the onus of proof is on him, since he is the one who is seeking to justify the change to the order of Srila Prabhupada given in the letter.

4. We are not seeking to institute anything. Srila Prabhupada already instituted the system on July 9th letter. We are simply seeking to **FOLLOW** it till we have evidence that we should stop following. If the author is arguing that following the system past departure is against 'guru, *sadhu* and *sastra*' then let him demonstrate this and that also will be enough to persuade us to stop. However, that is the whole point. The reason why the *ritvik* idea is now taking over ISKCON is because for many years we have simply been **TOLD** that either '*it was terminated on the tape*' or that it was 'against guru, *sadhu* and *sastra*', but these points have never been **DEMONSTRATED**, just re-stated. The FO has simply called the GBC's bluff, and they have been found wanting.

"Since there is no direct evidence stating that the *ritvik* system should have been abandoned on Srila Prabhupada's physical departure, the case for abandoning it can therefore only be based on indirect evidence."

[F0]

This is a lie. The May 28 conversation is direct evidence of Srila Prabhupada's desire for a traditional Vedic system of initiation, the *guru-parampara*.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal To The Tape' - The author is now sounding like a broken record. He is following the maxim that if you repeat something enough times people may believe it. Thus, his whole paper seems to so far have had only 2 responses - '*It's a lie*' or '*It's on the tape*'. Unfortunately for the author, we are no longer in the zonal *acarya* days when such pronouncements would be accepted as gospel. Nowadays devotees wish to see **EVIDENCE** for such claims - evidence, which has **NOT** been supplied in his paper - just a continual repeating of these hollow claims.

Further, it is strange that the author is stating that his version of events on the tape is a '*traditional vedic system of initiation*'. DOMD states that on the tape Srila Prabhupada is appointing '*ritviks*' who double up as *diksa* gurus on Srila Prabhupada's departure - that a *ritvik* is non-different to a *diksa* guru. Yet the GBC themselves, headed up by the sponsor of this paper H.G.

Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu told us in their official *'ISKCON Journal'* that there 'is no such word as *ritvik* in the vaisnava dictionary!' In fact so desperate were they to get this statement they went to H.H. Narayana Maharaja who is now regarded as an archenemy by the GBC. Now the very word, which does **not** exist in the '*vaisnava dictionary*'; has become the very basis for a '**traditional Vedic system of initiation**'!

- How much longer will the GBC go on like this?

"There is nothing in the letter that says the instruction was only meant for whilst Srila Prabhupada was physically present. In fact, the only information given supports the continuation of the *ritvik* system after Srila Prabhupada's departure."

[F0]

Here Mr. Desai gives a false argument. The July 9 letter refers back to the May 28 conversation, where the order is given.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal To The Tape' - But the letter does not just '*refer*' to the tape. If it is referring to the May 28th conversation, then it states that what follows in the letter is what **HAPPENED** on the tape:

"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 ..."

(July 9th Letter)

There is no mention here that the letter will then proceed to omit whatever information the author claims is on the tape to support his case.

Thus by using this argument the author has foolishly invalidated his central argument that the tape modifies the letter, and '*terminates the ritvik system*'.

- Since the letter is simply the record of the tape, how then can the letter be modified by itself?

"It is significant to note that within the July 9th letter it is stated three times that those initiated would become Srila Prabhupada's disciples. The GBC in presenting evidence for the current guru system have argued vigorously that Srila Prabhupada had already made it clear that, as far as he was concerned, it was an inviolable law that no one could initiate in his presence. Thus the necessity to state Srila Prabhupada's ownership of future disciples must indicate that the instruction was intended to operate during a time period when the ownership could even have been an issue."

[F0]

This is a case of avoiding the obvious. The May 28 instruction was given in the presence of only a few people. The July 9 letter was sent to devotees all over the world, most of whom might not have heard of the May 28 conversation, or if they had heard of it, might not have known when Srila Prabhupada's disciples would start initiating. It is for the benefit of these people that the letter specifies that the new initiates would be Srila Prabhupada's disciples. Otherwise, people might think that the disciples had already begun to accept disciples.

Category 5 - 'Miscellaneous' - Why would anyone think that Srila Prabhupada's disciples would accept disciples whilst Srila Prabhupada was present?

Especially when the '*law of disciplic succession*' is supposed to have been preached continuously by Srila Prabhupada from the very beginning.

The order is stated six times in the May 28 conversation:

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

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

2. **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 hana*. Be actually guru, but by my order.

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

Prabhupada: They're his disciple.

4. **Prabhupada:** Who is initiating. He is grand disciple.

5. **Prabhupada:** When I order, "You become guru," he becomes regular guru. That's all.

