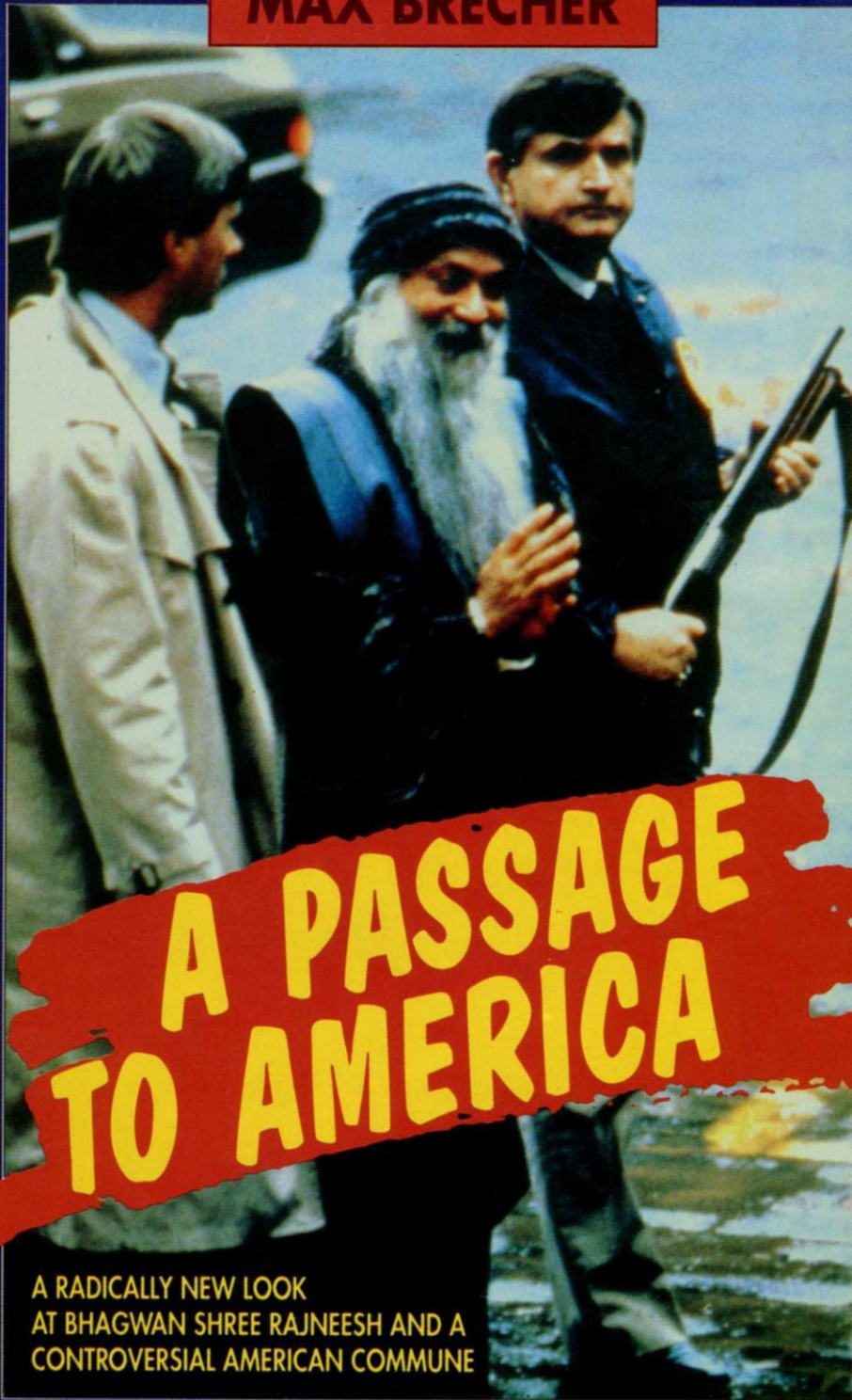


MAX BRECHER



A PASSAGE TO AMERICA

A RADICALLY NEW LOOK
AT BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH AND A
CONTROVERSIAL AMERICAN COMMUNE

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My apologies to the chap who designed this cover. I can no longer remember his name.

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INTRODUCTION

Such "historic" dates, in which the influence of Cecil B. DeMille may be noted, bear less relation to history than to journalism. I have long suspected that history, true history, is far more modest, and that its essential dates may well be, for a long time, secret as well. A Chinese writer of prose has observed that the unicorn, for the very reason that it is so anomalous, will pass unnoticed. Our eyes see what they are accustomed to see.¹

Tragedy, then, is the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly.... More important, from this total questioning of what has previously been unquestioned, we learn. And such a process is not beyond the common man. In revolutions around the world, these past thirty years, he has demonstrated again and again this inner dynamic of all tragedy.²

This book about Osho Rajneesh - formerly known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh - and his controversial American commune of Rajneeshpuram is, as the ancient Romans used to say, about everything and something else besides. God, politics, humor, wisdom, international intrigue, assassination plots, sex and the Vatican. It contains huge, unforgettable chunks from the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who, often in direct conflict with each other, passionately believed in the absolute rightness of their "causes".

It consists of a fair sampling from modern history and also deals with the very nature of human existence. Calling it "sensational" is opting for a minimalist interpretation. At the top end of the scale it threatens to submerge writer and readers in an overdose of details and drown them in an emotional bloodbath.

You as a potential reader might ask, "Why retell a story that has already been told many times before?". Indeed, I have often been asked this very same question by publishers who wanted to brush it and me off and avoid the risks of publishing what had – and has - the potential to become a snap it up item.

My response is simple. "Because it has never been properly told. Never been adequately researched, documented, taken apart and painstakingly pieced together. And what's more, it's too important to get wrong."

Authors with an external, allegedly objective perspective have all too often relied more on refusal than refutation. Without evidence, logic or coherent argument, they have categorically dismissed Rajneesh, the man and his claim to embody a bliss and wisdom "which passeth understanding". As if they themselves had reached some higher plane of existence and were miraculously above his state.

¹Jorge Luis Borges, "The Modesty of History"

² Arthur Miller, "The Tragedy of the Common Man". Originally published in *The New York Times*, February 27, 1949.

They have often portrayed him in the worst light possible, casting sinister, conspiratorial aspersions on every word, gesture and intention. The extent of their animosity can be gauged by their frequent failure to even get his name right. Thus instead of calling him Rajneesh, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, or Osho, they have used "the Bhagwan" and "the Rajneesh".

On the other hand, those who continue to love and revere him - and demonstrate those sentiments by gathering in large numbers at sannyasin centers around the world and what is now known as the Osho International Meditation Resort in Poona, India - have told insiders' stories. But too often those have been depictions of their own insides. What happened to them and how they felt. Vivid and valid as those experiences of total immersion and transformation are, they often fail to create a picture large and persuasive enough for those who haven't been there and done that.

Thus for different reasons no one has come close to telling this tale as, in my opinion, it should be told. Rajneesh's rise, it is true, is moderately well known. But the fall is a travesty of reporting on all fronts.

While applauding my own efforts I readily admit that I am grateful to all those who have walked the trail ahead of me. And while I am not the proverbial dwarf standing on their shoulders, I have benefited from both their correct and incorrect readings. Hopefully, my inevitable shortcomings will one day be surpassed by something much better. I can hardly wait.

This volume is based on thousands of media reports from the period, legal, historical, sociological and religious research, and about 100 formal and informal interviews with government officials, lawyers and sannyasins in the United States, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, Greece, India and Italy. It does not seek to square circles or build bridges across the chasms separating those who would praise Rajneesh and those who would bury him. But it does seek to dredge up the exactly what happened, when and why from the murky depths of myth, hysteria and straight black propaganda.

What readers do with this new information and light is their business, not mine.

Like any major historical work, this undertaking is the effort of more than one person. I have received a great deal of direct assistance and encouragement from many people. Some had gathered and organized archives full of legal records and newspaper clippings and radio and television reports. Others helped with the interviews, travel arrangements and transcriptions of the recorded conversations. Many shared their time, experiences and opinions with me.

But I have never depended on the interpretations and interpolations of others. I did the legwork, got my hands smudged in the stacks, did a lot of sneezing when box after box was brought out, and reconstructed events in three ways: impossible, possible and probable. At the end of the day, the beginning and all points in between, I alone am responsible for the choices made.

I have tried to follow what Buddha called "the middle way" and the *Upanishads*, ancient Indian books of wisdom, "the razor's edge" by steering a course between the shallows of outsider "objectivity" and the deep blue sea of insider "subjectivity". Between a slow thoroughness conducive towards understanding and solid, stand the test of time conclusions and the dramatic demands of a good read.

Critics who find the course swerving too much hither and thither are asked to remember the uncommon territories we are passing through and cut me some slack.

Those familiar with the first edition of this volume should know that this is a totally revised work. The stress then was on stop the presses scoop journalism. Here I have delved more into the rich academic literature on this and related topics and been more generous with the use of footnotes. There are more than 1500 of them.

Without sacrificing rigor and accuracy, I have also opted for a more literary approach. Appropriate rhythms, telling metaphors, and more precisely chosen words. The results are, in my opinion, a stronger, tighter argument and more pleasing peruse.

There's also a whole new chapter (13), which was originally intended to be a brief appendix on yellow journalism – with particular emphasis on *The Oregonian* – and then spun out to become the longest chapter in the book. It should be noted that the first 20 pages of that chapter were sent in a slightly different form to about 40 newspapers and television stations in Oregon – including *The Oregonian* - and not a single one of them deemed it or me worth a response.

So much for the quality of that state's journalism. At least as far as this theme is concerned.

On the upside, there was one Oregon journalist who was very much interested in me and my work. Eric Cain of Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB). He eventually came out with a visually beautiful and basically well balanced documentary (premiering in November 2012, now available online at <http://www.opb.org/programs/oregonexperience/programs/41-Rajneeshpuram>).

After watching it I complimented him on his stroke of editorial genius. Basically sucking out most of the *Sturm, Drang* and hysterical lopsidedness from the subject and situating it in the once upon a time in Oregon style. A clash of civilizations. But he chose, correctly, I believe, to sidestep most of the information focused on here. After all, there's only so much you can squeeze into an hour of even the best television.

Here's as good a place as any to make some clarifying comment about names. One, while technically speaking "Rajneeshpuram" refers to the legal entity of a city – 2,135 acres out of the 126 square miles of Rancho Rajneesh - I almost always use it to refer to the whole place. Two, throughout most of the 1970s and 1980s Rajneesh was known to his disciples - *sannyasins* - as "Bhagwan". Bhagwan is a multi-faceted Sanskrit word that can mean anything from "God" to "The Blessed One".

Then, in December 1988 and January 1989, he announced in a series of discourses that he was definitely dropping the name "Bhagwan".³ Alternatives were played with and in the spring of 1989, "Osho" was selected. The name was derived from "oceanic", a word coined by the great American pragmatist philosopher and psychologist, William James.

According to James, oceanic feeling or experience refers to a blissful state of cosmic consciousness, of contact with the universal currents of existence. Something that, by his own admission, he could only read, write and dream about.

Rajneesh coined the name, "Osho", to refer to the individual who experiences this state. For the sake of simplicity and neutrality, I will refer to him throughout as "Rajneesh" or "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh". Unless otherwise stated, emphasis in the text comes from the original sources.

³ "And from now onwards I am Gautam the Buddha. You can call me 'The Beloved Friend.' Drop the word 'Bhagwan' completely." (Rajneesh, *No Mind: The Flowers of Eternity*, Chapter 1, December 26, 1988. For more on the friend aspect, see Chapter 2, note 51.) Another transition name was "Bhante" (*Ibid.*, Chapter 3, December 28, 1988). A note on the Rajneesh quotes used throughout this book. They have been pulled from the Osho Foundation International's "Silver Platter" (April 1995), a no longer commercially available CD that contains most, but not all, of his then published English discourses and some of the translated Hindi ones. Those will be referenced according to book, chapter and date (not page numbers).

CHAPTER 1: LAST THINGS FIRST

Critical mass in a scandal is achieved when half of the wild rumors turn out to be true, and people start giving the other half their undivided attention. This is when official denials have the same effect as matches on gasoline.⁴

I think that an interest in narration is part of our mode of being in the world. It answers our essential need to hear what has happened, what men have done, what they have the power to do: risks, adventures, trials of all sorts. We are not here in the world like stones, unable to move, or like flowers or insects, whose life is wholly laid out in advance: we are beings of adventure. And man will never be able to do without listening to stories.⁵

After watching the Kansas City Royals stomp the St. Louis Cardinals 11-0 in the seventh game of the 1985 World Series, Ron Taylor, Special United States Customs Agent in Charlotte, North Carolina, went to bed. Just after 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) he was awakened by the phone and turned on the light to answer it. On the other end was that Sunday night's duty officer. He relayed a top priority message that had been heating up a national law enforcement network.

Approximately three hours earlier two Learjets, rented at the rate of \$1,000 an hour each, had taken off from the controversial religious commune city of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in Central Oregon. Rajneesh himself was on board one of those planes, fleeing the country to avoid arrest.

From about 10:20 p.m. EST - 7:20 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) - Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) officials had been "flight following" the two aircraft, first without formal US Customs' request, then with. From the very beginning the story being passed on from Portland to Seattle to Salt Lake City to Denver, Kansas City, Atlanta and Charlotte was confused. But it was exciting and something to laugh at or get morally outraged about, and it was better than a thermos of coffee to help you survive yet another graveyard shift.

Tom Price, the Area Manager in Charge (AMIC) of Air Route Traffic Control Center in Salt Lake City, told Wayne Peterson, the AMIC in Denver, about the "clan" and "absconding with something or other. I don't know all the details. It's none of my business". But then Price made it his business, big time. Calling and re-calling and making sure Peterson got the exact tail numbers of the planes and the telephone numbers of the people he was supposed to call.

But even before Price's alert Peterson was clued into those people and more than ready to play ball. "Yeah. I used to be in Seattle. I know what they did to that state of Oregon."⁶

⁴ Alexander Cockburn, *Corruptions of Empire: Life Studies & the Reagan Era*

⁵ Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth : Conversations With Claude-Henri Rocquet*

⁶ These conversations, sometimes garbled and hard to understand, have been pulled directly from FAA recordings in real time.

Price mentioned the pilot of the "November 58 Foxtrot Foxtrot" - a Learjet 35 with tail numbers N58FF. "Actually, she's a lady pilot. They don't expect her to actually land at this destination.⁷ They figure she's going to change route in the air. And the Seattle AMIC needs to know that. And he will forward it to the Customs or the FBI. It's quite a high priority."

By the time Atlanta was passing the tale and tail numbers on to Charlotte the "dialogue" was so rapid fire it's impossible to sort out who is saying what to whom. "Skip", or someone else, was saying, "On both aircraft they say are ... have prisoners on board.... He's transporting bad guys, hardened criminals." The lowdown everyone was getting came straight from Customs agents in Portland, Oregon.

"They said that Rajneesh's security people carried Uzi machine guns," Taylor told me 3½ years after the events. He was 40 at the time, enviably fit, quick and still full of boyish bravado. "The only thing I knew about the Bhagwan had been on *60 Minutes* and it did show him being accompanied by security people. That was one of the highlights of the story. I remember the tight security he had. And the fact that he was attempting to flee the country in the middle of the night, and possibly traveling with some armed people meant we would have to be extremely cautious. In cases of fleeing felons or drug cases and things like that, you are always on guard for weapons."

Meanwhile, Matt Shelly, managing news editor at *KGW* television in Portland, was using publicly available information to track the planes. He had actually become aware of the flight moments after the Learjets had taken off. Two hours before the government officials.

It was early evening, around 5:30 p.m.,⁸ when one of our charter pilots who was on the east side of the Cascades for the weekend called and said that he had heard a radio call of two Learjets leaving the ranch. And thought that we might find that of interest. He also gave us the tail numbers. Knowing the conditions at the ranch at that time, you didn't have to be a genius to figure out what that meant.

Around 10 p.m. PST - 1 a.m. EST - Shelly learned that the planes were going to land in Charlotte and was frantically trying to arrange live television coverage of the event. "We tried to get someone out of bed to cover it. We didn't have an NBC affiliate in Charlotte with news coverage at that time. Our bureau in Washington, DC couldn't get there in time. NBC dispatched a crew from Atlanta, but they were an hour late."

Taylor in Charlotte originally thought the late night call was a joke, but eventually got dressed and left his stunning blonde wife in bed. He raced through the damp, late October night to Thurston Aviation, a private terminal at the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. On his license plate was the state's motto: "First in Flight". For it was at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, that man first flew in a heavier than air craft.

⁷ Charlotte

⁸ 5:30 PST, 8:30 p.m. EST

It was heading towards 1 a.m., Monday, October 28, when Taylor, who was put in charge of the operation, was huddling in the deserted Thurston Aviation lobby with other Customs agents, a couple of airport police and three deputy US marshals. The control tower had been ordered to steer the two Learjets to Thurston. The cops would wait quietly for them there and arrest everyone on arrival. Those had been the orders handed down by Portland Customs, Taylor said. "Arrest everybody on both planes! Including the pilots!"

While Taylor and his men were inventing tactics, another Customs officer rushed in with his weapons, bulletproof vest, and two Charlotte city policemen in hot pursuit. Chased across two counties, he had failed to stop and identify himself. The cops, who thought he had stolen the car and was attempting to flee, wanted to arrest him.

"And we said, 'No way!' We said, 'We're glad you're here, because the Bhagwan's coming in here. Do you know who the Bhagwan is?' And they said, 'Yes, we've heard about him.' We said, 'We need your help. We need all the officers we can get.' That's how it happened. So they radioed back to their headquarters for permission to assist in the arrest, and got their guns out of the trunks of their cars. One of them had a high powered rifle with a scope on it."

By 1:30 a.m. there were about 12 of them, armed with shotguns, sawed off shotguns and 30.06 rifles. The first plane, a Learjet 24, landed. But instead of stopping at Thurston's, it taxied on 500 yards towards Butler Aviation. That threw Taylor's plan and Taylor himself out of whack. All the cops bolted out the door and tore off in their cars and on foot the 500 yards towards Butler. "Just stop that plane until we get there," he ordered. "Hold it any way you can!"

"Of course, our adrenaline was starting to pump at that time. It's dark outside. The car was stopped outside the plane. The plane⁹ is a large plane, you know. The agents had their weapons out and had their weapons pointed at the plane. Our officer, Pat Durkin, was yelling, 'Pilots, put your hands on the windshield of the cockpit!' And you could see the hands on the windshield of the cockpit. He ordered them out of the plane. The door opened.

"Things were starting to cook. I mean really cooking! Things were happening so fast. We had to get everybody off the plane. There were a couple of males and a couple of females. We didn't even have time to get their names. I said, 'Get them out of here! Put them in the terminal! Now! Take them in there, now! Now!' Because you could hear the other plane landing. So I assigned a couple of people to take them in to the terminal and watch them. There were a few lights out there, a few cars, and we huddled for a minute or so.

"'Look, what's the plan now?' we asked each other. We didn't know what, if anything, the first plane had radioed to the second plane. We were seeing the worst. We were seeing that maybe they had time to notify the other plane. 'Hey, the gig is up. Law enforcement

⁹ a Learjet 24

officers are here. Don't land, or, if you land, bring the guns.' We decided to let them land and deplane. But, if for any reason, the plane backs up and starts to leave, I told the police officer with the high powered rifle to shoot the tire out. 'Do not let the plane leave!' If it came to that, and we could do it without harming anyone, we would do it. If not, we would let it go.

"We all thought later that it would be a good movie, like a comedy of errors. Almost everybody was laying [sic, "lying"] under a car, and you could barely get under one. It was wet too! I could see everybody was kind of hiding. Under those circumstances, you kind of joke around, shouting to each other, 'HEY! HEY! HUH! HUH!' I do remember thinking and I got to giggling to myself. 'This is hilarious. Here I am a grown man, laying under a car, waiting for the Bhagwan. I hope he's on that second plane. Because if he's not, we in trouble.'

"Anyway, the plane came and pulled in besides the first one. It sat there for a long time with its engines running. We got a little worried about that, wondering if maybe they smelled a rat. We found out later that they left the engine running because the Bhagwan didn't want the air conditioning shut off. But we didn't know that. It complicated our situation. At any rate, laying under the car, all I could see was the wheels of the plane and maybe its belly. Then I saw the doorway coming down and I saw people's legs. I said, 'Rush them! Let's go!'"

"I probably wasn't too quick. I probably was not too anxious to get out there. You get nervous at times. Everybody scattered. Everybody was yelling, 'Federal agents! Get your hands up! You're under arrest! Freeze! Stop! Freeze!' It was dark. I ran to the right."

"It's a situation where you could almost wind up shooting each other," I suggested.

"That was a big concern. People started running. One of the female pilots was very frightened. I was screaming. She was just running, not towards the terminal. People had jumped out from behind cars, yelling, 'Federal agents! Freeze!' She panicked. And she wasn't the only one. Things were happening really fast. Everybody was yelling and screaming. I could understand her position. I came out of the complete dark, and she saw me with a .357 magnum pistol in my hand. 'Hold it right there,' I yelled. 'Where are you going?' I thought she was fleeing. She was frightened, and later she started crying."

Taylor admitted that "assault type tactics" were used in the arrest. "This did equal a more combat type situation than serving a warrant on a businessman."

"I think Pat Durkin and another agent cautiously went in the plane, with their weapons drawn and a flashlight on and yelled out, 'Get your hands up! Federal agents! You're under arrest!' And nobody would move their hands up. And they just yelled it repeatedly, 'Get your hands up! Get your hands up!' And they wouldn't do it. Just yelling and screaming, 'Get your hands up!' And they wouldn't do it. 'Get 'em up! Get 'em up! Get 'em up!' And they wouldn't do it, wouldn't do it, wouldn't do it. So they eased down there

and they literally got in their face. He said the Bhagwan's eyes just bulged out of his head from sheer surprise. And he raised his hands slowly and said, "Take it easy."

"The first I saw him he's coming out of the plane. I said, 'You come over here to me.' I had the Bhagwan brought to me. We treated him very nicely and courteously. 'Sir, put your hands on the wings.' And he put his hands on the wings. 'Spread your legs,' we said. He never said anything. He was not very cooperative. He wouldn't spread his legs.¹⁰ I said to him several times, 'Look, spread your legs, pal.' I think he was more frightened than anything. He just didn't know what to do. And he had his little hat on. What do you call it? I lifted it up to see if there was anything under there - nothing there - and I put it back on his head. He was handcuffed. And he never said a word."

Matt Shelly, the Portland news editor was on the phone to a guy at the airport who pumped gas. "Can you tell me what's going on," Shelly asked.

"Shit," said the man in Charlotte. "There's cops all over the place. All over the place. Nothing but suits out here."

"Is there anything happening?"

"Well, a Learjet just pulled up and they grabbed some guy the minute he got off. As I'm talking to you, they're walking him off the tarmac here."

"What does he look like?"

"He looks like Santa Claus."

"That was around five minutes to 11 p.m. our time," Shelly told me. 1:55 a.m. in Charlotte. John Tuttle, a major *KGW* newscaster was already in front of the camera in the newsroom. "And we went with it right at eleven. We acted as if it had literally just happened. The only thing we didn't have then was pictures. We certainly beat everybody to this story."

Under Taylor's command, the federal agents arrested 13 people: 4 pilots, 5 women, a German sociology professor, a tall, upper class English doctor, a Canadian self made millionaire whose father was a Supreme Court judge in Edmonton, Alberta,¹¹ and Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who at the time was almost 54. He was 5 feet 5½ inches tall, had a long white beard and dressed in flowing, ankle length robes and sandals. The Customs agents found and confiscated \$58,522 in cash, \$1.5 million dollars worth of jewelry and watches, 29 suitcases packed with astonishing neatness and one .38 Smith and Wesson revolver.

There were no submachine guns, and no arrest warrants for anyone.

¹⁰ Since Rajneesh was wearing an ankle length robe (see below), not pants, it was probably difficult, if not impossible, to spread his legs.

¹¹ "In Edmonton, Mr. Justice Michael Brien O'Byrne of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench was watching the news with his wife, Eileen.

'That's Michael!' said Eileen,

'That's not Michael,' grunted the judge.

'I'd know the head that I gave birth to anywhere.'" (Ric Dolphin, "Jayesh Michael O'Byrne", *Saturday Night*, February 1997)

Taylor said Rajneesh was a very peaceful man. "He never opened his mouth." But some of the people with him were asking irksome questions. "What's going on?" "Why are we being arrested?" Swami Devaraj, the distinguished English doctor, asked, "Don't you have anything like arrest warrants here in America?". Despite that embarrassing deficiency, the government billed the flight as both a well planned and desperate "last minute" attempt to flee the country to avoid arrest.

And up until now the media in general and the public at large have swallowed that interpretation hook, line and sinker. Which, as mentioned in the Preface, is why this story needs to be told again.

The prisoners were taken to town in a cavalcade of blue and white marked police cars and placed into Marshal holding cells in the Charlotte federal building. After only a few hours sleep a soft spoken Charlotte attorney, Ed Hinson, arrived with his flamboyant five by five law partner, Bill Diehl. "It was drizzling or had been raining," Hinson said. "The press had begun to gather in the form of a *WSOC* television reporter who was standing about half awake out back of the court house with a camera crew. He asked us if we were representing the Bhagwan, and we told him we might be."

We went inside to the Marshal's office. They had arrested the Bhagwan on the basis of some telephone conversations and did not have any arrest warrants. They also did not know why they'd arrested him. And they were not telling us anything. Finally, after some delay, we were permitted to see some of the people there. At first we visited with the women, who were about as non violent appearing as any women I've ever known.

They were mystified about why they were there or what had happened. All they knew was that a bunch of armed guys had attacked them out at the airport and had taken them into custody. Then I met the Bhagwan's financial adviser [Jayesh Michael O'Byrne] and his physician [Swami Devaraj]. Both nice laid back guys. They could tell us a little more. And then we interviewed the Bhagwan, who really didn't know much of anything, to tell the truth.

At 5:33 a.m. a 51 page, 35 count indictment rattled across the telex at the Marshals office. It charged that since December 1980 Rajneesh and seven other individuals had been plotting to move their organization from Poona,¹² India to the United States. They realized, the indictment claimed, that the best way to get people into America was illegally, through sham marriages between disciples, arranged solely for the purpose of obtaining immigration benefits. The indictment charged all eight of them with arranging a total of 16 sham marriages. Rajneesh was further accused of lying on several occasions to officials of the US State Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS).

¹² On today's maps Poona is written Pune, and Bombay, Mumbai. But since I am dealing with a period when that was not so, I will use old spellings and names.

Rajneesh's "co-conspirators" were conspicuous by their absence. The same was still true of the arrest warrants. They weren't there all morning or throughout the afternoon, not even for Rajneesh. Nevertheless, in a preliminary bail hearing on Monday afternoon in Charlotte's federal district court, Magistrate Barbara DeLaney asserted that there was an arrest warrant for Rajneesh and "probable cause" to hold six sannyasins with him. On Monday evening they and Rajneesh were taken to the Mecklenburg County jail. That night there was a full lunar eclipse.

By the next morning, Sheriff William Kidd told me, "the whole world knew where our jail was and that he was in it. From Tuesday morning onwards for eight days, it was a three ring circus around here. It was hell. About 8:30 a.m. I got called from California. People flew in here from all over the world to interview him and we let them interview him whenever we could. One guy from *CNN* flew up from Atlanta to interview that Bhagwan. 'I'm sorry you can't interview him now,' I said. 'Why not?' he asked. 'Because he's in court now and the marshals won't let us interview him.'"

Actually, Rajneesh was in the jail on that Tuesday morning, not in court.

"He said," Kidd continued, 'I got to interview him. I chartered a Learjet so I could do this.' 'Well, I'm sorry,' I said. 'The US marshals won't let you do that now.' And he just kept on and on. 'Well, listen,' I said. 'You're not going into that jail right now, because the man's not even there.' But that night, after we got all the interviews started, we let him get in there and see him."

The major television networks showed up: *NBC* and *CBS*. Ted Koppel of *ABC's Nightline* called Sheriff Kidd to ask if he could interview Rajneesh.¹³ "So we set it up," Kidd said. "They brought a big truck and they had a cable brought out to the jail. That night the Bhagwan would not interview [sic, "give interviews to"] three people at a time. He only wanted one at a time. He was very calm the whole time he was talking to Ted Koppel and all the other interviewers. Only one time did he get mad."

"What did Rajneesh get mad about," I asked.

"Ted Koppel said, 'Rajneesh, does it not seem kind of strange that one man, one small man, would have 93 Rolls Royces?' Or 89 or whatever it was. And he says, '89 are not sufficient. 989 are not sufficient for the Bhagwan.' He was angry. 'That is not sufficient' meant 'Nothing is too good for me!'"¹⁴

"Did you tell him about the flowers, sir," interjected Chief Deputy Bob Samuels, a milder sort of man.

"The flowers. I had never seen that many flowers. They'd come in here by the droves. Roses by the dozens. And we just got sick and tired of getting them. We brought the flowers to him and said, 'Here's your roses. Here's your flowers. What do you want to do with them?' And he wouldn't even come close to them because he was allergic. 'Give

¹³ On Tuesday, October 29

¹⁴ I didn't check the original interview tape to see if it actually happened like that.

them to the staff,' he said. So we got busy and gave the flowers to our wives, our nurses, the staff. And they took them to the hospital. I took one bouquet of flowers to the black community church and said, 'Pray for these flowers because they come from the Bhagwan.' So they set them down and prayed. We had calls from all over the world."

"I wanted to remind the Sheriff," Samuels said, "about the lady in red that stayed across the street the entire time that he was here."

"Stood over there in the pouring rain with just a raincoat on, all day long, as long as he was there. And it rained, rained, rained," Kidd said.

"It rained the whole time he was here. And after he left the sunshine came back," Samuels said and laughed.

"It was a rainy day," Kidd said. "It was a rainy week. And he brought it."

Actually, the rain came from Hurricane Juan, a storm that was affecting the whole Southeastern United States. In swampy New Orleans, 800 miles away and 20 years before Katrina, coffins were rising out of their graves and floating down the highways.

"You had a lot of fun with this," I said to Kidd.

"Well, we had to make fun of it. Either that or go mad."

Almost everyone had fun with the spectacle of Rajneesh, normally seen driving Rolls Royces, wearing diamond studded wristwatches and exotically clad in an emperor's robes, suddenly behind bars in green prison fatigues and eating grits. "There were a lot of Bhagwan costumes that year," former Assistant US Attorney in Charlotte, Ken Andresen, told me. "It was a pretty splashy thing here for a period of time, and it's something that has burned its way into the memory banks of all Charlotteans. The Junior League even saw fit to designate part of its two or three hour production to a little Bhagwan skit, and I'm sure that there have been other things like that around the city."

"This was a big to do down here!" said Chief Deputy US Marshal Ray Abrams. "Even this thing with PTL.¹⁵ We thought there were a lot of news people here then. But that was nothing compared to the Bhagwan. The Bhagwan was the biggest thing that I've ever been involved in." Deputy Marshal Wade McGalliard said he had worked with lots of people who had national publicity, "but not as much as this man". He mentioned that he and Abrams had both been involved with security for the John Hinckley, Jr. trial in Washington, DC. Hinckley was the man who nearly succeeded in assassinating President Ronald Reagan.¹⁶

"The Rajneesh bail hearings in Charlotte were bigger than the Hinckley trial," I asked in amazement.

"It was to us right here," Abrams said. "We had newspapers from all over the world here. He got more publicity than the Hinckley trial did."

"How many marshals were involved during the hearings?"

¹⁵ Praise the Lord, a Fundamentalist Christian congregation-business headed by Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. See Chapter 5.

¹⁶ See Chapter 3.

"We had everybody involved then."

"The whole office?!"

"Sure."

"How many was that?"

"I think there was about nine altogether."

"And then we also had the local police escorting," McGalliard said.

Flanking Rajneesh with rifles and vigilant glances, both McGalliard and Abrams had their pictures splashed around the world, on television and in major magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Life*.

Bail hearings began, appropriately enough, on Halloween: Thursday morning, October 31, 1985. Almost immediately, Assistant US Attorney from Portland Robert Weaver went off the track of the immigration indictment that he and his chief Rajneesh expert and number one witness had fathered and used to "legitimize" the arrest. Weaver, who had flown in with the local INS Deputy Director Joe Greene, hardly bothered to refer to the spectacularly dull accusations referred to in that document.

Instead, the two regaled the Charlotte court and the world press with gothic tales of horror that were guaranteed to curdle the blood and ignite the lizard brain regions of the imagination. There were allegations of secret Swiss bank accounts, an attempt to poison an entire town in Oregon by tampering with salad bars and the water supply, wiretapping schemes that put the Watergate conspirators to shame, but not, of course, the National Security Agency (NSA). And plots to assassinate at least four public figures.

The problem for Weaver and Greene was that there was absolutely no evidence - either then or since - to support, let alone substantiate, Rajneesh's involvement in any of that. "The ground rules in a detention hearing are not fixed," Ed Hinson, one of Rajneesh's Charlotte attorneys, told me. "The traditional rules of evidence do not apply. The government took advantage of the absence of constraints to trot out all the dirt, alleged dirt, all the garbage and character assassination that they could [to dump] on the Bhagwan. It was played to the media and public opinion as much as to the court. They wanted to have a damn sideshow! It was an effort by the government to paint him in a very bad light. It was, to me, a real gross over reaction by the government."

Despite the huge media contingent - or perhaps because of it - no one bothered to ask, let alone demand answers to a basic question. If Rajneesh was provably guilty of any of those really serious crimes, why was he being slapped on the wrist with universally despised immigration violations?

"I'm sure if there were other federal charges that the federal government thought they could pursue against him, they certainly would have done so," Ken Andresen said. "As a chief assistant US Attorney, I could tell you you don't play your second string. If you've got charges that are more serious, that you can prove, you're going to press them. You're not going to press your smallest charges unless that is the only thing you've got."¹⁷

¹⁷ For more on this aspect, see the comments of Greg Leo toward the end of this chapter.

Everyone noticed the implausibility of Rajneesh's story about suddenly deciding to take a vacation after having not left Oregon in four years. But no one noticed the impossibility of the government's counter scenario, that Rajneesh's Sunday night flight to Charlotte was a "last minute" getaway to avoid arrest the next day. The impossibility of the government position hung from a hundred angles on the non existence of an arrest warrant for Rajneesh and the hard to unravel weave of events that had prevented its seeing the light of day. By arresting Rajneesh without it, government officials had not only put the cart before the horse - last things first - and acted with consummate illegality, but also provided an ever expanding and deepening peep hole into their elaborate and ongoing plots against him.

Numerous officials from Portland - including Robert Weaver, Joe Greene, United States Attorney Charles Turner, Magistrate William Dale, and US Custom's agent Lawrence LaDage - have repeatedly asserted that there were arrest warrants. But on Thursday morning, October 31 - three days after the deadly force arrest - what was introduced into the federal court as evidence looked like a schoolboy's prank. A nearly blank, unsigned piece of paper masquerading as a valid warrant.¹⁸ Trick or treat.

But, apparently, almost everyone was having so much fun with the too good to be true show of "the rich man's guru"¹⁹ in chains to even think about thinking about how anyone could be guilty of fleeing arrest when there was no arrest to flee from. What was going on? Was this a tossed salad of absurdity? Halloween for the legal system and an allegedly tough and unprejudiced press, a time for serious lawyers and overburdened media types to dress up and act stupid? Or were more sinister forces driving events, not only in this case, but also in thousands of other instances of business as usual, next case, please "American justice"?

Charges against three of the sannyasins were dropped, and the other three were released on bail of \$25,000 each. As for Rajneesh, Magistrate DeLaney went along with the prosecution's contention that he was a "flight risk", and bail was denied. "We should have refused bail," said Swami Devaraj, Rajneesh's personal physician. "We should have gone back to Portland with him. We should also have gone on a hunger strike from day one. That would have made a big impact in the press. That might have forced them to release him."

The sannyasins flew back to Oregon and delivered Rajneesh's message to the other sannyasins. "Go happy." Rajneesh himself was dragged westward in chains like an already convicted felon on a huge prisoner transport plane operated by the US Marshals.²⁰ "To put this man in chains and drag him across the country was, to me, a shocking, disgusting effort by the United States," Ed Hinson said.

¹⁸ We return to this in Chapter 10.

¹⁹ This is how he characterized himself. See, for example, Rajneesh, *The Discipline of Transcendence*, Vol. 3, Chapter 10, October 30, 1976. For more on this theme of rich and poor, see Rajneesh's critique of Gandhi in Chapter 2.

²⁰ In a *National Geographic* television program, "The Real Con Air" (aired February 2008, no date), the then Justice Prisoner Alien Transportation System (JPATS) was described as a "high flying power keg" for transporting convicted and very dangerous felons.

The 54-year-old Rajneesh, who suffered from asthma, diabetes and a prolapsed disc, "disappeared" for a few days in Oklahoma City jails. Two years later, after Rajneesh's physical condition had been steadily deteriorating, Rajneesh and his physicians claimed he had been poisoned while in jail with thallium, a tasteless, odorless heavy metal compound used in rat poison. Then, for good measure, according to the suggestion of one Danish nuclear engineering expert, prison officials gave him a medium-high intensity dose of radiation.²¹

Twelve days after Rajneesh's arrest, he was released in Portland on \$500,000 bail. Six days later he agreed to a plea bargain on two out of the original 35 immigration charges. A \$400,000 fine was imposed along with a suspended 10 year prison sentence, and he was told that he could not return to the United States in the next five years without the consent of the US Attorney General. Rajneesh told the judge in Portland, "I never want to return again".

On Thursday, November 14, 1985, he and 12 disciples flew out of the United States on a privately rented Jetstar 731. They arrived at New Delhi's Palam airport at 2:30 a.m. Sunday morning, November 17. Rajneesh was greeted by the press and about 500 disciples who threw rose petals in front of his feet as he walked past.²² One of India's top film stars, Vinod Khanna, who was also a sannyasin, chauffeured him in a Mercedes Benz sedan to the Hotel Hyatt Regency in South Delhi. Later that morning he held a one hour press conference and condemned American politicians - not the American people - as "monsters". He said American democracy and justice was a sham and he aimed to expose it to the entire world.²³

"I won't deny the fact that I'm happy to have the Bhagwan out of Oregon," said Bob Smith, US Congressman from Oregon's 4th District, which included Rajneeshpuram. "Certainly, there are those who believe that federal prosecutors should have extracted 'an extra pound of flesh' in retribution for the arrogance, the threats, the abuse that we've all been forced to take from Bhagwan. On a purely human level, I admit I'm one of those people." He continued, "The first step in ending our ordeal is gone.... The last aspect is the ultimate disposition of Rajneeshpuram itself and the fate of Bhagwan's followers who remain there."²⁴

Two weeks later, Rajneeshpuram was for all intents and purposes a dead letter.

Viewed from the outside, it had been a 126 square mile religious commune-city built out of a near void in the heart of Central Oregon's "sagebrush belt". It had cost over \$100 million and was the result of a tremendous international effort of 100,000 people. Begun in the summer of 1981, by the fall of 1985 it had become the home of about 2,000 permanent residents, a pilgrimage center for about 50,000 people per year, and an oasis of sorts for farming and wildlife. With great relief and rejoicing, Oregon scratched

²¹ See Chapters 10 and 11.

²² See Chapter 10.

²³ *The Hindustan Times*, November 18, 1985

²⁴ *The Dalles Chronicle*, November 15, 1985

Rajneeshpuram off the map and tried to get the taste of Rajneesh and his red clad "followers" out of their mouths.

From the other side of the sawed off shotguns, prison bars, chains, and murderous financial losses, what had happened to Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram was a story older than the tale of Jesus in Jerusalem. It was the primal murder of innocence and sacred kings slopped out in a contemptuous, us versus them *Police Gazette* style. A tale told by idiots, full of sound and fury, and signifying much more than the mainstream media was prepared to take on board. It was a conspiracy not only against them, but also man as he is against man as he is capable of becoming. As deep down, in seed form, he already is.

"When you see a buddha," Rajneesh said in one of his last discourses, "the first unconscious reaction is to reject him because he offends you. His very presence is a challenge. 'Why is he so happy and peaceful, and why am I in such anguish? He should live according to everybody else, according to the crowd. Why is he living like an individual in his own right? He should be a sheep, he should not be a shepherd.' They cannot tolerate. Their own best and the highest peaks of consciousness which can make them aware of their potentialities, they destroy."²⁵

Rajneesh - which means "Lord of the Night" - was born on Friday, December 11, 1931 in Kuchwada, a small village in Central India. From the start he was in revolt against all bequeathed belief systems, organized religions, governments, and other "authorities", and refused to bend the knee before gods, nation, family, morality and tradition. He was against everything "ordinary" people stand for and on.

Because, he claimed, all that is immediately and ultimately against them as authentic, free breathing individuals. It prevents them from seeing and knowing the truth beyond hypnotic appearances - seemingly universal and eternal laws, but actually quite local beliefs and judgments - and making constant contact with what Zen masters have called the "original face". Who they really are when alone and naked in deep night. Before they were born and after they're dead.

Thus man is miserable not because of an hypothetical "human condition", but his all too human conditioning. Collectively, that *misère* is mirrored in a smog of rage, fear and sorrow that has blanketed the earth in a history that is little more than wall to wall war and violence always on the verge. According to him, the only way out was in. As first, baby steps in that direction he invented and encouraged outrageously weird and frankly frightening meditations.

One of them was "Dynamic". For an hour at a time, half clad and sometimes totally nude participants shook, shivered and shouted to music that sounded like underpaid metal

²⁵ Rajneesh, *Zen Manifesto*, Chapter 9, April 8, 1989

workers on a walk out. With ferocious energy, they jumped, grunted, cried, screamed, and let it all hang out.²⁶

From the outside, it looked like the end of the world. But it was no more terrifying than talking in tongues, holy rolling, faith healing, fire walking, snake worshipping or the 7 o'clock news. In contrast to many of those good old fashioned pastimes, however, there was method in dynamic's seeming madness. It was intended to help expose and eliminate all the unoriginal faces, the junk that had been tossed into participants and maintained at their expense. What for? So they could slip out of old skins, patterns and mental tics and live just born in the here and now.

Beyond his repeated kicks in the teeth to "accepted" wisdom and morality, Rajneesh was also claiming to have attained to the state of superconsciousness known as enlightenment. What's that? Good question. Unfortunately, there is no standardized definition acceptable to all or any of the parties. Thus, let's just say it is the necessary, but not sufficient, job qualification of Gautama Buddha, Lao Tzu and other mystics masters²⁷ down the ages. And in the modern age Rajneesh was setting up shop on the same street. He was, he said, "Bhagwan".

Rajneesh and his sannyasins preferred to translate the Sanskrit word as "The Blessed One". But critics - who, as I mentioned in the Preface, rarely got his name right, let alone what it meant - bluntly interpreted it as "God". And while turning to God was highly acceptable to a conventional world making a virtue out of normality, turning into God was not.

Along with controversy came success. On August 31, 1981, about three months after Rajneesh had entered the United States, he and his neo-sannyas movement were featured in a lengthy *Los Angeles Times* article. "The amazing growth rate over the last few years of his followers - more than 100,000 are estimated to have taken Sannyas, or initiation - may well make Bhagwan one of the most important and most watched religious leaders of the next several decades." At that time, Rajneesh had authored over 300 published books, which had been translated into more than 20 languages, and was listed in *International Intellectuals Who's Who*.

By the time of his arrest in October 1985, his name was widely circulated in the halls of the US Congress, television reports and popular national and international magazines like *People*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Life*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *The Guardian*, *The Economist*, *Stern* and *Der Spiegel*. The October/November 1985 issue of the *Utne Reader*, a guide to not on everyone's reading list sources of news, noted that Rajneesh had become "one of the few Eastern spiritual leaders to get acquainted with Middle America. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, along with hundreds of his rose-robed followers,

²⁶ They were either blindfolded or encouraged to keep their eyes shut. And the catharsis was individual, not interactive.

²⁷ That is, those who know what they're talking about from their own practices and experiences. As opposed to teachers, scholars and people like me, who assemble, edit and repeat their wisdom. For more on enlightenment, see Chapter 2.

dominated American television as the Rajneeshees battled with small-town Oregonians over control of the tiny town of Antelope, located near the 63,000-acre community of Rajneeshpuram."

The article's author admitted that most media reports depicted disciples as mindless "cult" followers. But she closed with a quote from Irv Thomas, the editor of *Black Bart Newsletter* who had spent six weeks at Rajneeshpuram. "Rajneeshpuram is a happy and affectionate place. It is immersion in another reality and you'd be wise to let no media superficially persuade you of what that reality is, or to simply discount its sincerity because it doesn't conform to our own."

The appearance of the article in the *Utne Reader* was all the more remarkable when one considered that editor Eric Utne's brother, Tom, had been a sannyasin and was one of a handful of people who died at Rajneeshpuram. According to the Oregon state medical examiner, the cause of death was a severe asthma attack. Nothing worth official notice or media mention. But that didn't stop normally fair and sober folks from noticing and giving it a sinister twist.²⁸ For in their minds even the most happens every day events around Rajneesh were cause for suspicion and alarm.

Rajneesh was arrested on October 28, 1985. Exactly 99 years before, in 1886, the Statue of Liberty was dedicated at the entrance of New York harbor. Over the years, the "Green Lady" became America's best face forward, to the world and itself. She was a symbol of welcome, hope and freedom. It also became the INS' icon.

A four foot high replica stands outside the commissioner's suite on the seventh floor of the national headquarters in Washington, DC. In January 1989 I interviewed Alan Nelson, who was then the INS' commissioner. A tall, genial man, he sat informally in shirt sleeves and smoked a huge cigar as he spoke. I asked if there had been high level interest in the Rajneesh case and if that interest included Oregon's two US Senators, Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood,²⁹ US Attorney General Edwin Meese III, Congress, and the White House.

"There certainly was interest," Commissioner Nelson said. "This was obviously a major story throughout the country, and I think the Oregon senators were certainly interested and others. There was interest of the others you mentioned, White House and Justice Department. I think we had interest from a lot of senators. So there was interest. And certainly a lot of opinions, mostly like: 'This is a problem, and we need to do something about it.' So I think there was a general consensus among the high level interest that, 'yeah, this is a problem and something ought to be done about it.'"

My role as commissioner was certainly involved in the overall issues and policies, but not into a lot of the details of the operation. Bottom line, when

²⁸ See more on this in Chapter 8.

²⁹ For more on Senator Packwood, see the Chapter 13.

you look at the situation, both the Rajneeshpuram and the situation out there, and the cult aspects, and the community impacts, and the dangers of physical [violence], and armaments, and all of those things, I mean this was certainly a very serious situation. The bottom line has to be nothing but a tremendous success story. I think there was a potential for all kinds of terrible, terrible things happening, and the fact that it ended well was a very good sign.

It did end very well. I don't think anyone can argue with that. He [Rajneesh] left the country, avoided lengthy litigation and other problems. It ended well. The whole unit up there, of course, disbanded, I think to the benefit of the community. The result was outstanding. And we're very proud of that, that we were able to resolve a difficult situation very satisfactorily.³⁰

Clearly, I think there is one thing we could say - the circumstances here are clean. It's not that we encouraged it. He did it on his own. But after being apprehended and jailed for a few days, he decided to leave. It turned out to be a very effective result. The bottom line is with immigration kind of things, the best thing you would have done is deport him. He might well have served criminal jail time, but he left the country, the whole compound disbanded. I think we avoided all the tremendous social, legal, other kind of problems that were inherent in that. So that was fortuitous.

Six months after our interview, on June 26, 1989, Alan Nelson resigned after a Justice Department audit concluded that his agency's management and administrative practices were in disarray. It noted a growing backlog of cases awaiting adjudication and that officials in western states frequently hired chartered jets to fly themselves to conferences when commercial flights were available.³¹ Nelson called the audit "grossly deficient".³²

Were Rajneesh and his disciples persecuted because of their religious beliefs, disbeliefs and practices and unjustly railroaded out of America? He himself has said as much on numerous occasions.³³ According to him, the conspiracy against him and Rajneeshpuram was top down and bottom up and was founded in Fundamentalist Christian ideology. He said he was a threat to the prestige and power of true believers because he relentlessly attacked the base of their authority.

He called priests and politicians "the mafia of the soul" and said they were in deep conspiracy to exploit ordinary human beings. That conspiracy depended on tying individuals up in knots and thou shalt nots - double, triple and quintuple bind codes of belief and conduct that are from the very beginning and all the way through impossible to

³⁰ Quoted again, in a different context, in Chapter 11.

³¹ Robert Weaver gives us some insight into why some of them might have done that in Chapter 10.

³² *The Oregonian*, June 27, 1989

³³ For example, Rajneesh, *Beyond Psychology*, Chapter 37, April 30, 1986; *The Invitation*, Chapter 1, April 21, 1987; and *The Zen Manifesto: Freedom From Oneself*, Chapter 9, April 8, 1989.

get even approximately right. The deceitful become hypocrites. The earnest feel eternally guilty and often go mad.³⁴

Greg Leo, the INS' Director of Congressional and Public Affairs - who just happened to have been born in Portland, Oregon - would say there was no conspiracy against Rajneesh. Because of America's traditional respect for individual freedoms and particularly First Amendment guarantees of religious rights, he said, the INS moved painstakingly slowly in its investigations of the Rajneesh organization.³⁵ Some people said they moved too slowly. "Some people told us we did a good job because of the result," he said. "I would say, though, that nobody was saying we did a good job until after the Bhagwan was forced out of the country."

But too many facts fitting together - not thrown into the same pot to make a conspiracy soup - support the charge that Rajneesh and his disciples were specially targeted for investigation, both in the United States and abroad. "We were involved with, primarily, worldwide intelligence gathering activities," former INS Chief Council Maurice "Mike" Inman told me in his Beverly Hills office.

"This is very high level, exotic almost, developments, as it turned out. I know that the INS had sent some investigators to India and other places." He also noted that under the Reagan Administration "we were existing under serious budget restraints. And people were constantly worrying, fighting for positions. You'd fight for secretaries, clerks and things like that. And I was wondering why INS investigators were going to India and doing things like that on what I considered to be a marriage fraud case."

"Doesn't the allocation of people going to foreign shores - when you're already strapped for funds - speak to you of high level interest in the Rajneesh case," I asked. "It did, yes. But at the time I was constantly wondering what was going on."³⁶

At the same time the INS was hot and heavily investigating Rajneesh and his international organization, it had a staggering work load and a never gonna get through it backlog of cases awaiting adjudication.³⁷ "The INS, when I was there, did 150,000 cases

³⁴ John Calvin said something similar. "For Calvin, Catholic ceremonialism is a kind of Judaism. The conditions of the rites are impossible to fulfill (for example, complete confession and perfect contrition for penance). Thus they lead either to despair or to hypocrisy. The Catholics, like the Jews, are vainglorious: they arrogate God's decisions to themselves, deciding who shall be saved" (Susan Snyder, "The Left-Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition", *Studies in the Renaissance*, 1965, p. 33). Even those with only a slight knowledge of the history of religions will have to wince. Aren't all established religions - Calvin's included - claiming to speak for God?

³⁵ Along with all the other amendments, the First had to be tacked on to the Constitution because it wasn't included at the start (see Chapter 3). "Throughout it should be kept in mind that the Catholics were a tiny minority, legally recognized in only three colonies at the outset of the Revolution. Even after the Revolution, it was not clear that the new republic would tolerate Catholicism or Judaism until the First Amendment was ratified in the spring of 1789." (Richard Popper, *The Third Force in Seventeenth Century Thought*, p. 309)

³⁶ See Dr. James Richardson's comment in Chapter 2, Ken Andresen's in Chapter 10 and Paul Travis in Chapter 11.

³⁷ See the Justice Department's audit mentioned above.

of deportation and exclusion a year," Inman said. "In 1985 there were 1,800,000 illegal entries into the United States along the Mexican border alone." In comparison, he said, a ranch in the middle of Oregon with perhaps as many as 500 resident foreigners was a drop in the bucket.

INS' record in dealing with ex-Nazis and Nazi sympathizers jolts the matter into an even sharper perspective. Under cover of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 approximately 10,000 Nazi war criminals and sympathizers entered the United States during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Although the federal government knew of their presence, it "made little effort to locate and prosecute them for nearly thirty years. Government efforts to identify and deport ex-Nazis through the INS between 1945 and the 1970s were superficial and ineffective. During this period, the INS filed fewer than ten cases against alleged Nazi collaborators. Of these cases, only one resulted in deportation."³⁸

The author, David Gelfand, seemed to be completely unaware of the US State Department's "Operation Bloodstone", which gung hoed Nazis into service and secretly brought them to both Americas, North and South "Bloodstone proved to be an open door through which scores of leaders of Nazi collaborationist organizations thought to be useful for political warfare in Eastern Europe entered the United States.... The men and women enlisted under Bloodstone were not low-level thugs, concentration camp guards, or brutal hoodlums, at least not in the usual sense of those words. Quite the contrary, they were the cream of the Nazis and collaborators, the leaders, the intelligence specialists, and the scholars who had put their skills to work for the Nazi cause."³⁹

When possible, the Nazis were intentionally shuttled into the United States under the already mentioned Displaced Persons Act. But in 1949 the US Congress passed a special "100 Persons Act", which allowed 100 people and their families to enter America with no questions asked. "The law also established that senior government officials - namely, the

³⁸ David Gelfand, "Nazi War Criminals in the United States: It's Never Too Late for Justice", *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, Fall 1986, p. 864f.

³⁹ Christopher Simpson, *Blowback: America's Recruitment of Nazis and The Effects on The Cold War*, p. 98. Before helping put American astronauts in space and on the moon, Wernher von Braun was the top man in the Nazi V-2 rocket program. Whatever successes he booked there - trying to raze London and bring the British to their knees - was made possible through the unsung efforts of Russian, French and Polish slaves of war. About 10,000 of them died in his care.

Another *Freund* of the *Amis* was a good Catholic boy from Bonn, aka "the Butcher of Lyon": Klaus Barbie. "On April 1, 1950, his name appeared on the monthly combined Search and Arrest List circulated to the German Police by the states of the American Zone. Apprised of this by a German police acquaintance, Barbie reported his concern to his CIC [Counterintelligence Corps] employers. Suspending his activities, they nevertheless kept him on the payroll Resorting to the rationalization that Barbie knew too much about the network of German spies CIC had planted in various European Communist organizations - but presumably as much to avoid the embarrassment of having recruited him - in 1951 the CIC sponsored his escape to South America via a 'ratline' operating through Italy." (Robert Wolfe, Interagency Working Group (IWG) Historian, "Investigative Records Repository (IRR) File of Klaus Barbie (Alias Klaus Altmann, Klaus Becker, Heinz Becker, Klaus Behrens, Heinz Behrens, Klaus Spier, Ernst Holzer)", September 19,2001) The "ratline" obviously refers to what happens when ships sink. When Barbie was extradited from Bolivia to France in February 1983 his employment by CIC and its involvement in getting him out of harm's way could no longer be kept under wraps. Anyone interested in knowing more about these matters should read Simpson and/or Google "The Gehlen Organization". That should keep you busy.

director of the CIA, the attorney general, and the commissioner of the INS - would have to take personal responsibility for stating that the favored immigrant was vital to national security."

In response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request filed by author Christopher Simpson, the CIA released a small group of heavily censored records in June 1985. "They acknowledged in passing that the CIA and the INS 'have cooperated on mutual problems for many years.'" Was Rajneesh, due to the international makeup of his organization, a "mutual problem" for the INS and CIA?

Greg Leo of the INS said it was wrong to think of Rajneesh's deportation in terms of immigration crimes alone. "It's kind of like Al Capone," he said. "Capone was a gangster, but the Internal Revenue Service got him on income tax evasion.⁴⁰ It's almost the same analogy with the Bhagwan. The Bhagwan was an organized crime figure. But the case that really caused him to flee, be apprehended and brought to justice was Immigration's."

At the suggestion of Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield, he said, the INS investigation of Rajneesh took a novel twist. "Hatfield played a very interesting role because he's a religious leader himself in the sense that many people recognize Mark Hatfield as a very strong religious person who is a great example. He was one of the first people to come out and say, 'Look at these people, not in terms of religion, but in terms of crime, in terms of what kind of crimes these people are perpetrating on the people of Antelope.'"

Antelope was a wide spot in the road, the home of about 40 mostly retired people, about 20 miles from Rajneeshpuram. The name became a local, state and national buzz word. Synonymous with something straight out of the 1956 cult classic, *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*.⁴¹ In this case it was an "alien cult" invading and overwhelming generically decent citizens in rural America.

After the departure of the sannyasins and the restoration of Antelope to its authentic ghost town allure, Rajneesh's books and other paraphernalia are still being sold to tourists on their way to somewhere else.

There were hundreds of stories, editorials and satires in the US media about Rajneesh after his downfall. Close to a 100 percent were in tune with the one in the *San Francisco Examiner*.

Back in his native India, the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is bad-mouthing the United States as if this country never had done anything for him. All it did was allow him to install a mammoth love commune in Oregon and lavish his affections upon dozens of Rolls Royces. Now, having been ejected from the land of the free for immigration fraud, he says of us Americans, "I don't

⁴⁰ See the comments of Ken Andresen above.

⁴¹ There's a lot of rampant McCarthyism and reds under the beds paranoia burnt into the fabric of that film.

consider them human; they are subhuman." Furthermore, "The Soviet Union is far better than the United States." How marvelous it would be if he would only try to prove this thesis. We can imagine the new Rajneeshpuram being set up somewhere east of Gorky, the first Rolls being unloaded from a freighter in Murmansk. Then the dimly scribbled note from Siberia three years later, "Send tire chains."⁴²

As far as anyone could tell, that summed up the mood of the moment, and any inroads he and his message might have made in Middle America had gone up in smoke. Sales of his books and tapes plummeted. You couldn't give them away. I mentioned this to Ed Hinson, the liberal Charlotte attorney who had grown up in South Carolina and had watched the Black Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s.

"It didn't surprise me that the majority of people would say, 'This guy's weird. Let's get him out of here,'" he said. "It disappoints me! It didn't surprise me that Governor Wallace stood in the doorway of the schoolhouse. But it disappointed me. I've come to have a great deal of respect for our system and confidence in the American people. And what disappointed me about this Bhagwan business was that this time the system failed."

Over the next six months the Rajneesh story flared up in the news when he was shotgunned out of Greece in March 1986 and was denied entrance to about 20 other countries. But by the summer of 1986, "one of the most important and most watched religious leaders of the next several decades" was all but forgotten. Clearly, Rajneesh was gone. But the significance of his passage to and through America remained unclear. Was it a warning for Americans to be wary of gurus bearing bliss? A warning to the gurus themselves that when it comes to first making and then enforcing laws Americans meant business?

On Monday, September 29, 1986, the United States House of Representatives voted 308-81 against an immigration reform bill that naysayers claimed would throw open America's doors to religious zealots. Congressman James Sensenbrenner, a Republican from Wisconsin, said "I don't think we should open the door to bhagwans, prostitutes and pushers".⁴³

⁴² *San Francisco Examiner*, November 21, 1985

⁴³ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 30, 1986. Nearly 20 years later, at the end of 2005, Sensenbrenner was still a Republican, a congressman from Wisconsin. And he hadn't forgotten about immigration problems - apparently a burning issue in a state so close to the Canadian border. He introduced H.R. 4437, which some referred to as the "Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act". Some of the sharper critics of the proposed legislation found it offensive and urged voters and representatives to shoot it down. According to them, the problems with it included expanding the definition of "aggravated felony"; calling for the mandatory detention of all immigrants detained at ports of entry; and limiting the right to due process of those charged with immigration violations.

One other perhaps not incidental fact about Sensenbrenner is that he was one of the main architects of the notorious Patriot Act (2001), which I for one consider to be a seemingly legal - because it's based on law - *coup d'état* along the lines of *Seven Days in May*, a political thriller by Fletcher Knebel and Charles Bailey II (1962).

Or was it an example of a South American brand of justice called "trial by television"? A skillfully manipulated and maintained propaganda piece designed by experts who knew that in the minds of a keep it simple, stupid public, first impressions last? In a world where people, ideas, events and whole dimensions are rushed to fame or infamy on television I am merely turning on the sound.⁴⁴ Readers will "hear what has happened, what men have done, what they have the power to do: risks, adventures, trials of all sorts". And along the way we will stray off the maps and out of time and into the heart and meaning of "America".

⁴⁴ A reverse technique is tried at the end of Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 2: "GO EAST, YOUNG MAN! GO EAST!"

Like the other forecasters mentioned, [Herman] Kahn [of the Hudson Institute] takes it as certain that there will be no change in value-systems in the immediate future. The "counter-culture" has peaked: the new values espoused by youth will spread no further. Incompetent and hysterical, their leaders can exert no political effect. Perhaps there may be a religious "counter-reformation" but more probably the values of "Middle America" will prevail.⁴⁵

This is no Kaaba
For idiots to circle
Nor a mosque
For the impolite to clamor in.
This is a temple of total ruin.
Inside are the drunk, from pre-eternity
to the Judgment Day,
gone from themselves.⁴⁶

Reincarnation is an Indian idea.⁴⁷ We come, go and come again, in different times, places, shapes and sizes. Sometimes as guys, sometimes as gals, rocks, trees, tigers or lambs. With one blow, it obliterates a flat life notion that presupposes without any evidence or argument that we rise over one horizon called birth, set under another called death, and on earth at least are never seen or heard from again.

Reincarnation is the stock market crash of certainty. It churns into confetti cozy balance sheets of getting ahead and falling behind, winning and losing, right/wrong, purpose, perspective, rationality, nationality, younger and older, language, money, maps and straight lines through time we call history.⁴⁸ With reincarnation we are forced to loosen

⁴⁵ Gordon Taylor, *How to Avoid the Future* (1975), p. 12

⁴⁶ Khwajah Esmat Bokhara'i, Sufi Master and Poet

⁴⁷ While the idea's birthplace seems to be "India" - whatever that meant in the old days (see Chapter 3, note 179) - most scholars are not prepared to say exactly when and where. Pre- and post-existence also has a long and revered history in the West. It was particularly helpful in Christian cosmology to help explain the seemingly whimsical and unfair ways of God and the world, why a few were chosen, or elected, while the vast majority of the *massa damnata* were not.

"The third option that almost everyone would have preferred, and the one most natural to the Greek metaphysics that all but the most classically Stoic of these theologies presupposed, was pre-existence: souls lived before coming into the body. But the Origenist controversy had demolished this last as an option for orthodoxy, and theologians when pushed on the issue had either traducianism or creatonism to choose from." (Paula Fredriksen, "The Body/Soul Dichotomy: Augustine on Paul Against the Manichees and the Pelgians", *Recherches Augustiniennes*, 1988, p. 108) Traducianists believed that souls are transmitted through natural generation; creatonists that they are created directly by God.

⁴⁸ According to Voltaire, *nom de plume* of François-Marie Arouet, "history is a pack of dirty tricks we play on the dead". ("Ce [l'histoire] n'est après tout qu'un ramas de tracasseries qu'on fait aux morts", letter to Pierre Robert Le Cornier de Cideville, February 9, 1757)

our grip on coherent biography - who we are, have been, and will become - and then completely let go.

"And why is the society so interested in there being no past life and no future life, that you will simply go either to hell or heaven," Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh asked about six months after his North American adventure. "Why are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam so persistent? Their reason is that once you know that you have eternity available in both directions, then their religions will have to change dramatically. If you are an eternal being, then what will happen to creation? You were never created. What will happen to God, who is a creator? If there has never been a creation, there is no need of a creator. So much is at stake. If they open the doors, they are afraid their whole religion as it is will collapse."⁴⁹

According to Rajneesh, he had been on the path of the mystic in his previous incarnation in 13th century Tibet. At the age of 126 he went on a 21 day fast that would have ended in enlightenment, the goal of lifetimes finally arrived at. But it would also have prevented him from coming back in the body and helping others to achieve the same supreme understanding.⁵⁰ Thus three days short of the target - again, according to him - the Tibetan holy man arranged to be murdered by one of his disciples.

Before that he promised he would gather his disciples again in the next life. By then, many would have forgotten the broad oaths they had sworn to each other. Many would not hear or heed the call. No matter. He would go on calling in all the languages for all the world to hear, and those for whom the message was meant would have an inkling of its meaning.⁵¹ For 700 years Rajneesh remained in a state of "frozen bliss. In that state

⁴⁹ Rajneesh, *The Path of the Mystic*, Chapter 10, May 9, 1986 (morning session). Spoken in Punta del Este, a plush suburb of Montevideo, Uruguay.

⁵⁰ Since as a Westerner I don't particularly believe – or disbelieve - in reincarnation, I thought my readers would assume that I was totally relying on what Rajneesh had said on the subject. I certainly didn't expect the flack I got – from mostly positive Indian reviewers – on this particular subject. So let me take this opportunity to declare that my opinion about it – and even I don't know what that is – is absolutely irrelevant to the story I am telling.

⁵¹ In June 1972 an Indian sannyasin - Govind Siddhartha from Bombay - visited Lama Karmapa at his monastery near Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. Lama Karmapa, head of the Kargyupta - Red Hat - Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, said Rajneesh had been with the Tibetans in past lives and went on to speak of him two lives back. In other words, before the 13th century.

"If you want to see one of Bhagwan's previous incarnations," the Lama said, "who he was in Tibet, you can go there and see his golden statue [,] which is preserved in the Hall of Incarnations." (Rajneesh, *The Silent Explosion*, 1973 edition, in a footnote. Thus not Rajneesh talking.) At the same time, apparently, Lama Karmapa predicted that Rajneesh would eventually "merge with" Gautama Buddha's "third body" and become "the Maitreya", the friend to all. But he asked Govind to keep it quiet until after it happened.

After having a 5 a.m. vision about it in July 1986, when, I assume, Rajneesh was staying in his house (see Chapter 11) Govind revealed it two months later. (Rajneesh, *The Osho Upanishad*, Chapter 35, September 23, 1986). During that time Rajneesh "gave him a lot of juice" - as his Western sannyasins put it. But more than two years later, Rajneesh said, "A few months ago in Bombay, Govind Siddharth had a vision that Gautama Buddha's soul has been searching for a body, and he saw in his vision that my body had become a vehicle for Gautama Buddha.... Because I declared him to be enlightened he has disappeared. Since then I have not seen him." (Rajneesh, *No Mind: the Flowers of Eternity*, Chapter 1, December 26, 1988)

there is no possibility to grow. You will remain at the same point until you are born again, and then you can start growing. A body is needed to grow."⁵²

For most of those 700 years India was "the golden bird", a land of fabulous treasures, precious stones, spices, silks, sciences and *Om Shanti* - a peace that passeth understanding. Seeking a shortcut to India, Europeans accidentally discovered - or possibly re-discovered - America. During Rajneesh's *intermezzo* the peacock became the "Jewel in the Crown" of the British Empire.

For centuries kings, queens, viceroys, bishops, prime ministers, professors and *pukka sahibs* protested that imperialism was not mere brute force and economic exploitation: shooting and looting. Rather, it was picking up "the white man's burden". A sacred duty, handed down from God and destiny, which obliged the British Empire to keep on expanding and bringing the benefits of Christ, Aristotle and Locke to all the far flung dark spots of the earth. In short, its version of "enlightenment".

For many Indians belief in that glorious vision died at Jallianwalla Bagh at 5:15 p.m. on April 13, 1919.

It was a hot summer Sunday afternoon just after the Great War. India had collaborated with the British in its sacred war against the heathen Hun and expected huge concessions towards Home Rule in return. What it got was the Rowlatt Act of 1919, an extension of a war time measure that gave the executive branch of the Raj broad powers to curb "seditious" activities and lock up seditious activists. In other words, martial law.

It meant the Raj could search homes and make arrests without warrants. It could observe, restrict and restrain anyone suspected of anarchical behavior, and keep in jail anyone arrested under the Defense of India Act of 1915. It was something that Indians – which, in those days included those we now refer to as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis – could not stomach. So there were local and nationwide protests, which led to more arrests, protests and riots.

British civil authorities in the Punjab – their heads bulging with worst case scenarios – were thinking the Great Mutiny of 1857. And even though none of them had been alive then, that collective memory was so strongly engrained in the tradition that it seemed like it had happened just the other day and to them personally. According to them, the protests and riots they were witnessing now were the beginnings of the Mutiny of 1919. The wogs⁵³ would rise up to slaughter the white colonials and rape their white women.

This indicates three things to me. One, Rajneesh's time sense (see notes 128 and 148 below). Two, how he worked with his intimates, and how they responded to his "caresses" and "hits". Three, proof positive - if that is needed - that nothing he said about anything could ever be taken as a one size fits all bottom line.

⁵² Rajneesh, *The Path of the Mystic*, Chapter 12, May 10, 1986 (morning session)

⁵³ What many racists British called the Indians. Like US soldiers in Vietnam calling the locals "chinks" or "Charlie". Often derisively defined as an acronym for "worthy old gentleman".

General Reginald Dyer, commander of the 45th Brigade at Jullundur, was summoned to Amritsar to restore "law and order". On Sunday morning, April 13, he marched through the city announcing military rule.

The inhabitants of Amritsar are warned by means of this proclamation that if they damage any property or commit any act of violence in the neighborhood of Amritsar, such acts will be considered to have been instigated from the city of Amritsar, and we shall arrange to punish the inhabitants of Amritsar in accordance with the military law. All meetings and assemblies are prohibited by this proclamation, and we shall act in accordance with the military law in order to disperse all such assemblies forthwith.⁵⁴

That same afternoon, at about 4:30 p.m., about 25,000 Indians gathered at Jallianwalla Bagh, eight acres of unclaimed land near the center of the city. For General Dyer it was a dangerous challenge to the prestige, power and authority of the British Empire and a personal affront. So along with 90 soldiers and 2 machine gun-equipped armored cars, he hurried to carry out his duty to God, King and Country.

Shortly after 5 p.m. the soldiers entered the *bagh*⁵⁵ through a narrow passage, and were immediately deployed to the left and right. Thirty seconds later, on the general's orders, the firing started. When Dyer noticed that his men were aiming over the heads of the peaceful and unarmed demonstrators, he ordered them to set their sights straight into the densest part of the crowd for maximum impact. In other words, "shoot to kill".

Ten minutes later 1650 bullets had been fired, about 400 people were dead and 1200 more were wounded. The pacifiers made an about face and marched back to the barracks. Four months later, Dyer testified before an investigating committee in Bombay.

I fired and continued to fire until the crowd dispersed and I consider this is the least amount of firing which would produce the necessary moral and widespread effect it was my duty to produce if I was to justify my action. If more troops had been at hand the casualties would have been greater in proportion. It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect from a military point of view not only on those present, but more especially throughout the Punjab. There could be no question of undue severity.⁵⁶

After Jallianwalla Bagh, India's best and brightest were forced - many probably against their Western educated wills - to realize that British rule had not much to do with fancy words like civilization, justice, democracy and level playing fields. It was simply the

⁵⁴ Rupert Furneaux, *Massacre at Amritsar*, p. 75. My account owes much to Furneaux.

⁵⁵ Garden or park. The linguistically alert will notice an uncanny resemblance to "bhagwan".

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17. Dyer, aka "The Butcher of Amritsar", was born in British India in the aftermath of the 1857 uprising. When he finally succumbed to continually deteriorating health eight years after the massacre, some newspapers were still remembering him as the "The Man Who Saved India" and "He did his Duty". But others had a completely different take on the recent past.

subjugation of one nation by another. To rebel against such a state of affairs - what the British legal system branded "sedition" - was a basic quest for freedom, an assertion of the fundamental rights of man.

THIS was the India Rajneesh was reborn in on Friday, December 11, 1931, seven centuries after his last death. The location was Kuchwada, a small farming village of about 700 people in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. As a young boy, he was called "Rajah", which means king. According to his mother, he did not eat for the first three days.

He was raised - some would say spoiled rotten - by his maternal grandparents. On his birthdays he rode through their village on a rented elephant and threw gold coins to the gathering.⁵⁷ At the age of seven, his beloved grandfather fell ill. When the local doctor could do nothing to save him they took him in a bullock cart to the closest town 16 miles away. Along the way the boy watched him die.

"I could see his pulse was slowing down, he was becoming unable to open his eyes; he started breathing in a very strange way, he stopped speaking. I saw death coming closer and closer. He was in my lap because my grandmother was in so much misery and suffering that she was constantly crying."⁵⁸

"I was saying to him, 'Please be silent' - the bullock cart was rattling on the rough, ugly road. It was not even a road, just a track, and he was insisting, 'Stop the wheel, Rajah, do you hear? Stop the wheel.'" Stop the wheel is Indian grown up talk for stop the wheel of birth and death. Or in the words of a 1961 musical, stop the world, I want to get off.⁵⁹

But the boy knew what he meant, and then some. He said, "You know that nobody except you can stop the wheel, so please be silent. I will try to help you." His grandmother stopped crying long enough to look at him in wide eyed wonder. "Don't look so amazed," he told her. "I have suddenly remembered one of my past lives. Seeing his death I have remembered one of my own deaths.' That life and death happened in Tibet."⁶⁰

From then on, he knew a secret. It wasn't one denied to anyone. Rather, it was one denied by everyone, every waking moment as they raced across the planet in pursuit of fame, fortune, entertainment, and their own identities in the eyes of others. We will die. Right now, this second, we are dying.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Rajneesh, *Notes of a Madman*, Series 2, Session 2, pp. 65f, 1984 (publication date). This book and two others, *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood* and *Books I Have Loved*, were spoken from the dentist chair at Rajneeshpuram at the end of 1981 and the beginning of 1982. See Chapter 3. In another version of the elephant tale there were two bags of silver rupees (Rajneesh, *From Personality to Individuality*, Chapter 27, January 25, 1985). If I was forced to choose between the two, I'd go for the silver.

⁵⁸ Rajneesh, *From Personality to Individuality*, Chapter 23, January 21, 1985

⁵⁹ *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off*, music and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley.

⁶⁰ Rajneesh, *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood*, Chapter 15, p. 189 (first edition), (publication date 1984).

⁶¹ This may sound like plain vanilla *memento mori*, but such a "just the same as" reduction should be strenuously resisted.

The rest of his youth was spent in Gadarwara, a booming town of 20,000. He grew up with his father, a cloth merchant, mother, a simple farm girl who married when she was seven years old, and an immediate family that was to consist of 11 kids born over a period of 27 years. It was a childhood bubbling with musicians, magicians, snake charmers, story tellers and itinerant priests pretending to know more than they actually did.

He gathered a gang of boys around himself and organized dangerous stunts. Such as jumping like monkeys from one tree top to another. And leaping 100 feet from a railroad bridge into the monsoon swollen Shakkar River. "I could not do it more than three times," one of his childhood friends, Swami Sukhraj Bharti, told me. "And that too I only did for his sake."

Sukhraj, a jovial 55 year old farmer and businessman who had once been mayor of Gadarwara, said that he "always got a good beating from either my father or older brother" when he returned home from his adventures with Rajah. "They said, 'He is a notorious boy and you will be spoiled if you keep constant company with him.'" At the time Rajah said to him, "Why don't you stop them from beating you? Just catch hold of your father's hand and say he has no right to beat you!"

Sukhraj didn't know much about Rajneesh's early meditations. "He had his spiritual life. But we didn't have any access to it. Our relationship was limited to playing and trouble making. Still, it was clear that on one level something mysterious was going on. He would suddenly disappear all alone and come back late at night. His mother would ask, 'Where have you been, dear?' And he would tell her not to worry, that he was fine."

Destiny had declared through the mouth of an astrologer that Rajah - now "Rajneesh" - might die at fourteen. He retreated to a ruined temple for seven days and watched with meticulous patience as flies and snakes crawled over him. "The basic note was this," he said years later, "that if you are feeling you are going to die, you become calm and silent."⁶²

Shashi, Rajneesh's childhood sweetheart, lived near the temple and frequently tried to interrupt his retreats. Finally, he posted guards to keep her out. Just how far the romance went is not known. "He was always very secretive about Shashi," Sukhraj said. She, the daughter of a local doctor, died of typhoid fever in 1947. She promised to return to him in the next life, and made him promise to wait for her.⁶³

⁶² Rajneesh, *Vigyan Bhairav Tantra*, Vol. 1, Chapter 24, December 17, 1972. Also known as *The Book of Secrets*.

Those inclined to think Rajneesh something of a necromaniac should understand hygienic as well as cultural differences between the modern West and India. Up until recently, death in India was an utterly pedestrian phenomenon. Literally. People died on the streets every day. Unlike love and sex, it was not taboo. As for life expectancy, even as late as the 1940's, 35% of "an Indian male cohort ...died before the age of 10". (Robert Blauner, "Death and Social Structure", *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*, November 1966, p. 380)

⁶³ "I had a girlfriend when I was young. Then she died. But on her deathbed she promised me she would come back. The name of the girlfriend was Shashi.... And now she has come as Vivek ... to take care of

Starting some time in 1952 - when he was 20 - and continuing for a year, he went through a process akin to what Christian mystics have called "the dark night of the soul".⁶⁴ Years later, he described it in terms of utter darkness, madness, endless falling, and waking up covered in sweat. "Every step for me was in darkness - aimless and ambiguous. My condition was full of tension, insecurity and danger."⁶⁵

In March 1953, the shattering storm hit and he felt "as if I was going mad with blissfulness". Since remaining in his room felt like being buried alive, he hurried into the street. "A great urge was there just to be under the sky with the stars, with the trees, with the earth, to be with nature. And immediately as I came out, the feeling of being suffocated disappeared. It was too small a place for such a big phenomenon. Even the sky is a small place for that big a phenomenon. It is bigger than the sky."⁶⁶

At around 2 a.m. on Saturday, March 21, sitting under a maulshree tree in Jabalpur's Bhanvartal garden, Rajneesh became enlightened. "I have known many other deaths, but they were nothing compared to it. They were partial deaths. Sometimes the body died, sometimes a part of the mind died, sometimes a part of the ego died. But as far as the person was concerned, it remained. Renovated many times, decorated many times, changed a little bit here and there, but it remained. The continuity remained. That night the death was total. It was a date with death and God simultaneously."⁶⁷

According to Rajneesh, enlightenment Eastern style isn't a one shot deal. It's an ongoing process, what is called the flowering of the thousand petal lotus.⁶⁸ Rajneesh was living in a *bagh* streaming with flowers, a sky bristling with stars. It was plainly stingy and futile to keep score. Words must have seemed obscenely inadequate, and for the first few years after the event he rarely spoke. Still, he had to make an effort to convey what had happened, because 721 years before, more or less, he had promised to call and keep on calling.⁶⁹

me.... Life is a great drama, a great play - it goes on from one life to another to another." (Rajneesh, *The Path of Love*, Chapter 2, December 22, 1976) The revelation came in response to a question about when he had had his last girlfriend. The answer included: "You are all my girlfriends, boys included." For more on this subject, see Chapter 9.

⁶⁴ Saint John of the Cross, a 16th century Spanish poet and Carmelite priest

⁶⁵ Rajneesh, *Dimensions Beyond the Known*, Chapter 5, date not noted

⁶⁶ Rajneesh, *The Discipline of Transcendence*, Vol. 2, Chapter 11, September 10, 1976

⁶⁷ Same discourse.

⁶⁸ For example, Rajneesh, *The Fish in the Sea is Not Thirsty*, Chapter 7, April 17, 1979

⁶⁹ One is reminded of a, perhaps apocryphal, story about Thomas Aquinas. While dictating his monumental *Summae Theologiae* to his secretary, Reginald of Piperno, he stopped dead in his tracks and refused to continue. Afraid that Thomas would abandon the piece in a state of lunatic disarray, Reginald asked, "Pater, why have you abandoned this great work, which you have begun to praise God and enlighten the world?" Thomas responded, "I cannot." That was a non starter for Reginald, and he persisted. Thomas then said, "I cannot, because in comparison with what I have seen and what has been revealed to me, everything I have written seems like straw scattered to the winds." (Marie Louise von Franz, *Aurora consurgens*, pp. 427-8. My translation and adaptation from the German.)

There was a long period of relative quiet. From the outside Rajneesh was a classic portrait of disaster. A young man who had gone too far and was now going nowhere. He lay on his unmade bed in an unkempt room and stared at the ceiling for hours on end. Relatives and friends worried that all his experiments with meditation had led to "total ruin".

Explained in eastern terms, what was happening - or not happening - was an expression of the *tamas guna*, or the energy of indolence and inertia. Energy of inertia? What kind of metaphysics is that? Or physics, for that matter? Rajneesh's next phase was a fiery blaze, an expression of *rajas guna*, and he blasted through it like a bullet.⁷⁰

While still a philosophy professor at the University of Jabalpur, *Acharya*⁷¹ Rajneesh, as he came to be known, was on the go by train three weeks a month. In Bombay one morning, in Calcutta the next night, in Delhi a day later and then on to Kashmir. The whole country was his campus and he spoke to millions of people, sometimes as many as 50,000 at a time.

Consonant with the rules of rhetoric and debate, he developed and expanded his points with facts and logic as a base, and stories and peasant humor for illustration. But he also used his eyes, hands, bare barrel hairy chest and beard, and for those who could get close attendance at his appearances was more than a multi media experience. Pedestrian, half dead words shook and shimmied in him. They blazed fire in his eyes, leaped into flowers in his hands, and breathed perfumed music from his mouth.

There were stories within stories within stories, Socratic sleights of hand and perspective. One wasn't quite sure what the message was, where it was coming from or who was listening. Somehow he managed to return to the starting points and braid most of the loose threads together before topping it off with "Enough for today". But by then no one could remember a single thing he had said. No matter. As far as he was concerned, the man himself was the message.

Like a one man guerrilla army or religious raider, he assaulted the citadels of authority. He cultivated controversy the way others court consensus and compromise. "With or without reason, I was creating controversies and making criticism - because the more controversies, the quicker this transition through the second phase of activity."⁷² And controversies weren't hard to come by, because India had an exportable surplus of sacred cows, both ancient and modern.

One of them was Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the modern nation who preached *ahimsa*,⁷³ celibacy, poverty, and pre-industrial revolution technology. The day Gandhi

⁷⁰ According to Rajneesh and yogis, there are three *gunas*: *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. The second is the quality of action, energy, force: the third light and stability. See, for example, *Yoga: The Alpha and the Omega*, Vol. 5, Chapter 1, July 1, 1975.

⁷¹ teacher

⁷² Rajneesh, *Dimensions Beyond the Known*, Chapter 6, date unknown. You could say he was consciously planning his own burn out.

⁷³ non violence

was assassinated - Friday, January 30, 1948 - Rajneesh had been "too sad to cry".⁷⁴ But now he attacked him from every vulnerable angle. Gandhi was not a religious man, he said. In India - and the rest of the world - that was like saying the Pope's not Catholic.

But he had an argument to back up the stinger. Religion, he said, has nothing to do with religiously reading and repeating the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Bible*, *Koran*, and other scriptures. Nothing to do with dogma, doctrine, and prayer - which was essentially begging and nagging God and telling him how to do his job. It was utterly unrelated to fasting, outward rituals or, indeed, anything normally seen as religion. Ouch!

It has everything to do with meditation. Meditation, according to him, in all its diverse forms, is essentially a deep enquiry into truth. Not in the style of theologians and pundits, by asking questions and arguing for and against various answers. But, rather, in witnessing what passes within and around the meditator: sensations, thoughts, feelings, breath. Things so subtle that calling them "things" is stretching that noun to the breaking point. Slowly, slowly, the meditator learns not to identify with what is witnessed. Only in this non identified state can truth be experienced.

Gandhi was not religious because he knew nothing of meditation and his inner nature. Gandhi masqueraded as a holy man. But he was a politician using religion as a tool and working the masses for political goals.

Gandhi worshipped poverty. Now if you worship poverty, you will remain poor. Poverty has to be hated. I hate poverty! I cannot say, "Worship it." That would be a crime. And I don't see any religious quality in just being poor. But Gandhi talked much about poverty and its beauty. It helps the poor man's ego. It buttresses his ego. He feels good. It is a consolation that he is religious, simple, that he is poor. He may not have riches, but he has some spiritual richness. No, not at all. Poverty is ugly and poverty has to be destroyed. And to destroy poverty, technology has to be brought in.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Readers of *Freedom at Midnight* (by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre) might remember that the men who conspired to assassinate Gandhi came from Poona. But that was hardly the first time Gandhi had had problems with that sort from there. According to I. K. Shukla, in 1934 "Gandhi was on [the] way to a reception by [the] Poona Municipality. A bomb was hurled at him but it hit the car ahead, and Gandhi was saved. The Chief Municipal Officer, a couple of constables, and four others were injured." In 1944, in nearby Panchgani, a "man with a dagger rushed toward him. According to Manishankar Purohit, the proprietor of Poona Surati Lodge, the assailant was none else but [sic, "none other than"] Nathuram Godse." Godse was the man who finally got the job done. In September 1944 "Gandhi was scheduled to leave Wardha for Bombay to meet Jinnah. A group from Poona went to Wardha to attack Gandhi and sabotage the program."

In June 1946, "Gandhi was traveling to Poona by a special train. They [*Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh*, RSS] had hatched a plot to derail the train in the dark that night between Neral and Karjat by putting huge stones on the rail track." ("RSS and Gandhi's Assassination", *The Milli Gazette* - "Indian Muslims' Leading English Language Newspaper" - September 1-15, 2004) Even Gandhi's assassination, cremation and scattering of the ashes didn't assuage the bloodlust of those who wanted to keep killing him. Which, incidentally, was not Rajneesh's mission in life.

⁷⁵ Rajneesh, *The Secret of Secrets*, Vol. 2, Chapter 4, August 30, 1978

More gasoline was thrown on the fire in Bombay on Wednesday, August 28, 1968 when he talked about sex. "What I want to say is this: sex is divine. The primal energy of sex has the reflection of God in it. It is obvious. It is the energy that creates new life. And that is the greatest, most mysterious force of all."

End this enmity with sex. If you crave a shower of love in your life, renounce this conflict with sex. Accept sex with joy. Acknowledge its sacredness. Receive it gratefully and embrace it more and more deeply. You will be surprised that sex can reveal such sacredness to the degree of your acceptance. And as sinful and irreverent as your approach is, that is how ugly and sinful the sex that confronts you will be.⁷⁶

According to him, sexual energy is also the basis of intelligence. The free expression of sex will make people more intelligent and creative and, therefore, more inoculated against exploitation and running with the herd fads and fascism. On the other hand, if half of one's energies are spent combating and suppressing the other half, the result would be a house divided, torn asunder, and ripped to shreds. Schizophrenia in either full extravagant bloom or waiting in the wings for someone or something to push it onto the podium.

It was point, set, match against Gandhi unless one of his many disciples and idolizers could rustle up better arguments. Unable to assault the center of Rajneesh's points, however, his opponents - read "enemies" - undermined him around the edges. The plug was pulled on the lecture series. But one month later he was re-invited to Bombay and finished the *From Sex to Superconsciousness* talks before audiences of 15,000 people.

In addition to the lectures there were meditation camps. Rajneesh's famous "Dynamic"⁷⁷ was first done sitting down in a high school in Bombay in 1969. Several weeks later there were about 700 people doing it standing up on a clean sandy beach - with trees - in Nargol, Gujarat. Ma Yoga Laxmi, a 5 foot minus, linguini thin Gujarati woman 2 years younger than Rajneesh, told me that in those days there were 4 steps to the meditation.

"The first 15 minutes was vigorous breathing. Then, in the next phase, one cooperated with the body. One let it do what it wanted to do. If it wanted to scream, one screamed. If it wanted to cry, one cried. Then one asked the question, 'Meh khan hai?' Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?' At the end one was grateful or prayerful, either sitting or lying down quietly. And in that space he said, 'I don't know why you are here. Perhaps you also don't know why you are here.' And his words and voice penetrated very deeply into Laxmi's heart."

At first, Laxmi's manner of speaking - referring to herself in the third person - is slightly disorienting. It seems to introduce an unseen other person into the conversation, and I felt myself suppressing an urge to look around to see who it was. While I eventually learned to like it - in her! - I never dared try it out for myself.

⁷⁶ Rajneesh, *From Sex to Superconsciousness*, Chapter 1, August 28, 1968

⁷⁷ See Chapter 1.

One night Laxmi was sleeping on the balcony outside Rajneesh's room. There was a full moon. "He was in the room, sleeping, and the door was open. And Laxmi had the feeling that today one has to know, 'Who am I?' or one has to die. With that intensity, it just happened. With the breath came the question, on and on. And then there was an explosion and laughter. It was so loud, but it was beyond Laxmi to stop it."

Her uncle, sleeping in another room, charged in. He was very upset. He thought she had gone off the deep end and was already wondering what he was going to tell her mother. The next day Rajneesh told her, "Today you make it very clear to everyone, we are all mad. Some are more mad than others. But everyone is mad. So tell your uncle and all your friends not to disturb you in any way. Whatever happens to you, let it happen."

To let it happen or not to. That was not only the question with Rajneesh, but also the continental divide. On one side were those who went along, through a seeming endless series of best and worst case scenarios, and high seas suddenly settling. On the other those who never could or would do any of that, or not with enough passion to make it worth the inconvenience. It was the parting of the ways for those who would praise Rajneesh and those who wanted him buried. Sometimes first one, and then the other.

Laxmi, who came from a family of vigorous and influential Gandhians, let it happen. She went further into the meditation, and laughed and laughed. To her uncle on the outside, she looked like she was going into irretrievable madness. He was worried about her and the family's reputation. He became angry and finally left the meditation camp.

After her return to Bombay she had visions of herself wearing red and orange clothes. "Do you know what this means," her mother asked. "No," she said. "It is sannyas," her mother said. "And I will be the luckiest woman in the world if my daughter becomes a sannyasin. But remember one thing. I don't want you to come back. Once you walk ahead, keep walking. Don't turn back."

The next time Rajneesh arrived at Bombay's Victoria Terminus,⁷⁸ Laxmi was on the platform to greet him with about 100 people. She was dressed in orange. He called her to him and said, "This is beautiful. This is the way existence wants it to happen. Today, my neo-sannyas begins." But many old friends were angry, because Rajneesh had spoken strongly against all religions and traditions. He had spoken against sannyas itself.

According to Laxmi, he smiled and said, "This is not the old concept of sannyas. This is life affirmative sannyas. See these colors. They are the color of the sun. They are the color of blood. And my people will be the most alive people on earth. They will be the beginning of a new cycle in human history."

In May 1971, *Acharya* Rajneesh started using the name "Bhagwan". Years later, at the end of December 1977, someone asked him about it. "Just a few days ago there was a question: 'Why have you declared yourself to be Bhagwan?' It is a drama. I have decided

⁷⁸ Known locally as VT. These early years are covered from another perspective by Ma Dharm Jyoti in her brilliant and brief *One Hundred Tales For Ten Thousand Buddhas*. In my opinion, an absolute must read.

to play the part of Bhagwan and you have decided to play the part of the disciples - but it is a drama. The day you will become aware, you will know: there is no master and no disciple. The day you will understand, you will know that it was a dream - but a dream which can help you to come out of all your other dreams; a thorn which can help to pull out your thorns from your flesh, it can be instrumental - but a thorn all the same; a poison which can help you to drop other poisons - but a poison all the same. Use it as a raft. That's why I say it is a drama."⁷⁹

But back at the beginning of the decade it was for some a dream and a drama too far. Especially for the Bombay film crowd and other smart setters who had previously applauded his iconoclasm. "It sorted out well," Rajneesh said. "Only those who are ready to dissolve with me remained. All others escaped. They created much space around me. Otherwise, they were crowding too much, and it was very difficult for the real seekers to come closer to me. The crowds disappeared. The word 'Bhagwan' functioned like an atomic explosion. It did well. I am happy I chose it."⁸⁰

After having slaughtered so many sacred cows, there was blood and bodies on the tracks. Travel became increasingly difficult. "I would reach a town after traveling for 24 hours in the train, and the crowd wouldn't allow me to get down into the station. They would force me to go back. There would ensue a fight between those who wanted me to get down from the train and those who didn't want me to get down, in their town at least."⁸¹

Before Rajneesh stopped traveling he held one of his last meditation camps at Mt. Abu, Rajasthan. In attendance was a 22 year old middle class English girl who was horrified by what she saw. "I saw those people doing Dynamic and I hid in the bushes," said Christine Woolf. "For two days I hid in the bushes! I didn't know what was happening to these people. They were doing all this deep breathing and catharting and the 'hoo,' and jumping up and down and laughing and crying and screaming and going naked! I didn't know what it was all about."⁸²

Finally, after a conversation with Rajneesh, Woolf participated in the activities. "That camp was just explosion after explosion. Every day something happened. I didn't know what was happening, but I allowed it. Everything felt so beautiful. I just let everything come in. And after that particular experience of just crying and crying, of just seeing my mind and seeing my body, after the meditation I just sat there."⁸³ In April 1971 in a Bombay discourse Rajneesh talked about this particular English girl.

Yesterday, someone came to me in the morning, and I told her to take sannyas. She was bewildered. She said to give her time to think and decide, at least two days. I said to her, "Who knows about two days? So much you

⁷⁹ Rajneesh, *The Diamond Sutra*, 340f, Chapter 9, December 29, 1977. The theme of what "bhagwan" means and the nature of the master disciple relationship recurs at many points in this book. The Preface and Chapters 9, 10 and 12.

⁸⁰ Rajneesh, *The Discipline of Transcendence*, Vol. 2, Chapter 4, September 3, 1976

⁸¹ Rajneesh, *The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha*, Vol. 11, p. 47, Chapter 2, April 12, 1980

⁸² Vasant Joshi, *The Awakened One*, p. 107

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 107f

require. Take it today, this moment." But she was not decisive, so I gave her two days. The next morning she came and took it. She has not taken two days, only one day. I asked her, "Why? You have been given two days, why have you come so soon?" She said, "At three o'clock at night, suddenly I was awake, and something went deep within me telling me, 'Go take sannyas.'"

It is not a decision that she has made, but a decision that has been made by her very deep-rooted mind. But the moment she came in the room I knew her, I knew that mind which she came to know twenty hours later.⁸⁴

The young English girl, Ma Yoga Vivek, was the woman sitting next to Rajneesh on the Learjet 35 14½ years later when both were arrested at gunpoint in Charlotte. Starting in 1973, she stayed with him almost continuously and became his nurse, caretaker and, according to the gossip, "girlfriend". Sometime in the 1970s she told one interviewer, "One of the first things Bhagwan said to me after sannyas was, 'Do you remember me? Do you remember anything about me?' And when he said that, again I went click. It goes like a click!... Literally everything gets turned inside-out. And the only thing that came out of my mouth was, 'I remember that you're someone that I loved very much.'"⁸⁵

She didn't recall who he was or when and where she had loved him. But that night she saw herself in a cottage along a river. People were sitting on the verandah outside waiting for her to die. And a 16 year old boy, Rajneesh, was sitting by her bed. "Just before I died, I made him promise that he would call me back, that wherever I was he would bring me back, and I made him promise that he wouldn't go with another woman, that he wouldn't get married." Shashi, Rajneesh's old flame, had returned.

Rajneesh's neo-sannyas movement took off in a big way after March 1974 when he moved to Poona, Maharashtra, a sprawling industrial city of 2.5 million people, 119 miles southeast of Bombay and 1850 feet above sea level on the Deccan Plateau. The Shree Rajneesh Ashram, as it was then known, was located in Koregaon Park, an exclusive residential neighborhood northeast of the city, which was filled with Maharajahs' mansions and old trees over-arching miraculously quiet streets.

From 1974 to 1978 about 25,000 people a year passed through the six acres of lush but trimmed tropical greenery. After that the flow totals gushed off the old charts. Ma Prem Arup, a Dutch sannyasin who was in charge of helping people design individual meditation and therapy programs, said that "between 2,000 and 3,000 people arrived each month. The turnover was very big. The number of people that would stay longer than a few months at a time was relatively small. Most people would come for a few days, a few weeks, or, at most, a few months."

⁸⁴ Rajneesh, *I Am The Gate*, Chapter 2, April 16, 1971 (pp. 42f)

⁸⁵ *The Awakened One*, p.

There were wild, cathartic groups and meditations where participants could shout, scream and babble at the sky, punch pillows, pound padded walls and hate their mothers, fathers and the whole world to their hearts' content. It was a place to do a lot of whatever you had always been dreaming about, like organizing your own funeral and watching the whole world miss you to death. In the early days of the ashram you could put on the boxing gloves and go a round or two with someone with the same needs. But it was 100 times safer, physically and spiritually, to pound defenseless pillows. There are no records, Akashic or otherwise, of anyone accumulating *karma* with pillows.

Like the attacks on Gandhi, there was a basis for this sensible violence. And it wasn't to make the world safe for Jesus and Coca Cola. According to Rajneesh, we are all "ancient pilgrims",⁸⁶ who have gathered much dust, lust and other stuff down the ages. From our animal heritage and the archives of human kinkiness. If we carefully watch our secret desires – and that includes secrets lodged within and hiding behind other secrets - we might discover that even before the first cup of coffee this morning we have chalked up a few Amritsars and Auschwitzs of our own.

But we are not born evil, destined to wallow in radioactive, never goes away sin and use whatever life we have making down payments on redemption. We just need a good psychic scrub: a brain and body wash. The groups and meditations were a general throwing open of all the windows and doors to the self, a spring cleaning of the soul.

Coming from various backgrounds where a premium was placed on hiding the human not so nice behind politeness and designing smiles, therapy group participants could get back to basics and let the shit fly. From the outside, it looked pretty sicko. A reign of terror and freewheeling licentiousness. And for some it was, complete with the lice. But for most, it was blood, sweat and tears, recognizing, acknowledging and coming to grips with what New Age participants the world over used to call "baggage".

And then there was sex. As advertised, it was free. It was there for the getting and giving, but not taking. In those pre-AIDS days⁸⁷ there was lots of it with many consenting partners. Sometimes it was smash and grab, with rage, jagged edges and not knowing each other a second after it happened. More often, it was rounded and friendly, with gobs of sobbing or laughing at the climax. Or couples apparently trying to set world records for how long they could hold hands, hug and stare deeply into each other's eyes.

According to Rajneesh, even sex is foreplay: childish things. But since humans miss the main thrust of it – through either repression or intoxicated, nearly unconscious over indulgence – they continue to wallow in killing whirlpools at the lower levels of their potential. By going totally into sex, he said, they can go beyond it and reach higher realms of consciousness. Thus for him and some, but definitely not all, of his sannyasins,

⁸⁶ "You are not new on the earth, you are very ancient pilgrims." (Rajneesh, *The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha*, Vol. 4, Chapter 5, August 26, 1979)

⁸⁷ See Chapter 6.

"from sex to superconsciousness" was not just a perfect package catch phrase you used to draw in the suckers "born every minute".⁸⁸

Participants in ashram groups and candidates for sannyas were on and off the roaders. Doctors, lawyers, high school teachers, college professors, police commissioners, drug addicts trying to kick, kooks, cooks, stewardesses, Buddhists, Jesuit priests, rabbis, little old ladies, beach bums, artists, freelance intellectuals, carpenters and *la dolce vita* jetsetters from Germany, The Netherlands, Australia, Japan, Italy, England, North and South America.

Among the more prominent who came and took sannyas were (in random order): English actor Terence Stamp; Prince Welf of Hanover, great grandson of the German Kaiser Wilhelm II and cousin of England's Prince Charles; Richard Price, founder of the California Esalen Institute; Princess Nicolleta Machiavelli, an Italian actress and distant descendent of Niccolo Machiavelli; Kitaro, a Japanese New Age musician; Patricia Lear, daughter of Learjet inventor William Lear; Stewart Kirkpatrick, son of former United States Ambassador to the United Nations Jean Kirkpatrick; and Shannon Ryan, daughter of Leo Ryan, a California congressman gunned down at a primitive airstrip in South America.⁸⁹

Ruth Carter Stapleton, sister of President Jimmy Carter, and pop singer Diana Ross visited the ashram, but did not become disciples. Others, like Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, allegedly wanted to visit but were afraid of the notoriety and political backlash. On a trip to India in 1975-76, Trinidad born, Nobel prize winning author V. S. Naipaul was told about it.

"You must go to that ashram near Poona," the Parsi lady back for a holiday from Europe, said at lunch one day in Bombay. "They say you get a nice mix of East and West there."

The young man who had been described to me as a "minor magnate" said with unexpected passion: "It's a terrible place. It's full of American women who go there to debauch."⁹⁰

Naipaul went to Poona. But while he claimed to be interested in wounded civilizations, he was not driven to check out what some saw as a way to heal them.

⁸⁸ A catch phrase that allegedly sprang from the mouth of cynical showman P. T. Barnum. But like so much that happens in "history" - as opposed to myth and imagination - it might not have been as simple and straightforward as we have been led to believe. Is nothing sacrosanct?

⁸⁹ See below. Arianna Stasinopoulou, who visited the ashram with her then partner, British journalist Bernard Levin, was not famous at the time. But she is now, as Arianna Huffington, the wildly swinging - this decade way to the right, that decade way to the left - political and social commentator. Always where the action is, she has written numerous books and has her own very prominent and popular blog: The Huffington Post (HuffPo). According to an inflammatory, anti-left website, *Vanity Fair* (Maureen Orth, "Arianna's Virtual Candidate", November 1994) and Wikipedia, she and Levin became sannyasins. But I have not been able to confirm or refute this.

⁹⁰ Naipaul, *India: A Wounded Civilization*, p. 51

By the late 1970s Rajneesh had been splash news in India for at least a decade. Most branded him a blot on the nation's escutcheon. A few called him the greatest spiritual philosopher since Shankara two thousand years before. By the summer of 1977 he was becoming a *phénomène* in the European media.

The story took an interesting twist when *Stern*, Germany's largest selling magazine, sent veteran reporter Andrees Jorge Eltern to Poona to find out why top professionals and thousands of German youths were sitting at the feet of a magnetic Indian master. Eltern discovered part of the answer in a very personal way. By taking sannyas himself. Eltern – now Swami Satyananda - attempted to address the launch questions, but the results were heavily red inked by outraged *Stern* editors. Eltern quit and proceeded to write about his and other Germans' experiences with Rajneesh in two best selling books.⁹¹

Sylvie Winter, a top German cover girl, took sannyas and moved to Poona. Eva Renzi, a German actress, went and created a stir in the tabloids in the summer of 1978 when she claimed she had been raped in an encounter group. The report was discounted by *Die Zeit*, a reputable German newspaper, and giggled at by *Esotera*, another German magazine.⁹² *Esotera* went on to note that Rajneesh and his work "is a radical challenge to all existing systems in the world, whether political, ideological or spiritual in nature. One could call him the most revolutionary teacher of our times. But his work is not hidden. The place where he works is anything but a cloister."

Peter Armstrong, executive producer of BBC's religious program, *Everyman*, wrote to the ashram seeking permission to film there. "Bhagwan has become a presence in England that can no longer be ignored. The BBC feels that the time has come for the world to look at the whole thing objectively."⁹³ Anthony Isaacs, executive producer of the BBC's *Travel and Exploration* program, also wanted to document the ashram's activities. But the Janata government, under the leadership of Gandhi disciple, Prime Minister Morarji Desai, was afraid that too much publicity about the "notorious" Rajneesh Ashram would give foreigners a false impression of the country.

India Today reported, "The Indian High Commission flatly turned down the applications of both BBC men, ascribing no reason. Inquiries to the Indian embassy in London as well as the authorities in New Delhi drew a blank. Said a BBC spokesman in a letter to the ashram: 'It's incredible to me that after all the protestations we have had about a free press and allowing journalists access to anything they wanted in India, that the first time we put in an application for something as unpolitical as the ashram, we get held up.'"

Rajneesh was also becoming famous in The Netherlands. Jan Foudraine, a popular Dutch psychologist and author, became a sannyasin and shouted it from the rooftops.⁹⁴ Famous

⁹¹ *Ganz entspannt im Hier und Jetzt* (Quite Relaxed in the Here and Now) and *Im Grunde alles ist ganz einfach* (Basically, Everything is Quite Easy).

⁹² October 1978

⁹³ *India Today*, August 1-15, 1978

⁹⁴ He wrote numerous books about it. For example, *Bhagwan ... : notities van een discipel* (*Notes of a Disciple*); *De man die uit zijn hersenen zakte* (*The Man Who Slipped Out of His Brains*), and *Oorspronkelijk gezicht een gang naar huis* (*Original Face, a Way Home*).

singers, actresses, newspaper reporters, and a clarinetist who had spent 14 years with the Rotterdam symphony orchestra joined up. A former Benedictine abbot was asked for his opinion by an Amsterdam weekly. "Even if Bhagwan, as they say, uses dangerous methods - which I cannot judge - it does fit in with the way towards the inner. That road is diametrically opposed to the road of the rational."⁹⁵

By contrast, on the other side of the "pond" – as Europeans, and now even some Americans, call the wild and windy Atlantic – Rajneesh was a huge "Who?", "What?", "Huh?". Reports about him and the ashram in the US were relegated to tiny esoteric periodicals.⁹⁶ In January 1978, *Time's* New Delhi correspondent, Lawrence Malkin, dubbed the ashram "Esalen East". And without the slightest embarrassment and twitch of apology boiled down Rajneesh's already overwhelming *oeuvre* - which he had obviously never read, let alone studied, understood and practiced - to seven words: "mostly pop-Hinduism and anything-goes homilies".

Sannyasins were also a mostly something. In this case, "refugees" from the Human Potential Movement.⁹⁷ Like so many other outside observers who had never felt the tickles, tingles and sheer pull of mystic desire, Malkin could not relate to the ecstasies of "religious" experiences. For him a "temple of total ruin" was just a totally ruined temple.

"This is a tavern, not a temple," Rajneesh said on Saturday, March 21, 1981, days before he went into a 3½ year period of public silence. "You ask what is the name of my religion. Do drunkards have a religion? Do the inebriated have a religion?"

There is ecstasy. There is bliss. Don't ask what my goal is. I have no goal. This existence is not here to fulfill any objective. This existence is spontaneous bliss. And you ask, "You have established an organization of thousands of people around you. What is the intention behind this?" Here there is no organization being established. But for a tavern a few arrangements have to be made. Just arrangements for the tavern!

A tavern too has its management. Ultimately, someone must be the *saki*, the wine server. Someone has to bring the bottles. Someone has to pass out the cups. Someone has to pour the wine from the bottles. A tavern has its own management, its own set-up. This is not an organization. This is only an arrangement so that the drinkers will not remain thirsty, and the puritan prohibitionists will not be allowed to enter.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Kees Tholens in *Die Nieuwe Linie*, July 4, 1979

⁹⁶ *Yoga Journal* (January/February 1979) and *Sufi Times* (July 1978)

⁹⁷ *Time*, January 16, 1978

⁹⁸ Rajneesh, *Bahutere Hain Ghat (Myriad Are The Paths)*. This discourse was given in Hindi and translated for me by Swami Chaitanya Kabir, one of Rajneesh's American disciples fluent in that language. This theme of drunkenness is common in some spiritual traditions. Most notably in the mystic poets of the Sufis. For example, "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam" - but not as translated by Edward Fitzgerald - and the immensely popular 13th century *mevlana* (master) Jalaluddin Rumi.

Years earlier - on Saturday, November 18, 1978 - another temple and ruin of a different order would suggest compelling "parallels" to self proclaimed "cult" and "true religion" experts, the press they force fed "information" to, and a wide base of don't care to know any better readers. It was repeatedly smeared over the Rajneesh story, and many believed, and still do, that they were one and the same tale. One had already happened. The other was a ticking time bomb, which could happen any minute.

This ground zero, "template" event happened on 600 acres of land about seven miles from the Port Kaituma airstrip in Guyana.⁹⁹ After hearing that California Congressman Leo Ryan and his fact finding mission had been attacked - leaving Ryan and four others dead and many seriously wounded - a "renegade" bible basher, Reverend James Warren Jones took his cues from Macbeth. "If it were done ... 'twere well It were done quickly".¹⁰⁰ He immediately put Plan B into action, a pre-rehearsed, amazingly coordinated skit called "White Night".

Before morning over 900 "mindless, brainwashed followers" of the Peoples Temple, mostly blacks, drank from the poisoned chalice and committed mass suicide with potassium cyanide laced "Fla-Vor-Aid". The world reacted with a shrill chorus of horror, outrage and I told you so. *Newsweek*, which had devoted a lot of reportorial resources and space to an in depth investigation of "what really happened and why", was getting and printing letters like these.

Not only was the account of the actual episode vivid, but the background of the "reverend" and the full picture of cults as a whole rendered an important service to the confused and shocked American public.

Janice Beck, Columbia, Maryland.

Parents like ourselves, who had a son in one of these new-age cults, pray this tragedy will bring about the investigation of all the cults. How can our government allow all these crimes to get by in the name of religion?

Mrs. M. Hansen, Little Falls, Minnesota¹⁰¹

That was one school of thought and the version of events that has largely dominated "official" histories and general mindsets. And nothing I nor anyone else writes will change one iota of that. Because first impressions last.

But from the very beginning others were hammering on the gates, scaling the walls, and trying to get alternative evidence factored into the equations. One of them was Deirdre Griswold, a reporter for a no budget socialist "rag", *Workers World*, who apparently had to rely on accounts from other journalists to piece her pieces together. She wrote:

⁹⁹ Seduced by Sir Walter Raleigh's *Discoverie of the large rich and beautiful Empire of Guiana* (1596), the Pilgrims almost decided to settle there. (Francis Dillon, *A Place for Habitation: The Pilgrim Fathers and Their Quest*, pp. 107-9)

¹⁰⁰ *Macbeth*, Act I, scene VII

¹⁰¹ From *Newsweek*, December 18, 1978, p. 7

In the orgy of press coverage on the terrible events at the Peoples Temple camp in Guyana, there is tremendous detail and attention given to the bizarre, inexplicable and gruesome aspects of the incidents that resulted in the deaths of over 400 Americans¹⁰² related in some way to the religious group founded by Jim Jones.

But there is a conspicuous **absence** [emphasis hers] of reporting on those very questions that could shed more light on why these grisly events occurred.¹⁰³

In the same article and on the same page she continued:

It has been the Guyanan government itself that has cautiously injected this question [what kind of covert CIA operations has the US been carrying out in Guyana?] into the press by releasing the information that it had agreed to give land to the Peoples Temple [in 1974] only after innumerable high-ranking U.S. political figures had interceded on Jones' behalf! And they listed those who had written letters of recommendation for Jim Jones: Rosalyn Carter [the wife of not yet President Jimmy Carter], Vice-President Walter Mondale [before he was Vice President], Sen. Henry Jackson, Sen. Hubert Humphrey, HEW [Health, Education and Welfare] Secretary Joseph Califano, Sen. Mike Gravel, San Francisco Mayor George Moscone, former San Francisco Mayor Joseph Alioto, and a number of Congresspeople.¹⁰⁴

Griswold concluded that article (the first of four on the subject, as far as I know) with:

Now the events at the Port Kaituma airstrip and the agricultural camp of the Peoples Temple have given the United States an excuse for openly intervening into Guyana with military personnel. True, these are being sent under the label of medical personnel, and their job is supposed to be confined to evacuating the bodies of the more than 400 dead people there.

But the presence of the U.S. military, no matter in what type of uniform, gives the U.S. government a tremendous control over interpreting the events there, rounding up and questioning the survivors, evaluating (or altering and suppressing) the material evidence, and concocting its own version of what happened.¹⁰⁵

And it wasn't only Griswold who suspected that there was more here than met the eye. Cecil Roberts, head of Guyana's Criminal Investigations Department (CID), told

¹⁰² It was originally thought that only about 400 people had died at Jonestown. The headline of *The New York Post* (November 28, 1978) screamed: "Cult Dies in South American Jungle: 400 Die in Mass Suicide, 700 Flee into Jungle".

¹⁰³ Deirdre Griswold, "Questions on the Mass Deaths in Guyana", *Workers World*, November 24, 1978, p. 3

¹⁰⁴ George Moscone was murdered three days after this cautionary note appeared (November 27, 1978).

¹⁰⁵ Deirdre Griswold, "Questions on the Mass Deaths in Guyana", *Workers World*, November 24, 1978, p. 5

reporters, "We're not only dealing with mass suicide, we're dealing with mass murder, and we'll have to sift through everything before we get a better picture."¹⁰⁶

Dr. Leslie Mootoo, chief medical examiner for the Guyanan government and allegedly the first medical man to arrive at the crime scene - a day after, on Sunday, November 19 - worked around the clock in stifling heat performing autopsies on rapidly decomposing bodies. According to Scientology's *Freedom* magazine, Mootoo told them that in many cases the cyanide had been injected, not ingested, "in portions of their bodies they could not have reached themselves 'Those who were injecting them knew what they were doing,' Mootoo said."¹⁰⁷ According to Griswold, he told reporters for the *Chicago Tribune*, "I do not believe there were ever more than 200 persons who died voluntarily."¹⁰⁸

So what had happened at Jonestown? Was it mass suicide or mass murder? A bit of both? If the latter, how much of one, how much of the other? And who was doing the killing? And why? Jonestown's own "goon squad" following Jones' orders? Making sure that everyone followed the script and died with appropriate revolutionary rigor? Or Green Berets and CIA mercenaries covering up evidence of widespread and endemic MK-ULTRA mind control experiments? One thing was certain. On November 18, 1978 no one in Jonestown died of old age.

Dr. James Richardson of the University of Nevada, Reno, who along with a few other social scientists had been studying "new religious movements" (NRM's) - not "cults" - and their arch enemies since the early '70's, raised some of these issues shortly after the events. While he believed that the vast majority of the Jonestown deaths were suicides and devoted most of his article toward explaining the group's history and differentiating it from authentic NRM's, he lamented (in a footnote) that the government's bungling had added fuel to left wing conspiracy mongers.

Because of the negligence of U.S. officials in not ordering immediate autopsies on those who died in Guyana, we will probably never know how many died by suicide and how many were murdered.... The negligence of the U.S. Government in not ordering immediate autopsies is nearly inexplicable,

¹⁰⁶ "Jim Jones Legacy", *Newsweek*, December 18, 1978, p. 30. In her use of this quote, Griswold omits that crucial "only". Thus, "We're not dealing with mass suicide, we're dealing with mass murder, and we'll have to sift through everything before we get a better picture." (Deirdre Griswold, "Jonestown: Motives for the Murders", *Workers World*, December 15, 1978, p. 5)

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Whittle and Jan Thorpe, "Revisiting The Jonestown Tragedy", *Freedom*, 1997. Available on the Net. According to John Judge, who many consider the godfather of Jonestown conspiracy theorists (see "The Black Hole of Guyana: The Untold Story of the Jonestown Massacre"), "Mootoo found no evidence of cyanide pathology in the corpses, which is quite visible in the form of splayed limbs, arched backs, and a certain death grin known as rictus. These bodies were in calm repose, many lying limp where they fell. Mootoo, upon close examination, found fresh needle marks in the backs of almost all of them (85-90%), bent and broken needles (indicating forced injections). The remaining dead were either 'shot or strangled' according to Mootoo. The Guyanese grand jury, hearing the real medical evidence, ruled not a single suicide happened at the Jonestown camp." In an open email to Arianna Huffington (née, Stasinopoulou), Sunday, May 26, 2002. Available on the Net.

¹⁰⁸ Deirdre Griswold, "The Sanitizing of Jonestown", *Workers World*, December 22, 1978, p. 8

and the Government has been severely criticized by many, including medical professionals, for its actions in the matter.¹⁰⁹

What he didn't reveal in that 1980 article was as interesting, if not more so, than what he did.

At the time of my earlier research I made a number of efforts to obtain information about what happened at Jonestown. I even contacted members of the Nevada congressional delegation whom I knew, asking them if they could obtain any additional information. The response was that they could not, and that everything about the Jonestown tragedy was classified, to such an extent that, even as members of Congress, they could not find out what happened! This was shocking to me, and made me wonder at the time what was going on.¹¹⁰

The bottom line is we still don't know what happened at Jonestown, let alone why. But some things are indisputable. Namely, one, that Reverend James Jones was not a "new-age cult leader". Rather, he "had been a fundamentalist preacher at least since 1950, and in 1964 was ordained as a Disciples of Christ minister."¹¹¹ The Disciples of Christ is a Protestant denomination whose faithful include the late President Lyndon Johnson and millions of "ordinary Americans".

And two, "the membership of the People's Temple was unlike the typical membership of most contemporary cults. Jonestown was originally called an agricultural community, and the People's Temple was not classified as a new religious movement until *after* [emphasis mine] the mass death of its members."¹¹² In other words, Jones was a red blooded Christian out of Indiana, and should not to be confused with either Indiana Jones or a guru from the exotic East. And his apocalyptic visions of doom and glory were in

¹⁰⁹ Richardson, "People's Temple and Jonestown: A Corrective Comparison and Critique", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, September 1980, p. 240. Here Richardson is pointing to an important source for the popularity of "conspiracy theories". Not because of some paranoia gene and tradition, but because governments are not only negligent, they also lie. And if they have lied once, they will do it again. And again.

¹¹⁰ Richardson, "Jonestown 25 Years Later: Why All The Secrecy?", 2002. Available on the Net. See INS Chief Counsel Mike Inman's remarks in Chapter 1.

¹¹¹ Anson Shupe, Jr. and David Bromley, "Shaping the Public Response to Jonestown: People's Temple and the Anticult Movement", in *Violence and Religious Commitment: Implications of Jim Jones' Peoples' Temple*, p. 110. This book was published in 1982.

¹¹² Anthony Storr, *Feet of Clay: A Study of Gurus*, p. 8. While that was true for the majority of people - who, cult or no cult, had never heard of Jones and his people - it wasn't for the aficionados. According to John Hall, "By August 18, 1977, Santa Rosa Press-Democrat reporter Steve Hart was calling the group a 'controversial cult.'" (*Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, p. 187) In 2006 black filmmaker Stanley Nelson released *Jonestown: Life and Death of the Peoples' Temple*, which didn't depict Temple members as mindless zombies on a death trip. Nevertheless, while it featured a number of important investigators - including John Hall and Rebecca Moore - it didn't address, let alone confront any of the wider ranging political issues touched on here. You could watch the whole film twice without even suspecting that such a dimension existed.

complete harmony with not only most of the Church's mainstream doctrines and steeped in the blood of the martyrs' traditions, but America's as well.¹¹³

A lot of noise is made these days about the senseless violence of "suicide bombers" and martyrs from other "cults". Part of that stems from a genuine ignorance about the prominent role martyrdom has played in Christianity - and Judaism. Part from those who should know better - and do - but prefer to hush up the long historical perspective.

In order to get a more hands on feel for this pick up the cross complex¹¹⁴ let's time travel back to the pre-Constantine days, when Christianity - in all its myriad, not one stop shopping forms - was an "outlaw cult". An affront to the Roman Empire, and not a sold their souls to the Christ killers major player in and inheritor of it. Christians were "the usual suspects", routinely rounded up - often because of their vandalizing of temples (smashing "false idols") - and brought before magistrates.

They were then asked to at least fake respect for conventional customs and gods. But even that was too much for many of the hot heads, who couldn't resist shouting out two fatal words: *Christianus sum*. "I am a Christian." Not surprisingly, the magistrates and most of the outraged citizenry took that as a real time version of "Fuck you!".

And this kind of behavior was not a fringe thing. "Contrary to what is usually said, voluntary martyrdom was by no means confined mainly to heretical or schismatic sects such as Montanists and Donatists, but was a good deal more common among the orthodox than is generally admitted."¹¹⁵ Those *Christiani* "thumbing their noses at

¹¹³ The theme of martyrdom returns in Chapter 12.

¹¹⁴ See Chapter 8 for Rajneesh's take on Jesus' "martyr complex".

¹¹⁵ Geoffrey De Ste Croix, "Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?", *Past & Present*, 1963, p. 21. We could write a whole chapter on this theme in the footnotes. But let's keep the party polite and limit it to three quotes. One, "[William] Frend rightly observes that many persecutions of Christians had their origin in the dissolution of family-relations in consequence of the conversion of individual members of this smallest, but most valuable unity of the *nomen Romanum*; moreover, conversion meant a complete break with the *mores maiorum*, the customs and the religion of one's ancestors. By thus detaching man/woman from the origins, family and community to which he/she belonged by nature [read, social arrangements], Christianity completely isolated its faithful from the surrounding world and transformed them into members of a *nomen* apart, tightly knit together by their own ideas about *fides* [faith] and *pietas* [piety]." (L. Janssen, "'Superstitio' and the Persecution of the Christians", *Vigiliae Christianae*, 1979, p. 158) Two, "For both the Jews and the early Christians, death was not usually inevitable. They could avoid martyrdom though infamy or face-saving gestures - either by feigning worship of Greco-Roman idols or by publicly recanting their beliefs - but for the true believers, it was a matter of honor to face up to the consequences of their commitment. Among Christians, apostates who abandoned the covenant were the objects of the deepest scorn, and over the centuries tens of thousands of believers died as testaments to their faith. The historical records of this zealous martyrdom clearly show that it did not spring forth as the personal choice of individuals acting on their own. To the contrary, the attitudes and behavior that would be necessary to stage one's martyrdom were shaped through social control practices of reward and punishment instilled by religious communities to insure an incontrovertible sense of honor, practices that bear a striking resemblance to the ones used by Jim Jones to create group solidarity and commitment among the people of Jonestown. The suicidal impulse effected by practices of social control among the early Christians raged to the point of group or mass suicide, and it likely led Augustine to his strong injunction against suicide." (John Hall, *Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, pp. 296f)

authority" - the technical charge was *contumacia* - were summarily dispatched. The executed became martyrs and saints, who were then worshiped and prayed to, along with their knuckles, teeth and thigh bones, which were placed under altars to consecrate churches. Without such relics a building could hardly be said to be a true and proper church.

Noticing the uncomfortable click fit between Reverend James Jones and Christianity¹¹⁶ in general, it was time to obey a standard damage control commandment. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." If an asset becomes a liability, divest. Better yet, catapult the poxy pig as far into the enemy camp as possible.

And that's exactly what Reverend Billy Graham, a radio and television preacher from, coincidentally enough, Charlotte, North Carolina, wasted no time in doing. In one "analytical" editorial, the confidant and adviser of many Christianity soaked - some unkind souls might say "obsessed" - US Presidents¹¹⁷ wrote, "One may speak of the Jones situation as that of a cult, but it would be a sad mistake to identify it in any way with Christianity."¹¹⁸

But at least one religious scholar, Jonathan Smith - who manages to be both distinguished and interesting - wasn't buying what Graham and others were preaching as gospel. "For others, it was not to be talked about because it revealed what had been concealed from public, academic discussion for a century - that religion has rarely been a positive, liberal force. Religion is not nice; it has been responsible for more death and suffering than any other human activity. Jonestown (and many of the other so-called cults) signaled the shallowness of the amalgamation between religion and liberalism [,] which was, among other things, a major argument for the presence of religious studies in the state and secular universities. Religion was not civil. And so a new term had to be created, that of 'cult,' to segregate these uncivil phenomena from religion."¹¹⁹

Not surprisingly, more people read the newspapers and heard Graham than heeded the advice of Smith. The "cult" aspect of Jonestown took off big time, and once that genie was out of the bottle no recall was possible. In fact, no one really wanted to. Why not? Because as former *Stern* reporter Andreea Jorge Eltern - then Swami Satyananda - told me, "No news is good news, but bad news is better".

Three, after Jesus' death, which was itself a martyrdom, "martyrdom of his followers developed in a way that diverged from Jewish martyrdom. It came to be regarded as an event that might actually *quicken* the coming of the apocalypse that would establish the Kingdom of God on earth, at the same time offering the martyred one immediate heavenly salvation." (*Ibid.*, p. 298) One of the reasons martyrdom was a viable option is that almost everyone believed in an after life. Which takes us back to the notion of reincarnation in another form: *sans carne*.

¹¹⁶ Its official incorporated name was "Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ" (Hall, op. cit., p. 320)

¹¹⁷ See Chapter 5.

¹¹⁸ *The New York Times*, December 5, 1978

¹¹⁹ Smith, "The Devil in Mr. Jones", in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*, p. 110. For comparable remarks, see René Girard in Chapter 9, note 780.

On the other side of the world, at the US Consulate in Bombay, consular officials "were ordered to visit the Rajneesh retreat and retreats of several other gurus with significant Western followings to measure the potential for a similar disaster".¹²⁰ "A consular official in Bombay concluded: 'I don't think we have any Jim Jones here, but if one of those guys suddenly turned sour, his followers would do just about anything he asked. That's the unsettling thing.'" Associated Press reporter Barry Slaughter visited the Poona ashram. "Some people compare your ashram with Jonestown," he wrote, and asked if mass suicide could happen there.

"Nothing of this kind can ever happen in this ashram," Rajneesh said on December 9, 1978. "Because one who has entered this ashram has already died. Now there is no way he can die any further. Now an eternal, an immortal life is available to him. Sannyas means death, a psychological death, death of the ego."

Hence, those who compare this ashram with Jonestown neither understand what Jonestown was, nor do they understand this ashram. They have no understanding at all. They would not hesitate to compare even Jesus with Rev. Jones. They would dare to compare Buddha with Rev. Jones, because Buddha has also said, "Die every moment." And Jesus has said, again and again, "Unless you die and are reborn, you will not enter My Father's Kingdom." But what kind of death are Buddha and Jesus talking about? It is a different kind of death, it is some other kind of alchemical process.

What happened in Jonestown is indicative of a diseased, sick state of mind. It has nothing to do with religion. Of course, a lot of mischief in the name of religion has been, and is still going on around the world. Jonestown is a part of that. The people who compare my ashram with Jonestown must be the same people who have never been here, nor have they ever looked into my eyes, sat near me, held my hand. They are the same people who have never been drunk with *darshan*, being in the presence of a master. They are the same people who stay away from this *madhu shala*, this tavern.¹²¹

But the media had a major scandal here, and they weren't going to let Rajneesh, meticulous social scientists and religious scholars rip it from their hot and horny hands.¹²²

¹²⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 1981. Of course, the US Consulate in Bombay was already well aware of the Rajneesh ashram's existence, and had been since about midway in the 1970's. Especially in connection with cases of American citizens who had "flipped" in the vicinity of Rajneesh - inside the ashram or on nearby streets. According to a source inside the Consulate, these cases were brought to their attention by the ashram itself, and on a "fairly regular basis" someone had to pick up people from the Poona mental hospital, drive them down to Bombay, and put them on a flight back to the States. The source said the cooperation between the Consulate and the ashram was "very good". There were no complaints about that or anything else.

From the source's perspective, it was a common occurrence - about once nearly every month. But for another perspective on "frequency", see Ma Prem Arup below.

¹²¹ Rajneesh, *Sahaj Yoga*. This discourse was given in Hindi and translated for me by Swami Chaitanya Kabir.

¹²² "A great deal of effort has been expended within the social-scientific tradition to unravel the complexities of marginal religious organizations. Unfortunately [,] it seems that the message is somehow

A public opinion poll conducted in November 1979, one year after the event, rated Jonestown "only behind Pearl Harbor and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in terms of public recognition". The recognition rate was 96 percent.¹²³ Over the next decade, the press hyped the original "mass suicide" story to high heaven, added a dose of Rajneesh, L. Ron Hubbard's Scientology, Reverend Moon and a cast of thousands of sick puppies, and mega mythed it beyond recognition.

Five months after Jonestown, in May 1979, Dr. James Gordon of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Bethesda, Maryland, was in India visiting medical researchers and "learning about India's traditional systems of healing. This was to be the first step in setting up collaborative research projects between the United States and India."¹²⁴ Dr. Gordon, who had been reading Rajneesh's books for a few years, listening to his audio tapes, and experimenting with dynamic meditation, wanted to study the ashram. "The idea had interested NIMH, but a State Department telex from Delhi had quashed it. The Shree Rajneesh Ashram was not a 'suitable place' for me as a representative of the U.S. government, certainly not a site for a joint research project."¹²⁵

At the beginning of 1980, Francis Adeney, from Spiritual Counterfeits Project of Berkeley, California,¹²⁶ was worried that Rajneesh might sneak into the US. He anxiously dashed off some letters to Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy. Senator Kennedy's office asked the State Department if Rajneesh had been given a visa. Jake Dyels, Jr., who worked for the Visas Services Directorate, wrote to Adeney on April 3, 1980.

"Our consular office at New Delhi has informed us that Rajneesh, *the spiritual leader* [emphasis mine] of the Rajneesh Ashram in Pune [Poona], has not applied for a visa of any kind, and that that office has no indications that he plans a trip to the United States." In America a few years later, the question about whether Rajneesh was or was not a "spiritual leader" would become a hotly - and expensively - contested legal issue.¹²⁷

totally lost to the majority of those employed by the print media." (Barend van Driel and James Richardson, "Categorization of New Religious Movements in American Print Media", *Sociological Analysis*, Spring 1988, p. 182)

¹²³ *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 1983

¹²⁴ Gordon, *The Golden Guru: The Strange Journey of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh*, p. 17. Dr. Gordon also interviewed a number of Peoples Temple survivors over a period of ten years. He was "confounded by the fact that not one of them expressed regret over the time spent in the Temple. 'They feel that the experience which altered the course of their lives ultimately helped them to discover who they were all along,' Gordon wrote in the *Washington Post*." (Lawrence Wright, "Orphans of Jonestown", *The New Yorker*, November 22, 1993, p. 83)

¹²⁵ Gordon, *The Golden Guru*, p. 17

¹²⁶ According to Anson Shupe, Jr. and David Bromley, Spiritual Counterfeits Project (SCP) was a fundamentalist Christian organization "dedicated to countering what it regarded as the 'satanically inspired wave of counterfeit religions.' The SCP perceived its ministry as embracing two aspects of 'spiritual warfare':

(1) Primarily, to educate the Church at large regarding the Eastern religious and occult philosophies gaining increasing credibility and prominence, so as to enable Christians to deal effectively in situations requiring this type of understanding; (2) Secondarily, to present the Good news to adherents of these religions and philosophies from a position informed as to their depth and intricacy, and hence to the subtlety of their error" (*The New Vigilantes: Deprogrammers, Anti-Cultists, and the New Religions*, p. 176).

¹²⁷ See Chapter 4.

There were many sannyasins who wanted Rajneesh to leave India. One of them was Ma Anand Sheela, an Indian disciple who later became universally infamous and hated as the outspoken voice and almost the face of Rajneesh. According to the stories, which must have come from her, she was raped in 1967 - at 17 - by either an uncle or a close friend of her father. After an illegal abortion, she was sent to the United States to forget.

She stopped in Bombay on the way to see Rajneesh for the first time.¹²⁸ Then she traveled on to Montclair, New Jersey, where she worked as a waitress and barmaid, and took some pottery courses at Montclair State College. On June 20, 1969 she married Mark Silverman, a New Jersey resident who suffered from Hodgkin's Disease. Sheela thought India was dirty and backward, and that she, Rajneesh and the whole ashram would be much better off in America.

But Rajneesh had already expressed his point of view on the subject at least twice publicly. In August 1978, one of his disciples asked, "Why won't you leave India? Those dim-witted politicians in New Delhi will be the last people in the world to understand what is going on here."

Rajneesh replied, "It is difficult for me to leave India. India has something tremendously valuable. It has the longest, deepest search for truth. Many Buddhas have walked on this land, under these trees. The very earth has become sacred. To be here is totally different than to be anywhere else, and what I am trying to bring you is more easily possible here than anywhere else."¹²⁹

According to him, India and Indians had forgotten the "secret India" and mystic search, but the current of spirituality was still thick in the air and sannyasins could tap into and drink from it. He also said he couldn't leave India because the people needed him and his sannyasins as an example of living in a technologically sophisticated way in harmony with the environment.

Two years later, on Tuesday, August 12, 1980, an Indian journalist, and sannyasin, just back from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida¹³⁰ asked him why he was so misunderstood in poor countries like India. He said he was only misunderstood in India, but there were worse things awaiting him elsewhere.

But if I talk about the new man in America I will be killed immediately, imprisoned. I will not be tolerated at all, because that means a danger to the whole American way of life.

The American way of life depends on ambition, and my new man has to be utterly ambitionless. America's whole approach is things should be better.

¹²⁸ According to my calculations, Rajneesh wasn't resident in Bombay at this time. But if someone can prove me wrong on that point, I'm ready to stand corrected.

¹²⁹ Rajneesh, *The Secret of Secrets: Talks on The Secret of the Golden Flower*, Vol. 2, Chapter 4, August 30, 1978

¹³⁰ Kul Bhushan

Everything should be made better. It does not matter where it is going to lead. But things have to be better, better and better. They are obsessed with the idea of bettering things. You have to have more speed, better machines, better technology, better railroads, better roads.

Everything better! Of course, in the same way, you need a better man. It fits with the whole style of American life.¹³¹

The "new man" wasn't the "better man", he said. The better man was a line extension of the old man, a variation on an old theme. The better man was man as a commodity, a thing to be bought and sold in the marketplace, the cheaper the better. And he was against anything that reduces the inherent dignity and value of man, that objectifies him to others and himself, and makes him both less than he is and exploitable.

"The new man," he said, "is not necessarily the better man. He will be livelier. He will be more joyous. He will be more alert. But who knows whether he will be better or not? As far as politicians are concerned, he will not be better, because he will not be a better soldier. He will not be ready to be a soldier at all. He will not be competitive, and the whole competitive economy will collapse. He will not be interested just in accumulating junk, and the whole economy depends on that. All your advertising agencies are just bringing to your mind the idea of collecting more and more junk."¹³²

The consumption society in a nutshell.

Understood or misunderstood, Rajneesh and his new men and women were at least talked about and seen throughout India, in the English and regional language press. Of course, the nude and semi-nude photos of beautiful sannyasin women had the biggest impact. They were printed beside articles that condemned Rajneesh as a shameless hypocrite, who was using hypnotism to seduce gullible foreigners.¹³³

¹³¹ Rajneesh, *Theologica Mystica*, Chapter 2, August 12, 1980. In the same discourse Rajneesh spoke about a local man, Vilas Tupe, who had tried to assassinate him earlier that year in May. "Just a few days ago a man threw a knife at me to kill me. Now such a knife can only be thrown in India! When it fell just in front of me I thought it was a stone. My eyes are not bad. I don't need glasses yet. I can see very clearly. I thought it was just a stone. It looked so dirty! And when I saw the picture of it I was very much puzzled. You could not even cut vegetables with it! This is the beauty of being in India. Now in America or Germany they would have done it with much more sophisticated means. India is the best place at the moment to do my work, my kind of work."

Over the years he talked about the incident frequently. According to him, the police had been tipped that somebody would try to kill him that day. "A fanatic Hindu - the same group [RSS] that assassinated Mahatma Gandhi" (Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 4, September 18, 1985). Thus they showed up in force - about 20 officers and even the police commissioner were present. They arrested the man. But bizarrely, despite the number of witnesses and the obvious fact that a crime had been committed, Tupe was released without any jail time or even a slap on the wrist fine. For more on him, see Chapter 11.

¹³² Same discourse and answer to the same question.

¹³³ Obviously, things hadn't changed much since Naipaul's visit in the mid 70s (see above), and perhaps they never would.

Many articles, editorials and letter writers accused Rajneesh of slinging mud on Indian religion and culture. And others raised loud, exasperated questions. "WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE RAJNEESH ASHRAM?" Trying to find the answer, thousands of Indians flocked to Poona. *Kalkandu*, a Madras daily written in Tamil, wrote that Indians went to the ashram like they would go to a zoo, to watch Westerners making love all over the place. They were sorely disappointed when all they saw was kissing and hugging.¹³⁴

Rambhau Wadke, a former mayor of Poona, told a reporter that "Rajneesh is a nuisance to Poona and should be kicked out of the city".¹³⁵ A resident of Koregaon Park, the neighborhood around the ashram, had a different perspective. "It is the local people who are more of a nuisance than the sannyasins here, when they crowd to see what's going on."¹³⁶ Rajneesh's discourses were played on television and radio, and when the ashram tried to set up a new commune in Kutch, the issue was discussed in the *Lok Sabha*, the Indian Parliament.¹³⁷

Europe, especially Germany, also reacted to the winds blowing from the east with newspaper accounts and privately printed brochures sporting titles like "Seducer Grasps at Our Youth" (1980). By November 15, 1980, the state government of Bavaria - the second largest state in West Germany and a stronghold of Catholicism - prepared a report for the Bavarian Senate on "Youth and Psycho-Sects".

In recent years, the report noted, there had been attempts to differentiate between "genuine" and "non-genuine" religious communities with an intent to legally prosecute and curtail the activities of the latter. However, the post Nazi German Constitution mandated freedom of religion - obviously not an option before - and in 1971 a German high court had refused to rule on the distinctions. The Bavarian report, which told of the "dangers for the personal, spiritual and psychic development" of sect members, appealed to parents and all religious and state institutions to face the challenge of the youth and psycho-sects.¹³⁸

While the report noted that sect power was limited and there was no need to take any extraordinary political and administrative actions against them, this was not the opinion of a Bavarian parson, Frederick-Wilhelm Haack. Parson Haack said that outside Poona the Rajneesh sect was strongest in Bavaria. Coming from a long tradition of word magic - where fiat, decree and name calling is seen as superior to cases based on solid evidence and argument - Haack hacked away at Rajneesh.

He called him a "spiritual liar" and said that the neo-sannyas and other sect movements were the sisters of the drug epidemic. Haack said they were also dangerous from the

¹³⁴ *Kalkandu*, July 31, 1980

¹³⁵ See a very different opinion of the Maharashtra government below.

¹³⁶ *Poona Daily News*, June 14, 1981

¹³⁷ *Dina Malar*, a Madras daily, July 15, 1980

¹³⁸ For a more detailed and in depth explication of and comments about many of these issues see Anson Shupe, Jr., Bert Hardin and David Bromley, "A Comparison of Anti-Cult Movements in the United States and West Germany" (in *Of Gods and Men*). It is interesting to note here that "the German government has a constitutional responsibility to protect the family institution and the youth of the nation" (p. 186).

political and spiritual perspective. And the worst was yet to come.¹³⁹ *Neue Revue*, a weekly magazine printed in Munich, reported that "more and more young people, often still children, fall under the spell of demonic sects. One of the modern seducers of the ambitious is obsessed Bhagwan from India." The father of one sannyasin was quoted as saying, "The damage caused among youth is immeasurable."¹⁴⁰

Ma Prem Arup, a Dutch sannyasin who helped people design meditation and therapy programs, said that many people arrived at the ashram after having traveled for a long time through India. They were often physically emaciated and at the end of their mental tethers. "Some people arrived at the gates of the ashram in such bad shape that we literally couldn't even welcome them in. We had to immediately get a consulate, the police or a hospital involved, because the first thing they needed was medical and psychiatric help."

"About 70% of the people in such extreme distress were people who literally landed on our doorstep. They had had no previous connection with the ashram and weren't involved with meditations or the therapy groups. But extremely desperate situations were very incidental to the basic work of the ashram. I think many people might arrive in various stages of distress, and end up being much less distressed and more balanced, actually. I mean, that's the majority of people."

I asked her what she meant by "majority". She said, "99%, probably". Some of the freak outs were on a rough road of their own, people who had abused their bodies and minds through poor diets and drugs. And others, interestingly enough, were inspired by the sensationalism in the press. "They would read a lurid account of all the horrible things that were supposed to be happening in Poona and then instantly decide, 'That's the place for me!' And, actually, most of those people should have stayed exactly where they were and asked for medical help in their own countries."

"So," I asked, "you're telling me that 99% of the people made it or thrived here in Poona, and only 1% were washouts?"

¹³⁹ *Die Rheinplatz*, March 14, 1981. The late Reverend Haack has been called "the first and most influential critic of new religions in Germany" (Hubert Seiwert, "The German Enquete Commission on Sects: Political Conflicts and Compromises", in *Regulating Religion: Case Studies from Around the Globe* (2004), p. 86.

¹⁴⁰ *Neue Revue*, February 7, 1981. The problem of how literally and seriously to believe in and take religion is one that has dogged all of them, and is probably a structural fault built into its foundation. As Ramsay MacMullen has noted, "the question dominant over all others in the history of European thought for a thousand years and more was not 'which religion?' [,] but 'how much?'" (*Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries*, p. 84) In other words, there was always a fear among "ordinary, decent citizens" of religion getting out of hand and threatening business as usual. As anyone with more than a passing knowledge of history will admit without comment. In this context, another quote is particularly *à-propos*.

"During the thirteenth century the danger that sons would be attracted to and enter one of the new [Christian] religious orders, especially while they were away at school, so worried parents that they began to accuse some orders of 'stealing' and 'brainwashing' their children - rather like the worries of American parents about radical religious groups in the 1970s." (John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, p. 318)

"It's even less than that," she said. "Because it wasn't one out of a hundred in acute distress situations. It was maybe 10 or 20 a year, and there were 20-30,000 people coming."¹⁴¹

A Frankfurt newspaper told its readers that 300 Frankfurters were "under the spell of the love-guru of Poona". The father of one sannyasin said, "They have done a brainwashing with the boy. That's like it was with Hitler. That's modern kidnapping." The same father, who was alive in The Third Reich and might have personally known what he was talking about as far as Hitler was concerned, wrote a letter to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggesting that Bonn give aid to India only if India promised "to evict all people living in Poona without a visa".

He said, "the guru is a fake, makes millions, has accounts in Switzerland and exploits people. These sects are like drugs. They brainwash people. They don't know who they are anymore. Therefore, they also get new names."¹⁴²

Undoubtedly, Rajneesh would have agreed with some of that outraged father's contentions. But for different reasons. His disciples didn't know who they were when they came to him. If they had known, there would have been no reason to come. But the same was also true of the outraged father himself and nearly everyone else, whether they recognized and acknowledged that fact or not.

For name, date of birth, documents, diplomas, nationality, race, religion, marital status, membership in this or that football club and political party, and attics stuffed with albums, knickknacks and memorabilia did not add up to and constitute a crystallized identity. According to Rajneesh, all that was the thrashing of arms pretending it's swimming. Smoke and mirrors obscuring and blotting out the answer to the question Laxmi and the others were asking themselves on that beach in Gujarat. *Meh khan hai? Who am I?*

Sannyasins also didn't know why they had become sannyasins. Some did it in the spirit of what the hell, I can always drop it tomorrow. Others to fit in with the new scene. Some were convinced by his intellectual arguments. Others, mostly women, fell in love with him. If they came for any of those flimsy and wrong reasons, it would sooner or later come out in the litmus test of the spiritual journey. They wouldn't and couldn't stay the course.

So what, according to him, were the right reasons? One, if I have understood him correctly, not having any other choice. It was either suicide or sannyas.¹⁴³ Two, not having a clue, but being swept along by a mysterious, life will take you where you need

¹⁴¹ It has been said that figures lie and liars figure. And statistics prove the truth of that. Nevertheless, if we examine something in isolation - outside the context of comparable somethings - we undoubtedly get an exaggerated sense of its atypicalness. And we might even be accused of making a mountain out of a molehill, a tempest in a teapot. We have already touched on this theme in Chapter 1 - INS Chief Counsel Mike Inman's comments about a drop in the bucket - and will be returning to it again in Chapters 6 and 9.

¹⁴² *Abendpost Nachtausgabe*, April 21, 1981

¹⁴³ For example, Rajneesh, *Ah, This!*, Chapter 3, January 5, 1980.

to go force far greater than themselves. Something they would never comprehend or explain, even after being enlightened.

He told a Sufi story about Mojud, "the man with the inexplicable life".¹⁴⁴ Mojud was a small official in a small town. One day he came across Khidr, the mythical guide of the Sufis. He said, "Man of bright prospects, leave your work and meet me by the river in three days time." Mojud did so, even though everyone and he himself thought he was mad.

On the appointed day Khidr reappeared and said, "Tear your clothes and throw yourself into the river. Perhaps someone will save you." And, again, poor shaking in his shoes Mojud did so. On and on it goes. Khidr, the inner voice, commands, and Mojud, the outer social creature, obeys. Even though his so-called rational voice - the one that he has acquired from his particular time and place - can't understand, let alone keep up with what happens as it happens. Life lived freely and spontaneously, not cunningly plotted out in advance or artificially reconstructed in retrospect.

Søren Kierkegaard, a 19th century Danish philosopher, is often credited with the notion that we must live our lives going forward, but can only understand them looking back.¹⁴⁵

Giving sannyasins a new name, Rajneesh said, was the beginning of the destruction of all fake identities. "First I destroy the identity with the name, then I will destroy the identity with the body, then the identity with the mind, then the identity with the heart. When all these identities have been destroyed, you will be able to know who you are: the unidentified, the nameless, the formless, the indefinable."¹⁴⁶

Five days later, on Tuesday evening, October 21, 1980, the allegedly parallel stories of the Peoples Temple and the Rajneesh Ashram met. In the person of Shannon Ryan, daughter of the late California congressman Leo Ryan. She sat with closed eyes in front of Rajneesh and waited for her sannyas initiation, a late 20th century *rite de passage*. In front of about 50 onlookers, Rajneesh placed the rosewood *mala* around her neck, pressed her third eye, a point in the middle of the forehead, and explained the meaning of her new name, Ma Amrita Pritam.

"Amrita" means the immortal, the timeless, the deathless. It represents god because god is immortal, timeless, eternal, deathless. It represents the real.

The unreal is momentary. It is changing continuously. It is like a dream world. Everything goes on changing. You see a movie. Scenes go on changing. But

¹⁴⁴ Rajneesh, *The Wisdom of the Sands*, Vol. 2, Chapter 1, March 2, 1978. I must confess to a special fondness for Sufi stories, poetry and music.

¹⁴⁵ This is one of those nifty sayings you can slip in almost anywhere. But becoming all too aware of the treacherous, made up nature of this sort of fortune cookie quote I tried to track down the source. I discovered that SK wrote things like that, but not exactly that. And his original source was Carl Daub (1765-183), a professor of theology at Heidelberg University. Reference: <http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/humsoc/kierkegaard/resources/Kierquotes.html>. Search "Livet skalet".

¹⁴⁶ Rajneesh, *I Am That*, Chapter 6, October 16, 1980

something behind the scenes, the white screen, remains the same. It is hidden behind the changing scenes.

When these scenes stop, when the projector stops, you suddenly become aware of a new thing, which was always there. But when you were looking at the picture you were not aware of it.¹⁴⁷

"Pritam'," Rajneesh continued, means "beloved: beloved of god, beloved of the eternal, the immortal.

This is the most significant thing that I want to insist on again and again for my sannyasins to remember, because the mind tends to forget. In fact, the mind has great investment in forgetting it. Because if you remember it the mind becomes useless. If you remember the eternal, if you remember the ultimate, then the mind becomes very insignificant. Because the mind is just a momentary phenomenon

If you watch a thought, it arises one moment and the next moment it is gone. If you watch any mood, it comes, it is there for a little while and then it is gone. If you are aware of the eternal, you won't care much about all these passing phases. And we become so much disturbed. A little bit of anger arises and we are completely clouded by it. We forget everything. And we know that tomorrow we will not even remember it. After a few days it will look so insignificant."

The Rajneesh movie moved. There were hundreds of thousands of characters moving in many more times than directions, all thinking that they and their closest friends were the center of the universe, the heroes of the piece. As in real life everywhere, scenes changed faster than the ability of plot, conspiracy and meaning to keep pace.

Yet nearly six years later, on Thursday, November 14, 1985, federal prosecutors credited Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his merry band of sannyasins with nearly superheroic craftiness. Starting from about December 1980, the prosecutors contended in a Portland, Oregon court, Rajneesh and his closest confidantes relentlessly conspired to transport himself and his commune to the United States.

In December 1980 and January 1981, Ma Anand Sheela, Rajneesh's future personal secretary, was in America. But according to Ma Prem Arup, who worked closely with her during that time, she was not on a mission for Rajneesh and the ashram. Rather, she was on the run from death. Her husband, Mark Silverman - Swami Prem Chinmaya - had finally succumbed to Hodgkin's Disease on Wednesday, June 11, 1980. The next day, in the morning discourse, Rajneesh had declared his death a cause for celebration.

¹⁴⁷Rajneesh, *I'm Not as Thunk as You Drink I Am*, a darshan diary

The first thing about Prem Chinmaya's death is that it was not a death at all. He died very consciously. He died so beautifully! It was rare. Ten years ago when he came to me I was afraid that he might die before he could taste something of deathlessness, because he was suffering from such a disease. It was incurable.

But he was a rare individual. He lived for these ten years by the simple strength of his individuality. His body was not capable of living. The doctors were puzzled. The physicians were unbelieving. But I knew the secret. He was not afraid of death. But he wanted to grow to a certain point before death happened. And he managed it!¹⁴⁸

According to yogic knowledge or theories - which word we choose will depend on our knowledge and theories - there are seven *chakras*¹⁴⁹ in the body. Rajneesh said Chinmaya had died from the sixth. He would be reborn, but almost certainly would achieve enlightenment in his next life. "This is not death. This is something far more beautiful. This is let go. This is surrender. This is love! He trusted me so totally. He died beautifully, silently, in utter relaxation. I am happy about him."

For Sheela, who bragged about never meditating and actually fell asleep in the front row during Rajneesh's morning discourses, it was no such thing. It was DEATH, black and simple. As she shuttled west and east over the next months, between India and America and back again, making and breaking plans, she forgot and kept on forgetting a secret Rajneesh had learned in a bone rattling bullock cart as he watched his beloved grandfather die inch by inch. That death is always close by, in and around us. But by closely witnessing it, as Rajah himself had done from early on, one could see that just as what we take as life is *samsara*¹⁵⁰ death is too.

Sheela did a lot of shopping in America and fell in love. She returned to India with her groceries - video equipment and western machinery for the ashram kitchens - and John Shelfer, a New York businessman.¹⁵¹ On January 26, 1981, a little more than 6 months after the death of her first husband, she married her second. The ceremony was performed by a Pan American Airlines pilot at 35,000 feet over Turkey.

Her major purchase, a 12 ton, custom designed, armor plated, stretch Rolls Royce limousine - later nicknamed "The Tank" - was air freighted to India at the beginning of March 1981. Immediately on arrival at Bombay's Sahar International airport, sannyasins had to pay an import tax equal to the cost of the car. What was going on? If Sheela, Rajneesh and others were already plotting a massive shift of headquarters to America, why would they spend so much time and money hauling expensive stuff into India?

¹⁴⁸ Rajneesh, *Tao: The Golden Gate*, Vol. I, Chapter 2, June 11, 1980. While I don't know exactly when he took sannyas, I'll take a stab in the dark and assume it was at the same time as Sheela, in February 1973 (see below). Thus not 10 years before.

¹⁴⁹ centers

¹⁵⁰ illusion, dreams

¹⁵¹ Aka Swami Prem Jayananda

Meanwhile, Ma Yoga Laxmi, one of Rajneesh's first disciples, personal secretary and titular head of the Poona ashram, was searching for a place inside India for "the new commune". Those three words in quotation marks had been a running gag among sannyasins for years. They summed up a jovial mix of both hope and derisive disbelief.

"We were looking at good properties," Laxmi told me, "and things were moving. But there were problems between the Maharashtra State government and the Center."¹⁵² The Maharashtra government wanted the ashram to move out of Poona. But it didn't want us to leave Maharashtra."

"Where did they want you to move," I asked.

"Anywhere was fine with them. Wherever we could get land. There was no objection. But they didn't want us to leave the state, because we were bringing in a lot of money. We were milking cows [sic, "a milk cow"]."

"I had the impression that the Indian government was hostile to the Rajneesh Ashram."

"Morarji Desai was. But Indira Gandhi was open towards us. Laxmi used to meet her like a friend. And Rajiv used to sit and talk." This is Laxmi speaking. Once again, and not for the last time, the reader should remember her practice of referring to herself in the third person.

"Rajiv Gandhi?"¹⁵³

"Yes. Rajiv was a pilot. His younger brother, Sanjay, was being groomed by Indira to replace her as Prime Minister."¹⁵⁴ [After Sanjay's death] Bhagwan told me to tell Indira that she should now prepare Rajiv as her successor. And Indira brought Rajiv to Laxmi and she said, 'He doesn't listen to me. You tell him.' And Laxmi, who had heard [from Rajneesh] that in life one has to choose between lesser and greater evils, spoke to Rajiv. 'You choose,' Laxmi said. 'Either you get trained by your mother, or let somebody else, somebody worse than the both of you, take over the country.'

"Rajiv said he would think about it. A few weeks later he came and said to Laxmi, 'I'm ready to train with my mother. I am trying my best to take up the task.'"

"Did he know that the message was coming from Rajneesh," I asked.

¹⁵² The national government in New Delhi.

¹⁵³ After Indira Gandhi was assassinated on Tuesday, October 30, 1984 - because of yet another incident in Amritsar (the storming of the Golden Temple in June of that year) - Rajiv replaced her as Prime Minister. He remained in that position until he himself was removed from office by a single voter - a Tamil suicide bomber - in Madras on Tuesday, May 21, 1991.

In an extended family saga spread over generations – something out of Aeschylus – it seemed like Indians were determined to prove that they were addicted to both worshipping people with the last name of Gandhi and assassinating them. As of this writing, January 2012, Rajiv's wife, Sonia, is still a major force in Indian politics and their son, Rahul, is the General Secretary of the Congress Party.

¹⁵⁴ Sanjay Gandhi died while performing aerobatic stunts over New Delhi on June 23, 1980, 12 days after the death of Swami Prem Chinmaya. Rajneesh also spoke lovingly of him and his mother at that time (*Tao: The Golden Gate*, Vol. 2, June 28, 1980). But years later, and many times, he had less kind things to say about the entirely politicized Gandhi family, mother and sons. For example, *Communism and Zen Fire, Zen Wind*, Chapter 6 (February 4, 1989), when he talked of Sanjay being "crazy for power".

"Sure, he did! Laxmi always used to say, 'this is from the master'. In those days Indira and Rajiv were open to Bhagwan. Indira was a good human being, but she was also a politician."

For about five months Laxmi was virtually camped out in New Delhi, talking to politicians and real estate agents. Occasionally, she would go off to Gujarat in western India, or Himachal Pradesh¹⁵⁵ in north India, to look at land. During her absence, Ma Anand Sheela took charge of the Poona ashram.

On Saturday, April 11, 1981 Sheela announced that Rajneesh was entering a new, final phase of silence. For weeks before that he had not appeared publicly. He was very sick and the rumors running around the ashram, and the Indian press, were that he might die. Sheela's address, however, did not refer to his physical condition.

Rather, it was a spiritual message. For years he had been saying, in more than 33 million words, both in Hindi and English, that "Silence is My Message". Silence is the universal language understood by flowers, trees, earth and sky. In silence, there are no dogmas and doctrines to dispute and die - or kill - for. No tension or tenses. And from now on, the proclamation went, he would commune with his disciples in that tongue. Those with the finely attuned ears of love and connection would hear it.

He would, however, continue to answer personal questions from sannyasins through his personal secretary. Perhaps the first order of business should have been, "Who exactly was his personal secretary?". And the second, "How capable was she of accurately translating his words, including the tone and flavor, into an oral or written response? Would her own 'baggage' - prejudices, investments and misunderstandings - intentionally or unintentionally color the end product?"

According to all Indian newspaper accounts of the period and the sannyasins I've interviewed, Rajneesh's personal secretary at that time and the undisputed power of the Poona ashram was Ma Yoga Laxmi. Ma Anand Sheela was rarely mentioned in newspaper reports. But Sheela had other, and very big, ideas. As far as she was concerned, she was the up and coming personal secretary, so there was no problem in exchanging a future for a present tense and backdating the time line into ancient history. In an Associated Press report 5½ years later, she claimed to have been Rajneesh's personal secretary for 14 years - since 1971 - 2 years before she took sannyas.¹⁵⁶

In order to put some sharper focus on her motivation and spin on events, let's turn back to when Sheela first arrived at the Poona ashram. Obviously, this was 1974 or later.¹⁵⁷ She tried to barge into Laxmi's office. But the receptionist stopped her. "Sheela's husband [Prem Chinmaya] said to her, 'Don't worry, Sheela. Soon you'll have that job. Nobody will be able to stop you.'"

¹⁵⁵ Himachal Pradesh comes back into the story in Chapters 8 and 10.

¹⁵⁶ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 26, 1985. See also the time perception of Hugh Milne (Chapter 11, note 1236).

¹⁵⁷ The first move to Poona, from Bombay, was March 1974.

The source is Ma Yoga Pratima, a pretty, blonde Australian sannyasin who, both in Poona and the US, hovered on the edges of the inner circle of power. I was a bit taken aback by this, because in the course of my investigations I had gathered that Chinmaya was a kind, mellow guy. "He was," Pratima assured me. "But he was also ambitious for Sheela. Because if she was in power, then his life was very easy, which it always was anyway, because he had cancer. So people looked after him anyway. But there was a little bit of power behind the throne - him playing the female side of it. Not a lot. Not a lot. But a little. A little."

I asked if perhaps the "female" Chinmaya was the force driving Sheela's masculine ambitions. "No," she said. "She was ambitious in her own right. Plenty." "So," I asked, "she basically made a grab for power immediately, from the very beginning?" Pratima agreed and said the power ploys, consisting of manipulation and worming, was "pretty naked".

Back to the spring of 1981. Ten days after the announcement of Rajneesh's silence, on Tuesday, April 21, 1981, sannyasins closed a \$370,000 real estate deal on Kip's Castle. The 30 room, Rhine style castle, which had been built between 1902 and 1905 by a Dutch industrialist, had 15 acres of land attached and was originally intended to be the Rajneesh Foundation International's North American headquarters. Kip's Castle was located in the region of New Jersey known to Sheela, on the border between Montclair and Verona townships.

Back in Poona, after six weeks of seclusion in his house – Lao Tzu - Rajneesh reappeared in Buddha Hall on Friday morning, May 1. *Satsang* was described as a silent, heart to heart communion with the master. Following ancient Buddhist traditions, the sannyasins greeted Rajneesh with reverential bowing while chanting an ancient Pali mantra.

Buddham sharanam gachchhami
Sangam sharanam gachchhami
*Dhammam sharanam gachchhami*¹⁵⁸

Original sannyasin music was played. For the most part of an hour, sannyasins sat still and silent with closed eyes. Some swayed. Rajneesh, who looked decidedly shaky as he glided in and out of the hall, sat in his specially designed orthopedic chair on a newly elevated white marble podium.¹⁵⁹ Ma Yoga Vivek, who Rajneesh claimed had been Shashi in her last life, sat a few feet away in case any emergency should develop during the gathering. Many sannyasins were afraid that their master would close his eyes on the podium and never open them again.

¹⁵⁸ I go to the feet of the awakened one (or I take refuge in the awakened one)

I go to the feet of the commune of the awakened one

I go to the feet of the ultimate truth of the awakened one.

Also known as "the three jewels", the order of the last two lines is sometimes reversed.

¹⁵⁹ The main new feature was eliminating the need to climb steps.

On Monday, May 4, Sheela visited the American consulate in Bombay to discuss "a highly confidential matter" with Joyce Smith, a visa officer. According to Smith's "personal statement",¹⁶⁰ Sheela told her that Rajneesh was very sick and needed immediate medical treatment in the United States. "Ma Sheela", Smith wrote, "then inquired about the possibility of the Bhagwan residing in the United States for some years as a minister of religion, if the climate suited him and if his recovery was positive. She said that she was asking this on her own, and that the Bhagwan had not expressed any interest in immigrating to the United States."

Ma Prem Arup, a Dutch sannyasin we have already met who worked closely with Sheela at the time, said that as late as three weeks before Rajneesh got on the plane to go to America "he had not at all agreed to go there".

"Not even to go there," I asked (once more in surprise bordering on mild shock).

"Right."

"How do you know that?"

"I heard it from Sheela. I know she was trying to get him to agree to go, and that he had said, 'No'. He wasn't ready to agree to that. He had never left India, and he didn't want to leave India." What seems to me to be incontrovertible proof of her contention is the fact that Rajneesh's Indian passport was issued on Wednesday, May 13, 1981, 8 days after Sheela's first visit to the Bombay Consulate and only 19 days before he finally flew to New York.¹⁶¹

The American visa officer, Joyce Smith, told Sheela that Rajneesh's "possible interest in an immigrant visa posed a conflict with his request for a non-immigrant visa to enter the U.S. for medical treatment on an urgent basis". Smith required a lot of medical certificates and other documents proving that he would return to India after the treatment. While she had no personal problems with him, she said she "would be unwilling to issue a visa without guidance from the [State] Department, as I felt that the Bhagwan was a highly controversial figure whose presence in the U.S. could lead to considerable problems".¹⁶²

Sheela returned to the consulate the next day with the required information and phoned for a visa update every day for a week. On May 18, she returned with Ma Yoga Sushila, a jolly fat woman from Chicago.¹⁶³ From what Smith wrote it sounds like a carefully

¹⁶⁰ Sent on January 20, 1982 from the American Consulate General to the District Director of the INS in Portland, Oregon: Attention: Investigator Thomas N. Casey.

¹⁶¹ This fact is even confirmed in the "hard hitting" - some might characterize it as a constant assault on readers' nerves and the good will and intentions of Rajneesh and the entire neo-sannyas movement - "For Love and Money", a 20 part series by *The Oregonian's* reporters Les Zaitz and Jim Long (with Scotta Callister as editor), which was run from June 30 to July 19, 1985. Only they had the date as May 15. "May 15, 1981, little more than two weeks before Rajneesh's departure for the United States, was a busy day for the Poona ashram. Foundation officials unveiled a purported plan to create a new commune in the western Indian state of Gujarat - but by then any thoughts of a major relocation in India were simply smoke. Sheela obtained an Indian passport for Rajneesh." (Part 6, July 5, 1985)

¹⁶² How right she was.

¹⁶³ The next time we hear from her she's said to be riding around a Greek island on a donkey. See Chapter 8.

rehearsed good cop-bad cop performance. But this time it was take charge-/hysterical-woman. Sushila, who told Sheela "she was too emotional to handle the matter", did the talking and ended the discussion with two points that stuck in Smith's mind.

First, she asked if someone in the US might intervene on their behalf. Second, if Bhagwan died, she "couldn't predict what the reaction of the group members might be (meaning, I assumed, that many of the members may attempt suicide or similar dire actions)."¹⁶⁴

"I told them," Smith wrote, "not to make any preparations for the Bhagwan's departure until they were advised that the visa could be issued and to expect a delay of two-three weeks." That delay would have taken the matter to about June 8th before preparations for the passage to America could begin. Somewhere around this time, Laxmi and her Australian driver, Swami Anandadas, a sannyasin since 1973, were back in New Delhi. Manu, a Bombay businessman and, apparently, Mr. Fix It as far as travel arrangements and bureaucratic irritations were concerned, came up from Poona to tell Laxmi "that we were moving to America".

"He told Laxmi," I asked Anandadas.

"I assumed that he did, because her face changed rapidly. The whole air became very heavy, and shortly after that we returned to Poona."

Since it was rather important to know exactly when that incident took place - so I could slot it into other times lines - I asked him to put on his thinking cap and be more specific. But like so many of the other sannyasins I talked to, dates and days of the week weren't the biggest part of his day.

"Too much time out in the hot sun," I jabbed.

"Too many petrol fumes, Max," he agreed.

The closest he could get was "mid May". On the other side of the planet the Washington, DC law firm of O'Connor and Hannan was hired through a New York sannyasin, a wildly successful arbitrageur and former colleague of Ivan Boesky. One of the firm's attorneys, Thomas Quinn, charged the sannyasin \$7,530 - \$7,500 for "services rendered regarding immigration and visa for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh" and \$30 for a cable sent by the State Department.

The \$7,530 cable - # 139208 - was sent on Thursday, May 28, 5:34 p.m. Washington time. It was 4:04 a.m. Friday, May 29, in Bombay. The cable read: "DEPT. UNDERSTANDS MR. RAJ NEESH, A GURU FROM PUNA, RECENTLY APPLIED FOR VISA TO ENTER U.S. FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT. VISA EVIDENTLY DENIED."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ See Chapter 11 for more on this bizarre notion.

¹⁶⁵ These sorts of telexes are all in capital letters.

2. AS THERE IS HIGH LEVEL INTEREST IN THIS CASE, A PROMPT REPLY BY PRIORITY CABLE (VISAS KANGAROO) WOULD BE APPRECIATED. INTERESTED PARTY. HAIG.

Alexander Haig, Jr. was Ronald Reagan's first Secretary of State.

The response from the Bombay consulate, on the eastern edge of the Arabian Sea, was probably the first order of business that hot, pre-monsoon Friday morning, May 29. At 10:50 a.m. Consul General J. Bruce Amstutz¹⁶⁶ shot a cable back to Washington. According to that - # 02063 - the consul had not denied Rajneesh's visa. They had merely passed the matter on to the State Department for the decision on higher levels.

"Amstutz" said Rajneesh's visa would be issued, "UNLESS DEPARTMENT ADVISES OTHERWISE". Nobody actually took responsibility and said "Yes". But they didn't say "No" either. According to a source inside the American Bombay Consulate, both telexes should have been kept permanently in Rajneesh's file. But the first one, from Washington, disappeared.

About four hours later, just after lunch, a second cable was sent. Over the last 48 hours the Poona ashram had been the target of three separate bomb attacks, which had caused \$2 million in damages but no injuries. "The Police have requested assistance from the military to identify the origin of the explosives and believe the bomb attacks to be the work of a local group hostile to the ashram."

The American consulate in Bombay was normally closed on Saturday mornings. But at 9 a.m. on May 30, Joyce Smith - in "the absence of any such [negative] response" - went to the office and issued a tourist visa for Rajneesh. A "Consular Assistant", an Indian Jewess who had been in contact with the ashram over the years, brought Rajneesh's virgin passport to the consulate and had it stamped. Around noon the next day, May 31, Rajneesh was driven through the gates of the Poona ashram in the armor plated, white Rolls Royce stretch limousine - The Tank - that had been imported into India at great expense less than three months before. He was escorted down to Bombay in a caravan of cars.

Early the next morning, Monday, June 1, two Rolls Royces drove out onto the tarmac of Bombay's Sahar airport and stopped by the door of Pan Am's New York bound Flight 001. Using round trip tickets, purchased in New York *before* the last gasp visa was issued, Rajneesh and about 18 disciples occupied all of the first class upper deck. *The Times of India* reported, "Twelve tonnes of luggage, including a Rolls Royce, have been booked for New York."¹⁶⁷

This is skin of the teeth, parallel processing with a vengeance. Throwing the dice for Plan A with the right hand and Plan B with the left - at the same time. Even though Plan A is

¹⁶⁶ While Amstutz's name is on the cable, according to Joyce Smith's aforementioned "personal statement", she sent it.

¹⁶⁷ "Death of a Celebration", *The Times of India*, June 7, 1981

absolutely worthless without Plan B actually panning out. Yet according to a 51 page, 35 count indictment from the US Attorney's office in Portland, Oregon,¹⁶⁸ Rajneesh and seven other individuals had been plotting to move their organization from Poona to the United States since December 1980. If that was so, then perhaps "professional conspirator" was not a viable career choice.

Sheela was going with Rajneesh to America. Laxmi and Arup, who saw them off at the airport, were staying behind. "As Bhagwan got on the plane for America," Arup said, "he spoke to Laxmi. He asked her to continue the negotiations for land near Simla.¹⁶⁹ He wanted her to stay in India and set up a base for his work there. And as soon as he left Laxmi got into some kind of panic. She was either concerned for Bhagwan's health or afraid that Sheela was going to keep him in America. I don't know exactly what happened, but she dropped everything. She stopped dealing with the government, stopped negotiating on the land, and followed him to America. Laxmi actually went against the request that Bhagwan had made of her."

Thirty hours after taking off from Bombay, the Pan Am 747 arrived in New York. Due to the spinning earth and changing time zones it was still June 1. After passing through US Customs, Sheela drove Rajneesh through the Lincoln Tunnel to the recently purchased Kip's Castle in Montclair, New Jersey.

By hook and *chutzpah*, Sheela had accomplished much in a small amount of time. But if she wanted to consolidate her coup and keep "her" master in America, she was just getting started. He wanted Laxmi to find a tract of land large and remote enough to accommodate between 10,000 and 100,000 sannyasins willing and able to give birth to "The New Man". Fifteen acres of suburban New Jersey, within sight of the New York skyline, would most definitely not fit that bill. Sheela still had to find "the new commune".

Back in India, the Poona ashram looked like it was closing down. According to the *Poona Daily News*, 5,000 out of 8,000 sannyasins had left the city. *India Today* noted that financial losses for Poona's hoteliers, restaurant and small traders would be about \$37,500 per day.¹⁷⁰ But there wasn't even a wild rumor of Rajneesh staying in the States.

India Today reported that he was moving to either Himachal Pradesh or Gujarat. Sources in the Poona police claimed, incorrectly, that "over 50 truckloads of movables have already been sent there,¹⁷¹ and a select group of 200 sannyasins is reportedly busy readying the place for their godman. Said Swami Mansukh Bharti, official building contractor to the Foundation: "When Bhagwan returns to India he will go straight to Chail since the Gujarat deal has fallen through. But he will definitely not go back to Poona."

¹⁶⁸ See Chapters 1 and 3.

¹⁶⁹ In Himachal Pradesh, former hot season capital of the British *Raj*.

¹⁷⁰ "Saint Goes Marching Out", *India Today*, June 16-30, 1981

¹⁷¹ To the Patiala Palace in Chail.

There was a big scare in Chail, the former capital of Patiala State. The *Sunday Tribune* sent a reporter up to investigate. "Reports have been circulated, despite denials, that the Rajneesh Foundation is being shifted to Chail. Stories continue to be heard about land deals, purchase of historical buildings and spectacular investments in property."¹⁷² However, the reporter was able to conclude, there was no truth to the rumors.

There were other speculations that had even less basis in fact. But like the Jonestown-Rajneesh connection and so much else of what at one time or another passes for the way it was, that didn't stop them from taking on lives of their own. A New Delhi daily reported that Rajneesh had married the daughter of a Greek shipping magnate, shaved his beard and was now lounging around the house wearing blue jeans and watching television like an ordinary suburban American husband.¹⁷³

The Academy Award for bonkers beyond the call of duty went to Indian filmmaker and actor, I. S. Johar, who had had a lost in the desert role in David Lean's epic *Lawrence of Arabia* and was also a Rajneesh disciple. He told police that Rajneesh had been killed in early April. "Realizing that his public appearances could not be stalled for long, they [the killers] managed a look-alike double of his [,] but the snag was that he could be recognized by his voice. To overcome this they announced in early April 1981 that Bhagwan Rajneesh had taken a lifetime vow of silence."¹⁷⁴

The Poona police described Johar's claim as "fantastic nonsense". But they promised to look into the matter and, if necessary, would contact Interpol.

¹⁷² "Chail is Still 'Safe'", *The Sunday Tribune*, June 28, 1981. Chail comes back into the story in Chapter 11.

¹⁷³ *Hindustan Times*, August 23, 1981

¹⁷⁴ *Maharashtra Herald*, September 8, 1981

CHAPTER 3: UNSETTLING THE WEST

Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide.¹⁷⁵

The one thing I knew, as in all cults, that one day the Rajneeshees would go away. That's just the nature of cults, if you've seen them. They'll go away. The only question is when. And that I didn't know the answer to. When? I just knew that some day they would go away.¹⁷⁶

Two hours after midnight on Friday, October 12, 1492,¹⁷⁷ a Spanish expedition in search of India and the land "where gold is born" approached an island in what is now called the Bahamas. "*Tierra! Tierra,*"¹⁷⁸ the lookout on one of the three ships, the *Pinta*, cried out. The expedition's leader, Cristóbal Colón, called it San Salvador. While even now historians and relatives are trying to piece together the details of his origins – Genoese? Spanish? Jewish? – the meaning of his name clearly summed up the two dominating forces of European imperialism for the next 500 years. Christóbal, "Christ-bearer", and Colón, "colonizer".

Known to moderns as Christopher Columbus, Colón had an outrageous idea. The world was round and by sailing west he could arrive in the East. On his third and final voyage to the "Orient", he reached the coast of Honduras in Central America and wrote "from there to the river Ganges there are ten days".¹⁷⁹ Most Americans are familiar with the broad outlines of the myth, which includes the ridiculous notion that everyone, including astronomers and navigators, really thought the earth was flat and only clever dick

¹⁷⁵ John Adams, Second President of the United States, in a letter to John Taylor of "Caroline". Quoted in Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and The Men Who Made It*, p. 13. Sociologist Barry Schwartz has written, "Progressive historians were not the first to recognize the Founding Fathers' distrust of democracy and their stake in checking the influence of the masses; however, these historians articulated the discovery more persuasively than ever before." ("Social Change and Collective Memory: The Democratization of George Washington", *American Sociological Review*, April 1991, p. 226)

¹⁷⁶ Vic Atiyeh, former Governor of Oregon, in an interview with me, March 9, 1989. In September 1920 newspaperman William Hawkins sought President Woodrow Wilson's opinion about Bolshevism. Wilson answered in strict confidentiality. He said, "I do not fear Bolshevism, but it must be resisted. Bolshevism is a mistake and it must be resisted as all mistakes must be resisted. If left alone it will destroy itself. It cannot survive because it is wrong." (David Foglesong, *America's Secret War Against Bolshevism*, p. 291) Let's translate that into something approaching straight from the hip. If left alone, it will destroy itself. Therefore, let's not leave it alone. See also Chapter 5, note 450.

¹⁷⁷ According to modern calculations and, apparently, local time and the Julian calendar. The moon was in its third phase (also known as the last quarter).

¹⁷⁸ Land! Land!

¹⁷⁹ Colón wasn't the only one who didn't know exactly where India was or what it meant. "Indies (plural) implies the various Indies of India itself. As India and Ethiopia were confounded by classic writers, so in the middle ages there was the 'India minor quae est Ethiopia.' To Marco Polo, 'middle India' was Abyssinia. The word India itself in 800 A. D. comprised the whole world outside of Europe and Africa, and later travellers made 'India minor' extend from Persia to the Indus (or to Malabar): 'India major' from 'minor' to the end of the world (or to the Ganges): while India tertia was 'Zanjibar' (or China), according to varying interpretations." (Edward Hopkins, "The Fountain of Youth", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1905, p. 22)

Columbus had ever studied the skies and curving horizons.¹⁸⁰ But they remain blissfully unaware of equally plausible tales of "first" discoverers.¹⁸¹

The Spain Columbus set off from and returned to was busy dismantling its rich history of cultural diversity - Arabic and Jewish science, art, architecture and mysticism - and working its way back to the Dark Ages. In 1492, the year Columbus "discovered" America, 170,000 Jews - or *Chuetas*,¹⁸² as the Spanish called them - were expelled. The Inquisition, complete with secret denunciations, torture, "legal" proceedings against the accused, and *Autos de fe*¹⁸³ - sudden burnings of heretics - grabbed power at the same time much of the rest of Europe was heading toward "more enlightened" times.

When reported in the Old World, the stories of the "New" seemed mad. Who could believe in galleons of gold and endless *Eldorados*? That people walked around naked with paint and feathers, chewed and smoked tobacco, and let you fool around with their wives, sisters and daughters without promises of marriage and sanctification by the Holy Church? Or in societies without laws, prisons and original sin?

In those days, when everything farther than ten miles from a man's hearth was mostly myth, America was the stuff *Star Treks* were made of. Before the novel took root in the European imagination, travel tales, posing as "true adventure", were what ignited fantasy. It didn't matter that those who wrote them - Jonathan Swift, Montesquieu,¹⁸⁴ Voltaire and others - had never actually journeyed more than a minute from Europe. Hardly anyone else had either.

Even in the 19th century, the average Englishman thought California was as remote as Timbuktu. So books like *Gulliver's Travels*,¹⁸⁵ *Persian Letters* and *Candide* could wow "intellectuals" - those exceptions in the population who could actually read and actively bought books. And many of them looked beneath the surface splash and saw the writers' true intent. By setting up inevitable comparisons with their own societies, they were taking dangerous potshots at not to be thought about, let alone debated, corruptions and conventions.

¹⁸⁰ For the long and fact resistant history of the "flat earth" myth, see Jeffrey Russell, *Inventing the Flat Earth: Columbus and Modern Historians*. Alexis De Tocqueville wrote, "Once the American people have got an idea into their head, be it correct or unreasonable, nothing is harder than to get it out again." (*Democracy in America*, p. 186)

¹⁸¹ For example: Vikings and Scandinavians arriving 500 years before and leaving ruinic ruins in remote Minnesota; Mongolians and Indians crossing a land bridge existing between Siberia and Alaska thousands of years ago; African mariners; Polynesians crossing the Pacific; a 4th Century CE Buddhist Priest, Hwui Shan, visiting what is now California and Oregon and possibly getting as far as the American Southwest; and 4th Century CE Roman Jews escaping persecution when the old Empire turned Christian. As early as 1931 Berthold Laufer wrote, "However paradoxical it may sound, I hope that the day will come when a history of the discovery and conquest of America will be written by an orientalist." ("Columbus and Cathay, and the Meaning of America to the Orientalist", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1931, p. 96). East is East and West is West? Yeah, right!

¹⁸² pigs

¹⁸³ Literally, acts of faith.

¹⁸⁴ Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu

¹⁸⁵ Published as Lemuel Gulliver's *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*.

But America was more than a hunk of land over there. It was a primal human longing often expressed in taverns and folklore, in spluttering love and eruptions of rage, but rarely refined into words and logic. What used to be called *furor*. America was wide open spaces called "freedom" and wide open time called "future", a place where men - and in some outrageous instances, even women - could stretch out, breathe and be themselves.

Seen from this perspective, John Locke, a 17th century empirical and political philosopher, could more appropriately be called the father of America than George Washington. For he popularized the esoteric notion that man is born as a *tabula rasa*, a wax tablet or empty slate. Man, he wrote, doesn't come into the world with hermetically sealed innate ideas and the don't even think about ever paying it off debt of original sin. Rather, he is born in freedom and is infinitely perfectible.¹⁸⁶

Locke's *tabula rasa* was an Englishman's Baedeker's through a library full of musty alchemical fragments. Alchemy goes a long way back. But for our purposes let's assume it originated out of Egyptian-Greco traditions in Alexandria and was transferred to Western Europe via Spain. While most people pictured it as a fool's quest to convert base metals into gold, the *cognoscenti* understood it as a way of transmuting the animal instincts of everyman, the *prima materia*, into the gold of higher consciousness. Another version of from sex to superconsciousness.

By going through an inner, transforming fire, men could see themselves as something other than commodities to be bought and sold in this market and that. As a practical guide toward sinking or swimming on your own, this alchemy was the quintessential rebellion. It raised fundamental questions that had been strategically strangled or put to sleep in almost every person in every generation. About the structure of society and government, inherited wealth, the nature of man, God, the divine right of kings, and the legitimacy of ecclesiastical "holy writ" and "God's will".

For if man was on the first rung of a "Great Work" that was to be achieved or neglected by his own efforts or lack thereof, it meant he had not been created perfect by a perfect God. And while he had not fallen, he could rise.

Locke's *tabula rasa* had deep roots in the rebellious fires of alchemy and a longing for enlightenment. His ideas torched off French *philosophes* like Voltaire, Diderot and Montesquieu, who were suffering from centuries of superstition and the nauseating notion that the power of all those Louis's stemmed straight from the sun. Using the light of reason and experience alone, they declared, man should shake and rake through all his ideas, laws, morals,¹⁸⁷ and institutions, and get rid of the ugly, outdated and counter

¹⁸⁶ One wonders how Locke tallied that with some of his less enlightened ideas about slavery and the "lower orders". "It was in a work entitled *The Reasonableness of Christianity* that John Locke disposed of claims to priesthood by lower-class believers: 'day-labourers and tradesmen, the spinsters and dairy-maids' must be told what to believe. 'The greatest part cannot know and therefore they must believe.' That too slammed doors which the [French] Revolution had thrown wide open." (Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, p. 285)

¹⁸⁷ From the French *moeurs*, customs, habits. For more on morality, see the Jiddu Krishnamurti quote at the beginning of Chapter 7.

productive by either legislation or revolution. At the top of Voltaire's hit list was the Catholic Church. "*Écrasez l'infame*," he declared.

The *philosophes* declared that the proper study of mankind is Man. He should discover what is real, right and rational according to his own nature and measure. And his proper work is to build his own kingdom on earth. Where else is there? They in turn deeply influenced Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and other framers of the American Declaration of Independence. Those intellectual gun slingers envisioned America as an adventurous, let's see what happens country, which wasn't condemned to be old world wine in new world bottles.

THAT America - which even in this jaded age many still see as the only social contract they're willing to sign off on - has yet to be discovered.

A holy glow surrounds the Founding Fathers, the American icons. An almost oedipal fear of getting too close to them as flesh and blood white guys shrouds their images in high school and even university history courses. Either we don't know or don't want to talk about Thomas Jefferson having a black slave named Sarah, who became his mistress when she was 14. In other words and today's terms, at least one freedom loving founding father was a slave owning statutory rapist.¹⁸⁸ Who knows what the others were up to?

This squeamishness extends to that primal social contract known as the Constitution. In legal and legislative ponderings, the question is frequently asked, "What was the framers' original intent?" As if they, living in primarily agricultural and far flung, deeply divided societies, could blaze trails for all possible futures. As if they and their moral, intellectual and emotional "baggage" are the altar all patriotic Americans must bow toward until the end of time.

"It is ironical," wrote Professor Richard Hofstadter of Columbia University, "that the Constitution, which Americans venerate so deeply, is based upon a political theory that at one crucial point stands in direct antithesis to the main stream of American democratic faith. Modern American folklore assumes that democracy and liberty are all but identical, and when democratic writers take the trouble to make the distinction, they usually assume that democracy is necessary to liberty. But the Founding Fathers thought that the liberty with which they were most concerned was menaced by democracy. In their minds liberty was linked not to democracy but to property."¹⁸⁹

He continued, "It was the opponents of the Constitution who were most active in demanding such vital liberties as freedom of religion, freedom of speech and press, jury trial, due process, and protection from 'unreasonable searches and seizures.'" These

¹⁸⁸ "Americans - and the press in particular - are torn between treating their presidents as celebrities whose every slip is news, and as holders of an office whose dignity and authority need to be preserved. The pattern in recent years, with one or two exceptions, has been a slow burn of small 'revelations' which flare up and die down again, without ever taking hold or doing obvious damage." (*The Economist*, January 8, 1994)

¹⁸⁹ Hofstadter, *op. cit.* (note 175), p. 10. I am indebted to Hofstadter for much of what follows.

guarantees had to be incorporated in the first ten amendments because the [Constitutional] Convention neglected to put them in the original document." Among the signers of the Constitution there were only six who had also signed the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson, who signed both, was a supporter of periodic rebellion against all governments. "A little rebellion now and then is a good thing and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical," he wrote in a private letter.

Senator Abraham Lincoln of Illinois put the matter even more forcefully. "Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right - a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world." He continued, "It is a quality of revolutions not to go by old lines or old laws; but to break up both and make new ones." Brave words. But in the real world things played out rather differently.

While the English were making sure the sun would never set on their empire, Americans were pushing theirs farther west. From sea to shining sea. There were many "Indian" wars. Depending on your level of your awareness, it could be called "settling the west" or "exterminating the brutes". Since even a thumbnail sketch of what really happened in American history would take us too far afield and seriously undermine all efforts at pride and patriotism, let's settle for a single quote.

In Virginia an Indian uprising against the invaders freed the English settlers of any inhibitions about seizing Indian land. With almost perceptible relief, a Virginian described the new state of affairs: "Because our hands [,] which were before tied with gentleness and faire usage, are now set at liberty by the treacherous violence of the Savages So that we, who hitherto have had possession of no more ground than their waste ... may now by right of Warre, and law of Nations, invade the country, and destroy them who sought to destroy us."¹⁹⁰

Killing Indians was a way to make a name for oneself and end up as president. And there was the Mexican-American War, known in some circles as the Texas War of Independence. While some Southerners wanted to confiscate all of Mexico, more sober souls prevailed. The United States only took Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Colorado and California.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Quoted in Roy Pearce, *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indians and the Idea of Civilization*, p. 11.

¹⁹¹ Perhaps one reason so many *illegales* keep crossing over into *El Norte* is because they keep forgetting it's no longer theirs. Meanwhile, the US' relationship with Mexico sounds like an off again on again affair between junkie lovers with chronic memory loss. "Migration into California and Texas has been an issue since the first half of the 1800s, when opportunistic gringos flowed into these then-Mexican territories. The reverse flow began in earnest in the 1920s, when American railway companies, looking for cheap labour, brought Mexicans as far north as Chicago. In the depressed 1930s about ½ m ethnic Mexicans - some of them American citizens - were deported. But a wartime labour shortage in the early 1940s brought back the United States' welcome mat." ("California, here we still come", *The Economist*, November 12, 1994)

By now folks were beginning to realize that they needed a catchy sound bite to pitch this land grab. "Colonizing" was a no no. "Imperialism" had not yet come into style and, besides, it might give the right impression. But "Manifest Destiny" - a combination of God's will and democratic civilization - had the right ring.¹⁹² In its day and in some circles, even *Lebensraum* must have sounded like a good idea.

Was "Honest Abe" in favor of westward expansionism? Personally, no. He was offered the Secretaryship of Oregon Territory and turned it down. But on behalf of the country as a whole, his response was an unequivocal yes. "New free States are the places for poor people to go to, and better their condition. For this use the nation needs these Territories."

In other words, instead of coming to grips with existing problems of the industrial north - long hours, low wages, slums, criminality, madness and social inequality - just give them a mighty westward heave ho. Instead of realizing that perhaps America was not the place of miracles promised in the brochures, Americans bought into and sold a multi-tiered myth of God, democracy and railroads. The American Dream.

Walt Whitman - "The Bard" - may have translated man's *furor* for freedom into songs of the body and soul electric. But in the business as usual 19th century parlance it meant empire without end.

America was a pluralistic universe of immigrants, slaves and scoundrels, magnates, farmers and industrial laborers. A place of phrenology, bible bashing, revival meetings, tall tales, whisky talk, ghost stories and enough superstitions to raise the dead and keep them gainfully employed. A place where anyone who could spell was the teacher, and people with a "past" could flee toward the future. Some were running from justice. Others injustice. Most didn't know where one stopped and the other started.

But why quibble over a syllable out in Indian country, as long as you were white and Christian, more or less, and could shoot straight. Americans were not subservient to a central government or religion, or even anything remotely resembling the myth of "objective reality".¹⁹³ With seat of the pants common sense, they understood that as long as they themselves weren't concocting reality, the objectives in any other version would be someone else's.

The issues of liberty and property met regularly at the South's "Peculiar Institution", known to moderns as slavery. The Fugitive Slave Law was passed and just as you would be obliged to return a man's cow or grand piano if it ran out of his house and into yours, darkies fleeing to free states had to be sent back. The United States Marshals - who in old

¹⁹² Horace Greeley, the newspaperman who dreamed up and drummed out the slogan, "Go west, young man! Go west!", wrote, "These people [Indians] must die out. There is no help for them. God has given this earth to those who will subdue and cultivate it, and it is vain to struggle against His righteous decree."

¹⁹³ According to Lucien Febvre, at the time of Rabelais "no one then had a sense of what was impossible". (Quoted in Simon Schaffer, "A Social History of Plausibility: Country, City and Calculation in Augustan Britain", in *Rethinking Social History: English Society 1570-1920 and its Interpretation*, p. 130)

films and new are almost always portrayed as the good guys - frequently went after such escapees and thoroughly whipped them before "bringing 'em to justice".

Carl Sandburg, a poet and Lincoln biographer, wrote that there were 31 rooms in the White House and Honest Abe was not at home in any of them. No wonder. He was a Yankee president smack in the heart of Confederate conspirators and threatened with assassination even before his inauguration. One of his first problems was Fort Sumter, a federal fort in Charleston Harbor. At that point, the issue was not secession or even the upcoming war. It was strategy. And Lincoln maneuvered the South into throwing the first punch, so it would look like the aggressor.

Hang on. What about Senator Lincoln's sentiments about shaking "off the existing government" two pages back? Wasn't Johnny Reb following his advice? Was this what is currently known as a "flip flop"? Could be. But on this score none of us can afford to be too hard on "The Rail Splitter" or too soft on ourselves. Because we all say one thing when outside and assaulting the ramparts, and something completely different when inside and defending the fort.

The War Between the States broke dreams and hearts and orphaned a nation. Lincoln was assassinated by an actor who didn't know where one script ended and another began, and Walt Whitman's evergreen shoots of promise now sounded like black shouts at skies emptied of hope. But one of the great unresolved problems of that war was still firing on all 16 cylinders 60 years later. According to social historian Frederick Lewis Allen, in 1924 the membership of the fanatically racist Ku Klux Klan (KKK) soared to 4½ million. For a while it dominated Oregon, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Indiana, Ohio and California.¹⁹⁴

In the 1920's radio and tabloids were booming, and radicalism was bust. American life was presented as a serial circus of sport, crime and sex, and not as political and economic struggle, or quest for spiritual alchemy. "The national mind had become as never before an instrument upon which a few men could play. And these men were learning to play upon it in a new way - to concentrate upon one tune at a time."¹⁹⁵

Prohibition was in full swing, and while the Coast Guard, Customs Service and Immigration and Naturalization Service joined forces to stop the flow of the Devil's drink, lots of others toasted their successes with bootlegged liquor. Even George Babbitt, the philistine everyman in Sinclair Lewis' scathing 1922 novel, *Main Street*, drank and knew about cocaine. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, set up in 1908, took on a series of national menaces.

"In 1910, the menace was 'white slavery.' There was widespread, and mostly unfounded, hysteria that white women were being spirited off to houses of prostitution. Stanley W. Finch, head of the Bureau of Investigation, told Congress that 'unless a girl was actually

¹⁹⁴ Allen, *Only Yesterday*, p. 59.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170

confined in her room and guarded, there was no girl, regardless of her station in life, who was altogether safe."¹⁹⁶

George Orwell has written that the average man "wants the struggles of the world to be transformed into a simple story about individuals".¹⁹⁷ Along with the help of tabloids and other mass media, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover supplied that average man a daily fix of larger than life gangsters. He and the FBI clambered up the backs of these super villains - John Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson, Ma Barker, and Bonnie and Clyde - and in the process became enormously powerful, and repressive, public heroes number one.

For "intellectual" writers like Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway, Henry Miller and F. Scott Fitzgerald America was still an isolationist backwater. They moved to Europe to get away from a world where Utopia meant a Bull Market and shopper's paradise. Unlike Henry James and his characters, the lessons they learned in Paris, Rome and Berlin weren't primarily about painting, architecture, culture and manners. They were about sex, drink, drugs and going nuts.

The sixties were a replay of the twenties with more players.¹⁹⁸ The "controlled substances" of choice included marijuana, hashish and LSD. San Francisco became what Paris had been for English and American degenerates. There were free rock concerts in Golden Gate Park. People would suddenly throw off their clothes and run naked. Regardless of her station in life and even if she was fastened at the wrists, ankles and throat to the cellar wall, no girl was entirely safe from the moon, music and mass mating call.

Across the bay at the University of California in Berkeley the Free Speech Movement (FSM) was under way. Students were smashing the looking glass that kept telling Americans they were the fairest of them all. In fact, the very opposite was true. Americans were the unfairest of them all. Absolute power had corrupted them absolutely.

The reek of it was obvious in everything they did and said, in their blood and the air they breathed. "Compassion towards underdeveloped nations" was bullshit. Just look at it for a few seconds without blinking or barfing and you could see *Realpolitik* and economic imperialism seething through. And Vietnam was not just serial insanity. It was genocide.

The US Marines and CIA torched, napalmed and bombed it back a thousand years and tried to keep track of the body count while congressmen, corporate leaders, generals and even the secretary of defense complained about the rising cost of killing. On May 19, 1967, then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara wrote a memorandum to President Lyndon Johnson.

¹⁹⁶ *The Washingtonian*, April 1984

¹⁹⁷ Orwell, "Raffles and Miss Blandish", first published in *Horizon*, October 1944. Orwell was the *nom de plume* of Eric Blair.

¹⁹⁸ Anthony Downs has called this phenomenon "the democratization of privilege" ("Up and Down with Ecology - the 'Issue-Attention Cycle'", *Public Interest*, Summer 1972, p. 44).

There may be a limit beyond which many Americans and much of the world will not permit the United States to go. The picture of the world's greatest superpower killing or seriously injuring 1000 noncombatants a week, while trying to pound a tiny backward nation into submission on an issue whose merits are hotly disputed, is not a pretty one.

McNamara, who had previously supported American intervention in Vietnam, now feared that the war was unwinnable. He opposed adding a surge of 200,000 troops to the half million American soldiers already there, on the grounds that the war could escalate into a direct confrontation with China and the Soviet Union. He was also afraid that the war might "polarize opinion to the extent that 'doves' in the U.S. will get out of hand - massive refusals to serve, or to fight, or to cooperate, or worse".¹⁹⁹

Walt Kelly, the creator of the cartoon *Pogo*, seemed to sum up the *Zeigeist* in one line: "We have met the enemy and he is us". The sixties and seventies expressed an undercurrent that has run deep and not so silent through all history, America's and everyone else's. It was a not so civil war between the real and ideal, the way things are and the way they are said to be.

"Free speech," asked the cops, politicians and most everybody over thirty. Where did those ungrateful, long haired, dope smoking faggot freaks think they were? In Budapest? You didn't have to protest for free speech in America, because America was, by definition, "freedom". Free speech and freedom of the press and religion included by way of amendments to the original Constitution. If you couldn't find the freedom you were seeking in America, you couldn't find it anywhere else either. And if despite that assurance you kept on looking, you were a natural born loser baying at the moon.

Back at Berkeley, Oakland's Alameda County District Attorney's Office - in the form of District Attorney D. Lowell Jensen and Deputy District Attorney Edwin Meese III - moved in to discuss their differences of opinions with FSM. With the finesse of Big Stick Teddy Roosevelt, they organized mass arrests of the protestors. "It was Meese, local historians say, who ordered police to nab the movement's leaders first, leaving the group without its principal organizers. He also favored early morning arrests, when there were fewer crowds and less media attention."²⁰⁰

Meese "slipped unnoticed back into Berkeley to orchestrate the police response to the People's Park demonstrations. According to a former D.A., Meese arrived on the scene with a fitted gas mask and assumed a measure of tactical command. Exactly what orders Meese gave on [Tuesday] May 20, 1969, the day 200 persons were injured and one killed by police buckshot, is hard to determine. But someone of rank gave the shoot-to-kill order to various police departments."²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ *The Boston Globe*, December 9, 1984

²⁰⁰ *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, May 4, 1986

²⁰¹ *The Rebel*, February 13, 1984. This report can't be completely right. Because if the police were told to shoot to kill - as in do or Dyer at Jallianwalla Bagh (see Chapter 2) - more than one person would have been killed.

Meese's contribution to the FSM crackdown earned him the notice of then California Governor Ronald Reagan, a B list Hollywood actor elected to that post in 1966. One of his campaign promises had been "to clean up the mess at Berkeley". Severely criticized for the overkill, Reagan, "The Great Communicator", shrugged it off with a series of Jimmy Cagney one liners. "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with. No more appeasement." Meese became chief of Reagan's crime bureaucracy.

Unruly students were at it again the next May - 1970. They were protesting on campuses throughout the nation America's continuing involvement in Vietnam and a new Pentagon skirmish: the invasion of Cambodia. Peaceniks at Kent State University were met by a 13 second fusillade of live fire from Ohio National Guardsmen, which left 4 dead and 9 wounded.

Not another Amritsar or My Lai. Nothing to get hysterical about. In fact, according to one freshman's outraged father, the National Guard hadn't done enough. Not by half. "They should have shot all of them," was the first thing he said to Laura Davis when she returned home to Cleveland. His opinion didn't change even after she told him that she was one of "them".

"That was the view of that generation for the most part," Davis said many years later. "Nixon blamed the protesters, the governor blamed the protesters, many people in Kent blamed the protesters."²⁰²

In the wake of Watergate and the negotiated abdication of President Richard Nixon, a Senate committee under the leadership of Senator Frank Church of Idaho investigated the CIA. The American public learned that the CIA was as dirty and dangerous as the KGB or any other secret service they had ever heard of. They killed people, smuggled drugs and arms, and waged thousands of undeclared wars.²⁰³

The Church committee also learned that the CIA had hired allegedly impartial television and newspaper reporters and college professors to write and push government propaganda. George Bush '41,²⁰⁴ then Director of the CIA, asked the committee not to make those findings public. "Don't fuck these guys in the press and on the campuses," he said. He added that they were the only areas of American public life with any credibility left.²⁰⁵

But was Bush - and by extension Carl Bernstein - right, even then? Were the press and academics so untainted and "objective"? And I don't only mean direct relationships characterized by specifically worded, write what I want instructions and brown envelopes

²⁰² From a documentary, *Kent State: The Day the War Came Home* (2001), directed by Chris Triffo, produced by Ron Goetz.

²⁰³ It was in this atmosphere that Congressman Leo Ryan tried to put the CIA on a shorter Congressional leash (the 1974 Hughes-Ryan Amendment), and why some suspected its involvement in his murder at Port Kaituma (see Chapter 2).

²⁰⁴ The '41 refers to his being the 41st US President. To distinguish him from his son, the 43rd.