6. He becomes *Disciple of My Disciple*. That's it.

Category 1 Error - 'Appeal to the Tape' - Finally, rather than keep referring us to DOMD, the author himself ventures to offer some evidence for the first time in his paper. We will now examine each of these 6 '*orders*' to see if an '*order*' is indeed given, and what precisely is being ordered:

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

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

Srila Prabhupada here states that 'the person who gives the initiation' is the 'guru'. There is nothing new here. Neither is there any 'order' here. If there is, we would like to know how the phrase 'He's Guru', is an 'order'. It is an answer to a question about 'who gives the initiation'.

- **To whom is this 'order' supposedly, being directed at?**

It can not be to the *ritviks*, since they do not yet exist - Srila Prabhupada has only indicated that he will name some in the future. Also, so far at this point there is no evidence that the *ritvik* 'will give the initiation', for Srila Prabhupada up to this point has only defined a '*ritvik*' as a priest **NOT** a *Diksa* Guru (see FO page 27 for all 32 separate references). So no 'order' is found here, that's for sure.

2. 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 hana. Be actually guru, but by my order.*

- **Now if an order to be guru is supposed to have been given here then where is it given?**

DOMD claims that the words 'on my order' IS the order to be guru.

- But to whom is the order given?
- To the *ritviks* that do not yet exist?
- To Satsvarupa to whom Srila Prabhupada is speaking?
- To everyone who happens to be listening?
- To all of Srila Prabhupada's disciples?

In addition, Srila Prabhupada is simply repeating the 'on my order' phrase as used by Lord Caitanya 500 years ago. DOMD itself states that this order given by Lord Caitanya does not need to be repeated.

- So, why does Srila Prabhupada need to repeat it here to indicate that he is giving an order?
- In addition, Srila Prabhupada quoted this phrase from Lord Caitanya many times before. Was he also ordering anyone who heard it then to become a *diksa* guru?
- If yes why does Srila Prabhupada need to repeat an order he has already given hundreds of times?
- If no, why on this occasion do these 3 words suddenly become some magic dispensation to immediately become *diksa* gurus once Srila Prabhupada leaves?

All these points were made originally the first time that DOMD made it. They were unanswered then and they still remain unanswered to this very day. The author would do well therefore to answer them, instead of merely re-cycling previously defeated arguments.

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

Prabhupada: They're his disciple.

Here Srila Prabhupada is stating the ownership of disciples. How again this is an 'order' beggars belief. Further if we accept the transcript for the tape offered by the publisher of this paper, and not the author, this ownership of disciples becomes attributed to Srila Prabhupada. This is since in the very next phrase Srila Prabhupada states:

'Who is initiating. **HIS** grand-disciple.'

(Author's version - Who is initiating. **He is** Grand-disciple.)

The **HIS** here definitely refers to Srila Prabhupada.

- Thus before we even discuss this further the author needs to first explain why we should not accept the transcript approved by his sponsor and which has been '*checked and corrected*' by H.H. Jayadwaita Maharaja?

Especially since anyone who listens to the tape will not hear the **TWO words** that are required to be spoken to render the author's version correct.

4. Prabhupada: Who is initiating. He is grand-disciple.

We have already covered this above. Again regardless of the transcript, this is not an 'order'.

5. **Prabhupada:** When I order, "You become guru," he becomes regular guru. That's all.

There has been much arguing by DOMD that this phrase does not have to refer to an order to be given in the future. Even if that is the case, the phrase above can not itself be an order, since it simply refers to a time 'when' such an order is given. Whether that time is in the future, or already occurred, it can not be at the precise moment the phrase is spoken.

6. He becomes *Disciple of My Disciple*. That's it.

Again, the author is confusing a **CONSEQUENCE** if an order **WAS** given. Whether or not that order is given earlier on, the tape is another issue. The one thing that is clear is that **THIS** phrase is not the 'order'

In summary we find it highly foolish of the author to try and claim that all of these 6 phrase were 'orders'; when even DOMD only claims that phrase 2 and the words 'On My Order' was the actual **ISSUING** of the order, and the other phrases simply talking about the consequences of the order having being issued. And as we have seen above, even this 'On My Order' is not evidence of Srila Prabhupada having issued an order for 11 of his disciples to become *diksa* gurus immediately upon his departure from the planet.

"2. The letter does not specifically say this system will continue after Srila Prabhupada's departure; therefore, it was right to stop the *ritvik* system at Srila Prabhupada's departure."

[FO]

This is another *straw man*. This is not the argument presented. The real argument is that Srila Prabhupada gave the order on May 28. This argument has never been defeated.