²⁰⁵ Carl Bernstein, "The CIA and the Media", *Rolling Stone*, October 20, 1977

stuffed with \$100 bills. I'm also referring to being unduly influenced, strong armed and even gang banged by party lines and official speak.

Through rewards and punishments - carrots (e.g., access and research grants) and sticks (being cut dead and left out in the professional cold) - and shared prejudices. About minimum dress codes - in terms of deference, default assumptions and body language - when attending press conferences and briefings, conducting interviews, building networks of regular and "reliable" sources, writing up results, getting them screened, edited and published, and establishing and maintaining reputations.

In short, gaining entrance to these privileged, very much part of the establishment clubs, and then not getting maneuvered out the front door or a second storey window.²⁰⁶ In the eyes, mouths, hands and behavior of such people, where exactly is the line between credible and incredible, and how far is that from what they and people like them - that is, "all reasonable people" - already believe?

The Church Committee report, which insiders claim didn't reveal even half of the dirty stories, also noted that along with the press and academia it considered religious groups "to be among the most important of our society's institutions. As such, any covert relationship that might either influence them or jeopardize their reputation is extremely sensitive."²⁰⁷

On January 20, 1981, a little more than five months before Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh came to America, Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as the 40th and oldest ever American President. Former Alameda County Deputy District Attorney Edwin Meese III became his general counsellor. And for the first time in American history that position attained cabinet member status.

Reagan's first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, Jr., later wrote in *Caveat* that he was surprised to see Meese and James Baker, another Reagan staffer and future Secretary of State under Bush '41, take seats at the first cabinet meeting. It seemed like an extraordinary breach of tradition and protocol. Meese "played the part usually played by the president, formulating issues, leading discussions, and summarizing remarks. Michael K. Deaver, the deputy chief of staff, subsequently sat at the table with Baker and Meese, and the three passed notes back and forth to one another like schoolboys." Haig "soon found out that Baker, Deaver and Meese controlled every avenue leading to the Oval

²⁰⁶ In this context three quotes from an extremely interesting article are relevant. One, "in a highly formalised or ritualised political situation there seems no way whereby authority can be challenged except by a total refusal to use the accepted form which is compulsory for this type of occasion, i.e. [,] a total refusal of all political conventions." Two, "This sort of effect is present when we note that in a given political system strict rules of 'politeness' are enforced." Three, "It is really a type of communication where rebellion is impossible and only revolution could be feasible." (Maurice Bloch, "Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation", *European Journal of Sociology*, 1974, pp. 59, 61 and 64, respectively)

²⁰⁷ *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, Winter 1983

Office.²⁰⁸ Meese also had authority over the staffs for domestic policy and national security.²⁰⁹

Terrorism was high on the agenda at that first cabinet meeting and remained a potent concern over the next eight years.²¹⁰ As, of course, it does today. High on the must read list was *The Terrorist Network*, by Claire Sterling, an American correspondent based in Italy. It described in elaborate, how the hell do you know detail a world wide web of terrorists all connected to "The Evil Empire", which in the halcyon days of the Cold War was the Soviet Union.

No matter that the book was based less on irrefutable evidence and more on inexhaustible prejudice and misinformation planted by the CIA in Italian newspapers.²¹¹ It was gobbled up by top officials in the administration - including Secretary of State Haig and CIA Director William Casey - and the only remaining problem was the one Darwin had faced more than a 100 years before and Darwinians ever since: to find and nail down the missing links.²¹²

Almost on cue, two "movie-driven" men, Ronald Reagan and John Hinckley, Jr., stepped out of the celluloid and collided outside the Washington, DC Hilton on Monday, March 30, 1981. According to Conservative author Garry Wills, Hinckley had thrown a pen at Hollywood starlet Jody Foster and threatened to kill her, but shot Reagan instead as a "love offering".²¹³ Six weeks later, shortly before 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13, 1981, a 23 year old Turk, Mehmet Ali Ağca, shot Karol Józef Wojtyła – aka, the Polish Pope, John Paul II - in St. Peter's Square. The simple event sparked a universe of expert conspiracy theories, complete with names, addresses, telephone numbers and birthmarks.

²⁰⁸ Frances Fitzgerald, "Memoirs of the Reagan Era", *The New Yorker*, January 16, 1989

²⁰⁹ Frances Fitzgerald, "Death of a Salesman", *Rolling Stone*, February 25, 1988

²¹⁰ Bob Woodward, *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA*, pp. 92f

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-9. Internal research showed almost immediately that the Soviet Union was not - REPEAT, NOT - responsible for international terrorism. But that "non fact" was never made public.

²¹² According to Noam Chomsky, Sterling's work "became the Bible of the [Reagan] administration and the founding document of the new discipline of terrorology. It was taken to have provided 'ample evidence' that terrorism occurs 'almost exclusively in democratic or relatively democratic societies' ... leaving little doubt about the origins of the plague. This book was soon exposed as a worthless propaganda tract, but the thesis remained intact, dominating mainstream reporting, commentary, and scholarship." ("International Terrorism: Image and Reality", in *Western State Terrorism*, p. 13)

But *The Economist* - a London weekly with an exaggerated sense of its own infallibility - was duped by Sterling. Lauding her research as "valuable and courageous", it was fairly clear to them that: "Despite the secrecy and complexity of this network [,] a fairly simple design ultimately emerges - a triangle of terror with Cuba, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation at the base and Moscow at the apex." (September 19, 1981)

²¹³ Wills, *Reagan's America: Innocents at Home*, pp. 210f. It was not well known at the time that Hinckley had had a huge impact on Reagan and his administration. Because Reagan never fully recovered from the shooting and, consequently, left a lot of the administrating and decision making to subordinates. It is still not well known that: (a) Hinckley's father was a substantial contributor to the Republicans; and (b) something that, in my opinion, has to be one of the weirdest coincidences in history. Namely, that a dinner engagement had been scheduled for the next evening – May 14 – in Denver between Scott Hinckley, John's brother, and Neil Bush, son of the then Vice President, George Bush. The dinner was called off. What would people think?

The would be assassin went through a dazzling series of shape shifts. Starting off as a right wing follower of the Turkish Gray Wolves, who were in the habit of murdering left wing journalists, Ağca somehow became affiliated with the KGB via Bulgaria. Most of the time he – or those manipulating his "testimony" – seemed determined to prove Sterling's latest addition to human wisdom. The elaborate plot behind it all - if you could actually follow such a mundane thing through the twists, turns and fancy dancing that included Ağca's claim to be Jesus Christ – was, approximately, by killing the Pope in Italy he hoped to keep communism alive in Poland.

By the end of the Turk's comedy of terrors trial in March 1986, the theories surrounding him had more holes than the Holy Father himself.²¹⁴

In the 1980s there was more of a world than there had been at the time of Cristóbal Colón and more people had been there. But perhaps it was just as much or more myth and fantasy than ever before. What Rajneesh and Hindu sages called *samsara*. Those honestly going through haystacks of common beliefs and knowledge in search of the needles of what they personally understood might find themselves out of sorts and wind up admitting that they had been accepting almost everything on faith in someone else knowing it better.

Long before it got right down to it, they didn't understand genetics, statistics, evolution, psychoanalysis, relativity theory, quantum mechanics, computers or toasters any more than their predecessors had got the hang of consubstantiation and the threefold nature of the one true god. They didn't know what was going on in the world, the nation, around the corner, in their own families, bodies, hearts and minds.

As always, some took off to find or eke out their own path. What was important, even critical, for them, even if it didn't mean squat to anyone else. Depending on your mood of the moment, they were either adventurous seekers or navel gazing narcissists. The stay at homes watched television, read the papers and waited for the next batch of experts to tell them what God wanted and which way was up.

Reagan & Co. were those experts, who spoke in high moral tones and carried M-16's. They rearmed the American Dream and weren't going to accept "No" or even "Let's negotiate" as any kind of real answer from Congress or anyone else. They invented Ollie's Follies to fund a secret war in Nicaragua.

There were a few downsides to it, sure. Nothing's perfect! It was illegal, for one. But, Gee Whiz! The American people would willingly vote and pay for it if only they knew how wonderful the *Contras* smelled in the morning. Okay, so the CIA helped drug lords smuggle cocaine into America and addicted a couple of generations to not so cheap thrills. But at least the ensuing wars on American streets - between real bad Jamaicans, blacks and Cubans - got the blacks off the backs of the whites. Another upside was that a

²¹⁴ Released from prison in January 2006, Ağca was almost immediately re-imprisoned because of a murder he had committed during his Gray Wolves incarnation. He was then re-released 4 years later, in January 2010, proclaiming that he was a messenger of God and that the world would end in the 21st century.

few good generals, loyal fighting men with families, amassed enough tax free cash to put their kids through increasingly impossible to pay for colleges, with enough chump change left over to buy the country.

During the same period over 100 high ranking officials in the Reagan administration were indicted on charges of ethical misconduct. One editorial noted that "the amount of sleaze is awesome!" It described the administration as one of the most corrupt in history - and that would include Warren G. Harding and Ulysses S. Grant.²¹⁵

Still, the corruption it was talking about was only the tip of the iceberg. If Americans wanted to know the original intent of "corruption", they could dust off their Latin grammars and pull out Aurelius Augustine, aka St. Augustine. Corruption means "broken heart". Augustine, who we have to thank for the can't live without it notion of original sin,²¹⁶ thought that a comparable state, an unquiet heart,²¹⁷ was the root force for all history.²¹⁸

If Americans really wanted to look at corruption, they could begin by examining their dreams and aspirations as mirrored in a single television commercial. A gang of grinning, beer drinking guys are slapping backs around a beach cookout and saying, "It doesn't get any better than this!". It wasn't a powerful argument for immediate suicide or radical personal and social transformation, merely an advertisement for beer.

During the Reagan years MBA's came out of the closet and investment banking was sexy. Anyone saying that the American mainstream was polluted was told to lighten up and get a job. Fashion was in fashion. Elegance and romance were in. Children weren't. Fathers were hard to come by outside the Catholic Church. Jogging was the rage. Suddenly there were ten different words for "sneakers".

To the average Yuppie Locke's *tabula rasa* might sound like an evening of classical Indian music. But alchemy was back and bigger than ever. It meant turning lead into gold, a few marginal shares and some quick turn over real estate deals into a fortune. The rich got richer and the poor, who didn't know a merger from a burger, were a growing mass of don't count losers. For those at the top, the Reagan years - "a rich man's President if there ever was one"²¹⁹ - were a drive through life. Occupying the last twelve rows of

²¹⁵ *The New York Times*, February 14, 1988. "The 'crimes' of people in the Reagan administration were secrecy and arrogance; what better punishment than public confession and humiliation?" (*The Economist*, January 9, 1993)

²¹⁶ *peccata originalia*. According to Augustine - and he really pushed hard on this issue - original sin is a STD, sexually transmitted disease, and the proud, delusional notion of "innocent until proven guilty" is literally unthinkable.

²¹⁷ *cor inquietum*

²¹⁸ Before he became a legitimate "Father" of the Catholic Church, Augustine was a member of one of the most feared and criminalized "cults" in the Roman Empire, the Manicheans. After his conversion he turned viciously against his former "cult" comrades - who were everywhere: not only in the North African countryside, but also within the Catholic Church itself - and any other powerful group that had different ideas about what true "Christianity" meant.

²¹⁹ Mark Hertsgaard, *On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency*, p. 343

stretch limousines, they moved down brilliantly lit avenues sipping Dom Pérignon²²⁰ while a very sound economic system played their song: *A Rhapsody in Greed*.²²¹

THIS was the America Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh entered late in the afternoon on Monday, June 1, 1981. On that day few Americans had heard of the 5 foot 5½ inch mystic. It was a coup of sorts that by the time he was deported, 4½ years later, nearly everyone had. At that later date people still didn't know much if anything about what he had been talking about for almost three decades. Or exactly what terrible crimes he had committed or had caused others to commit. But the majority were dead sure it was something intolerable. In the thrill of the moment and the ensuing forgetfulness, few bothered to wonder whether the "intolerable" referred to his actions or their attitudes about them.

Rajneesh's first residence in America was a sprawling turn of the century assortment of styles, designed by an architect who was told to leave nothing out. There were towers and turrets, spacious, high ceiling rooms and wide stairways cheek by jowl with narrow corridors and tight, creaky maids' rooms. Kip's Castle²²² evoked a description of Mark Twain's home in Hartford, Connecticut - either his or someone else's - "half castle, half cuckoo clock".

There are essentially two divergent versions of what happened next and why. According to one, the move to New Jersey was part of a painstakingly coordinated conspiracy to permanently move Rajneesh and his organization to America. On November 14, 1985, federal prosecutors in Portland, Oregon presented a 42 point statement of "facts" they could prove against Rajneesh, Ma Anand Sheela and six other sannyasins if their marriage fraud conspiracy case had actually gone to trial.²²³

Point 16 of the statement read, "During April and May of '81, before departing for India [sic], Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh told Sannyasins who were in positions of authority that the time for him in India was finished, that the ashram was moving permanently to the U.S., that there would be as many as 10,000 people living at the new communal city in the U.S., and the solution to any immigration problems encountered in the U.S. would be to arrange marriages with American Sannyasins."

Point 19 declared, "In May of 1981, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh made the final decision to move the ashram permanently from India to the U.S. and announced this to Ma Anand Sheela." Point 26 noted that when he applied for a temporary visa to come to America - based on the need for a back operation - "he had intentions to come permanently to the

²²⁰ Named after Dom Pierre Pérignon, a 17th-18th century French Benedictine monk who made important contributions to the production and quality of champagne.

²²¹ We return to this theme in Chapter 7.

²²² *Kip* in Dutch means "chicken".

²²³ Since the prosecutors knew that the case wouldn't be going to trial, they could say whatever they wanted (see Chapter 10).

United States but concealed this from the United States Consulate officials."²²⁴ Point 42 asserted, "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh did not obtain surgery after his arrival in the U.S. Almost all medical treatment and consultation in the U.S. was performed by Swami Devaraj and other Sannyasin doctors who also lived with and treated him in India."

The second version states that the passage to America was a response to very pressing circumstances. Swami Devaraj, Rajneesh's personal physician who accompanied him in June 1981 and was arrested at his side in Charlotte, said the trip was strictly for medical reasons and was not intended to be a permanent relocation. "Prior to our trip to the United States, Bhagwan was in very poor health. In addition to his chronic diabetes and severe asthmatic attacks, he suffered from a prolapsed intervertebral disc. He was somewhat overweight and started showing signs of incipient cardiac failure: shortness of breath, raised venous pressure and swollen ankles."

Each problem was difficult enough on its own. Together, they created a complicated medical picture and transformed an already unstable lower back condition into a situation which might demand immediate surgery. A sudden cough, which was common enough for someone with Bhagwan's respiratory problems, could at any moment create pressure on the prolapsed disc. The disc could then squeeze the sheath of nerves running down the bony canal of the spine and could cause an interruption of neurological functions served by those nerves.

According to Devaraj, something like that had already happened in Poona weeks before the trip, and he wanted to be prepared for any contingency.

It is usually reckoned that unless you relieve that pressure within 24 hours permanent destruction of those functions, which includes our ability to control urination, begins. In India, we had contacted Poona's top orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Hardikar, and Poona's top physician, Dr. Sardesai. In addition, we flew in Dr. James Cyriax from England. Dr. Cyriax, who virtually wrote the book on the non surgical approach to orthopedic medicine, is particularly expert with lower back disorders.

We wanted to have Bhagwan in New York in case back surgery was necessary, but only if absolutely necessary. New York at that time had fourth generation CAT²²⁵ scans. If it was necessary, we could do the scan in the morning and determine which disc had to come out, and the surgery could have been performed in the afternoon. But our preference, of course, was for a non surgical solution to the problem.

²²⁴ As we have already seen from Joyce Smith's statement (see Chapter 2), Sheela broached two subjects with her. One, the medical issue. Two, the possibility of "the Bhagwan residing in the United States for some years as a minister of religion". This issue comes up again in Chapter 4 during Rajneesh's interview with the INS' George Hunter. For more on Hunter, see below.

²²⁵ Computer Axial Tomography

While Devaraj waited for the non back related problems to improve, Rajneesh's back problem stopped deteriorating. "We postponed a decision for surgery in the hope that the prolapsed disc would eventually settle back in on its own. Which it did."

"How long did you expect to stay in America," I asked him.

"I was so deep into the woods with Bhagwan's condition, I couldn't think beyond the next days or weeks. The idea of how long we were going to be in America never crossed my mind."

Dr. Sardesai had recommended seeking medical treatment in America, but didn't think his patient would remain there.²²⁶ When asked, even Sheela expressed her uncertainty about his travel plans. "I don't ask him how long he'll stay. If I ask him, he may say, 'Okay, I'm leaving in three weeks.'"²²⁷

Federal prosecutors contended that Rajneesh, Sheela and others had been plotting since December 1980 to move the India ashram lock, stock and barrel to the United States. Yet, despite the alleged superhuman efficiency of the organization, as of June 1981 they had still failed to find a suitable site. Thus according to Point 30, Rajneesh "dispatched" Sheela to find a "large tract of land".

"Sheela dispatched herself," said Ma Prem Sangeet, a long, lean Oregon born attorney who worked closely with her for 2½ years. She also did over 100 interviews with others who were acquainted with different facets of her personality and patterns of behavior. "Sheela had grabbed power from Laxmi in Poona. Her major problem in America was keeping it. Keeping power meant keeping Bhagwan in America. At minimum that depended on her finding a piece of land for the new commune, as soon as possible, no matter what the price."

The new commune land rush was on. Sheela and others flew to Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and California. On Friday, June 12, she and her husband of six months, Swami Prem Jayananda, flew to Oregon - pronounced "Or-e-gun" by natives - and discovered the "Big Muddy Ranch", 64,000 acres (126 square miles) of rangeland, which was the basic look of the US west of Omaha.

Familiar to anyone who has watched at least one cowboy flick, it was deep in the heart of what one of my local sources called "the Redneck Riviera". It straddled two counties, Wasco and Jefferson, and was 20 miles from the closest town. Antelope itself was also centrally located, in the middle of nowhere, and nothing more than a store and a place to buy gas. A couple of miles out, the perfectly groomed state highway downgraded into an old military road, which had been built at the height of Oregon's brief 19th century gold rush. In those days a four horse stage traveled once a week from Fort Dalles, a cavalry outpost along the Columbia River, to Canyon City, an outpost of an outpost.

²²⁶ *The Oregonian*, "For Love and Money", July 5, 1985

²²⁷ *The Oregonian*, October 7, 1981

Dusty in the summer and muddy in the winter, the road hugged the hills as it moseyed into the down yonder. At first sight the sagebrush desert was so desolate and dry that one would think twice about crashing there for the night. Buying it was as loco as a lass with long, luscious locks suddenly shaving her head.

The Big Muddy had been a jamboree of failures. It "was the last to be homesteaded by the early pioneers who soon found that 160-acre homesteads and even the 640-acre parcels would not support one large family."²²⁸ Starting around 1882, the single and quadruple tracts, which eventually comprised the Big Muddy, were sold at between \$1.50 to \$2 per acre. Thus in those days you could own it all for little more than \$100,000. Hundreds of thousands of sheep grazed on it over the next century until it was overgrown with sagebrush and only good as a marginal summer range.

Rick Cantrell, a tall, rangy rancher living in Dufur, knew something about the Big Muddy's past. As Wasco County judge in 1981, he got caught in the crossfire of a range war between local residents and the newcomers from God knows where. "We know relatives of the man that used to run it for many years, and I've spoken to cowboys who worked for him. He didn't make any money at it. The biggest amount he ever made was during the war²²⁹ when he bought sheep for around \$22 and sold them for \$75. But that's just because that's the way the ranch was. It's not a real good cattle ranch. It takes a hundred acres per cow, and the lie of that land is so far from water that you don't even pasture it. The stock don't do well. If my place were paid for, I wouldn't trade it for all 64,000 acres."

On Friday, June 12, 1981, 11 days after touching tarmac at JFK, Ma Anand Sheela declared that she had fallen in love with the Big Muddy "at first sight". It was perfect for Rajneesh, she said, and was "The New Commune". She must have seemed like a mirage in the sore eyes of Roy Ryan, a Dumas, Texas real estate wheeler dealer who had bought the white elephant nine months earlier, on September 4, 1980, and was already in trouble with it. Ryan had given the previous owner, Rube Evans of Bend, Oregon, \$139,590 on the barrelhead, the title to another ranch in Waco, Texas,²³⁰ and shuffled some financing to pull the rest of loose threads together. Ryan's immediate re-sale deal had fallen through and he was two months in arrears on a \$2.5 million loan. With a poker face that won - and lost - the west, he opened with a \$7 million asking price.

²²⁸ Kirk Braun, *Rajneeshpuram: The Unwelcome Society*, p. 29. In the 19th century the federal government "owned" most of the land in the western states and territories. It had acquired them by hook, crook and treaties with hostile foreign powers, such as Mexico, France, Great Britain, the Sioux and Pawnee. In order to consolidate ownership, it encouraged western "immigration" by passing the Homestead Act. Single men were given 160 acres of land. Married men 320. According to R. Merton Love, as late as 1970, it owned 54% of the land out there as opposed to 4.6% in the east. ("The Rangelands of the Western U.S.", *Scientific American*, February 1970, p. 93)

²²⁹ World War II

²³⁰ At that time Waco was "an unprepossessing Texas town whose chief claim to fame had been as the home of Baylor University and as the birthplace of Dr Pepper and Steve Martin" (Joe Holley, "The Waco Watch", *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 1993, p. 51). For more on Waco, see Chapter 12.

The deal had been set in motion by Sheela's brother, Bipin Patel, a part time entrepreneur, car salesman and cab driver who had been living in and out of Chicago, Arizona and East Africa for years. He had located the ranch through four or five in between. By the time of the closing, one month later, everyone was pushing, shoving and looking for their cut of the action. Around 10 a.m. on Friday morning, July 10, there were more lawyers, middlemen, wives and witnesses than chairs at the Mid-Oregon Title Company's office in Madras, the seat of Jefferson County.

It "could have passed for a cattlemen's convention, with almost everyone who had touched the deal trying to wedge a cowboy-booted foot through the door." A few watched the three hour show leaning up against the wall.²³¹ Sheela, who frequently touted her skills as a consummate businesswoman,²³² strutted her time on the stage, threatened, cajoled, wormed, weaseled, said "Definitely not", left the room, made long distance telephone calls, both nationally and internationally, returned with a "Definite maybe", and finally said "YES!". The no nonsense negotiator had paid \$5.75 million for a ranch that on the 1980 tax records was assessed as being worth \$198,000.

"They were ready to buy the property and ready to put up the money," Ryan, the seller, said. "It surprised me how quickly they wanted to act."²³³ He wasn't the only one. "The purchase of the Big Muddy came down and, frankly, everybody was surprised that it was sold," Bernie Smith, Wasco County's round faced, cheery district attorney, told me. "It's a long way from everything."²³⁴ "Of course, the Rajneeshees gave a high price for it," Rick Cantrell said. A Mormon of the highest moral fiber, he allowed himself the luxury of a slight chuckle at their expense.

Meanwhile, back in New Jersey, a Hamburg based writer for the *Neue Revue* discovered Rajneesh's whereabouts and claimed to know what he was about. *Neue Revue* was one of the many German tabloids that had always printed sensational and factually incorrect stories about Rajneesh and his neo-sannyas movement.

Dagmar Techow, who allegedly made her living reporting the news, not making it up, was widely quoted in New Jersey newspapers. Church meetings were held and local residents gathered to hear her say that "the compound in India is protected by machine-gun-toting guards".²³⁵ By the time she was finished, gullible local residents, still rocking and reeling from the "cult scare" of Jonestown, were convinced that there was trouble in River City.

Trouble with a Capital T

²³¹ *The Oregonian*, "For Love and Money", Part 7, July 6, 1985. I have often been, and will continue to be, highly critical of *The Oregonian's* "reporting" in this series. But this section of its sleuthing and writing is not only highly professional, but also entertaining. According to its looks convincing to me research (in this section), Bipin Patel thought he was in charge of the deal and was looking to bank a cool quarter million out of it.

²³² See Chapters 5 and 9.

²³³ *The Oregonian*, July 6, 1985

²³⁴ The state attorney general's office was also keeping an eye on things. See Chapter 4.

²³⁵ Newark's *New Jersey Star Ledger*, June 19, 1981

And that rhymes with B
And that stands for "Bhagwan".²³⁶

They were sure they had another RED SCARE on their hands. Afraid that their kids would be snatched from the streets and their minds indoctrinated in sex, drugs, violence and other cult worst practices. Regardless of their station in life and level of education, no girl, woman or even senior citizens in wheelchairs were altogether safe from the lurid appeal of the exotic guru from the East.

Techow also accused Rajneesh of fleeing India to avoid paying \$18 million in back taxes.²³⁷ Like many rumors, the income tax story had some basis in fact. But not much. Nevertheless, it was the fallacy of cause and effect – that is, "we owe money, therefore let's skedaddle" - that echoed down the ages and were repeated in the federal prosecutors' November 14, 1985 statement.

"Beginning at the end of 1980 and continuing through 1981", Point 4 noted, "the pressure to find a new permanent commune and location for the commune increased dramatically. This was due among other things to a serious overcrowding at the ashram in Poona and an attempt by the Indian government to adjust a tax exempt status of the commune and assess taxes against the ashram's operations."

Starting around 1980, the tax office had, indeed, sought to revise the Shree Rajneesh Ashram's tax exempt status. The ashram claimed it was a religious trust and charity. The tax office claimed it was neither. "The tax office said we weren't a charity because charities consisted of hospitals, orphanages and service to the poor," Swami Anand Swabhav, a portly, grey bearded former ashram president, told me.

"We said we were helping people to find within themselves more consciousness. This would be a beneficial tool to them individually, Indian society and the world at large. With greater consciousness, men can obliterate much sickness and the need for more and more hospitals. With greater consciousness, man can obliterate all forms of poverty, material and spiritual."

The tax office claimed that we couldn't be a religious trust because our master, our religious leader, was still living and both he and his teachings might change. It was a strange argument. We fought the tax office tooth and nail for seven years. Our case was finally decided about seven years after Bhagwan went to America, in March 1988. The government asked for 4 billion rupees [about \$20 million], but settled for 10 million rupees [about \$500,000] to be paid in small installments.

The nervousness about Rajneesh and sannyasins felt by many in India, Germany and New Jersey was carried over to Central Oregon in general and Antelope in particular. In the summer of 1981, Antelope was populated by about 40 mostly retired people who

²³⁶ Meredith Wilson, "Ya Got Trouble", from *The Music Man*, 1962. With the necessary changes.

²³⁷ *New Jersey Star Ledger*, June 23, 1981

were divided into four major factions. It was like an old joke about churches. "This is the one we go to, and those are the ones we don't go to." Antelope was at the top of the list in a book called *Oregon's Ghost Towns*. Rajneesh and his sannyasins raised it from the dead.

On Wednesday, August 12, 1981, 35 people gathered for a fret together at the Antelope School. Donna Quick Smith, a local woman, was concerned that Rancho Rajneesh owners would start selling pornography. Smith - no relation to Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith - referred to an advertisement Rajneesh Foundation International had placed in *Time* magazine. At the top there was a simple black and white photo of Rajneesh and below a brief excerpt from one of his books. It began with words that clutched at your brains and private parts and wouldn't let go: "SEX, NEVER REPRESS IT".

Jefferson County District Attorney Michael Sullivan could find nothing pornographic in the material. Antelope Mayor Margaret Hill, who had come to teach school there in 1966, produced an advertising brochure from the sannyasin center at Kip's Castle and said that if it wasn't pornographic, it was "at least far out".²³⁸

Shortly after the meeting, Mayor Hill was contacted by Patricia Maggier, who claimed to be a German television reporter. *Frau* (or *Fräulein*) Maggier advised her to "Get them out of there!".²³⁹ One Portland newspaper reported that local people hadn't seen "so much excitement since the shepherders and the cattlemen were feuding decades ago." Ray Reynolds, a 57 year old man who lived in Portland but owned property in Antelope, said, "This town is so conservative, the women stand in one group and the men stand in another. That's the type of community it is, and we like it."²⁴⁰

Bernie Smith, Wasco County district attorney, Rick Cantrell, Wasco County judge, and a few others headed east from The Dalles, the county capital, on a "fact finding expedition" to what had been the "Big Muddy" and was now being branded "Rancho Rajneesh". Along the way, they stopped to meet with the concerned citizens of Antelope. At the time, Smith reckoned that 95% of the people outside of Antelope felt that if sannyasins wanted to try an alternative lifestyle on the high Central Oregon desert, "that's their business. They were just going to try something different and nobody in the community thought they were going to be any significant problem."

"I would not say that in the beginning the majority of people around here were in favor of them," Cantrell said when I put the question of first impressions to him. "But they were under the philosophy of live and let live. People laughed about it, and some of them didn't feel too good about them being here." Idonna Cantrell, Rick's wife who sat in on

²³⁸ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 13, 1981. At this point in US history there was very little that could still be legally considered pornography. For that story see Walter Kendrick, *The Secret Museum: Pornography in Modern Culture*. But that didn't stop nearly everyone, including a US Supreme Court Justice (Potter Stewart) from claiming that they knew it when they saw it. It seems that like beauty and so much else pornography is in the eye, and soul, of the beholder.

²³⁹ *Madras Pioneer*, September 24, 1981

²⁴⁰ *The Oregonian*, August 30, 1981

the interview at their home in Dufur and followed every swerve in the conversation, put it a bit differently. "Many people would say, 'They have their rights, but I don't like it.' They knew they had their rights. But, on the other hand, they didn't like it."

However, John Williams, former Oregon State Police Superintendent and ex-Marine, knew from the beginning that the sannyasins were going to be a problem.

The problem of the Rajneeshees fell in Major Kenneth Lamkin's jurisdiction, and then, of course, as the superintendent, it was my responsibility to monitor what was going on. And because of the seriousness of that particular problem from the beginning, I took a pretty active role, and probably more active than just a normal investigation of a problem in a district. I played a pretty active role in field monitoring rather than just remaining at headquarters reading reports.

There wasn't any doubt in my mind that there was going to be a problem. You have a faction that moves into a community that's so foreign to the lifestyle of Central Oregon. Those are cowpokes and people that wear short hair. And suddenly here is something they don't understand showing up right in their midst. So you have the possibility of some friction between the locals and the Rajneesh. The other part of the problem was just the pure number of people that were in a small area.

In the summer of 1981 there were less than 180 people at Rancho Rajneesh, an area the size of San Francisco, and larger than Washington, DC and five European nations.²⁴¹ At no time were there more than a few thousand residents. "But even more important to me," Williams continued, "was the very real probability that the Rajneesh were here to expand."

My feeling was and the intelligence reports that we had gathered were that they were there to expand, take over more land. You bet. Those reports told me that there was going to be trouble, that they weren't friendly, peace loving people, at least the administrators. A lot of people that came in there were real fine people. They were there to love and be loved, and have peace and tranquility and live their lives without harming anyone else. I think the majority of normal Rajneesh disciples felt that way. But my recollection is that the reports we got were not good. They gave the distinct impression that this is a group of people that had been run out of New Jersey and California. We have a background on Rajneesh in European countries before he came to America. That's really just routine police work. You've got to find out who these people are.

"Do you investigate any group that came in like that?" I asked

²⁴¹ Washington, DC (sometimes described as "67 square miles surrounded by reality"), Lichenstein (61 miles²)
San Marino (24), Gibraltar (2.53), Monaco (.75), and the Vatican (.17).

"No. No, not necessarily."

"If a new company came in and they wanted to make paper, would you investigate them?"

"Naw! Naw! No. No. But this group came in with all the appearances of being problems, trouble."

As Wasco County Judge, Rick Cantrell did some investigations of his own.

Whether it was distrust or covering your back, I don't know. We've seen things before, and when something different comes in, you naturally want to watch it and see what it is. On the court level we contacted every place in the United States where they had been: Massachusetts, California and New Jersey. I talked to aldermen, chiefs of police, mayors and whomever I could locate to see what their record was there.

The people I talked to said they had had absolutely no problem with them. In fact, they said they didn't even have traffic citations. In Montclair, New Jersey, at the castle, they said the only problem was that someone had thrown a rock through their window.

I did this checking up because we wanted to make sure what was going on in our county. I also called the INS in Portland. This was the summer of 1981, when they had first come on the scene. The INS said they were watching the ranch very closely. And they would let us know if they found anything wrong.

Already, in the summer of 1981, the INS in Portland was watching Rancho Rajneesh "very closely". In the fall INS officials visited Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver, the man who would eventually be responsible for criminally prosecuting Rajneesh et al. "They had some vague concerns that some of the laws were not being complied with," Weaver said. "We told them, 'This sounds very vague and if you ever have a case, please come to us and we'll be glad to talk to you about it.'"

George Hunter, a Portland INS examiner and a major force pushing for investigating and prosecuting Rajneesh and sannyasins, told my research assistant, Dorothy Amooore, he first became aware that he had a major problem on his hands in September 1981. Three women from Rancho Rajneesh came to visit him. "They were wondering how they could bring in masses of, quote, 'religious workers' to build an agricultural commune. After talking to them, it appeared as though these people weren't entitled to what we call 'religious worker' status, because they wanted to come in and drive tractors, lay brick, do construction and these types of things. At that time I realized that something was going on. We later learned that they had brought the people in anyway."

What did Hunter mean by "masses of people"?

"They were talking about hundreds at this time," Hunter said. "They decided that sham marriages would be the best vehicle to bring people into the country. It's a matter of

public record. The government stated in the plea proceedings for both Sheela and Rajneesh that in December 1980 a decision was made to move to the United States. And in the spring of 1981 they made plans to do it. Marriages were going to be the vehicle that would bring them here. These would be sham marriages with no attempt to establish a life together. That's what the Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver said he would be able to prove were this case to go to trial."²⁴²

Hunter certainly thought the marriages were sham and an organized plan. "There was no other way they could legitimately bring 80% of the organization, who were not US citizens, over here. I doubt that there was ever before as massive a case of arranged marriages to gain immigration benefits. They were very transparent as far as I'm concerned. Proving your case was something different." On September 14, 1981, several days after Hunter's interview with the three sannyasin women, the director of the Portland INS, Robert Krueger, sent a memo about sannyasins to the INS Northern Regional Headquarters outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Hunter's off the cuff determination that the sannyasins would not be entitled to "religious worker" status was based on cultural and personal prejudices, faulty logic and colossal ignorance. A fool of an INS examiner rushing in where more learned men and women have feared to tread. First, technically and legally speaking, "religious work" has little or nothing to do with the type of work done.

Down the ages in many countries, monasteries, missions, ashrams and religious communes, religious workers have been doing everything under the sun: farming, cooking, constructing, copying out manuscripts, doing accounts, making wine, beer, Benedictine, Grand Marnier and Dom Pérignon champagne (see above).²⁴³ Religious workers, it is said, have worked as temple prostitutes in Babylon and Jerusalem. The Crusades and other "Holy Wars" have been, and continue to be, pushed and promoted as "religious work".

Religious work refers to both the motivation behind it and the nature of the religion or organization it is being done for. If one accepted Rajneesh as a religious leader and

²⁴² Considering the circumstances under which the eventual plea was extorted - at gunpoint in spades (see Chapters 1 and 10) - such argumentation has absolutely no merit. It leaves the what to be proved unproved.

²⁴³ Richard Trexler, a historian who specialized in Medieval and Renaissance Italian history, noted that while convents had been instrumental in the development of the wool industry in Florence, by the end of the Middle Ages they were more consumers than producers. Nevertheless, they continued to supply something to the community. What? His answer, not totally tongue in cheek, was "holiness". (*Le célibat à la fin du Moyen Age: Les religieuses de Florence*, *Annales*, 1972, p. 1331)

Another example of comparable religious work comes from R. Forbes. "Here in the south or in the rest of Europe [,] this land reclamation was started and led by religious houses. Thus the Benedictines worked on the irrigation of Roussillon and in Saintonge, Maine, Ile de France and Bavaria. More to the north there were the Praemonstatencians and above all the Cistercians who cultivated the waste-land and left the traces thereof in such place-names ending in '-sart' or 'rode'. Their main works are found in Germany between [the] Rhine and Elbe, in Saxony, Thuringia and finally in Lusatia and Bavaria. The Cistercians worked with lay brethren [sic] or 'conversi'." (*Studies in Ancient Technology*, 1955, p. 50) The list of examples could go on and on.

sannyas as a religion – which, clearly, Hunter and many of his INS colleagues did not²⁴⁴ – then sannyasins working at the Big Muddy-Rancho Rajneesh-Rajneeshpuram for no wages and, in fact, often paying for the privilege, were indisputably religious workers. And here is where Hunter reveals his monumental ignorance of an ongoing debate about the nature of religion, and what is contained therein.

Here's a sample leaf from a whole rain forest of choices.

The fact may be denied easily enough through the defining of "religion" as distinct from "culture ... 'the way of doing things,' whereas "Christianity" is described as "belief" and the Christian as someone who has "seized upon a doctrine" in terms of which his life is wholly directed and shaped. To the extent that Christianity today remains centered in a book, while it is also the lens through which "religion" may be and most often is defined, the understanding of this term will screen out much that an anthropologist or historian would rather include: it will screen out, it will simply not allow as "religion," dancing and other communal or individual cult acts.²⁴⁵

The bottom line is if your husband, wife, son, daughter, granddad or grandma leaves home early one morning and in response to your question, "Where are you going, dear?", they say, "I'm off to find a working definition of religion", my advice is, "Don't wait up". Hunter's hard necked foolishness is further exacerbated by his claim to have made a concerted effort to understand not only religion and religious leaders in general, but also Rajneesh in particular.

"I probably spent six weeks, night and day, reading everything [Rajneesh had written] I could." He went on to boast that "I've probably read more of his books than any of his followers."

Ma Prem Arup, a Dutch sannyasin who had worked closely with Ma Yoga Laxmi and Sheela,²⁴⁶ said sannyasins first applied legally for immigration benefits to America. "They applied for visas under accepted categories, such as religious workers, religious teachers and specialized business workers. And if we had been any other organization, like the Catholic Church or IBM, those applications would have been accepted. But because we were who we were and Bhagwan is who he is, the United States government

²⁴⁴ See Chapter 4. According to Semmu Huaute, a 79 year old Chumash medicine man from California who visited Rajneeshpuram in December 1983, the US government didn't recognize Native Americans' religious beliefs until 1979 (see Chapter 5). Tibetan scholar Donald Lopez writes, "Over the past two centuries, the valuation of Tibetan society and, particularly, its religion has fluctuated wildly. Tibetan Buddhism has been portrayed sometimes as the most corrupt deviation from the Buddha's true dharma, sometimes as its most direct descendant. These fluctuations have occurred over the course of this century, as Tibet resisted the colonial ambitions of a European power [Great Britain] at its beginning and succumbed to the colonial ambitions of an Asian power [Communist China] at its end." ("Introduction: Tibet", in *Religions of Asia in Practice*, p. 451)

²⁴⁵ Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries*, p. 107

²⁴⁶ See Chapter 2.

rejected our applications out of hand. It was only after the INS refused to accept sannyasins in any of those categories that many of them chose to marry Americans."

"You said 'after' the INS refused to accept your other visa applications," I asked.

"Yes, after."

"Well, according to the November 14, 1985 plea agreement, the government contended that there were 400 'sham' marriages shortly *before* Rajneesh came to America."

"I don't know where they got that from. I never heard of nor noticed 400 couples getting married just before he went to America."

While she admitted that many marriages of "convenience" did occur - she didn't know exactly how many - she asserted categorically that there was no core group arranging and orchestrating them. In other words, no conspiracy. "It's just something people decided to do, or not to do, on their own." The inconvenience of "marriages of convenience" was spotlighted by Robert Miller. He wrote that the INS "harbors an unwritten presumption (they would deny it) that 75 percent of all marriage cases [between Americans and foreigners] are sham, intended solely for immigration purposes and are not *bonafide* at all."²⁴⁷

Throughout September and October 1981, the INS in Washington, DC received numerous letters from concerned citizens and one unnamed group, which claimed to have contact with "legitimate" spiritual groups in India. The letters unanimously asked the INS to investigate the fledgling commune. On October 1, Arthur Dunlap, Acting Assistant Commissioner of Investigations, forwarded one such letter to the Northern and Eastern Regional Commissioners and instructed them to conduct the appropriate investigations. On October 20, the Northern Regional Headquarters passed the request down the line to the Portland office. But, as we have already seen, the Portland office had already been alerted to the Rajneesh commune and had been passing *their* concerns up the line. To say the least, there was ample interest in the Rajneesh "problem".

On October 30, 1981, Edwin Meese III, then counsellor to President Reagan, responded to a man - name blacked out on the document obtained through an FOIA request - from San Diego, California. "I have forwarded your material on Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh as you requested", he wrote. "I did not recommend any specific action since each department will have to look at the issue on the merits." He concluded with, "I do appreciate your bringing this issue to our attention. Perhaps we'll see each other in San Diego again."

At this time Meese was more than what the title "counsellor to the President" suggests. But one report echoed some of Alexander Haig's concerns when it noted that Meese and two other top White House staff members were recognized as "a potent force in national affairs, so much so that there is concern in some quarters that they may be wielding more power than any non-elected official should".

²⁴⁷ Miller, "Marriage is the Worst Way to Immigrate", *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, a law review, October 1, 1982

As the top policy man, Counsellor to the President Meese supervises the cabinet and all White House policy advisers. He is the first White House aide ever to hold cabinet rank, prompting some in Washington to refer to him jokingly as "President Meese."²⁴⁸

Meese forwarded the Rajneesh material to the commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service and the then acting commissioner of the INS, Doris Meissner. The INS was not only on top of things, it was all over them. Then the US State Department, which already knew of Rajneesh's activities in India and his presence in America, re-entered the picture. On Tuesday, November 24 - two days before Thanksgiving and the same day Rajneesh's attorneys submitted an application for permanent residency based on his status as a religious leader and teacher - a confidential telegram was sent from Washington, DC to the American Consulate in Bombay.

Drafted by Stan Escudero, an India desk old timer, the telegram read: "DEPARTMENT HAS LEARNED INFORMALLY THAT IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (INS) IS BEGINNING AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF GURU BAGWAN [sic] SHRI RHANEESH [sic] AND HIS ASHRAM WHICH, HAVING LEFT POONA UNDER A CLOUD, HAS RELOCATED IN OREGON."

While noticing the neutrality oozing out of nearly every word in that alert, the reader might pause to ponder how a federal department can learn anything informally. The consulate general in Bombay was asked to investigate the past activities of the ashram including "INTIMIDATION OF INDIAN POLICE BY ASHRAM MEMBERS AND EXTORTION OF A LOCAL LANDOWNER BY THE ASHRAM AS WELL AS TAX PROBLEMS WHICH THE ASHRAM MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED IN INDIA. IN ADDITION, INS IS LIKELY TO REQUEST BROAD INFORMATION ON ANYTHING ELSE KNOWN ABOUT THE GURU AS WELL AS THE ACTIVITIES OF A WOMAN NAMED MA LAXMI."

At this juncture two other things are worthy of our attention. One, this might be one of the few times in history that ordinary civilians are being suspected of intimidating the police. Two, at that time the State Department believed, incorrectly, that Rajneesh had married or was about to marry an American citizen. Point three of the telegram informed the Consular General that "THERE IS BOTH CONGRESSIONAL AND WHITE HOUSE INTEREST IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GURU AND HIS ASHRAM."

Rajneesh himself entered the Oregon picture on Saturday, August 29, 1981.²⁴⁹ He flew in on a rented Learjet 35 from New Jersey to Redmond, Oregon. He and Ma Yoga Vivek sat

²⁴⁸ "Reagan's Big Three: Too Much Power?", *U.S. News and World Report*, November 2, 1981, p. 28

²⁴⁹ Not every sannyasin jumped at the chance to get married and go west. One of them, an American, stayed in Goa until November. He was brought news of Rajneesh's arrival in Oregon by a state resident, "a tall, friendly and very sweet boy". While he read the newspaper account and tried to figure out what it might mean for his future the boy fidgeted about the implications for his. "I don't know if I like the idea of you people moving into my state," he said. The sannyasin stopped, looked at him and said, "Since when is it *your* state? You live there. You don't *own* it."

in the back of the white stretch Rolls Royce limousine -The Tank²⁵⁰ - while Sheela drove. They gazed quietly out the windows, taking in the at first sight terrifyingly heartless landscape - what the British in East Africa used to call "miles and miles of miles and miles" - while Sheela extolled non stop the virtues of her purchase. As they reached the corrugated - something like a washboard - twisting country road that led down into the Big Muddy, Rajneesh finally asked, "But, Sheela, where are the trees?".²⁵¹

Towards the end of that year, 1981, and the beginning of 1982, Rajneesh dictated a number of unusual books to his dentist, Swami Devageet, while the latter also tried to work on his teeth. At one point, he told him about the spiritual masters who ended their days in the beauty of the Himalayas and Kashmir and pondered ironically about his own fate. "It seems that existence is playing a joke on me by putting me in this muddy place, 126 square miles of desert, with no big trees or any real beauty," he said. "Of all the beautiful places available on this earth, why did Sheela bring me to this dead and dirty place? It is just a desert. But we will have the last laugh. My people will show the world that meditation can make even a desert green again. We will bring life again to this dead place."²⁵²

For the first few days, Rajneesh's arrival in Oregon was kept secret. Then, at the beginning of September, the locals saw something that must have knocked their socks off. Dressed in long robes, and a knitted hat, Rajneesh whizzed by in a Rolls Royce.²⁵³ With one car following, he drove up from the ranch nearly every day and then along State Highway 97 to Madras. He would stop at the Safeway parking lot there, eat some fruit, drink Perrier, and then head back. The round trip was about 120 miles.

Swami Anandadas, Laxmi's former chauffeur,²⁵⁴ used to spend six hours a day cleaning a single Rolls Royce and often went out on the drives. "We used to follow behind him in the car, and I thought, 'This guy can't drive. I mean he can hardly walk straight for starts.'" Then Sheela asked him to give Rajneesh - who had been driving for 30 years - driving lessons. "I was foolishly impressed by Sheela at that time," he admitted. "She was always referring to Bhagwan as a bad boy and tried to control him. Sometimes she prevented him from going out by keeping the car keys. I thought that you really had to be good to patronize an enlightened master."

I was sitting in the back seat and he came out of the house and got into the Rolls. I thought I was the great driving teacher: the master. "Are you going to

²⁵⁰ Apparently, someone had driven it across the country.

²⁵¹ This is one of the few places where *The Oregonian's* post 1983 accounts of events actually tallies with mine. Or the other way around, depending on how you want to look at it. See its "For Love and Money", Part 2, July 1, 1985.

²⁵² This quote comes from Swami Devageet. I couldn't find it anywhere in the official archive on the Silver Platter. However, this clarification is not to be taken as suggesting that he made it up.

²⁵³ At first the accelerating collection of Rolls Royce Silver Spurs were all of a single color: green, blue, grey and red. But over the years they became almost psychedelic murals in motion. Without the graffiti. One tried to capture in paint the texture of a reptile's green skin. Another had white swans in flight. Another had huge orange flames rising up the sides.

²⁵⁴ See Chapter 2.

be a good boy and drive carefully?" I asked him. And he turned around and looked at me as if he hadn't heard and said, "Hmmm?".

He looked at me while I repeated it and that look brought a little more consciousness into it. And I could see how full of shit I was. It still makes me sweat when I think about it. He would use the horn a lot when he wanted to pass somebody. That is what you do in India. But it doesn't work in America. But he was a great driver. He had good reflexes.

People would give him the finger a lot. Pretty much every time we would go out. Every pickup that would go past from the other direction would give him the finger. I don't know what his response was, but Vivek, who used to ride with him, got quite steamed up about it. Once some *Easy Rider* type goons pulled up alongside him on a motorcycle and gave him the finger. Somebody else mooned him on his way into the Safeway lot. We got the license numbers and reported them to the police, and some people were even arrested.

So much for an across the board live and let live, we don't care what they do as long as they don't scare the horses, attitude.

The local Oregonians had laughed out loud when they heard the price the city slickers had paid for the sinkhole known as the Big Muddy. When it suited them and they thought they could bamboozle even more money out of them, they were willing to swallow Sheela's original story - that she had plunked down nearly \$6 million for land to develop a labor intensive farming community fit for 180 people. But they started choking on their spit when sannyasins kept applying for more and more permits for buildings having nothing to do with farming. Out here in sheep country, who was pulling the wool over whose eyes?

Within weeks of the ranch's purchase, the sannyasins wanted to publish and distribute Rajneesh's books from there. That initiative put them in direct conflict with 1000 Friends of Oregon, an allegedly apolitical, tax exempt "public interest group" set up in 1974 to supervise the interpretation of Oregon's new state land use laws, SB 100. They were designed "to begin serious implementation of the most fully standardized land use laws in the nation, to create a statewide land use planning and coordination process, and to establish the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) as a state regulatory body".

In effect, the LCDC was a watchdog body intended to oversee how SB 100 was interpreted by elected officials.²⁵⁵ Then, out of the blue, came another watchdog - 1000 Friends of Oregon - nipping at its heels.

Some saw SB 100 as an extension of Oregon's environmental consciousness, which was summed up under a popular slogan: "Don't Californicate Oregon". Others saw it as a harsh and authoritarian usurpation of local freedom by the state and a "no growth" policy.

²⁵⁵ Dr. Cari Shay, "Politics, Planning and the Public Interest: The Case of The 1000 Friends of Oregon"

Included in the second group were the conservative ranchers and farmers of Central Oregon, who believed that SB 100 and all its enforcers prevented them from doing whatever they wanted with their land. But lo and behold, the former enemy was a now a fast friend. No prizes for guessing why. One observer wrote:

I acquired first-hand knowledge of the opposition who pressured the Rajneesh to the point where they would display their intemperance and trigger legal reactions. Opponents included ranchers, loggers, lawyers, public officials, professionals, liberals, conservatives, fundamentalists, aquarians, cowboys, academics, ministers.... It was at first puzzling that these many groups [,] consisting of Oregonians who usually war (or at least contend) with each other (e.g.[,] environmentalists and ranchers) [,] could develop coalitions of such strength and focus.²⁵⁶

1000 Friends was called in by Antelope Mayor Margaret Hill to investigate land use violations at Rancho Rajneesh. 1000 Friends told sannyasins they could not use their land for anything other than farming purposes. If the sannyasins should disregard that advice, 1000 Friends would take them to court. If the sannyasins wanted any kind of business infrastructure, 1000 Friends decreed, they would have to utilize the urban growth boundary (UGB) of Antelope, the closest incorporated city.

Thus began the phenomenally publicized story of CULT TAKES OVER A SMALL AMERICAN TOWN. If you wanted to simplify the push comes to shove dynamic – and sometimes it actually makes sense to at least start there – then a good argument could be made for saying that 1000 Friends was responsible for that much ado about nothing squabble that "rocked" the nation.

The folks of Antelope didn't want the sannyasins coming in to disturb their old fashioned ways. And the sannyasins didn't want to go there either. Antelope was 20 miles away from Rancho Rajneesh and the small town atmosphere was alien to their ultra liberal international lifestyle. But there was nothing to be done about it until a more satisfying solution could be discovered or invented.

So sannyasins started buying up parcels of property. It wasn't rocket science, because half the town was for sale. While Mayor Margaret Hill thought the sannyasins should be watched carefully and their word could not be taken at face value, that didn't keep her from her second hat job as a real estate agent for many of the absentee owners.

The story of Rajneeshpuram's incorporation out of 2,135 acres of Rancho Rajneesh is a bit fuzzy.²⁵⁷ Swami Krishna Deva, a tall, blue eyed man with all American good looks

²⁵⁶ Lewis Carter, "The 'New Renunciates' of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh: Observations and Identification of Problems on Interpreting New Religious Movements", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1987, p. 169.

²⁵⁷ We'll be returning to it again in Chapter 4.

and the city's first mayor, said years later that he was the one who discovered the clause in Oregon laws that would allow the sannyasins to incorporate a city if they had 150 people living there. At the time of this "sworn testimony" Krishna Deva - or KD as he was called - was a crucial government witness. Like St. Augustine and so many ex "cult" members before him, he traded "evidence" against former friends for immunity from former enemies. Others said the incorporation idea came from Brent Lake, a LCDC field representative.

In either case, the sannyasins submitted their petition for incorporation in The Dalles two days after Columbus Day: on Wednesday, October 14, 1981. The official response was almost universally positive. That doesn't mean local Oregonians and officials were ecstatic about the incorporation. Merely that there was nothing they could do about it.

"It is sort of a foregone conclusion that the petition will be approved," said Wasco County Clerk, Sue Profitt.

"There are no problems as far as the court is concerned," said Judge Rick Cantrell. "As long as they are legal, they have just as much right as other citizens."

"Although new towns seem to be rare, according to the *Oregon Blue Book*, 11 cities were incorporated in Oregon during the 1970s."²⁵⁸

The public hearing on the incorporation was set for Wednesday, November 4. About 250 people crowded into the second floor circuit court room in The Dalles. "By the time of the hearing," District Attorney Bernie Smith told me, "there were a lot of people interested. Down across the hall there is the circuit court which will hold several hundred people. It was packed with a lot of people coming from outside the area."

A lot of people were alleging that the Rajneeshees were godless. People from the community were concerned about them having a city and getting tax monies because they were a city. People were concerned that they were going to change the rural setting down there. The whole spectrum of concerns.

I had examined a couple of Oregon Supreme Court cases that held that the county court really didn't have the grounds to deny them the right to incorporate. And I advised the court that that was my understanding of the law. County Commissioner Jim Comini wasn't very happy about it. I don't think he wanted to vote.

Presided over by Judge Rick Cantrell, the Mormon rancher we have already met, the court passed the motion by a vote of 2-1. Some said Comini didn't vote.²⁵⁹ He merely kept his mouth shut.²⁶⁰ Findings on land use issues were drafted by Oregon's top land use

²⁵⁸ All quotes from *The Bend Bulletin*, October 15, 1981

²⁵⁹ According to Swami Anand Svadesh, who stayed on at Rancho Rajneesh until it was finally sold - in December 1988 - Comini was still trying to "make political hay" out of the sannyasins as late as August 1988.

²⁶⁰ I am reminded of the State Department's handling of Rajneesh's visa (see Chapter 2). It didn't say yes or no.

lawyer, Ed Sullivan. "Those goals," Bernie Smith said, "subsequently stood up under appeal over a long term. It went up to the Supreme Court and back several times. But it sure took a long time to get it done."

In the meantime, the war was on. 1000 Friends spearheaded the land use attack against the Rajneesh city. Its director, Henry Richmond, declared Rajneeshpuram illegal before it was incorporated, because it violated SB 100. Most others, including the bill's original sponsor, said the law was intended to protect the fertile farmland of the Willamette Valley west of the Cascade Mountains. It did not apply to the not worth spit desert dust to the east. Brent Lake, the LCDC field representative, said, "there is no tie between land use statutes and incorporation statutes in Oregon, that 'land use goals were set up for existing cities, not new ones.'"²⁶¹

The state's number one newspaper, *The Oregonian*, which turned against the sannyasins three years later, originally flew flags in their favor. "Rajneeshpuram would not be the first Oregon community settled by a religious group," one editorial commented. "The community of interest in Rajneeshpuram is understandable: a group of people sharing one religion, a common lifestyle, and seeking to cultivate agricultural land that, until their settlement, was only marginally productive. In fact, that sounds like the way many cities throughout the United States got their start. In addition, many company towns have become cities."²⁶²

In the meantime, Ma Anand Sheela was painting with a rarely used or mentioned color from her personality palette. Charm. Along with her husband, Jayananda, she threw parties, invited the neighbors, and drummed up support in front of record setting audiences at the Madras Kiwanis Club and the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce. On October 27, while addressing a capacity crowd, consisting mostly of professional people and businessmen, at the Riverhouse Motor Inn in Madras, she was asked how many people would live in Rajneeshpuram in the next five years. Between 1500 and 2,000, she said. It was an amazingly prescient prediction!

A Bend real estate agent noted that while the sannyasin philosophy was different to what he believed, "it's probably a challenge to the rest of us to examine our values".²⁶³ By the end of the year, there were about 200 sannyasins working religiously at Rancho Rajneesh. For 12 or 14 hours a day, 6 days a week, they cleared land, planted sunflowers, apple trees, grapes, corn, squash and winter wheat, tended cows and chickens, herded cattle, cooked, cleaned, sewed, drove bulldozers or graders, made roads, put in water pipes, culverts, electric wires and set up pre-fabricated houses trucked in from Albany, Oregon.

The land, which at first sight was out of your worst nightmares, on second and third began to reveal its hidden beauty. There was a slow seduction to that isolated valley, which could only be appreciated by the people living and working there. Juniper trees,

²⁶¹ *Oregon Journal*, October 27, 1981

²⁶² *The Oregonian*, November 1, 1981

²⁶³ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 28, 1981

with a scent stronger than pine, filled the nostrils. An acidic tang sprang out of the soil. The sky had many moods and colors, and sometimes released a light so transparent it seemed celestial.

Stunning geological outcroppings, reminiscent of Easter Island statues or extraterrestrial Henry Moore's, were everywhere and hinted at some inexplicable presence. A power leapt from the land through the soles of the feet and spread upwards. Standing in those wide open spaces, in that immense freedom, you could feel rooted to both earth and sky. It was possible to sense that here - exactly here - was where you belonged and it was a fitting place for giving birth to "The New Man".

Around 2 p.m. every afternoon the sannyasins would line up for Rajneesh's daily passing, a ritual that quickly became known as "driveby". With hands folded together in *namaste*, a traditional Indian gesture of reverential greeting, they met their master, who slowed down to less than walking speed so they could see him, and he them. Looking at the videos, it seemed as if in those few silent seconds he was rippling the deeper waters of their hearts and they were pouring into each other. From the outside, it might have looked silly or even pornographic. But for many so does love. From the inside, however, it didn't get any better than THIS.

When Rajneesh had disappeared around the bend the sannyasins would close their eyes and embrace each other, or themselves. But not for long. There was lots of Great Work to do. They were there to burn in the ordeals of love, work and meditation, and find within themselves the pure gold of consciousness. They were there to build the first city of the golden future – the endless *Eldorado* – where The New Man would be born and live as never before.

Years later, when Rajneesh started speaking again, he said, "The coming revolution in the world is not going to be of the poor against the rich, the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. The coming revolution in the world is going to be between the stupidity of humanity and the intelligentsia. Nobody has yet proposed the whole program, but that's where I'm leading you all, towards a new kind of revolution by human intelligence against human stupidity."²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 2, Chapter 17, September 6, 1985 (Silver Platter). Published in *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 7. He returned to this theme many times. In this book see toward the end of Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 4: WORDS IN COLLISION

there is hardly an account of the successful establishment of a [Christian] holy man, and of the monastic complex associated with his person, that is not marked by savage competition for scarce resources, waged between the newcomers and local leaders, clergy and villagers.²⁶⁵

As the common size of the natives is somewhat under six inches, so there is an exact proportion in all other animals, as well as plants and trees: for instance, the tallest horses and oxen are between four and five inches in height, the sheep an inch and a half, more or less: the geese about the bigness of a sparrow, and so the several gradations downwards till you come to the smallest, which, to my sight, were almost invisible; but nature hath adapted the eyes of the Lilliputians to all objects proper for their view: they see with great exactness, but at no great distance.²⁶⁶

On Sunday morning, July 13, 1986, about 100 people joined the 20 remaining Antelope residents in a moment of prayer as an American flag, which had once flown over the US Capitol building in Washington, DC, was hoisted up a recently dedicated flag pole. The flag was provided by US Congressman Bob Smith.

Smith, a former basketball star for the University of Oregon, had had 22 years of experience in Oregon state politics when he ran and was elected to his first congressional term in November 1982. The sannyasins had voted 335-1 in his favor. One source close to the congressman told me he was originally favorable to them. "Smith used to tell ranchers, 'Leave them alone, for Christ sakes! The next thing you know you'll be going against left handed Mormons.'"

But as often happens in politics, love and other things is going to last forever relationships things had changed and moved on. On that Sunday morning another Smith – Don – a former Marine and an Antelope city councilman, said, "Today has special significance to the residents and friends of Antelope. This is the first picnic in Antelope since the farewell barbecue in June of 1982, but also because today we are here to commemorate the release of Antelope from four years of Rajneesh oppression."

After the ceremony and a pledge of allegiance, "the crowd milled about and celebrated with a picnic held at the community church, itself once embroiled in all the controversy."²⁶⁷ Built in 1896, the Methodist-Episcopal church, had been transferred to the Antelope government once in 1953 and again in 1969. But immediately after the sannyasins voted against the disincorporation of Antelope in April 1982, the old time

²⁶⁵ Peter Brown, *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World*, pp. 62f

²⁶⁶ Lemuel Gulliver (Jonathan Swift), *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, I. A Voyage to Lilliput, Chapter 6, p. 51

²⁶⁷ *The Dalles Chronicle*, July 14, 1986

residents had transferred it, secretly and illegally, to the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon.²⁶⁸

That afternoon a bronze statue of a cute enough to pet antelope was unveiled outside the Wasco County Courthouse in The Dalles. Nearly five years before, in November 1981, the same building and probably many of the estimated 250 people in attendance had witnessed hours of heated debate at the original Rajneeshpuram incorporation hearings. The antelope was called the "Freedom Memorial" and was: "Dedicated to all who steadfastly and unwaveringly opposed the attempts of the Rajneesh followers to take political control of Wasco County: 1981-1985."

Thus according to that plaque, not only Antelope, with its 40 odd souls, but all of Wasco County, with a population of more than 22,000, had been under siege from Rajneesh's sannyasins for not only a few months - say, in the fall of 1984 - but four full years. From the word go. Directly below that airbrushed and photoshopped gloss of what really happened was an often cited quote lifted straight from *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (1968).²⁶⁹ "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Like most things people say, this statement had a trap door leading to subtext meanings below the surface certainty. It assumes point blank that the speaker and those he is addressing - the *we* group - are good and those they collectively deem evil - the *them* group - actually fit the descriptions. More word magic. The rhetoric as reality school of thought. If the Nazis had won WW II, they would have placed thousands of such statues throughout a world made safe for Aryans. No prizes for guessing who would have been the heroes of that piece.

The quote's presence on the antelope statue was asserting in hard to miss terms that the sannyasins - all of them, and all the time - were evil, and those who stopped them in their tracks were good - all of them, and all the time.²⁷⁰ Some find such a world view pleasing and empowering. Others complacent and crippling.

²⁶⁸ See Chapter 5.

²⁶⁹ According to some web sources, the most often cited quote on the Net. While it is used mostly by right wingers to promote not so subtle or nice agendas, it is in principle susceptible to the jerking this way and that of all who get their mitts on it. On the Wasco County statue it is attributed to Edmund Burke, an Irish politician, and the source is *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). But according to Paul Boller and John George (*They Never Said It*, 1989), it is just another of those too good to be corrected or deleted quotes bumping down the echo chambers of history. In other words, Burke may have made statements that could be stretched to look and sound like this one, but he never said or wrote it. As such, it is in perfect harmony with the Oregonians' glorified image of themselves and how they dealt with "the Rajneeshee threat".

²⁷⁰ Stanley Cohen, a British sociologist, wrote in 1972, "the denounced person is made to look fully deserving of his punishment by contrast to the ideal counter-conception.... Moral panics depend on the generation of diffuse normative concerns, while the successful creation of folk devils rests on their stereotypical portrayal as atypical actors against a background that is overtypical." (*Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, p. 61)

Garry McMurry, a Portland attorney who had won suits against the Church of Scientology²⁷¹ and over the years had become something of a "cult expert", described that July Sunday as "the greatest day that Wasco County has ever had." Like the Lilliputians referred to above, he saw everything relative to his own size. But unlike them, his sense of exactness was just as impaired as his distance vision. For even if there was such a thing as the greatest day in all of Wasco County's history - which I very much doubt - this most assuredly was not it.

Norma Paulus, Oregon's previous Secretary of State and, at that time, the Republican candidate for governor,²⁷² sent her congratulations to the "Concerned Citizens of Wasco County". She wrote, "The battle waged by the people of Wasco County, and especially the forthright citizens of Antelope, was for nothing less than the continued honesty and integrity of our political process."

Oregon's tradition of independence and a clean political process was put to the test by the apparent attempt by the Rajneeshees to abuse and manipulate the ballot box. And tested was the tolerance and fairness of Oregonians.²⁷³

The people of Wasco County and of Oregon met the test. Without adopting the attitudes of Rajneeshee leaders - the arrogance, belligerence, threats and even violence - we stood our ground. The anger all Oregonians felt towards those who threatened the basic rights of our citizens was transformed into resolve.

The belief that Rajneesh "leaders and followers" were aggressive and evil from day one and the natives were fair, square, good hearted etc. etc. sits like thick black pitch on the Oregonian psyche. And it would be high heresy in that state to suggest that the historical record, rather than the hysterical one, should force them into a radical rethink. Professor Carl Latkin of the University of Oregon at Eugene studied the movement and the state's attitudes toward it.

"People knew more about them than the president," he told me during an interview at the Portland Hilton. "Half of the people in the state didn't know the name of the Governor, but 90% of them knew who the Rajneeshees were. Of course, most of the things they knew were wrong. They thought they were all foreigners. They thought they were trying to take over the state. They thought they were a Jonestown type cult. I think a lot of it had

²⁷¹ Most spectacularly, a \$39 million punitive damages judgment awarded in Portland, Oregon in May 1985. However, two months later, in July, another judge, declared it a mistrial. "In ordering a new trial, Multnomah County Circuit judge Donald Londer said he based his decision on improper, prejudicial and 'abusive' statements made during the trial by the lawyer [Garry McMurry] for Julie Christofferson Titchbourne, 27, who contended that she had been defrauded by the church." (Edwin Chen, "New Scientology Trial Ordered: Judge Stops \$39-Million Payment to Ex-Member", *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 1985)

²⁷² The campaign was conducted against the backdrop of the state's continuing economic doldrums and high unemployment. She lost to Democrat Neil Goldschmidt. For more on Goldschmidt, see Chapter 13.

²⁷³ This series of events is described in more detail in Chapter 7.

to do with the way they were portrayed and the way they portrayed themselves in the media."²⁷⁴

Like George Orwell's "average man",²⁷⁵ the average Oregonian cares little for push to shove historical sequence and sifting through complex layers of facts and legal points. More often than not he'll assume that the trouble began with and was escalated by the other guys. And if you're true blue American and human – and want to either stay put or get out of town in one piece - you'll go along with that.

But the state's intellectuals are more nuanced in their formulations. "It seems inevitable that wherever that group goes there will be conflict," said Kathleen McLaughlin, a professor of religion at Lewis and Clark College, as early as January 1982. Her claim to expertise was based on a stopover at the Poona ashram she had made several years before while leading a student group to India.²⁷⁶

And state and federal officials are eager to take inquirers step by step through the events that led to the rise and fall of the Rajneeshees and persuade them that their own courses of action were well within both the letter and spirit of the law. One of those officials is former Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer.

At first sight his credentials are impeccable and even bulletproof. He graduated *summa cum laude* from Harvard College in 1962, was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, and took his law degree from the University of California at Berkeley. He was also the only prominent state official who was too busy to respond to any of my three telephone requests for an interview when I was in Oregon during February and March 1989. Fortunately, however, he had been much chattier about the Rajneesh *affaire* on Wednesday, July 8, 1987.

At that time he was interviewed by Professor Latkin and Dr. Norm Sundberg, his colleague at the University of Oregon. Latkin personally gave me a copy of the interview at the time of ours. In that interview, which out of necessity I will refer to frequently, Sundberg asked Frohnmayer why there was such a big problem with the sannyasins. It was a major question that I had been pursuing in much of my own research.

But before Frohnmayer responded, his assistant, Phil Lemon, grabbed the moral high ground, and it was all downhill from there. "You mean why did they choose the course that they did which caused the ensuing reaction," he asked. "Another question is, 'Why did they choose to come here in the first place?'" His rephrase set the tone for the rest of

²⁷⁴ In an article three years later, he wrote, "Over 99 percent of the 742 respondents had heard of the Rajneeshees, and the overwhelming response to the survey's attitude questions was negative: 80 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement 'Rajneeshees are a cult'; 69 percent agreed that 'Rajneeshees are brainwashed'; 75 percent saw Rajneeshees as 'outsiders,' and 75 percent of the respondents said 'no' to the statement, 'I like Rajneeshees.'" (Carl Latkin, "Seeing Red: A Social-Psychological Analysis of the Rajneeshpuram Conflict", *Sociological Analysis*, Fall 1992, p. 261)

²⁷⁵ See Chapter 3.

²⁷⁶ *Willamette Week*, January 19-25, 1982

the discussion and the parameters of what could "legitimately" be referred to and, more importantly, what couldn't.

"I think it happened because of [a] 'bad neighbor policy,'" Frohnmayer said. "The state was prepared to tolerate, even welcome a group who were into a religious vision of their own. The early reception, at least in the Willamette Valley, was a combination of curiosity and tolerance, running between friendly to indifferent." Nevertheless, he himself had deep reservations about the group and Rajneesh.

We heard about them that first summer, 1981, because our office keeps track of large land purchases in connection with our monitoring of potential organized crime operations. We heard from our sources in Central Oregon that 64,000 acres had been bought by a mysterious India-based religious group that was currently based in New Jersey. The matter was of some concern [.] because there's always speculation of anybody who pays cash, or is able to make a purchase of significance, particularly of land that was not regarded as that valuable. You always wonder where the money comes from.

Accompanying that report was a statement that they hoped to make this a Mecca for as many as 14,000 people. I remember thinking, and probably said, "My God! If they bring that many people, they can take over government in a small Central Oregon community! And that means they will take over law enforcement! Or, at least they will have the capacity to control law enforcement" And I thought of that as a significant and potentially serious development.

This is quite a mouthful and invites many comments. We will restrict ourselves to two. According to Frohnmayer's source, in the summer of 1981 the sannyasins wanted to make Rancho Rajneesh "a Mecca for as many as 14,000". That's strange. Because at that time Sheela was rather disingenuously telling Jefferson County Planner Bob Martin that they were interested in developing labor intensive farming with, at the most, 180 residents. Two, Frohnmayer is portraying himself as someone with nearly Delphic oracle foresight, predicting what the eventual river – at least the remembered one – would look like from a few trickles of water.

Frohnmayer told his interviewers that he had other reasons to worry. As a young man he had studied totalitarianism and the life and writings of Friedrich Nietzsche. "I felt I had read Rajneesh's book. Much of what seemed bizarre to most people was explainable in terms of the superman ethos, of rabid, romantic individualism run wild. I knew at least some of the psychological gimmicks that really seemed to floor other people. I'm not sure there was much theology in Rajneesh's teachings. But to the extent that you can call it a theological mechanism, it was a way of reconciling irreconcilables or simply teaching people to cope. I genuinely think it was a sort of Master Race philosophy."

It's not exactly Lawrence Malkin's "mostly pop-Hinduism and anything-goes homilies",²⁷⁷ but it's not far from it either. I'll leave it to those with stronger stomachs to unpack Frohnmayer's gargantuan condescension. I'll stick to the facts. Even if he had read any of Rajneesh's *oeuvre* – which I sincerely doubt – he hadn't understood a word. For if he had, his tongue would have trembled at the very thought of trying to sum up its rampant diversity.

But let's spotlight one point in particular: Master Race. As we have already seen from a single quote,²⁷⁸ the New Man was not supposed to be a new, improved old man – a Superman. Others delving more deeply into both the letter and spirit of Rajneesh's work come across his praise of self acceptance and ordinariness time and time again. Being human is more than enough. It's the ideals of superhuman perfection and saintliness, which all religions have promoted and praised and many unfortunate followers have tried to live up to, that have driven people crazy. Some of his examples of right living are Zen Masters, whose claim to fame consists of eating when they're hungry and sleeping when they're sleepy.²⁷⁹

And I'm also sure that a very good case could be made against Frohnmayer's blunt and botched interpretation of Nietzsche.²⁸⁰

Former Governor Vic Atiyeh, who after retiring from office returned to a tasteful oriental art and Middle Eastern carpet emporium he runs with his brother, told me that during his eight years as governor he had traveled about 250,000 miles in Oregon. He said he had a good sense "of what was going on and how everybody was feeling. And I felt that way too. After all, I'm human, and I really objected to what was going on out there. They were insulting. They were genuinely insulting."

"From the start," I asked him. "Or was it a situation where push comes to shove?"
"No. No. No," the former governor asserted. "They actually began all of the insulting remarks."

History, however, has another tale to tell. Old words collide with the new.

²⁷⁷ See Chapter 2.

²⁷⁸ See Chapter 2. The "superman" returns in Chapter 11.

²⁷⁹ For example, Rajneesh, *A Bird on the Wing*, Chapter 6, June 15, 1974

²⁸⁰ For example, "But when we use the word 'superman' we must from the start ward off all the false and confusing overtones the word has to the common understanding. Nietzsche does not give the name 'superman' to man such as exists until now, only super-dimensional. Nor does he mean a type of man who tosses humanity aside and makes sheer caprice the law, titanic rage the rule. Rather, taking the word quite literally, the Superman is the individual who *surpasses* man as he is up to now, for the sole purpose of bringing man-till-now into his still unattained nature, and there to secure him." (Martin Heidegger, "Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?" (in *The New Nietzsche*), p. 67)

And "This passage makes it clear that at least in some of the cases in which Nietzsche speaks of mastery and power, he is concerned with mastery and power over oneself [sic, "one's self"], envisaging different habits and character traits competing for the domination of a single person." (Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, p. 183)

Seven years earlier, in March 1982, when Sheela was still being polite and charming with locals, Governor Atiyeh was campaigning in Central Oregon. He told the Madras Kiwanis Club – where Sheela had been well received the previous October - *KPRB* Radio in Redmond and numerous reporters that his sympathies lay with the Oregon residents as opposed to the sannyasins.

This has created a tremendous amount of emotional trauma and deep concern by longtime Oregonians. I'm provincial. I admit it. I was born and raised in Oregon, and of course my loyalty is to Oregonians. My sympathies are with those residents who are concerned with Rajneesh. They are concerned with a tidal wave of people into a community that has been quiet and peaceful for many years. The followers' moves are intimidating, and I think that is what is scaring people.

"It is very clear that their presence has been extremely disturbing to the longtime residents. Their presence is so different. If I moved into the neighborhood and they really didn't like me, I see no reason why I should stay."²⁸¹ By that time he had been twice invited to Rancho Rajneesh, and he did twice refuse. "I never met with them," he told me in March 1989. "I would never meet with them. I never wanted to elevate their position by having them talk with a governor. Those were just my personal feelings."

During this period the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) were also closely monitoring the activities of sannyasins, the commune and Rajneesh corporations. According to documents obtained by the *Willamette Week*, the FBI and DEA suspected the sannyasins of "trafficking in narcotics, racketeering and conspiracy".²⁸² "The documents demonstrated that in 1981 and 1982 the DEA ran background checks on cult members through U.S. embassies in India, Belgium and the Netherlands. The documents also show that by 1983 the U.S. Department of Justice was using the FBI's office in Las Vegas to coordinate multiple investigations into the Bhagwan, the Rajneesh Meditation Foundation International, the Rajneesh Neo-Sannyasin Commune and the Rajneesh Investment Corp."

To get an indication of what grab bag company the sannyasins were in – which the *Willamette Week* either didn't know about or consider worth mentioning – one should examine a sample list of the 179 other groups the ever vigilant FBI was investigating at the same time.²⁸³ They included the usual suspects. The American Civil Liberties Union and Amnesty International, for example. The American Federation of Teachers, the National Lawyer's Guild, Oxfam and anti-nuclear organizations. But there were also a few surprise entries: the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the US Catholic Bishops Conference.²⁸⁴

²⁸¹ *The Oregonian*, and *The Bend Bulletin*, March 14-17, 1982

²⁸² *Willamette Week*, March 3-9, 1989

²⁸³ One of the things many of them had in common was their opposition to the Reagan Administration's Central American policies.

²⁸⁴ *The Nation*, August 7/14, 1989. Maybe not so surprising when we consider what the American bishops thought about the Vatican and Reagan (see Chapter 5).

By the way, none of the above mentioned FBI investigations, including the ones of sannyasins, panned out into a single prosecution, let alone conviction.²⁸⁵ But that's hardly worth mentioning either, is it?

Some Central Oregon ranchers who had noticed the staggering sum the sannyasins had forked out for the Big Muddy, thought they would be an easy mark for more shearing. Kelly McGreer sold them 500 pounds of potatoes at almost twice the going price. Buck Coe, a "big bull of a man" who worked at the nearby Star Route Ranch in Maupin, offered himself and two D-8 earthmovers he didn't own to clear about 3,000 acres of land for farming. Clearing land basically consisted of knocking over shallow rooted juniper trees and removing the occasional boulder. Coe's asking price of \$75 per acre would have netted him a cool \$225,000. The sannyasins declined his generous offer and cleared 2,000 acres themselves for a little more than \$25,000.

After that Buck Coe's soft spot for them hardened. He started showing up at various meetings and appeared on a local television program with bandoliers of bullets crisscrossed over his chest. With the help of the McGreer family and 1000 Friends of Oregon, he instigated an investigation of Judge Rick Cantrell on the grounds that he had had a "conflict of interest" when he voted in favor of the motion to allow the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram. Weeks before he had voted in favor - as the law required - Cantrell had sold the sannyasins 50 head of cattle at the market price of 50 cents per pound.

Bernie Smith said, "1000 Friends needed a target. And Rick was a good target. They're an organization that's primarily concerned with land use protection, but they're political. You can't deny that. And they needed somebody in the government to blame for a lot of this. And they used Rick Cantrell as a target over the long term." After years of expensive litigation Cantrell was eventually completely exonerated. But the wounds of having his name and reputation dragged through the big muddy were still clearly visible on both him and his wife, Idonna.

Between October 1981 and April 1982, 1000 Friends, Coe and other local ranchers brought eight legal actions against the development and incorporation of Rajneeshpuram on the grounds that it violated state land use planning goals. 1000 Friends, which up to then had chalked up an impressive 89% win record on land use decisions, lost all their motions. But instead of admitting that they were barking up the wrong gum tree, the watchdogs vowed in October 1982 to fight on all the way to the US Supreme Court.²⁸⁶

By 1984, they were deeper into the loss stats but still wouldn't concede defeat. "For almost three years," wrote Dr. Ted Shay, professor of political science at Willamette University, "the staff has conducted an unremitting campaign against the followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. 1000 Friends have been involved in over 100 actions - legislative, administrative and judicial - against the Rajneeshees."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ The FBI investigation of sannyasins was allegedly cancelled in 1983.

²⁸⁶ *San Francisco Examiner*, October 14, 1982

²⁸⁷ Ted Shay, "Can Oregon Afford 1000 Friends?", *Counterpoint*, Summer 1984

They had been sweating the small stuff, he continued, to protect 2,135 "arid and eroded acres", which by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) standards could support nine cattle. "This is the most fantastic aspect of the 1000 Friends crusade: THEY WILL GO TO ALMOST ANY LENGTHS TO 'PROTECT' THE GRAZING LAND FOR NINE COWS!"

"The incorporation of Rajneeshpuram was a wonderful deal for 1000 Friends," Bernie Smith told me. "It was a good tool for them to recruit people in Oregon. They pointed at the Rajneeshees and said, 'Look at this danger we've got down there to land use laws and planning. It's the Rajneeshees.' They used that to get membership. And membership, of course, means more money to them. Those contributions mean more staff and more power in the state. 1000 Friends benefited in a lot of ways from the Rajneeshees, because they were able to get a lot of credibility from it."

Ranchers, farmers and other Central Oregonians who had previously been hostile to 1000 Friends became members and made contributions.

The incorporation of Rajneeshpuram was also challenged on "religious grounds" by the Citizens for Constitutional Cities (CCC). Buck Coe was also a member of that. Formed on March 17, 1982, it was opposed to the creation of "religious cities" and swore to "monitor the activities" of the sannyasins.²⁸⁸ CCC's president was "plain spoken" Bill Bowerman.

Known by some as the "guru of running", he had been the track coach at the University of Oregon for 24 years, trained more sub-four minute milers than anyone else in history, and was the 1972 Olympics' coach for the American track and field team. He credited himself with having brought jogging from New Zealand to America, had invented the waffle sole sneaker, and was co-founder of "Just Do It!" Nike, the largest producer of athletic shoes in North America. He was a 71 year old millionaire whose family had been in Oregon since the 1830s, the beginning of "white time" there.²⁸⁹ Bowerman had been friends with Attorney General Frohnmayr's father, Otto Frohnmayr, since their bachelor days.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ For more on church state issues, see Chapter 5.

²⁸⁹ *The Oregonian*, March 18, 1982 and September 18, 1983. Nike's other co-founder was Philip Knight, one of Bowerman's old runners. Back in the old college days at the University of Oregon he was known as "Buck". (Jeff Baker, "The man who invented running", *The Oregonian*, April 6, 2006)

²⁹⁰ "Early in my life," Dave Frohnmayr said years later, "I remember Bill and my dad having these rollicking conversations and putting our families in the car to go someplace. Camping trips to Cultus Lake, just wonderful times."

"Frohnmayr's father, Otto, and Bowerman were roommates in Medford and got married within two weeks of each other. The families lived two houses apart and remained close after the Bowermans moved to Eugene. Frohnmayr remembers Bowerman's 'great support, almost uncritical' of his political career, starting when the Bowermans walked a precinct during his first run for the Legislature.

"When Frohnmayr was Oregon's attorney general in the early 1980s, a religious group called the Rajneeshees purchased a ranch in Eastern Oregon and incorporated it as the city of Rajneeshpuram. The new city was next to a ranch owned by Bowerman's son Jon, and the Rajneeshees began harassing Jon Bowerman's family, which aroused Bill Bowerman's ire.

The attorney for CCC was Garry McMurry, the Portland "cult expert" who called the dedication of the Antelope Freedom Memorial "the greatest day that Wasco County has ever had". At CCC's inception he said they were "not a group of vigilantes, and it is not a group against any form of religion whatsoever".²⁹¹ But less than a month later, on April 14, he addressed 500 people in the too hot to handle atmosphere of the Madras Junior High School gymnasium.

"My sole purpose is to make it clear that danger exists if a charter is obtained by this group. It must not happen - the foundation of a city around them or any other para-military or religious organization."²⁹² Besides all their other atrocities the sannyasins were being suspected of they were now, and suddenly, being lumped and dumped with "other para-military" organizations.

Years later, the sight of steely eyed sannyasins toting semi-automatic Uzis became entrenched in the minds of television audiences everywhere. People like Ron Taylor, the US Custom's agent in charge of the arrest in Charlotte, North Carolina.²⁹³ But in the spring of 1982, sannyasins were the odd man out in cowboy country, because they were among the few who didn't have rifle racks in their pickup trucks.

While many of the resident sannyasins had solid construction and other can do skills, most were what the natives would call "over educated". They were vegetarians and by no means hunters or members of the National Rifle Association (NRA). It would have been difficult to find any among them who had served in the armed forces. "Hell," said Bob Harvey, a local Oregonian who had managed the Big Muddy and was hired to stay on. "I'm the only one down there with a gun."

Thus in the spring of 1982 there was no way the sannyasins could legitimately be confused with a "para-military" organization. But that had absolutely no deterrent effect on McMurry, who closed his address by saying that the issue of the sannyasins in Oregon

"Bill was normally a live-and-let-live type, but he saw what they were doing to Jon and saw what they were doing to the underdogs in (nearby) Antelope," Frohnmayer said. Bowerman and the head of the land-use group 1000 Friends of Oregon organized opposition to Rajneeshpuram, and in 1983 Frohnmayer issued an opinion that the city was the functional equivalent of a religious commune and therefore unconstitutional. Despite harassment both serious (the Rajneeshes poisoned salad bars in The Dalles) and silly (the group called Frohnmayer's mother and asked if he had been dropped on his head as a child), the state ultimately prevailed and the Rajneeshes eventually disbanded and left Oregon." (Baker, *ibid.*)

²⁹¹ *The Oregonian*, March 18, 1982. Similar sentiments had been expressed before in Oregon. "Oregon's politics were vastly complicated by the emergence and rapid growth of organizations claiming to be special guardians of American virtues and institutions: the American Protective Association (APA), the Federation of Patriotic Societies (FOPS), and the Ku Klux Klan. Reportedly, the societies together could muster 40,000 to 50,000 voters in support of their measures. The KKK claimed 14,000 members, 9000 in Multnomah County, the remainder primarily in Jackson and Clatsop counties. Undoubtedly [,] the 'Red Scare' contributed to their proliferation, the KKK claiming that they were not anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, or anti-Alien, but rather, 'pro-American'; but they all appealed to racial and religious prejudices well rooted in the region's past." (Dorothy Johansen and Charles Gates, *Empire of the Columbia*, p. 494f)

²⁹² *Madras Pioneer*, April 22, 1982

²⁹³ See Chapter 1.

was "absolutely fundamental to our whole fabric of society. Do everything that you can to further the causes of Citizens for Constitutional Government [sic] to stand between Rajneesh followers and their goals."²⁹⁴

But what were the goals of the "Rajneesh followers"? According to the Antelope "Freedom Memorial", McMurry, and other "cult experts", the sannyasins were already conspiring to take over the Wasco County government. If this was their intent, the strategy they had chosen to achieve it was unorthodox in the extreme.

First, they decided to purchase a ranch worth \$198,000 for \$5.75 million. Then, by mid March 1982, they had invested about \$15 million in the property and moved in 278 people. They were working between 72 and 84 hours a week and had completed several warehouses, a cafeteria, a heavy equipment garage and had built or improved 41 miles of roads. They had drilled 14 water wells, planted 3,500 fruit trees and opened up 1250 new acres for farming. They had also prepared the ground for an 88,000 square foot greenhouse, which was intended to be the largest in America. They had spent that money and accomplished that work, the Antelope "Freedom Memorial" said, all with an eye towards the overthrow of the Wasco County government and the destruction of the "fabric" of Oregon society.

Second, the sannyasins let themselves be persuaded by 1000 Friends that Antelope was the ideal and only place for them to locate their business activities. Then they watched the irate citizens of Antelope holler that they were being taken over by an "alien cult". The general chorus of complaint was joined by other citizens from around the state and 1000 Friends themselves.

Third, to get around the whole problem of Antelope, they cunningly studied the state's incorporation and land use laws, hired the best attorneys, complied with every clause, sub-clause and comma and voted to incorporate their own city, 20 miles from Antelope. To this day, no one knows how they stage managed the formation of CCC and got them and 1000 Friends to simultaneously oppose the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram on both "constitutional" and "environmental" grounds.

Run of the mill conspiracies, one hopes, are crafted stealthily, without arousing the slightest suspicions.²⁹⁵ But according to the Antelope Freedom Memorial declaration, the sannyasins would have nothing to do with tradition. As part of their zealous and zany plots, they had inspired the wrath of Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh, the suspicions of Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer, and had secretly arranged to be investigated by the INS, FBI, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), US Customs Service, DEA, Oregon State Police, and US State Department with high level interest coming from both Congress and the White House.

²⁹⁴ *Madras Pioneer*, April 22, 1982

²⁹⁵ Paul Dukes, a failed music student working for the British Secret Service in St. Petersburg during and after the Russian Revolution, had another opinion. He wrote: "most of the conspirators I met seemed to me to be either unfitted for conspiracy or working quite wrongly." (Dukes, *The Story of "ST 25"*, p. 196)

It was, undeniably, a roundabout way to take over a county.

Again, what were the goals of the "Rajneesh followers" in Oregon? According to them, they were immediate and obvious. They wanted to consolidate and build on their considerable personal and financial investments at Rancho Rajneesh. They were not interested in occupying Antelope or any other Oregon town. They had been forced into Antelope by 1000 Friends and other "public interest" groups fighting against the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram.

As long as the existence of Rajneeshpuram was not legally guaranteed - and it never was while it was a live wire issue²⁹⁶ - the sannyasins would have to stay in Antelope. "What it really boils down to," said Bob Davis, former executive assistant to Oregon's highly esteemed Governor Tom McCoy, "is that the people are saying, 'We don't want you in Antelope. We don't want you on the ranch. We don't want you in Oregon. We don't want you in the United States.'"²⁹⁷

Fearing the takeover of their town by the red clad sannyasins, Antelope moved to disincorporate. The mood of the moment was expressed by a bumper sticker popular at the time: BETTER DEAD THAN RED. "In the first case of its kind in Oregon and possibly in the entire country, here was a town that was going to try to vote itself out of existence."²⁹⁸ Fearing that the disincorporation of Antelope would leave them politically and economically up shit creek without a paddle, sannyasins fought back. They bought up all the empty houses, moved in and registered to vote.

Expressions of sympathy for the Antelope residents and hostility toward the town snatchers poured in. On Saturday, March 27, 1982, four men from nearby Prineville shot in a peaceful and good neighborly fashion at an unarmed sannyasin in Antelope. They turned themselves in, but were never prosecuted. Hey, in a live and let live society, there was no need to get riled up about each and every difference of opinion.

In March 1982, Donna Quick Smith, the woman who as early as August 1981 had worried that the sannyasins were going to peddle pornography in Central Oregon, got a letter from an unknown Bombay correspondent. "The only way to defeat these criminals," that Indian wrote, "is by dirty tactics, the same methods they use themselves. Don't entertain any scruples. If necessary, slaughter them because if not, they'll do the

²⁹⁶ "The Oregon courts, on the other hand, eventually found in favor of the city. In 1986, the court of appeals determined that incorporation had not violated the agricultural lands goal of the state planning system. In 1987, the state supreme court ended the litigation by dismissing the claim that a conflict of interest on the Wasco County Commission in 1981 should invalidate the incorporation. Rajneeshpuram is now empty, bankrupt, and legal within Oregon law." (Carl Abbott, "Utopia and Bureaucracy: The Fall of Rajneeshpuram, Oregon", *The Pacific Historical Review*, February 1990, p. 100)

²⁹⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, April 5, 1982

²⁹⁸ Kirk Braun, *Rajneeshpuram: The Unwelcome Society*, p. 43

same to you when they achieve power."²⁹⁹ If that isn't a call to exterminate the brutes, what is?³⁰⁰

On April 8, 1982, Donna Quick Smith told the Redmond Rotary Luncheon that sannyasins abused their children, fed them a low protein diet, gave them hours of tedious work, and practiced mind control. Other young zombies were destitute on the streets of Antelope. "They'll knock on people's doors, just to keep dry or warm or to get a ride to Madras," she said. Less than two months later she would separate from her husband - Don - and announce her plans to move back to Portland.³⁰¹

But on that Thursday in April, she was predicting a fairly quick demise of the "Rajneesh followers". "I think they'll fall apart from the inside. Someone from the top of that machine will get greedy. Cults have a history of corruption," she oracled.³⁰² Falling apart from the inside, as we have already seen, was a common theme and wet dream among many Oregonians and "cult busters" the world over.

Most people still believe that the Rajneesh "cult" and Rajneeshpuram fell apart from the inside. However, the facts will show that they were being picked on and at, and finally destroyed - at least as a very publicly visible movement in America - from the outside.³⁰³

On disincorporation day, Thursday, April 15, 1982, there was more media than voters in Antelope, a town that didn't have a hotel or stop light. There were a hundred of them, from ABC, BBC, CBS, NBC, AP, UPI, and CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company). As all too often happens, they were as much a part of the story as what was going on around them. Perhaps even more so. Just as too many cops at the scene of an arrest have to be

²⁹⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, May 3, 1983

³⁰⁰ Oregon's lone Pulitzer Prize winner, Harold Lenoir Davis, lived in Antelope for two years as a boy (1906-8) and worked for the *Antelope Herald* before moving to The Dalles. In one article he called the latter *Gros Ventre* (Fat Belly) and described it as "a good place to stay away from". (Davis, "A Town in Eastern Oregon", *The American Mercury*, January 1930, p. 81) He also dealt with local strategy for resolving troubles with the Indians. "He [the new Army commander] wanted merely to thrash them [the Siwashes] into good behavior. The businessmen cared nothing about their behavior, good or bad, but wanted them exterminated. There were controversies about that, and a particularly vicious one about the regulars' objection to killing Indian women; but, in the end, idealism prevailed over squeamishness, the single standard of redskin-slaughter was enforced, and the hostile tribes were thrashed into helpless, starving mobs, and shipped off to distant reservations to die of homesickness. Except strays, and a few inoffensive fish-eating colonies along the Columbia, no Indians remained. Gros Ventre had made its first Civic Improvement." (p.78)

³⁰¹ *Oregon Journal*, June 22, 1982

³⁰² *The Redmond Spokesman*, April 14, 1982

³⁰³ "Case studies of religious movements typically focus on the internal affairs of groups - the success and failures of the group tend to be traced to decisions made by group leaders or to developments within the organization. But when we back up and take a broader view, it is clear that internal factors often are of minor importance - that the fate of religious movements most often is determined by external factors beyond their control." (Rodney Stark, "Why Oregon?: What Makes the State Attractive to New Religious Movements?", *Oregon Humanities*, 1994) And one more: "Thus, violence can be viewed as a property of the interactional relationship between two or more individuals and groups, and not just as a property of a person or group." (James Richardson, "Minority Religions and the Context of Violence: A Conflict/Interactionist Perspective", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Spring 2001, p. 106)

concerned about not getting caught in the crossfire, the too many cameramen and photographers had to steer clear of each other's shots.

People magazine,³⁰⁴ which normally featured the rich and famous, returned to the American heartland to take a group portrait of all the red blooded Oregonian residents of Antelope, plus about 20 grandchildren and a few extras to amp out the mean and sour look. It looked like *American Gothic*³⁰⁵ multiplied by 23.

Oregon Secretary of State Norma Paulus and a chief election officer were on hand to oversee the voting. After the results were tallied the score was 55-42 against disincorporation. One newspaper said the longer term Antelope residents had been "outnumbered" and "outlawed" by the sannyasins.³⁰⁶ Another that the election was "a victory for the overbearing".³⁰⁷ Another called it the "an outrage to Oregon".³⁰⁸

After the disincorporation election US Congressman Bob Smith began "pounding" on the INS to make a decision on whether or not Rajneesh should be allowed to remain in the United States. Over the next 3½ years, Representative Smith would continue to urge them and the United States Attorney General to make a decision.³⁰⁹

Six weeks after the Antelope disincorporation hearing, at the end of May 1982, "the INS office in Portland had received a call from an aide to Senator Mark Hatfield. An INS memo of the conversation reported the aide as saying, 'Mr. Hatfield is very concerned about the operation of the religious cult which the Senator believes is endangering the way of life for a small agricultural town in Oregon as well as constituting a threat to public safety.'"³¹⁰

In fighting for the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram and against the disincorporation of Antelope, the sannyasins were fighting, in true American fashion, for their own interests and survival. Yet over the years their alleged self destructive tendencies have been remarked upon and emphasized. "I think I can say I predicted, even from the day they came to Oregon [,] that their community required too much intensity to avoid a schism for more than two or three years," Dave Frohnmayer pontificated to the University of Oregon professors. "I didn't think they would last five years. My father, who I consider a great sage, came to this conclusion independently and used to tell Bill Bowerman that they'll break up and go away."

In the remoteness of deserts around the world there are piles of rocks that have accumulated for no other reason than man's apparently inherent need to strike back at the *immensum*. Like molehills becoming ever bigger molehills - they never will be mountains

³⁰⁴ April 19, 1982

³⁰⁵ Grant Wood, 1930

³⁰⁶ *Salem Statesman Journal*, April 18, 1982

³⁰⁷ *Eugene Register Guard*, April 18, 1982

³⁰⁸ *The Bend Bulletin*, April 19, 1982

³⁰⁹ *The Oregonian*, October 25, 1984

³¹⁰ Frances Fitzgerald, *Cities On A Hill*, p. 331

- the piles have grown over the centuries as each passerby, without knowing what or why, tosses on yet another stone.

Over the years the sannyasins' "aggressive" and "self destructive" tendencies were heaped on the pile of Oregonians' *idées fixe*.³¹¹ Included in it was the puffed up ideology that sannyasins were universally evil from the start and Oregonians were the whole nine yards of decent and law abiding. Somewhere near the center was the conviction that the 40 people of Antelope and the 22,000 people of Wasco County had been under siege for four years and were in danger of being taken over by a couple of thousand outsiders. After they left the pile kept growing higher and wider.³¹² And it will probably continue to do so until there rumbles up from below some concerted interest in discovering, even approximately, who did what to whom, when and why. Until more than average Oregonians ask themselves who they are, what they did, and what they were capable of.

The "friendliness to indifferent" attitude Frohnmayer had talked about was the exception to the rule, not the rule itself. Not feeling hostile to the newcomers was an unpopular stance. But some were offended by Governor Atiyeh's antagonistic remarks about them. His Democratic opponent, State Senator Theodore Kulongoski, said Atiyeh "had disgraced himself and owes an apology to those people".³¹³ Michael Curtis, a military trained nuclear- and biological-warfare expert wrote to one newspaper.

Before we judge their settlement in this country we had better think back to how the Indians were dealt with when the West was settled. I'm all for freedom of choice, religion, etc. I'd much rather they voted us out than having to decide this matter with weapons. So far on the whole they've proved to be more peaceful than we were when the country was originally settled.³¹⁴

Much of the hostile reaction to the sannyasins would later focus on and around the toxic personality tics of Rajneesh's personal secretary, Ma Anand Sheela. "Silence or subtlety has never been Sheela's style," *The Oregonian* wrote about her years later. "She comes on like a flamethrower, all heat and noise, spewing invectives that range from profane

³¹¹ For more on these alleged self-destructive tendencies, see US Attorney Charles Turner's remarks toward the end of Chapter 9.

³¹² "If one thinks of what is going on as an argument as is implied by formal or logical analysis, repetition is mere redundancy. If, however, we are not dealing with an argument but with a total bonded experience, repetition is the only possibility for emphasis. A frozen statement cannot be expanded, it can only be made again and again and again. Repetition reminds us that we are not dealing with an argument, since an argument is a basis for another argument, not the basis for the same argument again." (Maurice Bloch, "Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation", *European Journal of Sociology*, 1974, p.74)

³¹³ *Oregon Journal*, March 16, 1982. *The New York Times*, which described Atiyeh as a right of center Republican and Kulongoski as a left of center Democrat, wrote: "Gov. Victor G. Atiyeh could lose his re-election campaign because of a sagging economy that he says has been weakened by President Reagan's decision not to strive for a balanced Federal budget.... 'If you remove that issue of the economy, I don't think I would have a strong opponent,' the Governor said." (September 28, 1982) Kulongoski lost that year, but was finally elected governor in 2003 and re-elected in 2006.

³¹⁴ *The Bend Bulletin*, May 3, 1982

harangues broadcast on the nightly news to obscene gestures to haughty lectures for lawyers who refuse to address her lovingly."³¹⁵

But according to Ma Yoga Pratima, the Australian sannyasin who had worked closely with her over the years and followed her career from her first intrusive minutes in the Poona ashram, Sheela wasn't all bad. "To start off with, she had a very strong life energy that was attractive and fun to be around. Being near her, you got a certain excitement, a certain lift." Bernie Smith said, "I know there were people, some of them very strong opponents of Sheela, who found her quite physically attractive."
"Was there anything in particular that turned Sheela," I asked Pratima. Meaning, obviously, to the darker, more unconscious side that exists in all of us.

No. I think it was very simply one more example of power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. As she got more and more power, it became more intoxicating. It became more prestigious to be in charge, to be bossing Westerners around, to be responsible for the welfare of thousands of people. What they ate. What they did. What time they got up. Ultimately, what they thought.

And then there was the whole thing about going to America. That was when the lines of power really became well defined. Sheela took over from Laxmi completely. And other people were drawn in because of the need to organize funds and activities. By the time we arrived in America, all the players were in place. Of course, some of them fell out of place when they wouldn't go along with Sheela as top dog.

At the beginning, Pratima said, there was a genuine attempt on Sheela's part to make friends with the neighbors. But she frequently blew it "by being brash, by trying to do things too fast".

Then, of course, the rather roughshod methods she used with sannyasins on the ranch caused more friction. And when she saw that she had caused friction with someone, her response was always to accelerate the friction instead of backing away from it and trying to smooth things over. If she saw that she had upset someone, she would go for them even more. She did this with sannyasins, with the people of Oregon, and in her interviews. Sheela had too much pride. She couldn't back down and apologize. She had the idea that whatever she said was right.

Then, when there were conflicts with the neighbors, the courts, the judges, she enjoyed it. It became a large theater for her to play on. It was a much larger stage with real participants, not just sannyasins, who she could browbeat because of their love for Osho, because they wanted to live on the ranch.

³¹⁵ *The Oregonian*, "For Love and Money", July 7, 1985

Those outside people really gave her a fight for her money. She enjoyed antagonizing them. She would come back and throw herself on her bed in fits of glee because she had won a particular point with somebody. Or she had managed to swear at somebody. Or she had managed to shock somebody by calling them a "bitch" or a "bastard", or suggested that they fucked cows, or whatever particular profanity which came out of her mind. She enjoyed it and she started enjoying it more and more.

Teresa Southern, a native born Oregonian who grew up around logging camps and had been living in Madras since 1971, said that Oregonians in general respected Sheela's aggressiveness. "They liked her go-get-it-ness, because that was the way they were. They liked her freshness, her calling a spade a spade. An Oregonian working in a logging camp will step up to someone and say, 'I don't like you. You're a mother fucker.' Immediately, you're on square one and things can only get better from there."

Southern, who became a sannyasin in June 1985 - Ma Anand Sarani - was, in effect, in neither of the increasingly polarized camp. She lived in Madras and dressed in red. "I was in a situation to experience both sides of the conflict," she said. Her unique perspective split up her marriage of 13 years, got her fired from her job as a dental assistant, and taught her lessons about herself and Oregon.

I used to feel as an Oregonian that I was friendly and welcoming. But after knowing Osho Rajneesh and sannyasins from around the world, I discovered that was only our idea: our conditioning of what we were. I discovered that Oregonians are a judgmental group, very cautious and non trusting. I saw that in myself and in my neighbors. Even when you're an Oregonian and you move to a new town, you have to go through a break in period. It just seems to be the nature of the type of people who settled the state, or that area of the country. They had to persevere. If you persevere, their original fear and hostility will turn to begrudging respect. Then it will start to grow from there.

In mid May 1982 the population of Rancho Rajneesh was swollen by an influx of summer workers. They came to build platforms and place them on all available flat land for 2,500 tents and the estimated 10,000 visitors who would be attending the First Annual World Celebration in July. Other crews were erecting huge, colorful circus tents with pennants on top, which would house temporary eating areas, shops and meditation spaces during the festival. Balancing on iron beams 40 feet up, other sannyasins were constructing a 2½ acre future greenhouse that would eventually become the new Buddha Hall.

The sannyasins bought tons of granola, coffee, yoghurt, and all the spare cups, plastic utensils and paper plates in the state. The work load went up a notch and days off were cancelled. Tuesday, May 18 was like any other day for almost everyone except the 154 sannyasins who took about 15 minutes each to head to the polls and cast their ballots in

favor of the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram. They were making history, but were too busy to think much about that. Voting a city into existence was one thing. Building it was another matter entirely.

Meanwhile, the Portland INS office had been in regular contact with their regional office in Minnesota, headquarters in Washington, the State Department and the American Consulate in Bombay. On November 23, 1981, Betty Lou Oplinger, a Bombay Consulate officer, sent the Portland INS a lengthy telex. She worried that as many as 10,000 sannyasins would eventually come to live at Rancho Rajneesh.

Was she the source Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer was referring to at the beginning of this chapter?

As the festival neared, Oplinger's nightmare scenario of 10,000 sannyasins overrunning the range found its way into the fears of Antelope residents. It was expressed at an April 28, 1982 meeting between them, local ranchers and representatives of 1000 Friends, and was later written down.

Incorporation of Rajneeshpuram would allow the organization to develop an array of urban-scale nonfarm uses which would threaten the economic viability of nearby commercial agricultural operations and the small-town character of Antelope. More specifically, it would permit the creation of a worldwide center for a growing movement at which tens of thousands of the Bhagwan's followers could live. The economic, social, environmental, political and legal consequences of such a center would be unacceptable in this rural agricultural area.

Those numbers, which began at a modest 180 and then spiked upwards to 10,000, 14,000, and "tens of thousands", were multiplying like rabbits on Viagra. Which goes to show that there is no such thing as a worst case scenario, because a terrified mind, especially in cooperation with others of the same species, can always think of one worse than that, and others worster still.³¹⁶

Betty Lou Oplinger from the Bombay Consulate thought a good proportion of the sannyasins coming to live at Rajneeshpuram would be foreigners entering the United States under the pretence of sham marriages. She said sannyasins wore red and the rosewood necklaces known as *malas* and only used the Sanskrit names that had been given to them by Rajneesh. She said if consular officers knew they were applying for American visas, they were sure to refuse them. This in itself is a remarkably blunt confession of clear and present prejudice. "You're a sannyasin and want a visa to the US? Forget it!" She went on to note that "the disciples may try to hide their Rajneesh

³¹⁶ Jeannie Mills, one of those who had loved and left Jim Jones, hallucinated about him becoming a threat to the whole nation. "'What recourse would we have,' she inquired, 'if he became president?'" (In John Hall, *Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, p. 211) Obviously, such an exaggerated threat made her opposition even more heroic and world saving.

connection and pose as ordinary tourists. "The possibilities of visa fraud, therefore, are high."

In a word perfect description of Catch 22, Oplinger was saying that sannyasins wishing American visas must approach consulates dressed as sannyasins. Then, and only then, would they be denied those visas.³¹⁷ It never entered her head – or if it did, she didn't care – that it was the resilient hostility of hers and people like her that was virtually forcing sannyasins to commit her trumped up version of "fraud". Because as far as I know, there is no law saying that sannyasins seeking a visa for the US must go to consulates dressed as sannyasins. At least not at that time.

Sannyasins continued to be high on the worry list of Donna Quick Smith. She urged Governor Atiyeh to call out the National Guard to protect Antelope residents during the festival. By mid June 1982, it was announced that 300 Guardsmen would be on call and helicopters were available. Bob Oliver, Atiyeh's chief legal aide, predicted a two hour response time should anything disastrous happen at Rajneeshpuram.³¹⁸

"Oh, I'm sure the governor asked the National Guard if they could produce some people if there was a riot of some sort," Bernie Smith told me in March 1989. "If somebody wants to riot down there, it's pretty easy to keep them down there. Anyway, that didn't materialize."

Ten thousand sannyasins arrived from around the world around the clock. Rajneeshpuram became a Renaissance affair, bright with the tang of many languages. Out of the macho pioneer spirit that was building the New City for the New Man was rekindled the spirit of communion and celebration. That and personal transformation were the sannyasins' goals – not the takeover of a one horse town, Wasco County, or the rest of Oregon and the world.

The sounds of "dynamic" and visitors screaming themselves clean were heard in the early mornings from the recently completed Buddha Hall. Old and new songs were sung. Old and new friends bumped into each other and, well, you know. For an hour each morning in the auditorium, the sannyasins gathered and Rajneesh sat silently on a three foot high podium. They bowed to their master, who was dressed in white, and chanted the Pali mantras they had learned during the last days of Poona,³¹⁹ the ones Gautama Buddha's disciples had chanted 2500 years before.

*Buddham sharanam gachchhami
Sangham sharanam gachchhami
Dhammam sharanam gachchhami*

As they bowed towards the floor there was a ground rumble of all those voices bouncing back at them. It swelled and disappeared, like surges of water going down drains. When

³¹⁷ For similar Catch 22's see Chapters 9 and 11.

³¹⁸ *The Oregonian*, June 18, 1982

³¹⁹ See Chapter 2.

they were finished, they sat silently with closed eyes, listening, in turn, to home grown music, selections from Rajneesh's earlier discourses, and the air. A single cough was enough to ruffle, but not ruin, the mood.

Call it "*Satsang* at the OK Corral", or "*Aum* on the Range", it must have looked positively pagan to most of the Oregonians. To skeptics, it never would stop being psychological gimmicks and brainwashing. No amount of example or evidence to the contrary would convince them otherwise. But if it wasn't real, it should have earned 10 Academy Awards for special effects and Best Ever Choreographed Bliss. The photographers and television cameramen loved it. Especially when sannyasins leaped out of no motion, laughed, cried, danced to abandon and hugged standing or sprawled out on the cement floor in shameless - and innocent - intimacy. Some of them must have asked themselves why they were still holding their cameras.

Rajneesh went out on his daily drive to Madras and passed at about 2 miles an hour the 10,000 people who saw in him the light of their lives. To hear them talk about it, his face gave an utterly new meaning to the word "softness". His smile was a revolution and revelation in joy. Years later, a Dutch cameraman described his experiences at Rajneeshpuram while making a film, *De Nieuwe Mens*.³²⁰ His producer, Frank Wiering, was almost paranoid about being "contaminated" by the Rajneeshees. During one of the drivebys, the cameraman said, "Listen to me! What are you afraid of? Look around. All those people are happy. Are you afraid of being happy?"³²¹

One day a car full of women from Central Point, Oregon, shouted curses at Rajneesh in the name of Jesus Christ, and tried to cut off his Rolls Royce. One of them, Trisha Ryckman, was an ordained minister of the Light of Life Ministry. She initiated a suit against the sannyasins and said her opposition to Rajneesh was part of a "war between God and Satan".³²² On the Fourth of July, just to pinch and remind themselves that they were still in America, the long term Antelope residents and their guests had a counter festival: a barbecue where firecrackers were lit and speeches made. The next night there was a full lunar eclipse and an eerie stillness slid over the land.

On Tuesday, July 6 - the newly proclaimed Master's Day³²³ - a small plane flew over the daily drive and showered the occasion with \$50,000 worth of rose petals purchased in Portland, the city of roses. That night, just before Rajneesh's last sitting with the disciples, the weather went wild. There was lightning, thunder and a sudden rain blowing through the open ended hall. For those who saw Rajneesh as the Antichrist and his sannyasins as the children of Baal and Moloch, it would have looked ominous. An unmistakable warning from a wrathful (but ultimately merciful) God about their waywardness and the threat of instant retribution. For the sannyasins, it was just another chance to dance, laugh and get wet.

³²⁰ The New Man

³²¹ *VPRO-Gids*, a Dutch radio and television magazine

³²² *Medford Mail Tribune*, July 29, 1982

³²³ A continuation of India's *Guru Purnima* Day, which is celebrated each year on the full moon in July.

Conspicuous by their absence were the old Poona guard, those sannyasins in exile who had fallen out of the movement because of either Sheela's nearly total consolidation of power or their own changes of attitude. Some were former group leaders who had picked up from Rajneesh the basic moves of being a master and decided it was time to solo. Some had Luciferian egos and would rather rule in hell than serve in heaven.

One of the more colorful characters was Ma Anand Deeksha, a godsend to any writer looking for comic relief. Aka Maria Grazi Mori, she reminded some of an old joke: what's the difference between an Italian grandmother and an elephant?³²⁴ Rich and monstrously assertive, *Donna* Deeksha had run the Poona ashram kitchens like her personal fiefdom. She dispensed exquisite food and western liquors to those she wished to reward, influence and own.

It was Deeksha who dispatched a crew of sannyasin handymen to prepare Kip's Castle in Montclair, New Jersey for Rajneesh's arrival. When he arrived and was getting into a small elevator, she maneuvered Sheela out of the way and accompanied him alone to his room. Rather quickly after that, Sheela outflanked Deeksha and forced her into a position of no consequence.

Sannyasins who had either chosen exile or had it thrust upon them were, as Sheela put it, "officially dead". It was a description not calculated to bridge the gap between them and the "living". Like rebel angels back in creation days, some of the exiles raged against the establishment. That is, Sheela and, by extension, the master who had "appointed" her, and disappointed them. Some would later become government witnesses and sources of scandal for allegedly hard hitting investigative reporters.³²⁵

Missing from the festival and presumed "dead" was Ma Yoga Laxmi, Sheela's predecessor. She had been asked by Rajneesh to continue searching for land in India. But ten days after his arrival in America, she showed up at Kip's Castle. Sannyasins who were there at the time thought he was surprised to see her. She stayed on in New Jersey and followed him to the ranch. Then her visa expired and Sheela shipped her out without mercy or money.

Ilegale in America, the sub petite woman - who came from a family of prestigious Gandhians and was accustomed to private audiences with Indian Prime Ministers, present and future - hopped from place to place, stopping three days here and there. In May, she

³²⁴ Two kilos and a black dress.

³²⁵ One of them was Deeksha, also known as Maria Grazia Mori, who *Oregonian* reporters Les Zaitz and Jim Long (see Chapter 2, note 161) never tired of referring to as being "in hiding" ("For Love and Money", *passim*). As if there was a clear and present threat of retaliation she had to be protected from. According to her, Rajneesh was "perfectly healthy" in Montclair, New Jersey. He "dealt with Mori daily as Sheela and others searched the United States for a potential commune site. He sent Mori on shopping trips to New York to buy hats, watches and material for clothes, and he talked at length about the Rolls-Royces he wanted to add to his collection. Mori grew increasingly disillusioned.

"This is the greatest shock of my life, because then I realized that he was a jerk," Mori said. "I realized that he was not enlightened." (Part 6, July 5, 1985) For more on the impacts of disgruntled "apostates", see Chapters 6.

got a call in Albany, New York from an American sannyasin friend in Ashland, Oregon. They discussed the upcoming festival, which Laxmi would not be attending.

Five minutes after hanging up, she was called by Tom Casey, a burly Portland INS investigator. She thought then, and continued to think in July 1989 when I interviewed her, that the INS had tapped the phone of the American sannyasin. But another explanation is not only possible, but also more probable. That is, the American sannyasin "friend" was knowingly collaborating with the INS.

Tom Casey had already visited Rancho Rajneesh on several occasions and had earned himself a reputation as a bull in a china shop. Failing to get the jump!/how high? results he was used to, he went over to Plan B: a hammer and a bigger hammer. A general onslaught of rudeness and more rudeness, threat and accelerated threat. What in the really wild west used to be called "fighting words". Casey boasted to sannyasins that as a federal officer he could go anywhere on their ranch he wanted. Not as easily intimidated as Mexican wetbacks, who spoke little or no English, and others he normally pushed around, the sannyasins and their lawyers told him to take a hike.

"We know who you are," Casey told Laxmi on the telephone. "If you want to attend the festival, a special visa can be granted to you." Talking to Laxmi must have been a strange experience for him. She speaks an English badly battered by Indian rearrangements and singsong, and, as already mentioned, further baffled by speaking of herself in the third person. "Great," she said. "It is his [Rajneesh's] grace. Maybe he wants Laxmi to be there."

At first blush, Casey must have wondered whether he was talking to Laxmi or waiting for her to come to the phone. She agreed to meet him. He told her to book a ticket, call him back with the flight details, and not tell anyone of their conversation. She arrived at the Portland airport at the end of May.

The three INS men on the ground had Laxmi's photograph and a description. But they would have recognized her without either. She "stuck out" in a crowd because she was so tiny. "Give us your passport," Casey said after they had spotted her. "Don't worry about your luggage. It will be taken care of. Come with us."

Casey and the other INS men took her out a side door. "Why you are taking from there?' So they said, 'Because we don't want sannyasins to know and we want to do your visa.' So Laxmi felt funny. But then, you know, maybe this is the way how this government functions. So there were two cars waiting."

They booked a suite at the Holiday Inn under a false, American, name. Laxmi was worried because she didn't have the money to pay for it. They ushered her away from the front desk and brought her upstairs. "Laxmi said, 'Look, friends. In India when somebody's doing something wrong against the policy of the government, they will never treat you the way you are treating.' They said, 'You know, we respect you. We have heard so much about you. We are your friends.'"

Laxmi wanted to get down to the business of the visa. But the INS men were still running Plan A past her. "Okay," Casey finally said. "If you want it that way, I'll tell you I have the power to give you your visa." She asked him what Rajneesh's status was. He said America was not ready for him. "I can see that you folks can go all the way to the Supreme Court to fight it," he said. "But still America will not allow him to be here. This is not my decision. It is coming from higher up. I'm just doing my job."

This quote is Tom Casey as told by Ma Yoga Laxmi. Thus it does not in any way constitute a smoking gun proof of a government conspiracy against Rajneesh and the sannyasins. In a court of law, it probably wouldn't even be admissible as evidence of such a conspiracy. However, considering all the other information we have presented so far and will be presenting later, I think we can at the very least pause to ponder Casey's astonishing "confession".

Like a few of the other officials we have already met - George Hunter and Dave Frohnmayer - Tom Casey had also read some of Rajneesh's books. I can't picture it, but that's what he told Laxmi. He couldn't agree with everything, but he respected certain parts. "I can tell you one thing," he said, "this Bhagwan is a very intelligent man, maybe even a genius."

You don't need to be a genius to see that this is a not all that bright civil servant trying to curry favor with the Indian. Laxmi asked him who exactly the orders were coming from. He said he couldn't tell her. "I respect you," he repeated. "You are innocent. But I have to do my work. If you cooperate, I will see that no harm comes to you. If you don't cooperate, I can't promise anything."

The bottom line was Casey wanted to know:

- ❖ How far Rajneesh was involved in the activities of Rancho Rajneesh?
- ❖ Where the money was coming from?
- ❖ What about the marriages?

Laxmi said she was not connected to the present power structure so knew nothing about what was happening there. She knew that the money in Poona came from contributions, entrance fees, groups, trainings, and legitimate sales of books, tapes, videos, cups, carpets and other handicraft. But the money for the American venture was outside her scope of knowledge. She didn't even have enough money to pay for the hotel room. As for marriage, she was not married so he would have to ask married people what they thought about it.

Mighty Casey was striking out. But even he must have been forced, against his will, to smile at her response. Because beneath it all he was Irish, and those folks are supposed to have a sense of humor. Then he pulled out what he must have thought was the clincher. He told her that if she cooperated – which for him at that time meant helping to nail Sheila - she would be given immunity, and perhaps come to power again. If not, they'd throw her in the clink.

Laxmi got her passport and ran. Like who knows how many hundreds of thousands or even millions, she remained a fugitive for years. Every effort she made to legitimize her status got her deeper into trouble. About a week after his meeting with her, on June 4, Casey visited the ranch with another INS investigator and two men from Customs.

He threatened to barge into Sheela's bedroom if he was not dealt with immediately. Sheela's husband, Swami Jayananda, came out to talk to him. After the intrusion Casey demanded a running record of every person who spent one night at the ranch. The record was to include both their legal and sannyasin names, nationality, date of birth and forwarding addresses.

During the summer of 1982 there were numerous rangeland fires. In August several old trees were apparently struck by lightning and burst into flames. Lightning torched off a few more in Crook County.³²⁶ The fires, which were old news in the region, were almost universally attributed to the presence of sagebrush.

"The foremost enemy of the human and animal use of these lands is brush. It drinks up the scarce water, gives rise to devastating fires, makes many areas impenetrable and robs the land of its potential production of useful grasses and other plants."³²⁷ Sagebrush steals water. In 1970 it was estimated that the intermountain region of the Western United States had 115 million acres of sagebrush. "Year after year, the acreage taken over by brush, like the national debt, keeps increasing."³²⁸

On Saturday, July 24, a 210 acre range fire broke out one mile north of Antelope and threatened the town. It was brought under control by about 200 firefighters, 50 of them sannyasins. "Bureau of Land Management spokesman Will Bartlett said the blaze was believed to have been human-caused."³²⁹ On August 27, another fire broke out on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation and burned 7,700 acres of brush and timber before it was finally subdued four days later. A total of "470 firefighters were used on the fire, including a well-trained six to eight-member pumper unit from the ranch operated by followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh."³³⁰

The fires symbolized two major problems in Central Oregon: strong emotions that were already at the flashpoint and the shortage of water. Unlike the emotions, the lack of water couldn't be meditated or mediated away. Neighboring ranchers and their new found environmentalist bedfellows, 1000 Friends of Oregon, claimed that too many people at Rajneeshpuram would overstress the already limited water supplies. The subterranean water table would be lowered and the John Day River would also be depleted.

³²⁶ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 31, 1982

³²⁷ R. Merton Love, "The Rangelands of the Western U.S.", *Scientific American*, February 1970, p. 91

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93. In 1970 the national debt was about \$370 million. When Reagan took office it was about \$2 trillion. When he left office it was about \$4 trillion. But all that is chump change in comparison with what it was in January 2012: \$15+ trillion and counting.

³²⁹ *The Oregonian*, July 26, 1982

³³⁰ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 31, 1982

In an attempt to head off flak about the highly charged water issue and solve the problem itself, the sannyasins started constructing an earthen dam on Currant Creek. At that time of the year it, like most creeks in Central Oregon, was more distant dream than fact. At best a standstill of water covered with slimy green algae. At worst a bone dry channel.

Using heavy equipment - and in the final phases, picks, shovels and air blowers - they excavated down to bedrock. When first looking at the immensity of the task some sannyasins, who had never before attempted anything so daunting, felt like they were being asked to build the pyramids from scratch. Rather than getting terrified by thinking about it, however, they soothed their nerves by doing it.

When the rocks in the 70 foot deep valley were clean enough to eat off, they started building the dam, layer by layer, from the bottom up. It would eventually consist of 243,000 cubic yards of compacted earth and be 450 feet across. It was designed to impound 330 million gallons of water in a 45 acre lake.³³¹

Ranchers whose families had lived in the area for generations scoffed at the scheme. If that big hole in the ground ever did fill up - and it was a mighty big if - it would take years. In the meantime, the sannyasin environmentalists and engineers wrote a 3 volume, 663 page comprehensive plan for Rajneeshpuram, which allowed for a total population of 3,719 by the year 2002. When it was finished in the fall, the plan was called "thorough" and "innovative" and received other rave reviews.

The Oregon Department of Economic Development wrote: "Your proposed investment in Rajneeshpuram during the next five years will certainly have a very beneficial economic impact on the State of Oregon."³³² The Housing Division of Oregon's Department of Commerce wrote: "The speed with which Oregon's newest city has prepared its comprehensive plan could serve as an example for other jurisdictions." The writer was referring to a compliance schedule passed in 1973. It stated that local comprehensive plans, which had to conform to statewide planning goals, were to be ready in 1976. When the first absolute deadline came and went, the deadline was extended to 1980. And then 1984.

That same fall, New York born, Washington, DC attorney Myles Ambrose flew into Rajneeshpuram in preparation for Rajneesh's interview with the INS. It was to determine whether or not he was entitled to "religious leader" status. In January 1989, when I met him, he reminded me of Bulldog Drummond, a fictional British detective. He had an impressive array of credentials and at one time or another had been Assistant Attorney General of the United States, Commissioner of US Customs, and Honorary Consul to Monaco - all .75 square miles of it. He had also studied philosophy and religion and was fond of locking horns with sannyasins on some finer points of Thomistic theology.

³³¹ *The Oregonian*, January 9, 1983

³³² As we have already seen (see note 313 above), the 1982 gubernatorial election was primarily about the economy.

"They furnished me with some of their tapes and some of the Bhagwan's writings, which I found humorous," Ambrose said. "But all over the lot! Having grown up in a society where there were set values - you know what I mean, coming from a religious culture where there were values and established procedures for doing things - to find somebody who is objectively recommending that there are no values. That whatever makes you feel good is good, you know, that kind of stuff It was a"

Having majored in philosophy myself, I wasn't averse to stepping into the ring for a few minutes of amiable sparring. "If you majored in philosophy," I said, "then you might recognize Rajneesh's affinity with situational ethics, which was popular in the sixties."

"Yeah. Yeah," he said. "It was popular and certainly all of us have been affected by it in one form or another. But he had a total vision of it."

"It seems to me something like Einstein's relativity theory applied to values."

"Yeah. Yeah," he said, probably more out of a desire to stick to the shallow water where he could feel the ground under his feet, and it wasn't moving.³³³ But he was perfectly at home in the shark infested waters of Washington and the federal bureaucracy's long and winding labyrinths of power. And he was in Oregon to steer Rajneesh down the narrow yet anything but straight paths of the INS and help him through their hoops on his way toward obtaining a green card and permanent resident status.

"I finally got to see Rajneesh," he said. "The major thing I remember vividly about the meeting was him saying, 'Mr. Ambrose, I am not going to lie under any circumstances for any reason whatsoever. If they don't want me in this country, I won't stay. I can go somewhere else.' And I said, 'I'm not going to ask you to lie'." Ambrose saw no insurmountable obstacles.

We could have demonstrated that he was a religious leader. I used to say when we were getting ready for this thing that the circumstances around the establishment of this as a religious enterprise are no less crazy than those around Christianity. After all, Jesus Christ was born in a stable on a cold winter's night, from a virgin! As a practicing Roman Catholic, although not the world's best, I happen to believe that story is true. But if I wrote it nowadays, I think a lot of people would say, "You're out of your fucking mind!"

And there was ample medical evidence to show that he did not come to the United States with an intent to stay under an illegal visa. That was the end of the game. His status would have been regularized and he would have gotten a green card in about a year.

³³³ From the contemporary perspective of postmodernism in spades, this conversation looks quaint, even stodgy. But back then it would look daring and almost cutting edge. At least among the intellectual non élite, such as Ambrose and myself.

But Sheela decided for some reason that they didn't want to do this. They wanted to do that. It was like everything else they did. They'd only do things halfway. Lots of things could have been done if they had sat down and organized themselves and figured out what their objectives were and where they were going.

Unlike so many federal, state and local officials and untold numbers of average Oregonians, Americans and other denizens of this third rock from the sun, Ambrose was not aware of what consummate plotters the sannyasins were. He also didn't know that the recognition of Rajneesh's religious status had already been more than half decided against him.

In the above cited November 23, 1981 telex from the American Consulate in Bombay, Betty Lou Oplinger wrote, "We have followed the activities of Rajneesh and his ashram for a number of years and have submitted many reports to the [State] Department on this group." Consulate studies involved keeping tabs on Rajneesh's published words, which was everything he had said in public, and press reports about him. As I can tell from my personal experience - after all, I have been trying to do approximately the same thing - that's not a part time job.

Since Rajneesh had continually critiqued marriage and religion, Oplinger wrote, any attempt he made to regularize his status through marriage or trying to pass himself off as a religious leader, would be a sham. She didn't know any religious leaders who had recognized him as a religious leader and saw no reason why the State Department or the INS should do so.

If she and others hadn't found any religious leaders to recognize him as one of their own it was because they were looking, as one Country and Western song had it, "in all the wrong places",³³⁴ and asking all the wrong questions of all the wrong people. They hadn't asked Lama Karmapa, the head of the Red Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, what he thought.³³⁵

He said, "Bhagwan is the greatest incarnation after Buddha in India. He is a living Buddha." They hadn't asked the Dalai Lama. He said, "Osho is an enlightened master who is working with all possibilities to help humanity overcome a difficult phase in developing consciousness."³³⁶ They hadn't asked who knows how many Zen Masters, or surveyed the length, breadth and depth of religious diversity in the world.³³⁷

³³⁴ Johnny Lee, *Looking for Love*, 1980. Those more in the know about these things call it "a crossover hit".

³³⁵ See Chapter 2.

³³⁶ Rajneesh's copious comments about him were far less complimentary. See, for example, *Books I Have Loved*, Chapter 12 (no date); *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 15, November 13, 1984; *No Mind: The Flowers of Eternity*, Chapter 8, January 2, 1989; *Yakusan: Straight to the Point of Enlightenment*, Chapter 4, January 20, 1989; and *Communism and Zen Fire, Zen Wind*, Chapter 6, February 4, 1989.

³³⁷ Here is a sampling of some of the reviews Rajneesh has reaped over the years. Some from professionals in the field of assessing what religion is. Others who, like Betty Lou Oplinger, George Hunter and everyone else, have a right to their opinion.

They hadn't even looked closer to home. For example, the April 3, 1980 letter from Visas Services Directorate officer Jake Dyels³³⁸ where Rajneesh is clearly referred to as "the spiritual leader of the Rajneesh Ashram in Pune [Poona]". Or the July 13, 1981 telegram from her own boss - J. Bruce Amstutz, Consul General at the US Consulate in Bombay - to his colleagues at the US Embassy in New Delhi and its other consulates in Calcutta and Madras. "As Department is aware, we issued B-2 visa to Indian religious leader Shri Rajneesh for travel to U.S. for medical treatment."

In other words, Betty Lou Oplinger & Co hadn't done their homework.

On Thursday, October 14, 1982, Rajneesh flew into Portland on the commune's Mitsubishi jet. He was greeted at the airport by guitar and flute toting sannyasins, who sang and danced around him. He smiled, *namasted* and flashed two huge V for victory signs at them and got into The Tank, the white stretch Rolls Royce that had been flown to India and back, and had logged more miles in the air than it ever would on the ground.

Jayananda, Sheela's husband, chauffeured him to the INS headquarters on the Skid Row side of town. Outside there was more of the same of what some would call commotion and others celebration. This time it was historicized by the media. Myles Ambrose said, "The guy was frail and what we were trying to do was reduce this circus to some manageable proportions. I mean, the press was all over the lot! Jesus Christ! It was unbelievable! And his people! They wanted to scream and throw flowers."

A path was cleared for him. Flanked by the large and dour Ambrose, he looked smaller and smilier. He entered the elevator, which had been scrubbed down to mint condition by teams of sannyasins who wanted to avert any chance of him suffering an allergic reaction

"Bhagwan is a mystical giant, a flowering of a unique intelligence and one of those rare humans expressing himself with joy."

Paul Reps, author of *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*

"He is the rarest and most talented religionist to appear this century."

Kazuyoshi Kino, professor of Buddhist Studies, Hosen Gakuen College, Tokyo, Japan

"*The Upanishads* talk about ultimate wisdom. Bhagwan tells you how to live it"

Robert Gussner, professor of religion, University of Vermont, USA

"I have never heard anyone so beautifully and playfully integrate and then dissolve the psychological problems which, for generations, have sapped our human energies."

Reverend Cain, chaplain, Churchill College, Cambridge

"These brilliant insights [of Rajneesh] will benefit all those who yearn for experiential knowledge of the field of pure potentiality inherent in every human being. This book belongs on the shelf of every library and in the home of all those who seek knowledge of the higher self."

Deepak Chopra, author of *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind: Quantum Healing and Unconditional Life*

"I've been charmed from reading his books."

Federico Fellini

"Osho is the most dangerous man since Jesus Christ.... He's obviously a very effective man, otherwise he wouldn't be such a threat. He's saying the same things that nobody else has the courage to say. A man who has all kinds of ideas. They're not only inflammatory - they also have a resonance of truth that scares the pants off the control freaks."

Tom Robbins, author of *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues, Still Life with Woodpecker and Jitterbug Perfume*

³³⁸ See Chapter 2.

inside. The corridors upstairs and the room where the interview took place were given the same treatment.

On the other side of the desk and conducting the interview was George Hunter, the Portland INS' "religion expert".³³⁹ "Are you aware that many sannyasins have recently married here in Oregon," he asked. Rajneesh responded, "I have heard". "Do you approve or disapprove of these marriages," Hunter continued. "Nothing," Rajneesh said. "I neither approve nor do I disapprove. That is their business. If they want to marry here, it is perfectly okay for them."³⁴⁰

In February 1989, Hunter expressed to my research assistant, Dorothy Amooore, an *idée fixe*: one of the stones on one of those piles in one of those deserts. Namely, that sannyasins did everything according to what Rajneesh told them. Nothing she suggested could budge him from that certainty. "If he was so adverse to marriages, as you have said," she asked, "is it possible that people got married anyway?" Hunter shook his head, "No". "Is it not possible," she re-queried. Again, Hunter, was adamant.

"Did you ask people during the interviews if they had been instructed to get married," she asked.

"Initially, yes."

"What did they answer?"

"Well, naturally, they weren't going to say yes. But we could have proved, like the public record shows, that there were massive instructions and coachings of people who didn't live together to make it look like they did."³⁴¹

Hunter told Amooore, "Prior to the interview I had read several of his books. I had determined that I could never find at any point where he would remotely suggest that any of his sannyasins would get married. Even marrying for love, for the accepted form of marriage, was not something he sanctioned or approved of. And, on the other hand, by this time, everybody on the ranch had gotten married. You could find literally hundreds of instances where US citizens had married aliens, but not one case where US citizens married US citizens.... Whenever anyone asked him if they should get married or have a child, the answer was always, 'No'."

At least two points – a minor and a major one - invite comment here, and for those with even half an ear clamor to be heard. First, the minor, Hunter was assuming that his perspective on the situation was the whole story. But if and when US sannyasins had married other US sannyasins, or, say, Germans married Germans, their cases would not have crossed his desk. He wouldn't have known anything about them. The same would have been true of those sannyasins - foreign or domestic - who didn't get married.

³³⁹ See Chapter 3.

³⁴⁰ *The Rajneesh Times*, August 26, 1983

³⁴¹ Like a man in water way over his head, here is Hunter reaching again for what the government allegedly could prove in a court of law, but never actually did. As I said in Chapter 3, this has no argumentative value. Turner tried the same tactic with me (see Chapter 10).

Two, the major, Hunter had been tasked with determining whether or not Rajneesh was a religious leader, not a marriage counselor. In other words, Hunter's obsession with marriage meant he was on the wrong track and cramming for the wrong exam. When Amore gently urged him to discuss what was in those o so many Rajneesh books he had bragged about reading, he said, "I don't think I want to get into the philosophical aspects".

That's like a student of relativity theory saying he didn't feel like discussing light, physics, mathematics, and the nature of space and time. Or someone showing up for his driver's test saying he couldn't be bothered to get behind the wheel. If Hunter wasn't interested in the "philosophical aspects", even the cerebrally challenged might wonder why he had studied all those books? And if he was not examining Rajneesh on those "philosophical aspects", what was the point of this "religious teacher" status interview?

The Hunter-Rajneesh interview was first made public by *The Bend Bulletin* in a six part series printed in August 1983. In apparent self defense, *The Rajneesh Times* followed suit one week later. As is often the case, what the latter paper left out was more significant than what it put in.

"Were you aware that Sheela made inquiries to the consulate in Bombay in so far as your eligibility for immigration to the United States," Hunter asked.

"No," he said. "The small things I don't get involved in."³⁴² According to Rajneesh, the possibility of emigrating to America was a "small thing".

"Mr. Rajneesh," Hunter asked, "when did you make your decision to come to the United States?"

"I never made that decision."

Rajneesh told Hunter he was unaware of a great number of things Sheela had done in his name. He was unaware of her visits to the American Consulate in Bombay. He was unaware of her telling consul visa officer, Joyce Smith, that he might be dying of cancer. He said he had never decided to come to America or Oregon. Sheela "wanted me here, so I am here".

"Did you ever discuss immigrating to the United States with anyone prior to coming to the United States?"

"Never. In fact, even today, if my health is better, I would not stay here for a single moment, because it is not my milieu and atmosphere to which I am accustomed."³⁴³

After the October 1982 interview Sheela got down on her knees on the pavement outside the Portland INS building and touched Rajneesh's feet. It looked like an Indian version of *King Lear*, one of the allegedly most faithful of daughters proclaiming and proving her die for you devotion. Apparently embarrassed, Rajneesh beckoned her to rise.

³⁴² *The Bend Bulletin*, August 21, 1983. We recall that Point 26 of what the government allegedly could prove noted that at the time Rajneesh applied for a temporary visa to come to America "he had intentions to come permanently to the United States but concealed this from the United States Consulate officials" (see Chapter 3). Here Hunter himself is admitting that that wasn't the case and he knew it.

³⁴³ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 22, 1983

Considering what he had heard and been questioned about inside, one is forced to wonder what he was thinking when he looked at her, and how she, as a disciple, responded.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, work on the New City for the New Man continued apace. By the time Rajneesh's 51st birthday rolled around on December 11, the idea of the earthen dam, which in August had made many shake in their boots, was a been there, done that. The lake, which was supposed to take years to fill up – if ever - was filled to more than capacity in less than six weeks. This could be attributed to one or two things: (a) God's will (or Satan's); or (b) abnormally abundant rains.

In January 1983, 1000 Friends filed 38 pages of objections to Rajneeshpuram's comprehensive plan and continued to assert that its very existence would threaten the water supply of the entire area. But by April 1, an Oregon Water Review Board study determined that Rajneeshpuram "could meet the long range water needs of 16,000 [people] with existing groundwater and surface water in the area". The study also showed that the aquifers sannyasins were drawing water from were too geologically isolated to affect anyone else. There "could be some effect on the John Day River, but very minor".

"We heard testimony from hydrologists, pro and con, from the University of Oregon and Oregon State, and from wherever anybody could drag one out to testify about what was going to be the effect on the water table," Bernie Smith told me. I asked if the sannyasins had had a positive effect on the water table and the local ecology.

"I think they did," he said. "Over the years they put in a significant number of check dams. They plugged up draws which, while it doesn't keep the water from roaring through and washing things away, it does slow erosion and water runoff. They built one dam and impounded a lot of water, which probably raised the water table in the area. From a standpoint of soil erosion, from a standpoint of supporting more life, the ranch is certainly better now than it had been."

By the end of 1982 there were 700 sannyasins living at the city-commune and another 70 living in Antelope. In less than 18 months – starting from their arrival on the scene in the summer of 1981 - they had invested \$35 million in their project and had the fourth largest public transportation system in Oregon. They were a week away from ignition on a \$1 million, 10 megawatt electrical substation, the largest of its kind in Wasco County. Four days before Christmas the INS issued two orders. One denied Rajneesh permanent resident status "as a matter of discretion", claiming intent all along to seek permanent resident status despite the disclaimer of medical reasons and everything Rajneesh had told Hunter in October. The second refused to classify Rajneesh as a religious teacher.

"It could be argued", the order noted, "that the beneficiary does not teach religion, rather the antipathy of religion, and thusly not the kind of religion intended by the regulation. However, there is no need to address this issue." Even for those who never got into, let alone through Philosophy 101, from the perspective of both religion and the law this is obviously what is known in the trade as *petitio principii* - begging the question on all 52 cylinders.

It boils down to more word magic and is part and parcel of the business as usual rhetoric as reality school of non thinking. It is as it is, because we say that's how it is. Do you have a problem with that? The INS – that is, George Hunter - put its foot in even further by noting that a religious leader, by definition, has to preach, and Rajneesh's "self-imposed period of silence" was one more nail in the coffin of him not being a religious leader.

According to Hunter and the INS, Rajneesh - "the guru" and "eastern master", with hundreds of books to his name and hundreds of thousands of disciples - had flunked his religious leader exam. Again, it was a matter of governmental officials not doing their homework. Those interested in some of the counter conclusions on the subject of silence and religion can examine the quotes and references in the footnotes.³⁴⁴

Back on the ground in the "real world", the *Democrat Herald* of Albany, Oregon criticized the INS' position. "The INS made itself look silly by insisting that he couldn't be a religious leader because he had vowed not to speak in public", it editorialized. True, that was 3½ years later, on June 6, 1985. "That might have been a case of discrimination, but the INS gave in on that point."

Might had nothing to do with it. It was a case of discrimination, and in the next two chapters we will examine the intrigue and less than live and let live reasons behind the change of heart.

If words were the stuff religions were made of, then Mardo Jimenez was a saint. The conservative Baptist Honduran pastor, who had moved to Madras in 1978 to minister to Hispanic migrant workers, had received American citizenship earlier that year. Shouting, "INS SAVE MADRAS!", "BHAGWAN OUT OF MADRAS!", "REPENT YOUR SINS!", "AMERICA WILL BE FREE!", "JESUS IS LORD!" and "I LOVE YOU!", Jimenez gathered an increasingly surly and hostile crowd of Christians and truckers to

³⁴⁴ "Throughout the course of Egyptian wisdom-literature, but particularly during the New Kingdom, the ideal of the *gr* ... '(truly) silent man,' is a prominent feature." (Ronald Williams, "The Sages of Ancient Egypt in the Light of Recent Scholarship", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1981, p. 13)

"You know no one as philosopher unless he talks, for your mind is your tongue; on your lips are your wits.... The best of you are those who keep silent; they do not confute themselves." (William Willis and Klaus Maresch, "The Encounter of Alexander with the Brahmans: New Fragments of the Cynic Diatribe P. Genev. Inv. 271", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 1988, p. 82.)

"As Pythagorean Platonists and Dionysian mystics taught, the only proper way of meeting the ineffable is by silence and by closing the eyes." (Edgar Wind, "Michelangelo's Prophets and Sibyls", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 1965, p. 71)

"There are, however, some important instances when Hasidic masters, following kabbalistic statements, conceived the state of silence as superior to that of speech." (Moshe Idel, "Reification of Language in Jewish Mysticism", in *Mysticism and Language*, p. 75)

"Is talking essential to religion? [Ludwig Wittgenstein asked] I can well imagine a religion in which there are no doctrinal propositions, in which there is thus no talking. Obviously [,] the essence of religion cannot have anything to do with the fact that there is talking, or rather: when people talk, then this itself is part of a religious act and not a theory. Thus it also does not matter at all if the words used are true or false or nonsense.

"In religion talking is not *metaphorical* either, for otherwise it would have to be possible to say the same things in prose." (*Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, p. 305)

confront Rajneesh when he turned his Rolls Royce around at the unused weigh station on US 97.

Frances Fitzgerald wrote, "Jimenez stood on top of a car holding a Bible in one hand and in the other an American flag so big it threatened to drag him away in high winds. 'I love you!' he called, wind tears streaming down his cheeks, and 'Believe in Jesus!'"³⁴⁵ Jimenez told Fitzgerald many things about Rajneesh that she, wisely, chose to paraphrase. Otherwise, it would have sounded too much like people don't really talk like that parody or hebephrenia. He believed Rajneesh was: (a) possessed by the devil; (b) immoral because he was organizing orgies; and (c) trying to destroy the institution of marriage.

On George Washington's birthday, Tuesday, February 22, 1983, the just off the banana boat Jimenez was wrapping himself in the flag from the back of a pickup in Albany, Oregon, protesting too much the presence of a sannyasin speaker and calling for the immediate deportation of Rajneesh. "They want to take over our cities and institutions," Jimenez screamed. "Are you going to let them take over our world?"³⁴⁶ Notice that "our" as a possessive adjective describing such nouns as cities, institutions and world.

Before that bit of sermonizing the size and velocity of his Madras protest escalated through the end of December and the beginning of January. In one camp were the Christians and about 100 truckers. Some of those truckers wore T-shirts with a picture of Rajneesh driving in a Rolls Royce as seen through the scope of a high powered rifle.³⁴⁷ They were a hit throughout the state. Some of the truckers were eventually arrested for threatening to convert the "friendly to indifferent" cartoon into a been there, done that.

Bob Oliver, former legal aide to Governor Atiyeh, told me "there were several occasions when there was grave danger of an incident", and this was one of them. "For example, when the Bhagwan used to take his drives into town, and the preacher was out there. Some overly enthusiastic follower [of Jimenez] could've taken a shot at the Bhagwan." Or "thrown a rock at the car. Any number of things could have happened."

But the "para-military" sannyasins fought back. Armed to the teeth with guitars, drums, tambourines and song, hundreds of them were bussed out from Rancho Rajneesh-Rajneeshpuram to counter the protests with celebration.

Meanwhile, back in the Attorney General's office in Salem, Dave Frohnmayer was getting the blow by blow. "The confrontation with the fundamentalist minister literally happened across the street from the Ford dealership in Madras which is managed by the father of one of my executive assistants, Marla Rae. Looking out his window, he called his daughter and described the convoys from both sides which got larger every day, the

³⁴⁵ Fitzgerald, *Cities On A Hill*, pp. 248 and 259. A Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award winner and contributor to *The New Yorker*, *New York Review of Books*, *The New York Times Magazine* and *Rolling Stone*, she has been vice-president of PEN, the international association of writers, and on the editorial board of *The Nation*. Contrary to what I wrote in the first edition of this book, she is not the granddaughter of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

³⁴⁶ *Albany Democrat Herald*, February 23, 1983

³⁴⁷ For more T-shirts with similar themes, see Chapter 6.

arms getting more evident and a near civil war which was getting ready to break out. We got that information because we have a Central Oregon ranch girl right here in our office who had family ties in a community hundreds of miles away. That's the kind of state we have."

What Frohnmayer forgot to clarify for the two University of Oregon professors - and they, knowing what they could get away with, never got past his self serving interpretation of events³⁴⁸ - was the sticks in your throat fact that "the arms" that were "getting more evident" were only in the hands of the Oregonians, not the sannyasins. That is, if anyone got trigger happy at the time, it would be the sannyasins on the receiving end, not the Oregonians. But he was right about one thing. "That's the kind of state we have."³⁴⁹

In January 1983, Constance Cumby from Apocalyptic Alert, a Detroit based anti cult group, went around to Bend. She told 300 anxious listeners to beware of the New Age. "Cumby quoted the Bible and projected excerpts of several books onto a screen as she wove a thread connecting Satanic forces, occult writers, Hitler, meditation, the United Nations, drugs, rainbows and the devil."³⁵⁰

Many members of the audience brought Bibles with them. "Others took notes or held small tape recorders." Cumby said that over 10,000 organizations, including Amnesty International and the Chase Manhattan Bank, were involved in the conspiracy to put Satan's plan of destroying the world into action.... The world," she said, "looks remarkably like God said it would look in the last days."

Coincidentally enough, Rajneesh had had a similar vision about the end of the world six months before. Over the next 20 years, he said through Sheela, a series of natural and man made disasters would destroy California and major cities like New York, Tokyo, London and Bombay. There would also be a nuclear war.

The good news for sannyasins - or maybe not so good - was that some of them would survive the holocaust in a city that they were going to build in underground caves. Before civilization collapsed, Rajneesh said, again through Sheela, the sannyasins were going to gather the world's knowledge on microfiche – this was pretty much before the computer

³⁴⁸ See my comments about accepted codes of deference to officials in Chapter 3. I come back to this topic of the Oregon professors not saying boo to power in Chapter 12 (note 1294).

³⁴⁹ Frances Fitzgerald was closer to the mark when she wrote: "The face-off between the Rajneeshee and the Jimenez group had not ended in violence, but in the opinion of Michael C. Sullivan, the district attorney of Jefferson County, it had come very close to doing so. For four days the police had watched the truckers gather and the pickup-truck cowboys stalk about, spoiling for a fight. Finally the Rajneeshee leaders had come to Sullivan for help, and he had negotiated a settlement: the Conservative Baptists would stop demonstrating if Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh would stop driving to the weigh station every afternoon. Sullivan, a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, and a man of unusual intellectual detachment, could find no humor in the situation even now. The Jimenez group, he said, did not speak for most people in Madras. A Methodist minister and a Catholic monsignor had spoken out against violence and religious intolerance while the trouble was going on. All the same, the demonstration testified to the state of emotion in the two counties [Jefferson and Wasco]." (*Cities On A Hill*, p. 258)

³⁵⁰ *The Bend Bulletin*, January 21, 1983

revolution - and find experts in all languages so that world science and culture could be preserved. The Noah's Ark thing. Someone would go to Egypt and Mesopotamia to learn the esoteric details of building underground cities. But who and from whom?

Had she known of Rajneesh's vision, Constance Cumby would have scoffed at him and it. For as far as she was concerned, he, all cults, and more organizations than the FBI was keeping track of were the problem, not the solution. They were on the side of the angels all right: the rebel angels who desired nothing less than total fornication with the sons and daughters of men and the complete takeover of the cosmos. In short, their goals were to put Satan's Plans Alpha to Omega into action. Clearly, she and people like her were not into prophecy sharing with anyone.

CHAPTER 5: JUSTICE WITH A VENGEANCE

Bertram Cates: People look at me as if I was a murderer. Worse than a murderer! That fella from Minnesota who killed his wife - remember, Rache? - half the town turned out to watch 'em put him on the train.

They just stared at him as if he was a curiosity - not like they hated him! Not like he'd done anything really wrong! Just different!

Henry Drummond: There's nothing very original about murdering your wife.

Cates: People I thought were my friends look at me now as if I had horns growing out of my head.

Drummond: You murder a wife, it isn't nearly as bad as murdering an old wives' tale. Kill one of their fairy tale notions, and they call down the wrath of God, Brady and the state legislature.³⁵¹

American history was once cheerfully written with the assumption that Americans were a religious people. They were because God wanted them to be. Even Perry Miller, an atheist impressed not with God but with the ideas of godly men, managed to leave that impression. As a breed, political historians have been more nervous than intellectual historians in assigning a positive role to religion. Religion either leads people to overmoralize issues that demand rational analysis and compromise or prompts them to vote blindly in affirmation of group identity rather than in accord with economic self-interest. Many narratives of American history firmly consign religion to the private sphere, something occasionally interesting when supportive of a progressive social philosophy but otherwise best left out of the account. In my opinion no centrally important cultural component of American life is more regularly neglected in synthetic accounts of American history than religion.³⁵²

The thousandth consecutive broadcast of Dr. Robert Schuler's *Hour of Power* at 7 p.m., Sunday, April 2, 1989, was listed in *The New York Times* as an epic evangelical event. Dr. Schuler, from the Blue Ridge Mountains, had as his guests America's last five presidents: Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and George Bush '41. Each and every one of them, particularly Nixon, Carter and Reagan, had deep, sustaining roots in the traditions of American Christianity.

When Nixon's administration was coming apart at the seams he sought solace and guidance on his knees with his Jewish Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.³⁵³ While running for president, Carter, who called himself a "born again Christian", confessed in a

³⁵¹ Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, *Inherit the Wind*

³⁵² Robert Moore, *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture*, p. 9. Much of the original argument in this chapter has been overtaken by events. That is, you don't have to argue any more for the intimate connections between religion, especially right wing Christianity, and the US government. Because everyone already knows it. In the current climate it is not a scandal - something to be whispered about in smoke filled rooms and vehemently denied in public. Rather, it is the down payment for entry into the political arena, the opening bid in "serious debate". But that was not at all the case at the time these events took place.

³⁵³ Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, *The Final Days*

Playboy interview³⁵⁴ that he sometimes looked at women with "lust in his heart". For most of the slick – not necessarily sick – world, that lust was not much of a revelation. But the place where the urge got stuck was.

Tales of Reagan's enthrallment with fundamentalist Christians and theirs with him – that is, until he didn't do absolutely everything they asked of him – are so well documented that any further chronicling of that special relationship may seem superfluous. Especially when considering the sea changes that have happened since. But for a few minutes let's pretend that up until now no one has said anything about it. Why? Because it is nearly impossible to understand the breadth and depth of the real time hysteria and "moral panic" around Rajneesh without it.

In *Prophecy and Politics: Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War*, Grace Halsell chronicled a wealth of Reagan's statements and actions indicating his fascination with the literal last act of the world. "During the presidential race of 1980, Reagan told Jim Bakker of the Praise the Lord³⁵⁵ network - who, like so many of the President's buddies, went to jail - 'We may be the generation that sees Armageddon.'" Armageddon wasn't just a metaphor for him. It was on the map in Israel - or would be up until the last nanosecond – in the short stretch between Tel Aviv and Haifa.³⁵⁶

Nevertheless, at the very beginning of his administration, when he seemed to go soft on abortion, Reagan was threatened by the new religious right. Opposed to gay rights and pornography and in favor of prayer in the schools, it clamored as early as February 1981 for Reagan to prove himself a "true conservative". One spokesman said ominously, "no politician in America who wants to get elected will be able to ignore the Christian right".³⁵⁷

During the Reagan Administration a new Inquisition in the form of censorship was on the upswing. Between 1984 and 1985 intellectual brown- and black-outs in school curricula increased by 35%. Among the books on the *New American Index* were Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Other major offenders included the usual suspects: Charles Darwin and anything having to do with evolution. In one survey 40% of 2,100 college students believed that human life actually began in the Garden of Eden. Another study of 18 US high schools found

³⁵⁴ November 1976

³⁵⁵ PTL

³⁵⁶ What might not be so well known are the affinities between Jews and the Moral Majority. "A letter from three prominent American Jewish leaders, published last December [1980] in the *Jewish Week-American Examiner*, declared that 'there is [a] far greater potential commonality of interests among Jews and the Moral Majority than there is among Jews and the National Council of Churches.' Jacques Torczyner, an executive of the American sector of the World Zionist Organization and former president of the Zionist Organization of America, has said, 'We have, first of all, to come to a [sic, "the"] conclusion that the right-wing reactionaries are the natural allies of Zionism and not the liberals.'" (Stephen Zunes, "Strange Bedfellows", *The Progressive*, November 1981, p. 29)

³⁵⁷ *National Catholic Reporter*, February 6, 1981

that half of the biology textbooks failed to provide adequate coverage of evolution and 17% of them didn't even mention it.

At the inauguration of George Bush, a few months before Dr. Schuler's historical *Hour of Power*, Reverend Billy Graham, the world famous Charlotte, North Carolina, evangelist who poked his nose with impunity into the business of God and the US government, talked extensively on the theme that Christianity and morality were and are the very foundations of America.³⁵⁸ Bush spoke about "fresh breezes blowing", "The New World Order", and a "kinder, gentler America".

Much fuss was made by television commentators about both president and vice-president, Dan Quayle, taking the oath of office with their left hands placed firmly on bibles that had been in their respective families for generations. But not one of them referred to the inconvenient First Amendment to the US Constitution, which theoretically mandated a strict separation between church and state.

Three months later, at the thousandth broadcast of the *Hour of Power*, "the spiritual leaders of the world" were weighing in. These included Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, Mother Teresa, Mrs. Martin Luther King and the always mentioned Dr. Graham. One of his contributions to the Fort Knox of human wisdom was: "God is the greatest product in the world. Why shouldn't I sell Him like soap?" The A list was rounded off with Bob Hope, Sammy Davis, Jr. and Marisa Wayne, youngest daughter of "The Duke", the late film star, John Wayne³⁵⁹.

God knew how many of America's then 20 million white fundamentalist evangelical voters were watching the show. However, a survey conducted in February 1985 by the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion noted that 61 million Americans watched at least 6 minutes of the top 10 evangelical programs.³⁶⁰ Despite pious hopes to the contrary, "Christianity" was, is, and possibly always will be the state religion in America. What that has meant and will mean about the health of the country - spiritually, intellectually, economically, culturally and politically – is something that can be debated until, so to speak, hell freezes over.

But according to many biblical scholars, these particular outpourings of American Christianity had nothing to do with Jesus Christ. It was an ideological gruel serving the political needs of the moment.³⁶¹ A month before, at the beginning of March 1989,

³⁵⁸ Immediately after the Jonestown tragedy, it will be recalled, Graham reminded everyone who would listen that it was very much a "cult" thing and had nothing to do with Christianity (see Chapter 2). More than a year later he wanted to use the 600 acres of Jonestown to settle Laotian refugees (*The New York Times*, March 30, 1980).

³⁵⁹ From his third wife, Pilar, a Peruvian woman 22 years younger than him.

³⁶⁰ James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous, The Rise of the Survivalist Right*. "In his recently published study of support groups, 'Sharing the Journey,' Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow estimates that there are 900,000 Bible-study circles in the United States; they involve one adult in 10 - and this does not include Sunday schools." (Kenneth Woodward, "The Death of Jesus", *Newsweek*, April 4, 1994, p. 43)

³⁶¹ See Chapter 8, note 684.

Robert Funk and 50 other biblical scholars had met in Sonoma, California to vote on varying interpretations of Jesus and the New Testament.

They said Jesus probably did not compose the Lord's prayer and wondered whether Christians could properly anticipate the cataclysmic end of the world through God's direct intervention.³⁶² Funk³⁶³ said, "I think it is insufferable and unforgivable to allow TV evangelists like Jimmy Swaggert, Jim and Tammy Bakker and Jerry Falwell to dominate the way Americans understand religion. These people are biblical illiterates and quacks pushing their own brand of know-nothing theology."³⁶⁴ Funk and other biblical scholars who would challenge the *Hour of Power's* claims to Christianity and spiritual leadership weren't invited.

If the name Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh had occurred to Dr. Robert Schuler or any of his audience in April 1989, it would have evoked the repugnant image of an utterly disgraced and discredited man, in jail or possibly dead. It would definitely not have been associated with "spiritual leaders of the world". Yet on the same day they were playing and displaying the golden oldies in the US, Rajneesh was very much alive and kicking and still in the "spiritual leader" business back in the always in flux Poona ashram.

It was his first public appearance in six weeks. He was driven in the world's longest Rolls Royce Silver Spur over 400 yards of marble surfaced roads from his home, Lao Tzu House, to Gautama the Buddha Auditorium. The limousine was a custom built job with climate control, color television, a double stereo system, bar and refrigerator. For the life of me, I can't figure out when he found time to use all, or any, of the extras.

The dome roofed auditorium was protected by the world's largest mosquito net. Three thousand disciples and visitors sat inside on white marble. Rajneesh's orthopedic chair was placed on a green marble podium between two waist high air conditioning systems. Looking from the side, one could see his words coming out in clouds of condensed breath. Rajneesh, who had recently gone through a series of name changes and was then known as "Osho",³⁶⁵ discoursed for 2½ hours on Zen. At the time no one knew he had less than a year to live.

It has been a long awaiting. But that is the very essence of Zen. To wait, to wait for nothing. There is no God, there is no ultimate meaning. Life is all

³⁶² *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 4, 1989

³⁶³ "The goal ... is to 'raise the public literary level,' disseminating knowledge he [Funk] says has been hoarded by scholars for years.... If a 'radical reformation' of Christianity should happen to be ignited in the process, he adds, so much the better." (Jeffrey Sheler, "Bob Funk's Radical Reformation Roadshow", *U.S. News and World Report*, August 4, 1997, p. 55) "John Dominic Crossan, a bible scholar at DePaul University, notes that there was an 'implicit deal - you scholars can go off to the universities and write in the journals and say anything you want.'" (*Time*, January 10, 1994, p. 38)

³⁶⁴ "Although I cannot prove that average religious Americans are less theologically sophisticated than their forbearers, I can nonetheless assert without any hesitation that they are no more so. They can buy and read vast numbers of religious books, yet survey after survey suggests that they are stupefyingly dumb about what they are supposed to believe. When religion began to sell itself in earnest, it contributed to a process of democratization that did not yield impressive enlightenment." (Robert Moore, *Op. cit.*, p. 10)

³⁶⁵ See Preface.

there is. Those who have found have found nothing, have found that there is nothing to find.

Zen is the ultimate manifesto of non-finding, of rejoicing without any reason, of laughing and loving and dancing without any cause.

There are believers in the world, many types of them. There are non-believers in the world. They are not in any way different; it's just that their beliefs are negative. Somebody believes in God, and somebody believes in a no-God, and each is as fanatic as the other.³⁶⁶

Rajneesh said the great scientists and *avant-garde* intellectuals of the West were closing in on the void, the emptiness and meaninglessness at the roots of life.

Their instruments have led them to nothing. Their analysis, their experiments have revealed to them the nothing, but their minds are not ready to accept nothing. Nothing seems to be full of fear.

The Eastern mind has also reached nothing, but it reached nothing in a very different way. It reached nothing dancing - not through analysis, not through logic, but through meditation. It has reached to nothingness through music, through song, through dance, through meditation. It has been a joyous experience. The nothing in the East does not create fear. It creates freedom. It opens doors, it destroys all boundaries. But the Western mind simply freaks out.³⁶⁷

In January 1983 *Anno Domini*, which then President Ronald Reagan declared "The Year of the Bible", Rajneesh was publicly silent and, therefore, not a religious teacher or leader. According to the INS' George Hunter. That decision was protested in 34 cities and 18 countries from January through March. Eight thousand sannyasins and sympathizers marched in front of the US Embassy in Bonn, Germany. There were 3,000 for a comparable demonstration in Munich, 2,000 in Berlin, 4,000 in London, 5,000 in New Delhi, 7,000 in Bombay, and 2,500 in Milan.

There were other shows of strength and support in Japan - where there were an estimated 9,000 disciples - The Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden and Scotland. Only two of them were in the United States, both in Portland. In case anyone had either forgotten or hadn't known it to begin with, they proved that Rajneesh and the international neo-sannyas movement were not exclusively, or even predominantly, an American *phénomène*. They had, could and would get on very well outside the land of the free and the home of the saved.

But back at INS headquarters and in its offices throughout the country, there was much more on its plate and pie charts than Rajneesh and his sannyasins. As far as the really big

³⁶⁶ Rajneesh, *The Zen Manifesto: Freedom From Oneself*, Chapter 3, April 2, 1989

³⁶⁷ Same discourse

picture was concerned, they shouldn't even have shown up. "We had a lot of law enforcement problems throughout the country in the immigration field," Mike Inman told me.

Inman, a native born Oregonian, was chief council for the INS during the years of the Rajneesh *affaire*. "Haitians in Florida, Cubans in various detention centers. The Sanctuary movement was starting to happen.³⁶⁸ Then we had the legislation going on. And the Bhagwan was merely one of a multitude of problems. There were various parts of the INS that dealt with this as a bigger issue than I did."³⁶⁹

Apparently, if you are exposed to this matter, you become swept up in it, and it becomes within your head and heart or wherever it is, a big deal. You become emotionally involved with it. Every time somebody got closely involved with the Bhagwan and the whole guru system, all of a sudden the burner got turned up in them. The INS investigators in Portland were really caught up in this, heavily, emotionally involved. They were really wanting to escalate this, far above and beyond what I wanted. The fire in my belly was never ignited.

In addition to INS' law enforcement problems there were massive administrative and managerial deficiencies. "One reason cited for the surge of illegal immigration is the frustration of trying to deal honestly with the INS", noted one writer.³⁷⁰ More than a year later the problems were escalating. "Legal aliens become illegals because they cannot get documents processed", wrote another. "The Reagan administration is cutting the agency's budget and paring jobs from its payroll. One study found that the relationship between Washington and its field appears to border on warfare."³⁷¹

In the January 27, 1982, Senate confirmation hearings of Alan Nelson as INS Commissioner, Senator Alan Simpson, a Republican from Wyoming, observed that for years many of the agency's top management positions, including the commissioner's spot, had either been vacant or filled with acting managers. "There are many things here about the organizational structure which have surprised me in the hearing work, such as the district office that handles New York City is in Burlington, Vermont, and other curious and even more extraordinary organizational things," he said.

Nelson had worked in the Alameda County District Attorney's office in Oakland, California, along with Edwin Meese III, the future US Attorney General, and D. Lowell Jensen, the future assistant US Attorney General, the number two man at the Justice Department. The three of them were sometimes referred to as the "Alameda County Mafia".³⁷² As already mentioned, I asked Nelson if the Rajneesh case had attracted high

³⁶⁸ See later in this chapter.

³⁶⁹ See similar comments from him in Chapter 1.

³⁷⁰ James Mann, associate editor at *U.S. News and World Report*, April 21, 1980

³⁷¹ Orr Kelly, *U.S. News and World Report*, June 22, 1981

³⁷² Maggie Mahar, "Rogue Justice: What Really Sparked the Vendetta Against Inslaw", *Barron's*, April 4, 1988

level interest. He said it had.³⁷³ Greg Leo, a Portland, Oregon native and the INS' Director of Congressional and Public Affairs, said:

I know all the Oregonian politicians personally. Nobody at any time impeded us, and many times they would encourage us to move more quickly. But they were very careful about that, because the individual elected officials here knew that this was an extraordinarily sensitive area. And they did not want to have any public perception that this was in any way politically motivated. We received letters from Senator Mark Hatfield ... and from Congressman Bob Smith, the Congressman from that area.

There is much in Leo's statement that invites comment. But let's focus on a single sentence. "And they did not want to have any public perception that this was in any way politically motivated." As politicians the world over know, political motivation is one thing, but public perception of it is a horse of a different color.

Senator Hatfield's stance on Rajneesh depended on who was asking and what he wanted to hear. One citizen wrote to make sure Rajneesh got a fair shake with the INS, and he responded politically. "As you know the matter of visa requests, denials and appeals is one which is outside my jurisdiction as a U.S. Senator. Because it is essentially a judicial matter it is important for elected representatives to not interject their opinions in the due process of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. I have always been a strong supporter of American citizens' first amendment rights and will continue to insist that people of whatever religious belief have every opportunity to practice their faith regardless of government intrusions."³⁷⁴

One of the operative phrases in his missive was "American citizens' first amendment rights". What he omitted was the trifle that American citizens do not normally need any assistance with the INS. In the course of the majority of their lives they would have little opportunity to learn of its existence, let alone confront it face to face. He also forgot to mention that none of what he had said had any point of contact with the Rajneesh case. He was not an American citizen and never would become one. Not if Senator Mark Hatfield had anything to say about it.

To another citizen, who was opposed to Rajneesh, he wrote that the rejection of Rajneesh's request for preferential status "came as a relief but no surprise to me. It is a comfort to know that our system of due process is effective, even if laboriously slow, in rooting out cases of visa irregularities. You can be assured that as the Rajneesh Foundation pursues the appeals that are available to them, I will continue to do everything appropriate to make certain that the Bhagwan and the Rajneesh community are scrutinized to the fullest extent of the law."³⁷⁵

³⁷³ See Chapter 1.

³⁷⁴ *The Bend Bulletin*, January 26, 1983

³⁷⁵ *The Bend Bulletin*, January 26, 1983..

According to Leo, Congressman Smith – the ex-basketball player who was first for the Rajneeshees and then against them³⁷⁶ – "had an intense interest in this thing, and was very anxious to see that justice was done here. But he did not, at any time, interfere politically. There was an expression of interest in getting these guys brought to justice. 'Come on. Let's investigate these guys. Let's see what's really going on.'"

"Brought to justice" is an American euphemism that like the evil in the fake Edmund Burke quote always refers to someone else. In other words, one would never say, "I'm going to bring myself and my best pals to justice." While it can mean as little as "make them pay", it has been known to get out of hand and become a lynching, figuratively and literally.

On February 10, 1983, another Oregon congressman, one more Smith in a heap of them – Denny this time - called for Rajneesh's immediate deportation.³⁷⁷ On April 8, 1983, an INS memo noted: "Perhaps this is wishful thinking, but there is speculation that the pressure applied by the Service to the immigration situation of the organization may cause them to pick up stakes and leave the United States."³⁷⁸ It would be extremely interesting to know who penned that memo. Unfortunately, the source still remains unknown.

Mike Inman, who when I talked to him still couldn't figure out what all the fuss was about, said, "I probably made six to ten trips to Portland solely to deal with the Rajneesh issue. I spent a great deal of time dealing with the US Attorney in Portland, the FBI, the Oregon State Police and the State Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer,³⁷⁹ two or three congressmen, and both United States Senators. I had interminable meetings in Washington, DC."

Then US Attorney in Portland, Charles Turner, and former Assistant US Attorney, Robert Weaver, believed that both Inman and the INS national headquarters in Washington put undue pressure on their office to criminally prosecute the Rajneesh case. "I think they just wanted us to do their dirty work for them," Robert Weaver said.

"The case was a politically difficult one. I had conversations with Commissioner Nelson and when these guys at the INS would sit down and talk about their two or three big cases, Bhagwan was always on that list. It was always on the short list, along with Sanctuary and the illegal aliens from Mexico. And the reason that all those things were on somebody's short list was because they were getting inundated with enquiries from the White House, from Capitol Hill, from constituencies."

I know it was a matter of concern at the White House. And I don't think it took any other form other than, "Hey! What are you doing about this case?"

³⁷⁶ See Chapter 4.

³⁷⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, February 13, 1983

³⁷⁸ *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 4, 1984. See US Attorney Charles Turner's remarks at the beginning of Chapter 6.

³⁷⁹ See later in this chapter.

You know, they'd get a few calls and someone says, "I just thought I'd call you and ask you what the hell you're doing on this case?" And so, they wanted to be able to say, "We're doing something!" And we, the US Attorney's office, became the scapegoat in a way. Inman would tell us frequently that he knew Ed Meese personally, as a very, very thinly veiled attempt to tell us that he could get what he wanted.

As the good American citizens of Oregon bickered about the nature of Rajneesh and the Rajneeshees, where they came from, how many there were and would be, what they had done and would do, and what should be done about them, the state hardened into an immense echo chamber. The voices clashed, rumbled and ran over each other like music from a romper room orchestra.

Black bad faith continued to sabotage attempts at harmony in Antelope. The sannyasins, who outnumbered old time residents by about 70-30, voted in a sannyasin mayor and won 3 out of 6 seats on the Antelope City Council. But in January 1983, the older residents on the council refused to serve alongside the sannyasins, and the latter were forced to take total control. The political "subjugation" of Antelope was complete.

On April 29, 1983 the three Antelope City Council members who had been out of office since January met secretly to pass a "retroactive ordinance", which attempted to legitimize an earlier transfer of the town church to the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon.³⁸⁰ As we have seen,³⁸¹ the first transfer was illegal. So was the 1983 "retroactive ordinance" passed by out of office "officials". But one illegal act trying to legitimize another was sustained in 1984 by a Wasco County judge. His reasoning was that the original transfer of the church to the city of Antelope had "been invalid because they violated the separation of church and state".

By 1984, the hypothetical and hypocritical "separation of church and state" mantra, had taken on a sacred, "We hold these truths to be self evident" status. It had, some thought, the power of Joshua's horn, to knock down the walls of a city, even though there were no walls and, according to many, there never had been a legal city. But it came with a proviso. The magical mantra was only to be invoked – and would only be successful – if used by the Christian majority against a nobody likes them anyway minority.

In the spring of 1983, there was an upsurge of hostility against the sannyasins. *The Dalles Weekly Reminder* started printing a series of inflammatory articles by Bill Driver. A previously unknown writer, he finally learned what they should teach on the first day in any decent writing course. If you want to make your mark on the world, tell the people what they want to hear.

"More and more people are saying it's time to quit talking," said one disgruntled resident recently. A story is going around Antelope that sums up a growing sentiment in the area. A local reportedly approached Krishna Deva

³⁸⁰ Ted Shay, *Rajneeshpuram and the Abuse of Power*, p. 11.

³⁸¹ See Chapter 4.

(David Knapp) recently and asked, "Dave, you're a psychologist. Just how much more of this crap do you think I can take before I crack and start pulling the trigger?"

One Antelope area resident stated during a city council debate over the American Legion's proposed barbecue that any Rajneeshee "coming around that barbecue pit is gonna be shot."³⁸²

"The danger," Driver concluded ominously, "however, doesn't come from the people who are making the noise. It comes from the people who have already 'given up talking.'" Donna Quick Smith, who was now separated from her husband, Don, and had moved out of Antelope, wrote a letter to the *Beaverton Valley Times* and quoted the sagebrush advice she had received the year before from an anonymous correspondent in Bombay.

While this has already been quoted,³⁸³ it is worth repeating here. "The only way to defeat these criminals is by dirty tactics, the same methods they use themselves. Don't entertain any scruples. If necessary, slaughter them because, if not, they'll do the same to you when they achieve power."³⁸⁴

Shortly thereafter, in the middle of the night, a beautiful white horse was shot at close range with a .22 pistol. It belonged to Harry Hawkins, a former Jefferson County deputy sheriff who had become one of Rajneeshpuram's first two police officers.³⁸⁵ *The Rajneesh Times* published a letter from Sheela on the front page.

"A relatively small number of people who are themselves no better than thugs have been trying to scare us out of the state by threatening the lives of Rajneeshees, or those of their friends, or trying to destroy our property," she wrote. Included in the list were Donna Quick Smith, Bill Driver, and Mardo Jimenez, the flag waving Honduran pastor. For the record, I don't find Sheela attractive in any way - sexually or otherwise. But this time she was spot on and calling a spade a spade. The people she mentioned had elbowed their way to the front ranks of the anti-Rajneesh flame throwers.

"We are tired of this uncivilized, barbaric, unsophisticated and violent way of trying to intimidate a religious minority" Sheela continued. "Once and for all, we wish to make it clear that we are here in Oregon to stay at whatever the cost. If that means that some of our blood is spilled, or some of our property vandalized, then that is the price we are prepared to pay."

At the beginning of May, the sannyasins initiated a suit against Donna Quick Smith for \$140,000. "Comment is bound to be made about a group like ours," said Rajneeshpuram's

³⁸² *The Dalles Weekly Reminder*, April 14, 1983

³⁸³ See Chapter 4.

³⁸⁴ Quoting such a statement in a tinderbox situation obviously reflects back on the user. It is their own call to arms hiding behind the subterfuge of "I didn't say it, he/she did". I'd now like to push that one step further and wonder out loud if there ever had been a Bombay pen pal. In other words, maybe from the beginning the quote had been Donna Quick Smith herself talking. Or one of her associates.

³⁸⁵ *The Rajneesh Times*, April 29, 1983

mayor Krishna Deva. "That is not the point. America is a forum where people have freedom to say things about each other. But when talk turns to violence, then we are going to use legal means. Not a shootout at noon, like some people in Antelope wish we would. We are going to use courts of law, the Constitution of our country, to protect ourselves."³⁸⁶ When it came to talk like Donna Quick Smith's letter, Krishna Deva said, "there are no more cheeks to turn". Sannyasins would be on the look out for other rabble rousing rhetoric.³⁸⁷

There was an epidemic of stories about sannyasins secretly buying up property and businesses around the state as a prelude to a putsch. Which led to a harmless why did the sannyasin cross the street joke.³⁸⁸ But some small business linked by rumors with Rajneeshees saw nothing funny in the situation, and were reduced to placing signs in their windows.

NOTICE: This business is not in any way affiliated with the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. This is a private business with absolutely NO connection to them in any way.

"The rumors can be a serious matter if people who are wary of Rajneeshees stay away from a business because of the rumors."³⁸⁹

At the beginning of May six Indian professors making a Rotary International sponsored tour of Oregon visited Rajneeshpuram and found instant celebrity by getting themselves quoted in newspapers as the latest batch of experts on the subject. "One day he may be demanding a separate state. And he will be a big threat to the United States of America," Professor Mohan Goel prophesized. The group's leader, K. K. Bhatia, said Rajneesh could eventually take over Oregon. "Not the state, but the people and their minds." C. S. Jabbal said, "I would be happy if the Immigration Department kicked him out."³⁹⁰

On May 23, between 750 and 1000 people turned up at The Dalles High School Auditorium to form the umpteenth anti-Rajneesh group, this one called "Concerned Oregonians" (CO). A similar gathering of 600 people had occurred on the same spot a month before. Garry McMurry, the Portland attorney and "cult expert" who represented the still functioning anti-Rajneesh group, Citizens for Constitutional Cities (CCC),³⁹¹ was there.

Laura Bentley, who years later, as the chairman of the "Concerned Citizens of Wasco County" headed a fund raising drive for the Antelope "Freedom Memorial", opened the

³⁸⁶ See Chapter 9 and note 852.

³⁸⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, May 3, 1983

³⁸⁸ To buy the other side. See Chapter 11 for a "factual" account along these lines.

³⁸⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, May 4, 1983

³⁹⁰ *The Oregonian*, May 12, 1983. According to Wikipedia, "The stated purpose of the organization [Rotary International] is to bring together business and professional leaders to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world."

³⁹¹ See Chapter 4.

meeting saying: "We are not a bunch of rabble rousers. We speak for concerned citizens of Oregon."³⁹² McMurry toured the state in tandem with Bill Driver.

"McMurry said he and Driver have been accused of being religious bigots - an accusation denied by the attorney." Driver, who was new in the business of being an expert on Rajneesh in Oregon, now upped the ante. He was now an expert on him in India as well. According to him, the sannyasins were "very, very, very unpopular in India".³⁹³

On May 26, 1983, a preliminary initiative petition, drafted by an Albany, Oregon group purportedly concerned with the rising cost of living, was filed with the secretary of state in Salem, the capitol. If adopted, the Jeffersonian sounding petition³⁹⁴ would effectively drive the Rajneeshees into the sea. It read in part:

Request for an initiative petition which will: expel the Rajneesh cult from Oregon. Whereas, all power is inherent in the people - they have at all times a right to alter, to reform or abolish the government in such manner as they think proper - Article I, Section I.³⁹⁵ Therefore, a majority vote by the people approving this initiative petition identifies the Rajneeshees as an alien cult that has invaded Oregon and threatens our governments - and herewith commands our governor to expel immediately from Oregon all members and vestiges of said cult. Any attempt by a judge or any public servant to obstruct enforcement of this directive will be disobedience to the people, hence a violation of our Oregon constitution and therefore be punished as treason.

In June, Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer's office determined that the petition had to be rewritten, because it provided "no specifics on how to accomplish their goal".³⁹⁶ Frohnmayer's staff said that as a law the proposal "would violate the religious provisions of the U.S. and state constitutions". But that wouldn't stop it from being considered. The constitutional issues would be determined later by the courts. It needed 62,251 signatures by July 6, 1984, to get on the ballot by November 1984. Almost universally condemned in the media, it had 31,000 signatures by January 1984.

The city the tolerant folks from Albany wanted to wish out of existence was not a sandbox in the desert. It had at that time about 750 residents and was the result of a primal surge of love, intelligence, ingenuity, hard work and cold cash. Frances Fitzgerald, who visited Rajneeshpuram for the first time in May 1983, described it.

They had built a 350- million-gallon reservoir, 14 irrigation systems, with underground pipes taking the water to the fields, and several artesian wells for drinking water. Their truck farm now provided 90 per cent of all the vegetables consumed on the ranch; their poultry farm and dairy produced all

³⁹² *The Dalles Chronicle*, May 24, 1983

³⁹³ *Beaverton Valley Times*, September 15, 1983

³⁹⁴ See Chapter 3.

³⁹⁵ of the Oregon constitution

³⁹⁶ They should have said to "legally accomplish their goal".

the necessary milk and eggs. The infrastructure for the city now included a ten-megawatt electrical substation, an urban-use sewer system, a telephone and computer communications center, and 85 school buses - or the fourth largest public-transportation system in the state of Oregon. Starting with a single farmhouse, they now had 250,000 square feet of buildings. With 38 new residential quadruplexes, they could house 1000 people over the coming winter. The tent city that they were building would accommodate 15,000 people for the week of the Master's Day Festival.

With all the speed of this development, the Rajneeshees had clearly done a good deal of careful environmental planning. One of the main worries of the local ranchers was that the Rajneeshees would use up so much water they would lower the water table throughout the region. According to the Oregon State Water Resources Department, however, the ranch had its own aquifer - independent of those of the neighboring ranches - and the Rajneeshees had done enough water-conservation work that it would be adequate to their needs for the foreseeable future.³⁹⁷

On Thursday, March 24, the whole practice of prayer in government, which had originated in the days of the Provisional Legislature before Oregon had become a state in 1847, was suddenly called into question when Sheela was scheduled to make the daily invocation. Six or seven members of the House walked out of the session directly after the salute to the flag and before her three minute prayer. "I'm a Christian and I don't believe in their religion," said one representative who walked out. She had not objected to other non-Christians who had delivered the prayer. But the sanniyasins were different. "They have every right to be here. It's just that I didn't want to listen to it."³⁹⁸ When Sheela was finished it took the Speaker of the House 14 minutes to round up the necessary quorum of 40 to open the meeting.

The sanniyasins tried to resolve the problem of Antelope and quell some of the state's gathering hostility toward them by offering an amendment to HB 2295, which would have proclaimed Rajneeshpuram a legal city and protected its incorporation from future legal broadsides. In exchange, they vowed to sell their holdings in Antelope and resign from the city government. At the time Governor Vic Atiyeh said he would oppose any legislation that would settle the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram while it was before the State Supreme Court. "I resent the most blatant offer of a trade I've ever seen."³⁹⁹

Political motivations and perceptions of political motivations. Two very separate things. If you wanted to make tradeoffs, you had to be less blatant about it. In March 1989 Atiyeh told me, "They constantly tried to make a deal with me, and I don't make deals. The case was the case, and their deal was another deal."

³⁹⁷ Fitzgerald, *Cities On A Hill*, p. 261. This quote has had different incarnations. The major changes involve the form of the numbers. For example "a quarter of a million" to "250,000".

³⁹⁸ *The Bend Bulletin*, April 1, 1983

³⁹⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, June 3, 1983

"You don't make deals," I asked incredulously.

"I don't make deals, never did. Never have. Never did in the legislature, never did as a governor. So we just told them, 'You're coming at it the wrong way.'"

"I never met a politician who never made deals," I said.

What I didn't add – for obvious reasons – was that as a political journalist in my younger years I had met hundreds of politicians, in office and on the campaign trail, who said they didn't make deals, but wasn't inclined to believe any of them. After all, politics is about workability, the art of compromise and the possible. In other words, making deals.

My nudge nudge wink wink tone and look was a way of giving Atiyeh a chance to climb down from his you'll regret it in the morning statement without losing face. But he didn't take advantage of it. Rather, like Sheela (according to Ma Yoga Pratima), he charged further into the breach.⁴⁰⁰ "You've just met one now," he said. "You give up a lot when you don't make deals. Your job's harder when you don't make deals. I know this is going to sound kind of funny, but I'm different from most politicians, and in a sense my job is more difficult. I'm also not vindictive. I was never that way, and I gave up a lot. I gave up a lot, in the process, in terms of not getting what I wanted."

On Thursday, July 14 the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) established an eight page set of temporary rules that some hoped would deal a body blow to Rajneeshpuram. By a vote of 4-3, it applied statewide land use goals retroactively to all Oregon cities incorporated after August 21, 1981.⁴⁰¹ The rules, which were written with the assistance of attorneys from 1000 Friends of Oregon, affected only one city. No prizes for guessing which one.

"The new guidelines state that cities seeking incorporation on lands outside urban growth boundaries [UBG's], with or without resources, must justify the change in status on the basis of exceptions to land-use goals for farm or forest land and must show the need for the city outside an acknowledged urban growth area."⁴⁰²

Former State senator Ted Hallock, one of the co-authors of SB 100 - Oregon's land use law that had directly given birth to LCDC and, indirectly, 1000 Friends - said, "I spent five months of agony fighting to get that bill through the legislature. Not once was any consideration given to the possible formation of new cities. My primary purpose was to protect good farm land from further encroachment by existing urban areas. Not once did we discuss the evolution of a new city in a semi-desert area."⁴⁰³

Hallock told sannyasins that what they were doing in Rajneeshpuram "is totally commensurate with the intent of our legislation". He also said that 1000 Friends "has

⁴⁰⁰ See Chapter 4.

⁴⁰¹ Someone once defined "myth" as a "strategy for dealing with a situation". The same could be said about traditions, biblical interpretations, résumés and, apparently, laws. Something similar was done with the US-German extradition treaty to handle the "situation" with Sheela (see Chapter 11).

⁴⁰² *The Bend Bulletin*, July 15, 1983

⁴⁰³ *The Rajneesh Times*, July 1, 1983

done a lot for Oregon [,] but on this issue they are full of baloney. Their interpretation of Senate Bill 100 and mine are two completely different things....This city [Rajneeshpuram] is in support of a wonderful agrarian experiment."

On Friday, July 29, three successive bomb blasts rocked a Portland hotel the sannyasins had bought earlier that year. The only one hurt was Stephen Paster, aged 34, reported to be a Moslem Fundamentalist. Everyone wanted a piece of the action.

Allegedly working with two others - who were never named or apprehended – Paster lost parts of his hands and nearly blinded himself when one bomb he was setting blew up in his face.⁴⁰⁴ It seems that the plan was to first set off one explosion, and then when people came running to help the wounded, the other two would have gone off. "Get me out of here!" he screamed at sannyasins carrying him on a stretcher into the lobby of the hotel. He was obviously expecting the second and third shoes to fall.

The bombing technique was similar to one used around the same time by an anti-cult group in Philadelphia. "A bomb was set off in the Krishna Temple during the morning devotions. And a second, larger bomb was set to go off 15 minutes later in the exact same place. It was plainly designed to kill a lot of people," Dr. J. Gordon Melton told me. Dr. Melton, a professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara, has researched and written extensively on New Religious Movements (NRM's) and their enemies, fanatic Christian anti-cultists.

"Fortunately," he said, "the devotees were so caught up in their devotion that nobody responded to the first bomb. When the second bomb went off everybody heard that and responded. Some of the Moonies' facilities in upstate New York have been fire bombed. The 3 H Organization⁴⁰⁵ Temple in San Diego got shot up. But the Krishna Temple was the most vicious example."

In September 1983, Stephen Paster was released on \$2,000 bail. Someone attempting such a heinous crime was disturbing enough. Being released so cheap for something he had clearly done – he was caught, literally, red handed – compounded the outrage. Knowing a golden opportunity when he saw it, he immediately jumped bail. He was still in the terrorist sector two years later when he was apprehended near Denver, Colorado.⁴⁰⁶

"After the Portland bombing, Sheela was really concerned," said Ma Yoga Pratima, the pretty, blonde Australian sannyasin who worked closely with her. "I think that's when they started training people in guns."

⁴⁰⁴ According to Swami Dhyana Arjuna (who reappears in Chapter 12), all three men had been at the ranch the day before the bombing. "I met all of them. They were scouting the place to set off the bomb there."

⁴⁰⁵ Holy, Happy, Healthy: a Sikh group under the leadership of Yogi Bhajan.

⁴⁰⁶ See Chapter 9.

Throughout the summer of 1983 there was a mushrooming of anti-Rajneesh groups and petitions. CCC and CO continued to hold meetings throughout the state and collect money. On some occasions they drew as many as 200 people. They were joined in July by Americans for Constitutional Rights (ACR), whose avowed *raison d'être* was to railroad the reds out of the state.

Their first official meeting in The Dalles drew between 600 and 700 people.

Another group, Control of the Rajneesh (COR), formed and immediately collected 5,000 signatures to place a measure that would direct state officials to remove the "threat" of the Rajneeshees on the November 1984 ballot. Approximately 100 people turned up at one COR rally in Medford - the same town where Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer's father, Otto, lived. Most of them were senior citizens. One of the petition's organizers, 51 year old Wanda Smedley, said, "My freedom is at stake, and my children's, and my grandchildren's. If they can take over one city in the state, what's to stop them from taking it all? He's worse than a thief in the night."⁴⁰⁷

By May 1984, four requests had been made for petitions "to expel the followers of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh from the state or to limit their activities. Two were granted ballot titles. One was pending. A fourth was thrown out by Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer."⁴⁰⁸

The next outrage committed by the thousand sannyasins against Oregon's three million citizens involved the Antelope School. It was connected to Rajneeshpuram that summer by a strip of land one foot wide and 19 miles long. While narrow, it was anything but straight and would have been extremely difficult to walk without the best boots, intentions, GPS,⁴⁰⁹ and the most up to date map of the school district, which had been gerrymandered in June.

Worried that sannyasins would flood the school system, area ranchers and older residents had asked them to educate Rajneeshee kids at Rajneeshpuram. Always eager to reject even the most leaning over backwards offer and offend each and everyone, the sannyasins complied. Nevertheless, they continued to pay school taxes in Antelope.

But in June, 200 square miles were lost to the tax base when most of the taxpayers arranged to have their properties shifted to neighboring districts. Left as the odd man in, the sannyasins were expected to pick up most of the tab for a school their kids did not attend. "Not surprisingly, Rajneeshees voted against a district budget request in June and also elected one of their community to a vacancy on the school board."⁴¹⁰

A second, smaller budget was sent to the voters. But it too was shot down. The board decided to close the school and send the 12 non-Rajneeshee elementary school kids to

⁴⁰⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 21, 1983

⁴⁰⁸ *The Oregonian*, May 4, 1984

⁴⁰⁹ Global Positioning System, which wasn't available to civilians in those days.

⁴¹⁰ Ted Shay, *Rajneeshpuram, And the Abuse of Power*, p. 9

Madras. They formulated another budget, which was to pay part of the tuition and transportation costs. But before the proposals could be voted on, the Wasco County Educational Standards District (ESD) "determined that the School Board which had devised them was improperly constituted. The redrawing of the boundaries had removed the property of the four board members from the Antelope School District."⁴¹¹

The four vacant spots were filled by sannyasins. As with the Antelope City Council, the occupation of the school board was more inheritance after abdication than takeover.

"In September came this big to-do with the takeover of the Antelope School," Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer told University of Oregon Professors Norman Sundberg and Carl Latkin in July 1987. "I think it was the most polarizing thing the Rajneesh community did to move people from neutral to negative."

Whether it was legal or not, it was overreaching by any fair estimate. It got a lot of publicity. It was daily fare for the evening news. I think it really turned attitudes around. Shortly after that I got a call from my father who told me a group of people were coming to see me and that I personally should see them and listen to what they had to say. The suggestion had been made to my father by Bill Bowerman. My father and Bill Bowerman were bachelors together and I have been a friend of the Bowerman family since childhood. I met the group and found, to my discomfiture, [that] they were attended by two television cameras.

But the story I heard was a very sympathetic one and a very believable one. About the kind of oppression those folks were going through.⁴¹² There was precious little I could do about it, but it gave me a mind set that said the Rajneeshees were not a benign group. The takeover of the Antelope school caused people to turn the corner in terms of whether or not this could go on for a long period of time without significant hostilities. That triggered the involvement of the national media who had people out here on a daily basis.

One of my sources, a longtime observer of and participant in Oregon politics, said that Oregon for Frohnmayer was supposed to be a whistle stop on the way to Washington. "Dave spent more time in Washington, DC than any other attorney general in Oregon's history." He wanted to "argue cases before the US Supreme Court" and "was waiting for a US Senate seat to pop open".

In the fervor of the Antelope School controversy and the gold rush of yet more national media splash, his office was working hard on the notion that Rajneeshpuram violated a

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10

⁴¹² Frohnmayer didn't say and the professors didn't ask which group this was, what intolerable outrages they had suffered at the hands of the sannyasins, and why they were more sympathetic and believable than anyone else. But it should be a piece of cake for resident researchers to investigate. If they ever get even slightly bored with the official, good guys us versus bad guys them interpretation of events.

constitutionally mandated "separation of church and state".⁴¹³ Marla Rae, the woman with "family ties" in Central Oregon - whose father managed the Ford dealership opposite the Madras weigh station where Mardo Jimenez had protested Rajneesh's right to life in Oregon - was working one weekend with some records sannyasins had submitted to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) for a liquor license.

"They tried to be so sophisticated in their approach in dealing with government entities," Rae said in the same July 1987 interview. But every level of information for Frohnmayer's church-state case developed from those records. "Incredible stuff," Rae said. "After I started reading I called Dave. 'Dave! Listen to this! This is amazing!' I'd call up Bill Gary⁴¹⁴ and say, 'Bill, can you believe this?! It was a gold mine in terms of the information we sought."

While Rae did not specify what EUREKA! information she found in the OLCC applications, it was unblinkingly clear what their goals were: to wipe Rajneeshpuram from the legitimate topography of Oregon. "Our eyes lit up," Frohnmayer agreed. On Thursday, October 6, he called a press conference in Salem and issued a non legally binding opinion that Rajneeshpuram did not have a right to exercise any governmental power, or even to exist. He thought the thing could be decided without a trial by a summary judgment. "We saw a chance for a quick victory."

If we were right - and every major constitutional scholar has subsequently agreed with us - their city was void *ab initio*,⁴¹⁵ and there was no way they could fix it without disincorporating and starting all over again. Of course, they were in a strategic bind because on one hand they needed the city to have the necessary population densities for just about everything they had done and everything they wanted to do down there, and on the other hand, the chances of them being able to re-incorporate after disincorporating were pretty minimal. But it was very difficult to get across to Rajneeshes and other people in the state that our lawsuit was not involved with chasing them out of the state!

It was clear at that point that the battle lines were drawn by them. It was war from their standpoint and precluded any cordial or decent communications from that point on. I should have been prepared for it and wasn't. I was

⁴¹³ CCC (Citizens for Constitutional Cities) had been on that bandwagon since March 1982 (see Chapter 4). According to James Woods, Jr., "The phrase 'separation of church and state' is judged to be not only sterile, but without constitutional justification when applied to the American tradition of church and state. Increasingly, there are those who are ready to respond to any use of the phrase with the reminder that the words 'separation' and 'church and state' appear nowhere in the Constitution and therefore lack any constitutional foundation." ("Separation Vis-à-Vis Accommodation: a New Direction in American Church-State Relations?", *Journal of Church and State*, Spring 1989, p. 198) He went on to write that during the previous decade - that is, stretching between the 1970's and '80's, the exact period we are dealing with here - the Supreme Court had been moving away from a position of "'separation' of church and state to one of greater 'accommodation' of the state to the church" (p. 204).

⁴¹⁴ deputy attorney general

⁴¹⁵ from the beginning

genuinely surprised by the vituperativeness of the Rajneeshee community to the issuance of that opinion. Next day I was the subject of a Rajneeshee news conference where I was called Herr General Frohnmayer, a fascist, a communist and a jerk, all in one paragraph. I've always been curious to know how I could be all three at once. Maybe two out of the three.

Even for people who read English as a 98th language, Frohnmayer's what did I do? astonishment is less than genuine or credible. If he had won his case and invalidated the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram, he would have made Father Otto, Bill Bowerman, and who knows how many other Oregonians delirious with glee by "legally" driving the sannyasins into the sea.

"Dave was planning on riding that church-state horse all the way to the Supreme Court," my Salem source said. Bob Oliver, legal aide to former Governor Atiyeh, told me that "Frohnmayer was pushing us. Not to take any specific legal actions, but to take a more active public stance against the community of Rajneeshpuram." Oliver accented the words "more active public stance" by thumping the table in the Salem restaurant where we were doing the interview.

"What would that have done," I asked.

"Nothing, except maybe make Frohnmayer feel better."

"We don't doubt," said Myles Ambrose, the Washington, DC attorney who accompanied Rajneesh to the INS interview in Portland, "that the real ballbreaker in that whole operation was the Attorney General Frohnmayer. He was the guy who was really out to get the Bhagwan."

"*The Oregonian* was the only newspaper in the state that editorialized in favor of the Rajneesh and unfavorably towards our opinion," Frohnmayer told the University of Oregon professors. "To its great discredit and my still great anger, *The Oregonian's* editorial board bought the notion that I had gotten my facts wrong." This is only part of what sparked his ire.

Legal issues about the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram as an Oregon city must be resolved, but it would be more appropriate for the state to be the conciliator seeking answers rather than assuming the role of adversary.

Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer issued an opinion last week that incorporation of Rajneeshpuram violates constitutional standards on separation of church and state. His judgment appears based on at least some flawed assumptions of fact, which may undermine his legal conclusions. At the very least, his whole approach further polarizes the Oregon political and social climate for the religious minority forming a community on an Eastern Oregon ranch. The Rajneeshees still seem to be guilty until proven innocent, a

condition that has characterized their association with the state since they sought a home here.⁴¹⁶

In effect, *The Oregonian* editorial was saying that Frohnmayer was not a neutral observer of a continuing "bad neighbor policy", but an active participant in it. What's more, he was doing his utmost to polarize people "from neutral to negative", and "the battle lines" were being drawn not "by them", but by him. None of which was even sneezed or coughed at by the Oregon professors interviewing him four years later. The editorial continued:

His work would have had greater weight, however, if he had bothered to check the facts before basing it on the assumption that only the faithful may reside at Rajneeshpuram. Also, it would have been more helpful had the thrust of his effort been an attempt to guide the Rajneeshees on how to distinguish municipal from religious functions in order to have a legal city within both state and federal constitutions. Instead, he produced a generally negative document.

Many constitutional authorities believe members of a religion can create cities, just so long as they treat religion and civic affairs separately and do not presume to exclude those of other persuasions.

Like many minorities past and present, the Rajneeshees are obvious political targets. But they are entitled to fair treatment in Oregon, and Frohnmayer should respond to the questions he raised by trying to help them achieve their civic goals within the letter and spirit of the law.

Frohnmayer's sanguine opinion of his own "opinion" was further buffeted less than a month later by Roy Haber, former deputy chief in the Civil Rights Division of the US Justice Department, and later an attorney in private practice in Eugene.

None of Frohnmayer's individual conclusions, whether they are legally sound or not, are a basis for holding that the city is unconstitutional. He attempts to do what is called "bootstrapping" in the law. When the basic premises are not sufficient in themselves to warrant some legal conclusions, naive practitioners will attempt to lump the parts together, hoping that somehow the whole is mysteriously greater than its parts.⁴¹⁷

After a whack at all Frohnmayer's premises, singly and together, Haber noted that "a large percentage of the original small towns in this country were settled by groups of people of one faith who were fleeing religious persecution. Under Frohnmayer's opinion, these people would not have been given the franchise for their own cities."

From a wider perspective, social historian Lewis Mumford has contended that for thousands of years cities originated not out of economic motivations but, rather, out of

⁴¹⁶ *The Oregonian*, October 9, 1983

⁴¹⁷ *The Oregonian*, November 1, 1983

religious ones. "It is only for their gods that men exert themselves so extravagantly."⁴¹⁸ He also said that the resurgence of cities in the later Middle Ages and the concomitant forest clearance and land reclamation was largely due to the influence of Christian monastic orders.