Category 1 - 'Appeal to the Tape' - Unless arguments have been substantiated there is nothing to 'defeat'. You merely have unsubstantiated assertion, which defeats itself through a lack of evidence. To simply say there is an 'order' does not actually present anything to defeat, since first the actual 'order' must be produced. Thus, the author will **FIRST** have to produce this magical 'order'. Then we can discuss 'defeating' it. As we have seen, for 20 years the GBC have claimed the existence of this 'order' via many devices, depending on which particular interpretation of the tape they happened to have been trumpeting at that time. However so far, when asked to actually locate and specify the exact words used to give this order, DOMD has only come up with 'On My Order'. This assertion however has been shown to be false in the 'Final Order Still Stands'. The author meanwhile has attempted to give **6 'orders'**. Upon examination of his 'evidence', we found no such 'orders' but merely statements of principle and relationships.

"3. The letter also does not state: The *ritvik* system should only run until the departure of Srila Prabhupada. Yet it was only allowed to run till his departure."

[FO]

In the May 28th conversation Srila Prabhupada gave clear directions how initiations were to take place after his departure. These directions were consistent with his teachings as well as guru, *sadhu*, and *sastra*. Mr. Desai of TFO continually tries to create the idea that Srila Prabhupada instituted a proxy-guru system in ISKCON. The fact is that the term *ritvik* was not even introduced by Srila Prabhupada himself. He just accepted the term when it was introduced by Tamal Krishna Goswami, and from his usage of the word it is clear that he did not take it to be synonymous with the term proxy-guru. Thus, the point made above in TFO is moot.

1. DOMD states that on the tape Srila Prabhupada spoke of appointing '*ritviks*' who would act as *diksa* gurus. Yet up until that time Srila Prabhupada had only ever used the word *ritvik* to denote priest - never *diksa* guru. For *diksa* guru he had used words such as '*diksa*' or '*initiating*' guru. He had certainly never used the term '*officiating acarya*' to denote a *diksa* guru. So immediately, we see there is nothing '*consistent*' with Srila Prabhupada's teachings according to DOMD version of events.
2. How can the term *ritvik* not even have been '*introduced*' by Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada had already used the term many times in his books before H.H. Tamala Krishna Maharaja even brought it up. Further when Srila Prabhupada stated he was going to appoint '*officiating acaryas*' why did H.H. Tamala Krishna Maharaja immediately think that Srila Prabhupada was talking of '*ritviks*' when Srila Prabhupada had never previously used the term to denote a '*regular*' *diksa* guru.
3. Srila Prabhupada uses the word *ritvik* in the July 9th letter, which according to DOMD is the '*follow-up*' to the use of the word '*ritvik*' on May 28th. DOMD admits that on July 9th Srila Prabhupada used the word *ritvik* to mean proxy.
4. We have already produced evidence from H.G. Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu that the word *ritvik* can **ONLY** exist in Srila Prabhupada's presence i.e as '*proxies*'.
5. Also on the tape Srila Prabhupada could **NEVER** have said 'Yes' to the question:

'So they can also be considered your disciples.'

if there was no 'proxy' relationship.

To round off we will take one more point from much further on in the paper to demonstrate that it does not get any better:

And its a fact that Srila Prabhupada never said alright here is the next *acarya*, or here is the next eleven *acaryas* and they are authorized gurus for the movement, for the world. He did not do that."

(Ravindra Svarupa das, San Diego debate, 1990)

This argument is called a Red Herring. A Red Herring is meant to distract the reader with an irrelevant argument. The fact that Srila Prabhupada did not specifically appoint anyone or any 11 does not change the fact that he wanted all of his disciples to initiate. In fact, it confirms it.

Category 5 Error - 'Miscellaneous' - Here we have the amazing claim that the fact that Srila Prabhupada did **NOT** do something **CONFIRMS** that he wanted something else. Thus the fact that Srila Prabhupada did **NOT** appoint anyone as guru **CONFIRMS** that he wanted everyone to initiate! How not doing the one thing is supposed to be confirmation of the other simply defies belief.

- How can the fact that Srila Prabhupada does **NOT** appoint people as guru be simultaneously **CONFIRMING** that he wanted them to initiate?

At this point we will stop. The reader will no doubt by now have got the gist of this latest offering since we have covered well over 10% of it 'point for point'. The issue of the evidence of the tape has been extensively covered both in the FO and in the '*Final Order Still Stands*'. The arguments presented therein still to this day remained unanswered.

Careful readers will have noted that earlier we said '*virtually all*' the points the current GBC reply made were invalid. We concede the paper does make one point, which the GBC should do well to imbibe. Having done so it will surely find no problem at all in adopting Srila Prabhupada's July 9th policy directive. To finish off we will leave you with this point:

Furthermore, the GBC's logic, right or wrong, is not the basis by which we choose which system to follow. The basis is Srila Prabhupada's instruction.

Amen to that.

Thank you for your continued patience.

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