In other words, as we have already seen,⁴¹⁹ even in a Christian context you could - if you wanted - see building cities as "religious work", and those engaged in it as "religious workers".⁴²⁰ Mumford also wrote, "As for the [city's] charter itself, it led to the legal fiction, still piously preserved, that the town itself is a creature of the state and exists by sufferance. In plain fact the historic cities of Europe today are all older than the state that legally claims these rights, and had an independent existence before their right to exist was recognized!"⁴²¹

On the same day that Roy Haber was disagreeing with Frohnmayer in the pages of *The Oregonian*, a television show in Seattle, Washington quoted an Oregon rancher as saying, "If shooting starts around here, I think it will catch on pretty fast and there's a lot of people who want to get their licks in."⁴²²

⁴¹⁸ Mumford, *The City in History*, p. 37. Mumford is not the only one who has noticed this phenomenon. The 19th century French classicist, Numa Denis Fustel De Coulanges wrote that "the foundation of a city was always a religious act" (*The Ancient City*, p. 134). Plutarch - a Delphic priest during the first and second centuries *Anno Domini* - wrote, "In your travels you may come upon cities without walls, writing, king, houses or property, doing without currency, having no notion of theatre or gymnasium; but a city without holy places and gods, without any observance of prayers, oaths, oracles, sacrifices for blessings received or rites to avert evils, no traveler has ever seen or will see. No, I think a city might rather be found without the ground it stands on than a government, once you remove all religion from under it, get itself established or once established survive." (*Adversus Colotum (Reply to Coletus)*, 1125 D-E)

⁴¹⁹ See Chapter 3.

⁴²⁰ As usual, things are more complicated than that. According to James Preus, "Urban communes reared their heads within a feudal order in whose preservation the Church had a heavy economic and political stake, so that bishops were among the chief opponents of the rise of towns." ("Theological Legitimation for Innovation in the Middle Ages", *Viator*, 1972, p. 22)

⁴²¹ Mumford, *op. cit.*, p. 263. Norman Cohn seems to be in substantial agreement on this point, at least in the German context. "The German peasants, a prosperous and rising class, were concerned to increase the autonomy of their communities and to defend their traditional rights against encroachments by the new territorial states." ("Medieval Millenarism: Its Bearing on the Comparative Study of Millenarian Movements", in *Millennial Dreams in Action*, p. 38)

Closer to home, Alexis De Tocqueville wrote, "In 1628 a charter of that sort was granted by Charles I to the emigrants who were going to found the colony of Massachusetts.

"But generally charters were only granted to the New England colonies long after their existence had become an established fact. Plymouth, Providence, New Haven, and the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island were founded without the help and, in a sense, without the knowledge of the motherland. The new settlers, without denying the supremacy of the homeland, did not derive from them the source of their powers, and it was only thirty or forty years afterward, under Charles II, that a royal charter legalized their existence.

"For this reason it is often difficult, when studying the earliest historical and legislative records of New England, to detect the link connecting the immigrants with the land of their forefathers. One continually finds them exercising rights of sovereignty; they appointed magistrates, made peace and war, promulgated police regulations, and enacted laws as if they were dependent on God alone." (*Democracy in America*, pp. 40f)

⁴²² *Week Night*, November 1, 1983

Four years later, Frohnmayer said, "I'm frankly surprised and pleased at the degree of tolerance and restraint that the larger community showed. It could have easily been a bloodbath. Sooner or later, someone was going to take a pop at the Bhagwan. I talked to cops all around the country and state. They related stories. This wasn't just an issue in The Dalles and Madras. It was an issue in bars in Estacada [Oregon] on Friday nights. Folks would get a couple of belts in them and start talking about the folks in red over there. There were women in Portland who were physically afraid of the Rajneeshees in ways that can only be described as irrational."⁴²³

"Under different circumstances, Dave could have become a Rajneeshee," my savvy Salem source said about Frohnmayer. "He was just like them. He's over educated, wealthy and well connected. He stayed in school long enough to avoid the draft. As a boy, Dave played the violin while all the other boys were out playing ball. His mother had to kick him out of the house."

But, my source said, it was the push on the environmental front by 1000 Friends Director Henry Richmond that forced Frohnmayer to show that he too was on the side of the angels and do something about the sannyasin menace. In 1980, Richmond had run unsuccessfully in the Democratic primary for attorney general. In 1983, as a strident anti-Rajneeshee, he was increasing his political standing in leaps and bounds.

Starting around the middle of September, Richmond's 1000 Friends began sending out an estimated 500,000 copies of a RAJNEESHPURAM ALERT flyer. Reaching roughly one out of every two residences in the state, it noted that Rajneeshpuram was "racing ahead with development" that could deplete the area's ground water supply and run neighboring ranchers out of business. Three months later, in December 1983, the water table at Rajneeshpuram was 150 feet *higher* than it had been two years before.

Senator L. B. Day of Salem, the first chairman of the LCDC, said: "To use the Rajneeshees to try to create a political base kind of turns me off. They're trying to find a scapegoat. There are a lot of other major land use issues in this state."⁴²⁴ My Salem source said that Richmond's going against the Rajneeshees on the environmental issue was an "embarrassment" to almost everyone in the State Legislature. "Jesus," he said, "you could go after them for almost anything but the environment. They had the best planning and the highest environmental consciousness in the history of the state."

"One state agency revealed it has spent over \$300,000 and six years in an attempt to persuade ranchers in the Antelope area to apply the very same land use practices now in effect at the Rajneesh Ranch", wrote Hank De Voss, an Oregon environmentalist. "The

⁴²³ While this statement doesn't color coordinate with his perspective expressed at the end of Chapter 4, I'm sure that with lots of kicking and screaming and no one paying too close attention to the result it could be squashed into that mind set.

⁴²⁴ *The Oregonian*, December 19, 1983

responses of the area ranchers has been to do nothing, but at the same time demand that the agency provide more dams for more irrigation at the taxpayers' expense."⁴²⁵

De Voss stressed that the 2,000 plus acres of the city of Rajneeshpuram were "rangeland, not agricultural land" and that the sannyasins had 1920 acres under cultivation, 726 more than had ever been considered possible. "The comprehensive plan for the city had been passed on by 12 federal agencies, 41 state agencies, 17 county agencies, and even 1000 Friends of Oregon had been consulted on part of the planning. The state of Oregon and Wasco County officially recognized the city."

By December 1983, 1000 Friends had 8500 members. Director Richmond, who said they were aiming to boost their numbers to 10,000, announced his intention to file a suit against the state government for not moving fast enough to invalidate the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram. "'We felt it was irresponsible for the attorney general of the state not to have challenged Rajneeshpuram two years ago on the basis that it violated state land-use laws,' Richmond said. He was referring to SB 100, which Senator [Ted] Hallock had said did not relate to the incorporation of cities in desert areas. 'We feel that it is even more irresponsible now, with a formal ruling that Rajneeshpuram violates state land-use laws, for the attorney general to refuse to enforce the law.'"⁴²⁶

In December 1983 Grandfather Semmu Huaute, a 79 year old Chumash medicine man from California, visited Rajneeshpuram. "I came here to see how the land is being taken care of," he said. "If you don't love the land, you don't love yourself. And I can see here that you are trying to restore the natural balance. I have my own religion and I'm a traditionalist. But what I see here is happy people taking care of the land and each other. I don't see anybody begging for money or staggering drunk down the street like you do in every civilized Christian town."⁴²⁷ Grandfather Huaute noted that the US government only recognized Native Americans religious beliefs in 1979.

That same government was still not recognizing Rajneesh as a religious teacher. Therefore, he was not entitled to permanent resident status under that category. According to the INS, what Rajneesh taught was not a religion and, therefore, his sannyasins were not entitled to immigration benefits as religious workers. But that ruling wasn't universally appreciated, even by those who were out to git 'em. For example, Dave Frohnmayer.

Why not? Because he was banking his whole church-state case on the notion that Rajneesh was a religious teacher and Rajneeshism a religion. In the let's get all our horses pulling in the same direction atmosphere of Oregon officialdom, something and someone had to give ground.

⁴²⁵ *The Rajneesh Times*, December 9, 1983

⁴²⁶ *The Bend Bulletin*, December 11, 1983. Richmond's second statement referred to the LCDC ruling - written with the assistance of 1000 Friends of Oregon attorneys and passed by a whisker in July - which insisted that SB 100 could be applied retroactively to all cities incorporated after August 21, 1981 (see above in this chapter).

⁴²⁷ *The Rajneesh Times*, December 23, 1983

"We had a major meeting with the INS,"⁴²⁸ Frohnmayer said, "and told them that our church-state case was filed on the assumption that they were a religion. In 200 years of Supreme Court jurisprudence there has never been a case that directly defines religion. So, fundamentally, you're stuck with accepting at face value the representations made in good faith of a group sincerely holding beliefs however bizarre."

And HEY, PRESTO! Frohnmayer said "Let there be religion" and there was religion. Shortly after this meeting, on Wednesday, February 15, 1984, the INS accepted that Rajneesh was a religious leader. But that didn't mean they were going to grant him permanent residence status because of that mere technicality.

Richard Norton, former deputy assistant commissioner for investigations at INS national headquarters in Washington, half stood, half sat on the arm of his chair as he told me his version of the Rajneesh story. "The Bhagwan had hired or among his followers were a number of lawyers who were very aggressively attacking the government's role in this case. And it looked as though we were about to have the situation explode on us."

"The Regional Office in the Northern Region"⁴²⁹ was ambivalent about the case. I think they sensed a public relations nightmare. If people sensed that this guy had some legitimacy as a religious leader, then for us to be trying to tear his organization apart looking into fraudulent marriages may seem injurious to, I won't say to the image of the Service, but the public relations aspect can be very touchy." Again, political motives and perceptions of political motives. The way things are, and the way they are said to be. An example of this touchy situation, Norton continued, "was when the then Deputy District Director Carl Houseman appeared on *Nightline*. And Carl, well intended, came off very poorly. At that time we hadn't developed our investigations properly. We certainly couldn't talk about it in any clear terms. And we ended up looking ridiculous on that show."

On Thursday, July 7, 1983, both Houseman and Rajneesh's personal attorney, Swami Prem Niren, appeared on ABC's *Nightline* with Ted Koppel. Probing the INS' objections to Rajneesh, Koppel initiated a line of questioning. Was it permissible, he asked, to change immigration status after entering the United States? "Well, yes, certainly," Houseman said. "That's permitted under the law, Ted. There's no question about that at all." He went on to say that Rajneesh was not performing his religious duties because he was silent.

"Are you claiming," Koppel asked, "that someone cannot be a religious leader or cannot participate in religious activities without speaking?"

"Not necessarily, no," Houseman said.

Koppel went on to say that Trappists take vows of silence. Did that mean they are incapable of communicating with each other in a spiritual manner? Houseman did not respond. "These people are unpopular," Koppel said. "But we pride ourselves in this

⁴²⁸ This must be the meeting Mike Inman was referring to above.

⁴²⁹ outside Minneapolis, Minnesota

country on being able to tolerate that kind of thing. How do you respond now to the charge that you're trying to get rid of them because these folks are not the way most of us are?"

"I deny that uncategorically [sic]!" Houseman spluttered. "That's just not an issue here."

Directly after Houseman's disconcerting performance, Rick Norton said, "it became very clear that we had to make a decision, that we couldn't go on looking like fools out there in the public eye. Either there was a case or there wasn't. We should get off this guy's back, or we should give it a serious effort. So at that point I got personally involved and stayed personally involved in the case for the next two years."

We took a trip⁴³⁰ into the site itself to determine what we were up against. I guess it was also intellectual curiosity on my part. I wanted to find out exactly what we were facing, what the legitimacy of the place was, whether or not we were making a mistake by going forward. Well, it was clear to me, after looking into it, that we had a situation involving massive sham, the sham of the Bhagwan and how he got into the United States, the sham of setting up all these marriages, and enough background information to indicate that these people were involved in a lot of other activities that were questionable.

Sometimes you have to make a judgment as to whether or not you are going to pursue a case one way or the other. These guys were bad guys. The way they treated the people of Antelope. The way they set themselves up as a fortress. The way they aggressively attacked - legally or otherwise - to get their own way. This was not your average group of pacifist religious types, it didn't seem.

"It didn't seem," I asked him. After all, how could he have determined all of the above from a single drive down to Rajneeshpuram?

"It didn't seem like they were. You had to make a judgment somewhere. Are you truly interfering with the establishment of a legitimate religion? Are you subjecting the agency to a lot of criticism by going after these guys? Or is it a righteous case? And I made the decision that it was clearly something we should pursue with vigor, and informed the Commissioner⁴³¹ that we were going to go after this case and then see what happened."

In an internal memorandum dated December 15, 1983, Norton recommended prosecuting the major violators in a suspected major marriage fraud conspiracy. "Assuming these goals are reached, the organization would be sufficiently discredited to enable denial of the visa petitions filed by RFI⁴³² on behalf of the Bhagwan. It is important to note that neither the investigation nor the resultant adjudication will be based upon the viability of RFI's status as a religion. The means by which the evidence will be gathered has been discussed with Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Youngman. He concurs that we have

⁴³⁰ November 22, 1983

⁴³¹ Alan Nelson

⁴³² Rajneesh Foundation International

sufficient justification for the proposed operation and has designated the Service⁴³³ as the lead agency in an investigation that will also target smuggling of contraband, drugs, and other violations of interest to DEA,⁴³⁴ FBI, IRS and Customs. Department of Justice approval will be obtained for the execution of the Service's plan of action."

The FBI and DEA had been running background checks on sannyasins and monitoring their activities since 1981 and had found nothing to prosecute.⁴³⁵ The FBI's investigation, which was allegedly called off sometime in 1983, was about to resume. Assistant Attorney General of Oregon Bob Hamilton told me that at one point he had counted 17 state and federal agencies coordinating their efforts investigating Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram.

"What's the difference," I asked him, "between 17 agencies coordinating against Rajneesh and his people, and a conspiracy against Rajneesh and his people? What's the difference?" Hamilton's voice, which until then had been friendly, suddenly became very cold and angry.

"Well, I don't accept either one of those. I'm not going to answer that. There was no law enforcement conspiracy that I participated in against the Rajneesh or his people."⁴³⁶

While CCC, CO, ACR, COR,⁴³⁷ INS, FBI, DEA, IRS and the US Customs Service were trying to get their acts together and Frohnmayer was biting his nails about potential discrimination against any Oregonian or jack rabbit who might eventually care to live in Rajneeshpuram, President Ronald Reagan was, in "the year of the Bible", merrily moving towards establishing diplomatic relations with a shamelessly absolutist Catholic theocracy about 1/740th the size of Rancho Rajneesh.⁴³⁸

Relations between the US and the Vatican, which was both less and more than a country, were formalized on January 10, 1984. Reagan's initiative seemed to violate the plurality of American traditions and even the wishes of the majority of US Catholics and their bishops.⁴³⁹ It also seemed to violate the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

But the increasing infiltration and occupation of the American government by all sorts of Christian sects during the 1980s and later would prove that possession and interpretation

⁴³³ INS

⁴³⁴ Drug Enforcement Agency

⁴³⁵ From what I've learned, it was even more heavily investigated than Reverend Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple. According to John Hall, "the scandalous charges by Temple opponents never translated into any significant criminal prosecution. A report to District Attorney Freitas [in San Francisco] summed up the situation. If substantiated, abuses by Temple notary publics would amount to misdemeanors. The most damning charges lacked credible evidence." (*Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, p. 214)

⁴³⁶ This interchange returns in a very different context in Chapter 12.

⁴³⁷ See above for references.

⁴³⁸ .17 square miles

⁴³⁹ *National Catholic Reporter*, February 17, 1984

were ten tenths of the law. It is normally assumed that Protestant Fundamentalists, traditionally hostile to the Catholic competition, exercised the most power in the Reagan establishment. But some experts point to the covert influence and importance of the Vatican. According to them, the links between the inner circles of the Vatican and the US are stronger "than is generally considered the case".⁴⁴⁰

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta "represents the cutting edge of right-wing Catholicism in the United States, a hidden meeting ground where the Catholic church and the U.S. ruling elite intersect." Included in the constellation of right wing Catholics in the Reagan Administration were: Edwin Meese III, then counsellor to President Reagan and later attorney general and functioning head of the United States Justice Department; Jean Kirkpatrick, former US ambassador to the United Nations;⁴⁴¹ and William Casey, director of the CIA. Some said the covert action branch of the CIA was predominantly Catholic.

Behind the fortress face of its 100 foot high and anything but transparent walls, the Holy See was seething with factions and family feuds. Some of it scandalously vocal, some so discreet even the walls hadn't heard. As has and always will be the case with any allegedly monolithic organization.

Within the Catholic Church there was a push for more oxygen in the form of less medieval views about sexuality, birth control, abortion, women's rights and scientific knowledge. In Latin America there was "liberation theology", a movement preaching that priests and nuns should literally take up the cross and throw themselves body and soul into the political and social struggles of their times.

That meant *engagement* with works as well as words against the Vatican's traditional bedfellows: right wing military dictatorships. It also meant, yet again, a direct confrontation between two utterly irreconcilable views about what Christianity is and should be. A get the job done business selling sin and salvation, trying to ramp up numbers and turnover, and increasing its power and prestige by supporting repressive regimes and propping them up when they were in serious danger of being brought down. Or a source of inspiration, light, love, freedom and justice in the here and now, not in a no one really knows somewhere else or immediately after the Second Coming.

In the United States, Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen branded a US Naval submarine base "the Auschwitz of Puget Sound" and repeatedly called his congregation "to witness" against the immorality of nuclear armaments. Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, Wisconsin openly advocated breaking US immigration law. He pledged to support "any Catholic parish that would want to be a sanctuary for Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees".⁴⁴²

⁴⁴⁰ Martin Fair, *National Catholic Reporter*, March 17, 1984

⁴⁴¹ Whose son, Stewart, was a Rajneesh disciple (see Chapter 2).

⁴⁴² *National Catholic Reporter*, November 26, 1982. In 2002 Weakland admitted he was homosexual and resigned in disgrace. In January 2011, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee said it would file for bankruptcy protection against pending sexual abuse lawsuits. Clergy sex abuse claims and payouts had already cost it \$29 million over the past 20 years. It was the eighth US archdiocese to seek Chapter 11 protection. One of

Along with the Rajneesh sannyasins, the Sanctuary Movement was one of the main targets of the INS. It assisted refugees on the run from war torn Central America – the lands of the *desaparecidos*.⁴⁴³ Places where, in the words of Guatemalan Archbishop Próspero Penados, "one has to be very careful what one says. One walks around with the knowledge that they can kill you at any time."⁴⁴⁴

Archbishop Weakland also blasted the disparities between rich and poor, the increase of "sleaze" in American society, and took swipes at the church itself. "The Church as a perfect society is a fake. The Church is a broken society. We live in a community of broken people, we minister as broken people." He said that healing was needed "in all areas of the Church"⁴⁴⁵

Meanwhile, back at the Vatican, another sort of heeling was being called for. It was time to get back to basics, an old world order where *Roma locuta, causa finita*⁴⁴⁶ was more than just something you said to scare the shit out of the congregation. Heretics of all sorts were rounded up and chastised.

For example, Leonardo Boff, the Brazilian founder of liberation theology, was summoned to Rome and made an offer he could have refused but didn't. He was suspended and then reinstated into the graces of The One True Faith only after secretly signing a document of submission. He agreed that he was a sinful theologian and nothing he could ever say could contend with the eternal truth of the Church. Shades of Galileo Galilei.

Another example of how the shepherds dealt with straying sheep was the obscure case of Hubertus Mynarek, who when I talked to him in January 1990 was a professor of sociology. He had written a book critical of Catholic bureaucracy - *Herren und Knechten der Kirche*.⁴⁴⁷ When being secretly asked to recant he was given the old one two: carrot and stick.

If he was a good *Knechte*, the *Herren* would give him the chair of theology in any university he wanted. If not "Professor," he was told, "we can no longer burn you at the stake. But we can ruin you financially. We can bring you to the point where you will be lying in the gutter, begging for mercy and pleading to be re-admitted into the Church." Mynarek picked the stick and had to live on social security for years.

And the beat goes on, while most of the beaten fall by the wayside. Only to be raised from the dead 50 or 100 years hence in a biopic where some actor, at absolutely no personal cost to himself – *au contraire* – can play the hero and saint, and mainstream

the other seven was Portland, Oregon. (Dinesh Ramde, "Milwaukee Archdiocese Bankruptcy: Sexual-Abuse Lawsuits Leading to Chapter 11", *The Huffington Post*, January 4, 2011)

⁴⁴³ the disappeared

⁴⁴⁴ Allan Nairn and Jean-Marie Simon, "Bureaucracy of Death", *The New Republic*, June 30, 1986, p. 17

⁴⁴⁵ *National Catholic Reporter*, November 14, 1986

⁴⁴⁶ Rome has spoken, case closed

⁴⁴⁷ This title could be translated in two ways, civil or brash. *Gentlemen and Servants of the Church or Church Bosses and Serfs*.

audiences can be shocked and outraged, wipe their eyes, and revel in what one sociologist has called "no-cost rectitude".⁴⁴⁸

Close ties between the Vatican and the US were based on the time honored formula for negotiating with gods and other great powers: *do ut des*.⁴⁴⁹ It was beneficial to both sides. For example, on October 18, 1982, Vernon Walters, a devout US Catholic with extensive CIA connections, visited the Pope. A few days later Roman Catholic priests in Nicaragua were ordered to resign from the Sandinista government.⁴⁵⁰

The late Penny Lernoux, an expert on Latin American affairs and Christianity, has written: "Although much was made of President Ronald Reagan's ties to Jerry Falwell and other Protestant fundamentalists, the Pope actually did more to further the Republican cause by disciplining Reagan's most outspoken Catholic critics and threw the church's institutional weight behind groups identified with U.S. interests, such as anti-Sandinista Catholics in Nicaragua."⁴⁵¹

In the summer of 1986, Attorney General Edwin Meese III paid the pope back. The Justice Department went to court to "defend the Roman Catholic Church against the loss of its tax-exempt status when another church-related group contended it was engaging in political lobbying and campaigning in opposition to legal abortion - activities the tax-exemption does not permit."⁴⁵²

The Vatican's involvement in the disciplining of Rajneesh was declared a fact on December 24, 1989, by Ashok Row Kavi, an Indian columnist for the *Bombay Sunday Mail*. According to him, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Bavarian born head of the Vatican's modern inquisitorial office, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "is known to have operated behind the scenes in the expulsion of Rajneesh from America". The information allegedly came from someone "very close" to Ratzinger, "the man who controls the Vatican's policy against other religions".

⁴⁴⁸ Barbara Nelson in *Making an Issue of Child Abuse*

⁴⁴⁹ I give that you may give: tit for tat.

⁴⁵⁰ *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, Winter 1983. While some scoops may still be possible on this turf in terms of who, what, when and where, the main cat is out of the bag and not only admitted, but also bragged about. The US and the Vatican closely cooperated - some might still protest "collaborated" or "conspired" - to bring about the fall of the Soviet Union. This is old hat and you can take your pick of sources to cite. I choose *Rivals for Paradise*, a documentary written and produced by Paul Sapin for the BBC's *Everyman* series, which was first aired on November 9, 1997, when this was still almost breaking news.

According to Vernon Walters in the documentary, there was constant contact between the United States government and the Vatican - the latter informing the former about the military situation in the Eastern bloc. "We had the same goal: that is, to *halt the expansionism* of the Soviet Union," Walters said (emphasis mine). Note his coy economizing with the facts. The policy was to "contain", not destroy. Others sources on this theme include Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time* and as a refreshing breath of impassioned air Polly Toynbee, "Twenty-five years on, Karol Wojtyla's ultra-conservative Vatican deserves far more censure than praise", *The Guardian*, October 17, 2003.

⁴⁵¹ *The Nation*, April 17, 1989

⁴⁵² John Jenkins, "Mr. Power: Attorney General Meese is Reagan's Man to Lead the Conservative Charge", *The New York Times Magazine*, October 12, 1986

But why would Ratzinger, who was widely believed to be the second most powerful man in the Vatican at that time, bother with a gadfly like Rajneesh when he already had so many home grown heretics on his shit list?⁴⁵³

Giancarlo Zizola, an internationally respected Italian Vaticanist, author, writer for the Italian magazine *Panorama*, and close observer of John Paul II's papacy, told me in an interview at his apartment in Rome in January 1990 that "the biggest danger for the Church is not communism or the threat from the South". By "the South", he meant various non European readings of Catholicism by the numerically superior congregations of Africa and South America. "The threat is from West Europe, from the strength and vitality of popular religions."

Harvey Cox, a liberal Harvard theologian, expressed the situation slightly differently. The real problem for Ratzinger and institutional churches, he wrote, is "no longer how to revive a comatose piety in an age of unbelief, but how to cope with fresh waves of faith that did not conform to the old patterns. Church leaders were faced not with a decline in spirituality but with a new outburst of religious energy. God was not, it seems, dead after all. But sometimes the God who was alive appeared to be more dangerous to the several religious establishments than the old secular foe they had come to know so well."⁴⁵⁴

Six weeks after the cryptic poke at Ratzinger and two weeks after Rajneesh's death, at the age of 58, the Bombay journalist readdressed the issue. According to Kavi, eight years earlier - in 1981, when the Rajneesh ashram in Poona was creating a *Sturm und Drang* throughout Europe and particularly in the cardinal's native Bavaria - Ratzinger said: "All sorts of Satanic cults by oriental godmen are out to seduce the faithful away from Christ." Kavi said Rajneesh was the specific "object of these controversial statements".⁴⁵⁵

Is it possible that Kavi was on to a scoop he was either unwilling or unable to follow up? Ratzinger was known to be in total agreement with Pope John Paul II, who once avowed, "To deserve the name at all, a civilization must be a Christian civilization."⁴⁵⁶ He also had

⁴⁵³ As everyone now knows, on Tuesday, April 19, 2005 Ratzinger became the successor to Pope John Paul II. Much to the joy of the conservatives and consternation of the more liberal elements in the church. According to an article in an Italian newspaper (*La Repubblica*, April 14, 2005), 5 days before Ratzinger became Benedict XVI, 8 out of 11 American cardinals and 5 out of 10 German ones said they would vote against him. The day after the election by the gathering of cardinals - 201 of whom were ordained by John Paul II himself - a Parisian newspaper, *Liberation*, wrote that it was as if the Pope had named him as his successor. I have only a slight disagreement with that statement. Skip the "as if" and say the Pope had named himself as his successor.

⁴⁵⁴ Cox, "Liberation Theology vs. Cardinal Ratzinger", *Tikkun*, May-June 1989. The name of the magazine Cox wrote for has many interesting meanings in Hebrew. One of them is "healing". In a 1997 interview Ratzinger said something similar. "In the 1950s someone said that the undoing of the Catholic church in the twentieth century wouldn't come from Marxism [,] but from Buddhism. They were right." In the same interview he depicted Buddhism as an "auto-erotic spirituality" and warned against the "seductions" of eastern faiths. (Quoted in John Allen, Jr., *Cardinal Ratzinger: The Vatican's Enforcer of the Faith*, p. 253)

⁴⁵⁵ *Bombay Sunday Mail*, February 4-10, 1990. Anyone caring to take another tumble in those good old days should return to the story of the Bavarian parson, Frederick-Wilhelm Haack in Chapter 2.

⁴⁵⁶ *The Nation*, April 17, 1989. Of course, this is nothing to stop the presses about. As Zizola told me - and everyone else would know if they gave it more than a second thought - there really is only one true faith,

a reputation for working secretly and ruthlessly against Catholics with other opinions. "The cardinal, who 'daily receives top secret information from every continent,' does his best to take daily top-secret action on the basis of this information."⁴⁵⁷

Dr. Hans Kung, a liberal German Catholic theologian and a former colleague of Ratzinger's at the University of Tubingen, credited him with influencing the banning of certain books in the US. Dr. Kung said it was "indicative of Ratzinger's subtle and covert operating style".⁴⁵⁸ In this context it is interesting to note that he is the son of a police chief, a devotee of original sin advocate Aurelius Augustine,⁴⁵⁹ and was known as "the enforcer".

Toward the end of December 1983 special papal raiment was designed for Sheela. When she appeared in public with it for the first time she seemed cloaked in a mantle of infallibility and magically transported to a higher plane. The silly goose was out.

"She had the idea that whatever she said was right," said Ma Yoga Pratima. "She had the idea that she was the best businesswoman,⁴⁶⁰ the best decorator, the best designer, the best architect. The only thing she realized that she couldn't do was spell. She did realize that she was practically illiterate. But other than that, in her opinion, she was the best."

Over the years she wiggled and wallowed in a sense of her own specialisms, and if you weren't careful she'd tell you about it. "I was always spoiled rotten by everyone. I was spoiled so much. Anyway, my parents believed in spoiling."⁴⁶¹ "I am a princess. My mother always bathed me in milk, and washed my hair only with buttermilk."⁴⁶²

She told Professor Carl Latkin, "I was the Queen, and Bhagwan was the King." When she traveled around the world as Rajneesh's personal secretary and local sannyasin

and that is the one you happen to believe in and belong to. By definition, religions are always at war with each, overtly or covertly. They are "not nice", as Jonathan Smith has noted (see Chapter 2). As for the other element in the equation, "civilization", Denys Hay has written, "When we do (on rare occasions) meet the terms ["barbarian" and "barbarous"] in a political sense it is significant that 'Christian' and 'barbarian' can be opposed to one another It is significant in this connection that Moslems were firmly regarded as idolatrous pagans, worshipping Mahomet, who was the embodiment of evil. As a picture of Islam and its somewhat puritanical values this had not even the verisimilitude of a caricature, but it fitted in with a necessary view of the non-Christian world." (*Europe: the Emergence of an Idea*, pp. 23f)

⁴⁵⁷ *National Catholic Reporter*, October 11, 1985

⁴⁵⁸ *National Catholic Reporter*, July 20, 1984

⁴⁵⁹ See Chapter 3.

⁴⁶⁰ According to the oft referred to and occasionally cited "For Love and Money", "Several years earlier, he [Bipin Patel, Sheela's brother] had invested Rajneeshee money in the commodities market with less-than-satisfactory results, said a confidential source. Bank records showed that between June 1976 and December 1977, more than \$266,000 of Rajneeshee money went through Patel's account at Harris Trust and Savings Bank in Chicago. Patel invested some of the money in commodities and also gave Sheela a check to set up her own commodities account. Between the two, the movement lost about \$175,000." (*The Oregonian*, July 6, 1985) But to be fair, even "successful" business people often lose money. Failure is an inevitable component of success. However, the reverse is not true.

⁴⁶¹ *The Oregonian*, October 14, 1984

⁴⁶² *Quick*, October 30, 1985

communes paid homage as well as all her expenses, she assumed "that it was just an honor for them to have me around their commune".⁴⁶³ "All my life I have been loved. I am very popular."⁴⁶⁴

Others spoke of her in less hagiographic terms. "If there was a room with two people in it, she could start seven fights," said Myles Ambrose. "I don't know if 'pathological liar' is a broad enough term to describe her," said Robert Hamilton.⁴⁶⁵

She was sued many times because of her whiplash tongue. Donna Quick Smith took umbrage at her April 29, 1983 letter.⁴⁶⁶ With the always there when you needed him Garry McMurry as her lawyer, the woman previously known as "Mrs. Smith" filed a \$1 million defamation of character suit against Sheela, Rajneesh and two Rajneesh corporations in the middle of July 1983.

But Smith also couldn't keep her trap shut. Shortly after filing the suit, on August 4, 1983, she was seeking signatures on a Rajneesh deportation petition in Myrtle Creek, Oregon. Two hundred people turned up to hear her say that she thought the sannyasins' ultimate goal was "state takeover". Locally, 500 people signed the petition that called Rajneesh an "undesirable alien".⁴⁶⁷

Not having any evidence to support their contentions had never taken the wind out of Smith's and McMurry's sails. Thus sticking with what worked and claiming that everything Sheela said came straight from Rajneesh, they moved to depose him. Sannyasin attorneys argued strenuously that since public silence was part of Rajneesh's religion, forcing him to testify would violate his - here it comes again - First Amendment rights. By December 1983, their petition had gone all the way up to the United States Supreme Court, where it was immediately batted down without comment by Justice William Rehnquist.⁴⁶⁸

"Sheela insisted vehemently at the time that Osho could not appear," said Ma Prem Sangeet, Rajneeshpuram's Oregon born city attorney, who, incidentally, had studied law under Dave Frohnmayer. "She claimed that his health was so bad that he could virtually drop dead if he should enter a deposition room."⁴⁶⁹ The lawyers, including me, were amazed at the hysteria of Sheela's reaction." Sangeet had some other amazing things to tell me.

⁴⁶³ Debtor's Exam, March 1988

⁴⁶⁴ *Australian Sun Times*, April 28, 1985

⁴⁶⁵ See Chapter 7.

⁴⁶⁶ cited above

⁴⁶⁷ *Myrtle Creek Umpque Free Press*, January 19, 1984

⁴⁶⁸ In one dissenting opinion, Rehnquist "took the position that the Unification Church [the Moonies] did not even have standing to question the law, *because it had not established that it was in fact a religion!* [emphasis in the original] This opinion, which was rendered in 1982, seems completely oblivious to the First Amendment implications of assuming a court can rule on what is a religion" (James Richardson, "Changing Times: Religion, Economics and the Law in Contemporary America", *Sociological Analysis*, Supplement: Presidential Issue, December 1988, p. 7s)

⁴⁶⁹ Here's that drop dead angle again, one Sheela had used with Joyce Smith in Bombay (see Chapter 2).

Depositions are not like court appearances. They can take place anywhere. So it was possible to arrange for one to take place in a room where Osho would not have an allergic reaction. But anyone who suggested that the deposition could take place was practically accused of wanting to kill him. She said she had not asked Osho if he would appear. Then she implied that she had asked him and he said he didn't want to do it. But I always suspected that she never asked him about it.

And that's what he said years later. He said later that he had wanted to start talking much earlier than he actually did in October 1984. But Sheela kept objecting and complaining that his health wouldn't stand it. He told her that his health was no use to him if he couldn't use it to work with his people.⁴⁷⁰ When he finally insisted on speaking, she cried for several days, begging him not to. But he insisted.

There is no doubt in my mind that Sheela did not want Osho to attend a deposition in part because she was afraid of what he might say. But mostly because it would become apparent that he was getting strong enough to speak again, and she wouldn't be able to stop him from stealing center stage from her.

That was her greatest fear. Her whole power and position depended on the fact that she was Osho's sole spokesperson. She had begun to equate herself with Osho. Whatever SHE said, he had said, and not the other way around. She had also begun to look at sannyasins as HER people, and referred to them that way.⁴⁷¹

Years later, after Rajneesh had denounced her and her crimes and she was reduced to a religion of one plus who knew how many other ghost idolators rattling round her brain, Sheela said, "He gave some story that, 'maybe she is unhappy because I have started speaking publicly and she doesn't get as much media attention, because I get the media attention,' like that. And I know that was not the reason because, in fact, I had to bargain with Isabel to make sure that I would give interview only if they interviewed Bhagwan."⁴⁷²

If she actually said it like that, then as far as English was concerned spelling wasn't her only handicap. A few months later, she said, "No matter what they say, I made Bhagwan a king, an emperor He misses me desperately. I don't care what he says."⁴⁷³ She didn't care what he said, and this time I think we should take her at her word.

But at the end of 1983 and the beginning of 1984 those disputes looked a long way off. Standing in her papal raiment and mantle of infallibility – something Rajneesh never

⁴⁷⁰ *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 6, September 20, 1985

⁴⁷¹ Emphasis hers. We will return to what was said in the deposition at the end of Chapter 6.

⁴⁷² Debtor's Exam, March 1988

⁴⁷³ *Australian Daily News*, June 20, 1988

dreamed of claiming for himself or anyone else⁴⁷⁴ - the audiences stretched from directly in front of her bathed in milk feet, through Oregon, the United States, the world, and farther than merely enlightened eyes could see.

Everywhere she turned, she saw herself reflected as the picture of enchantment, the fairest of them all, and smiled inwardly with the radiance of so many secrets only she knew. From now on, in her own mind at least, every word she spoke would thunder with authority, not because Rajneesh had said it, but because she had. This was the turning point, the no-going-back. She had stepped out of the shadows and into the limelight on the stage of history, not as the understudy "secretary of", but as the heroine of the piece the whole world had come to see.

⁴⁷⁴ See Chapters 8 and 9.

CHAPTER 6: PARANOIA: MINIMUM DAILY REQUIREMENTS

Is it better to be loved than feared, or the reverse? The answer is that it is desirable to be both, but because it is difficult to join them together, it is much safer for a prince to be feared than loved, if he is to fail in one of the two. Because we can say this about men in general: they are ungrateful, changeable, simulators, dissimulators, runaways in danger, eager for gain; while you do well by them they are all yours; they offer you their blood, their property, their lives, their children ... when need is far, but when it comes near you, they turn about.... Men have less hesitation in injuring one who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared, for love is held by a chain of duty, which since men are bad, they break at every chance for their own profit; but fear is held by a dread of punishment that never fails you.⁴⁷⁵

The trick is getting them where you want them, on your terms. Then you control the situation, not them. You have the options. Pull the trigger or don't. It doesn't matter once you've got them where you want them. The important thing is knowing that it's in your hands, that you can do whatever you determine is in your interest to do.⁴⁷⁶

Like everyone who staggers onto the stage of history, Sheela was keen to rewrite the play. Like John Hinckley, Jr., who tried to assassinate President Reagan, and Reagan himself, who even in the pre-Alzheimer days couldn't remember whether he had actually fought in World War II or had merely hung out as the hero in training films,⁴⁷⁷ she was "movie-driven". Exaggerated images shooting from the silver screen were the source of her beliefs about true love, honor, shame, and who underneath it all she really was.

But unlike Hinckley, Reagan and Hollywood influenced America, her movies were made in Bombay, the film capital of the world. According to most, but perhaps not all, contemporary Western standards, they were gaudy, tawdry and ridiculous. Women dripping in silks, sulks and diamonds bobbed behind peekaboo hands and made eyes at ferociously handsome sultans. Petulance, rage, turn on and off, success and disaster happened suddenly. So did embracing - but definitely not kissing or other nasty stuff - with one foot on the streets of the city and the others in Kashmir or Switzerland. And every few minutes there were outbursts of mass singing and dancing, women on one side,

⁴⁷⁵ Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513), Chapter 17, p. 59

⁴⁷⁶ James Baker III, US Secretary of State under Reagan, in "Playing for the Edge", *Time*, February 13, 1989

⁴⁷⁷ For example, as a pilot getting instructions on how to engage the dreaded "Zeros", the superior fighter aircraft the Japanese used so successfully at Pearl Harbor. How he could have ever made this "mistake", even in his wildest dreams, is beyond me. For he was amazingly near sighted. According to Edmund Morris, one of his biographers, "He was as blind as a bat. He was so blind that they figured he wouldn't be able to distinguish a Japanese soldier from an American at a distance of more than 12 feet." (In Eugene Jarecki's documentary, *Reagan* (2011))

In January 2011 the story of exactly when Reagan's slide into dementia began heated up. His son, Ron Reagan, said he showed signs of Alzheimer's while still in office. And that was confirmed by numerous other sources, including CBS journalist Lynn Stahl in her 1999 book, *Reporting Live*. The specific incident she referred to happened in the summer of 1986. See Chapter 8, note 673.

men on the other. Whatever was lacking in focus, continuity and credibility was made up for by an abundance of plot.⁴⁷⁸

"It is a revelation that will change the course of history," said Ambalal Patel, Sheela's father, on Thursday, February 2, 1984. He followed it up with a tale about a chance meeting 48 years before with a distressed Gadarwaran cloth merchant in a Bombay bazaar. According to father and daughter - or daughter and father - the merchant was upset because a famous Benares-Kashi astrologer had predicted that his son was destined to die before his seventh birthday unless he was adopted by someone who was not his real father.

So on Wednesday, January 12, 1936, Patel and the other man drew up adoption papers.⁴⁷⁹ With feigned surprise, Sheela and her father announced that the small boy was none other than Rajneesh himself. In other words – go with me on this – Ambalal Patel was Rajneesh's father, and Sheela his sister. The secret was being told now, Patel said, because he was in poor health and - you guessed it - might die any moment.⁴⁸⁰

It was a miracle! Not the pathetically fabricated hoax itself, which had trouble holding together long enough for anyone to pick and kick it apart. But that anyone with even 10% *compos mentis* could dream it up and then brag about it. The first problem was that January 12, 1936 was a Sunday, not a Wednesday, even in India. Another came from Rajneesh himself. He claimed to remember past lives in Tibet 700 years back, but had never even hinted at the existence of Sheela's father in his vivid childhood reminiscences.

In other words, if he had known about Tibet, he would have known about Papa Patel.⁴⁸¹ A third problem was that while Patel may be dead now – we all have to go sometime – at that time he was a robust old crank who regularly pinched young girls. Once he had posed naked in the snow as someone's idea of a holy man.

There were two basic reasons for this Roman farce. One was revealed immediately, and could be seen by everyone. The second at the end of the summer,⁴⁸² but could only be detected by those with 20-20 hindsight and after their eyes had been rocked open by a series of other puzzle pieces falling into place. Sheela and her father filed forged adoption certificates, affidavits and application papers with the Portland INS. Among the many surprises of US immigration laws there is an obscure clause stipulating that permanent resident status can be granted to an unmarried son of a resident alien. Rajneesh was now the unmarried son of Patel, who had been a resident alien since 1973.

⁴⁷⁸ I am obviously referring to the Bollywood slush pile, not the crafted, evergreen classics of Indian cinema, such as the works of Satyajit Ray.

⁴⁷⁹ *The Rajneesh Times*, February 3, 1984. *Bapuji*, the scion of the Patel clan later told *Oregonian* reporters that he was a freedom fighter - who isn't a freedom fighter after the fact? - and had four tours of duty in prison by the time he was 25 ("For Love and Money", Part 8, July 7, 1985). If that was true, and I'm not saying it is, in 1936 he would have had more political things on his mind. His more settled days began only after independence (1947).

⁴⁸⁰ This subject returns in Chapter 8.

⁴⁸¹ aka *Bapuji*

⁴⁸² See the end of this chapter.

Two weeks later, on February 15, the INS granted Rajneesh "religious teacher" status. The concession had nothing to do with Patel's "historic" revelation, or a change of heart at headquarters about accepting Rajneesh and his religion. Rather, it was designed to get the INS in step with the church-state case and put the whole unprovable religion thing - what Frohnmayer had called "a land war in Asia" - on ice.

Meanwhile, the INS stepped up its investigations and worked towards whipping up a massive criminal conspiracy case out of who knew how many instances of individual and unrelated "sham" marriages. Two days later, on Friday, February 17, then Deputy Commissioner for Investigations in Washington, Rick Norton, called Joe Greene in Miami.⁴⁸³

Greene was a mustachioed, hard hitting INS agent with a master's degree in philosophy from St. John's, a Catholic university on Long Island. He was supervising criminal investigations resulting from the "Marielito boatlift". The Marielitos, a class of hardened Cuban criminals and mental patients released by Castro in 1980 for emigration to the United States, were one of the INS' "huge problems". The Carter administration had accepted over 125,000 of them sight unseen, and in cities like Miami, Los Angeles and New York they had been committing extremely violent crimes ever since. In three years 7,000 of them were arrested in New York. One detective said, "Letting in the Marielitos was like Custer calling for more Indians".⁴⁸⁴

Thus Joe Greene was one of INS' hottest agents in one of America's hottest towns, a crossroads of crime centering around Columbian cocaine, guns and tons heavier arms running, and Spanish speaking spies. And Rick Norton was asking him to drop that for Portland, an INS cul-de-sac. Greene said he had never heard of Rajneesh. So he bought a book the same day, started to read, and a few days later agreed to go up there for two or three months to put the finishing touches on the criminal conspiracy case. Why? Because in his Catholic heart of hearts he knew that Rajneesh was bad news. Two years later, he would tell one newspaper that the investigation had "taught him the power of evil".⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸³ Over the years a lot of connections between the INS and the CIA have been alleged, and a few have been proven (see Chapter 1). And during the course of my investigations people were continually trying to tell and sell me stories about alleged CIA involvement in the, at that time, still unproved conspiracy against Rajneesh. This is the kind of stuff that makes investigative journalists' drool, along with their publishers and the reading public.

But assuming that almost definitely I would be standing alone in court one day and having to defend almost every syllable, I made a pact with my inner counsel. I wouldn't use anything unless it was 95 to 100% sustainable in such a venue. So I had to steer clear of the whipped up water where some of the more sensational and successful "investigative journalists" make their living.

True, the immediate financial payoffs are middling to meager to non-existent, but the long term rewards are the satisfaction of a job well done and results that will withstand all attacks and the teeth of time. And being a stubborn soul, I'd rather be right than rich.

Having said that, if there was any direct connections between the CIA and INS, Miami was one of the obvious places for it to happen. Why? Because "As a result of the break in diplomatic relations with Cuba on 3 January 1961, the CIA station there had moved from Havana to Miami where it continued to operate as the Havana station." (Piero Gleijeses, "Ships in the Night: The CIA, the White House and the Bay of Pigs", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, February 1995, p. 17)

⁴⁸⁴ *U.S. News and World Report*, January 16, 1984

⁴⁸⁵ *Salem Statesman-Journal*, December 29, 1986. See Chapter 10.

"Joe Greene," Norton said in January 1989, "is one of the persons that I think is a key, who you'll want to talk to. Of all people, Joe Greene is a walking history of this case. He ate, lived and slept it. Broke his marriage up over it. A lot of things happened as a result of that, to Joe, on the plus and minus side. I'm sure he will want to talk to you. I think it is key for him to be interviewed by you and I think you'll agree. If you can get Joe to talk, which is usually not a difficult task, he'll tell you exactly the toll it took on him and the things that he did."

After the Rajneesh investigation Greene received one of the 11 distinguished service citations US Attorney General Edwin Meese III handed out in 1986 and was promoted to INS Northern Regional headquarters outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota. As I got deeper into my own investigations, I wanted to talk to him. I called a few times, and he agreed. But he wanted to do it *mano a mano*, which meant me flying up there especially for him.

As I got deeper still, I was pissing myself anxious to talk to him. And if there were 23 naked blondes standing between him and me right now, I'd push all of them aside to get to him. But the problem was that as I got hotter he got cooler. He stopped returning my calls. A man used to having his prey in his sights - with his finger on the trigger - sensed that he was now in mine.

"If anything," Norton said, "Joe got a little bit too personally involved in the case, to the point where at times it was a touchy relationship between him and the US Attorney [Charles Turner] to get this case prosecuted. We ran into difficulties in two respects. One, with the US Attorney being extremely cautious about proceeding with this case. He was under enormous pressure out there to conduct an aboveboard investigation *without the appearances of persecuting a religious group* [emphasis mine]. Two, internally here in Washington there was concern expressed by our General Counsel,⁴⁸⁶ Mike Inman, that we shouldn't be bothering with such a case."

Inman's account of events squared with Norton's. At the beginning of 1984, he and Commissioner Alan Nelson attended a legal executive counsel meeting in Seattle, Washington. "It was a huge, three day affair. Robert Krueger, who was then district director of the Portland INS had 20 minutes to speak. And everybody thought he'd lost it. People attribute his retirement to this involvement. He was talking about the Bhagwan taking over a portion of Central Oregon, and playing havoc with the immigration laws. And I, who was born and raised in Portland, paid some attention to it, but not a helluva lot. I thought there was some big punch line! Afterwards, the Commissioner came up to me and said, 'Is he serious?' And I said, 'I don't know.'"

Krueger retired on Friday, March 30, 1984 at the age of 57.⁴⁸⁷ It was on the youngish side to be voluntarily hanging up his spurs.

⁴⁸⁶ I assume "Chief Council" and "General Counselor" are the same thing.

⁴⁸⁷ Before coming to work at the Portland INS in 1979, Krueger had spent eight years with the US Border Patrol.

"Everybody was seeing shadows," Inman said. "Every time the Bhagwan was mentioned, everybody was seeing spooks, ghosts, was really upset by it. All these people were just overreacting to the Bhagwan, like he had cast a spell over everything with which he was involved, and people were not rational. The INS investigators in Portland were really caught up in this, heavily, emotionally involved. In Portland, Oregon, you've got people thinking this is the most important case that has ever occurred, and that everything, all prior procedures, should disappear, and that people should act in a way that would be different from the way they'd act in any comparable or parallel situation."

But Inman's version of the Rajneesh story completely contradicted what US Attorney Charles Turner told me. "Mike Inman was a politician, pure and simple,"⁴⁸⁸ he said one evening after hours in his Portland office. He made no effort to conceal his disgust. A tall man with bright blue eyes and thinning hair, he seemed extremely tired at first. It had been a long day for him – and, come to think of it, me too – and at the beginning his voice was so soft I had to ask him to speak up. But within five minutes he was in full flow, bitter about the way he had been abused and positive that his account was correct. He talked vigorously for two hours.

We were trying to develop this case because we were using the criminal process to solve what was really a political problem. It's not a very satisfactory measure. Clearly, there was a very significant fraud, but Rajneesh should have been kicked out of the country in the very first place. And using the criminal justice system to correct a problem, even though it's criminal in nature, is not the best way to go about it in my estimation.

That was the court of last resort, when everybody else threw up their hands. "What are we going to do with these people? How are we going to get them out of here?" They're totally entrenched. They're a political entity. They have money. They have power. They have organization. They're sophisticated. They have people who are absolutely, completely, totally committed to what they are doing, zealous beyond anything that I've ever encountered before in my life.

"So what are we going to do about it? Let's use the US Attorney's office to charge them with immigration fraud." And I didn't know whether there was a case. Meanwhile, there was a tremendous groundswell, led by Inman, to do something about it.

"The Immigration Service," Turner continued, "apparently realized that they could not exclude the man. They couldn't deport him, which is what they should have done."

"If it was illegal, how could they have done it," I asked.

"Well, if we could prosecute him criminally for immigration fraud, why couldn't they take that same evidence with a lower degree of proof, and deport the man? I mean the highest standard of proof that we know in this country is in the criminal justice system.

⁴⁸⁸ Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver said something similar (see Chapter 5).

It's 'beyond a reasonable doubt'. But what I learned was that while the burden of proof for deportation is lower on paper in reality it is considerably higher. That's because of all the procedural safeguards that are built in. It wasn't possible for the INS to take the same degree of evidence and use it to deport him. They weren't going to be successful."

"So basically," I asked, "are you telling me that they had to go criminal just because of a lack of anything else?"

"Because they would not have been successful civilly. But I recognized early on that the thing to do, if they wanted to get rid of these people, was to deport the Bhagwan, because he was the catalyst and the linchpin for this organization. If we could get rid of him, the whole thing would fall apart as a matter of course. And they ridiculed and laughed at me about that. But that's exactly what happened."⁴⁸⁹

Steve Trott, United States Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division (1983-86) and at the time of my research a judge in the United States Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, agreed with Turner's side of the story. "If I remember correctly, Mike Inman was hell bent for prosecution leather on this stuff, on all the immigration violations, and the Bhagwan and everybody else. And he just couldn't understand why Turner couldn't generate instantaneously a thermonuclear prosecution that would blow all these guys out of the country and into jail and everything else. And I always used to wonder: if we've got all these cold immigration violations, why don't you just use your authorities over in the INS and get them out that way? That was a question I never had answered."

The answer was simple enough, if only those involved would sit still long enough to actually hear what the others were saying. Because the INS did not have - then or at any other time - hard and fast, or even soft and loose immigration violations against the man they wanted most: Rajneesh himself.

Trott was playing a guitar in Cincinnati, Ohio, when I finally reached him by telephone from Los Angeles.⁴⁹⁰ In the early 1960s he had been a member of a pop folk group called *The Highwaymen* and put himself through Harvard Law School with the \$100,000 he banked from a single hit, *Michael, Row The Boat Ashore*.⁴⁹¹ "This is a gigantic knuckleball for me," I said to him, "because Inman told me he was pushing hard on the alleged marriage fraud cases, which involved about 20 couples pushing for adjudication on their green cards, but he never had any intention of making a criminal case of it."

Trott laughed loudly at the very idea. "So you're telling me," I pursued, "that Mike Inman was pushing hard for a criminal case, from the beginning?"

"Oh yeah. Heatedly! Heatedly!"

"Why was he pushing so hard?"

⁴⁸⁹ See INS memo (February 10, 1983) at the beginning of Chapter 5.

⁴⁹⁰ Through the friendly assistance of his secretary in Boise, Idaho.

⁴⁹¹ An African-American spiritual first noted during the Civil War. Sung by former slaves after their owners abandoned St. Helena's Island (South Carolina) in advance of a Union blockade.

"I don't know. He never said, 'Look, they're after me'. He never said, 'They're pushing me' or 'Somebody's turned up the heat on me'. But he had nothing but unflattering things to say about the US Attorney's office in Portland. Inman seemed to have a sense of the whole thing that was out of sync with what other people thought."

More than a little shaken, I returned to Inman with the discrepancies. He reasserted that there were some couples petitioning for immigration benefits stemming from marriages he believed were fraudulent. There was some evidence to back up his contentions, he said, and he wanted the INS to move ahead and try to prove its case. But he was told to back off.

All because of not wanting to interfere with a potential criminal investigation, which wasn't that big a deal anyway. Now, in the criminal proceeding there was a conspiracy allegation, which was used to include the Bhagwan as a defendant. But there was no evidence that I recall that linked him personally with advising somebody to engage in a phony marriage. But there were a lot of inferences.

Now the INS, when I was there, did 150,000 cases of deportation and exclusion a year. So 50 cases one way or the other is not going to make a hell of a lot of difference. There were several hundred thousand backlogged at all times. So I looked at these 18 to 50 cases in a universe of 150,000.⁴⁹²

Turner had an unbelievable emotional involvement with this particular prosecution. The memos that he wrote, the trips to Washington, the screaming to people who couldn't understand why a United States Attorney would look at the matter this way.... One of the things you have to realize about a United States Attorney is the number of cases they've got before them.

They are so overwhelmed on a daily basis that for them to become obsessed with any one case is Rudy Giuliani⁴⁹³ had 50 cases going at any one time, each one of which was a thousand times bigger than this case. He's breaking up the Mafia. Okay? At some stage I asked Turner. "I have so much trouble getting US Attorneys to prosecute immigration cases. And only as a personal favor to me and with great reluctance will they commit resources to them. So why is it that with both feet and your two top assistants you've jumped into this?" And he said, "Well, you guys wanted it."

Rick Norton, who had decided after a quickie drive down to Rajneeshpuram that the agency had a "righteous case",⁴⁹⁴ said he made "frequent trips out to Portland to try to keep a handle on how things were going and put out the internal fires, those here in

⁴⁹² We have already touched on this issue of seeing things in statistical perspective in Chapters 1 and 2. We will be returning to it again in Chapter 9.

⁴⁹³ US Attorney in New York City at the time of this interview, its mayor from 1994 to 2001, and presidential hopeful in 2007.

⁴⁹⁴ See Chapter 5.

Washington and those out in Oregon, that seemed to cause the case to drag on forever. And we were starting to look into different ways in which we could handle the investigation. At one point I had selected a couple of people that I was going to place out there in the organization, have them show up as followers, and actually live at the ranch."

"You were actually going to infiltrate it," I asked.

"That was given consideration. We talked to a number of psychologists at places like UCLA to determine if it was wise to do this. We were concerned about getting our officer into a situation where he would have to participate in some of the activities that were rumored to be occurring out there - which would not ordinarily be considered legitimate - or not participate and cause suspicion to fall on himself."

What those rumored activities consisted of could be scooped by the bucket from almost any issue of *Oregon Magazine* and the "Rajneesh Watch" column of Win McCormack, cult buster in residence. McCormack constructed his fantasies on the premise that Rajneesh and the entire New Age movement was a fraud that used sex, drugs, mind control and physical and psychological coercion to first recruit members and then prevent them from escaping back to the normal real world.

"So," I said to Norton, "your officer would have basically been a spy."

"We have no objection to having somebody undercover. That's the way we conduct investigations on a large scale. There was some internal dispute as to whether or not we should go ahead with this. Even the Department of Justice had considered whether or not we should go in with any sort of an undercover operation. We also considered what kind of peripheral activities we might get involved in, short of joining up."

"By the spring of 1984, or maybe it was still the winter," Former Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver said, "we were ready to jacket the Rajneesh case. 'Jacketing a case' means we opened a criminal case in the United States Attorney's office.⁴⁹⁵ There was a criminal case there in a very rough state. At that time I don't think we had three witnesses in terms of former Rajneeshees who were involved in those things which became part of the indictment, and who were in a position to testify against Rajneesh. By the end of our investigation we had two dozen. Although they may have been former Rajneeshees and may have not liked Rajneesh or Sheela, they did not like the government. So it took a certain amount of time to gain their confidence."

Exactly five weeks after her previous announcement that would change the course of history, Sheela had another that was distinctly less slapstick and more to the point. And even if it didn't immediately alter much beyond the sannyasin world – at Rajneeshpuram and elsewhere – it had instantaneous impact inside.

⁴⁹⁵ In other words, at the same time the INS was granting Rajneesh "religious teacher" status - or shortly thereafter - the government was looking for another way to exclude him.

Around 9 p.m. on Thursday, March 8, 1984, she shared Rajneesh's latest vision with several thousand sannyasins still digesting a late dinner. According to him, AIDS - an acronym for Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome - would decimate two thirds of the world's population before the year 2,000. The death toll would be in the billions. It was, the vision continued, the "disease without a name" discussed in the writings of Michel Nostradamus, a 16th century Frenchman. In the eyes of some a crackpot, in the eyes of others a seer.

Thus from that minute onwards the commune would mobilize itself against the spread of AIDS. Since it was then believed to be transmitted through sexual contacts and bodily fluids - blood, sweat, tears, sperm and spit - sannyasins were instructed to use condoms, rubber gloves and k-y jelly during all sexual encounters, and shower immediately after each emission. They should attempt to drastically diminish the number of their sexual contacts and think seriously about becoming either monogamous or celibate.⁴⁹⁶ That night the sexual revolution came to a screeching halt.

Even though there had at that time been a scatter of mainstream coverage on the topic, which included a *Newsweek* cover story, the level of AIDS awareness was minimal. Like most Americans and the world at large, the majority of sannyasins had never heard of it. The same could not be said of those immediately at risk living on and around Castro Street in San Francisco. As early as 1981 they already knew about it up close and personal. Fifty percent of the resident population had been infected by the time of the first AIDS tests.⁴⁹⁷ People would go to the hospital one day, and five days later they were dead. "It was like we were living in a war zone," said Daniel Goldstein. "You never knew where the next bomb was going to drop."

A-I-D-S would become the scarlet letters of the 1980s and 90s.⁴⁹⁸ It reached with both hands into the global unconscious - its most intimate moments and dirtiest secrets - and just thinking about it took you to the roots of revulsion. It brought up images of squalid and steamy bathhouses, where *macho* homosexuals convulsed and came in the mouths and up the asses of as many as 2,500 partners in a ten year burn of sexual rage. It threw you to the front lines of what you really thought about sex, queers, blacks, junkies, speed freaks, Hispanics and Haitians.

The national budget reflected a reluctance to make a public issue and federal case out of it. For Fiscal Year 1984 - beginning in October 1983 - out of a total that teetered toward a trillion \$40 million was committed to AIDS research. Randy Shilts, a *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter who followed the story as it developed from the first dribbles of not news to a national epidemic, contrasted America's yawn reflex with the way it dealt with a more acceptable and popular "tragedy".

The discovery of cyanide in Tylenol capsules occurred in those same weeks in October 1982. The existence of the poisoned capsules, all found in the

⁴⁹⁶ aka *bramacharya*

⁴⁹⁷ *San Francisco's Year Zero: We Were Here*, A documentary by David Weissman (2011)

⁴⁹⁸ While it shows no signs of abating in the 21st century, it's no longer news because it's no longer new.

Chicago area, was first reported on October 1. *The New York Times* wrote a story on the Tylenol scare every day for the entire month of October and produced twenty-three more pieces in the two months after that. Four of the stories appeared on the front page. The poisoning received comparable coverage in media across the country, inspiring an immense government effort. Within days of the discovery of what proved to be the only cyanide-laced capsules, the Food and Drug Administration issued orders removing the drug from store shelves across the country. Federal, state and local authorities were immediately on hand to coordinate efforts in states thousands of miles from where the tampered boxes appeared. No action was too extreme and no expense too great, they insisted, to save lives.

Investigators poured into Chicago to crack the mystery. More than 100 state, federal and local agents worked the Illinois end of the case alone, filling twenty-six volumes with 11,500 pages of probe reports. The Food and Drug Administration had more than 1,100 employees testing 1.5 million similar capsules for evidence of poisoning, and chasing down every faint possibility of a victim of the new terror, according to the breathless news reports of the time. Tylenol's parent company, Johnson & Johnson, estimated spending \$100 million in the effort. Within five weeks, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued new regulations on tamper-resistant packaging to avert repetitions of such a tragedy.

Altogether, seven people died from the cyanide-laced capsules.⁴⁹⁹

All of the above speaks volumes about how the American media reports news and, in fact, how something becomes and remains news. Which, eventually, gets tossed onto the pile of folk lore and, eventually, is magically transformed into the one step removed from that called history.

At the time most reporters and social commentators declared that Rajneeshpuram's response to AIDS was unduly alarmist. And there was some validity to that viewpoint. After all, even in retrospect, Rajneesh missed the mark in terms of time frames and the astronomical body count.⁵⁰⁰ And while I'm willing to listen to a good argument against what is merely my opinion, he might have been a bit over the top with that Nostradamus malarkey.

⁴⁹⁹ Shilts, *And the Band Played On*, p. 191. The FBI was still hot on the trail in early 2009. They had tracked a potential suspect to Cambridge, Massachusetts. As of that time no one had ever been prosecuted for the crime.

⁵⁰⁰ For other not exactly spot on predictions by Rajneesh see the end of Chapter 4. Nevertheless, according to Marion Goldman, an associate professor of sociology at the University of Oregon, "Many of the restrictions [imposed on the sannyasins] were later advocated by United States government agencies. The earlier licentiousness facilitated open, frank discussions of sexually transmitted diseases and thus allowed for detailed AIDS discourse. AIDS has become a topic of discussion for almost all religious groups, and some of the early Rajneesh disease control strategies anticipated widespread social policy." ("What Oregon's New Religions Bring to the Mainstream", *Oregon Humanities*, 1994, p. 34)

But in the broad outlines his vision wasn't much more "paranoid" than the nightmares already being batted around behind closed doors at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. By people like Dr. Dale Lawrence on the last working day of 1983.

He had believed that tens of thousands would die in the AIDS epidemic. This long incubation period, however, meant that the genetic machinations of the still-unknown virus had permitted it to sleep for years before anyone even knew it existed, before anyone knew it was spreading. It just hadn't shown up yet in a dramatic way because of the long incubation. The 3,000 AIDS cases now reported marked the barest beginning of the havoc the epidemic would bring. The future these projections promised was going to be worse, far worse, than anyone had ever imagined.⁵⁰¹

By 1986, the director of the United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO) was saying, "We stand nakedly in front of a very serious pandemic as mortal as any pandemic there has ever been. All of us have been underestimating it." Comparisons were made between AIDS and other plagues that had periodically swept through human populations and hacked away at them. The 14th Century Black Plague, which eliminated between one third and one half the population of Europe - about 30 million people - was mentioned. The Spanish Flu outbreak, which had suddenly erupted at the tail end of World War I, in the fall of 1918, and had covered most of the northern hemisphere within a month. Perhaps as many as a billion people were affected by it. Twenty million died: 548,000 in America, 12.5 million in India.

In 1988 sex researchers William Masters and Virginia Johnson flatly stated that AIDS had already infiltrated heterosexual and "normal" middle class America. "It is likely that heterosexual transmission of AIDS will soon become the predominant mechanism of infection on a worldwide basis."⁵⁰² Noting the discrepancies between sworn to forever sexual fidelity – what was it? a normal state of affairs or yet another eternally chased after and lied about ideal? - and the rarely encountered real thing, they recommended the universal use of condoms.

Being in love meant never having to say, "You're dead!". But Masters and Johnson stopped short of advocating rubber gloves, because they felt it destroyed the "intrinsic dignity" of love. While advocating a total rethink of America's attitudes and actions about all forms of sex, the researchers were particularly worried about AIDS taking off in a terminally naive teenage population.

Just as some teenagers believe that you can't get pregnant if you have sex standing up or that you can't contract a sexually transmitted disease from someone you love, many teens have taken a stance towards AIDS that is based on wishful and woefully misinformed thinking. A sex education teacher told

⁵⁰¹ *And the Band Played On*, p. 402

⁵⁰² Masters and Johnson, *Crisis: Heterosexual Behavior in The Age of AIDS*, p. 49f (Chapter 4). A word of caution about this page number and the following. They come out of a Dutch translation of the same book, which I originally read in English.

us, for example, about a high school student who was certain that the AIDS virus is only transmitted heterosexually by pregnant women.⁵⁰³

Scientific American ran a series of weighty articles on the subject, and in October 1988 devoted a whole issue to it. The research budget for Fiscal Year 1989 exceeded one billion dollars. Estimating who had it now, who would get it, and how many would eventually succumb was infinitely more complicated than guessing the number of beans in the jar. Some said the world death stats would reach 50 million. The number of Americans affected ranged from 800,000 to two million. Some said the numbers were too high. Others too low. Some said the epidemic was leveling off and on the down slope. Others that we hadn't seen anything yet. As is often the case, the "scientific debate" was almost as virulent and self serving as the disease itself.

Some, like Peter Duesberg, professor of virology at the University of California at Berkeley and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, said AIDS is not caused by the HIV virus. It is not acquired. It is not transmittable. It is not deadly. There is no scientific evidence linking it to homosexuality.

When assumptions about AIDS being caused by the HIV virus are shot at, defenders respond by modifying their definitions. Those dying with the virus in their bodies are AIDS patients. Those dying with the exact same symptoms but without the virus are suffering from something else. What is it? Where does it come from?⁵⁰⁴ What causes it? Is it a pandemic or not? In the early 1980s, when Rajneesh predicted it would destroy two thirds of the world's population, it was a "disease without a name". By the end of the decade and into the nineties – and who knows, maybe even now – it was threatening to become a "name without a disease".

No one knew it at the time, but by the spring of 1984 the city of Rajneeshpuram was as big as it was ever going to get. Most thought that was already too big. From 1982 onward Greg Leo, the INS' Director of Congressional and Public Affairs, "couldn't go back to Oregon and see anybody I grew up with without being asked the question, 'What's going on with the Bhagwan case?', because, obviously, this was probably the biggest public issue in Oregon during that period of time.⁵⁰⁵ And because of my job in the INS, people

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 118 (Chapter 9) . According to a much more recent study, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that while many teenagers knew about the birds and the bees, some still didn't know where babies came from ("CDC: Many Teen Moms Didn't Believe They Could Get Pregnant": http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/19/cdc-many-teen-moms-didnt-_n_1217977.html). "In a survey of thousands of teenage mothers who had unintended pregnancies, about a third who didn't use birth control said the reason was they didn't believe they could pregnant." But, the officials reported, most of them did know about the ins and outs, causes and effects.

⁵⁰⁴ Since then, others have claimed that AIDS developed when researchers in the colonial days of the Belgian Congo - now Congo - were using chimpanzee kidneys to make polio vaccines. According to that hypothesis, some of those chimpanzees were infected with SIV - the simian version of HIV - which was then transmitted, via inoculations, to humans.

⁵⁰⁵ It wasn't so obvious to everyone. Some though the biggest public issue was the flailing and failing economy (see Chapter 4).

looked to me for lots of information. But I can't purport to say that I know everything that was being investigated."

There was nothing accidental about him being kept in the dark about certain matters, he told me *en passant*, and almost by accident. Because "I'm the guy likely to be answering the press questions and likely to be subpoenaed in the course of the other legal team trying to uncover facts for the case or for the defense." That should provide some food for thought for those who still need it to adjust hearing aids when listening to assertions and denials from official spokespeople.

"This was a very difficult area for law enforcement," Leo said, "because on the one hand, you have an organization that purports to be religious, and on the other, you have a lot of evidence that points to widespread criminal activity. The government, whenever it's involved with areas related to religion, has to move very, very carefully, because we have strong traditions of First Amendment rights involved here. You don't want to persecute somebody because of their religious beliefs. That's a basic constitutional tenet. It's something that's very important to the people of this country."

Former Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh told me he was also repeatedly confronted by people who wanted him to do something about the Rajneeshees. "The Oregonians said, 'The governor didn't do anything.' What they meant by 'anything' was never defined. What they really wanted to say was, 'Get those guys out of our hair, Governor! Do something about it! Get 'em out of here! They just bother us!' This is one of those cases where people didn't really want the niceties of reality or propriety."

Atiyeh in turn complained about the INS. "They were a problem in great measure, because they just dragged their heels and wouldn't Well, they should have moved a little bit more rapidly than they did. And they couldn't make a decision on it. They just kept dragging it out, and all the while that's going on, we're suffering here. And it just hung out there as a question to be decided."

Lawyers for 1000 Friends of Oregon had filed a petition trying to force sannyasins to "vacate and remove all buildings and other structures within the city limits of Rajneeshpuram for which building permits or other permits have been issued". They were also demanding the removal of all facilities serving the city, including sewer and water systems.⁵⁰⁶ Rajneeshpuram Mayor Swami Krishna Deva said they had "gone beyond bigotry and are looking for senseless destruction, in fact, the murder of a thriving community".⁵⁰⁷ Some did a brisk business in T-shirts with a picture of Rajneesh on it and the caption, "Not Wanted Dead or Alive".

Despite repeated complaints from Rajneeshee attorneys and clear Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations forbidding flights beneath 500 feet over populated areas and near a functioning airport, military jets continued to buzz the place. A sannyasin attorney complaining to officials at the US Naval Base on Whidbey Island,

⁵⁰⁶ *The Bend Bulletin*, February 13, 1984

⁵⁰⁷ *The Oregonian*, February 14, 1984

Washington, wrote: "A U.S. Air Force F-16 flew at an altitude of 50-100 feet above the airstrip at Rajneesh airport. This was literally seconds after a Beechcraft Bonanza had just landed there."⁵⁰⁸

The military flights, which had been going on for two years, had escalated in the last four months. One cowboy pilot made a sharp, swift turn around in the narrow valley. On Sunday, April 29, another jet flew low over the city. A sannyasin spokesperson said, "This is what they used to do in Vietnam. It's called 'buzzing the Gooks'."

On May 11, officials at Whidbey assured city officials that their jets would steer clear of the area. On June 23 an FAA spokesman in Seattle said the Navy had agreed to alter their flight corridors and a new air route would be established in 30-60 days.⁵⁰⁹ Neither promise was ever honored. The military continued their aerial surveillance of Rajneeshpuram using its own resources and private companies.

"Sure. The training pilots would fly over Rajneeshpuram, take pictures and let the interpreters look at them," Brigadier General Ervin "Blackie" Osbourn, former Commander of the 41st Brigade of the Oregon National Guard, told me. General Richard "Dickie" Miller, former adjutant general of the Oregon National Guard, added that there "was a photo reconnaissance unit from Boise, Idaho. They took some pictures for us." Brigadier General Dave Nudo said they also used twin engine Mohawks, which are designed to cruise at 300 miles per hour and are specifically designed for surveillance. "They use infrared photography, primarily photography of heat sources. But while their mission was to photograph terrain at Rajneeshpuram, it was incidental to a training mission."

On the home front, the sannyasins had been as busy as beavers on speed since the summer before, when it became obvious that a Wasco County judge would put a restraining order on all future developments. Starting at 6 a.m. and continuing with a few small breaks until 8, 9 or 10 p.m., they had launched a series of simultaneous building programs, which included over 120 town houses, 3 major factories and warehouses, and winterizing the 2.2 acre Buddha Hall. "We would build a whole townhouse before the folks in Portland had their first cup of coffee in the morning," Swami Satyam Anando told me. "And the second would be done by the time they got to work,"

The whole city was a construction site, with miles of open trenches for sewer, water and irrigation pipes, electric and telephone wires. Acres of cement were poured, raked out, leveled and left to dry. Thousands of people were working within inches of each other, sawing, hammering, drilling, putting up sheet rock, plastering and painting. "I was often too tired to eat," Satyam said. "When there was a break, I'd lay down using a rock for a pillow and pass out immediately. Before then I thought I knew what rock bottom looked like, but then I kept discovering newer and deeper levels of exhaustion."

⁵⁰⁸ *The Rajneesh Times*, May 4, 1984

⁵⁰⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, June 26, 1984

Considering the number of people and intensity of work, often in very close proximity, it is astonishing that there were so few accidents. And some of those that did happen, which might have had life altering consequences elsewhere, left the victims relatively unscathed. One man slid off an icy roof. Another fell from the top of a tall ladder. But they were back on the job within a few days. One man cut deeply into his arm with a chop saw. He was immediately flown to Portland on a sannyasin airplane, and totally recovered within a month.

By the time of the 1984 summer festival - the Third Annual World Celebration - there were 1700 residents of Rajneeshpuram and an estimated \$100 million had been spent on it. Thirty five hundred tent platforms were set up to welcome an estimated 12,000 visitors. Along with the regular flowers, glitter and pageantry, there was a new display of what most saw as a storm trooper force.

Since the bomb blasts in the Portland Hotel the year before,⁵¹⁰ security had tightened considerably. A black Ford Bronco lead car with sinisterly tinted windows and rifles on racks drove out in front of Rajneesh's Rolls Royce. Steely eyed men and stonefaced women with Uzi semi automatic rifles, holstered Smith and Wesson pistols and motorolas walked beside and behind his car. Other security forces, in cars and circling overhead in an airplane and helicopter, scanned the adjacent roads, hills and sky. Still others on foot watched the 12,000 faces lined up to see their master, and tried to on the spot sort out the twitches of ecstasy so intense it often felt like pain from an imminent sudden lurch forward. Behind the Rolls was a beige Mercedes sedan with six guys in suits looking like the Mafia.

At the center of the heat was Rajneesh, looking like the Himalayas under glass. With his foot on the brakes, he whispered by at two miles an hour, watching all the eyes. Sometimes he stopped, push buttoned down the window, gave gifts to the grown ups and toys to the kids. The disciples greeted him with *namastes*, tears, smiles and a new eruption of unscheduled pagan music at points along the route. Sheela and a few others tried to put a halt to that. But when it was discovered that Rajneesh liked it, the musicians became a new orthodoxy.

Many placed roses on the hood of the Rolls. Three replacements were pre-positioned at strategic points because the cars kept overheating. He would get out of one and walk slowly to the next, smiling and greeting his people. It was at these points, professional security people know, that he was most vulnerable. In fact, a trained eye or even a slack reader of Frederick Forsyth novels would have seen that a high performance hit man could have assassinated him at almost any point.

In Buddha Hall two Uzi armed guards flanked him on the podium during morning *satsangs*. Down below on both sides were phalanxes of more women with motorolas and Smith and Wessons. Directly in front in a metal crow's nest were security personnel raking the assembly with binoculars. Sheela and other top Rajneesh officials began to strut night and day with hardware on their hips.

⁵¹⁰ See Chapter 5.

This bravura show of gun chic was their answer to the rising tide of so-called legal and how the west was won not so legal threats against them. The latest upset had been when the Oregon Court of Appeals voted 6-4 that the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram had violated statewide planning policy. By doing so, the court reversed a 3-0 decision it had made three months earlier, on March 20, stating that the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram had not - repeat, had not - violated statewide planning policy. "I am delighted with the decision," said the director of Oregon's Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC), the state agency that had retroactively nullified Rajneeshpuram the year before.⁵¹¹

Henry Richmond, director of 1,000 Friends of Oregon, said, "This means that there is no city". Dan Durow, the new Wasco County planner, said the sannyasins "might have to go back to Day One". Swami Krishna Deva - or "KD" as almost everyone, including Rajneesh, called him - said, "We're not going anywhere. We're here to stay".⁵¹²

Mayor KD was tough. At least during the few minutes each week or month he was let off the leash and told to look that way in front of the cameras. But according to Ma Yoga Pratima, behind the scenes he was a pussycat. "He was a really nice guy who was so eager to please and be the good boy. I mean that's how I see KD."

According to Swami Pratho Subhan, a Rajneeshee attorney, KD wasn't a lawyer, but "he had been involved in zoning applications in Chicago, I believe, and also in Los Angeles". It was because of this, Subhan said, that Sheela had picked him out of the crowd and given him power. Pratima said he loved that power, and while he was abusing it, Sheela was abusing him. "I mean, she really gave him hell. She psychologically got him to the point where he would basically do anything for her, which she did by very cleverly building him up and then smashing him down."

"And in this was Sheela was a very good psychologist. She was also helped by [Swami] Julian, who used to read books, such as *How To Win Over Your Enemies*, or *How To Hate People*.⁵¹³ Really sick, perverted psychological textbooks, which he would get sent to him. He would read [them], and then he would come and brief Sheela on how to deal with people. She got into this at the end of the ranch, towards the last year. So she actually did have some psychological weapons. Simple things like keeping people around her when she was going to the toilet, which I later read is a way of debasing people. That if you make someone sit around the toilet while you're shitting, you're basically"

"... shitting on them," I filled in her pause.

"Yeah. Well, you have some kind of psychological hold over that person. It's a known technique. I didn't realize it was. Later on, when I had a look at some of these books, I realized that some of the stuff she did, whether it was conscious or unconscious, or someone had told her to do it, were very tried ways of getting someone into your power. Literally."

⁵¹¹ See Chapter 5.

⁵¹² *The Oregonian*, June 28, 1984

⁵¹³ This genre of reading material reappears in Chapter 7.

So, it seems, if Dave Frohnmayer really wanted to understand some of what was going on at Rajneeshpuram, he had the wrong reading list. I don't mean the "beliefs however bizarre", which he couldn't prosecute and, therefore, couldn't care less about, but the real juicy criminal stuff he could sink his teeth into. He should have set his sights a lot lower than Nietzsche and Machiavelli.

Sheela - the S half of KD's S&M relationship - was, as to be expected, much better at being tough. But sometimes it came across in a weird way. As if she were writing two films at the same time, one with the left brain, the other with the right. *Gandhi* meets *The Terminator*. For example, when asked what she would do if attempts were made to dismantle Rajneeshpuram, she told a KGW Portland television reporter, "I will be dead. I will paint the bulldozer with my blood."

She threw buckets of purple prose at the media, and they lapped it up. "We are simultaneously being attacked by all kinds of fascist forces. As far as our community is concerned we are determined to protest and protect our truth and freedom with the very last drop of our blood."⁵¹⁴ "I mean business. You will find out what will happen to you if you come to harm me or Bhagwan or any of *my people!*[emphasis mine] Jesus had wimps for disciples. We're not wimps."⁵¹⁵

Once again and just in case anyone hadn't noticed, I plead guilty to all charges of finding it almost impossible to look at Sheela, let alone listen to and read and repeat what she has to share. And I think we would all be better served if journalists - and other so-called impartial observers - put some of their prejudices on the table and stopped pretending to some pristine and impossible to achieve ideals of "objectivity".⁵¹⁶ Being accurate is hard enough. Being fair and balanced is something we should shoot for. But at the same time we should be more modest about how good our aim is. Having said all that, when I compare Sheela's reading of the opposition with what I have discovered independently, I must admit she was quite consistently right on the money.

But closer to home she missed the mark completely. As we have already seen,⁵¹⁷ many of the statements she made over the years indicated that she thought of the sannyasins not only as *her* people, but *her children*. "During the last years I was only surrounded by sannyasins, but many of them are like my kids."⁵¹⁸ "Two people who had gone to see her in a Portland jail after her extradition to the United States reported that she had promised she would always be the 'ma' to her sannyasins."⁵¹⁹ "Sannyasins loved me because I was their mother and I took care of them like a mother. I literally gave my body, mind and

⁵¹⁴ *San Francisco Examiner*, July 1, 1984

⁵¹⁵ *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 5, 1984

⁵¹⁶ In 1996 the Society of Professional Journalists removed the term "objectivity" from its code of ethics. This reflects the fact that many contemporary journalists find the concept to be an unrealistic description of what they actually do and aspire to. They now prefer words like "fairness", "balance", "accuracy", "comprehensiveness" and "truth". (Brent Cunningham, "Rethinking Objectivity", *Columbia Journalism Review*, July-August 2003) This issue returns in Chapter 12.

⁵¹⁷ See Chapter 5 and just above in the "my people".

⁵¹⁸ *Stern*, September 26, 1985

⁵¹⁹ Fitzgerald, *Cities On A Hill*, p. 380

soul to them. Day and night, I was available to them. They came to my house 24 hours a day. They woke me in the middle of the night, even when I was with my lover. Nobody was ever turned away from my house. It took the heart of a mother to take care of so many people."⁵²⁰

After fleeing Rajneeshpuram in September 1985, without shooting off anything more dangerous than her mouth, Sheela told a German newspaper that she was "optimistic about the fact that many sannyasins will follow her".⁵²¹ Apparently, her confidence was a tad misplaced. Because when she decamped only 20 went along, and all of them were bound to her at the wrist, hip, ankles and throat by crimes plotted and committed. Everyone else danced in the streets.⁵²²

Starting in the summer of 1984, the heavy display of light weaponry at Rajneeshpuram gave rise to a rash of rumors - this time slightly more founded than previous ones - about the group's paramilitary aggression, which remain intact to this day.⁵²³ But a strong case can be made to show that they were more than just an expression of Sheela's stretched to the limit nerves. That is, they were necessary. And it is not only likely that the guns prevented bloodshed through "strategic deterrence", but also probable and provable.

"I was originally horrified by the sight of the guns," said Ma Deva Sarito, a Texas sannyasin who worked on Rajneeshpuram's photographic team. "Here was the world's gentlest, most intelligent man riding side by side with the ugliest symbols of humanity's stupidity. I couldn't understand it. But, on the other hand, we were surrounded by people whose idea of expressing themselves was to shoot holes in the Rajneeshpuram highway signs and put Osho's face on a T-shirt behind the crosshairs of a rifle sight. We were forced to speak a language they could understand."

Sheela instructed the photographers to get the most possible menacing looking shots of Rajneesh's security force. "Our answer to their display of guns," Sarito said, "was an even bigger display of guns. It was a crude form of dialogue, maybe even a bit overdone. But it

⁵²⁰ *Australian Daily News*, June 20, 1988. In the context of this mother complex, it is interesting to zip back to the beginning of this chapter and reconsider my hypothesis about Sheela being "movie-driven". On more than one occasion I heard that one of her favorite films was *Mata Bharat (Mother India)*, the 1957 epic that tells the story of Radha, a classic earth mother trying to raise her two sons without a husband. While some contend that it is a powerful and emotional tale of rural life, class conflict, history and courageous perseverance against all the odds, in my opinion it is a long winded (almost three hours) melodrama.

⁵²¹ *Frankfurt Abendpost*, September 26, 1985

⁵²² See Chapter 9.

⁵²³ As usual, these rumors occur in a vacuum and don't take into account the gun happy culture the sannyasins were living in. Without relying on deliberately provocative films - such as Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* - a lot of statistics could be garnered to substantiate this. For example, "Almost half of all American households exercise this right [to bear arms], and together they own 200m guns." (*The Economist*, January 16, 1993) One year later the estimate had shot up to 212 million (*The Economist*, March 26, 1994). And the fact that the US has one of the highest murder rates in the world. The push comes to shove sequence can be further emphasized by recalling what Bob Harvey had said in the early days. "Hell, I'm the only one down there with a gun." See Chapter 4.

was necessary and it worked. I have no doubt that it prevented a lot of people from driving down into the ranch and shooting the place up, or worse."⁵²⁴

Frances Fitzgerald, however, saw the guns through the heightened, hysterical perspective of ex-sannyasins.

A woman who described herself as a former aide to Sheela told me with some certainty that the commune was involved in a triangle trade of gold, drugs, and arms across the world: the guns and drugs were hidden in caves, and the whole operation was (she suspected) run from a giant computer installed in Rajneesh's house. Another ex-sannyasin told me (though not for attribution) that the Rajneeshees had infiltrated the highest levels of the state government, and had blackmailed Oregon politicians with photographs of themselves in compromising positions with Rajneeshee women. Still another ex-sannyasin - now one of the group's most outspoken opponents - told me there might be an esoteric death cult in the commune: a sannyasin who had just left the ranch had told me there were rumors of an inner sanctum where the goddess Kali was worshipped and there had been a human sacrifice.⁵²⁵

The female ex-sannyasin, who told Fitzgerald "with some certainty" some of the items in this soup of insidious insinuations, was Kate Strelley, a self confessed former heroin addict who eventually provided the background information for a hatchet job called *Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh: The Ultimate Game*. This alleged insider had spent less time at Rajneeshpuram than Fitzgerald herself.

Another source was Hugh Milne, who had spent seven years in Poona as the "ashram stud". Then in Rajneeshpuram, when it was time to put down his prick and take up a pick and shovel - and work between 84 and 90 hours a week - he experienced a *crise de conscience*, a dark night of the neck and lower vertebrae. After less than a year in Oregon, 1981-82, he left. He too wrote a book, *Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh: The God That Failed*, and was successfully sued for slander because of statements made in it.⁵²⁶

Beyond the absence of coherence in Fitzgerald's "eyewitnesses" - not very critical or credible listening on her part - was her failure to follow up with a smidgen of independent research and fact checking. Something *The New Yorker*, the original publisher of her account, takes unwarranted pride in. For example, while one reporter from *The*

⁵²⁴ We return to this theme in Chapter 7.

⁵²⁵ Fitzgerald, *Cities On A Hill*, p. 345. Two more not incidental things can be mentioned about this quote. One, much of it reminds me of the hysteria of high profile "cult" dropouts (see Chapter 4, note 315) - either real and actually believed by them, or a pumped up strategy to get and keep the attention of the media. Or both. And two, Ms. Fitzgerald is engaging (and not for the last time: see Chapter 12) in an ancient rhetorical gimmick, which despite thousands of years of near constant use is still in perfect working order. Namely, introducing each I'm going to sue your pants off statement with a so and so "told me" (see Chapter 5, note 384), she "gets the satisfaction of saying something without the technical responsibility". (Ann Bergren, "The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite: Tradition and Rhetoric, Praise and Blame", *Classical Antiquity*, April 1989, p. 20)

⁵²⁶ In London in November 1988. Milne reappears in Chapter 11.

Oregonian was actually found in a Rajneesh hotel making love to someone else's wife, she was not a "Rajneeshee woman". And *Oregonian* politicians themselves were perversely un-American in their refusal to be caught in compromising positions with sannyasin women or men.⁵²⁷

There was no Kali worship. No human sacrifices. No caves where drugs and guns were found. In fact, there might not have been any caves. Even *The Oregonian*, which eventually went after the sannyasins tooth and nail - a dedicated investigative team doing nothing else for 13 months and eventually spending about \$250,000 on this story alone - came up with nothing on the drug theme. Leslie Zaitz, one of those reporters, said, "we heard from the start that they were involved in drug traffic, that some of their income came from it. We spent a lot of time on this aspect but could find no evidence in the United States of any link to illegal drug traffic."⁵²⁸ I wonder if they ever bothered to print that "non-fact".

As for the guns, former Oregon State Police Superintendent John Williams told me that Navy SEAL divers, working in close coordination with the FBI, dragged both lakes at Rajneeshpuram looking for cases of them. They never found anything. But if we want to be hyperbolically skeptical about the matter - a skepticism not immediately distinguishable from around the bend paranoia - that doesn't mean they weren't there!⁵²⁹

Other research utterly demolished allegations of international arms involvement. Affidavits filed in federal courts before Fitzgerald's work went to press described Sheela and her friends touring America shopping for guns. *The Oregonian* discovered that they went looking in at least 25 gun shops. On at least three occasions they tried to buy a couple of foreign made automatic weapons, but the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) squelched the deals.⁵³⁰

Apparently, the reporters for *The Oregonian* and the bumbling sannyasins didn't have a clue about how the on the street gun traffic in America works. So it would have behooved them all to take a tip or two from those in the know. Like the limey journalist writing for *The Economist*.⁵³¹ According to him, of the 284,000 gun dealers in America, only about 20,000 had proper stores - and about half of them were pawnbrokers.

⁵²⁷ That wasn't true in Portland and Washington, DC (see Chapter 13).

⁵²⁸ Ron Lovell, "Dissecting a Sect", *The Quill*, May 1986, p. 16. *The Quill* is a professional publication, written by journalists for journalists. For more on *The Oregonian's* hostility, see Chapter 13.

⁵²⁹ For more on this sickness, see Chapters 9, 10 and 11.

⁵³⁰ "For Love and Money, July 9, 1985. While widespread sannyasin involvement in gun running and dastardly derring-do remain highly disputable at best, the same cannot be said for Frances Fitzgerald's own father, Desmond Fitzgerald. A CIA veteran who made his reputation in the late 1950s as a clandestine operator in the Far East, he became head of "Task Force W", and was charged with the assassination of Fidel Castro. In connection with that assignment, he met with Rolando Cubela, a senior official in Castro's government, in a hotel room in Paris on November 22, 1963. He passed the Cuban a pen/syringe and told him to use Black Leaf 40 - a deadly poison - to assassinate his boss. As Cubela was leaving the room, Fitzgerald was told that his own boss had just been shot in Dallas. But even after Kennedy's death he "would soldier on ... in his efforts to assassinate Fidel Castro". (Seymour Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot*, pp. 377 and 382, and the Net.)

⁵³¹ "Home on the range", *The Economist*, March 26, 1994. See also Chapter 7.

"The rest sell guns out of car boots [trunks], or at gun shows and flea markets. They do not buy solely from manufacturers. Until January this year [1994], federal-law-enforcement agencies also sold off their surplus weapons - some 60,000 handguns and rifles, including the quasi-military 9mm automatic pistols so popular with young bloods." They also could have gone to the Kmart or Walmart.

If the sannyasins had been state of the art adept in the arms trade, they should have been running guns, not running after them.⁵³² If they wanted the most sophisticated stuff, they could have looked them up in the catalogues and had them sent over with the pizzas. In contrast to the sea of lethal hardware they were swimming in, the Rajneeshees had stock piled a piffling 16 Uzis, 15 Galil assault rifles, and about 22 .357 Magnum pistols.⁵³³ They didn't own one machine gun or any other automatic weapons. A very thorough state and federal post mortem on Rajneeshpuram also failed to discover any bombs, grenades, Russian recoilless rifles or anti-tank armaments.

Yet the rumors and young and old wives' and husbands' tales of an immense arsenal persisted and probably still do. In February 1989 US Attorney Charles Turner told me, "He [Rajneesh] had the most heavily armed law enforcement entity in the state of Oregon, including the State Police".⁵³⁴

Across the Atlantic Ocean in 1984, Europe in general and Germany in particular was following the Rajneesh story with accelerating interest. There was a wealth of short pieces in the tabloids, mostly doing a booming business in old news: the "cults" and "brainwashing" thing. But there was also a growing interest in the sannyasins' economic strength.

⁵³² See the comments of Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith in Chapter 9.

⁵³³ *The Oregonian*, July 9, 1985. Guns were also a running rumor about Jonestown. As early as 1980, Dr. James Richardson tried to put the matter into perspective. "Guns were present in Jonestown, but they totalled only about 30, and were not automatic weapons. This ratio of guns to people is considerably lower than the guns-to-people ratio in the U.S. as a whole (estimates range up to 200 million guns in America), and it is not surprising that some guns were present in the jungle setting." ("People's Temple and Jonestown: A Corrective Comparison and Critique", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, September 1980, p. 246). John Hall also addressed this issue (*Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, pp. 214f, 293 and 357)

⁵³⁴ Kim Johns, a former arms dealer in Medford, Oregon and later defense contractor for the US government, claimed in an October 1990 Portland, Oregon television program (*KOIN-TV*) to have sold the sannyasins automatic weapons. He also said they had helicopters equipped with gunnery and electronic scanners on the ground. While those statements are unsupported by any evidence that I have been able to uncover, and in fact contradict it (see Chapter 7), some of what he said slots effortlessly into something I did come across. In that program, which dealt with covert plots on Rajneesh's life, Johns' said, "There was a legitimate fear on their [the sannyasins] part of the Bhagwan's life being in jeopardy by someone other than" At this point, he paused and said, "an entity of some sort like the federal government. Someone big." Johns said he was not talking about "ranchers with pitchforks and shotguns". He was talking about some real "heavy hitters". We will be moving on to those plots in the next chapter and returning to this program in Chapter 12.

In January 1984 the international edition of *Time* reported that sannyasins operated eight major discos in Germany. "Far Out" in Berlin attracted 20,000 customers per month and 250,000 in its first year.⁵³⁵ By the summer of 1984, there were an estimated 50,000 sannyasins in Germany. Five thousand lived in communes. They operated about 70 businesses and netted about \$6 million per year. Besides the discos, the sannyasins ran 20 of the nation's 50 vegetarian restaurants.

In February 1984⁵³⁶ *Der Spiegel*, one of Germany's most prestigious and respected magazines, ran a 10 page article on "The Businesses of the Bhagwan Sect". On the cover was a cartoon of a bare breasted female disciple of "the sex guru" sitting in a full lotus yoga posture on top of a cash register while Deutschmark notes floated magically around her. The manager of the sannyasin disco in Dortmund told *Der Spiegel*, "We count on 20,000 paying guests per month." The Berlin disco was going for four million customers per year, and the one in Cologne three million. The sannyasins also wanted to become hotel proprietors. "We will set it up like a chain, similar to how Hilton does it," said one sannyasin in Cologne, with either consummate *Hochmut*⁵³⁷ or terminal *naïveté*.

There was concerted opposition to the sannyasin surge. The Wiesbaden municipal authorities refused them a disco license on the grounds that by visiting them "youths and young grown ups" are prone "to succumb in the emphatically loose atmosphere to the influence of the representatives of the Bhagwan movement and finally become life incapable individuals through destruction of their own personality".⁵³⁸

But *Die Welt* noted that those turning up at these discos were not the typical young set. Rather, they were those "who have their first youth behind".⁵³⁹ A woman's magazine noted that more than half the visitors were women. They liked the energy, cleanliness and being able to enjoy a night out without idiots making "stupid passes" at them.⁵⁴⁰

In November 1983 the Dusseldorf president of regional administration advised his city manager and deputy clerks to "examine applications for restaurant licenses to find out if followers of the Bhagwan sect were behind them". Deutsche Bank in Hamburg, Cologne and Munich were against handling sannyasin money, and some of their accounts were summarily shut. Frederick-Wilhelm Haack, the Bavarian Protestant parson who as early as 1980⁵⁴¹ had been ringing the bells about the Rajneesh peril said the western push of the movement in the form of financial investments in the establishment was "eminently threatening". Thomas Gandow, of the Protestant Church in Berlin, described sannyasins working in the "Far Out" disco as "zombies who no longer have anything in common with the standards and foundations of our culture".⁵⁴²

⁵³⁵ January 16, 1984

⁵³⁶ February 6, 1984

⁵³⁷ arrogance

⁵³⁸ *Der Spiegel*, February 6, 1984

⁵³⁹ *Die Welt*, January 21, 1984

⁵⁴⁰ *Brigitte*, May 16, 1984

⁵⁴¹ See Chapter 2.

⁵⁴² Gandow headed one of the two main anticult movements in Germany, the *Archiv für Religions und Weltanschauungsfragen* (Irving Hexham and Karla Poewe, "'Verfassungsfeindlich': Church, State and New

It sounds amazingly like what ancient Romans used to say about early Christians.

Those who confessed to being Christian were at once arrested, and on their testimony a great crowd of people were convicted, not so much on the charge of arson, but of hatred of the entire human race. They were put to death amid every kind of mockery. Dressed in the skins of wild beasts, they were torn to pieces by dogs, or were crucified, or burned to death: when night came, they served as human torches to provide lights These Christians were guilty, and well deserved their fate, but a sort of compassion for them arose, because they were being destroyed to glut the cruelty of a single man and for no public end.⁵⁴³

Pastor Joachim Biallas from Lower Saxony described Rajneesh as a "mixture of Rasputin and Arthur Rubenstein". Walter Schroder from Bielefeld said, "Mammon and belief have entered into an extraordinary alliance". Professor Friedhelm Farthmann, Nordrhein-Westfalen's Minister for Labor and Social Affairs, said, "the Bhagwans use their discos to capture people in the worst possible way".

A German court ordered him to put a lid on it. But that didn't crimp his style. "Bhagwan's socially questionable direction needs to be reviled," he said.⁵⁴⁴ Who can stand by and idly watch while his super salesmen "try to allure young people into a realm of total dependence with novel methods," the *Hannoverische Allgemeine* asked rhetorically.

On May 24, 1984, the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France voted 98-28 to urge countries in what was then known as the European Economic Community to tighten controls on the financial dealings of "religious sects" like the Rajneeshees and Moonies. The Parliament resolution "proposed a voluntary code of conduct for the groups, such as

Religions in Germany", *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, 1999, p. 210). Such groups and many mainstream churches were against - sometimes violently so - any scholarly research into "new religions" or "cults". "Consequently", according to the authors of that article, "some German academics, including established professors and graduate students in religious studies, admit that they are reluctant to engage in empirical studies involving participant observation for fear of either losing research funding or of not being able to obtain employment in the future. Many of those we spoke to on this issue [between 1987 and 1995] cited the influence of mainline [sic, "mainstream"] churches as the main reason for not studying new religions empirically.

"Experience shows that such fears are fully justified. In the 1980s a German sociologist produced a number of empirical studies that contradicted theological dogma. The result was a campaign of vilification by a certain cult investigator. This resulted in what Wolfgang Kuner calls 'a hidden campaign' against the man's work, public attacks on his integrity, the loss of university support (including a major grant), and other sanctions.... Apparently, similar attacks were made on other sociologists, with the result that many academics backed away from empirical research into new religions." (221)

⁵⁴³ Tacitus, *The Annals*, 15.44. There has been some learned debate about whether *odio humani generis* should be taken subjectively or objectively. That is, whether the early Christians were being accused of hating the whole human race or being hated by them. But the discourse is merely academic. Because the subjective or objective wasn't going to change how the "whole human race" - in other words, anyone in our group that fits that very restricted description - felt about them. But the former provides a good excuse for the latter and clears away any lingering guilt about how they felt and what they did.

⁵⁴⁴ *Aachener Nachrichten*, June 5, 1984

banning the induction of minors and allowing members unrestricted communication with their families.⁵⁴⁵ Member governments, it said, should tighten laws that give the sects charity status and tax exemptions and should subject the sects to labor and social security laws."⁵⁴⁶ The vote stemmed from a report introduced a month earlier into the Parliament's Committee of Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport by Richard Cottrell, a Conservative Englishman.⁵⁴⁷

The "Cottrell report", as it was called, had originally been designed to confront "problems" stemming from Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. It stressed that "full freedom of religion and opinion is a principle in the Member States and that the Community Institutions therefore have no right to judge the value of either religious beliefs or individual religious practices". Cottrell even said, "There is no doubt in the mind of the author that phenomenon though they may be, the new religious movements, and their variants, will remain a strong feature of the social landscape. It is ultimately therefore a question of equal co-existence."⁵⁴⁸

But when the report hit the Parliament floor for debate, the NRM's - Rajneeshees, Hare Krishna, Scientology and Children of God - were tarred with the same brush. According to the avowedly Christian representatives, they were guilty until proven innocent of: physical and moral coercion; contemptuously exploiting young people and turning them into helpless spiritual, psychological and economic slaves (when not driving them to suicide); and "illegal activities having little to do with religion", such as disinformation campaigns, political subversion and trading in "weapons, drugs and other things". Jonestown - which, as we have already seen, was very much a Christian, not an NRM, thing - was seen as "the logical result" of all new religious movements.

The judgments - which were not confined to any political groups of the right or left - were resisted by some MPs. Jaak Vandemeulebroucke of Belgium said, "In the course of history all religions were always so-called new religious movements or new religious organizations. They were often unpopular and in every case controversial with regard to the establishment and generally held beliefs." Doekte Eisma of The Netherlands said, "The discrimination of the old religions against the new religions is expressed throughout the resolution." But Parliament passed the resolution because "hundreds of thousands of parents in Europe have invested their hope in us".

Meanwhile, back in Oregon, events and interest in Rajneesh and sannyasins were going from hot to hotter. Donna Quick Smith's \$1 million defamation of character suit against Sheela, Rajneesh and two Rajneesh corporations came to a head. After nearly a year in the courts, Multnomah County Circuit Judge Clifford Olsen ordered Rajneesh to appear and give testimony. When his attorneys continued to challenge the decision he put his foot down.

⁵⁴⁵ As if they didn't already have that right.

⁵⁴⁶ *The Oregonian*, June 15, 1984

⁵⁴⁷ Oddly enough, Cottrell returns to our story (see Chapter 11, note 1194).

⁵⁴⁸ He may have said "equal co-existence", but he couldn't have meant it. Because co-existence was one thing, and equality something altogether different.

"He's going to be put under oath and ordered to answer questions. If he refuses, we will deal with that."⁵⁴⁹ If he refused, Judge Olsen said he would issue a warrant and have him arrested. Swami Prem Niren, Rajneesh's attorney, said the sannyasins would fight within the law. But, he added, "*We will not resist arrest under any circumstances, at any time* [emphasis mine]."⁵⁵⁰

The legal defense failed and Judge Olsen ordered Rajneesh to appear in court on Friday morning, August 18, 1984. He didn't show. But Niren relayed two messages from Rajneesh. One, he had agreed to be deposed because he was afraid of the effect his arrest might have on his disciples. And two, he hadn't heard anything about the defamation suit until early that morning. In other words, even with a matter that had cost so much effort, tension and expense, Sheela wasn't telling him everything. This put the lie to her suggestions "that she had asked him and he said he didn't want to do it".⁵⁵¹

Arrangements were made to videotape the deposition at Rajneeshpuram on Sunday, two days later. Garry McMurry, the Portland cult expert and attorney for both Concerned Citizens of Oregon (CCO) and Citizens for Constitutional Cities (CCC), waited at Sheela's house - Jesus Grove - while Rajneesh was chauffeured in "The Tank" past approximately 1700 cheering and dancing disciples. He took the oath on *The Book of Rajneeshism*, slim pickings from his approximately 33 million public words, and expressed his loathing for oathing. Liars lied just as easily under oath.⁵⁵² And for someone who told the truth it wasn't necessary.⁵⁵³ But he agreed to play along, because he was basically not a serious man.

According to McMurry, there was another game going on, and it had everything to do with psychological intimidation. "Once he was admitted to the room where the deposition would be held, McMurry was startled to see that his counsel table - a low coffee table - was set some 40 feet away from the guru. Rajneesh was seated like a king holding court

⁵⁴⁹ *The Oregonian*, August 17, 1984

⁵⁵⁰ *The Oregonian*, August 17, 1984. Swami Niren's statement will be returned to in Chapter 9 when we reconsider the bizarre circumstances surrounding Rajneesh's eventual arrest.

⁵⁵¹ See the remarks of Ma Prem Sangeet at the end of Chapter 5.

⁵⁵² There is an old English proverb, "He that will swear will lie", which has a very long history. Witness the Latin "*Que facile jurat, facile perjurat*" and Cicero's "*Qui mentiri solet, peierare consuevit*" (whoever is used to lying is also accustomed to swearing falsely) (Roland Smith, "Three Obscure English Proverbs", *Modern Language Notes*, November 1950, pp. 442 and 443). Further, "In his *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* [1843], [Jeremy] Bentham considers which 'instruments' tend to secure trustworthiness in evidence, and which are false securities for trustworthiness. It is into the latter category that he puts the oath..... His main reason for rejecting [it] ... (apart from saving the Almighty a lot of overtime and some difficult questions of interpretation) was that mendacity, if called for by an exciting motive, takes place unrestricted by the fact of an oath having been taken." (D. Greer, "Anything but the Truth? The Reliability of Testimony in Criminal Trials", in *Criminal Justice: Selected Readings*, p.174)

All very true. But there is a very definite legal reason for this procedure, which I am in perfect agreement with. Namely, those caught lying under oath are subject to prosecution as perjurers. For more on perjury and perjurers, see Chapters 9 and 10.

⁵⁵³ I recall what Myles Ambrose said (see Chapter 4). "The major thing I remember vividly about the meeting was him saying, 'Mr. Ambrose, I am not going to lie under any circumstances for any reason whatsoever. If they don't want me in this country, I won't stay. I can go somewhere else.' And I said, 'I'm not going to ask you to lie'."

for about 50 persons, with Sheela and other women disciples kneeling on his right. 'And here's Niren on his knees, on the left side of the bhagwan with his lawyer or two other lawyers,' McMurry said. McMurry objected by telephone to Olsen, who ordered the extra spectators out of the room."⁵⁵⁴

McMurry questioned Rajneesh on his view of religion and how his commune worked. Who really was in charge there? If Sheela did something, was she doing it on her own? Or had Rajneesh told her to do it? Rajneesh described the phases of his life's work.⁵⁵⁵

Democracy is a political phenomenon, and democracy takes care of the last person in society, the most ignorant. Democracy is really for the most ignorant. It is a mobocracy. Religion takes care of the highest man, the Buddha, the enlightened, the Christ who has known the truth. Now, there is no question of deciding whether it is true or not by voting, by people who know nothing about it.

In that experiment,⁵⁵⁶ there was no question of democracy. That does not mean that I am against democracy. In politics, democracy is okay. But politics is a lower field. Religion is the highest phenomenon on the earth. In religion it can only be dictatorial. And by dictatorial I don't mean the dictatorship of the masses like in communism. By dictatorial I mean simply the master dictates and the disciple follows. There is no question of whether it is right or wrong. This was my third phase of work.

When that phase was over I moved out of India and I moved into silence. Now the situation and context is totally different. I am no more concerned with the commune, its day-to-day work, its details, its economics, its finances. I am not concerned at all with mundane, worldly affairs. Now my disciples are prepared enough to take care of the commune. I am just an outsider.

They can only ask their spiritual questions to me, nothing else. And if you want to ask spiritual questions, you have to come here like a disciple, sit on the ground in total acceptance, not like the way you are sitting here, interrogating me. This is a different situation.

McMurry fidgeted with his papers while Rajneesh spoke. He had fought so long to ask his questions, but the answers were not to his liking. Rajneesh upbraided him. "I have never come to such a stupid person in all my life. You have not even asked a single relevant question to your case. I'm not here to waste my time. You are looking at your papers."⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵⁴ "For Love and Money", Part 12, *The Oregonian*, July 11, 1985. This scenario fits in very well with the tactics Pratima was describing earlier in this chapter.

⁵⁵⁵ *The Rajneesh Times*, August 24, 1984

⁵⁵⁶ the Poona ashram

⁵⁵⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 20, 1984

The Rajneesh Times printed a good deal of the McMurry-Rajneesh exchange. But, as with the Hunter-Rajneesh encounter at the Portland INS, what was left out was just as - and in some cases, more - interesting than what was put in. "I am not making anybody head of my religion because I don't want any books to be followed," he said. "I don't want people exploiting others in my name. I am not going to be succeeded by anybody. The day I am dead, I am dead. There is no question of my successor."⁵⁵⁸

Rajneesh's words in August 1984 and vision for the future clearly clashed with that of *Mata Bharat* Sheela. She had placed all her bets on succeeding him. In fact, her statements, then and later, show that in her own mind at least it was a *fait accompli*. The sannyasins were her people. Her children. The press came to see her. And if Rajneesh could not get used to a drop in status - as a figurehead in her religion - she would have to write him out of the script.

Sometime after August of the same year she started laying the groundwork for that great work. That's when the manuscript of Rajneesh's reminiscences about his early years was given to her. Along with her associates - who probably took care of both the spelling and grammar - she inserted into the forged Chapter 29⁵⁵⁹ the fabricated adoption story mentioned above. Like that story itself, it was pretty pathetic revisionism. But if you didn't have the other pieces of the puzzle, you probably wouldn't have noticed.

"We were staying with a certain man, Ambalal Patel," the forgery reads, "who was my father's friend. He was so loving towards me that I found in him another father. After the very first day I started calling him *Bapuji*, which means father."⁵⁶⁰ In many ways, this fictional *Bapuji* was more of a father to young Rajah than his own father, and his wife, *Ba*, was also more of a mother. *Bapuji*, "an Oxford graduate", had played an important role in the young boy's education and was "already enlightened".

After Rajneesh's own enlightenment "*Bapuji*" brought Sheela to me [,] and from the very first moment I could see that out of all his children she is the most courageous, intuitive, intelligent and maybe a candidate for enlightenment."⁵⁶¹ Candidate for enlightenment? Isn't everyone? Through literary ventriloquism Sheela got her dummy to say, "Sheela turned out to be one of the most devoted and committed disciples."⁵⁶² She also got him to predict that he might die in 1984.⁵⁶³

The whole set up points to the second reason for the Bollywood take on the *Dynasty* adoption yarn. In 1984 Sheela was already preparing for life after Rajneesh's death. Perhaps she was preparing his death as well.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁵⁸ *The Oregonian*, "For Love and Money", July 1985

⁵⁵⁹ *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood*, first edition, September 1985, pp. 401-14. Scholars studying forgery in texts should return to this to find a good, but clumsy example of how it's done.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 405

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 412

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 414

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 413

⁵⁶⁴ See Rajneesh's comments during the Friday, September 13, 1985 press conference and later in Chapter 9.

Five days after the deposition, on August 25, 1984, the jury, by a vote of 10-2, found Sheela, Rajneesh and others "not guilty".⁵⁶⁵ But that small victory for sannyasins didn't stop the press from publishing articles and opinions with more incite than insight. **TALK OF WAR** was a banner headline for a *Eugene Register Guard* story.⁵⁶⁶ Anonymous investigators were privately voicing "apprehension over the level of animosity between Rajneeshees and Oregonians and question whether the law could be enforced peacefully should the legal tide eventually turn against the Rajneeshees".

But the author failed to balance it out and ask what would happen if the legal tide turned the other way. Apparently, he knew as well as everyone that there was no chance of that happening. "I don't know the state of mind out there," said one investigator who spoke on condition that his name not be used. 'I think if any federal agency went in there, they would have to use a great deal of caution.'" The author quoted Sheela as saying, "If somebody's coming to destroy because of their bigotry, because they think this is how they want us to live, we'll meet them with three times their force."

"A lot of people are concerned about potential violence out there now," said State Representative Wayne Fawbush. "If they continue to lose in the courts, which I'm sure they will, then we will have to be much more careful. They are getting very frustrated and will be getting more so."⁵⁶⁷ "What I see here today is the beginning of civil war in this county," Mayor KD said in mid July when the Wasco County Court in The Dalles voted unanimously to delete Rajneeshpuram's comprehensive plan from the county's.⁵⁶⁸ He told the hostile audience that if they wanted a war, it was fine with him. Some of those present clapped and cheered.⁵⁶⁹ They wanted a war.

"We certainly had meetings," former Governor Atiyeh told me in March 1989. "We had meetings on about everything. That's part of what I'm trying to say to you. The Rajneeshees were consuming time, emotions and efforts. We would have meetings prior to the hunting season. We were worried that an angry Oregonian with a hunting rifle might go out there. We'd worry, 'Is somebody going to shoot some Rajneeshee out of anger and then that will trigger everything. Because, I presume, they were looking for a cause to become more up-brazen [sic]. We had a whole lot of ifs. I used to tell people that the followers might kill the Bhagwan, and then of course claim that somebody else did it. Then they'd have a murder."

I asked how many scenarios he had. He laughed. "We had a bunch of them. Let's say there is a great deal of excitement and all of a sudden a bunch of Oregonians decided that they will clean out the place, and the Rajneesh are there with their automatic weapons,⁵⁷⁰ and all of a sudden there is this shooting starting to take place. Well, if you draw that

⁵⁶⁵ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 26, 1984

⁵⁶⁶ *Eugene Register Guard*, August 26, 1984

⁵⁶⁷ Win McCormack, "Rajneeshpuram: Valley of Death", *Oregon Magazine*, September 1984

⁵⁶⁸ For the background of that plan see Chapter 4.

⁵⁶⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, July 12, 1984

⁵⁷⁰ Yet another reference to the Rajneeshees' non-existent automatic weapons. For more on this never ending story, see Chapter 7.

scenario out, if you let it go for a while, pretty soon it adds up. More Oregonians join the effort and you've got yourself a major battle going on."

Perhaps only a few people in Oregon, either inside or outside Rajneeshpuram, had enough coolness or perspective to examine the sequence of events that had brought the state to such a fever pitch. But with the long look of history - which tends to be excessively dismissive of what it's like on the ground and in the heat of the moment - we should now be able to see that at this point the Rajneeshees were not trying to overrun Wasco County, Oregon, the US and the world. They were trying to protect themselves from being run over by and out of them.

"There were automatic weapons," said Greg Leo, the INS' public information officer, who had a cartoon character's knack for overstatement and an uncanny ability to get almost everything wrong. But to give him his due, he was exceptionally poorly placed to pick up even scraps of what was really going on 3,000 plus miles north by northwest. His ears were being filled with junk from left and right, particularly the agency's over the top and tugging at the leash investigators in Portland.

They were extremely well organized and belligerent. It was the kind of thing where when you drove your car onto the property, they tailed you. Most private citizens who went on to the Rajneesh property were strip searched. They shook you down pretty good. Their excuse was that they were looking for weapons and explosives, that maybe you were an assassin trying to kill the Bhagwan. These people were super paranoid and armed to the teeth! They were certifiably paranoid and extraordinarily dangerous. These people were violent. Some of the stories I've heard still curdle my blood. Their basic paranoia was that they would react violently to anything that appeared to be a threat.

CHAPTER 7: RUMORS WITH A VIEW

Of course there is neither good nor evil. Good is that of which you are not afraid; evil is that of which you are afraid. So if you destroy fear, you are spiritually fulfilled.... When you are in love with life, and you place that love before all things, and judge by that love, and not by your fear, then this stagnation which you call morality will disappear.... I am not concerned with societies, with religions, with dogmas, but I am concerned with life, because I am Life.⁵⁷¹

But if the domestic enemy begins to make unpleasant noises, then something has to be done about it.... At the liberal end, you have the viewpoint expressed in the Trilateral Commission study, which is concerned quite explicitly with restoring apathy, passivity and obedience so that democracy in the preferred sense can survive, and that again reflects a conception of the population as the enemy which has to be controlled or suppressed or somehow marginalized.

I might mention in this connection that the rise of clandestine operations is a reflection of the strength of the domestic enemy. If the enemy, the population, can't be controlled by force, can't be indoctrinated, and can't be marginalized, it will in fact drive the state underground. The government will have to carry out its actions in secret [,] because the domestic enemy won't tolerate them. The scale of clandestine operations is often a very good measure of domestic dissidence.⁵⁷²

By July 24, 1984 desperation was the prevailing climate. Not at Rajneeshpuram in general, but in the minds of Ma Anand Sheela, Swami Krishna Deva, and other upper cadre officials. On that Tuesday Sheela called a top secret meeting in her Jesus Grove home to discuss throwing some major monkey wrenches into the upcoming Wasco County elections.

Like most ultra hush hush meetings, the price of admission was high. One that the vast majority of those in the lower ranks would never have dreamed of paying. For everyone on hand would be irrevocably compromised by what was said - and not said - and directly or indirectly implicated in the ensuing crimes.

That guilt was bright lined two years later when former Rajneeshpuram Mayor Swami Krishna Deva, then known as David Berry Knapp, and Ava Avalos were singing for their supper. According to a June 22, 1986, statement of "expected evidence" - evidence the US Attorney's office would have presented had the case gone to trial - Sheela's plan was to make many people in The Dalles sick on election day so they couldn't vote.

⁵⁷¹ Jiddu Krishnamurti, *Let Understanding be the Law*, talks in response to questions at the 7th International Camp of the Order of the Star held at Ommen, The Netherlands in August 1928, August 6, 1928.

⁵⁷² Noam Chomsky, Interview on *KGNU* Radio, Boulder, January 24, 1988

After the [July 24, 1984] meeting, Knapp said that Ma Anand Puja⁵⁷³ gave him an eyedropper full of a liquid he believed contained salmonella bacteria. Knapp said he went to one of the affected restaurants at The Dalles, Oregon, and put the liquid on the food in the salad bar. Knapp said he didn't believe anyone became ill from his activity and said that defendant Sheela later became upset when people did not become sick as a result of Knapp's efforts.

Krishna Deva also accompanied Sheela and Puja on a trip to The Dalles in August to explore the possibilities of blowing up the Wasco County Planning office. They stopped at a grocery store en route. According to him, Sheela said, "Puja, let's go have some fun". They then poured a liquid substance, believed to be a salmonella culture, over the lettuce in the produce section. "We will make everyone sick," Puja said, again according to a now on the other side of the fence KD.

Both were reportedly "very upset" when, apparently nothing nasty happened. In the second week of September, Ava Avalos, a chubby, dark haired Mexican American girl,⁵⁷⁴ was given blue clothes, a wig and six plastic vials filled with brown liquid. She was told to dump it into coffee creamers and salad bars in at least three restaurants. The government document does not say whether anyone was affected by her actions. But two weeks later, on September 24, there was a massive outbreak of salmonella poisoning in The Dalles, which was traced to contaminated food in at least ten restaurants. One of the 750 affected was the daughter of Rick Cantrell, one of the Wasco County judges who had voted in favor of the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram.⁵⁷⁵

According to the key government witnesses, Puja boasted about "really having done it right". Sheela complimented her for doing "such a good job poisoning all those people". Many of the stories emanating from the showcase sannyasins, which created each and every state and federal argument against other sannyasins - not cases, because none of the charges were actually tested in courts of law with hard evidence and real back and forth going into details and slogging it out⁵⁷⁶ - were frankly incredible. But there was ample evidence coming from other quarters to show that salmonella poisoning had occurred and that Sheela, Puja, KD and AA were culpable.

"KD was extremely helpful," US Attorney Charles Turner told me. What he did not say was that KD had to be very helpful. Otherwise, they would have thrown the whole legal library at him.⁵⁷⁷ "He gave us an enormous amount of information about other aspects, including the wiretapping, the plots to kill, the poisoning case, and also how the political entity, the city, was formed. He was extremely helpful." In exchange for their help, KD and AA were granted immunity for their involvement in The Dalles poisoning and other

⁵⁷³ a nurse originally from the Philippines

⁵⁷⁴ For more on Ava Avalos, see Chapter 13.

⁵⁷⁵ See Chapter 3. He and his wife, Idonna, didn't hold a grudge. I found it hard to believe, but that's the kind of people they were.

⁵⁷⁶ See Chapter 8, note 728. See Chapter 13 for an apparent exception to this rule.

⁵⁷⁷ We will be returning to this aspect in Chapter 11.

acts of violence, such as the Sunday, January 13, 1985 firebombing of the Wasco County Planner's office.

"Did Krishna Deva directly link any of these criminal activities to Rajneesh," I asked Turner.

"No. I don't think he His impressions or feelings he had were based upon the relationship between Sheela and Rajneesh."

"So there was nothing that you and I would call in the real world 'hard evidence'?"

"Well, I don't know what you refer to as 'hard evidence'."

"Direct testimony: 'I heard him say to her'."

"Do you mean a smoking gun?"

"Yes."

"The answer is no. But in my business I frequently think the circumstantial evidence is far more persuasive. I am more persuaded by that in many cases than I am by direct evidence. They say in the legal business, 'When the judge instructs the jury, there is no difference between direct and circumstantial evidence. There is no difference. One is not better than the other. When the jury comes to weigh the evidence, they are weighed exactly the same.'"⁵⁷⁸

I asked Turner's former assistant, Robert Weaver, "Was there any evidence, direct or circumstantial, that linked Rajneesh to the more violent crimes of Sheela?"

"I would say there was evidence that led me to believe he was involved in those," he said.

"What kind of evidence?"

"Beyond that, I can't tell you. It's not a matter of public record."⁵⁷⁹

I asked the same of Robert Hamilton, Oregon's assistant attorney general who headed the organized crime division in Salem and put together the state's cases against Sheela, Puja and others for violent crimes. "Did you ever find any evidence against Rajneesh for conspiracy in or complicity with any of the crimes that Sheela allegedly perpetrated?" He replied, "Sheela will say that he was. Sheela will say that. And Krishna Deva, one of our cooperating witnesses, will make a case."

"What did he say? Is the case going to happen?"

"No. No. No. Krishna Deva will make a case for you that Rajneesh was culpable, involved and knowledgeable about plots that went against the external enemies of the commune. He will say that if you analyze what happened and when, and you listen to Rajneesh's discourses, that there are certain key words and phrases that KD will use to show knowledge on Rajneesh's part. KD believes that. It may be true. But with him, you still probably would need Sheela to make the case."

It sounded like reading tea leaves to me, I said. "Did he give you any real evidence?"

"That's evidence," he affirmed. He thought Krishna Deva was being truthful and was

⁵⁷⁸ Which is one way of recommending stuffing as much "evidence" into the court record as the judge will tolerate, no matter what its quality. Or, in layman's terms, "throwing shit at the wall and seeing what sticks". See the Charlotte bail hearings in Chapter 10.

⁵⁷⁹ The issue of what is, and what is not, "a matter of public record" comes up again in Chapters 10 and 12.

trying to be helpful to prosecutors. I didn't say that what people believed or were trying to do didn't, or shouldn't, carry any weight in legal cases. That was equally true of what Myles Ambrose thought about the virgin birth,⁵⁸⁰ me about reincarnation,⁵⁸¹ Betty Lou Oplinger about Rajneesh not being a religious leader,⁵⁸² or Krishna Deva and him about Rajneesh's level of involvement in, and legal and moral culpability for, criminal deeds discussed and committed. I didn't say that because I thought Hamilton had already learned it at law school. The only thing that counted was what you could prove.

Hamilton did, however, concede that in order to prosecute Rajneesh, "even viewing it at its best, two other things would have to occur. We would probably have to spend an enormous amount of time investigating and corroborating. And we would probably need Sheela's cooperation." He paused and sighed hopelessly. "And who would put Sheela on the stand in their case? I don't know if 'pathological liar' is a broad enough term to describe her."

"What was your estimate, as a hard boiled realist who has to live in the real world, of Krishna Deva's 'evidence' against Rajneesh?"

"Wasn't sufficient," he said.

Krishna Deva claimed credit for the second prong in the election takeover scheme - the busing in of about 6,000 homeless people from around the nation to vote. "KD has admitted that the idea of bringing in the homeless for the election was his," Dave Frohnmayer said in July 1987. "They thought if they could bus in enough people, they could take over political power. But they miscalculated by several thousand people."⁵⁸³ It's possible, however, that the plan stemmed from Mayor KD's too literal interpretation of an outside political adviser's snide remark. "The only way you guys could win in Wasco County is to have 20,000 people here on election day."⁵⁸⁴

The "Share-A-Home" program, as it was called, was unveiled at the end of August 1984 in Buddha Hall. It wasn't pitched as a can't miss scheme to take over Wasco County, but, rather, as a way of sharing the commune's abundance, meditation and the bliss of being near Rajneesh with the less blessed. Still, the shock and dismay was palpable even among

⁵⁸⁰ See Chapter 4.

⁵⁸¹ See Chapter 2.

⁵⁸² See Chapter 4.

⁵⁸³ In other words, Frohnmayer was conceding that the sannyasins didn't have a snowball's chance in hell of actually accomplishing "their goals", even if that's what the now severely out of it, bunker mentality Rajneesh bigwigs were trying to do. That is, the takeover was never a credible threat. See Bernie Smith (Chapter 8). For another opinion see John Williams' (also Chapter 8).

⁵⁸⁴ Apparently, bringing in the vote was as much a part of good old fashioned Oregon politics as bringing it out. "Up to now, the rum-handlers of the town [The Dalles] had managed to hold themselves in place by voting all the cow-punchers who hit town just before election, and by running in hoboes, section-gangs, and all members of the dry party who liked beer, but didn't like to pay for it. All told, these reinforcements gave them just enough of a lead to win with. The dry party used to try to keep even by hauling in the inmates of the poor-farm, but there weren't enough of them." (Harold Lenoir Davis, "A Town in Eastern Oregon", *The American Mercury*, January 1930, p. 81)

the knee jerk enthusiastic.⁵⁸⁵ For the majority of disciples at that time, sannyas was a free form dive into one's own mystery, and that had little to do with charitable works, preaching an interminable list of do's and don'ts, and saving masses of lost, not damned, souls. How could you help others when you yourself were lost?

Rajneesh started speaking again three months after the August meeting. In December he said, "This dress I am giving you is simply so that you start having a distance from the crowd, so that the crowd pushes you out and does not allow you in. Otherwise you would like to be inside. Who wants to be outside the crowd - it is so cozy there, so warm."

I give you this dress simply as a strategy, a device so that people will avoid you; wherever you go, people will turn away. That's the only way to save you; you cannot mix with the crowd. Otherwise it would have been easier for me and easier for my sannyasins if I had not made you different looking from other people. Many more people would have come here more easily. But I am not interested in many more people. I am not a politician, I am not a pope; what do I have to do with many people?

I am interested only in those chosen few - intelligent, courageous, capable of coming out in the cold and dropping the coziness of the crowd and the mob. Just in the beginning it feels cold; soon your body has its own system of creating warmth. Your being starts creating its own aroma.⁵⁸⁶

Thus "Share-a-Home" was a kick in the teeth to Rajneesh's entire approach. But at the time it was launched he was publicly silent and Sheela's word was law. So sannyasins flew off in all directions - to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, New York, Washington, DC, New Orleans, Phoenix, Houston, Cincinnati, Memphis, Puerto Rico - to find those living in no income housing.

In the good old days Americans had had enough dignity and decency to keep their poverty to themselves and die quietly indoors in the most desolate tenements, ghettos, slums and coke towns. But in the 1980s a sudden blight of high visibility homelessness hit the big city streets. The downwardly mobile slept in subways, train and bus stations, under bridges and in garbage dumpsters. Some were like characters out of Dickens or *My Fair Lady*, with tribal clothes and rituals and names like "Scooter" and "Moondog". They danced, sang, fiddled, painted, did acrobatics on the street, mumbled to themselves, hugged lamp posts. Others were nuts enough to throw away money given them, and even burn \$100 bills.

The rural homeless - the stuff Depression folk lore was made of - were prouder than their city brethren and steadfastly refused to admit that they had spiraled into financial hell. Those who didn't commit suicide after banks foreclosed on mortgages - or shoot the bankers - left farms that had been in their families for generations and squatted somewhere, in railroad cars and paper shacks, kept the holes in their clothes patched,

⁵⁸⁵ Bertrand Russell wrote somewhere that those living under a dictatorship "are condemned to a lifetime of enthusiasm".

⁵⁸⁶ Rajneesh, *From Ignorance to Innocence*, Chapter 14, December 13, 1984

worked at whatever jobs they could get, and waited for their luck to turn or The Good Lord to change his mind.

How many homeless were there? Who were they? And what were they doing in the richest nation in the world in the heart of the Reaganomic Miracle? Depending on who you asked, there were between 600,000 and three million. Depending on the location, 30 to 50% were Vietnam veterans, physically and psychologically mangled after their experiences in Southeast Asia and re-entry into an American society that saw them as killers and psychopaths.

Some were the fallout from more recent conflicts, such as the February 1983 suicide bombing in Beirut. The rest were ex-cons, the mentally deficient turned out of down sizing asylums, alcoholics, drug addicts and the lazy and arrogant flotsam and jetsam of the planet. "One problem that we've had," said the current occupant of the White House, "is the people who are sleeping on the grates, the homeless, who are homeless, you might say, by choice."⁵⁸⁷

Others thought Reagan was more the problem than the solution. When filling out the applications for his current job in 1980 he promised to balance the federal budget by 1983. When he got it he said there would be a \$500 million surplus by 1984. But in 1984 there was a \$185 billion deficit. A slight, 37,000% miscalculation. During his watch tax revenues doubled and national debt nearly tripled. "By 1988, six years of growing trade deficits and capital borrowing have turned the United States from the largest creditor into the largest debtor nation in the world."⁵⁸⁸

Reaganomics, which his vice-president and successor, George Bush, once described as "voodoo economics", spelled massive windfall benefits for the privileged few and disaster for everyone else. There was a cutback in social services and raises weren't keeping up with prices and monstrous rent hikes. The rich were getting richer and the poor were going down the drains and clogging the plumbing.

Unemployment reached its highest levels since the Depression.⁵⁸⁹ "Domestic enemies" like Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky argued that by glorifying the rich and criminalizing the poor, the media was setting its sights on the wrong issues.

Both British and American analysts have noted the periodic intense focus on - and indignation over - "welfare chiselers" by the mass media, and the parallel de-emphasis of and benign attitudes toward the far more important fraud and tax abuses of business and the affluent. There is also a deep-seated reluctance on the part of the mass media to examine the structural causes of inequality

⁵⁸⁷ *Good Morning America*, January 31, 1984

⁵⁸⁸ Frances Fitzgerald, "Death of a Salesman", *Rolling Stone*, February 25, 1988

⁵⁸⁹ Yet when Reagan died in 2004, in the middle of a bitterly contested presidential election, seldom was heard a disparaging word. Not because some critics weren't trying to get in their two cents. But because they couldn't be heard above the general clamor of more prominent and "balanced" media voices heaping praise and tribute on "The Great Communicator" and the semi-religious fervor with which he was canonized.

and poverty. Peter Golding and Sue Middleton,⁵⁹⁰ after an extensive discussion of the long-standing "criminalization of poverty" and incessant attacks on welfare scroungers in Britain, point out that tax evasion, by contrast, is "acceptable, even laudable" in the press, that the tax evader "is not merely a victim but a hero." They note, also, that "The supreme achievement of welfare capitalism has been to render the causes and conditions of poverty almost invisible."⁵⁹¹

The sannyasins hit the parks of New York, San Diego and Washington, DC, beaches of Venice, California, and inner city Christian missions all over the country. They passed out brochures to prospective clients and steered clear of conversations about the nature of God and the Antichrist. On offer was an expense paid trip to paradise, Rajneeshpuram, the city of real love. The sannyasins would bus the homeless to their commune and take care of all their housing, medical and other living expenses for nothing.

No one had to work. And if they weren't happy there, the sannyasins would give them a ticket back to their city of origin. There were, however, a few conditions. The homeless had to be over 18 years old, United States citizens, in tolerably good mental and physical health, and free of alcohol and drug addiction. Originally, they were supposed to have no criminal record. But that was quickly changed to no pending criminal charges and court cases. Program participants were expected to live without drugs, hard liquor, meat and violence.

"All sorts of people were living on the streets," said Swami Satyam Anando, who went on a couple of recruiting expeditions. "Many were ones you wouldn't expect. Bob was a meek older man with glasses, who smiled every time I looked at him. Vincent was a trim black man just out of the Navy, whose father was a college professor. Scooter was a master welder and mechanic. One henpecked guy climbed on the bus with his wife and mother in law."

One guy on the bus, who had a ruptured blood vein in his eye, had been hit on the head with a hammer a few days before. Another went cold turkey on heroin withdrawal with barely a whimper. I didn't think that was medically possible. They'd tell me about being attacked by outraged citizens who wanted them to be locked up or kicked out of town. They were attacked by ordinary gangs, cops and other homeless people. These people have a lot of courage and stamina to survive life on the streets. I don't think I'd make it for a week.

New neighborhoods shot up around Rajneeshpuram, like islands in a volcanic sea. Fences went up around them because, Sheela claimed, the new arrivals were frightened by the wide open spaces and the fences made them feel more secure. By the end of September, when there were 4,000 guests above the 1700 long term residents, the place looked like a refugee camp.

⁵⁹⁰ *Images of Welfare: Press and Public Attitudes to Poverty*

⁵⁹¹ Chomsky and Herman, *Manufacturing Consent*, p. 345

The downtown mall area became alive with people lounging on the benches and grass, talking loudly, playing ghetto blasters, blocking sidewalks, whistling and honking their mouths at the passing female meat. The disco overflowed with guzzlers, cripples who either hadn't washed that day or had just shit themselves a minute before, and hormone juiced studs trying to get some action. "The new arrivals quickly realized that *malas* were a status symbol and a shortcut to scoring the ladies," Satyam said. "It became common for the street people to grab sannyasins by their *malas* and ask, 'Hey, man! How do I get hold of some of those beads?'"

Social services at Rajneeshpuram had never been a problem before, because hardly anyone got sick. But now they were on overload. The medical people were jammed up with constant lice and venereal disease checks and diagnosing a sizable number of chronic disorders the homeless had acquired over years of malnutrition and stressful living. That included leg sores, concussions, mouths full of rotten teeth, alcoholism and an alleged incidence of 40% psychotic malfunctioning.

And there were lines everywhere. People lined up to get beer and cigarette cards and then lined up again to get the beer and cigarettes. People lined up to make requests for clothes and then lined up for the clothes. The lines for meals outside one cafeteria were so exasperatingly long that the best tactic was to finish breakfast and line up immediately for lunch.

Nevertheless, and against all odds, many of the homeless were fitting into their new surroundings. They were doing dynamic in the morning, singing, dancing, getting buzzed by Rajneesh on the daily drivebys, and working. Some went to the garage to repair cars. Others wrote their stories for *The Rajneesh Times*. Like the rest of the sannyasins, the vast majority did manual labor, in the kitchens, on the farms and the various construction sites.

There were an endless series of meetings held with the press and thousands of homeless, where everyone listened intently to good cop-bad cop Sheela accelerating from love and compassion to riot and revolution. She opened the wounds of the oppressed, made visible the subtle chains that bound them to a rotten society, and denounced in red hot chili pepper catch phrases "the dirty, corrupt politicians and the lying establishment press".

In tones reminiscent of give me that old time religion revival meetings, she was hailed as "MOTHER SHEELA!" "SISTER SHEELA!" or "SHEELA! SHEELA! SHEELA!". Silver tongued street preachers stepped up to the microphones and spoke with hands over their hearts, or fists raised high, sometimes in quick succession, sometimes all at once. They pledged a fight to the death to defend Rajneesh, the commune, Sheela, and everyone good from everyone bad.

Outside Rajneeshpuram there was a blizzard of national and international media reports. Closer to the scene of the crime there was an explosion of terror, rage and rumor. "They

have made threats to take over the county by the year 2000," said Wasco County Clerk Sue Proffitt, who noted that the county they wanted to takeover had only 12,000 registered voters. "They are threatening to take over our society, our way of life. We take these threats seriously. It's very heavy, very real."⁵⁹²

"Any act of violence against Rajneeshees will serve their purposes most handily," said Democrat Wayne Fawbush, State Representative for the 56th District. Nicknamed "landslide Wayne" because of the slim majorities he normally won by, he had to be thinking of the effect a sizable bloc of votes would have on his chances for re-election. In November 1982, the sanniyasins had voted 328-0 against him. His bulletins to constituents and potential voters sounded like US embassy warnings for travelers heading to Uzbekistan.

- 1) Stay away from the area unless you have business there.
- 2) If you have to go to Rajneeshpuram, contact the sheriff's department and tell them you're going.
- 3) If you are placed in a confrontational situation, do as they say. Let them arrest you if necessary. Don't give them any excuse for physical confrontation.⁵⁹³

By contrast, his Republican opponent, John Lundell, a 48 year old plumbing contractor and mayor of The Dalles, shot his own foot and then put it in his mouth on a local radio station when he suggested giving the Rajneeshees their own county. He repeated his comments even after the first onslaught of protest calls and hate mail. "I thought it was a heck of a good idea. I still think it's a heck of a good idea."⁵⁹⁴ This time Fawbush did win by a landslide: 13,594 to 6,647.

Reverend Mardo Jimenez, the flag waving fundamentalist who, amazingly enough, was not running for anything, repeated his belief that "the guru is a demon-possessed man. His followers are demon possessed." Win McCormack quoted a German ex-disciple, Eckhart Floether, who described Rajneesh as a necrophiliac. "If I have to be betting, I am betting that it will be ending in some kind of mass suicide."⁵⁹⁵

Joanne Boies of Albany, Oregon, who had ignited the 1983 write in campaign to rid Oregon of the Rajneesh vermin,⁵⁹⁶ wanted to march into Wasco County with 250 people and an escort of soldiers from the US Army Base at Fort Lewis, Washington.⁵⁹⁷ Rednecks wearing "Bigot" caps and "Bhagwan Search and Destroy" T-shirts shouted out slogans at public meetings. "Kick him out!" "Send him back!" "We don't want them taking over the state of Oregon or any other state. This is our country."⁵⁹⁸ A resident of what had been

⁵⁹² *The Bend Bulletin*, September 17, 1984. But see Frohnmayer above.

⁵⁹³ *The Dalles Weekly Chronicle*, September 13, 1984

⁵⁹⁴ *The Oregonian*, September 26, 1984

⁵⁹⁵ *Oregon Magazine*, October 1984

⁵⁹⁶ See Chapter 5.

⁵⁹⁷ *The Dalles Chronicle*, September 10, 1984

⁵⁹⁸ *Democratic-Herald*, October 6, 1984

Antelope said, "If they mess with me or my family, I'll kill those Rajneeshees. They want to make Oregon red. It's going to be red all right. It's going to be their damn blood."⁵⁹⁹

Some believed the state takeover was a *fait accompli*. They thought the sanniyasins owned 300 businesses, more than 500,000 acres of land and were planning a population of 100,000. Some said they were bringing in the street people to form their own army.⁶⁰⁰ Larryann Willis, Democratic candidate for the US Congress in the 4th district, described Rajneeshpuram as a "police state". She said the Share-a-Home program was a "thinly veiled attempt to influence the outcome of state and federal elections in Oregon".

Describing alleged civil rights violations in the former city of Antelope, Willis said, "America has not seen this type of citizen harassment and abuse of civil police powers since the Ku Klux Klan dominated the politics of the old South." "The most notorious instance, one that is nationally recalled by historians now that it is passing beyond living memory, was the post-World War I Ku Klux Klan-inspired hysteria that led to attacks on Catholic schools in the name of 'one hundred percent Americanism.'"⁶⁰¹

For obvious reasons, Willis neglected to mention how powerful the Klan had been in Oregon.⁶⁰²

She also omitted her own history with the sanniyasins. After they had unanimously voted against her in November 1982, she had sought their political and financial support in the spring of 1983. But they turned her down again. In September 1984 she claimed that the Rajneeshpuram police force had "more automatic weapons than all the police agencies in the state combined and enough .233 ammo to supply a battalion for a year".⁶⁰³

The Bend Bulletin tried to put a lid on the rumors. "There is no evidence that the Rajneeshees have stockpiled any illegal arms, officials said, noting that many police agencies have similar weapons, although communities of comparable size probably do not have as many. 'The only difference is that police agencies don't display them' like the Rajneeshees do, said Col. Duane Pankratz of the Oregon State Police, which has prepared an emergency plan for bringing troopers from around the state to the area."⁶⁰⁴

Rumor control telephone numbers were published and operators received 2,000-3,000 calls the first day. Most people, the operators noted, didn't want to find out what was going on. They wanted to make threats and give their opinions. On October 17, Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh published a fact sheet in *The Oregonian* that noted:

⁵⁹⁹ *Province*, Vancouver, British Columbia, October 24, 1984

⁶⁰⁰ Trying to get an army out of the essentially undisciplined homeless would have been more difficult than getting the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth out of Sheela.

⁶⁰¹ Martin Marty, "The Vision of Oregon", *Oregon Humanities*, 1994, p. 7

⁶⁰² See Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 (note 291).

⁶⁰³ *Burns Times-Herald*, September 24, 1984

⁶⁰⁴ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 23, 1984. Some academics think that the increased number and types of lethal hardware in special police squads and more "dynamic", "no knock" tactics are in themselves cause for concern. See, for example, Peter Kraska and Victor Kappeler, "Militarizing American Police: The Rise and Normalization of Police Paramilitary Units", *Social Problems*, February 1997.

- ❖ The Rajneeshees have one helicopter that is not capable of supporting a machine gun.
- ❖ State officials saw no buildup of arms at the city.
- ❖ Fifteen percent of the Share-a-Home "street people" had left. About 3500 remained. There had been no crime wave in the area.
- ❖ There was no evidence to indicate that Rajneeshee children were abused.
- ❖ There were no Rajneeshees receiving welfare or food stamps.

Despite attempts to disseminate some semblance of facts about the sannyasins, the rumors rippled, ripened, and acquired vintage, credibility and "historicity", even in the minds of highly placed officials who should have known better. "The rumors were that they had aircraft with machine guns," John Williams, former Superintendent of the Oregon State Police, told me.

"But they didn't," I said.

"No," he asked skeptically. "I don't know that they didn't."

"I was told that by Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith. He said, 'There's not a helicopter down there that you could mount a machine gun on. It would tear the helicopter apart. You mount a thirty caliber on one of those things, you start pumping rounds, and it's going to tear the fuselage of that helicopter apart.'"

"Oh, that's right," Williams agreed. "But there were all kinds of rumors and you have to be prepared. There was lots of armaments."

On Monday, September 24, Williams ordered aerial surveillance of Rajneeshpuram. As if that hadn't already been happening.⁶⁰⁵ On Wednesday evening, with Governor Atiyeh out of the country, Attorney General Frohnmayer called a behind closed doors emergency planning meeting of 30-40 state and federal officials. The guest list included representatives from the governor's office, the FBI, the US Attorney's office, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), INS, and the Oregon National Guard. The Rajneeshpuram Police Chief was cordially not invited.

"The 46-member Rajneeshpuram Peace Force is being excluded on orders of Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer from emergency planning started this week by state and federal agencies to cope with any trouble in connection with Rajneeshee activities."

All 16 of the full-time peace force members have received training at the Oregon Police Academy, and the force is certified by the state Board on Police Standards and Training. Thirty members are classified as reservists.

Frohnmayer said Thursday, however, that the police agency is not legally constituted since, he said, the city of Rajneeshpuram is not legally incorporated.

⁶⁰⁵ See Chapter 6.

"We have taken the view that they are not entitled to have a police force," he said, noting that he already had taken steps to deny the force access to state and federal computerized crime information networks.

Frohnmayr based his opinion on his lawsuit, pending in U.S. District Court, that claims the city's incorporation violated provisions of the Oregon Constitution requiring strict separation of church and state.⁶⁰⁶

In addition, he said, confidential matters regarding various lawsuits were discussed in the group's first meeting Wednesday, and it would have been inappropriate for Rajneesh representatives to have heard the discussion.⁶⁰⁷

However, Frohnmayr apparently forgot to touch base with the State Police before making his *ex cathedra* pronouncements. "'As far as we are concerned, yes, it [the Rajneeshpuram Peace Force] is an authorized police force,' said Lt. Col. Duane Pankratz, operations commander of Oregon State Police."⁶⁰⁸ And the attorney general's much touted church-state pontifications - which "every major constitutional scholar has subsequently agreed with"⁶⁰⁹ - was shunting from pillar to post, from state and county courts to federal courts and back again, looking for a sympathetic judge to hear it.⁶¹⁰

Once again and not for the last time, he was acting as if it was another example of *Frohnmayr locuta, causa finita*. At the end of September 1984 he went to Washington, DC to confer with officials in the Justice Department. "I even went to the White House," he said. The inter-governmental relations office told him they would watch the situation "very carefully".⁶¹¹

The Economist also reported on the Oregon turmoil. "The conflict has its irony because there is something particularly American about the Rajneeshes, despite their exotic names. On an as yet smaller scale, their venture recalls the movement of the Mormons to remote Utah in the mid-nineteenth century after they were driven out of the mid-west. Like the Mormons, the Bhagwan's disciples have created a town in the desert. They are committed to staying."⁶¹²

⁶⁰⁶ If Rajneeshpuram was allegedly violating state laws, what was the case doing in a federal court?

⁶⁰⁷ *The Oregonian*, September 28, 1984. Obviously, the lawsuits referred to were against them.

⁶⁰⁸ *The Oregonian*, September 22, 1984

⁶⁰⁹ See Chapter 5.

⁶¹⁰ The case was finally decided in 1986, after 99.9% of Rajneeshpuram's residents had left the state and the city was effectively a dead letter. But even then the price was high. Frohnmayr needed former Mayor KD's testimony, and he needed immunity for a lot of violent crimes he had committed and conspired to commit. See Chapter 11.

⁶¹¹ *The Oregonian*, November 17, 1986

⁶¹² *The Economist*, September 24, 1984. According to Marion Goldman, "Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Oregon has been a haven for religious seekers and disciples of unconventional faiths. Sometimes called cults, these unconventional or new religious movements have been part of the American religious landscape from its beginnings." ("What Oregon's New Religions Bring to the Mainstream", *Oregon Humanities*, 1994, p. 31) And "It would be impossible to catalogue the thousands of new religious movements that have taken root in Oregon since the Civil War." (*Ibid.*, p. 32)

The Wall Street Journal watched the turmoil in Oregon with detached amusement. "The sage of 'Rancho Rajneesh' in central Oregon has been an endless delight of the tabloids. Followers of the Baghwan [sic] Shree Rajneesh, an Indian savant, have formed a commune that offends neighboring ranchers and nearly everyone for 200 miles around. But perhaps the experience will help Oregonians rethink some of their own legislative excesses."⁶¹³

The editorial continued, "What's missed in the grossly overheated atmosphere is that it started with Oregon's ultra-environmental land-use laws. Critics of the land-use laws hope the Rajneeshpuram fiasco will underscore the futility of such rigid controls. Maybe the lesson of the whole affair is that if a law is basically ludicrous there will always be someone around to drive it to its absurd conclusion."⁶¹⁴

But within that 200 mile rumor zone Rajneeshpuram was no laughing matter. And there wasn't much room for examining the push and shove sequences - effects being paraded as causes, symptoms masking the sources of the unease - and saying, "Whoa! Isn't there another way?" A *KATU-TV* poll showed 92.2% negativity against the sannyasins. Another survey conducted at the end of October revealed that the prejudice was statewide.

According to Joe Hertzberg, a professional Portland public opinion researcher, two thirds of the people polled agreed that Rajneeshes would lie to protect their interest, and 70% disagreed with the statement, "The Rajneeshes are not hurting anyone and should be left alone". The poll, Hertzberg said, uncovered "a magnitude of prejudice I have not seen in my 11 years of research".⁶¹⁵

The proprietor of the largest gun dealership in The Dalles told a *Los Angeles Times* reporter he had "sold more weapons last month than he did in any other month in 13 years of business".

⁶¹³ *The Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 1984

⁶¹⁴ I never came across anyone who even remotely said anything like that.

⁶¹⁵ *Eugene Register-Guard*, January 11, 1985. It wasn't just Rajneeshes who were experiencing American hostility against NRM's and specific legislation aimed at them. While it never got as high strung as the Rowlatt Act, Nuremburg Laws or the Patriot Act, it was something of a trend. A 1983 study by McClosky and Brill revealed "that a sizable majority of Americans do not consistently support established civil liberties and are intolerant towards unpopular groups that seek to exercise their civil liberties. This indicates that a course of action against unpopular groups such as the new religions [,] which includes the limitations of their civil liberties [,] might gain widespread support from the general public." (James Richardson and Barend van Driel, "Public Support for Anti-Cult Legislation", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1984, p. 412)

James Richardson also wrote, "There is much negative sentiment against so-called 'cults' in the general population, as evidenced by poll data and other information. The general population is wary and even frightened of these new religions and what they are perceived to be doing in our society.... A Gallup Poll done last year revealed that 62% of those surveyed in a nationwide telephone survey in January 1989 stated that they would not like sects or cults as neighbors. This figure was much higher than any other ethnic or religious group surveyed." ("Cult/Brainwashing Cases and Freedom of Religion", *Journal of Church and State*, Winter 1991, p. 71)

"There's lots of inquiries, especially from older folks," he said, adding, however, that he was reluctant to ascribe the interest to the perceived Rajneeshee threat.

But Ernie Newby, a telephone receptionist from Hood River, Oregon, was more specific.

"Some old-time farmer who doesn't want to see his land that's been in the family for several generations taken over is going to get a gun and go in there and blow up that sucker [Rajneeshee]. It's what everyone's talking about."⁶¹⁶

Jefferson County District Attorney Michael Sullivan, who had helped arbitrate the Mardo Jimenez confrontation,⁶¹⁷ said the threats against the commune had increased in intensity and should be taken seriously. Swami Krishna Deva said, "They come by telephone, telegraph and letters, from burning us out, to killing, to kidnapping our children."⁶¹⁸

"There have been many threats made against the Bhagwan's life that can be dismissed as the ravings of disturbed people. But the latest threat seems to be more than this. His disciples say that a 'federal mediator' has told them 150 armed men are planning an attack on Rajneeshpuram in which they will kill the Bhagwan and wreak havoc on the commune."⁶¹⁹

The sannyasins were ringed round by enemies and rumors of violence. Thus it was a perfect setup for someone to go in there and finally do something decisive. No one would ever bother to sort through the rubble to find out what had happened and who was responsible. "Oh, isn't it terrible," the hand wringers would say, as, I'm sure, their Roman counterparts said about the early Christians being thrown to the lions and dogs. Others would be made of sterner stuff. "It was bound to happen. Because they hate the whole world and are completely self destructive. Like Jonestown, didn't I tell you?"

Like the poor, unemployed, homeless and other long term losers, they only had themselves to blame.

John Wayne Hearn joined the Marine Corps as a young man and trained as a large and small weapons specialist in Quantico, Virginia, Parris Island, South Carolina, and Camp

⁶¹⁶ *Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 1984

⁶¹⁷ See Chapter 4.

⁶¹⁸ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 23, 1984

⁶¹⁹ *Melbourne Australian-Herald*, November 2, 1984. The federal mediator the article referred to was, I believe, John Mathias, a black man working at Community Relations at the Department of Justice in Seattle, Washington. During my research he got wind of me, or I of him - I can't remember which - and invited me up to Seattle for a very interesting interview and explosively revealing information. While that certainly whetted my appetite, I didn't salivate like the proverbial Pavlovian dog, because I was used to such chatter not coming close to anything I would call evidence, direct, circumstantial or prophetic. Nevertheless, I drove up from Portland to meet him. Without even offering me some freebie samples of what was on offer, he cut to the chase about how much it was going to cost. I thanked him for his cooperation, but said that buying information wasn't in my nature or budget.

Lejeune, North Carolina. He was sent to Vietnam in April 1966, when he was 21, and served there until the beginning of 1969. He was medically discharged on January 30, 1970 because of bad knees, and was content to live legally and obscurely as a truck driver and freelance photographer for the next 14 years, until September 1984.

He got his kicks reading *Soldier of Fortune* (SOF) magazine, the "Journal of Professional Adventurers", with a circulation of around 180,000 per month. He also kept up with supplementary literature published by its sister enterprise, Paladin Press. Their list included: *Getting Even*; *The Complete Book of Dirty Tricks*; *Survival, Evasion and Escape*; *The AR-15/M-16: A Practical Guide*; *The Remington 1100 Exotic Weapon System*; *The AR-7 Exotic Weapons System, How to Kill*, Vol. I; and *CIA Methods for Explosives Preparation*. Hearn had been married three times and was bunking with a bachelor buddy in Riverdale, Georgia, just outside Atlanta.

Looking down the barrel of his 39th birthday, he suddenly decided to jump back into a life of professional adventure big time. His first *SOF* advertisement, in September 1984, ran, "Ex-Marines, '67-'69 Nam Vets, ex-Drill Instructor, weapons specialist, jungle warfare, pilot, multi-engine, high risk assignments, U.S. or overseas. 404/991-2684". According to a deposition taken on Tuesday, October 13, 1987 at the Cross City Correctional Institution (Cross City, Florida) and later used in a \$22.5 million civil suit against *Soldier of Fortune* in Houston District Court (Texas) in February 1988, it was an instantaneous hit, and he had to run hard to keep up with his skyrocketing schedule.

Over the next six months he received a constant stream of telephone calls - 70 to 140 per week. By his probably not strictly scientific bookkeeping, 90% of the people wanted him to do something illegal. Twenty one to thirty five calls per week were from those who wanted someone bumped off. Other frequently solicited services included picking up and delivering drugs, illegal arms and large volumes of cash. He was contacted to bomb and beat up some, help others break out of jail, and assassinate people in high places.

"The calls I got any time I was home were so numerous I couldn't even lay [sic] down and sleep. That's how often my telephone rang." He eventually shunted incoming traffic to a message service and was spending \$1,000 a month returning calls.

"When you placed the ad were you surprised to start getting calls from people inquiring about criminal conduct," *SOF* defense attorney Larry Thompson asked Hearn. "Yes, sir," he replied. He was asked if he had ever informed the police or magazine about the unexpected catch. "No, sir," he responded to both questions. When asked about the original intent of his ad, he said, "At no time did John Wayne Hearn advertise in *Soldier of Fortune* magazine for murder for hire. That's the bottom line."

"It seems like an awful lot of people are calling about - inquiring about criminal conduct from what you described," Thompson pursued. "What would you do when the people would call up and make that kind of inquiry?"

"Listen to them," Hearn said.

"Other than listening to them would you do anything else when these people would call?"

"Yes, yes."

Two questions later, the occasionally laconic Hearn said he would get involved in child custody suits, "returning children, returning teenagers out of cults".

An exhibit of his notebooks on the jobs he was doing and thinking of doing was presented in the United States District Court in Houston, Texas. On page 21 there was a telephone number from someone in Portland, Oregon. On pages 22 and 28, there was a Woodland Hills, California number, which at the time was listed under the name C. Buck.⁶²⁰

"Page 22," Hearn said to Thompson as they were running through his heavy fall calendar. "You'll see at the top it says Thomas McMullen. In Oregon when Rashi [sic], whoever it was that was out here [there], the one who got deported"

"Who had all the cars and Rolls Royces and all that," Thompson asked.

Yeah, that's him. This man [McMullen] is a private investigator, got in touch with World Security Group. He had men that lived in that area, old timers, farmers that wanted something done up there. What they wanted done was this village they were setting up of double-wide trailers, he wanted some of them destroyed. We were contacted and asked if we could go out there and blow some of these up without hurting anybody. That's the initial contact from where it says the Oregon job.

We went out there, did an overfly, checked security, and it was like a military base. And from what they had told us, they were protected by machine guns to Uzis. You name it. They had it protecting them. Even a helicopter that had machine guns mounted on it that we observed out there.

As has already been amply noted, there were no helicopters at Rajneeshpuram capable of carrying even a single machine gun. But that didn't stop people from thinking otherwise.

"Did you actually call the private investigator, McMullen, in California," I asked Hearn when I finally located him in February 1990. By that time he was in a Charleston, South Carolina prison, within visiting distance of his mom.

"Yes," he said. "I had three or four contacts with the man."

I had earlier spoken with Ben Green, a Florida freelancer who was writing a book about Hearn's life.⁶²¹ He allegedly had all of Hearn's telephone records. But there was no mention of the McMullen-Buck number. Hearn said Green hadn't been able to get all the records. He didn't know why.

"Did you actually fly over Rajneeshpuram," I asked.

⁶²⁰ Discovered by using a reverse phone directory. Look up the numbers and come up with the names.

⁶²¹ His book, *The Soldier of Fortune Murders*, was eventually published in 1992. It was followed up the next year by a movie based on the book, *When Love Kills: the Seduction of John Hearn*.

"Yes."

"With Warren Eaton of Ann Arbor, Michigan?"

"Yes," he said and quickly added in amazement, "How did you get his name?"

"Warren Eaton was an ex-CIA man? All of your buddies were ex-CIA?"

"Every one of them. Don [Morton], David Harris and Warren Eaton."

"And how did you meet them?"

"Through *Soldier of Fortune* magazine."⁶²²

"They were all advertising in *Soldier of Fortune* magazine?"

"Yes, all of them."

I asked him what kind of plane he and the ex-CIA man had used to do surveillance on Rajneeshpuram. He said it was one designed for reconnaissance, but wouldn't get more specific. However, in the deposition used in the Houston court he said Eaton owned "a mapping and aerial survey company within the United States, and that's where we used the airplanes from".⁶²³ I asked if McMullen had ever paid him for the Rajneeshpuram fly over.

"Yes."

"How was the payment arranged? Did you actually meet McMullen?"

"A third party picked up the money somewhere on the West Coast of the United States."

As far as he knew, the intention of the trailer bombings was to scare the street people into leaving. No one, he said, was supposed to get hurt.

"So why didn't you do the bombing?"

"That place is like a fortress. Guys walking around with machine guns. That's the reason we decided not to do it. The guy, whoever was calling us, was crazy."

Before speaking to Hearn - four times over a period of a few weeks - I had imagined him to be something like Sheela, a pathological liar with delusions of grandeur. This impression was based on the numerous improbabilities and impossibilities that had been strewn all over his deposition. Nevertheless, I also thought he was possibly one of those clandestine operatives in the underground government Noam Chomsky was referring to at the beginning of this chapter.

In the Houston court deposition Hearn said he had been hired to overthrow the government of French Guyana in South America and assassinate the president. "The president of French Guyana has hit squads," he said in the deposition. "He was murdering people. The Canadian people got in touch with me with a report from our United States Congress."

"Can you tell me who the Canadian people were," *SOF* attorney Larry Thompson asked.

"Were they government or not government?"

⁶²² But if we return to his original ad (see above), Hearn was pitching teams of operatives from the start.

⁶²³ This reminds me of what the Oregon National Guard generals told me about reconnaissance planes (see Chapter 6). But I am not suggesting that the stories are related.

"I don't know. I have a letter of confirmation for the money they paid, which Brazos County Sheriff's Department⁶²⁴ has a copy of that letter [,] which nobody has got and I doubt they'll let anybody have it. That's part of the stuff I turned in, was copies of some letters. Confirming the hundred thousand dollars' pay for the trip to French Guyana."

Before the November 1984 mission, Hearn trained for six weeks with the ex-CIA men and eight others in Tennessee. He noted that they had pilots and explosives experts and everyone had to be parachute qualified and adept in jungle warfare. As to the types of people he preferred to work with, he said he wanted nothing but Vietnam vets with reasonably honorable discharges.

"I didn't want some idiot, somebody wanting to go out there and just take off killing a bunch of people. I wasn't interested in anything like that.... The mission was to go to French Guyana. They have three helicopters, a Kiowa gunship, a Huey gunship. The mission was to cut through their security fence, steal the two gunships, and destroy three targets. Then go to the airport, steal a Dash Five⁶²⁵ and return to Turk Island⁶²⁶ where our aircraft was going to be waiting for us."

Hearn's employer told him what resistance to expect on arrival. "Army regulars consisted of 6,000 men divided into six brigades, about 800 men, well-armed, very low quality. Officers and NCOs⁶²⁷ were all promoted politically. One sixth on duty at any given time. One half off duty unarmed. Most off base. The President had hit squads. The targets was [sic] the President's Palace, National Fuel Exchange, and the general headquarters command. All wooden buildings. They were all located within a six mile radius."

It doesn't seem possible that Hearn could have learned all the requisite skills from reading a couple of do it yourself pamphlets from Paladin Press. "We went to Texas," he said, "picked up the weapons, the explosives that were required, and left. We had engine problems on one of the aircraft outside the Mexican border out over the Gulf and had to ditch everything and return back." He told me he had been hired by rich French Guyana nationals then living in exile in Canada.

"But that was still a private job," I said. "You didn't think you were doing that for the CIA."

"Well," he objected excitedly, "let me tell you where I got the weapons at!"

"Where did you get them?"

"We landed just outside of Brownsville, Texas, and they showed up with M-16 rifles and 3.5 rocket launchers and loaded them out of a United States Navy van and loaded them into our three airplanes. I told the FBI that and they didn't want to hear it no more. When I started giving them people's names, all of a sudden, they didn't want to talk to John

⁶²⁴ Texas, where Hearn gave himself up in February 1985. Thus according to him, his incredible Walter Mitty career in crime lasted less than 5 months (from September 1984-February 1985). Hmm

⁶²⁵ -5. Designation as fighter bomber, F4U-1, 2, etc., or "Corsair". First flown in World War II.

⁶²⁶ A British ruled Caribbean island due north of Haiti.

⁶²⁷ non-commissioned officers

Hearn." He said there is a US Naval base just outside of Harlingen, in the extreme southeastern corner of Texas, near the Mexican border.⁶²⁸

After 14 years of driving trucks and shooting pictures, it was amazing how quickly a 39 year old with bad knees jumped full tilt into such a strenuous program and managed to squeeze so much adventure into so little time. And all stemming from a couple of few inch adds in *Soldier of Fortune*.

While continuing his trucking job, the deposition used in the Houston court noted, Hearn flew guns three times to Nicaragua, accumulated 100 résumés of other mercenaries, sent some guys with M-16s and M-79s and body armor to Canada where they earned \$1,000 a day, and sent seven "bodyguards" to Lebanon with "an escape plan in case something went wrong over there". He also accumulated about 600 guns in Honduras and South Africa. They included three M-60 machine guns, one 60 millimeter mortar, four M-79 grenade launchers, M-2s, M-16s and AK-47s. Bought at about \$300 a piece, he would sell the whole lot for \$180,000. At those prices, it's a miracle he broke even.⁶²⁹

"The ones in Honduras," Hearn said, "our friendly United States government left there when they pulled out of the big operation they had over there. And in South Africa it's guns that had been smuggled into the country with the help of the United States government and abandoned." He said he would sell the guns to anybody in any country, but "I wouldn't sell to a commie anything". On page 20 of the court exhibit, there was information about an aerial reconnaissance flight at 45,000 feet over Cuba sometime in the fall of 1984. It was arranged through Colonel Fred Wagers in Tennessee, "another CIA connection".

"What was the purpose in overflying Cuba at 45,000 feet," Larry Thompson asked.

"To learn the general area of where we were going to be moving personnel and equipment in and out of."

"For what purpose, if you can tell me?"

"Company purpose."

"CIA purpose?"

"Yes."

"You were going to work with the CIA?"

"It wasn't put that way, but that was who I was told was financing it."

Hearn was to meet Colonel Wagers at a United States Air Force base near Springfield, Tennessee. The "man from Washington didn't show up". Nevertheless, they did the Cuban overfly. It was 13 hours of flight time, and each man was earning \$350 an hour. Hearn was a pilot in one of the planes. The other was one of his ex-CIA buddies. "We had available a T-28, two 206s, two Aero Commanders is what was going to be used. The

⁶²⁸ A routine Google browse reveals that in 1989 the INS set up a 5,000 inmate tent prison for Central American refugees in Harlingen, which six Roman Catholic bishops denounced as "the largest concentration camp in America since the internment of the Japanese". There is also a "Marine Military Academy" in the area. But as far as I can determine, no US Naval base.

⁶²⁹ 600 x \$300 = \$180,000

job would be a minimum of three weeks to maximum of six months, flying in and out of Central America to Cuba, in areas around Cuba, actually not in Cuba per se, but around Turk Island and the area around Cuba." When asked why they used Aero Commanders, he said "they were furnished by the government and they were going to write them off". The planes had anti-radar jamming systems and a GNS night scope.

"Were you working for the United States government," I asked Hearn in February 1990, more than two years after the cited deposition was taken.

"I was never told, 'Hey, you're doing this for Air America'.⁶³⁰ But I was led to believe that the money was coming from the CIA."

"Did you tell this to the FBI?"

"They didn't want to talk about it."

No one did. While taking the deposition, Larry Thompson pussyfooted around the issue of ex-CIA men behaving very badly indeed. Ronald Franklin, the attorney for the plaintiff who had organized the suit and deposition, said, "Larry, I interrupt. And I appreciate you being sensitive to that kind of question, and I think that is something you should recognize, depending on how deeply you want to get into this, that he may have some hesitancy, I imagine to"

"Any of these questions you don't want to answer," Thompson assured Hearn, "by all means don't answer them. I'm not looking to get anybody into trouble or anything."

Serving three life sentences for three cold blooded killings, one sweats bullets trying to imagine what more trouble Hearn could get into. But Franklin said, "I just wanted him to hear that from you". Houston District Judge David Hittner awarded the plaintiff \$9.4 million in damages. But he also wasn't interested in pursuing the question of government involvement in the life and fast times of John Wayne Hearn. Why not? As a rough guess, I'd say because he too wasn't "looking to get anybody into trouble or anything". Starting with himself.

The case received substantial coverage in the *Houston Post*, *The New York Times*, *Mother Jones* and, because of the Rajneesh angle, some Oregon papers. It was even discussed in several legal journals. The media concentrated on the horror and entertainment value of a "killer for hire", someone who - can you imagine it? - actually killed people for money! But no one was interested in tracking down the bigger story. The possibility that Hearn was the tip of the iceberg, a business as usual US government operative who had got sidetracked into a few private assignments.

As with the Tylenol panic,⁶³¹ the reporting on the Hearn case was a fashion statement about the condition of the American press and the people who bought it and got exactly what they deserved. For the most part hard hitting and muck raking "Watergate" journalism was either *passé* or had gone underground. Because, as I myself would eventually discover time and time again, even if running way too far, fast and over the

⁶³⁰ A now well known former CIA cover company.

⁶³¹ See Chapter 6.

budget journalists managed to connect the dots and come up with whaddya know zinger scoops, publishers weren't interested in touching them with a ten foot barge pole.

Meanwhile, for a lot less effort and personal expense the competition was copying out what official spokespeople said and "filling in the blanks". And even if the vast majority of them weren't exactly rolling in dough, they could at least keep their necks above the poverty line and stay out of jail.

At the same time John Wayne Hearn was being approached by "Thomas McMullen-C. Buck" to blow up a few trailers in Rajneeshpuram, Don Stewart was contacted for a bigger assignment: the assassination of Rajneesh himself. "We were going to use five pounds of military quality C-4 plastique,⁶³² which only people in government can get," he told me. "If I wanted to buy it, I couldn't. Stealing it would be almost impossible."

Since Stewart is an important material witness in this story whose credibility will be aggressively denied and challenged, it is important to preface his remarks with more than the usual few stage setters. He is nearly six feet tall, wears glasses and weighs about 275 pounds. When I finally arranged to meet with him - at the Woodham truck stop near Medford, Oregon⁶³³ at 9 p.m. on Friday, March 3, 1989 - he told me to go up to someone looking like Burl Ives.

To be honest, I was somewhat scared, without the somewhat. I wasn't used to meeting would be assassins anywhere, even in the light of day on 5th Avenue, and certainly not at night in the "foreign territory" of southern Oregon. Thus there was more than a little know what I'm about posturing when I went in.

"How many people do you have on the outside," I asked after I had spotted him at a table about 20 feet from the entrance.

"Enough," he said. "What about you?"

"More than enough."

I put my black attaché case on the table, smiled at Stewart and his Mrs. sitting next to him - a distinctly abbreviated version of her Mr., but with the same glasses and girth - went to the gents', pissed and turned on the tape recorder I had in my inside coat pocket. Back at the table, I opened the attaché case, took out my notebook, and turned on the visible tape recorder therein. He told me to turn it off. This conversation was going to be off the record.

I made a lot of fuss about that. I hadn't come all this way to have a conversation with a total stranger, with nothing but my say so to back it up. Those were the rules of engagement, he said. Take it or leave it. I protested some more. But then I agreed to his terms. I turned off the tape recorder he could see, and began to scribble furiously in my

⁶³² Explosives manufactured by DuPont Chemicals in Delaware.

⁶³³ Not too far from the California state line.

notebook. Meanwhile, the one he couldn't churned away in my jacket. I didn't have to worry whether out in the dark - on the "perimeter" - my more than enough protectors were watching over me. I knew they weren't.

I called him "Don" so much during all our conversations that it almost seems like betrayal to call him "Stewart" here. But so be it. No matter how friendly journalists may seem, they, like photographers, are working people and the job always comes first. You can call that dedication or a mental defect, but remember it the next time you have anything to do with them.⁶³⁴

Stewart speaks slowly, deliberately and clearly. Half of what he says is frankly incredible. But other parts have more than a superficial glaze of possibility and logic, especially if one has tuned into the background buzz. The context and climate, not only within the 200 mile radius, but also in places farther afield and higher up. Born "somewhere near Indiana" in the American Midwest around 1949, he began his career as an undercover government operative when he was 19.

"I went after actual bad people," he said during one of our approximately 20 conversations. "Motorcycle gangs, dealers in heroin and crystal meth. White slavers who would take girls off the beach or from parties, get them wasted on drugs, and then sell them to porn houses. But I didn't snuff⁶³⁵ them. I built cases against them and had a 99% conviction rate." All by itself, that conviction rate sounds dubious.

According to an in depth profile on Stewart in a local California newspaper,⁶³⁶ between 1969 and 1977 he worked for more than 15 state, federal and local agencies in California. Among his employers were the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), a division of the United States Treasury. Among his credentials was the infiltration of the American Nazi party. In 1973 he helped the local sheriff's department "crack one of the largest cocaine smuggling rings ever uncovered in Sacramento".

According to him and the article, he fell from grace because he discovered lawlessness within the law - corruption inside the agencies he was working for - and unlike Larry Thompson, Ronald Franklin and Houston District Judge David Hittner, he was looking to get people into trouble and everything. But his whistle blowing was whistling in the wind. It was yet one more example of what an old Russian buddy told me about life in the former Soviet Union. "There were two types of people: those who know, and those who don't want to know."

In early October 1984 Stewart was contacted by a man called "Wolfgang". He wouldn't tell me his real name. Wolfgang claimed to be an intimate of numerous government agencies, including the FBI and the Treasury Department and was actively negotiating with them on the Rajneesh "contract". "The deal was," Stewart said, "that I was supposed to go into Rajneeshpuram with four people. I don't know who they were. I was supposed

⁶³⁴ For another opinion on the same subject, see Chapter 12, note 1351.

⁶³⁵ kill

⁶³⁶ *Sacramento Bee*, November 9, 1977

to plant the C-4 on the road and Wolfie was going to be on the perimeter of the kill, in a completely innocuous position, with a reason for being there. He was going to set off the explosives by remote control and videotape the Bhaggie Wan getting vaporized. He was going to give copies of the videotape to all the people who had paid for the kill."

Stewart said that Wolfgang was planning on getting paid for the same job from several sources: local ranchers, State of Oregon officials, and others from the FBI and Treasury Department. "After the hit everyone would have thought that they had paid for it. And what were they going to do? Discuss it among themselves or publicly say, 'Hey, this guy cheated us!'"

Stewart told me the assassination was supposed to take place during one of Rajneesh's drivebys, and those funding it said that if 200 or 300 sannyasins were "tookin out" as collateral damage, "that was acceptable. There were also other plans to have us go in there and blow up their magazine⁶³⁷ and create enough confusion that they would have to send in the National Guard." Stewart said he had been offered \$100,000 for the job, but payment was not on Wolfgang's don't forget list.

"After the hit, we were supposed to hurry to the lake⁶³⁸ where a helicopter would be waiting for us. Except, of course, there wouldn't have been a helicopter. There would have been someone - maybe from the Oregon State Police, I don't know - who would just happen to be there and would have smoked⁶³⁹ us as we were trying to escape. But who would have cared? Two bad guys getting what was coming to them."

"Were you actually going to kill Rajneesh," I asked him.

"No. But I kept Wolfgang going, because I wanted to find out what he was up to. Meanwhile, I called the ranch and spoke to what was his name, Deeva, Swami Krishna Deeva [sic]."

"Were you trying to sell him the information?"

"No. I was giving it to him. The whole thing. With names and telephone numbers and everything. In my opinion, Deeva did not do the necessary thing."

Unbeknownst to Wolfgang at the time, Stewart recorded many of the conversations. I have listened to some, but not all of them. What follows are excerpts from those tapes, roughly divided into first establishing Wolfgang's connections with US government agencies, and second, the unfolding of the plot. The tapes, which have been copied and safely stored on several continents, may not be *sensu stricto* admissible in a court of law - at least not for ordinary mortals in ordinary courts - but they are "direct evidence", not reading tea leaves.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁷ arsenal

⁶³⁸ Krishnamurti Lake, on the main road between "downtown" and Antelope. The one sannyasins had built in the fall of 1982 (see Chapter 4).

⁶³⁹ killed

⁶⁴⁰ Unless otherwise stated, all the voices are "Wolfgang".

I've worked very closely with the Bureau⁶⁴¹ and been paid by them. I gather intelligence data I find it a lot easier to work with the Bureau than I do [with] the Treasury people. The people I've seen with the Treasury Department have been dumber than red bricks. I want the Justice Department to kick loose with some big bucks.

I'm going to contact Oregon. I'm going to contact the Attorney General's office.⁶⁴² I'm also cultivating a lead up there in Oregon with some private people. I understand from my contact, who has to remain completely anonymous, that you have some farming and ranching people up there who are getting together a very large war chest to get rid of these people.⁶⁴³ Probably just to neutralize their entire operation. The only thing that's holding us up is funding, which is always the bottom line. If we get a good signal from Portland, Oregon, we're going to go.

I'm going to extrapolate [sic] from him⁶⁴⁴ just a very positive commitment or whether or not they want to have a higher meeting. It could well be in Portland, Oregon. They have taken this matter from here to San Francisco, San Francisco to Portland, and from Portland they're taking it back to DC. The people in Portland have some super interest in the operation, and they apparently have been doing some investigation down there.⁶⁴⁵ However, the fact that they⁶⁴⁶ are alleged to have a 400 man security force, you know. They told me that by Wednesday they would have some information. They wanted to know how we would get in.

Let me bring you up to date in our wonderful thing with the Treasury Department. They're very concerned and they have taken the matter to the Justice Department. I told them simply that "if tragedy strikes after I tell you this and the Treasury Department, the government did not operate, I feel compelled to make this information known". And they did a backflip. And they said, "Are you and the ex-agent in a position to get us verifiable information?" I said, "Yes, we are".

One thing they are looking at very closely is, they say, "Well, if there's a relationship, somebody gets hurt, and they're acting for us in a quasi manner, then we got a problem." The more I look at this thing and review the facts, the more I realize that some time these

⁶⁴¹ FBI

⁶⁴² in Oregon

⁶⁴³ the Rajneeshees

⁶⁴⁴ someone named Larry Hall

⁶⁴⁵ See note 654 below.

⁶⁴⁶ the Rajneeshees

government agencies are non risk takers, and they want to look rosy and wonderful under all circumstances.

Wolfgang: It was just run by me and they wanna know - because I've been in Vietnam for so long, what kind of feelings you have if enemies were inside America.

Stewart: You mean, me?

Wolfgang: Pardon?

Stewart: You mean how I would feel?

Wolfgang: Well, no. I mean how I would feel. And ... uh ... I told them an enemy is an enemy, y'know?

Stewart: True.

Wolfgang: True. So ...

Stewart: ... So it would sort of like be a legal thing then?

Wolfgang: Uh ... the only way I'd touch it!

Stewart: Okay.

Wolfgang: If I had the blessings from the gods.

Stewart: Well, okay. That makes it different!

Wolfgang: Mm mm! It makes it wonderful!

Wolfgang: I may add that the Treasury people are doing something with the Oregon people and the question they asked me about how I felt about my combat experience in relation to [domestic] enemies on this side [inside the US], they have not renewed that, because they got my answer. In answer specifically to your question, they have a multitude of things they want. But in order to keep it official, it's going to be centered around the possession of restricted weapons. I'm sure of it. You know what I'm going to do Monday? I'm gonna get a firm commitment out of 'em.

Stewart: Okay.

Wolfgang: And if ... and if they do [go] that way, I'm gonna ask them to, as a favor, simply to have someone in authority in the State of Oregon, who can come up with some bucks to have someone from outside their state go in, and have them contact me. And then what I can do is then fly up, meet you, and go there and meet them.

Stewart: Were they really seriously considering having him tookin' out?

Wolfgang: They asked me one question and they were very solemn about it. They didn't say, "You go in there and kindly shoot the sonuvabitch. They asked me a very philosophical question that to me could have no other meaning."⁶⁴⁷

⁶⁴⁷ Listening to these materials and then reading the transcripts, it is frequently difficult to puzzle together the pieces to extract from them clear reference points and maximum coherence. That is partially due to the nature of these dicey conversations - on the telephone between strangers and skating on no legal ice whatsoever. They thrive on codes and ambiguity, because in this company the "friend" today may very easily become the "enemy" tomorrow or even 18 seconds from now, when the going goes from bad to o shit!

Stewart: Okay. And you would be capable of having this done?

Wolfgang: Yeah. I look upon this as I would any other military mission.

Wolfgang: Let me ask you some very direct questions. Would they have the opportunity to take in plastique and to literally blow up their magazine?

Stewart: Uh You'd have to locate where they're storing. I don't think they're centrally storing it.

Has anyone tried to assassinate the old guru [Rajneesh]?

The impression I get is they don't really give a shit about the old fart,⁶⁴⁸ because they can probably have him deported any time they want to.⁶⁴⁹ But their main concern is, "Who the hell is financing all of that?" And it doesn't come from the dummies who join the commune.

If I get that⁶⁵⁰ from the government, we can resolve some of their administrative problems. I tell them that is what we'd have to have. They've got some real problems involving that thing being used as an armed militia camp Say, even though somebody dusted his holiness away, would that still answer the question as to where the funding, the foreign government funding, where the cash [is coming from]? The government is looking very strongly at it coming out of the Near East.

Friday Evening, October 26, 1984. Approximately 8:10 Pacific Standard Time (PST).

Wolfgang: The federal government is not really interested in their religious bullshit. They're very interested in where's all the money coming from? Is it going to be a terrorist camp activity? You know.

Stewart: A training depot for terrorists in the United States?

Another contributing factor is the deliberately sliced and diced way Stewart presented his *bona fides*. He was trying to whet my appetite to sell me more. But every once in a while a light shines through the murk. The "very philosophical question that to me could have no other meaning" is a clear reference to the immediately preceding conversation. Wolfgang, who had allegedly "been in Vietnam for so long", was asked "what kind of feelings you have if enemies were inside America".

⁶⁴⁸ Rajneesh

⁶⁴⁹ But, as we have already seen, they couldn't.

⁶⁵⁰ \$100,000 for each man who went into Rajneeshpuram

Wolfgang: Well, that's one of my best guesses. And so, officially, it would be a clandestine intelligence of what's going on. Is something really bad going on? When you file an affidavit, it very clandestinely supports certain ... certain operations. And I have been on those operations, and I really think that it would be well worth the government's time and expense to have somebody go in there for them.

Stewart: I was getting all hyped up on the other aspects of the job.

Wolfgang: About locating someone?

Stewart: About abolishing 'em.

Wolfgang: Yeah.

Stewart: Baba Baloney.

Wolfgang: UhYes! Uh

Stewart: I take it that's out of the picture?

Wolfgang: No. No, it's not! I didn't want to mention anything about that until after I talked to 'em. But let's suppose that the dirty sock team came down and they evaporated him. Okay? How long do you think the organization⁶⁵¹

More than three years before I had ever heard of Don Stewart - on November 12, 1985 - Rajneeshpuram's Police Chief, Ma Barkha,⁶⁵² reported a similar story to the FBI. According to a document filed in its Portland office, Barkha told an agent about a telephone call she had taped from someone who called himself Michael.

Michael "had indicated that a government agency had attempted to kill Bhagwan. Barkha stated that she had provided a copy of the tape to the FBI and that there were previous calls that this individual had with Krishna Deva. Barkha stated that there were transcripts in the files of two of these conversations that the individual had with Krishna Deva. Barkha stated that the individual indicated that Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF)⁶⁵³ was attempting to contract the death of Bhagwan and that she wanted to make sure that someone was investigating this."

There is no indication that the FBI ever followed up. That is hardly surprising, because to have done so would have meant sooner rather than later trespassing on the turf of some other friendly federal or state agency and possibly stepping on their own toes as well. And they weren't "looking to get anybody into trouble or anything".

The Wolfgang-Don Stewart tapes contain echoes of government concerns with the Rajneesh group that we have already encountered more than once in this narrative. Rick Norton, INS deputy commissioner for investigations in Washington, DC, was planning on infiltrating the Rajneeshpuram operation. "At one point I had selected a couple of

⁶⁵¹ would last after that

⁶⁵² I'm not kidding. That's her name.

⁶⁵³ Some refer to it as ATF, others as BATF. It's the same thing.

people that I was going to place out there in the organization, have them show up as followers, and actually live at the ranch."⁶⁵⁴

John Wayne Hearn and an "ex-CIA" operative - Warren Eaton - overflew Rajneeshpuram on a reconnaissance mission. Another echo is the eternal concern with where the money's coming from. Dave Frohnmayer said, "The matter was of some concern because there's always speculation of anybody who pays cash, or is able to make a purchase of significance, particularly of land that was not regarded as that valuable. You always wonder where the money comes from."⁶⁵⁵ Tom Casey grilled little Laxmi about finances.⁶⁵⁶ Some officials assumed the money just had to be coming from foreign governments. Wolfgang said, "And the government is looking very strongly at it coming out of the Near East." When in doubt, blame it on the Middle East. Or the Russians and Bulgarians.

Readers familiar with civil liberties literature will recognize the key ingredients that would put a "legal" spin on the sorts of clandestine operations the more naive among us used to think were reserved for states of war behind enemy lines. In December 1981 President Reagan signed Executive Order 12333, "which permitted the FBI among other things to contract with private groups for intelligence gathering and to conceal the existence of such contracts in warrantless break-ins under certain circumstances (which remain classified); and to accept any material if received in the course of a counter-terrorism or counterintelligence investigation regardless of how that material was obtained."⁶⁵⁷

In effect, an illegal search can be used to gather information that can then be used to obtain an upgraded "legal" search warrant. By using deliberately non-transparent terminology, which even lawyers and other code breakers can't decipher, one can also create "justifications" for domestic surveillance and control by the CIA. By the way, EO 12333 effectively put an end to effective Congressional oversight on CIA activities, something put into motion by the [Harold] Hughes-Ryan Act of 1974. One of the driving forces and co-sponsors of that was a congressman from California, who practically no one had heard of at that time: Leo Ryan.⁶⁵⁸

In the same year, 1974, Victor Marchetti and John Marks, former CIA and State Department officers, published *The CIA and The Cult of Intelligence*. This far down the line in our story it's hard not to snicker at one of the terms used in theirs. The authors noted that there was relatively widespread feeling among observers of the CIA's Clandestine Services⁶⁵⁹ that the Domestic Operations Division "would like to do more on the American scene than it apparently has up to now."

⁶⁵⁴ See Chapter 6. It now seems highly likely that some operatives were actually sent in under the cover of the "Share-A-Home" program (see the text referenced by note 645).

⁶⁵⁵ See Chapter 4.

⁶⁵⁶ See Chapter 4.

⁶⁵⁷ According to Ross Gelbspan, a reporter for the *Boston Globe*, in "The New FBI", *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, Winter 1989. Now, of course, anyone with a computer can read all about it.

⁶⁵⁸ Which is why, some theorized, the CIA wanted him dead.

⁶⁵⁹ Previously headed by Desmond Fitzgerald (see Chapter 6, note 530).

The rationale used by the CIA would most likely have been the same one mentioned by Director [William] Colby at his confirmation hearing: that the agency can rightfully spy on Americans "involved with foreign institutions." To the mistrustful minds of the Clandestine Services, the problems caused in the United States by dissidents, civil-rights activists, and anti-war protesters certainly conjured up the specter of foreign influences. After all, the covert officers reasoned, the dissident political groups in the United States were obviously receiving financial support from somewhere and the sources could be foreign. The clandestine operators familiar with the CIA's secret efforts to aid and strengthen anti-government groups in Eastern Europe and elsewhere easily calculated that somehow the communist countries were now getting even by using American groups to stir up trouble in the United States.⁶⁶⁰

When I asked Don Stewart if the CIA was involved with the mission into Rajneeshpuram, he told me he didn't know. Does it matter? Especially when one considers that the FBI - which is nominally part of the Justice Department, but is usually seen as an entire empire operating in splendid isolation - the Justice Department, the State Department, and the Treasury Department are all members of the US Intelligence Community.

Wolfgang claimed to be well connected with the bureaucracy. He boasted about having services that could get him in depth profiles of other people's banking and telephone records. "I have the availability service going back six months for anybody in America as to who they talked to long distance, how long they talked, and you know this is very good information," he said on the tapes. Wolfgang knew how the clandestine bureaucracy - the underground government - worked and he spoke its language.

But who was Wolfgang? Where did he live? What was his day job? What were his shadowy connections with numerous federal and state agencies? I was able to answer some of those questions a year after my first sorties with Stewart.⁶⁶¹ In the meantime, what stuck out from the mass of astonishing details in the Hearn-Wolfgang stories was the deterrent value of the Rajneesh "gun mystique".

Hearn, who profiled him and his mates as "Ex-Marines, '67-'69 Nam Vets, ex-Drill Instructor, weapons specialist, jungle warfare, pilot, multi-engine, high risk assignments, U.S. or overseas", and was ready to do that hairy scary stuff in South America, wasn't willing to get caught with his pants down inside Rajneeshpuram. Wolfgang and his government contacts were worried about an alleged "400 man security force" and people going in, getting caught and killed in action.

Heretofore, many writers and officials, in Washington, DC, Oregon and New York, have noted the possibility of a bloodbath at Rajneeshpuram. But the blame for that "catastrophe" has always been dumped on the already overloaded doorstep of the sannyasins. As if they were acting and reacting in a world all their own, creating

⁶⁶⁰ *The CIA and The Cult of Intelligence*, p. 229f.

⁶⁶¹ See Chapter 12.

problems for themselves and everyone else because of a standard - comes with the cult kit - paranoia.

Amid all that on the rag smoke and shadows and sound and fury, almost everyone has missed what by now should be obvious. Without the guns, the sannyasins could and would have been attacked on numerous occasions, by local hotheads spoiling for a war and/or well trained operatives hired and fired by the underground government.

CHAPTER 8: GUNNING FOR THE HOLY SMOKE

Another time, when I was about five, my father was sitting alone in one of our small rooms, singing and playing his viol. Some washing had just been done there and a good log fire was still burning. It was very cold, and he had just drawn near the fire. Then, as he was looking at the flames, his eyes fell on a little animal, like a lizard, that was running around merrily in the very hottest part of the fire. Suddenly realizing what it was, he called my sister and myself and showed it to us. And then he gave such a violent box on the ears that I screamed and burst into tears. At this he calmed me as kindly as he could and said: "My dear little boy, I didn't hit you because you had done wrong. I only did it so that you will never forget that lizard you saw in the fire is a salamander, and as far as we know for certain no one has ever seen one before."⁶⁶²

Were we to search among men's recorded thoughts for the choicest manifestations of human imbecility and prejudice, our specimens would be mostly taken from their opinions of the opinions of one another.⁶⁶³

Throughout the fall of 1984 Sheela shot off her mouth and got caught in the cross fire. "You tell your governor, your attorney general and all the bigoted pigs outside that if one person at Rancho Rajneesh is harmed, I will have fifteen of their heads. And I mean it. You have given me no choice. Even though I am a non-violent person I will do that."⁶⁶⁴ "The county is so bigoted that it deserves to be taken over."

She shouted and the street people shouted back. "RIGHT ON, SISTER SHEELA! RIGHT ON!" The more implausible her remarks, the more applause she got, the more press, and the more avidly she was believed. At one point she declared Oregon dead and the street people shouted and danced with Saturday night fever. On another occasion, she said Rajneeshpuram would secede from the state.

Sooner than expected, however, she had to control the self created chaos. The majority of street people were doing their best to work and come to grips with their new environment. But since it was difficult enough for seasoned sannyasins - with their cultural advantages and wealth of experiences - it was not surprising that most couldn't manage.

"They were excited by the free food, clothes and shelter at Rajneeshpuram," said Swami Satyam Anando. "And they were also thrilled by the love and friendliness and Osho. I and anyone else could tell by looking into their faces, hugging them and feeling deep trembles of gratitude. I could tell from talking to them and reading many of the interviews they gave the media even after they had left or had been kicked out."

⁶⁶² Benvenuto Cellini, *Autobiography*, p. 20

⁶⁶³ John Stuart Mill, *On Bentham and Coleridge*, p. 113

⁶⁶⁴ *The Oregonian*, September 19, 1984

But everything was so violently new and out of sync with the way they and their world were. So their experiences and insights remained basically like dreams. Love, friendliness and meditation are a practice, and like any practice, you have to develop skills in them. You have to develop more and more capacity. That takes time and patience. On the spiritual path you may be given much for free - glimpses of bliss, true love and freedom. But in order to keep what you have been given, you have to work for it. You have to deserve it.⁶⁶⁵

A vocal minority experienced neither bliss nor friendliness and caused problems from the start. They spat, littered, defaced property, stole, jostled and fought with each other. They could turn almost anything into a weapon, including spoons. At mass meetings in the meditation hall Sheela scolded and humiliated them. She provoked guilt, tears and much pleading for forgiveness. She threatened to take away their beer and cigarette rations and was finally forced to get rid of them by the busload.

Governor Vic Atiyeh kept a cool public profile, but let the everyone know there were limits to how far he'd let things go. He told the Rajneeshees, "No matter what you do, we're ready for it." In March 1989, he told me, "The one thing I knew as a governor is that you move in early on anything."

"Move in? What does that mean?"

"Oh, probably National Guard personnel."

"Battalions coming down the road in trucks? Or something else?"

"Yeah, it involved highways and being able to control highways, and people coming and going. I suppose just intimidation of numbers and vehicles. On the other side, you know, if you happen to see an armored personnel carrier [APC] or a helicopter or something that looks pretty ominous That has a dampening effect on anybody."

The preparedness plan was called "Operation Serenity", said General Richard Miller, former adjutant general of the Oregon National Guard. As intelligence developed, he said, "we began to position equipment and full time personnel and armored personnel carriers at the armories of Bend, Redmond and The Dalles. We also alerted those units in those areas, which were primarily cavalry type units, so they had lots of wheeled track vehicles that could be committed, and scout vehicles and so forth."

So all our initial planning centered around a show of force. But the point that the Rajneeshees had these armed people, and other people ... and their security people were in essence thumbing their noses at authority. So, we said, "Well, if it comes to a showdown, then this is what we're going to plan to ensure that we don't lose." And, by the way, I want to make this point. The National

⁶⁶⁵ A similar conviction was expressed by J. Reyner. "What do we owe to [Pyotr] Ouspensky: and more important, what are we prepared to pay? The idea of payment is today almost outmoded. Everything is demanded as of right with querulous complaints if the demands are not satisfied in full. Actually, nothing in the Universe is free. There is an old Spanish proverb: 'Take what you want, says God, and pay for it.' As a corollary, nothing has lasting value unless it has been paid for." (J. Reyner, *Ouspensky, The Unsung Genius*, pp. 111f)

Guard doesn't get involved until the local, city, county or state police have exhausted all their resources. That's when the Guard gets into it. So the Guard is a backup.

Notes taken at the September 26, 1984 behind closed doors meeting called by Frohnmayer for state and federal agencies⁶⁶⁶ testify to the intensity of Operation Serenity's backup. "The Oregon Military Department reported to the meeting it had 2,000 Air Guard and 7,500 Army Guard troops ready to move if the governor declared a state of emergency."⁶⁶⁷

John Williams, former superintendent of the Oregon State Police who informed me, incorrectly, that the sannyasins had aircraft with machine guns,⁶⁶⁸ said that in the fall of 1984 the Rajneeshees "could have taken over the county very easily". "There wasn't much of a possibility of that happening, was there," I asked. "I would say it looked very real. They had the votes. We felt it was very real at the time. People were very definitely worried."

"People tell me," I said to Bernie Smith, Wasco County District Attorney, "that the Rajneeshees were trying to take over your county government."

"Well, they couldn't have done that," he said. "The only time the county ever pulled together on the whole thing was when there was concern about that election. And by the county, I'm talking about the people in the county. Just about everybody who could vote in this county registered. At that point I was running unopposed. I think there were maybe 13,000 voters and I got 12,900 votes. Normally when I run unopposed I get 60 or 70% of the votes. People think, 'Why vote for somebody who is running unopposed. So I can tell you that the people in the community here had pretty well decided that they were going to cast their votes.'"

Around mid October it became obvious to Dave Frohnmayer that the Share-a-Home program was a "public relations disaster. It backfired." He told a group in Klamath Falls that the Rajneeshees "don't have the voting strength to overthrow the Wasco County government. While they might defeat an existing incumbent, they don't have the power to elect someone more inclined towards their own cause or issues."⁶⁶⁹

Bob Smith, the ex-basketball player and US Congressman, told constituents that the Rajneeshees had become a "national issue". Yet he assured them that it was almost impossible for them to take over the county. Even if one of their candidates won, he could be recalled in six months. Smith also said the Department of Justice and Immigration and Naturalization Services had agreed to "provide whatever manpower or

⁶⁶⁶ See Chapter 7.

⁶⁶⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, June 21, 1985

⁶⁶⁸ See Chapter 7.

⁶⁶⁹ *Herald and News*, October 17, 1984

assistance is needed to make sure the election is a safe one, and the election process is valid."⁶⁷⁰

There were mass exoduses of street people. First one of Sheela's hand picked sannyasin candidates, and then another, dropped out of the race while she was out of town and without her permission. On Monday, October 29, one week before the election, she announced that her threats to take over the county were meant as a joke. The next day, October 30, Rajneesh started speaking on a regular basis.⁶⁷¹

Sheela said sannyasins would boycott the polls. Not taking any chances, The Dalles Ministerial Association sponsored an election night candlelight vigil on the steps of the Wasco County Courthouse, right next to where the future Antelope statue would stand. "Some 500 people gathered at the Wasco County Courthouse at 6:30 p.m. Monday where four pastors led them in a prayer vigil which ended in a candlelight ceremony that encircled the building. The vigil was called 'Come and Pray in Peace.' It provided the participants with a 'united opportunity for Christians of all faiths and backgrounds to meet together to pray for themselves, the national, state, county and city elections and the issues of our county,' Pastor Ron Coleman, the first of four ministers to speak, said. Later, the 'issues' were identified more specifically when Coleman said the prayer session was not just 'on the Rajneesh issue.'"⁶⁷²

The next day, November 6, 1984, Ronald Reagan, aged 73, broke his own record for how old you could be and still get elected president of the US.⁶⁷³ But the landslide victory occurred in an atmosphere of dwindling faith in an exercise in futility some called "American democracy". Only 53% of the electorate showed up to cast their votes. By November 1990, the turnout had dropped to just below 37%. But back in Wasco County a whopping 79.5% showed up - approaching 90% with the absentee ballots - and re-elected Bernie Smith and Wayne Fawbush. US Congressman Bob Smith won 57% of the votes throughout the district, but lost to Larryann Willis in Wasco County.⁶⁷⁴

Swami Satyam Anando said, "People in The Dalles and throughout Oregon thought that the Share-a-Home program was a great crime committed against them and their society. I understand their anger. But the greater crime was committed against the street people themselves. They were told that they were being brought to Rajneeshpuram to share our home, to share Osho's vision and love."

They trusted him. They trusted us. And Sheela betrayed that trust. In her demented desire to take over Wasco County, she lowered her screening

⁶⁷⁰ *The Dalles Weekly Review*, October 18, 1984. INS is part of the Department of Justice. But what would it have to do with a local election?

⁶⁷¹ *Newsweek* (December 3, 1984) speculated that he began to speak because "he may be dissatisfied with Sheela's outspoken performances".

⁶⁷² *The Dalles Chronicle*, November 6, 1984

⁶⁷³ During the 1984 campaign the incumbent made some astonishing gaffes. For example, he used slogans that had worked so well when running against Jimmy Carter in 1980. "Do you feel better now than you did four years ago?" See Chapter 6, note 477.

⁶⁷⁴ *The Dalles Weekly Reminder*, November 8, 1984

standards and brought in enough hardened criminals to create havoc, nearly destroy the commune, endanger Osho, and make life generally unbearable for the genuinely homeless who came to the ranch. The most courageous ones managed to stick it out, and some of them stayed on until the end. But a lot of them left, or were kicked out, with the feeling of one more dream shattered. Sheela exploited people. As far as I'm concerned, that was her greatest crime.

On October 24, 1984, Rajneesh stopped on his daily driveby and gave a four minute discourse in front of a Portland television camera on why he thought his religion was the first and possibly the last. Six days later, he began speaking each evening in his house to a rotating group of about 40 sannyasins. The discourses were videotaped and played for a larger audience in the meditation hall the next evening.

Sheela, who had been Rajneesh's sole outlet to the world during the 3½ years of public silence, was angry. "When Osho finally insisted on speaking again," said Rajneeshpuram's city attorney Ma Prem Sangeet,⁶⁷⁵ "Sheela cried for several days and begged him not to. But he insisted. He originally intended for the discourses to be listened to early in the morning, when people were fresh, so they could hear what he was saying."

At first she played them in the early evening. Then she made up a "backlog" of work that needed to be done and played the videos late at night, at the end of an exhausting day. Either people stopped coming altogether or they fell asleep. When Osho decided to speak to the whole commune in person, everyone was jubilant, practically dancing in the streets. Everyone except Sheela and her coterie. They sat around the dining room table at Jesus Grove listening to Sheela complain about what a burden it was going to be on her to provide security, heat the auditorium, and run the commune with people working only 10 hours a day instead of 12.

Rajneesh spoke almost daily - except for a three month gap between April and July - up to and including the morning of his arrest nearly one year to the day later. The audio and videotapes were sold and played around the world and eventually compiled into eight books totaling about 6,000 pages. Federal "investigators" - and "journalists"⁶⁷⁶ - who in a time of slashed budgets and general belt tightening were traveling the globe in search of incriminating evidence against him, could have saved a lot of money and learned more if they had stayed at home, coughed up a few bucks, and paid attention to what he was saying for everyone to hear. But they weren't interested in "their religious bullshit",⁶⁷⁷ and as far as Rajneesh was concerned, they'd rather be dead than well read.

⁶⁷⁵ See Chapter 5.

⁶⁷⁶ See Chapter 13.

⁶⁷⁷ See Chapter 7.

Anyone who thought they had his number from the old Poona days - such as "insider" authors Kate Strelley, Hugh Milne and other government informants - would also have discovered that whatever life lessons they thought they had picked up from earlier discourses were no longer applicable. Assuming that they had learned anything worthwhile then and were ready and able to learn something new now.⁶⁷⁸

For Rajneesh had undergone yet another revolution as radical as twentieth century physics. "This is the first religion," he said on opening night, October 30, 1984. "I don't promise you any heaven, and I don't make you afraid of any hell. There is none. I don't say, 'You have to follow me, then only you can be saved.' That is absolutely egoistic. Jesus says, 'Come follow me.' Even my book on Jesus is titled, *Come Follow Me*. That is not my statement. It is Jesus' statement."⁶⁷⁹

His repeated emphasis over the next year - until October 1985 - was exactly the opposite of what public officials and the public at large thought, and still think, his message is. Instead of preaching absolute faith and blind obedience to himself - an allegedly infallible, god-like being - he attacked beliefs in all gods, religious scriptures, religious teachers and followers. On November 2, 1984, he said:

Doubt is not to be substituted by a belief. If you substitute it by a belief, then you are in a very strange dilemma. Just scratch your belief a little bit, and there is doubt flowing, fully alive. The belief is skin deep and underneath your blood is flowing.

So basically my standpoint is: you are responsible. Don't throw the responsibility on anybody else. Otherwise you will never be free of it. Because how can you be free if I am responsible for your misery? Then, unless I free you, you cannot be free; it is in my hands. And if it is in my hands, it can be in somebody else's hands.

Those who are with me have to understand it, howsoever hard and painful it is: that you and you alone are responsible for everything that is happening to you, has happened to you, will happen to you. Once you accept all your responsibility in its totality, you become mature.⁶⁸⁰

On the tenth night, November 8, 1984, he continued burning bridges.

I am saying to you, I am an ordinary man, just like you, with no difference at all. I am cutting at the very root of your believing in me. Hence my insistence on being ordinary. I don't want you to cling to me in any way. I am not your

⁶⁷⁸ Rajneesh had always maintained that he was saying one thing and those listening or reading were hearing something completely different. Thus according to him, there is an unavoidable interpreter's bias. In other words, "What you see and hear is what you want to see and hear. It's not what I'm saying." Unfortunately, that goes for me as well. And his and my readers.

⁶⁷⁹ Rajneesh, *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 1, October 30, 1984

⁶⁸⁰ Rajneesh, *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 4, November 2, 1984

enemy. I don't want you to remain crippled, blind, dependent, a slave, because of me. I don't want to take that responsibility.

So from my side I am completely clear. I don't give you any support. And from your side I am continually hammering you, sometimes even hurting you, because whatever you think is meaningful may not be so, and I have to destroy it. Before I can make you completely clean, I have to remove many rocks that are in the way of my reaching you, and are not allowing you to reach me.⁶⁸¹

He set his sights on lies, bigger lies and God.

A very simple principle has to be understood. If you lie once, then you will have to lie a thousand and one times to protect the first lie. Still it remains unprotected. Those one thousand and one lies cannot make it a truth. They may repress it, but it is there. And in fact they are all lies. So every lie in its own turn again needs protection. And you cannot protect a lie by any truth.

Truth needs no protection. When you speak the truth it is self-evident, complete. Nothing else is needed, no support. It has its authenticity in itself. The lie is empty. It has no evidence. But you can befool people by telling a series of lies. Perhaps one they may find out, but when thousands of lies are told, it is very difficult to find out in this crowd the basic lie.

God is the basic lie. So basic that it needs thousands of theologies in the world to protect it. Still, it is not protected. Still, God is not self-evident. Still, it needs proof. Still, no argument is enough. All arguments are found to be illogical. Yes, they can convince somebody who is already convinced. But there is no point in convincing a man who is already convinced, who has accepted, believed. He needs no arguments about it, no proofs.⁶⁸²

In Poona he had stressed the ways of the heart, trust, love and surrendering to the energy of the master. In Rajneeshpuram, he was encouraging sannyasins to sharpen the swords of their own intelligence and not accept any group truth. During the January 11, 1985 discourse he talked about the sea change in his approach. He distinguished between belief and trust.

Belief was a mind construct, hypothetical. Trust came from the heart, and involved an entirely different world of love. Doubt without trust would almost certainly lead to unbearable anguish, an existential abyss and suicide. So before he set them free on an open ocean of absolute doubt, he had to teach and encourage them to swim. He had to, literally, give them heart.

⁶⁸¹ Rajneesh, *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 10, November 8, 1984

⁶⁸² Rajneesh, *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 16, November 14, 1984. Exactly one year before he left America under very dramatic circumstances.

Doubt needs great courage because you will be doubting everything possible. You will be surrounded by all kinds of doubts. All consoling beliefs will be taken away, beliefs which gave you a certain confidence, a certain stability, a certain feeling that you belong to a big tradition, a well-respected religion of holy scriptures, messiahs, representatives of God. You had all these things surrounding you. They gave you a cozy feeling that you are not alone. I am trying to do just this: cut away everything that gives you a false, cozy feeling and that keeps you dozing all your life.

Belief is an opium which all the religions have been giving you in good doses. I am trying to destroy your addiction to the opium. My whole effort is to leave you alone.

Yes, you will fear, you will feel a certain trembling, you will feel all is lost. But this is just in the beginning. A little patience. It is a passing phase. Soon you will feel a tremendous energy arising in you which would have never arisen in the crowd, with its beliefs, because there was no need. You were spoon-fed. There was no need for you to think about your food on your own.

I am taking every consolation, every comfort - I mean spiritually - so you are completely alone in your being. And then take the hypothesis: Meditate, be silent, just watch yourself.⁶⁸³

With "words on fire", he smote the whole holy smoke business most call "religion". He shot down Jesus. To call yourself the only begotten son of God, he said, is megalomania. And what did that make the rest of us? Bastards? But, he continued, Jesus was not a bad man, just a little mad and suicidal. He didn't deserve to be crucified.

Still he chose it by going to Jerusalem.⁶⁸⁴ Faced with the same decision, he said he would have gone somewhere else. "I don't want to be crucified - no interest in it at all. I don't want to be deified - no interest in it at all."⁶⁸⁵ One sannyasin asked what would happen when he died. "Are we all going with you?"

No, nobody is going with me. I am not Reverend Jim Jones. I am not even a Christian. The day I go your responsibility to live becomes greater - to live me, to become me. All around the world all the communes have to understand.

It is very easy to die with me. It is so easy that it is against my sannyasins' dignity. I will not give you such an easy job. You have to live! And when I am

⁶⁸³ Rajneesh, *From Personality to Individuality*, Chapter 13, January 11, 1985

⁶⁸⁴ While Rajneesh was very much aware of how priests and scholars appropriate the words and deeds of masters and rewrite "history" to serve their immediate needs - economic, political and personal - he was not *au courant* with the latest Biblical criticism and the frequently extremely interesting debate about how much of the "historical Jesus" has been passed on down to us, and how much of what we think we know is word twisting and pure forgery. For more on this subject, see Chapter 5.

⁶⁸⁵ Rajneesh, *From Personality to Individuality*, Chapter 10, January 8, 1985. He returned to this theme often in his discourses. A search on the Silver Platter churns out 24 hits.

not there, you have to live more consciously, more carefully - because who is going to spread me all over the world?

Remember, dying is a very easy thing. It happens in a single moment. Living is the real challenge. My leaving the body will be a real challenge for you, that now that I have left one body, I can be in all of your bodies, that now I am not speaking from one mouth. I can speak from millions of mouths.

Christians have been cowards, not accepting the responsibility of Jonestown. They have created a religion which is death-oriented. My religion is life-oriented. I do not believe in death. In fact, there is no death. Nothing dies. It only transmigrates into new forms.⁶⁸⁶

Rajneesh said it would be impossible to make an organized religion around him.

I want it to be impossible because I want you to remain individual religious persons. If you are together here, that is just a friendly togetherness, not a commitment, not in any way are you sacrificing your freedom, your independence, your individuality.

How can you organize a religion around a man who teaches you disobedience, rebellion? You can dance around me, you can sing around me, you can paint around me. You can do a thousand things around me, but you cannot do politics around me. And if you do, then you are an idiot. Then you are simply wasting your time. You are in the wrong place. If you want to play politics, be somewhere else. Here, finally you will realize that you wasted your time. This was not the place for politics.

My religion is only a quality, a religiousness. This is the problem for politicians to understand. They think that here in our city, state and religion are mixing. They are absolutely wrong. Here, state and religiousness are one, not mixing. There is no question of mixing. What do you mean by mixing? In Washington they are mixing. In Salem they are mixing. Here they cannot mix. Here, they are one, because here religion is not Christianity, is not Hinduism. Here, religion is only a silence of the heart.⁶⁸⁷

On Wednesday, December 19, 1984, eight days after his 53rd birthday, he was asked if organization was necessary for a religion to survive. He talked generally about the organization of religious communes throughout history. Then, 20 minutes before the "Enough for today", he trained his attention on Rajneeshpuram itself and the world sannyasin movement.

The discourse, which was later called "Number 20" by those who were there, sent shudders of fear and rage through the hearts and minds of the home grown power élite. And while in the past they had subtracted from and added to the historical record - like

⁶⁸⁶ Rajneesh, *From the False to the Truth*, Chapter 16, July 14, 1985

⁶⁸⁷ Rajneesh, *From Darkness to Light*, Chapter 13, March 13, 1985

the interview with INS examiner George Hunter,⁶⁸⁸ the deposition proceedings with attorney Garry McMurry,⁶⁸⁹ and Chapter 29 of *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood*⁶⁹⁰ - this time damage control meant flushing the whole damn thing down the memory hole.

In "Number 20" Rajneesh said sannyasins were basically unworldly and innocent people, and they became more of both as they became more sannyasin. Still, since they were living in an anything but innocent marketplace world, they needed advice on politics, business and finances. Some of them were good at creating wealth and they were to be the advisers to the different communes. But they were not to have any power. They were not to control the purse strings.

The European and Asian communes could use Rajneeshpuram as a model, but they were to be separate and independent entities. Power was not to be in hands of any person or group. It was to be diffused among a loosely organized meritocracy. Some would take care of business, others the various therapies. Others would be responsible for his books and tapes. But no one could claim that they and they alone were the true bearers of his message. No one would hold the keys to his kingdom. "I am taking every precaution to ensure that you will not be left under any fascist regime, to ensure that I will leave a place where you can blossom and flower to your fullest potential."

After much protest from those in attendance who were not part of the inner circle, a sanitized version of "Number 20" was reproduced in *The Rajneesh Times*. All barbed and resonating suggestions that Rajneeshpuram itself had become a fascist state and Sheela was, in the words of Ma Prem Sangeet, "Hitler in a red dress", were deleted.⁶⁹¹

In one early Rajneeshpuram discourse, November 5, 1984, Rajneesh said, "I have always respected America as a country of democracy. I have always appreciated the respect for the individual, for freedom, freedom of expression. I have always loved the American Constitution. And now I feel it would have been better if I had not come here, because I am absolutely disappointed."⁶⁹²

In effect, he was repeating what he had told George Hunter two years earlier.⁶⁹³ America was not his milieu, the atmosphere he was accustomed to. He had his heart set on leaving. Towards the end of January 1985 he sent Sheela to look for land in India. She was accompanied by her husband, Jayananda, Mayor KD, and a few others.

There was a flurry of speculation in the Indian press about the possibility of his return. Joe Greene of the Portland INS told reporters that "it is a fair statement" that they were curious about Sheela's travel itinerary.⁶⁹⁴ She, however, publicly denied that her mission

⁶⁸⁸ See Chapter 4.

⁶⁸⁹ See Chapter 6.

⁶⁹⁰ See Chapter 6.

⁶⁹¹ While he made many references to the "fascist regime" after Sheela left Rajneeshpuram (notably in *From Bondage to Freedom*), I find no reference to "20" on the Silver Platter.

⁶⁹² Rajneesh, *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 7, November 5, 1984

⁶⁹³ See Chapter 4.

⁶⁹⁴ *The Oregonian*, January 29, 1985

was a prelude to anything. "For Bhagwan to go back anywhere, that would kill him. That man is too fragile."⁶⁹⁵ The same old song. Sheela also claimed to have had an audience with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who in the Indian version of real life *Dynasty*, had replaced his assassinated mother.⁶⁹⁶ But there was no confirmation of that visit from his office.

According to Swami Ananda Apurv, a 35 year old New Delhi businessman who did meet with Sheela, there was a possibility of buying some property in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. But she wouldn't look at it unless he scrambled up a helicopter. He suggested an air conditioned car. Not good enough: no can do.

But the excuse she gave Rajneesh was something else entirely. She told him it was too dangerous to travel into the area. Knowing his answer in advance, she asked if he still wanted her to go. No, he told her. Come back. Apurv told me there would have been no danger.

"We have given him such a nice house and he wants to come to this ugly country," Sheela told Apurv at the time. She asked him to go to the Indian immigration office, steal some stationary, and type a letter saying that Rajneesh would never be allowed to return to India. According to Apurv, she had already worked this trick in Australia.

Krishna Deva was visibly upset during the trip and avoided Sheela as much as possible. He spent most of the time by the hotel pool and made cryptic remarks to Apurv, such as, "You don't know what's going on!". Another eyewitness, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me that Sheela kept pestering him and someone else to murder Ma Yoga Sushila, the jolly fat Chicago woman who had accompanied her to the American Consulate in Bombay to inquire about Rajneesh's visa.⁶⁹⁷ She was, it was rumored, then living on a Greek island. When Krishna Deva protested that she was probably somewhere in the mountains riding around on a donkey, she said, "Well, then, get on a donkey yourself and go after her".

Prior to her India junket, she ordered the desperate to please Ava Avalos,⁶⁹⁸ who would later become one of the government's sterling witnesses, to set fire to the Wasco County Planning Office. On Sunday night, January 13, 1985, she went with two other sannyasins, ransacked through files and started fires in several parts of the building. The computer melted down and there was an estimated \$5,000-\$10,000 worth of damage.

Almost everyone immediately recognized it for what it was. Arson. Ma Yoga Pratima remembered "Sheela getting the newspaper the next day, and reading it and going, 'Oh, look what happened! Isn't that strange! Oh, isn't that funny!' It was a totally false voice and obvious that she had conspired to do it. And she talked to KD and said, 'This place

⁶⁹⁵ *The Oregonian*, February 19, 1985

⁶⁹⁶ Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards at 9:20 a.m. on Wednesday, October 31, 1984. Coincidentally enough, this was almost the exact time Rajneesh had started speaking in America (subtract 14½ hours, 9:50 p.m., October 30).

⁶⁹⁷ See Chapter 2.

⁶⁹⁸ See Chapters 7 and 13.

got bombed! Oh, what a pity! Oh, it got burned down!' And he knew exactly what had happened. I think I was the only one in the room who didn't know what had happened, who didn't know that they had planned it."⁶⁹⁹

On a chilling Sunday afternoon, November 18, 1984, Patricia Ryan stepped up to the podium in front of the US Capitol building and commemorated her father, Congressman Leo Ryan, who had been gunned down at the Port Kaituma airstrip exactly six years before. There had been a damp drizzly November in her soul ever since and much of her efforts had been devoted to trying to get the rest of the nation - and, if possible, the world - to recognize and share her pain.

As she started to address the crowd of about 30 it began to rain. One contemporary profile⁷⁰⁰ portrayed the 31 year old as someone devastated by a string of events "that hit her over and over, as if they were aftershocks of her father's murder:⁷⁰¹ the sudden death of her mother, the death of her grandfather, a broken engagement and most galling of all, her sister's decision to join Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in his controversial commune in Oregon. 'I was 28 when my mother died, 25 when my father died. You feel like an orphan, no matter what anybody says,' [Patricia] Ryan said. "You feel like all of a sudden you're struggling to keep your head above water, to make it somehow in life. I feel like I'm constantly struggling to overcome the weird things that have happened to me in my life.'

"The futility of her father's death was brought home in the most painful way when Ryan's sister, Shannon, one year her senior, joined the Rajneesh sect. 'She joined after my father died,' said Ryan, still in a state of disbelief, four years later. 'We were shocked.'⁷⁰² I try

⁶⁹⁹ Some of my more skeptical sannyasin sources have wondered how much Pratima actually knew in real time. After all, how close to the inner circle can you remain without actually becoming part of it? I, who was very much charmed by Pratima and came within an inch of actually falling in love with her (however adolescently and fleetingly), don't have an opinion one way or another. I return to this issue in Chapter 9.

⁷⁰⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1984

⁷⁰¹ As if they had been caused by it.

⁷⁰² People in the Ryan family doing what many would consider weird had started long before Shannon became Ma Amrita Pritam (see Chapter 2). According to John Hall, Ryan, a "twice-divorced maverick suburban Democratic congressman from middle-American San Mateo", had joined forces with the anticult movement *before* Jonestown, "partly on the basis of his own relatives' involvement with groups like the Unification Church. A Roman Catholic, Representative Ryan made his most notable early anticult efforts in an investigation of Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, and in alliance with conservative Congressman Robert Giomo from Connecticut. The two congressmen once held a briefing for the Justice Department with the noted anticult intellectual, Margaret Singer, but the Justice Department was not receptive. Absent a specific offense, it held, 'religious proselytizing and the recruitment and maintenance of a belief through a strict regimen, meditation, chanting, self-denial and the communication of other religious teachings cannot under our laws - as presently enacted - be construed as criminal in nature and serve as the basis for criminal indictments.'" (*Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, p. 220). Ryan's involvement in the anticult issue - the less charitable might call it investment or obsession - led to his insisting on the Guyana trip, which the State Department frowned on and was not official business. In fact, a good argument could be made for Ryan triggering both his own death and the tragedy of Jonestown.

not to say anything about her personally to the press. I don't say anything negative about her because I don't want her to be thinking that we're against her. It's hard when you have someone in an organization like that. We don't know what she's into. We don't know if it's good or bad."

Even through the twisted prose and denial of the obvious it's impossible to miss exactly what she thought about that organization and her sister for joining it. A year earlier she was less mincing with her words. "At all levels government is scared to death to touch it. They avoid it like the plague. Politicians are afraid in any way to go after any religious group. Every time they try to do that the so-called accepted religions are upset and are afraid it's going to curtail them."⁷⁰³

And a few years later, in March 1988, she really let herself rip. "Many cults attempt to assimilate themselves into society, to put on a legitimate front," she told members of Positive Action Center in Portland, Oregon. "But they remain a constant and distinct danger to young, idealistic people." And she "lauded Oregon for its part in ousting the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his followers from their Central Oregon Commune, even though her older sister was a member."⁷⁰⁴

Back to November 1984. Patricia Ryan had worked tirelessly for the 218 signatures needed to get her dad a Congressional Gold Medal. The recently re-elected Reagan was going to present it on November 29 in the Oval Office at the White House. The whole family was invited. But Patricia didn't think her sister - Shannon or Ma Amrita Pritam - would show up.

However, once again, and not for the last time, she was wrong. "Pat didn't want Pritam to come," Swami Anand Subhuti, a British journalist and editor of *The Rajneesh Times*, told me. He was married to Pritam at the time and came along to the award ceremony. "She and her other sister, Erin, had done all the work to get the medal and she didn't want to be upstaged during her moment of glory. She was shocked when we did show up. During

On July 31, 1980, Ryan's five adult children, two sons and three daughters, filed a lawsuit against the CIA in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. They were claiming \$3 million in general damages plus costs for his funeral and bringing the action. (Thomas G. Whittle and Jan Thorpe, "Revisiting The Jonestown Tragedy", *Freedom*, 1997)

⁷⁰³ *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 1983. Patricia Ryan was right about that, as *US News and World Report* noted just after Jonestown. "Even anticultist Molly Koch concedes that 'we can get into all kinds of trouble if the government starts defining what is a valid church.'" ("Behind the Cult Craze", December 4, 1978, p. 24). An amusing take on what is and isn't a cult is reported by Anson Shupe, Jr. and David Bromley. "Perhaps the classic example that demonstrates the ultimate relativity of determining what constituted a 'cult' occurred when one of the authors attended a meeting of the Interreligious Affairs Committee on Cults of the American Jewish Committee's [AJC] Dallas Chapter in 1978. Working with a Dallas citywide interfaith council composed of all major Judeo-Christian denominations, the AJC came to loggerheads over the issue of Jews for Jesus, a group which the AJC defined as 'cultic' and subversive to the Jewish family [,] but which conservative Dallas Christians regarded as a 'legitimate' mission." (*The New Vigilantes: Deprogrammers, Anti-Cultists, and the New Religions*, p. 114) We have already dealt with the issue of defining religion in Chapter 3.

⁷⁰⁴ *The Oregonian*, March 14, 1988. At that time Ryan was positioning herself as a "congressional lobbyist". But she didn't add her true job description: "cult buster".

the photo op session with Reagan she and Erin were on his right, Leo's mother was on Reagan's left, and next to him was a brother, Christopher Ryan. That effectively crowded out Pritam and me with our red clothes and *malas*."

According to Subhuti, Patricia Ryan resented what she saw as Pritam's using the ceremony as a publicity stunt for a cult that was abhorrent to her. Two weeks later, the same reporter who had interviewed Patricia published a profile of her sister. Before her father's death, Pritam, then Shannon, had discussed with him her interest in eastern mysticism. Coming as she did from an Irish-Catholic family, she had expected him to dismiss the whole idea.

But she too was wrong. He said, "If that's what you're interested in. I fully support whatever you're doing. Go for it. If it makes you happy, then you have to go into it."⁷⁰⁵ Pritam, who looked and sounded more upbeat than her maudlin sister, said, "My father would definitely be supportive of what I'm doing. I know him well enough to know that he wouldn't prejudge us like some of the other people do who know nothing about it."

Once again I was reminded of *King Lear* and the contest to prove who was more loving and true to daddy.⁷⁰⁶ I asked Subhuti if he thought a similar competition was at work between Ryan's daughters. "Yes, it seems so," he said. "From what Pritam told me, her father had a soft spot for her in his heart. I think she was his favorite."

Jonestown was the jewel in the crown of the entire Anti-Cult Movement (ACM), the smoking gun on its altar. If it hadn't happened, it would have had to be invented. In fact, as we have seen, it was invented. And reinvented, over and over.

In an exercise that without any aerobics of the imagination could be called "making history", the story has been amped, ramped up and tampered with. Slanted in terms of not only "what really happened", but also who it happened to, and how it was to be packaged and pushed. That is, not as an essentially blood of the martyrs Christian phenomenon, but something to be continually associated with three buzz words: "New Age Cults".⁷⁰⁷ The ACM, in turn, was at that time responsible for the majority of mainstream opinion about those groups. Asking or accepting their opinions on the subject is equivalent to approaching "a top Nazi official close to the *Führer*" about the authenticity of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

According to Dr. J. Gordon Melton, a professor of New Age religion at the University of California at Santa Barbara, the Christian anti-cultists are divided into different levels, which vary in viciousness. At one level, the opinions expressed are just annoyingly smug. An example of that are the remarks made by Garry McMurry, the Portland lawyer and all

⁷⁰⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, December 5, 1984

⁷⁰⁶ See Chapter 4.

⁷⁰⁷ "The tragedy at Jonestown reinvigorated the ACM at a time when its fortunes seemed to be declining." (Anson Shupe, Jr. and David Bromley, "Shaping the Public Response to Jonestown: People's Temple and the Anticult Movement", in *Violence and Religious Commitment: Implications of Jim Jones' Peoples' Temple*, p. 131)

purpose "cult expert". "New religions are really nothing new," he said to a Boones Ferry Commercial Club luncheon. "People ask 'where did these bozos come from.' The answer: they've always been there." McMurry, who was right about the bozos, estimated that between 25,000-35,000 people "are lost each year to the phenomenon of new religion."⁷⁰⁸

At the most vicious level, however, are films like ***FEAR IS THE MASTER***, an all hands on deck hatchet job that makes hard core pornography look like *Snow White*. Reeking of such notoriously anti-semitic propaganda films as *Der ewige Jude*⁷⁰⁹ and *Jud Süß*,⁷¹⁰ it deliberately quotes Rajneesh out of context, in the blackest possible light, and bludgeons ready to vomit viewers with obscene images of sex, death and violent mindless masses. The text, subtext *und Übertext* of this audio visual assault on the intelligence and senses is that Rajneesh, Hitler and Jim Jones are one and the same and all part of the Satanic conspiracy against the decent Christian earth.

"There's tension between the two levels," Dr. Melton told me.

Anti-cultists are active all over the world, in America, Germany, England, France, Denmark, India and Australia. Their pamphlets and articles, written in a "Can we talk?" style, take it for granted that both author and readers are in brain sync about who the good guys are and who needs a permanent vacation from life. People who don't join cults are just like us. People who do are either psychological cripples or genuinely evil. Or, in for a penny, in for a pounding, both.

Like all propaganda, anti-cult literature is designed to terrify and provoke rage. It has a primal power because of its primitiveness and ability to short circuit rational thought, and can even affect eminently intelligent and fair people like Bernie Smith. He was generally sober and sane about sannyasins. Yet he was unduly suspicious about three deaths at Rajneeshpuram, which wouldn't have raised an eyebrow, let alone provoke conspiracy theories, anywhere else.

"I always found it strangely coincidental," he said, "and I think most other people did too, that they had the death of some sannyasin during three or four out of their major festivals and they were able to have a big fancy funeral for them at their crematorium and do all their celebrations and things they do for death."

Smith, who was usually scrupulous with his facts, was wrong on nearly every point. Tom Utne, the brother of *Utne Reader* editor Eric Utne,⁷¹¹ died in July 1984. The state medical examiner, Dr. William Brady, did the autopsy and determined the cause of death to be a

⁷⁰⁸ Lake Oswego, *Oregon Review*, January 10, 1985. Thus maybe there is some justification in McMurray's claim - see Chapter 4 - to not being a group of vigilantes. Along the lines of, if you think we're bad, you should see the guys behind us.

⁷⁰⁹ *The Eternal Jew*, 1940

⁷¹⁰ *The Jew Süß* - Oppenheimer - was the arch villain in the 1940 film. A year after its release another Oppenheimer of Jewish German descent - Julius Robert - went after the Nazis big time by getting involved in the Manhattan Project.

⁷¹¹ See Chapter 1.

severe asthma attack.⁷¹² Canadian born Jim Colpitts, or Swami Prem Anbara, bought it in a canoeing accident on May 1, 1982 when he was reckless enough to dare the snow melt surge of the John Day River. I don't care how good a swimmer you are. If your head stays under long enough, even in warm water, you're going to drown.⁷¹³

Since the Rajneeshpuram crematorium only opened in the spring of 1985, they weren't cremated in the city. For the third man on the list, a Japanese sannyasin, it was never safe to go into the water, because he couldn't swim. He went under in Krishnamurti Lake in the summer of 1985 and was cremated in the city. According to those on the scene, there wasn't a whiff of foul play.⁷¹⁴

If Bernie Smith had been in normal Bernie Smith mode, he should have seen the accidents as I did. Shit happens. And considering the number of people who lived in and passed through Rajneeshpuram, the high intensity of activity, and the amount of genuine bubbling and boiling over rage against sannyasins, what is amazing is not that some people died there, but that so few did.

Back to Dr. Melton. While trying to shed some light on New Religious Movements (NRM's), he has, out of necessity, become interested in the ACM. He's a Methodist, but comes from a family "that's religiously diverse".

My mother's a Methodist. My father was a Southern Baptist and my grandfather was a Primitive Baptist. I had cousins who were Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses. So part of my getting into the study of New Age religions was motivated by trying to understand the diversity of my own family. I spent all my graduate school days studying different religious groups and became more and more fascinated.

Professionally, I saw this was an area that had received very little attention. And I came to feel that it needed more attention because we were moving into a very diverse religious situation in America.⁷¹⁵ I want the new religions to be

⁷¹² *The Bend Bulletin*, July 9, 1984

⁷¹³ There were two sannyasins with him. Both survived, shocked but none the worse for wear.

⁷¹⁴ Swami Prem Purushottama Goodnight knew the Japanese sannyasin, Adinatha, in Tokyo in the 1970's and was on patrol as a Peace Officer on the day of the incident. He wrote: "During the last festival (1985), while on patrol, we were called for an emergency at Krishnamurti Lake. There had been a swimming accident, apparently someone had drowned. When we finally got the body out of the lake, to my surprise, I found that it was Adinatha. He was the Japanese sannyasin that Sagara and I stayed with for some time in Tokyo. The investigation showed that it may not have been accidental, that he just allowed himself to sink into the timelessness of the lake and never resurfaced." (*From Lemurs to Lamas*, p. 79)

⁷¹⁵ To get an idea of what Dr. Melton was referring to, consider these words of Thomas Robbins. "In effect, I argued that religious movements, and perhaps ultimately religion itself, *are increasingly being viewed as social problems*, and also as objects of hot controversy. This is a situation which has prevailed during much of American history; however, I maintained that during a certain period, 1945-70, *religion seemed tamer and less controversial than in preceding periods or in the present period*. I termed this period the 'Eisenhower Period' and referred to the former president's alleged statement that every American should have a religion and that he didn't care which religion the individual chose. I interpreted this statement as indicating that during this period, religion in general was viewed favorably and *particular religions were*

given a chance to prove themselves, to rise and fall on their own merits, rather than having society dump on them.

The Anti-Cult Movement [ACM] has developed a fairly strong national base. It certainly seems to be strongest in Southern California, Chicago and the Boston area. Those are the places you see it. But it popped up in rural Montana.⁷¹⁶ It's fairly vocally strong, but it doesn't have a large following in terms of numbers of individuals. And it has found a couple of people to put a lot of money into it.

"Are these anti-cult organizations considered legitimate, and do people join them openly," I asked. "Or is it something not quite respectable, something to be ashamed of?" Something to be done with code names and a white sheet over your head.

"There's a certain amount of hiding, yes," Dr. Melton said. "It's been very difficult for people like myself to study the movement, because anyone who ain't for 'em is agin 'em. It's like the traditional anti-black, anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish literature. It's all the same. You pick out an unpopular social group and you go after them. And you use the same tactics. You use the same broad generalizations. You take the sins of one and, through guilt by association, you put it on the whole phenomenon. You propose outlandish means of dealing with it. Vigilante tactics and the whole bit. So the literature does all sound the same."

"What do you mean by vigilante tactics," I asked.

"Deprogramming is a vigilante tactic where you basically take people who are not professional therapists or social workers and you turn them loose on the public. And the public you turn them loose on have very little legal recourse. The ACM is making allies on the state and local level, especially in trying to freeze state action against them, and to get local policemen and the like to work with them.

"And they have been pretty effective, in that the FBI now refuses to deal with deprogramming cases. If someone was grabbed and taken across state lines for deprogramming and the FBI discerned that it was a deprogramming matter, they would

viewed as more or less interchangeable. This was the period when, according to Will Herberg (1961) [*Protestant, Catholic, Jew*], the three major American religious traditions shed their distinctive doctrinal viewpoints and converged on a consensual celebration of the American Way of Life. John Cuddihy speaks of the earlier conflictful pre-World War II situation of American religious pluralism as 'the era of "cold war" and "co-existence" between Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism, and between all of them and civil religion, [which] gave way in post-World War II America (1945-1975) to a *thirty-year period of religious ecumenism and theological detente.*' (Cuddihy, 1978:28; my [Robbins] emphasis)." ("Sluts, and Converts: Studying Religious Groups as Social Problems: A Comment", *Sociological Analysis*, Summer 1985, p. 172. All emphases in this quote are from Robbins.)

⁷¹⁶ Against Elizabeth Clare Prophet and the Church Universal Triumphant.

have nothing to do with it.⁷¹⁷ The Anti-Cult Movement is not legitimate. I put it in the same category as the Ku Klux Klan and the anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish groups."

I asked Myles Ambrose, the Washington, DC attorney who had represented Rajneesh with the INS, if he thought the Rajneeshees were being targeted by the government. "Yeah. Yeah. When Sheela started taking on the whole world and it became prominent, I think it was definitely targeted. It got to be a scalp for anybody to go after and get. Yeah."

They became targets like the Moonies. There was a lot of cult stuff going on about the Moonies and they were infected by it. A good friend of mine, a novelist⁷¹⁸ and editor of a magazine here, had a son who joined the Moonies and when you mentioned that word he'd go off the wall. One night he came up to me at a party and said, "How the Christ could you represent those bastards?" I said, "These people aren't the Moonies! There's nothing about them that relates to the Moonies."

As has already been more than abundantly demonstrated, there had been many angles of attack against the Rajneeshees long before the what were you thinking attempt to take over Wasco County. There were tons more to come. The Oregon Department of Commerce got approval from Dave Frohnmayer to fine Rajneeshpuram \$1.4 million for alleged building violations in the form of winterized tents. The fine, which was eventually reduced to \$111,600, was described as "the largest ever levied by the state Department of Commerce".⁷¹⁹

But that was an appetizer in comparison with the bills introduced into the State Legislature on February 11, 1985. If passed after a statewide constitutional amendment referendum, House Bill 2892 (Senate Bill 599) and HB 2893 (SB 600) would allow the Legislature to repeal for no reason whatsoever the city charters of both Rajneeshpuram and The City of Rajneesh (formerly Antelope).

Rep. Wayne Fawbush introduced HB 3021, which if passed would effectively obliterate a major source of the Rajneeshees' income. Namely, their world festival each summer. For it would give counties the right to regulate mass gatherings of 2,000 people or more in one place for more than five days on land not zoned for that purpose. It passed in the House by a vote of 36-10, in the Senate by 28-2, and went into effect on September 20, 1985.

⁷¹⁷ "The tragedy in Guyana has added to this problem since some deprogrammers and their sympathizers want to lump People's Temple together with other new religions, apparently to help justify deprogramming. It is perhaps worth noting that although this link has been suggested by some deprogrammers, there is no record of anyone being deprogrammed from People's Temple, a fact that may be related to the class and racial origins of most members or to the circumstances that this group was of no concern to those opposed to newer religions until the Guyana tragedy." (James Richardson, "A Comparison Between Jonestown and Other Cults", in *Violence and Religious Commitment: Implications of Jim Jones' Peoples' Temple*, pp. 28f)

⁷¹⁸ Warren Adler. Among his titles turned into films were *The War of the Roses*, *Random Hearts*, and *Cult*.

⁷¹⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, January 9, 1985

In July the Oregon Secretary of State prepared a ballot measure that would require 83,361 signatures by November 1986. "As approved by Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer, the ballot title currently reads: 'Shall City of Rajneesh (Antelope) charter be repealed, city cease to exist, and Wasco County assume city's assets and liabilities?'"⁷²⁰

About the same time a state representative from Portland conducted an informal poll and discovered that 71% of the people favored disincorporating Rajneeshpuram, 13% were opposed, and 16% didn't know.⁷²¹ Actions that on the surface were favorable to the Rajneeshees were turned or reinterpreted to their disadvantage. On June 14, 1985 the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) ruled that Wasco County could not delete Rajneeshpuram from its comprehensive plan.⁷²² But instead of reinstating it, county officials decided in September to remove all cities from the comprehensive plan.

On July 9, 1985, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that Wasco County had not violated statewide land use planning when it had approved the incorporation of Rajneeshpuram. But instead of that being *causa finita*, it passed the buck back to LUBA. Frohnmayer was disappointed. "From a practical standpoint, we are disappointed that the decision does not finally resolve the status of the city. We believe it is in the interest of all citizens of Oregon to have the legal status of the city of Rajneeshpuram finally resolved."⁷²³

There is no doubt about what "finally resolved" and "all citizens of Oregon" meant to Frohnmayer. In his July 1987 interview with the University of Oregon professors, he said, "There were deceptive acts all along. But, when the obvious was vituperatively denied, I realized I had a pack of liars on my hands. I knew that here was a group with very seriously suspect and worrisome dynamics. I knew that it would only be a matter of time before we could get it out!"

Not fall apart from within because of alleged self destructive tendencies. Frohnmayer himself was no greenhorn when it came to denying the obvious. Not vituperatively, of course. Since no one dared challenge him on any of it, he didn't have to.

"The legislative reaction⁷²⁴ was relatively moderate. But, if all the criminal activities had been known before September 1985, as opposed to having been really a pretty well-kept secret, there would have been blood all over the floor. I mean that metaphorically in terms of repressive legislation. People would have said, 'My God! This is a real enemy! We haven't been imagining this!'" If Oregonians considered HB's 2892, 2893 and 3021 moderate, I wonder what they would think repressive.

In retrospect, however, it seems that the greatest hope resided with the INS. One of the main agitators for them to "do something" was Congressman Bob Smith. In October 1984, he told *The Oregonian* that he had been "pounding" on the agency since April 1982

⁷²⁰ *The Bend Bulletin*, July 3, 1985

⁷²¹ *The Dalles Weekly Reminder*, July 18, 1985. See the Joe Hertzberg poll in Chapter 7.

⁷²² Which it had done the previous July (see Chapter 6).

⁷²³ *The Bend Bulletin*, July 10, 1985

⁷²⁴ to the Rajneeshees

to decide whether Rajneesh should be allowed to remain in the United States. It would require a great deal of mental mincing and lawyering to interpret Smith's idea of decision as anything other than Frohnmayer's "finally resolved".

Smith had also asked the Department of Justice - through lame duck Attorney General William French Smith - to increase the staffs in the Portland INS and the US Attorney's office to investigate Rajneeshees.⁷²⁵ At the end of November, three US congressmen from Oregon, Bob Smith, Denny Smith and Jim Weaver, held a 2½ hour meeting in Portland to hear complaints against you know who. *The Washington Times*, a Reverend Sun Myung Moon-owned newspaper, reported Bob Smith as saying, "I think it's time for the government to act in the matter of the Rajneesh." In another report, he described Rajneeshpuram as a "frenzied army encampment".⁷²⁶

What was preventing the INS, in conjunction with the US Attorney's office, from moving in against the Rajneeshees? Through dissident ex-sannyasins, they had probably amassed enough evidence to indict, arrest and possibly convict Sheela and a few other top Rajneesh officials of considerable hanky panky. However, in a real court of law, with the irksome need to stitch together solid evidence and coherent arguments, they probably would have come up short of a beyond a reasonable doubt proof of "conspiracy" and an unprecedented "marriage ring".

But getting rid of Sheela & Co. would hardly have put an end to their consternation. In fact, as they later discovered, that would have made things even worse. Because the sannyasins would have been much happier without the Wicked Witch, and maybe, just maybe, more Oregonians would have been happier with them.

No, in order to shut down the whole kit and caboodle and become the heroes of the piece, they had to get the "top gun" himself: Rajneesh. As US Attorney Charles Turner⁷²⁷ said, and it's worth repeating here: "But I recognized early on that the thing to do, if they wanted to get rid of these people, was to deport the Bhagwan because he was the catalyst and the linchpin for this organization. If we could get rid of him, the whole thing would fall apart as a matter of course. And they ridiculed and laughed at me about that. But that's exactly what happened."

In other words, the US Attorney was looking for the "magic bullet" that would ricochet and ricochet and eventually wipe out an entire city and commune.

Mike Inman, the INS' chief council in Washington, DC, told me that US Attorney Charles Turner "did not want to go against the Bhagwan. He was dragging his feet. That's what took so long. I was told that what with the political heat and the problem that existed on the Oregon scene, nobody wanted to touch the Bhagwan with a ten foot pole. Some people speculated that he didn't want to touch it, that he wanted the Bhagwan problem to go away. I didn't believe that."

⁷²⁵ *The Oregonian*, October 25, 1984. See Chapter 5.

⁷²⁶ *Salem Statesman-Journal*, November 28, 1984

⁷²⁷ See Chapter 6.

"Who was pushing Turner to go against Rajneesh," I asked.

"The INS locally - Joe Greene and all - the investigators investigating the marriages. They were trying to get the Rajneesh out and had all kinds of local political pressure. They presented the evidence informally to the US Attorney's office."

"If Turner wasn't going to take heat from you, why would he take it from the local INS officials?"

"Let me continue. The US Attorney, if he wants to, can create a criminal action in one or two ways. He could go and file a complaint tomorrow. Or he could go to the Grand Jury. Often, the US Attorney will use the Grand Jury to, in effect, place the indictment in the hands of the Grand Jury, not in the hands of the US Attorney. It takes them off the hook."⁷²⁸

Inman said the INS investigators were at odds with Turner. "They had bought into the Rajneesh case emotionally and were pushing hard for a criminal prosecution." Turner wanted to take the matter before a Grand Jury, and the investigators were concerned that he "was going to drag the thing on for ever".

Steve Trott, former United States Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, watched the conflict from Washington, DC and supported Turner. "Charlie Turner was a very careful pro," he said. "We in the US Justice Department took a very professional approach to that Rajneesh case. If there's violations of the law, then we've got a responsibility to do something about that. Go out and investigate and see. Let's have our US attorneys and our lawyers tell us what's there. I mean when you take on a show like that you've got to be really careful, and really prepared, not fire a lot of blank shots around and come off [looking] like a dodo."

Which is exactly what the INS had done when it denied Rajneesh religious teacher status and then let INS Deputy District Director in Portland Carl Houseman defend that decision on *Nightline*.⁷²⁹

⁷²⁸ In 1930 Raymond Moley, a New Deal Professor at Columbia University and close friend of President Franklin Roosevelt, did an intensive national survey of Grand Juries. "It seems to be the practice to pass to the Grand Jury some cases in which the prosecutor wants to show complete impartiality. Frequently, also, he permits the Grand Jury to assume responsibility in certain very doubtful cases." ("The Initiation of Criminal Prosecutions by Indictment or Information", *Michigan Law Review*, February 1931, p. 412) Professor Moley noted that the Grand Jury did what prosecutors wanted in 6,118 out of a total of 6,466 surveyed cases, or 95% of the time. But only 51% of those indicted were successfully prosecuted. "A system which brings formal accusation against many innocent persons, or against many persons concerning whom the state is unable to prove its accusations, is not an efficient system." (p. 415) In order to judge both the efficiency and fairness of the Grand Jury system, he wrote, it was crucial to note the difference between those found guilty by plea, and those found guilty after a trial. "The importance of this tendency should be emphasized. Great numbers of indictments seem to be returned every year in which a crime is charged more serious in nature than the prosecutor is able to prove. He hopes in this way to 'bluff' the defendant into pleading guilty to a crime of less seriousness." (p. 422f) It is impossible to exaggerate how important these caveats are here.

⁷²⁹ See Chapter 5.

In the middle of December 1984, Assistant US Attorney in Portland Robert Weaver stated publicly that it might take "two to three years" to decide to bring marriage fraud conspiracy charges against Rajneesh and his disciples.⁷³⁰ "Mike Inman," Weaver told me, "wanted the US Attorney's office to indict Rajneesh immediately. In February 1984, or shortly thereafter. It was clearly his desire that we proceed quickly in obtaining the indictment and the longer our investigations went on, the more vexatious it became to him."

I think he had it in his own mind this sense that if we indicted him, Rajneesh would just leave. And that he, Inman, would not have to do his job, which was to do the civil administrative deportation proceedings. It is often said about prosecutors [working with a Grand Jury] that anybody can go in at any time, and get anybody indicted for anything. And there is a certain amount of truth to that.

But as a practical matter, it doesn't happen. Because after you indict somebody, you lose control of the case. You are no longer working secretly with the Grand Jury. It's now in the public realm. The other side, whoever you have indicted, is going to attack, viciously attack your indictment and try to get it dismissed on any grounds that they can! Legally, there are remedies available to them. They are going to try to knock down, belittle and eliminate your evidence!

So my view had always been that I wanted to have my case so well prepared that, if necessary, I could walk out of the Grand Jury room and try it the next day. I don't know what in their mind [Inman and the INS in Washington] they envisioned happening after the headlines, BHAGWAN INDICTED FOR FRAUD! That he was just going to come in and plead guilty?

My view was that he was going to retain the most competent, aggressive defense lawyers he could and, for once, the government would be outspent and outnumbered. And I was not going to return an indictment unless it was absolutely solid, rock solid.

"The Bhagwan had a legal right to be here," Inman told me. "And the only way we [could] deport the Bhagwan is if he's convicted of some crime, some conspiracy. But we [the INS legal staff in Washington] were not seeking to deport the Bhagwan based on the marriage fraud." He said he had about 99% of the evidence that the Grand Jury investigated. It had been developed by Joe Greene and Tom Casey before the Grand Jury convened.

"Now, in the criminal proceedings there was a conspiracy allegation which was used to include the Bhagwan as a defendant. But there was no evidence that I recall that linked him personally with advising somebody to engage in a phony marriage. But there were a lot of inferences."

⁷³⁰ *Statesman-Journal*, December 16, 1984

I always had serious doubts on a criminal conspiracy thing, whether or not you could smear the Bhagwan in a criminal conspiracy, because everything that we had come across stopped short of him. The only question that everybody had was whether or not the Bhagwan himself was involved in the conspiracy.

They were having trouble reaching to him, because they gotta tag him with the overt act, and the fruits of the conspiracy at a lower level. They gotta involve him in the unlawful agreement somehow. And, by the way, I don't know how that ever came out.

The main reason Inman didn't know how it came about was simple. Because it didn't. According to all my thorough research and analysis of the evidence, there was no link – direct or indirect – between Rajneesh and whatever sham marriages that did take place.

Perhaps another reason for the INS' slow progress was a vacuum in the Justice Department itself. Before stepping aside as Attorney General, William French Smith had ordered an extensive investigation of his would be successor, Edwin Meese III.⁷³¹

"So unless Meese decides to step aside or Smith agrees not to, the acting Attorney General for much of the 1984 election year will be, by default, the department's third-ranking official, Associate Attorney General D. Lowell Jensen. White House advisers have no personal objection to Jensen, 55, a former district attorney of Alameda County, California, who had earlier [1958-66] been an assistant D.A. there when Meese was a deputy in the same office. Jensen helped organize the mass arrests of Berkeley students during the Free Speech Movement in the mid-sixties and prosecuted radicals such as Huey Newton and the kidnapers of Patty Hearst."⁷³²

In the fall of 1984 the special prosecutor investigating Meese realized that all the information he had amassed against him did not amount to an indictable offense. What a glowing stamp of approval for the country's soon to be top justice official. Thus on February 23, 1985, 13 months after he was nominated, Edwin Meese III was sworn in as US Attorney General. Some argued that Meese's actual appointment as US Attorney General was materially insignificant.

"Clearly, Meese's appointment does not portend change at the Justice Department. During the first four years of the Reagan administration, he already controlled policy at the department from the White House, discreetly participating in nearly every crucial decision made under his predecessor, former attorney general William French Smith.

⁷³¹ *The Economist* had this to say about attorney generals in general, and Meese in particular: "For decades the Justice Department has been run by men who (with a few exceptions) qualified for the job mainly because they were pals of the president. Too many attorney-generals have been fixers or felons. Among the infamous are John Mitchell, who served Richard Nixon so loyally that he ended up in jail for perjury; and Ed Meese, an almost-indicted Reagan appointee who seemed to regard his department as a treasure-chest of influence to be raided for family and friends." (March 13, 1993)

⁷³² *Time*, April 9, 1984. For Jensen and Meese working in the same office, see Chapter 3.

Meese probably had more to say about the direction of the department than Smith." On many issues, the writer continued, "Smith appeared uninterested and uninformed".⁷³³

Back on the INS-Rajneesh front things were moved to the back burner and then completely off the stove. On October 24, 1984, a United States District Court judge in Portland ordered the INS to decide on pending Rajneeshee marriage petitions by February 23, 1985. On February 23, 1985, the Ninth District US Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco extended the deadline until March 15. On March 15, the same court further extended it. Sometime between February 23 and March 15, the US Attorney in Portland decided to take the criminal marriage conspiracy case before the Grand Jury.

It is widely believed among the legally illiterate that the Grand Jury process - which stems from a 13th Century English Covenant known as the Assize of Clarendon⁷³⁴ - is a crucial democratic inheritance and supports citizens' rights. But there are a large number of modern legal experts - and perhaps by now they are in the majority - who would challenge that golly gee assessment.⁷³⁵ They contend that the Grand Jury process unfairly guarantees government secrecy and protects many zealous prosecutors from charges of misconduct.

"Nothing in the Assize of Clarendon supports the notion that the Grand Jury developed for the protection of individual rights. To the contrary, the Grand Jury developed as an accusing body. In fact, once an indictment was returned, a presumption of guilt arose requiring the accused to demonstrate his innocence by battle, compurgation or ordeal."⁷³⁶

⁷³³ William Greider, "Give Meese a Chance", *Rolling Stone*, June 6, 1985

⁷³⁴ According to *Wikipedia* (with slight adjustments of spelling and grammar), "The Assize of Clarendon was an 1166 act of King Henry II of England that began the transformation of English Law from a divinely-ordained system of deciding the prevailing party in a lawsuit (such as trial by ordeal or trial by battle), toward a more humanistic 'evidentiary' model, in which evidence and inspection was made by laymen. This act greatly fostered the methods that would eventually be known in Common Law countries as 'trial by jury.' It is important, however, to realise that the Assize of Clarendon did not lead to this change immediately. In fact, recourse to trial by combat was not officially rescinded until 1819." That might have had something to do with the prevalence of dueling in upper class circles.

Incidentally, two years earlier, in January 1164, the "Constitutions of Clarendon" defined church-state relations in England. "Designed to restrict ecclesiastical privileges and curb the power of the church courts, they provoked the famous quarrel between Henry [II] and his archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket." (Online *Encyclopedia Britannica*) That quarrel eventually led to Becket's martyrdom in Canterbury Cathedral nearly seven years later, on Tuesday, December 29, 1170.

⁷³⁵ Among the important references on an extremely long list are the previously cited Moley article - see note 728 - Wayne T. Westling, "Use of Hearsay Testimony Before Oregon Grand Juries", *Oregon Law Review*, Fall 1983; Peter Arenella, "Reforming the Federal Grand Jury and the State Preliminary Hearing to Prevent Conviction Without Adjudication", *Michigan Law Review*, February 1980; William Campbell, "Eliminate the Grand Jury", *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, June 1973; and James Whyte, "Is the Grand Jury Necessary?", *Virginia Law Review*, April 1959.

⁷³⁶ Mary Richardson, "The Improbability of Probable Cause: The Iniquity of the Grand Jury Indictment Versus the Preliminary Hearing in the Illinois Criminal Process", *Southern Illinois University Law Journal*, Spring 1981. p. 283f) Compurgation is having someone else swear that the accused is innocent. Ordeal could be just about anything. Like wrapping the accused in chains, throwing him in the water and seeing if he sinks or swims. Or throwing him into the fire with the salamanders to see if he burns.

One of the arguments advanced in favor of retaining the Grand Jury system of indictment "is that the secrecy surrounding the proceedings protects the erroneously accused person from damaging publicity. However, since most Grand Jury proceedings lead to trial, the accused is seldom spared public disclosure." And even in an allegedly innocent until proven guilty society, the indicted individual "carries an aura of guilt that is not completely dispelled even if he is acquitted".⁷³⁷ While the Grand Jury system was largely abolished by the English Parliament in 1933, it still retains its hold over American legal tradition.

Mike Inman said the federal Grand Jury in Portland was "given one day a month and it was going to take another two years to get the goddamn thing done. Turner wanted to make a full presentation to the Grand Jury. They had a schedule of something like 18 or 20 months. He had the ability to move the hearings along at whatever speed he wanted. And I said, 'This is not a Grand Jury investigation into how the government of Beverly Hills works. This is an investigation of a crime.'"

So there was this big scene. And then Alan Nelson talked to Jensen, and Jensen ordered Turner to come back to Washington. And he came back.⁷³⁸ There was a big confrontation. Nelson was there. Turner was there. I wasn't there.

Well, the issue was whether or not the deportation cases would roll over and the immigration benefits would be granted so as to preserve the very lengthy Grand Jury presentation, which might have lasted another two years.⁷³⁹ Turner's position was that he should be able to proceed leisurely with this criminal Grand Jury investigation.

What they were doing was this overall conspiracy case, to have the big Bhagwan as the target. So they were dealing with the huge, big picture. Jensen decided that each party should do their own thing. Jensen was a pro. He was a criminal prosecutor. He's a smart guy. The decision was made by Jensen, maybe by Meese, I don't know how high up it went.

Former Commissioner of the INS Alan Nelson phrased the conflict more delicately. He said the INS and the US Attorney's office in Portland "obviously had similar goals. We wanted a successful investigation: if necessary, a prosecution, criminal and/or civil. The point is we wanted to pursue actions to go after the Bhagwan on immigration and other issues and we were well coordinated. This was an ongoing issue. I had many meetings and many phone calls with Turner over the years, and of course our other people did also."

Why, one wonders, would the Commissioner of the INS, backlogged with so many other nightmare scenarios of his own, be interested in going after Rajneesh on issues not

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 292

⁷³⁸ According to my calculations, this was September 1985.

⁷³⁹ until September 1987

related to immigration? "So you met with Mr. Turner many times over the years on this particular issue," I asked Nelson.

"Well, I talked with him. I know I met with him a number of times because he would be here in Washington. I think he did come back here once, maybe twice, or maybe even more, relating to this whole matter. And I think that Jensen and Trott were also involved. So I know we had at least three or four if not more personal meetings here in Washington, or possibly at some other location if the US Attorneys were meeting there."

So we talked and conferred many times on the phone. Certainly, Jensen was involved. He was specifically my boss during this whole period of time, and so, obviously, I reported to him. And our typical working relationship was that we'd meet once a week or so to go over all the INS items.

And so it would be mainly in that context that the Bhagwan, obviously, was one of the issues we were dealing with. He understood a lot of the procedures and was very interested in it, and certainly fully involved in what was happening. I don't remember that he was calling shots per se, but he was certainly well aware of what was being done, and would be approving any actions, either in general or specific terms.

According to Alan Nelson, Mike Inman, Steve Trott and Charles Turner, the Rajneesh case went straight to and through D. Lowell Jensen. As we have seen, in the California days Jensen and Meese had worked for years in the same office. Another colleague was Alan Nelson. Together, the three were known as the "Alameda County Mafia".⁷⁴⁰

Aiming to discover Meese's direct involvement in the Rajneesh case, I sought an interview with Jensen. At that time he was on the bench of the US District Court of Appeals in San Francisco. He wasn't in when I visited his chambers. But I persisted. Later, through his secretary, he declined the interview, giving as his reason that he didn't have much to do with the case. Like Patricia Ryan and Dave Frohnmayer,⁷⁴¹ he too was denying the obvious.⁷⁴²

Rick Norton, former deputy assistant commissioner for investigations at the INS' Washington headquarters, said that around this time - late spring, early summer 1985 - "we started planning for how we could actually get into the ranch as well".

"Get in there for what reason," I asked. "For the investigations?"

"We felt we may have to go in at some time and actually physically arrest people, and that they could say, 'No, I'm not coming'. And then we were not going to let the law create neutral ground that people were invulnerable on. So we considered how to get in there. As a matter of fact, I overflew the ranch on two occasions, once when I first went

⁷⁴⁰ See Chapter 5.

⁷⁴¹ See above.

⁷⁴² See Chapter 9.

out there to survey the situation,⁷⁴³ and then once⁷⁴⁴ when the planning got very serious about how we were going to actually physically conduct an operation to get into the ranch and arrest people - such as, perhaps, Sheela, or the Bhagwan himself - if they refused to come out."

"Were you planning a mass arrest there?"

"Oh, no. No. No. It would have been strictly targeted at people who were the conspirators of the marriage fraud. This was, I might add, a worst case scenario, that we first wanted to proceed with indictments and in a request for these people to turn themselves in. Issuance of a warrant of arrest, dealing with the attorneys, telling them that a warrant of arrest existed."

Slowly escalating it to a point where, if there was no alternative, we would use public access to the ranch and ask for these people to turn themselves in to federal officers. I don't want to overstate this, because it sounds like we were mounting a major cavalry charge on this ranch, and we weren't. But we were openly considering ways in which we could have air, land and road access into the ranch, in order to execute a warrant of arrest.

"I read a story in *The Oregonian*,"⁷⁴⁵ I told Norton, "which said that Commissioner Nelson didn't want the INS to get involved with arresting Rajneesh at Rajneeshpuram. According to the article, he specifically refused to let INS participate in any such action."

"It's kind of a funny situation," he said. "When I went out there in, I think it was late August 1985, we hired a plane and we overflowed the ranch, and we very carefully surveyed it and determined how we would make sure that the government carried out the warrants of arrest. I'm choosing my words very carefully here. I describe to you the process we were going to go through. We had warrants. We were going to tell the attorneys we had the warrants. We were going to demand that people show up. But we did not want the Bhagwan fleeing the United States - well, fleeing the ranch - without the warrants being served. So we looked over how we were going to do it."

And we considered, "Well, if they don't respond, we're going to have to drive into the ranch. And if they don't respond then, we've got a Mexican standoff, unless we escalate it in careful steps." So some of those careful steps included bringing in other units from other directions on the road, from the south end of the ranch as opposed to the northwest end,⁷⁴⁶ and perhaps using air support, bringing in a helicopter.

In cooperation with the local authorities, landing an airplane on the airstrip. Perhaps even having a tactical unit in the hills above the ranch in case our officers needed backup. Certainly, if we went into the den of the lion there

⁷⁴³ November 1983. See Chapter 5.

⁷⁴⁴ late August 1985

⁷⁴⁵ "Infighting mars probe of Rajneeshes", December 30, 1985

⁷⁴⁶ Antelope side

with half a dozen officers, compared to their security force, and they decided they were going to lay down their lives for the Bhagwan, our people clearly needed to have backup.

In the first week of May that year, President Ronald Reagan went ahead with a promise he had made to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to visit a military cemetery at Bitburg, in the Rhineland-Palatinate near the Luxembourg border. Kohl, who had represented that district in the *Bundestag*, the German Parliament, thought Reagan's visit would help keep him in power.

A month before the proposed visit a Jewish group announced that 47 members of the *Waffen SS*, combat units of Hitler's élite guard, were buried there. By honoring Nazi Germany's war dead, Reagan would be honoring them as well. Still, according to Don Regan - the president's former Secretary of the Treasury and recently appointed chief of staff - Reagan wanted to do "Helmut" a favor.

Kohl's Social Democratic predecessor, Helmut Schmidt, was the European who "had certainly devoted the greatest amount of time to denouncing Reagan's economic policy, and it may have been that the warm spot the President developed in his heart for Kohl had something to do with the fact that the Germans stopped nagging him about taxes and interest rates after the Christian Democrats regained power. Whatever subconscious factors may have existed in addition to the normal political urge to see a like-minded ally remain in power, Reagan wanted his friend Helmut Kohl to remain as Chancellor of West Germany."⁷⁴⁷

Back on home soil a week later, things came to a head between Philadelphia Mayor Wilson Goode and MOVE, a black, back to Africa "cult". "MOVE members were said to be loud, profane, unsanitary, disruptive, obnoxious," wrote Philip Weiss.⁷⁴⁸ "These are not capital offenses. In fact, until a few weeks before the police assault, the mayor acknowledged that he had no legal basis even to evict MOVE adherents. So they weren't evicted; they were murdered."

In the pre-dawn of Monday, May 13, 1985, hundreds of police surrounded the evacuated city block on Osage Avenue where the MOVE people lived. It was three miles west of Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence had been signed just short of 209 years before. City Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor "warned over a bullhorn: 'Attention, MOVE. This is America. You have to abide by the laws of the United States.'"⁷⁴⁹

Mayor Goode gave the signal, and a helicopter flew over and dropped a bomb containing military quality C-4 plastique on a house known to be stockpiled with gasoline. There

⁷⁴⁷ Donald Regan, *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington*

⁷⁴⁸ *The New Republic*, July 10, 1985

⁷⁴⁹ *Maclean's*, May 27, 1985

was a tremendous orange explosion and endless clouds of unholy smoke. Evacuated residents watched the bomb trigger a "six-alarm fire - the worst in the city's history - that reduced most of the tree-lined blocks to smouldering rubble". It was a radically proactive way to promote even more homelessness in America.

Eleven MOVE members were killed: four of them children. About \$5 million in damage was done. Gerald Arenberg, executive director of the American Federation of Police, said the Philadelphia cops "broke every rule in the book". Another magazine editorialized, "The inhabitants of the MOVE home were deprived of life, liberty and property without due process of law. But in the city of brotherly love and elsewhere, the niceties of the Fifth Amendment gave way to the doctrine of Clint Eastwood and William Rehnquist: Constitutional rights endanger public safety, and the bastards deserve what they get."⁷⁵⁰

But in Reagan's America, and a long time before and after that, this was apparently a bleeding heart minority - and possibly even fringe - view. The by the skin of his teeth approved new US Attorney General, Edwin Meese III, described Mayor Goode's handiwork as "a good example for us all to take note of.... The situation that gave rise to the tragedy was caused by the criminals, not the police."

Despite some flack and nail biting, the police were basically exonerated and the next time around Mayor Goode was re-elected. What the Commander in Chief - who in the good old California days had said "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with. No more appeasement."⁷⁵¹ - thought about the matter never became public. In any case, he did not honor the MOVE dead.

MOVE was an example of what had happened before happening again, what had been believed before being believed again. It was a smaller version of Jonestown, what happens when fanatic cult members "thumb their noses at authority". Tragic, but true, the MOVE "bastards" had it coming. Just like those dope smoking, long haired faggots at Kent State.⁷⁵²

If Jallianwalla Bagh⁷⁵³ had stuck in the history books with a slightly different spin, it too could easily have been shoved into the same category. It was a sneak preview of what could have happened five months later at Rajneeshpuram.⁷⁵⁴

⁷⁵⁰ "The Goode, Bad and the Ugly", *The Progressive*, July 1985, p. 11. At around the same time, on April 19, 1985, "eight years to the day before the fire at the Branch Davidian compound, the FBI and other law-enforcement officers surrounded our group [Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord (CSA) in Mountain House, Arkansas] in what became a four-day armed standoff." (Kerry Noble, "In Response to Stuart Wright", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Summer 1999, p. 83) According to Noble, who was a member of CSA and negotiated for them, tragedy was avoided because "the FBI began the operation, not the BATF (as with the Davidians) or the US Marshals (as in the Ruby Ridge incident)" (p. 84).

⁷⁵¹ See Chapter 3.

⁷⁵² See Chapter 3.

⁷⁵³ See Chapter 2.

⁷⁵⁴ MOVE had already been around in the 1970s. Sometimes in Jonestown Reverend Jim Jones talked to his people about the "pogroms" against them up north in "the land of the free" (John Hall, *Gone From the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, p. 237).

CHAPTER 9: FORGETTING ABOUT THE UNTHINKABLE

You don't have many suspects who are innocent of a crime. That's contradictory. If a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect.⁷⁵⁵

The distortion of a text is like a murder. The problem is not in the deed, but eliminating the traces.⁷⁵⁶

On Monday, June 3, 1985, four days after one more US Navy A-6 jet flew about 500 feet over Rajneeshpuram, Ma Anand Sheela held a press conference in Portland to announce a sannyasin class action suit against the US State Department and INS. That morning Rajneesh Foundation International (RFI) had filed the suit in the US District Court and had singled out numerous officials, including Attorney General Edwin Meese III, Secretary of State George Schultz, INS Commissioner Alan Nelson, District Director of the Portland INS Carl Houseman, Deputy District Director Joe Greene, INS Examiner George Hunter, and INS investigator Tom Casey.⁷⁵⁷

The suit claimed that both the State Department and INS were "selectively prosecuting" sannyasins and sannyasin organizations and using illegal surveillance techniques to investigate and harass them. The surveillance included wiretapping, tampering with the mail, and aerial reconnaissance. Sheela told reporters that someone in the US Attorney's office had told her about an imminent indictment and arrest warrants for her and Rajneesh. Both, she said, were scheduled to be arrested between the 11th and 27th of June. On June 21, a similar suit was filed against the state of Oregon, Wasco County and about 22 officials. Among the accused were Governor Vic Atiyeh and Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer.

On numerous occasions over the years Sheela and Mayor KD had repeatedly talked tough. More recently, they had used words like "BLOOD" and "WAR" and had asserted that sannyasins would take 15 Oregonian heads for every Rajneeshee killed. When asked by a visiting congressional aide in March 1985 what he meant by that, Krishna Deva said, "It simply means if anybody attacks this community, if they use violence against this community, the expertise of the security will handle it."

⁷⁵⁵ Edwin Meese III, *U.S. News and World Report*, October 14, 1985. At least three things can be said about this quote. Saul, who became Paul on the road to Damascus, said something similar: "only criminals have anything to fear from magistrates". (*Epistle to the Romans*, 13:1-7 is the place to go for more of Paul's advice on civil obedience.) Strange sentiments from someone whose own "guru" was crucified by Roman imperialists and who was also crucified. Two, while Meese believed this about others, it had no relevance for him personally during the many phases of his career when he was a definite suspect and was being heatedly investigated (see Chapter 8). Three, the history of the word, *crimina*, speaks volumes for how all but the most sophisticated view "the sordid side" of life. It originally meant an "accused", a "suspect", not necessarily what we call a convicted "criminal". But in those days, when a person was guilty until proven innocent, there was no difference between a *crimina* and a criminal. And despite our pious platitudes to the contrary, that remains essentially true today.

⁷⁵⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. 6, 1932-39, p. 144 (II, 6). My translation.

⁷⁵⁷ We have already come across all of these names, except for Schultz.

When further questioned about the scope and training of the security, the mayor said, "Why don't you test it and find out?".⁷⁵⁸ But in June 1985, when faced with the possibility of imminent arrest, there were no brave dares lobbed like Roman candles into the enemy camp. No "Come and get them".⁷⁵⁹ As a matter of fact, both Sheela and Krishna Deva were decidedly lamb like and mum that summer in Oregon.

With the possibility of an imminent arrest hanging over their heads, RFI hired Peter Schey, a nationally prominent immigration lawyer. Originally from South Africa, Schey worked in Los Angeles and headed the National Center for Immigrants' Rights. He phoned US Attorney Charles Turner on June 26 and informed him that he was the attorney for Rajneesh and other sannyasins in criminal matters relating to the INS' investigations. He wanted to clarify two major - and phased - issues. Phase One, if Rajneesh was the target of a Grand Jury investigation, Schey had to make arrangements for how and when he would testify before it.

"It's my understanding," Schey told me in March 1989 when I interviewed him at his home in Beverly Hills, "that there is a Department of Justice policy memorandum, that if a person is the target of an investigation, that they are supposed to be provided an opportunity to testify before the Grand Jury. The discussions that I had with Turner were focusing on the likelihood that Bhagwan would be called to testify before the Grand Jury. And the conversations made it clear that he was going to be called. Because most of the conversations that I had with Mr. Turner dealt with the circumstances under which Bhagwan would testify before a Grand Jury."

At the time of the Schey-Turner conversations Rajneesh and others had been the target of Grand Jury investigations for about four months.⁷⁶⁰ But Turner did not share this information with Schey. What's more, when the Grand Jury investigations were rounded off four months later, on October 23, and indictments handed down, Rajneesh had still not been informed of his target status and given a chance to tell his side.

Schey's phase two issue was that in the event of a criminal indictment being handed down against Rajneesh and other clients, he wanted to arrange for "voluntary surrenders upon the issuance of summons". In a July 3, 1985 letter to Turner, he wrote, "As I have advised my clients not to make any statements in the event of arrest, the government would not achieve any benefit or advantage by post-arrest custodial interrogation." Schey mentioned that he was particularly concerned about the health and safety of Rajneesh and submitted a medical affidavit attesting to his frail condition.⁷⁶¹

"Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh suffers from three related medical problems: diabetes, allergic asthma and lumbar disc disease. He is highly allergic to a great number of substances common to any public area. Exposure to many substances causes asthmatic attack, a

⁷⁵⁸ *The Oregonian*, March 20, 1985

⁷⁵⁹ *Molon labe* (*Μολών Λαβέ*). Allegedly what the Spartan King Leonidas said at Thermopylae when the Persian King Xerxes I told the Greeks to lay down their arms.

⁷⁶⁰ See Chapter 8.

⁷⁶¹ Frail condition is not to be equated with might drop dead any second.

major risk factor for dislodging his unstable lumbar disc. Subjecting him to arrest and the accompanying booking procedures may, in his physician's words, be 'potentially life threatening.'"⁷⁶²

"Mr. Turner told me on more than one occasion that in the event that Rajneesh was indicted he would give me sufficient notice," Schey told me. "That generally meant 24 hours notice, which would permit me to fly up to Portland. And it would permit Bhagwan to voluntarily surrender."

"Where would the surrender take place," I asked.

"At Portland."

"He told you that directly?"

"Directly."

"At the court house in Portland?"

"Not at the court house, but in conversations."

"No," I clarified. "I meant he told you directly that he would be willing to have Rajneesh surrender at the court house in Portland?"

"Right. Precisely. That Bhagwan could surrender at the court house in Portland."

"This is a very important point," I said. "Because both Turner and Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver told me that they never took that surrender agreement seriously. Also, INS agent Joe Greene said under oath in a Charlotte court room that Turner told him that under no circumstances would voluntary surrender at the court house in Portland be acceptable to him."

"Well," Schey said, "that was not the same thing he told me on at least three occasions. They could indict somebody and then not unseal the indictment for a week or a month or six months. But when they were ready to unseal this indictment and serve the warrants, they told me that they would give me one day to get to Portland and get my client to the court house."

Mike Inman, former chief council for the INS, who in the spring of 1989 was working about a mile from Schey's house, was also "in favor of the peaceful surrender, letting the Bhagwan and inditees come in and surrender at the court house to avoid the confrontation. I wanted Turner to make arrangements with Peter Schey, call him and tell him there was an indictment. And say, 'Look, we've indicted these people. We know that there are quasi-fanatical supporters. We don't want to create any problems. We'd like to make arrangements for you to bring them in quietly and surrender them. We can post bond and they can go back to the compound and we can proceed on a normal basis. Because, remember, immigration cases are not that heavy. Right?"

And Turner said, "Nothing doing! The minute we do that they'll take off and run. I want to storm the Bastille!" He wanted the INS Border Patrol and INS investigators, the FBI and the Oregon National Guard to go up and announce at the gate that they had warrants and unless they were honored in the next minute or something like that they were going to forcefully enter.

⁷⁶² He is obviously reading from Dr. Devaraj's book. See Chapter 3.

He wanted to go in there and physically roust the Bhagwan out of his compound. He really wanted to go for it. He wanted a frontal attack. The manner in which Commissioner Nelson described it to me, it was literally a military assault. Force would be used to enter, with people on loudspeakers saying, "You are surrounded. All ingress and egress points are covered."⁷⁶³ Unless you come out, we're going to forcibly enter and remove you."

The prospect of any physical encounter with the sannyasins over anything, especially indictments stemming from non-violent, "low grade" immigration matters, was abhorrent to Inman. "To me, engaging in that kind of activity, where the defendants are charged with violating immigration laws, is like using a cannon to kill a mouse. It was overreaction. And mind you, my entire law practice I'm a civil lawyer. I'm not a criminal lawyer and I'm not a true law enforcement type. "

Carl Houseman, the district director of the Portland INS who had appeared on ABC's *Nightline* and had been a source of so much embarrassment for the agency,⁷⁶⁴ thought that some form of surrender agreement should be, and was being, worked out. INS Commissioner Alan Nelson said he was under the same impression.

"There were obvious concerns about arms at Rajneeshpuram," Nelson said, "whether law enforcement agencies would go in there to serve warrants, and whether he [Rajneesh] would come to Portland to surrender. There might have been some issues about procedure, how do you serve the warrants. But it was a minor issue in the whole process."

Lowell Jensen and Steve Trott wanted to be sure that this was coordinated. Done right. That we didn't walk into some kind of shootout, and all that kind of stuff. Assuming that the Bhagwan would not voluntarily surrender, how did we serve the warrants? And there was even a question: do we offer him the opportunity to come and surrender?

I don't know if it ever got finally resolved. Because, again, he did flee. At that point I think there was still a discussion. I believe there was a general agreement that they would make some effort to try to get him to come voluntarily. I think it was agreed, but we never got to that because of events.⁷⁶⁵

Around the time Schey imagined he was negotiating with Turner about both testimony before the Grand Jury and the terms of surrender, Stephen Paul Paster was arrested in his car at a shopping mall in Englewood, Colorado, just outside Denver. He had lost most of his hands planting a bomb in the Portland Hotel Rajneesh in July 1983⁷⁶⁶ and had been a fugitive from justice for over a year.

⁷⁶³ This sounds very much like Rick Norton's plan, as described in Chapter 8.

⁷⁶⁴ See Chapter 5.

⁷⁶⁵ Alan Nelson didn't know how that got resolved for the same reason Mike Inman didn't know how the marriage fraud charges against Sheela were linked to Rajneesh (see Chapter 8). Because it never happened.

⁷⁶⁶ See Chapter 5.

A search of the house where he was staying revealed a cache of handguns, a shotgun and a semi-automatic pistol. Also found were how to instructions for making electronic bombing devices, which he obviously hadn't read carefully enough the first time around, and several passports under different aliases.⁷⁶⁷ This far into the plot it's more good sense than paranoia to wonder what the latest batch of explosives were for and how he got them and those passports.

One is also more than a tad curious to know whether he was working alone or with, and for, others. For example, the always conveniently vague "international gang of terrorists"? The closer to home Anti-Cult Movement (ACM) we cuddled up to in the last chapter? The clandestine underground government Noam Chomsky opened our eyes to?⁷⁶⁸ Any combination of the above?

None of that, according to Jack Ballas, assistant special-agent-in-charge of the Seattle office of the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF). "I know it [the Portland bombing] has to do with the East Indians, with the political and religious mess that exists between the factions," he said.⁷⁶⁹ Ballas didn't know any such thing and neither did anyone else, because it simply wasn't true.⁷⁷⁰

While spreading malicious misinformation about Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram had been done many times before and would continue to be a routine occurrence, this case was different. Because the crank caller had actually identified himself. "Hi, my name is Jack Ballas. I work for BATF in Seattle. Here's my telephone number."

And, again, one is more than a little bit curious to know why he bothered. In order to get a possible answer - and I stress the word "possible"- we can return to the Wolfgang-Don Stewart connection.⁷⁷¹ In my conversations with Stewart and in parts of his taped conversation not cited earlier, the BATF was mentioned as playing a major role in the conspiracy to "get Rajneesh".⁷⁷²

Was Ballas' diversionary tactic - pointing at "them there" - an attempt to draw attention away from "us here"? A way of saying, "Hey, we had nothing to do with this!"? Was something much more insidious going on? Was Ballas saying, in effect, "There's no telling what those crazy religious fanatics and terrorists will do among themselves. It's such a tangled, sordid world, they can bomb and kill each other and we'd never sort out

⁷⁶⁷ *The Oregonian*, June 28, 1985. We have another "bomb" story toward the end of Chapter 10.

⁷⁶⁸ See one of opening quotes to Chapter 7.

⁷⁶⁹ *The Bend Bulletin*, June 28, 1985

⁷⁷⁰ A person with a supernatural ability to connect the dots - all of them - might want to give Ballas the benefit of the doubt. After all, he could have been referring to a May 29, 1981 cable from the American Consulate in Bombay reporting the suspicions of local police. Namely, that recent attacks on the sanniyasins had been the work of "a local group hostile to the ashram" (see Chapter 2). It sounds like reading tea leaves and jerking off to me, but even if it were true, he should have said the bombing might have been attributable to those "East Indians" (whatever that means). "We don't know, but it's something worth looking into."

⁷⁷¹ See Chapter 7.

⁷⁷² The BATF returns big time in Chapter 12.

who did what to whom and why." Was the point of the exercise setting the stage for misinterpreting whatever worst case scenario that could, and eventually would, happen?

While readers are free to do whatever they want with their money, here's where I'd shift my chips from the "possible" to the "likely". In other words, approximately three weeks after exterminating the brutes in Philadelphia and in the middle of RFI suing nearly everyone except Treasury and BATF, Ballas was preparing the world to expect another isn't that terrible at Rajneeshpuram.⁷⁷³ Due to their mass psychological self destructive tendencies and pathologically criminal disregard of legitimate authority, anything and everything was possible "down there".

And they would have brought it on themselves. Anyone who had conflicting readings of "what really happened" would be dead. Either literally or effectively as far as bearing credible witness was concerned, because of the stigmata stamped on their foreheads over the years by the media and the generally going along for the joy ride public. "I'm a brain dead cult dummy, and everything I say can and will be used against me."

At the end of June, after a three month public silence, Rajneesh began speaking again. This time he spoke live to a couple of thousand people in the meditation auditorium. He also initiated a series of world press conferences and interviews with reporters who asked him questions one on one. Some reported a certain uneasiness about being in the presence of an "enlightened master". How did one behave in such circumstances? What was the drill? What did one say? What didn't one say?

Certain ground rules had to be established. Or, rather, set aside. "Don't be polite to me," Rajneesh told one man. "Because I won't be polite to you." But after the opening informalities, many of the interviews developed a fun, punchy repartee rhythm with both sides obviously enjoying the game. And, of course, one went on television, the radio and to press with zip quotes one couldn't easily squeeze out of more "rational" sources.

Ken Kashiwahara of ABC's *Good Morning America* asked if there were any orgies in Rajneeshpuram. "No orgies are going on," Rajneesh replied. "And if people want an orgy, it is nobody's business. If a few people want group sex, what is harmful in it? If two persons can enjoy, why cannot ten persons enjoy together? Once we think of sex as natural, joyful fun.... No orgies are happening here, but I am not prohibiting them. It is up to the people. If they feel like having an orgy, so far so good."⁷⁷⁴

In July some reporters from *Der Spiegel* asked Rajneesh what would happen if the Oregon State Police sent people to take him and his sanniyasins out. "We will decide in the moment. We never plan," he said.⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷³ We catch this technique being repeated in Chapter 10.

⁷⁷⁴ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 1, July 17, 1985. Even in the best of times it's hard to get an orgy going and keep it up. Don't ask how I know. And given all the precautions and AIDS protective latex (see Chapter 6), this wasn't the best of times. Thus I suspect this is more his rock 'em, sock 'em style than an accurate description of possibilities.

⁷⁷⁵ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 2, July 19, 1985. And the following short interchange.

Der Spiegel: But if it happens, you will be prepared to kill people?

Rajneesh: No. We will see at the moment what we can do, whether it is right to stand before them with our chests open and tell them to kill us and prove that they are civilized, and prove they are democratic.

Der Spiegel: Yes, provided this is a civilized democracy.

Rajneesh: It is not.

Der Spiegel: The American society is not democratic?

Rajneesh: No society anywhere is yet civilized.

While one could try to understand - or misunderstand - from his side Rajneesh was doing his best to provoke listening. He often started way out there, with something that would sound crackpot to almost everyone. Then came the subtle and intricately woven arguments to support the outlandishness.

In July a Portland television reporter asked him about his health. "You seem to be looking very well," she said. "My health is very good and getting better," Rajneesh said. "Oregon, its dry climate, its hostile people, all have been tremendously helpful. I am feeling very good."⁷⁷⁶

"I love to disturb people," he told another interviewer, "because only by disturbing them can I make them think. They have stopped thinking for centuries. Nobody has been there to disturb them. People have been consoling them. I am not going to console anybody, because the more you console them, the more retarded they remain."⁷⁷⁷ "Disturb them! Shock them! Hit them hard! Give them a challenge. That challenge will bring their capacities to a climax."

A Dutch journalist asked Rajneesh why he deliberately created so much hostility in people. "Hostility is emotional," he said, "and the beauty of the whole game is that the hostile person is burning himself. I am not hostile. I have simply triggered something in him and he is burning himself."

And nobody can remain hostile for long. It is a sickness. He has to find some way out of it. Either he has to forget all about me - which is impossible because I have hurt him so deeply. Neither can he forgive me or forget me. The only possible way is to come close to me and try to understand what I am doing. "Is it really right for me to be so hostile to these people? Is it right for me to be so full of hate with these people?"

⁷⁷⁶ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 8, July 25, 1985

⁷⁷⁷ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 4, July 21, 1985 This statement could have come straight from Frohnmayer's area of expertise: Friedrich Nietzsche. For example, "The better the state is organized, the stupider mankind will be. To make the individual *uncomfortable* is my mission." (Quoted in William Arrowsmith, "Nietzsche on Classics and Classicists", Part II, *Arion*, Summer 1963, p. 25)

And anybody who comes closer is going to change. This has been happening every day. Hate can very easily turn into love, just as love can turn into hate. They are two sides of the same coin.⁷⁷⁸

"Bhagwan," another reporter asked, "it has been said that violence is as American as apple pie."⁷⁷⁹ Why is the United States - a country that prides itself as a land of freedom - such a violent place? Is there a relation between violence in America and its so-called freedom?" Rajneesh's response was a kick in the teeth to the most cherished American beliefs, that they were a fair and honest folk, whose manifest destiny was to police the world and save it from itself.

Violence in America has deep roots. It is the only continent in the world which is being ruled by foreigners. The native red Indians, to whom this continent belongs, are almost finished. And the people who think they are Americans, none of them are American. They have all come from other countries, invaded the poor country, invaded the poor innocent natives. The roots of violence are there.

The people who had come into power over this continent through violence have remained in power through violence. Unless the continent is given back to its people, this violence is going to remain.

It is a strange phenomenon that the people who are ruling the country are trying to prevent others from living here. We are not trying to prevent others from living here. We are not trying to rule the country. We are not invaders. They are trying to call us foreigners just because they came here three or four generations ago. Time makes no difference. They are all foreigners.

"Violence is the religion of America," he continued later in the interview.⁷⁸⁰ "And America is despised and condemned all over the world - even those countries receiving American help are not sympathetic towards America. I know it. In India you will not find a single person who is sympathetic towards America. And America has been helping. Whenever there is famine or floods or no rain for years, and people are dying, America is always ready to help. But American help does not create sympathy for America. On the contrary, it offends, because they know what you are doing to your own poor."

Why are you helping others when you yourself are not doing anything for your own downtrodden? It is not compassion that you go on helping Ethiopia,

⁷⁷⁸ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 17, August 3, 1985

⁷⁷⁹ Rebecca Moore, a professor of religious studies at San Diego University who lost two sisters and a nephew at Jonestown, wrote a piece, "'American as Apple Pie': Peoples Temple and Violence in America" (in *Millennialism, Persecution, and Violence: Historical Cases*).

⁷⁸⁰ René Girard has written an extremely perceptive and influential book, *La Violence et le sacré*. While no summary does it justice, he claims that violence is inherent in religion. Period. It doesn't make any difference whether it is American, Indian, African or Greek. Without violence, religion is not possible. While there are some problems with this theory - specifically, his tendency to equate religion with sacrifice - his book is well worth a slow read. For comparable remarks, see Jonathan Smith (Chapter 2).

India, wherever there is poverty and sickness. It is an effort to make ground for your armies, for your nuclear weapons. All these countries understand perfectly that this is simply business, not help.

America is the most condemned country in the whole world. America has no friends anywhere, for the simple reason that it is the most destructive power today. When your whole government and the energy of the people and the intelligence of your scientists are moving in only one direction - destruction - how can you avoid violence?⁷⁸¹

A Portland television reporter said that most of America seemed to be saying no to him, his message and movement. Did he, therefore, think he had come to the wrong country at the wrong time?

Whenever I would have come, it would have been the wrong time. I cannot come at the right time in spite of all the watches given to me. I just either come before the time or come after the time. But this is the fate of a person like me.

The message that I am giving will never fit with the existing society. But I enjoy to be a misfit. That means I am still alive. Those who have fitted completely, comfortably, are just small parts in a big mechanism. I have belonged to no society, to no religion, to no country. I will always be a misfit even amongst Rajneeshees, because I am not a Rajneeshee. It is just their love and tolerance that they allow me to be here. Otherwise, I don't follow anything of Rajneeshism.⁷⁸²

Conspicuous by her absence on the roster of reporters getting inside the up close and personal zone was Frances Fitzgerald, an author who claimed to be trying to understand the story of Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram from both sides of the continental divide of those for and against. She was offered a personal interview in which she could ask any question she wanted. But she didn't accept. Why not? Unlike her, I am normally averse to attributing motives to people I've never met - and even those I have. But the answer seems pretty clear. In fact, she supplies it.

⁷⁸¹ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 9, July 26, 1985. Comparable sentiments have been expressed by scientists and historians of science. For example, "The full impact of the cold war on American science cannot simply be measured quantitatively, by federal budgets or by the numbers of scientists and engineers devoted to military projects. Rather, the long-term costs must be reckoned both in dollars and in sense, in terms of our scientific community's diminished capacity to comprehend and to manipulate the world for other than military ends." (Stuart Leslie, "Science and Politics in Cold War America", in *The Politics of Western Science*, p. 231)

⁷⁸² Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 3, July 20, 1985. One sannyasin told me an allegedly true story about Poona 1 (a bald and not very funny version of which appears in *The Dhammapada*, Vol. 12, Chapter 6, April 26, 1980, with "Bhagwan" changed to "Osho"). Some of the ashram kids were sitting outside the main office discussing why everyone wore red except Bhagwan. One of them said, "Ah, Bhagwan. He's not even a sannyasin!"

To listen to Rajneesh lecture, however, was to understand some of his attraction for his disciples. He was - in a way that could not be appreciated on videotape - a brilliant lecturer. He spoke slowly - the right pace for a lecture hall - and every sentence was well-formed. His large eyes were expressive, but as he moved hardly at all, the words seemed to come from the interior, from somewhere beneath the long gray beard that descended his chest. The gist of his lectures was familiar to me from his books, but what I had not gathered from reading the lectures was his talent as a comedian. The jokes sounded better than they read, for his timing was perfect, but far better were the comic riffs he would go off into once or twice in a lecture - the little experiments in the language and the play of associations. Also Rajneesh was a world-class hypnotist. One of his lectures ended with a description of a dewdrop sliding off a lotus leaf and being carried down a stream to the ocean. It put virtually everyone in his audience into an alpha-wave state at ten in the morning.⁷⁸³

For a moment at least she felt the tug, lure and seduction. Rajneesh trying to lift - steal - her from her typical self and what she knew, and the threat of what had happened to so many others before happening to her. Namely, of being taken away from all this and becoming Ma Prem Somebody Else.⁷⁸⁴ Over and over, she had done the interviews and heard the stories. About people just passing through to check out the scene, with absolutely no intention of giving up a goddamn thing, and then, against all "rationality", "better judgment" and "will", doing the unthinkable. Tearing their clothes and throwing themselves into the river.⁷⁸⁵ Most had been just like her, and except for the red clothes, *malas* and love for Rajneesh, still were.

That summer Rajneesh wasn't only putting it to outsiders. He was also dishing out the same treatment to insiders. As he had done throughout his career. They were long accustomed to seeing him as an ethereal, asexual being who barely managed to touch the ground when he walked, so he spoke of his love affairs with many women. If his body was in better shape, he told them, he would still be making love to women. In an apparent attempt to compound the offense, he said:

But, of course, if I started smoking here while I am speaking to you, many camels⁷⁸⁶ are going to be shocked. But I am an unreliable man, I live moment to moment. If it happens to me, tomorrow you will see a table by my side with the best cigarettes in the world - what is it, 555? - and a bottle of champagne, and my Guida,⁷⁸⁷ one of the most beautiful girls I have come across, pouring

⁷⁸³ *Cities on A Hill*, pp. 357f

⁷⁸⁴ This same combination of longing and fear is expressed throughout Carl Gustav Jung's not always completely honest and above board memoirs. For example, "It had been, in fact, the first hint of 'going black under the skin,' a spiritual peril which threatens the uprooted European in Africa to an extent not fully appreciated." (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, p. 273). Others have called it "going native" or "going *shenzi*".

⁷⁸⁵ See Chapter 2 for the reference.

⁷⁸⁶ Rajneesh had many animal names for stupid people: camels, donkeys, frogs.

⁷⁸⁷ Guida is a reference to Vivek-Sashi.

champagne into the glass for me. I can do that, it is just a question of the idea arising in me. Then nobody can prevent me.⁷⁸⁸

He kept returning to similar themes for weeks.

Slowly, slowly, you will get accustomed to the idea that an enlightened man can come to a disco, dance with you, play cards with you, drink a little champagne with you. You should be immensely happy that you are with a man who claims no holier-than-thou attitude.⁷⁸⁹

Enlightenment had never been like this. Those who couldn't swallow the revisions and "revelations"⁷⁹⁰ left. Attracting people toward him and driving them away had from the beginning been an essential part of the game plan, and history has proved him a master on both fronts. But what was the reason for this apparently contradictory and counter-productive approach?

He had repeatedly said he didn't want excess baggage in his "caravanserai".⁷⁹¹ He didn't want people hanging around because of what they thought enlightenment and masters were, or should, be. His success or failure, he said, should not be measured in terms of numbers of disciples and glowing testimony on the asset side, and declining figures and bad press on the debit.

An enlightened master's success was measured in the quality of his people, the depth of their intelligence, understanding, love and creativity. Those willing and able to make the jump "to the next level" - by leaving old levels behind - had their eyes and "no-minds" widened, and their maturity went up a notch.

It seemed like he was disengaging from many of the free floating umbilical cords that normally latch on to all charismatic leaders. He was not their father, he told disciples. He was not God. He was not omniscient, omnipotent or any other silly omni-thing. The message repeated incessantly throughout the discourses was doubt, doubt, and more doubt.

Doubt everybody, including me. No guru has ever said that. No guru can ever say that. His whole gurudom is based on creating belief in you, faith in you.

So don't trust in me. Don't trust in anybody in particular. Simply trust. Let it be your fragrance.

Love me, but don't love my words. Trust me, my presence, but don't trust my experiences. Trusting my presence will encourage you to realize all those

⁷⁸⁸ Rajneesh, *From the False to the Truth*, Chapter 24, July 22, 1985

⁷⁸⁹ Rajneesh, *From the False to the Truth*, Chapter 33, July 31, 1985

⁷⁹⁰ Revelations is in quotation marks because it is by no means certain that any of this was true. It could have been the trickster in him talking.

⁷⁹¹ We have already touched on this theme in Chapter 2.

things that I have been telling you. But if you trust all those things already, you will stop inquiring.⁷⁹²

But the most shocking revelations were yet to come. They began on Friday evening, September 13 at the regular news conference being held in Sheela's house. Since Rajneesh had started speaking at the end of October 1984, she had spent most of the year somewhere else. Apparently, the commune, which was the size of San Francisco, wasn't big enough for the both of them.

After shouting "tough titties", giving the finger and getting beeped countless of times in Europe, Asia and Australia, she returned for her curtain call. But she was not present at that news conference when the shit hit the fan. The September 13 talk was "Number 20"⁷⁹³ with a full brass band. And this time there was no chance of missing the message or magically making it disappear.

Rajneesh talked about the generic criminality of politicians and, as he had done the December before, turned his bright lights on Rajneeshpuram's fascists in residence. He told the disciples that he would not be with them forever, and the "moment I am not with you, you can start behaving politically, you can start making a bureaucracy, a hierarchy. You can start making small groups and fighting with each other and doing the whole thing, on a smaller scale, of course."⁷⁹⁴

He wanted them to become aware of the ways of politics and power to ensure that "in this society no priesthood arises, no politics arises. Even while I am here the same stupidities are arising once in a while. Just the other day Sheela has written a letter to me that now when she comes back here she does not feel as excited as she used to be. She feels happier working outside in Europe, in Australia, in Japan or anywhere else. Perhaps she is not conscious - and this is the situation for all - she does not know why she does not feel excited here any more. It is because I am speaking and she is no longer the central focus. She is no longer a celebrity."

When I am speaking to you, she is no longer needed as a mediator to inform you of what I am thinking. Now that I am speaking to the press and to the radio and TV journalists, she has fallen into [the] shadow [s]. And for three and a half years she was in the limelight because I was silent.

It may not be clear to her why she does not feel excited coming here and feels happy in Europe. She is still a celebrity in Europe - interviews, television shows, radio interviews, newspapers - but here all that has disappeared from her life.

⁷⁹² Rajneesh, *From Death to Deathlessness*, Chapter 25, August 30, 1985

⁷⁹³ See Chapter 8.

⁷⁹⁴ Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 2, Chapter 23, September 13, 1985. Originally published in *The Last Testament*, Vol. 1, Chapter 12. And unfortunately, but not surprisingly, these words have proved all too prophetic.

If you can behave in such foolish unconscious ways even while I am here, the moment I am gone you will be creating all kinds of politics, fight. Then what is the difference between you and the outside world? Then my whole effort has been a failure. I want you to behave really as the new man.⁷⁹⁵

Rajneesh said that Sheela not only wanted him silent. She wanted him dead. Earlier that same day, Sheela had called a meeting of her closest confidants, those she wanted to accompany her to Europe. Among those at the meeting was Ma Yoga Pratima.

"Sheela basically said that Bhagwan doesn't care about the commune any more. 'He's only interested in Rolls Royces and watches.'" According to Pratima, she said, "He doesn't give a shit about you people. I'm leaving. I'm taking my friends with me. We're going to go off and start businesses in Europe, because we're very successful business people."⁷⁹⁶ And anyone who stays here is an idiot. The place is going to fall to pieces after we've gone. So who wants to come with me?"

Pratima said Sheela and the others were freaked out and she thought the whole matter could be resolved if Rajneesh talked to her and calmed her down. But she and everyone else outside the inner inner circle were like Swami Ananda Apurv in New Delhi. They didn't know "what's going on". They didn't have a clue about the violent crimes Sheela and her coterie had contemplated and committed.⁷⁹⁷

But those in the loop didn't need to stick their anything but clean noses in the wind to figure out which way it was blowing. Some of them had flipped earlier that summer, and had to be heavily sedated and isolated. One man was exiled because he refused to go along with a poisoning scheme. Another couple left in the night and vanished into the wider world. "It was very nasty," Pratima said. "People were cracking up, emotionally disturbed about what was going on."

"Are you telling me that some people were involved in the inner circle without having known that they were participating in criminal activities," I asked her. "No. I'm sure they all knew. When you're talking about poisoning someone, people know that's murder."

On Saturday afternoon, September 14, Sheela and about 15 others who were lashed to her through love, hate and deeds done, flew out of Rajneeshpuram.⁷⁹⁸ That night most of

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁶ Sheela's assessments about her business and other talents were touched on in Chapter 5.

⁷⁹⁷ For Apurv, see Chapter 8. While I personally believe that many of these crimes were planned and occasionally carried out, in all fairness I must confess that I have not sufficiently studied that side of things to definitely conclude that that actually was the case. Thus if readers want to include an "alleged" in front of every mention of them, they will be perfectly justified in doing so.

⁷⁹⁸ Frances Fitzgerald's reading of the exodus was: "When Sheela and fifteen other sannyasins left the ranch in mid-September, their main motive, according to sannyasins, was to escape indictment for immigration fraud - an indictment they supposed was coming down from the federal grand jury on October 3. (In fact they had the date wrong; it was planned for November 1.)" (*Cities on A Hill*, p. 373) As with much of what she proclaims as how it was, the first sentence has to be doubly wrong. The immediate driving force for the

them flew on to Zurich, Switzerland. Some of those staying behind, who still didn't know about the intricate web of deceits and secrets behind the skedaddle, cried and protested eternal love to those going. Others were relieved to see them leaving, but couldn't immediately say why. But the majority of sannyasins only found out about it later that evening.

Early the next day, in a meditation hall filled with stunned sannyasins, Rajneesh was asked about the difference between ordinariness and mediocrity. He eventually steered the response to the subject of Sheela and her escape. "Sheela asked me again and again during these four years, 'Bhagwan, help me so that I never deceive you, never betray you.' I told her, 'Sheela, asking it again and again means there is a tendency of which you are aware, that you can betray, you can deceive. Otherwise, what is the point of asking it?'"

He said, "The idea was that all these people will go with her, and the commune will be in a chaos. Now the commune is always in a chaos! Nobody can disturb it. What more chaos can be there?"⁷⁹⁹

"Everyone in the hall laughed," Swami Satyam Anando told me. "The love, light and laughter Osho had always talked about and inspired, but which had been completely sucked out of the everyday oxygen, was suddenly back."

Not everyone saw it like that. A distinct exception to the rule was Mayor KD, who Rajneesh singled out for what had to be one of the toughest lessons of his life. He turned to him and said: "Krishna Deva has been guarding me with a gun. Sometimes I think these people who can leave because Sheela is leaving, they were not here for me. Their hands and their guns were dangerous. They may not have known it, but now they can understand that they were not here for me. And it is more possible for a guard to shoot me than anyone else."⁸⁰⁰

Outside in the late summer sun, "friends hugged, looked into each other's eyes, and realized that even though they had been living and working together, they hadn't really seen each other for years," Satyam said. "It was a revolution, as if we were waking up from a war." Swami Krishna Deva left for California the same day. A few days before he had already started negotiating his me first future by contacting federal officers in Seattle to find out "how indictments and/or subpoenas would be served at Rajneeshpuram".⁸⁰¹

departure was not an indictment, but the wallop on her thick skull she got from the master. And any sannyasin worth talking to would have known that. While the November 1 date for the indictment is intriguing - especially in connection with what is argued below and more extensively in Chapter 10 - Fitzgerald can't be bothered to divulge her source. I later discovered that it was the always reliable *Oregonian* (*Rajneesh and company pull up stakes from Oregon as guru's vision in desert becomes a mirage*, December 30, 1985).

⁷⁹⁹ Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 1, September 15, 1985

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.* It should be remembered that Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had been assassinated by her own Sikh bodyguards.

⁸⁰¹ *Willamette Week*, September 26-October 2, 1985

Over the long weekend a few sannyasins left over from the Jesus Grove power élite came forward to tell what Sheela & Co. had been up to over the years. Caught in a similar dilemma, the first reaction of most officials in government, business and any other organization would have been cover up, damage control and denial. That's how Nixon dealt with Watergate, Reagan with Iran-Contra and Clinton with Monicagate.

Rajneesh, by contrast, called a press conference the next day - Monday, September 16 - and flew the dirty laundry in full view. Among the list of crimes were the poisoning of 715 people in The Dalles, a plan to poison that town's water supply, the January arson fire in the Wasco County Planning Office, the non lethal poisoning of a few public officials and many sannyasins who had been close to Rajneesh. Among those who had almost died were Jefferson County District Attorney Mike Sullivan and Rajneesh's personal physician, Dr. Devaraj. Rajneesh also claimed that Sheela might have embezzled as much as \$55 million from the commune's coffers.

More was revealed the next day. Sannyasins had found a poison and explosives laboratory at Jesus Grove, along with two suitcases of Paladin Press style books and bulletproof brassieres. They discovered evidence of what was later billed as the most sophisticated and extensive wiretapping setup in history. Further, one of Sheela's former pilot boyfriends had been asked to crash a planeload of bombs into The Dalles. He rebelled against the kamikaze scheme and had been kicked out of the commune.

On the surface of it, the revelations, which so enraged Oregonians and others, were mind boggling. They made a cannonball splash in the local and international press, and most never got over it. You ask them about Rajneesh and sannyasins, and this was what they remember. Others didn't want to get over it, because it was in their best interests to remember and remember and remember. At least how they remembered it.

But when one compared what was being dreamed and schemed with what had actually been carried out, it squared perfectly with the old adage. When all is said and done, more is said than done. For example, despite the poisoning plans and actual attempts, no one had been killed. Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith said "the Rajneeshees were very incompetent at doing their dirty work, incompetent at killing people. If they really intended to do a lot of people in, they were really very sloppy at it. Fire bombing the planning office here! The needle into the rump of the doctor!⁸⁰² Strange business! If somebody had grown up in the Bronx, they'd have a good idea how you'd get the killing done. But they came up with the most grandiose schemes, the most complex schemes imaginable."

"These poisonings and so on. I'm not discounting that. It was terrible. These were ugly things to do. But, at the other end of the spectrum, they weren't very effective at getting the final product. They had all these plans to kill to hell everybody. But the truth is that ..."
"... Nobody was killed," I interrupted.

⁸⁰² Swami Devaraj, Rajneesh's personal physician. See below. We return to some of these themes in Chapter 12 (especially note 1166). For more on harebrained schemes, see Chapter 13.

"Well, we don't know if anybody got killed," he countered. Because as far as he⁸⁰³ and so many Oregonians are concerned, just because gung ho efforts to uncover other provable crimes turned up nothing, that didn't mean they hadn't happened.

In their eyes, the *onus probandi*⁸⁰⁴ would always remain on the sannyasins. Of course it would. Otherwise, it, or at least a very large portion of it, might fall on their own heads and hearts.⁸⁰⁵

But back to the issue of the gang that couldn't shoot straight. One could recall with malicious irony the words of Washington attorney Myles Ambrose, which were spoken in an entirely different context. "Lots of things could have been done if they had sat down and organized themselves and figured out what their objectives were and where they were going."⁸⁰⁶

One Portland policeman who was on the rotation to Rajneeshpuram told a local cop, "I don't know why we're spending so much money down here. What we've come up with so far happens in a couple of hours in Portland." And perhaps it is also worth mentioning that the victims of the crimes were pretty evenly divided between those inside Rajneeshpuram and those outside.

Rajneesh told the press that there was now no reason for sannyasins and Oregonians to remain enemies. Rajneeshees, he said, would drop their suits against everyone if everyone dropped their suits against them. Sannyasins would sell all their properties in the City of Rajneesh and he would recommend that they vote to restore the old name of Antelope.

But the more vocal Oregonians - at least those who managed to get themselves heard - said, "Hell, no!". "I'm elated," said Lester Smallwood, who lives six miles west of Antelope. "Now that the guru's lost his big shots, his first line of defense, maybe he's not as secure."⁸⁰⁷ Letters with even stronger sentiments were expressed in other newspapers around the state. Most of them said they knew all along that the Rajneeshees were up to no good. And they didn't believe for a second that Rajneesh himself didn't know what Sheela had done and, indeed, hadn't ordered her to do it. Others called for Rajneeshees to prove their new good neighbor policy by selling the 90 or so Rolls Royces and reimbursing the Salvation Army for its "clean up" of the Share-a-Home fiasco.⁸⁰⁸

⁸⁰³ See his comments in Chapter 8.

⁸⁰⁴ burden of proof (or probability)

⁸⁰⁵ This should not in any way be interpreted as a *J'accuse* against Bernie Smith. As far as I can tell, he operated completely within the letter and spirit of the law. He made a critical error of omission - see below and next chapter - but perhaps there wasn't much he could do when confronted with a *force majeure* and a pretty much *fait accompli*.

⁸⁰⁶ See Chapter 4.

⁸⁰⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 17, 1985

⁸⁰⁸ Apparently, they didn't know what former Governor Vic Atiyeh told me. Namely, that the Salvation had already been reimbursed from state coffers, "legally, but quietly".

"All the letters want us to make gestures of peace," Rajneesh said in one of his discourses. "A small minority - just 5,000 sannyasins in this desert - and the whole of America, the greatest destructive power in the world today, is begging for gestures of peace. I am surprised. Not a single letter has come which shows any gesture of love and peace towards us. They want every gesture of love and peace to come from us. Love and peace cannot exist from one side."⁸⁰⁹

The same, of course, is true of hate and war.

Nevertheless, some educated opinion expressed the possibility of healing the rifts between sannyasins and the rest of the state. "I think if Bhagwan and his new inner circle play their cards right there can be a dramatic improvement in public opinion," Benton Clark, University of Oregon sociology professor, told one reporter.⁸¹⁰

"Once the criminal allegations surfaced," University of Oregon Professor Carl Latkin told me in March 1989, "people's attitude towards the Rajneeshees became slightly more positive. Maybe the fear of the group was even worse than the deeds. I think it was the way they were portrayed in the media. People were frightened they were going to take over the state." During the same interview he said, "Now people who didn't know the Rajneeshees talk about them in positive terms."⁸¹¹

An editorial in a Lakeside newspaper did a quick survey of religious prejudice in America and reminded readers that a federal army in 1857 tried to overturn Mormon control in Utah. "Now, in 1985 we see that age-old attitude: 'we are old, therefore legitimate, and any new religious viewpoint is wrong.' ... Let's leave the Bhagwan and his followers alone."⁸¹²

New and old Rajneeshee leaders went out into the wider community and started rebuilding bridges that had been burned from both sides. A Corvallis newspaper described the visit of two sannyasin representatives to address 80 business people in their community. They "impressed the audience with warm, straightforward answers to a range of questions about the commune city on Oregon's high plains."⁸¹³

Among the leaders was Rajneesh's new secretary, Ma Prem Hasya, an easy going, 48 year old "Hollywood" socialite. While her life story is worth an entire book, we'll have to make do with a few choice morsels. Born in a Jewish family in Paris in 1937, she survived WW II in a Polish convent by pretending - and believing - she was Catholic.

Her father was killed by the Nazis when she was four. Her mother survived a concentration camp. After the war, mother and daughter were reunited and went to Israel.

⁸⁰⁹ Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 16, September 30, 1985

⁸¹⁰ *The Oregonian*, September 22, 1985

⁸¹¹ That wasn't my experience during my research. But he lived there, I didn't.

⁸¹² *Tenmile Times*, November 13, 1985. We recall Sheela's early successful efforts to endear herself with locals. See Chapter 3.

⁸¹³ *Gazette-Times*, November 12, 1985

But her mother saw the writing on the wailing wall and said, "I didn't save you from the Nazis to lose you to the Arabs". So they moved to America. Her first husband was a Tennessee billionaire and it was not uncommon to have the political *crème de la crème* over for Sunday brunch. Together with her second husband, Al Ruddy, she had produced the Academy Award winning film *The Godfather*.

Addressing a capacity crowd of 400 civic leaders at the Portland City Club, Hasya said Rajneeshpuram intended to expand its facilities as a resort and meditation center. She was accompanied by another sannyasin millionaire, Swami Dhyhan John, a successful Kansas City doctor. When asked if Oregonians had a stake in the survival of Rajneeshpuram, John said they did.

The city was pumping \$2 million a month into the state's economy and planned to accelerate their expenditures. He noted that most sannyasins with money had stayed away from Central Oregon because of Sheela's crude tactics. But now more of them would be coming.⁸¹⁴ However, the new sannyasin leaders said, Rajneeshpuram was in a life and death struggle with government authorities.

"We have given the police enough evidence to convict the criminals we had among us," Hasya told the Portland City Club. "But the targets of the investigation seem to be the innocents who were left behind."

In March 1989 I asked former Governor Vic Atiyeh, "After Sheela's crimes were exposed was there a possibility of any gap between the sannyasins and the rest of the state being bridged?"

"No," he said flatly.

"Why not?"

"Because 'they', whoever 'they' were How do you separate them? How do we know for sure who were all taken advantage of and were remorseful, and who were part of it, or at least had knowledge of what was going on?"⁸¹⁵ And you know, we'd been abused too much by them. Certainly, there would have been no one from the non-Bhagwan to reach over and extend a friendly hand. Nobody was willing to do that. Certainly, I wouldn't have done it. So the best thing to do was to just let it disintegrate. There was no reason for us Oregonians to keep them out there. They never gave us any reason for that."

Those had been Atiyeh's sentiments from the very beginning.⁸¹⁶ In March 1982, before any of the ensuing crimes had been planned or committed, he said, "It is very clear that their presence has been extremely disturbing to the longtime residents. Their presence is so different. If I moved into the neighborhood and they really didn't like me, I see no reason why I should stay."

⁸¹⁴ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 13, 1985

⁸¹⁵ For even more extreme views, see those of Oregon State Police Major Robert Moine in Chapter 12.

⁸¹⁶ See Chapter 4.

On Tuesday, September 17, the day after Rajneesh exposed some of Sheela's criminal activities, Oregon State Police Superintendent John Williams said his office was coordinating the investigations of charges made. "We've been in contact with the Rajneesh Peace Force and they are working with us in the matter."⁸¹⁷

The next morning law enforcement officials from the FBI, Wasco and Jefferson Counties, Rajneeshpuram, the state police and the attorney general's office met in The Dalles to coordinate. At that point, it looked like Bernie Smith would be running the show. At least that's what some thought. Smith said the investigation "would be as wide as indicated" in the allegations made by Rajneesh.⁸¹⁸ He also said he "would not consider immunity for anyone involved in planning or commission of a crime but would consider it for those who knew about crimes but did not report them."⁸¹⁹

But on Friday, September 20, Governor Atiyeh ordered Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer to coordinate the investigation "task force". "Task force" is a military expression and shows how General Frohnmayer viewed his writ. Robert Hamilton, deputy attorney general in charge of organized crime, and Byron Chatfield, also from the attorney general's office, were immediately assigned to the case.

"I was assigned by the governor and attorney general within hours or days after the incident occurred where Rajneesh himself went public with a series of allegations concerning wrongdoing perpetrated by people associated with him," Hamilton told me. "There had been a whole litany of events of a civil, public and controversial nature between the Rajneeshes and Oregon. What was significant about them was that all these things had fallen into the realm of a civil litigation, with the exception of the federal immigration matters beings pursued by the US Attorney's office. Rajneesh's allegations threw the whole realm of this business into the criminal arena, and there was a need for an investigation."

For two or three weeks the investigation focus was Rajneeshpuram, and even though that city was in Wasco County, the investigators were headquartered in Madras, the capital of Jefferson County. But then, in the middle of October, they shifted to The Dalles. "I counted at one point 17 agencies, state and federal, that were involved in this investigation," Hamilton said. "The scope of the investigation mandate, the list of crimes is phenomenal! Looking back on it now and then, I scratch my head again and think, 'Gee whiz! This really happened!'"

Hamilton said there were more crimes than could be successfully prosecuted, and a major problem faced by him and his staff was how to prioritize and focus. "You're not going to indict everyone for everything. There could have been a lot of people indicted. Although we had a lot of resources, it is never enough to cover everything. We had to regularly pursue what we thought we could solve, pursue what we thought we could get the job done with."

⁸¹⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 17, 1985

⁸¹⁸ *The Oregonian*, September 19, 1985

⁸¹⁹ *The Oregonian*, September 18, 1985

While Hamilton didn't say what he meant by "get the job done", at this point the "inferential gap" is so minor that even little babies can cross it in the dark without danger. Four years of pent up fury against the sannyasins was aimed full tilt at shutting down Rajneeshpuram. So even though they didn't have enough resources to pursue everything Rajneesh had alleged, that wasn't going to stop them from throwing their net wider. To include the alleged himself.

But again - and unfortunately for Hamilton and all those 17 agencies - there was no "magic bullet". "Initially, our focus was Rajneesh," he said. "We had a series of allegations made by him and we were going to investigate those allegations wherever they went. We're people, I hope, with practical common sense and some experience. We never closed our eyes to the possibility that it might lead to him. We were following our allegations to wherever they led. And our evidence didn't take us to him."

At the start of the investigations former Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard General Richard Miller and Brigadier General Ervin Osbourn were out of town. When they returned at the end of September, less than a week later, they found 15 armored personnel carriers (APC's) already deployed in the area around Rajneeshpuram. At that point, Brigadier Osbourn told me, the Oregon National Guard vehicles were under the command of Colonel Gale Goyins.

And he, Goyins, was pushing for an invasion. "Martial law was what some people were thinking about," Osbourn said. So one of the first things he did was to order the APC's back to their armories. General Miller said, "We figured we could bring in, if we needed, 600 troops, National Guardsmen to that area, from Portland, The Dalles, Bend, Redmond."

"In helicopters," I asked.

"No. No. We would have transported them in deuce and a half [2½] ton trucks. We were prepared to send in one or 600 Guardsmen, whatever the situation required."

But why were the National Guard preparing to send anyone into Rajneeshpuram? Those accused of attempted murder, poisoning, wiretapping and the other crimes had already left bed, board, commune and country. Wasn't that equivalent to shutting the barn door after the horses had bolted?

General Miller sent General Osbourn to Madras to coordinate the National Guard's involvement. Osbourn said, "We had our first meeting that evening and all the law enforcement people were gathered around. A lot of state police. We met at the court house there in Madras. When [John] Williams⁸²⁰ finally said, 'If I have to, I'll pull in 800 state police.' If he did that, he'd strip the whole state of his patrol units."

Osbourn was relieved, because that meant 800 National Guardsmen less he would have to send into a potentially bloody fray. "Hey, during my first call to General Miller I said, 'They got more law enforcement over here than they know what to do with. They don't

⁸²⁰ Superintendent of the Oregon State Police

need any infantry troops from us, or armored troops. All they want is transportation, and maybe some tentage.' The FBI had people all over the place. They didn't need anybody else with guns. And that was the first thing I did when I got to Central Oregon, was order all the gun mounts taken off helicopters and all weapons secured."

Jim Long and Leslie Zaitz, two reporters from *The Oregonian* who helped research and write a long series of inflammatory anti-Rajneesh articles, wanted a photo of a National Guardsman dressed in full uniform, with helmet and an M-16, silhouetted against the sky. Osbourn said, "We aren't going to do that. That's not our role and we aren't going to have a Kent State type image here.

Our people are not trained like law enforcement officers to shoot. We're good at area shooting, and we do have some people trained in sniper operations. But that was not our role at all, and we understood that role very well."

And we just weren't going to go in and end up killing some young Rajneeshee. I'd explain to our guys,⁸²¹ I said, "You think it's pretty, pretty great to be over here right now. But it's pretty goddamn lonesome two or three years down the line in a witness chair and you're accused of murder. We aren't going to have that role." They were upset with me when I said we weren't going to get involved in any fighting.

Rajneeshpuram's new mayor, Swami Prem Niren, an Oregon born, Los Angeles lawyer who had been a partner in the office of Democratic Party National Chairman Charles Manatt, held a press conference and said Frohnmayer's chief investigator, Paul Keller, "was trying to dominate a joint investigation by state, federal and local police in the community". "That's utter nonsense," Frohnmayer countered.⁸²²

On Wednesday, September 25, Governor Atiyeh expressed concern for the safety of Rajneeshpuram residents. "My concern is now centered on the people of the ranch, those that are really being the victims by actions of the leadership." The buzz was that he had called out the National Guard to protect them. The occasionally cool governor - in public at least - also said, "I've taken about all of this that the governor of the state should take and that the people of Oregon should take." His patience had worn thin.⁸²³

The FBI scheduled a meeting with Rajneesh for Saturday, September 21 and again for Sunday, September 22. They cancelled both times, because Rajneesh insisted on videotaping the interviews. At first the sannyasin witnesses had "told all" and voluntarily turned over about 3,000 wiretapped tapes to the FBI. But when it became more than obvious that the investigations and investigators were out to get Rajneesh and bring Rajneeshpuram to its knees, the sannyasins made them work for their money.

"Probably the most tense it got," General Osbourn told me, "was when the Bhagwan was still over in his little compound, and he supposedly had numbers all the way from 15 to

⁸²¹ the full time National Guard personnel General Miller brought with him

⁸²² *The Bend Bulletin*, September 25, 1985

⁸²³ *The Oregonian*, September 26, 1985

30 armed, well trained bodyguards. But I remember talking to Ted Gardner⁸²⁴ and John Williams that" He paused and cleared his throat.

"There was a question of whether the Oregon State Police and FBI should storm that compound and go ahead and take the Bhagwan - get it over with rather than mickey mousing around. The closest it ever came to where we were really going to probably do some shooting was when the question was raised, 'How long do we let the Bhagwan sit over there in his compound with the threat of his armed bodyguards with Uzis and all the other things we had heard about?'"

"Why don't the Oregon State Police and the FBI SWAT⁸²⁵ teams go over there and storm them?' I think it got to a point where it was a question of 'Let's quit screwing around and get on with our investigation. Or, do we take a slower pace and not agitate anything?'"

"Why was Gardner so frustrated," I asked.

"Because a block down the road there were rumors of a bunch of armed people who were not going to let the law enforcement in to talk to anybody.⁸²⁶ Here they are defiantly - with their own armed guards - and we've got law enforcement people all over the place and these people are ..."

"... Thumbing their noses at authority," General Miller interjected. It was an expression he had used earlier in the interview and seemed to embody his feelings of personal affront.

"Thumbing their noses, yeah," Osbourn agreed. "The FBI was well prepared to take very aggressive action. They brought their SWAT team down from Seattle and teamed it up with the local [Portland] SWAT team."

Theodore Gardner, like OSP Superintendent John Williams, was a former US Marine. When he had fallen out of favor with the then FBI Director, Judge William Webster - later head of the CIA - he was demoted from FBI chief in Washington, DC to Portland. "Ted Gardner," Williams said, "with a more direct way of operating, probably on occasion expressed the view that he would like to see us moving a little more positive. We had the manpower. We had the support. Let's go in and get the job done." Again, the magic phrase: "get the job done".

Meanwhile, Sheila was doing anything but lying low in Germany. She bared all - literally - in many magazines and was talking a lot with the press. "This week friends of Sheila informed *Quick* reporters that she had secretly recorded compromising talks with Bhagwan, and had deposited the cassettes in a safe place. 'Ma Anand Sheila now has good reason to fear for her life,' they explained."⁸²⁷

⁸²⁴ head of the FBI in Oregon

⁸²⁵ Strategic Weapons and Tactics

⁸²⁶ This sounds uncannily like myths about UN weapons' inspectors not being allowed to get on with their jobs in pre-invasion Iraq.

⁸²⁷ *Quick*, September 26, 1985

According to Hans Gunter and Heidi Rieckmann, the people who rented Sheela & Co. a house in Häusern, Germany,⁸²⁸ *Stern* paid her 20,000 Deutschmarks a month rent - about \$10,000 - plus an additional \$150,000 for her exclusive story. The glossy then advertised a spectacular three part series that would "tell all". But as with who knows how many of its exclusives – the "Hitler Diaries", *zum Beispiel*⁸²⁹ – this one flopped. Only one part was ever printed.⁸³⁰

In that one part exclusive she pled innocent to all charges and called Rajneesh the most corrupt man in the world. She repeated the scared stiff approach, and added that she was afraid Rajneesh would send a hit team to get her. "They will kill me because I know everything about Bhagwan." Once again she demonstrated her ongoing ability to rewrite the script that some still fondly call "history". She claimed to have been Rajneesh's secretary for 14 years, since 1971.⁸³¹ She was only ten years off.⁸³²

Her words about knowing everything, Rajneesh said, "is a message to the attorney general of Oregon, to the FBI, that she is willing to reveal it if they give her immunity. Then she can save all those twenty criminals who have escaped from here, and she can point to any people and say that these are the people who did all the wrong things."⁸³³

He also said that one sannyasin overheard the FBI saying they wanted to imprison 500 people and cripple the commune. "I have told them [the police]," he said, "we will not be supportive. We will not cooperate. We will not be your hosts anymore. You can pack your luggage and get out."⁸³⁴

Two days later, on September 28, he said, "Just the other day, from a very reliable source I have been informed that the governor has put the National Guard on alert against us." There were many law enforcement officials in the audience - some in uniform. And just as he had talked about Rajneeshpuram's former mayor, Krishna Deva, he now began to talk about them.

And one thing you should remember. The people in the police department, the FBI, the CIA, the KGB, these people and the people who are in the jails serving long sentences - for ten years, fifteen years, twenty years, great criminals - they are of the same quality.

⁸²⁸ See Chapter 10.

⁸²⁹ On April 22, 1983 *Stern* published extracts of what it called the greatest collection of Nazi memorabilia ever: 62 volumes of diaries written by *der Führer* himself. They had paid approximately 10 million DM for them. But within two weeks they were exposed as "grotesquely superficial fakes". *Stern* was also the magazine that Andrees Jorge Eltern - later Swami Satyananda - had worked for (see Chapter 2).

⁸³⁰ *Stern*, September 26, 1985. Apparently, Sheela had only her own "tough titties" to expose.

⁸³¹ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 26, 1985. She became a sannyasin in 1973.

⁸³² As I wrote this the first time, in 1989, Sheela was reported to be living in Switzerland. She had never been assaulted by a single sannyasin or anyone else. Amazing as that sounds. In 2007 she was still shooting off her mouth and playing Queen of the World. And anyone who wants to kill, slap or even yell at her can easily find out where she lives. But, again, no one has bothered.

⁸³³ Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 12, September 26, 1985

⁸³⁴ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 26, 1985

A criminal employed becomes a police officer. A police officer unemployed becomes a criminal. It is only a question of employment. The police officer does crimes in the service of the government, for which he is paid. The criminal is doing crimes independently. He is like a private detective - no government support. He is more courageous. But the quality of these people is not different.⁸³⁵

On Monday, September 30, two weeks after Rajneesh himself began unraveling the twists and turns of Sheela's crimes, there were 50 investigators at Rajneeshpuram and about 40 people were subpoenaed to appear before grand juries in The Dalles and Portland. That day he officially announced the death of Rajneeshism. It shouldn't have come as much of a surprise. In fact, for about a year in his discourses and press conferences, he had been killing it not so softly with his songs.

He had been saying it wasn't really a religion in the way people understood traditional religions like Judaism, Christianity and Islam. He hated those organized religions of priests and politicians and said why to both those willing to listen and those who weren't. Just as marriage was the death of love, he would say, religion was the death of religiousness. The latter is what he was teaching his disciples - sharing with them. That evening *The Book of Rajneeshism*, the so-called Rajneesh catechism, was burned at the commune's crematorium along with Sheela's pope's robes. Sannyasins danced with joy.

A few hours later Rajneesh from Rajneeshpuram and Frohnmayer from Salem appeared live on Ted Koppel's *Nightline*. Rajneesh said Frohnmayer's church and state case went up in smoke with the religion - because there was no longer any church - and he would have to stop his attack.⁸³⁶ Frohnmayer said he would let the courts decide the matter and would not discuss legal technicalities on television.

A few days later Frohnmayer said the killing of Rajneeshism was "like holding up an egg and calling it a sausage". With his apparently inherited penchant for sweeping generalizations, in which all sane people were on his side and everyone else had missed the boat,⁸³⁷ he said, "I don't think there is any neutral outside observer who doubts that it (Rajneeshism) is a theology."⁸³⁸

Thus, according to him, US Congressman Bob Smith was not a neutral outside observer. Because he was more than willing to accept at face value the burning of Rajneesh religion and wouldn't have minded shoving Rajneesh himself into the flames. With the no frills logic of an ex-basketball player, he said Rajneeshism was no religion and, therefore, Rajneesh was no religious teacher. Q.E.D.

⁸³⁵ Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 14, September 28, 1985. See Chapter 10 for a comparable opinion about the US Marshals.

⁸³⁶ A week later in his morning discourse, Rajneesh challenged Frohnmayer to a debate on religion. "Again, I would like to know how much religion he knows, how much he has meditated. To what stage of meditation he has reached. I give him an open challenge. I want to discuss openly with him what religion should mean." (*From Bondage To Freedom*, Chapter 23, October 7, 1985)

⁸³⁷ See, for example, Chapter 5.

⁸³⁸ *The Bend Bulletin*, September 25, 1985

"It is clear from statements made by the bhagwan," Smith wrote, "that he is not a religious teacher and that the Rajneesh community is not a religious community." He said his public statements in the last days "leave no doubt in my mind that religion was no more than a legal excuse for continued residency in the United States and the accumulation of extraordinary wealth. In light of bhagwan's comments denouncing religion, I believe that the INS should be able to move much more quickly to a resolution of any alien status decision. Since the religious foundations on which bhagwan's continued residency were based have disappeared, I can see no reason why deportation proceedings should not begin immediately.

"I've called on the Attorney General of the United States and the Oregon Attorney General, the FBI and the state police as well as the Immigration and Naturalization Service to follow up with full investigations of the horror stories."⁸³⁹

Frohnmayr and the rest didn't need an ounce of urging from Rep. Bob Smith. The "horror stories" he was referring to had to include the poisoning of salad bars in The Dalles and the idea of poisoning its water supply, and the January 13, 1985 firebombing of the Wasco County Planner's office (also in The Dalles). By now, however, almost everyone seemed to have forgotten the slightly inconvenient truth that the accusers were being persecuted by the law in Oregon while the alleged perpetrators of the crimes were on a seemingly perpetual, and very public, vacation in Germany.

Smith also asked "both Treasury Secretary James A. Baker and Attorney General Edwin Meese to act without delay to review any special federal tax or immigration treatment for the bhagwan, his followers, his commune or his corporations."⁸⁴⁰

On Wednesday, October 2 *The Oregonian* ran the splash headline: FEDERAL PLAN TO ARREST GURU DENIED. The day before Swami Prem Niren had told reporters that federal warrants had been issued for the arrest of Rajneesh and hundreds of his disciples. Federal officials from the US Attorney's office in Portland and Marla Rae, spokeswoman for Frohnmayr, denied the report.

Rae put Niren's comments "in the category of unnecessary pot stirring". When asked about the rumor of imminent arrest in the October 1 morning discourse, Rajneesh replied: "Aha! That's really groovy! That's the only experience I have missed in my life. And knowing that this is my last life, I would certainly want to be arrested. Make sure that I am handcuffed, because whenever I do anything, I do it totally."

Arresting me, an absolutely innocent person who has done no wrong, is the beginning of the end of American hypocrisy about democracy. It will be a great help to the whole world to understand that America is not what it pretends to be. It is not following its constitution. It has the best constitution in the world, but the worst politicians also.

⁸³⁹ *Lake County Examiner*, October 3, 1985

⁸⁴⁰ *Herald and News*, October 3, 1985

I have been for three and a half years in isolation, in silence, just remaining in my room, no contact with sannyasins, and still I am a criminal. If I am a criminal, then nobody on this earth is innocent.⁸⁴¹

"Rajneesh in his discourse this morning warned police will have to bring 5,000 handcuffs if they decide to arrest him because his followers will want to be by his side."⁸⁴² The same article quoted a Rajneeshpuram press relations officer saying "everybody expects this (the arrests) to happen at some point". A week later a Salem observer wrote: "The state of preparedness of Oregon officials this past week now exceeds the levels seen exactly a year ago when Rajneeshes imported bus loads of street people. Gov. Vic Atiyeh says he is in touch with the Rajneesh situation on a 'minute-by-minute' basis."

The hottest rumor is that the governor has or will soon call out the National Guard, presumably (as the rumor goes) so federal immigration officials (or someone else) can arrest the Bhagwan.

The governor says there is no truth to that. He says since activating the Guard takes his signature on a public document, the media (and everyone else) would know about it.⁸⁴³

More than three years later, in March 1989, I discovered that possible invasion was not a rumor or even a remote possibility. It was a passionately planned for probability. Bob Hamilton opened the first window into what was happening at the time. "When it came time to execute the search warrants,⁸⁴⁴ loss of life was on everyone's mind. The game plan was to go in there and take control of this! We had been in a negotiating session forever."

On Wednesday, October 2, 1985, the investigations were two weeks old. "There was plenty of force out there," he continued. "Oregon State Police, etc. But the basic problem was that law enforcement didn't have enough people to go into a confrontation with these folks. It was never anyone's intent to execute the search warrants by force. But we weren't going to negotiate any more!"

It's our time! We have court authority to go in there! And we were going to go in there! If, during the operation, we met resistance, if there had been a firefight, the National Guard would have taken us out with the helicopters it had on standby in Redmond. THEN, THEN, there was going to have to be some very, very serious planning, and some very, very serious decisions made. Then it became a military problem. And then everyone, top to bottom, were going to have to sit down and make some real unpleasant, difficult decisions and some enormous plans. Whether anyone was making those plans, I don't know.

⁸⁴¹ Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 17, October 1, 1985

⁸⁴² *The Bend Bulletin*, October 1, 1985

⁸⁴³ *Eagle Point Independent News*, October 8, 1985. We have already seen that the National Guard was extremely active, if not officially "activated".

⁸⁴⁴ looking for evidence of crimes Sheela had committed

In Chaos theory there is something known as "the butterfly effect", which means that something tiny - like a butterfly fluttering its wings - can have enormous, unforeseen and unforeseeable consequences. The same is true in life, stories and ordinary grammar. Were those National Guard helicopters designed to take law enforcement officials *out of or in to* Rajneeshpuram?

Hamilton said they were designed to take them out. A recap of events at Rajneeshpuram in *The Oregonian* on December 30, 1985 also had it that the helicopters were supposed to take officials out. But two weeks after I spoke to Hamilton General Osbourn had another tale to tell. He said the National Guard had three HUEYs - utility helicopters that make a terrific noise - pre-positioned at the Redmond airport. The same airport Rajneesh had flown into four years earlier, in late August 1981.

The idea was "that those helicopters would be used, if necessary, to move the FBI and the Oregon State Police's SWAT teams from Shaniko. FBI had some there at Shaniko. Oregon State Police had some at Madras. So we could have moved those people into the ranch at a moment's notice."

"You wanted to move the SWAT teams into the ranch," I asked Osbourn. "Right?"

"Yes, if that was necessary. My role only being that law enforcement - i.e., the FBI or Oregon State police - says, 'Things are getting out of hand. We need you to air lift some more of our law enforcement people in here. And where will you do it? Where will you put your drop zone, and all these good things.'"

So the FBI wanted me to bring them into the airstrip, and I says, "No, that's too low. And we don't know who's sitting on top of that hill. We'll bring you into the high area and you can work down." That was our plan. We were prepared to bring in more from Salem, depending on the situation.

Once law enforcement, through John Williams, said to the governor, "Things are getting out of hand. We need the National Guard", then the governor would have declared - what? - a state of emergency, put certain Guard units on [the] state payroll, and then it would have been General Miller's call, I guess mine, to offer advice to General Miller on, "Okay, we want these choppers to start moving Oregon State Police and FBI agents from the two different points: Madras, one area; Redmond in another area - three points - and Shaniko in another, and bring them in."

The next evening I asked John Williams about the plan. "The National Guard generals told me they could get to Shaniko within 15 minutes and from there down to the ranch would take another 10."

"I asked for 30 minutes," he said.

"You had two more helicopters on standby in Salem, according to General Osbourn. At the most, you could have brought in about 75 highly trained people, right? Fifteen per helicopter?"

"I think we had more than that. If you're talking total state police, FBI and National Guard people, 75 would be too low. The figure that comes to my mind is over a 100. We had daily logs coming in from district headquarters in Bend. If it was necessary, they were being flown over, or a patrol was relaying them, so we could keep the governor advised on a current basis. We put a radio in the commune [Rajneeshpuram] center where we had our command post, with a receiver and transmitter in the governor's office, and one in my office, where you could just pick up the radio and talk. I had a person manning our radio where I could talk to him immediately."

"Brigadier General Osbourn told me you were prepared to send in 800 state troopers," I said. "Is that correct?"

"No. "I only had 852 troops. That story came from the Rajneesh."

"But General Osbourn told me you said it!"⁸⁴⁵

"Yeah," he went on, without batting an eyelash or missing a beat. "But there were a lot of rumors going back and forth. Now the Rajneesh were spreading rumors and we had our own system of trying to deal with those rumors. So we put out information to the press to quiet the public down. We didn't want a big war going on. Our role was to keep things quiet. Behind the scenes we were prepared for whatever eventuality occurred."

Bob Hamilton also talked about the tight network of communications between investigators while he was at Madras. An IRS⁸⁴⁶ agent came into the office one day, "and they were plugging into this effort. We were talking. 'Things are pretty complicated,' I said. 'Things are happening pretty fast.'"

And he says, "Hey, I call in every two hours. And I think my supervisor calls my SAC⁸⁴⁷ every two hours." ... There's about a two hour turnaround time to Washington, DC. Washington was totally involved in this. You may have heard already that twice a day during the Madras phase,⁸⁴⁸ there were telephone conference calls of up to an hour or more participated in by the Attorney General Frohnmayer, the governor, the head of the state police, the head of the FBI and Charles Turner. Twice a day!

I don't know any other instance in this state where there were that many people at that level regularly getting together. That works its way down through the staff and creates pressures. There was a PBS⁸⁴⁹ documentary - something like *A Day in the Life of Ed Meese* [sic, *Justice for All*]⁸⁵⁰ - and, coincidentally, the number one topic at that morning's daily briefing was Rajneesh. That kind of interest equates to pressure. When that interest gets down to a fellow at my level, that's pressure!

⁸⁴⁵ See above.

⁸⁴⁶ Internal Revenue Service

⁸⁴⁷ State Agent in Charge

⁸⁴⁸ when investigators were headquartered in Madras

⁸⁴⁹ Public Broadcasting Station

⁸⁵⁰ See Chapter 10.

On October 2, when Congressman Bob Smith was calling on the US Attorney General and Secretary of the Treasury to step up investigations of Rajneeshpuram and begin deportation proceedings, Governor Atiyeh told *The Bend Bulletin* "he had not put the National Guard on alert to protect commune residents. State and federal authorities presented about 10 search warrants in the town and searched various Rajneeshee buildings. Much to the chagrin of the agents, the sannyasins and the press treated it like a media event. The National Guard wasn't needed."

"Tell me," I said to Bob Oliver, former legal aide to Governor Atiyeh, "about the array of forces, the balancing act, in the fall of 1985."

"We had a state police command post down there at the ranch. Actually, it was more of a contact point and we hoped it wouldn't be a tripwire."

"What does that mean?"

"When people feel themselves and their community threatened, they can do irrational things, and we were afraid they might harm one of our officers."

"Was any officer ever harmed?"

"No. But it was a fear at the time. Even then we didn't have any massive array of forces. Although we could have gotten between 200 or 300 state police down there within a couple of hours if an emergency developed which justified pulling some patrols off the roads. Mobilizing the National Guard would have been a slow process. Probably by the next day we could have had a few hundred on the scene. That's not a lightning response team."

"You've slid around my question about who is pushing and who is staying cool. Somebody has to be pushing."

"Charlie Turner, of course, was very active in this. But the feds - FBI, INS, the US Attorney's office - were not bringing us into everything they were doing."

"Again, who is pushing, and who is saying 'Play it cool?'"⁸⁵¹

"Everybody was saying play it cool."

"If everyone's saying play it cool, there's no reason to say it. Is there?"

"No. No. Everyone was fearful of violence. KD had once made the statement, something like, 'You'll have to carry us out of there.' Or, 'You'll take that city down over our dead bodies.'"⁸⁵²

"But he was the first one to leave," I said. "He jumped ship when he saw the water. And he was moving towards the state's side then as a witness. In fact, all of the people who

⁸⁵¹ For one possible answer, see the comments of Oregon State Police Superintendent John Williams. "And Ted Gardner, another former Marine, with more of a direct way of operating, probably on occasion expressed the view that he would like to see us moving a little more positive. We had the manpower. We had the support. Let's go in and get the job done." For another possibility - and there could have been more than one - see Chapter 12, note 1270.

⁸⁵² As far as I can determine, Krishna Deva had said Rajneeshees would respond with force only if they were physically attacked. As far as defending the entity of Rajneeshpuram was concerned, "we are going to use legal means. Not a shootout at noon, like some people in Antelope wish we would. We are going to use courts of law, the Constitution of our country, to protect ourselves." See Chapter 5.

had talked so tough, Sheela and Krishna Deva, the faces behind the Uzis, were gone by then, were out of the picture."

"It didn't surprise me that KD had left," Oliver said and once again sidestepped the point I was nudging him toward. "I had always doubted the motives of his involvement."

At 10:22 p.m. on October 1, a 49 page affidavit supporting the search warrants and raid into Rajneeshpuram was filed by Lt. Dean Renfrow of the Oregon State Police. The affidavit recalled in detail information about murder plots against various Wasco County officials and sannyasins living in the commune, wiretapping schemes, arson, and a plan to poison the water supply of The Dalles. All the information had been provided by cooperating sannyasins.

"On September 27, 1985", the affidavit read, "Investigator Robert D. Greene Jr., of the Oregon Department of Justice interviewed Ma Deva Samya of Rajneeshpuram, who was then employed as publisher of The Rajneesh Times." Along with Krishna Deva and others, Samya had attended numerous meetings in Sheela's room at Jesus Grove.

"Samya recalled that, during several of these meetings, the possibility of poisoning Dr. Devaraj was discussed. Different methods of poisoning were discussed, among them were poisonous spiders, snakes and other methods. At some point, however, Puja expressed a desire to use something less obvious. Although Samya left the room when the discussions became too detailed, she recalled Puja saying that her medicines were working. Samya also recalled Sheela saying that Devaraj's liver was so bad, due to alcohol consumption, that he could die at any time."

In the affidavit Samya also testified about the Share-a-Home program. She "mentioned to Sheela that the street people were being treated with less love and respect than the fellow sannyasins. Sheela replied that she didn't really care about these people, that they were on the ranch for a specific purpose, which Sheela did not specify. Sheela indicated that, after that purpose was accomplished, she didn't care if the street people stayed or left."

Samya said the street people had regularly been given haldol, a tranquilizer, in their beer. She also recalled for the state investigator discussions "among the same group of people (Sheela, Puja, Shanti Bhadra, Su, Krishna Deva) about an attempt to poison Ma Yoga Vivek." Vivek-Sashi-Guida, the woman who for nearly a decade - in this life - had been closest to Rajneesh's body.

The affidavit was released to the press on Thursday, October 3. That evening Krishna Deva returned to Rajneeshpuram. While there had been rumors in the air since September 24 that he was busy selling his soul to Frohnmayer, he was not greeted with hostility. Perhaps the innocent sannyasins were blissfully unaware of the rules of that kind of horse trading. You always sell upward. Since there was already more than enough testimony to draw and quarter Sheela ten times over, that left only two bargaining chips in his hand: Rajneesh or Rajneeshpuram, or both. In other words, Krishna Deva would have to swap community for immunity.

On October 10, the attorney general asked for \$932,000 from the state Emergency Board to offset the costs of the investigation. They were eventually given \$500,000. At the time Frohnmayer thought the investigation and presentation before the Grand Jury would last between four to six months.⁸⁵³ In his interview with University of Oregon Professors Carl Latkin and Norm Sundberg, he described the investigation as "the longest single criminal investigation ever mounted in the state of Oregon".

He also noted that ten investigators from his office were involved along with three top lawyers. The pieces were falling into place for him, who wanted to use the investigative "task force" to "get the job done". If done correctly, that would have made him a political superman, and could have paved the way to becoming governor and who knew how much more. In his unsuccessful 1990 bid for that post, he was still bragging that he had played the leading role in ridding Oregon of "the Rajneesh".⁸⁵⁴

But in the fall of 1985 getting rid of Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram meant acquiring the word perfect cooperation of some witnesses at the top. The most likely candidate was Krishna Deva. And in exchange for that wham bam he was going to require huge doses of denial and wink wink administered on a daily basis for the rest of his life. On Friday, October 4, OSP Superintendent John Williams was asked about the deal with the ex-mayor. "It's close," he said. "I would say something might be coming through on this."⁸⁵⁵

But Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith, who was originally slated to head the investigation of the crimes alleged by Rajneesh, was definitely not going along with that. Nosirree! "It's over my dead body that Krishna Deva will get immunity," he told the press. "He has hurt too many people in Wasco."⁸⁵⁶ Perhaps his lack of "team spirit" was the reason the "task force" was initially stationed in the county next door. Smith also expressed surprise at the way the investigation had been yanked out from under him by Frohnmayer.

Governor Vic Atiyeh ordered the attorney general's office into The Dalles. Smith said this is unusual because the AG usually waits to be asked and usually investigates but does not prosecute. This is the first time in the 14 years Smith has been an officer of the state that he has seen the attorney general's office act in this manner.

Smith can see valid reasons for the attorney general's office to come into an area if the local authorities are not doing their job, but this has not been the case, said Smith.

The attorney general's temporary The Dalles office is set up in a building across the street from the courthouse. At this time, according to Smith, there are several attorneys, secretaries and some investigators. "I think they are

⁸⁵³ *The Oregonian*, October 10, 1985

⁸⁵⁴ See Chapter 12.

⁸⁵⁵ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 6, 1985

⁸⁵⁶ *The Dalles Weekly Reminder*, October 17, 1985

working very hard on the racketeering end of things and the conspiracy crimes, but I'm not positive, because they're not including me in this," he said.⁸⁵⁷

In February 1990, almost a year after my first interview with Bernie Smith - after a lot of the puzzle pieces had fallen into place for me and I had a greater grasp of what events and sequences meant - I called to remind him about his earlier statements and ask for a comment about both Frohnmayer's take over of the investigation and allowing Krishna Deva to walk on the serious stuff.

"I didn't know anything about it," he said. "It wasn't my decision."

"You don't have any other comments to make on it?"

"No."

For anyone with a legal eye it was obvious that Frohnmayer was going to use Krishna Deva and The Dalles Grand Jury to ramp up his church-state case against Rajneeshpuram - which, according to his own modest assessment, had been an infallible *causa finita ab initio*⁸⁵⁸ - and use the ultra punitive Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) law to break the financial back of all Rajneesh corporations.

Originally designed to fight the infiltration of business by the Mafia, RICO has been described by Harvard Law Professor Alan Dershowitz as "the prosecutor's nuclear weapons". "Because a RICO statute is so powerful a statute - it carries draconian penalties, including lengthy imprisonment and forfeiture of virtually all the defendant's property - prosecutors quickly expanded its scope beyond organized crime. Statutory words such as 'enterprise' and 'pattern of racketeering' - originally intended to describe sophisticated organized-crime activity - were sufficiently ambiguous to allow their application to other areas. Not surprisingly, state prosecutors quickly saw the tactical advantage of bringing RICO prosecutions and lobbied their state legislatures to enact 'baby RICO' statutes. The Moral Majority also got into the act, urging that both federal and state RICO laws be amended to cover obscenity offenses."⁸⁵⁹

In this context it should be remembered that Bob Hamilton, one of Frohnmayer's point men on the Rajneesh investigation, was the attorney general in charge of organized crime.

Lawyers also weren't slacking on the federal level. US Attorney Charles Turner told me he "had six lawyers that were in the office, including myself, that were working on aspects of the case."⁸⁶⁰ And I only had something like 21 lawyers in my whole office. So I had devoted a disproportionate number of resources to working on this case."

⁸⁵⁷ The same article.

⁸⁵⁸ a that's that from the beginning

⁸⁵⁹ *Omni*, April 1989. In another article he was quoted as saying, "It's legislation on the cheap. It's an attempt to use one statute to solve all the evils of society." (Alain Sanders, "Showdown At Gucci", *Time*, August 21, 1989). You could say the same thing about The Nuremberg Laws (1935).

⁸⁶⁰ immigration conspiracy

Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver said, "By the time it got to the point where we decided we were going to indict Rajneesh, then, according to our practice, we had to decide what we were going to do. You can summon somebody in. Or you can get an arrest warrant and you can go out and arrest them. In this case you've got an overstayed alien who's got access to millions of dollars, airplanes [and,] I believe, still in possession of his passport."

"My research," I said to him, "has led me to believe that Rajneesh wasn't an overstayed alien."⁸⁶¹

"He may not have been," he quickly acquiesced. "He may not have been. He was deportable. There was a procedure available to the INS to ask him, to require him, to leave."

Charles Turner, Weaver's former boss, had told me Rajneesh was not deportable.⁸⁶² That was why he had to hunt for criminal charges against him. "Now," Weaver continued, "whether or not that is an overstayed alien or not, I don't know."⁸⁶³ But they had the wherewithal to begin deportation proceedings against him, independent of this criminal case."

"Anyway, my assessment from the beginning of this case was that we were not going to treat Rajneesh any better or worse than anybody else. So the decision was made to arrest him. That decision being made, you have to decide how you are going to do that. I remember the initial conversation I had about the arrest with Ted Gardner in July or August of 1985 when the indictment wasn't even drafted."

In other words, as early as July, two months before the array of Sheela's crimes were discovered and revealed and three months before an indictment against Rajneesh was finally handed down, the US Attorney's office was closing in for the kill. Plans for Rajneesh's arrest were being made while one of his attorneys, Peter Schey, was being led down the garden path into believing in a two pronged promise.

One, Rajneesh would be given the chance to testify before the Grand Jury targeting him. Two, in the event of an indictment being handed down and a subsequent arrest warrant being issued, peaceful surrender at the Portland courthouse was part of the in good faith agreement.

As we have already seen, the peaceful surrender scenario was exactly what INS Commissioner Alan Nelson, INS Chief Council Mike Inman and Portland INS District Director Carl Houseman were hoping would happen. But, obviously, both Turner and Weaver were marching to the beat of a very different drum. They were suiting up for an indictment and arrest at Rajneeshpuram. And when push came to more push, cooperation

⁸⁶¹ As far as I know, being in possession of your own passport isn't a crime.

⁸⁶² See Chapter 6.

⁸⁶³ Since Weaver was supposed to be prosecuting immigration crimes, that was exactly the sort of thing you would expect him to know.

between the INS in Washington and the US Attorney's office in Portland - which had never been what it might and, some said, should have been - went out the window.

"This is the only time I think that, politically, the INS pulled a fast one on us and got a leg up," Weaver said. "Because they weren't going to do the arrest. Turner was back in Washington⁸⁶⁴ and met with Nelson after work a couple of times to try to persuade him to assist us in the arrest. Nothing ever happened."

But they did not do what was necessary to get the Marshal's Service involved, which was to put in a formal request to their headquarters in Virginia. I would go to the Marshal Service here with the warrants and the plan. And they said, "Okay, Bob. We will help you as soon as our headquarters tells us to help."⁸⁶⁵ But they had never been officially consulted on this by the INS. It was embarrassing in the sense that the government could not seem to get organized on this.

"Bob Weaver came up to my office one day, about two weeks before the arrest," Chief Deputy Marshal in Portland Michael O'Brien told me, "and said, 'We are getting some warrants issued this week and we'd like the marshals to go up and execute these warrants.' I'd only been here a couple of weeks at the time but I knew who the Bhagwan was and the problems that existed out there."

O'Brien, who had been involved in tracking down American spy Christopher Boyce,⁸⁶⁶ told me later in an informal conversation that Weaver had tried to "sneak" the arrest right past him. Apparently, that was cause for some hard feelings between them for a while.⁸⁶⁷ "I told him," O'Brien said, "this was being taken care of at a level much higher than our district, and that we had not been given the authority to go out and make those arrests."

"What does that mean," I asked. "'This was being taken care of at a level much higher than our district?'"

"Our understanding was that headquarters and the INS were discussing who was going to be allowed to make the arrest with the Attorney General [Edwin Meese III]," he said.

"Are you saying they were actually discussing this with the Attorney General?"

"It is my understanding."

"Well, they have the Attorney General divided up like everybody else," interjected Portland US Marshal Kernan Bagley. "So it would have been the person in charge of operations."

"D. Lowell Jensen," I asked.

"Yeah, Jensen," O'Brien said.

⁸⁶⁴ The last week in September 1985. See Chapter 8.

⁸⁶⁵ What Marshals can and cannot do on their own authority is an issue that comes up again in Chapter 10.

⁸⁶⁶ Of *The Falcon and the Snowman* fame.

⁸⁶⁷ Weaver said he went to the marshals "with the warrants and the plan". According to O'Brien, that was about two weeks before the arrest and Weaver was still talking future tense about "getting some warrants issued this week". In other words, just as Weaver's understanding of an "overstayed alien" left something to be desired, so did his grip on what he had and what he was going to get.

"So we're talking as high at the Attorney General's office?"

"Yes. Mm mm. Right."

The beginning of October, Weaver said, "was the one time I felt I was not in control of this case, because I was dependent on the INS contacting the Marshal Service. They knew that! The Grand Jury, the shape of that case, what the indictment looked like, who was going to be indicted, all that was within our control. But somehow, in that arrest scenario, we were not in control. At that point I was not exclusively in control."

"Who was," I asked.

"INS in Washington. It was always very clear to me from the INS agents here in Portland that they were going to go ahead with the arrest. And the rug was pulled out from them at the last minute, when they [the INS in Washington] decided not to do that. When it came down *to the day of the indictment*, they decided not to do the arrest. We were literally sitting with *five or six arrest warrants locked in my desk drawer*, and I had nobody to execute them [all these emphases are mine]."

"Was that on October 23rd?"

"Yeah. Whenever it was in October that I indicted them. It was a Wednesday."⁸⁶⁸

Through speaking with Weaver and reading statements he made in open court, I noticed a fatal attraction to hyperbole in general and the phrase, "last minute" in particular. Was the decision not to participate in the arrest really made at the "last minute", on "the day of the indictment"? Turner told me that he and Weaver had been discussing the arrest of Rajneesh "in detail at least six to seven weeks before the indictment". In other words, in early September.

Turner had many conversations about the arrest situation and considered a number of scenarios proposed to him. But contrary to what Mike Inman had said - that he was determined to "storm the Bastille"⁸⁶⁹ - he insisted that he was not going to provoke anyone. He said he was on the side of moderating forces.

"And I can remember telling them expressly that I'm not going to send somebody into that ranch to do something that I'm not going to do myself. And I'm not going to have somebody's blood on my hands over something like this, when I know that we can achieve the same objective by non violent means. There isn't any question that there were some people who were agitating to do something."

"Who were they," I asked. It was basically the same question I had tried, unsuccessfully, to nail Bob Oliver down on. I wasn't to have any more luck with Turner.

"I'm not going to go into that. I know who they were."⁸⁷⁰ But I also know that as the person who knew more about this than anybody else, who had the right to call what was

⁸⁶⁸ Wednesday, October 23, 1985

⁸⁶⁹ See below.

⁸⁷⁰ Once more, see Chapter 12, note 1270, for one possible answer.

going to happen, that we were not planning to have anything to do with any part of a violent confrontation. That nobody was authorized to do anything except if I permitted it to be done. I personally assured D. Lowell Jensen, in a meeting at the United States Attorney's conference in October [sic, late September], right before this, that there would not be any type of violent, hostile confrontation. I would not have the blood of some young agent on my hands by taking some rash action so that I could vindicate some notions of law enforcement. I wasn't going to do that."

"So, basically, you were in charge of this whole show?"

"Obviously, you know that I wasn't in charge, because when I asked people to help me do things, they told me to take a hike. So, obviously, I was not in charge. There were people agitating, from time to time, to do things. But I think, eventually, it was recognized that there wasn't going to be any armed confrontation, because I wasn't going to permit it, and because the Department of Justice did not want it."

I mean the whole idea was not to have somebody shot. The whole idea was to see whether or not we could develop the rule of law. I'm simply astounded by the idea that people want to use a form of violence because they're so frustrated over a situation that has occurred for a number of years.

There was no possibility of violent confrontation, no possibility whatsoever, because I went over the arrest plans with Joe Greene. I knew exactly how they were going to take place. I gave express orders. But there was some sentiment to do something of a confrontational nature if he defied us once we told him, "There is an indictment, and the following people have been named, and are required to surrender immediately".

"My tactic," said Mike Inman, "was to achieve a surrender of the indicted individuals peacefully, quietly and without creating any publicity or any risk of anything creating problems for anyone. What Turner wanted to do was to utilize the Oregon National Guard, the FBI and the Immigration Services' Border Patrol, and storm the compound with force, and go through the barricades and fences."

"Are you aware that such a surrender agreement existed in writing between Turner and Schey," I asked.

"Then why were they talking about 'storming the Bastille'? If that agreement was made between Turner and Schey, it should have been followed."

"Turner told me he was dead set against any violent confrontation."

"Then what did he want the Border Patrol to do? Nelson said to me, 'Can you imagine our having to transport the Border Patrol people from the southern border all the way up to Oregon, from all over the western United States, to conduct an assault on the Bhagwan when they've been charged with conspiring to violate immigration laws?' Nelson called me up and said, 'This is the suggestion that's been made. And I am personally opposed to having INS personnel involved in storming that compound. If the FBI wants to do it or the Oregon National Guard or the Oregon State Police, that's up to them. But I do not

want INS personnel involved in forcibly entering that compound.' Can you imagine what a confrontation with Uzis and rifles and FBI stuff would look like?"

"A couple of people could have gotten killed," I said with deliberate understatement.

"A couple!" he fired back.

"Okay, lots."

"For an immigration and fraud case, right. I mean somebody has lost reality on that."

Rick Norton, former deputy assistant commissioner for investigations who was running the Rajneesh case from Washington, was transferred to a new job in September 1985. The arrest scenario he had envisioned - an escalating series of steps that might eventually lead to a full scale invasion of Rajneeshpuram - was prepared while he was in transition, and he lost control of the development of it. "The way the report⁸⁷¹ ended up it sounded like we were going to call in the First Air Cav," he said. Later the same day, Greg Leo, INS director of congressional and public affairs, told me that "calling in the First Air Cav [Cavalry]" meant "kicking ass".⁸⁷²

"The report," Norton said, "probably understated the escalatory nature of what we wanted to do, and overstated the final action that might be taken in the case of this stand off, where we would go in with a large group of people to effect mass arrests. It looked like an assault on the ranch if you read it that way."

I asked US Marshal Kernan Bagley if Turner had actually asked them to bring in FIST - their Fugitive Investigative Strike Team - to deal with "mass arrests" at Rajneeshpuram. "They were requesting us," Bagley said. "Yeah. We did ask. We figured if somebody at that time determined that it was our primary responsibility, we would do it. But it was determined by our headquarters that it wasn't. It was the INS' primary responsibility. 'Stay away,' [Howard] Safir⁸⁷³ said."

Bagley had asked about bringing in the Marshals' SWAT team, but was told they could not get directly involved in the arrest. "But it was determined," he said, "that we could assist with the arrest as long as we got permission from headquarters or the United States Attorney General, who was Edwin Meese [III] at that time. If it's something of national security or national interest or was going to cause a lot of problems, or there might be deaths - which this was."

"It sounds like this was on the edge of that," I said.

"Right. Meese could say that we could or couldn't assist. We had the jurisdictional powers. But we had to get authority from somebody to help bring the prisoners out. It was finally determined that the INS would do it, because they were the ones who had

⁸⁷¹ I have tried, unsuccessfully, to get a copy of this report.

⁸⁷² Those wishing for an unforgettable visual for the term need only remember Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 classic, *Apocalypse Now*, and the sequence of events incited just for the hell of it by Colonel Kilgore (played by Robert Duval), which led to the destruction of an entire Vietnamese village in minutes.

⁸⁷³ then national director and resources director of operations for the US Marshals Service

caused the first indictment⁸⁷⁴ to be issued. They were going to bring up their team of people, their SWAT team, which was called by another name. Not the Tactical Border Patrol, but a border control team. So that's where it was left Friday night [October 25, 1985] when we left work. INS would do it⁸⁷⁵ and it would take place sometime during that Monday week."

"So, you thought the arrest was supposed to happen on Monday?"

"Monday week!" Bagley corrected sharply. "We were pretty much aware that it would be Monday week sometime. Whatever was convenient to the INS, based on the circumstances. We agreed to help in a support [role], to help take people into custody. But on Friday night we didn't know the exact arrest day because we hadn't assigned anybody Monday morning to vans to transport prisoners. The only chore we were going to have was to house prisoners from the arrest. We could send buses, Greyhounds or whatever, up there. We were waiting for proper word. We didn't worry about it. We didn't worry about it on our part."

I asked John Williams if he knew anything about the arrest plan. He paused for a stretched out moment to remember. "It seems about the time he flew the coop that the legal people were in the process of seeing whether or not they had enough evidence against the Bhagwan to issue a warrant. The US Attorney's office is working with the State Attorney General's office. They're working back and forth. It's immaterial to us who issues the warrant. If it's gonna be a federal warrant. If it's gonna be a state warrant. If it's gonna be a combination. It seems to me that they were planning on a combination."

Williams' assumption that state and federal officials were planning a combination of arrest warrants is in perfect lockstep with Hamilton's saying that the investigative "task force" was going after Rajneesh.⁸⁷⁶ Williams confirmed this. He told me he thought the state police had unearthed "sufficient evidence to go over there and get the job done - arrest the Bhagwan".

"You thought you had sufficient evidence to link the violent crimes, like murder and salmonella poisoning, to Rajneesh," I asked in astonishment. Because all the lawyers I had talked to - then and since - had to admit that despite their heavy breathing desire to find exactly those sorts of smoking guns, they had come up short. And this is further confirmed by the fact that officials had to go with their second, and maybe even third, string charges - the rinky dink immigration "conspiracy".

But Oregon's top cop thought otherwise. "Yeah. Yeah," Williams said. "But the legal people on the state and federal level were saying, 'Wait'. I don't know what Turner and Weaver told you about what we wanted to do. We were prepared to go. We were prepared to move in and it seemed like there was some delaying tactic being played."

⁸⁷⁴ At this point, law enforcement officers were thinking of first indictments. As we will see directly below, they were expecting more indictments and arrest warrants to follow. Lots more.

⁸⁷⁵ As we have already abundantly seen and will see again below, this was not true. The INS had steadfastly refused to get involved in any arrest plan.

⁸⁷⁶ See above.

On Tuesday, October 15, a seven member Grand Jury met under tight security on the second floor of the Wasco County court house in The Dalles. Four witnesses - including some of the new leaders at Rajneeshpuram - gave testimony that day, mostly on the attempt to murder Rajneesh's personal physician, Swami Devaraj. On Saturday, July 6, 1985, the testimony went, just after Rajneesh had left the meditation hall Ma Shanti Bhadra, an Australian sannyasin, hugged Devaraj and jabbed him with a syringe loaded with an unidentified poison.⁸⁷⁷ The doctor got deathly ill and nearly died in a Madras hospital.

Lt. Dean Renfrow's aforementioned 49 page October 1 affidavit had also mentioned the murder attempt on Devaraj. "Samya recalled entering Sheela's bedroom in the summer of 1985. Sheela and Shanti Bhadra were in an adjoining bathroom and did not notice Samya's presence. Samya saw Shanti B. acting very excited, literally jumping up and down, and saying, 'I did it; I did it.' Sheela then teased Shanti Bhadra, saying, 'I didn't know you were such a good nurse.'"

"Sheela, when she planned something, was so juvenile," Ma Yoga Pratima told me. "Like a kid, when it's done a trick, she couldn't help giving herself away. When she had Shanti Bhadra jab Devaraj, she went wandering around the house that morning in a loud voice talking about how there were very big mosquitoes at the back of Buddha Hall. She could not help betraying her own conspiracies by a childish gloating over the results."

If that was actually the case, the independent investigator must ask, "Why hadn't Pratima, Samya, and who knows how many others noticed those conspiracies earlier and done something about them?". An exceedingly good question, and one that could and should be asked of others the world over who are close enough to responsible - and blameworthy - inner circles to know what's going on, but not technically part of them. Ordinary good decent citizens - with mortgages and kids in college - in government, business, banks and other groups. Wherever people get together to achieve common goals.

Everyone is, of course, free to draw their own conclusions. But before doing so I would advise them to factor in the very much us versus them mentality that prevailed for years in and around Rajneeshpuram. In such conditions, what could Pratima and the others have done? Go and have an open hearted chat with, say, Dave Frohnmayer? Anyone blowing the whistle on one of their own, no matter how much they needed being called to order and held accountable, would be playing into the hands of their common enemies. As has been more than abundantly demonstrated by the events described in this chapter.

⁸⁷⁷ More than 20 years later, in 2009, the Catholic born mother of two wrote a book that tried to explain, and justify, her actions. She thought Dr. Devaraj was going to try to kill Rajneesh. Why she thought that was anyone's guess. But the main theme of the book, appropriately titled, *Breaking the Spell*, was that she had been hypnotized by a charismatic eastern guru promising enlightenment. Many people prefer that personal responsibility be damned reading of reality, because it supports and reinforces what they have done with their lives and, equally importantly, what they haven't.

On Friday, October 18, 1985, Bob Hamilton said, there was a meeting "involving most of the major people involved in this: Turner, Frohnmayer, etc." The original game plan for arrests was loosely agreed upon at that meeting. Ma Anand Sheela, Ma Shanti Bhadra, and Ma Anand Puja, the Philippine-American nurse who had concocted the poison, were to be arrested first in Germany on immigration violations.

That weekend Turner sat down with Weaver and some other top attorneys in his office and reviewed the immigration indictment. He said, "We wanted to make sure that the case was as strong as it possibly could be. When we returned the indictment I was satisfied that we could convict all the people."

Weaver outlined the case, and I made an analysis of the evidence, and I was satisfied that we could convict all the people. And it was my decision to indict the Rajneesh.⁸⁷⁸ That was my personal decision, basically. They were uncertain as to whether we should do that, and it was my decision that we could and should do it, and he [Rajneesh] could be convicted.

Bob [Weaver] is an excellent lawyer. But I think he wanted the stamp of approval by the US Attorney as to whether or not we should indict the Rajneesh.⁸⁷⁹ It was rather a momentous decision to make, and one which I think, and properly so, he sought the advice of the person who was in charge of the office.

Because, after all, if there is a problem, I need to take responsibility for it. So he did what I would have done if I was in his shoes. He was not waffling, but I think they raised concerns and played the devil's advocate, and let me make the decision, which I think was the proper thing to do.

From the beginning of October civilian divers hired by investigators were searching Rajneeshpuram's two man made lakes for automatic weapons.⁸⁸⁰ They used sonar devices and magnetometers, but had only managed to come up with some bottle caps and old nails. Divers reported that there was between 12 and 18 inches of muck at the bottom of one lake.

On October 23, the Justice Department finally managed to bring in six US Navy divers to help out. That had been delayed "because of a federal law prohibiting the military from aiding local law enforcement". According to Dorwin Schreuder, an FBI spokesman in

⁸⁷⁸ Proving once again that Grand Jury indictments are in the hands of prosecutors. In other words, Grand Juries are nothing more than test audiences always ready with the rubber stamp.

⁸⁷⁹ Weaver himself said "I wanted to have my case so well prepared that, if necessary, I could walk out of the Grand Jury room and try it the next day." See Chapter 8.

⁸⁸⁰ One of the lakes (Patanjali) had been made before the sannyasins' arrival.

Portland, that prohibition was waived by the Defense Department after the Oregon Justice Department made a formal request.⁸⁸¹

The elite SEAL⁸⁸² team was used to searching the deep waters of Puget Sound for unexploded and potentially dangerous ordinance that had by one accident or another come to rest on the bottom. Thus in comparison with their regular work environments, Krishnamurti Lake must have seemed like a not particularly large cup of coffee.

At 12.59 p.m. on Wednesday, October 23, a Federal Grand Jury in Portland handed down an immigration indictment, which charged Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Ma Anand Sheela, Ma Yoga Vidya and five others with 35 counts of immigration fraud and conspiracy. On the same day, both the local INS and the Portland US Attorney received a seven point memorandum from INS Commissioner Alan Nelson.⁸⁸³

It stated in no uncertain terms that the INS could not send people to Rajneeshpuram and get involved in any attempt to arrest Rajneesh. It could also not get involved in any way with extradition matters involved in the immigration case. "Sources said the Oct. 23 memo, whatever its subsequent description, was treated as a field order in the Portland office, where 'the guys (investigators) got so goddamn mad when they found out about it they were kicking the furniture, and a couple of them didn't even come to work the next day.'"

I asked Turner if he had received the memo before the indictment was handed down. "I don't remember when the memo was transmitted," he said. "Probably before. But I already knew before I got the memo, because I'd talked to Mr. Nelson about it."

I asked Weaver, who had assured me that INS support was yanked out from under him at "the last minute", if he too had known that Nelson's veto was on the way. "It didn't just leap up at you from out of the blue, did it," I asked. "I think we knew before it arrived. But it seems to me that we did not, at least in my case. I did not know until Had I seen that before I indicted him, I would not have indicted him."

Turner and Weaver, who had worked closely on this case - they had even conferenced about it the weekend before - were saying two very different things. Turner dismissed the timing of the memorandum's transmission as of no significance. He had already known about it. And if he had known, then so did Weaver. Nothing else is possible. Weaver confirmed that, as we will soon see. But then slip slid onto the nearest available

⁸⁸¹ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 25, 1985. Requested by the Oregon Justice Department (state), but working for the FBI (federal). Go figure. For more on Schreuder and the divers, see below.

⁸⁸² Sea, Air and Land. Now, of course, most famous for the elimination of Osama Bin Laden.

⁸⁸³ "Infighting mars probe of Rajneeshees", *The Oregonian*, December 30, 1985. It is also the source for the next paragraph and much more information below. I have tried, unsuccessfully, to get copies of some of the supporting material.

tangent. That is, while "we" may have known about it, "he" personally did not. For if he had, he said, he wouldn't have indicted Rajneesh.

"So you took the indictment," I asked Weaver, "and then went for the arrest warrants, right from there?"

"Yeah."

"Was that after lunch?"

"It's some time that week, Max. Some time that week. I went into Magistrate [William] Dale's chambers, and he signed the warrants."

"So it wasn't the same day you got the indictment?"

"I don't think so. I saw the [Nelson] memorandum early in the morning, like 7 a.m. in the morning. So it's going to be the next day."

There are only two possibilities here, and neither of them makes sense. Either Weaver saw Nelson's memorandum at 7 a.m. on Wednesday, October 23, before the indictment was handed down, or at 7 a.m. on Thursday, October 24, before he got Magistrate William Dale to issue and sign arrest warrants. In other words, arrest warrants that are valid, legal and binding: "arrest warrants" that really are arrest warrants.

Which means Weaver was saying that knowledge about the memorandum would have kept him from going for the indictment - an essentially trivial step in the entire process. But it didn't stop him from going for the much more momentous arrest warrants and all the dread and drama that the actual arrests supposedly entailed.

At this point I presented Weaver with a lineup of three arrest warrants, which I had gathered from two places. One from the archives of Bill Diehl and Ed Hinson - the attorneys who helped represent Rajneesh in Charlotte⁸⁸⁴ - but wasn't available in the official federal court house records in either Charlotte or Portland. And two from the Federal Court in Portland.

As one compares the separate versions of the "same" arrest warrant - as readers of this book can do - it becomes clear that there are forgeries among them. And the closer one looks, the more etched in the brain and memory that impression becomes. Having said that, I hasten to add that in this case "forgery" is something of a misnomer, because it implies that there was an "authentic" arrest warrant. And I am contending that all three are fake.

The batch included an arrest warrant any Assistant US Attorney could proudly take home to meet his mother. It was signed by Magistrate Dale and dated - by him - October 23, 1985. It was found in Portland, but not in Charlotte. Now Weaver has already told us that he went for the arrest warrants "some time that week". That is, not on Wednesday, October 23, but Thursday, October 24 at the earliest. Is it possible that Magistrate Dale didn't know the difference between Wednesday the 23rd and Thursday the 24th?

The picture perfect arrest warrant had the name of Wade McGalliard, a Deputy US Marshal in Charlotte, typed in as arresting officer. If it had existed before the arrest, it

⁸⁸⁴ See Chapters 1 and 10.

would not have had McGalliard's name typed or even written in. Because at that time neither McGalliard nor Charlotte were the tiniest beans in the whole jar of arrest scenario possibilities. Another telling clue for the forgery - but by no means the last - the warrant was clocked into the Portland Court House at 8:42 a.m. on November 12, 1985, more than two weeks after events.⁸⁸⁵

I told Weaver I thought the arrest warrant had not been issued on October 23, and was in fact backdated. "It was not backdated," he said after examining the three arrest warrants. "I can tell you that. October 23rd was a Wednesday. Yeah, that must be the day I got the arrest warrant."

I asked Bob Hamilton. "On Friday night, October 25, did you realize there was going to be an arrest at Rajneeshpuram on Monday, October 28?" "I didn't know," Hamilton said. "No! No! I knew there was some planning going on. Since we had no arrest warrants and weren't likely to have any arrest warrants, I wouldn't necessarily have known about it. But I had been hearing some planning going on. On a contingency basis. And quite frankly, I wasn't convinced it could be done in a real safe way. I didn't know how it was going to be done. To this day, I don't know how extensive the planning was to forcibly go out there and arrest him. Or exactly who all the players were."

"Did that scare you?"

"That concerned me."

The "Infighting" article⁸⁸⁶ hinted at a hornets' nest of government negotiations and bickering in Portland, Salem, Washington, DC and Bonn, West Germany. Turner wanted to arrest Rajneesh at Rajneeshpuram, but no one could or would help him. Lawrence LaDage, a special agent in charge of investigations for the US Customs Service in Portland, wanted to. But the regional office in Los Angeles "turned thumbs down".

At this point, Ted Gardner, head of the FBI in Portland, and Turner, were at each other's throats. The aggressive Gardner, who according to Brigadier General Ervin Osbourn had thought seriously about storming Rajneesh's compound just to talk to him, refused to get involved in Turner's arrest scheme for an alleged - some, like me, would say, fabricated - immigration conspiracy.

⁸⁸⁵ I also ran the arrest warrants past the court appointed "clerk of court", Robert Christ, whose name appeared on them, but not his signature. He agreed that the discrepancies looked strange, but then added, "This is probably the first time I have picked up one of those things in many years." He wasn't even sure what they looked like. "I never see them." He has deputies who do things in his name. We had a pleasant chat. He confirmed what I already knew from many hours of research in New York City law libraries. Namely, that arrest warrants, not indictments, give peace officers authority to bring someone before the court. Without them the officers and court have no such authority. Outside Christ's office I watched the procedure for filing papers. Everything would have been easy to tamper with, among willing and proficient accomplices, except for the clock in time. Marilyn Kirkland, one of Christ's deputies - whose "authenticating" signature does appear on one version of the "arrest warrants" - did not wish to talk to me. Magistrate William M. Dale, whose signature appears on the backdated warrant, never responded to my numerous requests for an interview.

⁸⁸⁶ *The Oregonian*, December 30, 1985

"However, Gardner did refer Turner's request to FBI headquarters, recommending that it be denied. FBI Director William Webster backed Gardner. Reportedly, Webster didn't want to saddle the FBI with a potentially bloody mess by trying to serve warrants based on marriage-fraud cases."⁸⁸⁷

"It's my judgment," Mike Inman told me, "based on the way I know how things work, that the director of the FBI, Judge Webster, and/or Meese said, 'Don't get involved in storming the compound.' Al Nelson used to talk to Webster a lot, and I know Jensen, who was their boss. Jensen was opposed personally to a frontal assault on the compound. Everybody was except the people in the pits."

"When was the arrest supposed to take place," I asked Turner, who had repeatedly told me he knew exactly what the plans were. There was a long pause and he lost his characteristic, almost brow beating assertiveness - an occupational hazard among both prosecutors and investigative journalists. "I ... hard ... to remember when it was. It was, I think, on the Monday. The thing was, I think, scheduled for Monday."

"What was the plan?"

"We had permission to use Joe Greene from INS and one other person, I think ... if I remember correctly. And the Oregon State Police. And we were simply going to go outside of the ranch, the fence,⁸⁸⁸ and announce that the indictment, and the following people had been indicted, and they were to surrender immediately."

"So that was going to happen on Monday?"

"If I remember correctly. Again, I'm It's my recollection of it. Greene was going to go with the Oregon State Police."

"Lots of Oregon State Police?"

"No! No! As I told you, there wasn't going to be a confrontation. We obviously were going to have enough vehicles to transport the people back to Portland, assuming they surrendered."⁸⁸⁹

"Were there arrest warrants issued after the indictment came down on Rajneesh?"

Turner's voice dropped into the almost sub audible range.

"Certainly."

"Who was supposed to arrest Rajneesh for the INS," I asked former Oregon State Police Superintendent Williams.

"I don't know," he said. "That's a good question. To begin with, you're going to have to get a warrant. It was our assumption it would be handed to us to serve. But maybe Mr. Turner had different ideas."

⁸⁸⁷ *The Oregonian*, December 30, 1985

⁸⁸⁸ While there was no fence around Rancho Rajneesh, there was one about 15 miles from the perimeter of the property, around Rajneesh's house. Any law enforcement officers standing there had been in "enemy territory" for at least 45 minutes and had their sights set on Rajneesh. The aggressiveness in Turner's tone is amplified by "surrender immediately".

⁸⁸⁹ Since there were only eight people on the federal immigration indictment, two of whom were very publically not there, they wouldn't have needed all that many vehicles. Certainly not as much as Marshal Kernan Bagley was referring to above.

"Well, Weaver told me it was going to be done by the state police and the INS. And I had the impression that Major Moine was going to be involved in the arrest. But he didn't know anything about it. He didn't know anything about the arrest warrant or the arrest plan. He told me he had never even seen the arrest warrant."

"No."

"Did you?"

"No. No. But we were prepared to arrest him. We were waiting for the warrant."

From mid September to the end of October, there was much confusion and rage among the sannyasins directed at Rajneesh himself. The same question was asked repeatedly. Why had he appointed such a horrible person to be his personal secretary? Repeatedly, in his discourses and press conferences, he responded to it. As usual, his answers varied. But there was a current of continuity between them.

He said that 99% of the work she had done was beautiful and necessary. She wasn't evil incarnate and the commune should be grateful to her. But what they could not forget was her criminal attacks on people both inside and outside the commune city. On September 19 he said, "I had chosen Sheela to be my secretary not because she was meditative, not because she understood my approach towards problems. My reason for choosing her was totally different. She had a very practical mind, very pragmatic. She was intelligent. And thirdly, because she had no idea of my total vision. Just necessary instructions she could repeat like a parrot. And I needed a parrot."

I was in silence. I had no need of a very articulate man, because the articulate man will hear me, but his mind will constantly be changing it, making it more sophisticated, more polished. He will edit. He will add. It will not be pure.

I needed a parrot who knows nothing of philosophy, knows nothing of religion, knows nothing of the ultimate problems of life. Sheela was perfect. She could only repeat what I was saying to her.

So when I had chosen Sheela to be my secretary, my reasons were: the secretary has to be pragmatic, practical in worldly affairs because she will be taking care of the commune. And she will have to manage the commune amidst a world, and she has to be alert and aware about worldly ways.⁸⁹⁰

Eight days later, he referred to a journalist who had asked, "If Sheela was so crude, so violent, so hostile to people, so full of hatred, why did you chose her as the president of the foundation?" He answered:

⁸⁹⁰ Rajneesh, *From Bondage To Freedom*, Chapter 5, September 19, 1985. Compare Jesus' "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves." (*Matthew* 10:16) And almost the same thing, *Luke* 10:3.

When you make a beautiful building, for the foundation you choose all kinds of ugly stones. But when the foundation is over, then you start working with marble, not before that.

With human beings this is a difficulty. They don't know when their time is over. They cling. They think they have been chosen forever. I have told Sheela many times that nobody is chosen forever. "You fulfill a need. You do your best. Then vacate the place for those whose work is now to make something better, higher."⁸⁹¹

By the end of October most sannyasins were starting to come to grips with their crash course in human unawareness and corruption. Even around and "close to" an enlightened master. In old friends, lovers and some they had previously wanted to "share energy" with. In themselves in varying degrees of simultaneously knowing something was rotten in the state of Denmark and not wanting to know. For example, the lovely Pratima - who I could have fallen head over heels in love with had she batted her eyelashes at me⁸⁹² - must have had a severer case of the latter than so-called ordinary sannyasin working in the trenches and fields far from the madding centers of power.

Those who couldn't take it all in and jump to the "next level" - getting beyond both the evil's out there recriminations and morbid, will never get over it breast beating - left the commune and Rajneesh. Others who had either left voluntarily or been kicked out by "Sheela and her fascist gang" returned.

Rajneesh was discoursing about his more regular topics of love and levels of human consciousness on Friday morning, October 25, when, around 9:30 a.m., two low flying military jets - A-7's - streaked through the narrow valley and over the 2.2 acre meditation hall. "The whole place was filled with the scream of the planes," Swami Satyam Anando told me. "It felt like an invasion and I'm sure I wasn't the only one who was terrified. But Osho turned the whole incident into a joke. Then those jets did a 180° turn in that narrow valley and streaked back again. On the second pass no one was frightened."⁸⁹³

I wondered if the National Guard generals knew anything about the incident. "There was so much interest in that area by Air National Guard," General Miller said. "ANTS [Advanced Naval Training School?], Navy and some military jets." General Osbourn said, "Air traffic became a problem, with sightseers, military and the press. They just about drove us nuts! But air traffic became such a problem that we were considering asking FAA to make that area a restricted area."

⁸⁹¹ Rajneesh, *From Bondage To Freedom*, Chapter 13, September 27, 1985. This is the kind of talk that almost definitely provoked Sheela's desperate measures toward those physically close to Rajneesh and at least thoughts about doing the same to him if he didn't behave. See Swami Anandadas' comments (Chapter 3). "She was always referring to Bhagwan as a bad boy and tried to control him."

⁸⁹² Which, in my opinion, is the real origin of Chaos Theory's "butterfly effect".

⁸⁹³ One can clearly hear the jets on the audio and videotapes made of the discourse (*From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 41, October 25, 1985, during Rajneesh's answer to the first question). The whole event took four minutes.

The military jets you're talking about were from a reconnaissance outfit. And we heard about the report. I didn't see them. But I heard that two jets had come low. And then that made the Rajneeshees so paranoid they thought we were going to invade them right away. Through General Miller's office I said, "Well, you put out the word to the Air Guard. Don't come below 30,000 feet over this area because those people are really paranoid!" They were so paranoid! I couldn't believe the stuff they were imagining. Boy, those people were ready to explode!

According to Bob Hamilton, "the word came down" on the same day, "Friday, October 25, mid to late morning" that Sheela and the others couldn't be extradited from Germany for immigration violations. Thus he was told to "Go as fast as you can on the attempted murder indictment!" It was ironic because we had a Grand Jury that was almost sick that day. We got real busy! We shifted our focus from what our schedule was that day, kept them over a little longer, drafted up some indictments and by 5 o'clock at night⁸⁹⁴ we had returned our indictments. We earned our pay that day, let me tell you!"⁸⁹⁵

More irony came in the form of a newspaper report from the same day about how the "grand jury today continued its questioning of witnesses at The Dalles. The proceedings were reportedly going slowly."⁸⁹⁶ Four days later, after Rajneesh had been arrested, the same newspaper "revealed" why the six Navy SEAL divers working for the FBI did not work over the weekend. "We knew there would be some arrest warrants executed and just didn't want people up there at the time," FBI Spokesman Dorwin Schreuder said.⁸⁹⁷

In fact, on the evening of October 23 someone from the FBI did indirectly tip sannyasin attorneys about the federal immigration indictment against Rajneesh. One of those attorneys was Swami Prem Niren. At this point it should be remembered that no one at Rajneeshpuram had ever said they would rather be dead than arrested. Not Rajneesh. Not Krishna Deva. Not even motor mouth, couldn't remember what she or anyone else had said Sheela.

When push came to shove in August 1984 - in the shadow of yet another imminent arrest - Niren had said, "We will not resist arrest under any circumstances, at any time."⁸⁹⁸ Earlier in October 1985, on several occasions, arrest had seemed imminent. With both press and police present, Rajneesh had said he would welcome it. He even dared them to do it, and bring along 5,000 pairs of handcuffs for the sannyasins who would go

⁸⁹⁴ That afternoon.

⁸⁹⁵ Proving once again the made to order quality of Grand Jury indictments.

⁸⁹⁶ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 25, 1985

⁸⁹⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 29, 1985. I can't make heads or tails out of Schreuder's remarks. Because while there was much talk about imminent arrests, my research proves conclusively that those arrests weren't any more imminent that weekend than they had been in the preceding months.

⁸⁹⁸ See Chapter 6.

peacefully along with him.⁸⁹⁹ It was a classic non violent strategy, straight from the pages of Henry David Thoreau, Mahatma Gandhi and civil rights activists.

Peter Schey flew up from Los Angeles and went with Niren to Turner's office to explore the veracity of the imminent arrest rumor. If true, they wanted to invoke the pre-arranged surrender agreements to remove all hints of scary monsters confrontation. They offered Turner a menu of options about ways to effect the arrest and were also open to suggestions from him. But despite the fact that indictments had already been handed down and, allegedly, arrest warrants were locked and loaded in Weaver's draw,⁹⁰⁰ Turner and other attorneys told them that all discussions about arrest and surrender were premature. The investigations were ongoing.

Schey flew back to Los Angeles. But the rumors of imminent arrest persisted. So he flew back to Portland on Sunday afternoon, October 27, and called Turner at his home to discuss what was going on. Again, Schey rolled out a whole series of surrender possibilities. Again, Turner said these kinds of discussions were premature. To paraphrase Shakespeare, "Did I not thrice offer him the guru's surrender, and did he not thrice refuse?"⁹⁰¹

"You wanted Rajneesh to surrender," I said to Turner. "Peter Schey wanted to surrender him. What was the problem?"

"It was difficult to deal with the man, because I wasn't going to tell him the thing that he most wanted to know. Namely, is he going to be indicted? When is he going to be indicted? And can we agree on the terms of surrender? Because I felt he would take that information, use it, and flee. Now that's exactly what happened. When he found out there was an indictment, he did flee."⁹⁰² So that my concern about that was justified."

We think the complex is difficult to understand. But actually it's the simple that often eludes us. It can stare you in the face for years and you might not see it, because it's so damn simple, stupid. Using that principle here, let's take a deep breath, step back and see what Turner's tortuous logic amounts to.

When it came to the issue of arresting Rajneesh everyone was worried about a potentially bloody confrontation. And despite Turner's continued protests to the contrary - so and so, uh, were going to do, uh, such and such on, uh, "if I remember correctly", Monday, October 28 - none of the players he mentioned knew of such an assignment, what it was exactly, and when it was supposed to take place. In a situation where there was unprecedented high level coordination of efforts, and hour by hour and even minute by minute passing on of information and orders, none of them had ever seen the arrest warrants.

⁸⁹⁹ See above. Like Rajneesh's references to "historical" and "scientific" facts, his statistics should never be accepted without independent research.

⁹⁰⁰ See above.

⁹⁰¹ *Julius Caesar*, Act III, scene 2.

⁹⁰² Turner mentions here an indictment, not an arrest warrant. Since an indictment without an arrest warrant has no binding power, it's impossible to flee it. And as far as I know, you can't even flee a valid arrest warrant until after it has been served.

With the exception that proves the rule. Joe Greene, the man from Miami who, in the words of Rick Norton, "ate, lived and slept it. Broke his marriage up over it",⁹⁰³ and in his own, said the Rajneesh investigation had "taught him the power of evil".⁹⁰⁴

Given all those ongoing concerns, Schey's surrender arrangement - which had been "agreed to" in July - should have looked like manna from heaven. But that's not how Turner saw it. *Au contraire*. He viewed it with suspicion and even contempt. Why? Because, he said, he thought Rajneesh would attempt to flee. While I don't for an instant believe Turner knew all the confused and contradictory things he was thinking at the time - or has dared map them out since - let's assume for the moment that the ball in his roulette wheel of what ifs had actually settled into the "flight risk possibility" pocket. How terrible would that have been and what would have happened next?

Let's run it through a *Gedankenexperiment*⁹⁰⁵ and find out. While suspecting that Rajneesh is a definite "flight risk", Turner tells Schey on Sunday to surrender his client at the Portland Court House on Monday at, say, 11 a.m. Then there are two possibilities. Either A, Schey delivers as promised. Or B, Rajneesh flees. While Rajneesh's fleeing would have had serious repercussions for Schey - in terms of reputation and possible legal action against him - neither of the alternatives would have harmed Turner.⁹⁰⁶

In the first instance for obvious reasons. In the second because forewarned is forearmed. From other sources we "know" that Rajneeshpuram was under increased "surveillance" from Thursday, October 24.⁹⁰⁷ Including the airport. If Rajneesh flees, so much the better for Turner for three reasons. One, because it will be easy to nab him almost immediately. Two, because they will be able to arrest him on neutral ground without the presence of thousands of sannyasins and alleged "paramilitary death squads". Three, later in court Turner and Weaver could easily demonstrate not only Rajneesh's inherent unreliability, but also a near perfect cause and effect sequence between the threat of imminent arrest and flight.

While I - silly me - arrived at this reconstruction 15 years after talking to Turner, I was reaching for something like it that evening as we approached the end of the interview. I said if I was going to attempt to flee the country from Oregon, I could have done better on a Trailways bus. Despite its somewhat rambling character, Turner's response is worth producing at length.

Absolutely. There isn't any question about that. And the things that these people did were so bizarre, and so often were against their best interests, that it astounds somebody looking at it from the outside. "How could they have done these things?" I mean it was as if they were trying to engage in a form of

⁹⁰³ See Chapter 6.

⁹⁰⁴ See Chapter 10.

⁹⁰⁵ thought experiment

⁹⁰⁶ as he himself admits below

⁹⁰⁷ See Lawrence LaDage's affidavit in Chapter 10.

self destruction.⁹⁰⁸ So many times they did things that were against their best interests.

And as a matter of fact, we said in the office if we could have asked him to do one thing for us, any one thing, we would say, "Would you please flee and then be caught inside the country? Would you do that for us? So we could solidify our case."⁹⁰⁹ Because "the guilty flees where no man pursueth".⁹¹⁰ And that's what he did. It's bizarre. I can't understand it.

You're right. There are so many things he could have done. If he had simply surrendered, he would have been released on bail, and he may never have been convicted. Who knows? He could have gone to trial. He could have had the option of fleeing at a later time, because there would have been months, and months, and months, and months between the time that he was released and the time that the case went to trial.

But he was receiving bad advice from a lot of people. And a lot of people and they were extremely paranoid. They were having very bizarre, strange thought process, extremely zealous people who really couldn't see the forest for the trees. And so, in terms of rational thought behavior, there wasn't a lot there.

A lot of money, a lot of intelligence, a lot of ingenuity, a lot of imagination. But in terms of common sense, a good judgment, and a pragmatic approach to the situations that were crossed, he didn't find that. But your assessment was a good one, and because we talked about that many times in the office.

As we have seen, Turner's accusations of "very bizarre, strange thought process" and much of the other litany of negatives could easily have been applied to him, and with a lot more justification. I asked Weaver, "What was wrong with going along with the surrender agreement that Turner had previously arranged, at least in broad outlines, with Peter Schey?"

"Well the obvious concern that the government had was that this was an attempt to confirm the existence of an arrest warrant, and then allow him to flee. I don't think any of us ever believed that Peter Schey, Jack Ransom or Swami Prem Niren could speak for Rajneesh or turn him in. Based upon what I had seen, Rajneesh was not somebody who was going to freely and voluntarily submit to some other authority."⁹¹¹

⁹⁰⁸ The self destruction theme again. In other words, we didn't destroy them. They did that to themselves.

⁹⁰⁹ Which suggests that it needed something dramatic like that to solidify it.

⁹¹⁰ "The wicked flee even when no one pursueth. But the righteous are bold as lions." (*Proverbs*, 28:1)

⁹¹¹ He had already submitted to the authority of Multnomah County Circuit Judge Clifford Olsen in the matter of the \$1 million defamation of character suit deposition (see Chapter 6).

"But, considering the fact that lots of people were worried about a potential bloodbath and rumors of imminent arrest were in the air, weren't you putting the Rajneeshees between a rock and a hard place?"

"It's not the government's job to make those guys' jobs any easier," Weaver said.

Sunday morning, October 27 was sunny and warm in the high desert. During the night the clocks had been set back an hour, from Daylight Savings Time to Pacific Standard Time (PST). Everything was calm at Rajneeshpuram and after six weeks of turbulent coverage even the newspapers were mute on the matter. Nothing in the air portended imminent arrest. Even the 7:30 a.m. arrival of a Learjet 35 from John Wayne airport near Disneyland in Santa Ana, California didn't arouse undue alarm. Neither in commune residents nor hostile outside forces who might, and actually swore that they were, closely watching the comings and goings there.

During the morning discourse, Rajneesh addressed a question from a sannyasin who said he was there not because of himself, but in spite of himself. Rajneesh said, "That's the right thing to do, coming to me in spite of yourself. Yes, there are people who come because of their openness, receptivity. There are people who come with their intelligence, with their rationality. But these are not going to be closest to me."

You are fortunate that you are here in spite of yourself. That means, neither a conviction of the head has brought you here, nor an openness of the heart has brought you here, but something which can only be called a magnetic pull between two beings.

That's why you are puzzled. It is unexplainable. It is one of the greatest mysteries. Two beings can find themselves pulled together against their minds, against their logic, against everything. Nothing can prevent them. Something far more powerful than openness, than intelligence, has made them aflame.

Yes, there are a few people who are here just in the same way. They will be enriched more than anybody else. They are the blessed ones.⁹¹²

At around 5:30 p.m. PST that same day two Learjets took off from Rajneeshpuram: the Lear 35 that had arrived in the morning and another Learjet 24 that had come in from Portland around 3:30 the afternoon. According to flight plans the pilots filed with Seattle Air Traffic Control (ATC) ten minutes later, their final destination was Charlotte, North Carolina. As we have already seen,⁹¹³ Matt Shelly, managing news editor at KGW television in Portland, was on top of things almost from the first minute. "Knowing the

⁹¹² Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 43, October 27, 1985. We return to this issue in Chapter 12.

⁹¹³ See Chapter 1.

conditions at the ranch at that time, you didn't have to be a genius to figure out what that meant," he told me.

As they made their "desperate", "last minute" attempt to "flee the US" - about 3,000 miles from the northwest to the southeast they were passed from one Air Route Traffic Control (ARTC) to another. Like all planes filing flight plans. From Seattle to Salt Lake City, to Denver, Kansas City, Atlanta, and finally on to the airport tower in Charlotte.

But there was something extremely different about these particular hot potatoes, at least in the hopped up heads of those "flight following" them. Thus shortly after 7:30 p.m. PST - that is, two hours into the flight - Tom Price, Area Manager in Charge (AMIC) of ARTC in Salt Lake City, told Wayne Peterson, the AMIC in Denver, that one of the planes was on its way to "Charlotte. South Carolina. Or maybe it's North Carolina. North Carolina, I guess. Anyway, they don't expect him to actually Actually, she's a lady pilot. They don't expect her to actually land at this destination. They figure she's going to change route in the air. And the Seattle AMIC needs to know that. And he will forward it to the Customs or the FBI. It's quite a high priority."⁹¹⁴

Peterson in Denver was passing the message and mania on to John Miller, AMIC in Kansas City at the same time Ron Taylor, Special US Customs' Agent in Charlotte was being roused from bed. That is, shortly after 8 p.m. PST, 11 p.m. EST.⁹¹⁵ "And in flight following both of these aircraft, don't You know, treat it as a suspect aircraft. Don't let the pilot know." Peterson called Miller a second time. "John. Peterson again. Denver. Sorry to bother you. But the owner, or the 68 operator of one of these Lear, 58 FoxFox,⁹¹⁶ wants your commercial number to say something to you."

Swami Prem Niren told me and anyone else willing to listen that the caller was the ranch trying to contact the planes to tell them to turn around and come back. On the FAA tape there was a good deal of laughter from Peterson and Miller. Because, obviously, when you're tracking "suspect aircraft" you don't cooperate with anyone outside the loop.

Shortly before 9 p.m. PST - that is, 3½ hours into the flight - Price in Salt Lake City called Peterson to say that "US Customs have now made a formal request that the FAA track the aircraft".⁹¹⁷ In other words, everything they had been doing up to then was informal and running to catch up.

By the time the planes reached their scheduled destination - Charlotte - the air in front and behind them was rampant with descriptions, none of them good. The people on board were "escaped criminals", "hardened felons", real bad people who were possibly carrying submachine guns with armor piercing teflon bullets. So it comes as no surprise that

⁹¹⁴ Pulled from FAA recordings in real time.

⁹¹⁵ See Chapter 1.

⁹¹⁶ Numbers on the plane, 58FF.

⁹¹⁷ The importance of this point will become clearer in Chapter 10 when we examine the affidavit of US Customs' Agent Lawrence LaDage.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, ten disciples and all four private, non sannyasin pilots were taken into custody using what Ron Taylor, called "assault type tactics".⁹¹⁸

After they were in tow Taylor - who was the chief officer in this Customs led arrest, not Deputy Marshal Wade McGalliard⁹¹⁹ - hurried to the bank of pay phones at Butler Aviation and called the agent in Portland⁹²⁰ who had set the whole show in motion. Taylor told me:

They seemed to be very elated at the time. I could hear them cheering in the background. "You mean you actually got them?" "Yeah," I said. "We got lucky or something." They thought they were just going to get away. There were a lot of them in the background, shouting, "They got them!"

It was a total surprise to them, that's the impression I got. It was like one chance in a million of catching these people fleeing the country, because they were in Learjets, and they didn't know what airport they were going to exactly. They were surprised that we caught them!

It's my understanding, later on, that they were getting information second and third hand, that the plane had already left and they were frantically trying to find out where the plane was and where they were going. So, we stopped them from fleeing the country and one of them said to me, "Taylor, you don't know what you've just done!"

I said, "Really, I don't. What are you talking about?" And he said, "You've just stopped this guy from fleeing the country. I don't think you realize what you've done!" If we had been 20 minutes later, they would have refueled and gotten away from us.

"I forget what precipitated the trip to Charlotte, which made it into this huge thing," said Myles Ambrose. "Niren told me that the flight was unrelated to his dealings with the United States Attorney Charles Turner. He didn't even know that the Bhagwan was leaving, and that really shook him up. My recollection was that an agreement had been made that he would be surrendered at an appropriate time."

It is not unusual for people to surrender. But this was strangely handled. It was a regular procedure, a regular case, and Turner made a big issue out of it. Turner was the focal point of getting rid of the Bhagwan. If they hadn't done it for the INS thing, they probably would have done it for something else.

⁹¹⁸ Modern American law permits the use of deadly force against fleeing felons, but not misdemeanants (John Langbein, *Torture and the Law of Proof*, p. 176).

⁹¹⁹ See above.

⁹²⁰ William Gleason or Lawrence LaDage. Gleason, along with telephone number, is continually mentioned in the FAA tapes. LaDage filed an affidavit about the buildup to the incident. See Chapter 10.

Ambrose didn't remember what precipitated "the trip to Charlotte" because he never knew. Because he hadn't been on the ground at Rajneeshpuram day in and day out for four years, where an accelerating array of forces had their hearts set on destroying Rajneeshpuram no matter what the costs and consequences.

A few days after the arrest an editorial appeared in a Pendleton, Oregon newspaper.

As the Indian guru Rajneesh and his helpers face prosecution after trying to flee the country, the patience used by state and federal officials in Oregon on the case looks commendable. It stands in stark contrast to such impulsive decisions as Mayor Goode's of Philadelphia to use a warlike assault this summer against members of the MORE group.

Officials in Oregon who had proceeded with patience and persistence toward Rajneesh and his followers have shown the value of responsible behavior. Thanks to them, Oregon has avoided warfare with the guru and his disciples.⁹²¹

In those two short paragraphs the aren't we wonderful writer had two minor facts wrong and a whole pileup of major ones. One, the assault in Philadelphia happened on May 13, which on my calendar is spring. Two, the group's name was MOVE. But those *faux pas* pale before the colossally incorrect assessment of why the "unthinkable" didn't happen at Rajneeshpuram.

Some officials were forging chilling psychological profiles of the "Rajneeshee terrorists" and others were believing them. And even though there were an abnormal number of them cooperating and coordinating, they were also fighting among themselves like alpha males on steroids and their minds were raging almost out of control with aggressive paranoid worst case scenarios. Were they going to carry on "mickey mousing around", and let "the law create neutral ground that people were invulnerable on"⁹²² so Rajneesh and the Rajneeshees could continue "thumbing their noses at authority"? Or were they going to reassert "the rule of law" in Central Oregon by arresting Rajneesh for an alleged immigration conspiracy?

In that climate a bloody invasion of Rajneeshpuram was practically inevitable. Dave Frohnmayer admitted as much 20 years later in a German documentary. But he gave all credit not to Rajneesh, but sane, sober and sensible government officials like, of course, himself.⁹²³ It would have been one more example - and there's no end to them - of sensible violence. Like the Shock and Awe invasion and occupation of Iraq to discover

⁹²¹ *East Oregonian*, October 30, 1985

⁹²² Rick Norton's words. See Chapter 8.

⁹²³ *Focus TV Spezial, Die Bhagwan Story*, 2005. I called the film's producer in Munich and told her who I was. I sent her a copy of the first edition of this book and she sent me a copy of the film. (Which is well worth watching.) Unfortunately, while the thrust of Frohnmayer's statement is unmistakable, his exact words are too blurry - both in the original English and the German voice over - to quote with confidence. I made several attempts to get a copy of the interview, but I never heard from her again.

weapons of mass destruction, which despite the "best intelligence" and "general consensus" weren't there.

Like when only doing his duty British General Reginald Dyer stormed into Jallianwalla Bagh. For Rajneesh, whose entire family was involved in the independence movement,⁹²⁴ the lessons of that day were not an academic issue. Something to be learned by rote so he could pass exams and move up to the "next level". It had been burned into the hearts, minds and *karma* of all Indians.

Four years after the fall 1985 events, I sent a question into Rajneesh. Unlike the journalists at Rajneeshpuram, I was not offered a face to face interview, because he was seriously ill. I didn't know it at the time, but he had less than five months to live. "I would like to know how you saw events at that time. Was there an unspoken intent when you decided to leave Rajneeshpuram on Sunday night, October 27, 1985?" He answered through his secretary, Ma Deva Anando.

"I left for Charlotte because for six weeks previously the National Guard was on standby around the commune, ready to enter the commune. Obviously, if they had arrested me there, the 5,000 sannyasins would not have tolerated it. There would have been bloodshed. To avoid this, I went to Charlotte. It was just to avoid the bloodshed of the sannyasins. There were no sannyasins in Charlotte to be involved if I was arrested there. And there was a beautiful house in the mountains there for me to stay."

I was in America and I was free to go anywhere. There was no intention on my part of destroying the commune. On the contrary, I wanted no bloodshed in the commune, which would have happened if I was arrested there.

The INS had been asked to help in arresting me, and they refused. In fact, they were at fault all along. They hadn't adjudicated my case and replied to my request for extension. The reason was that if they said, "No", we could appeal. And then they couldn't destroy the commune. So it was a clear cut conspiracy.

While Rajneesh was never strictly accurate with numbers, all my research proves that he was right about the possibility verging on the probability of bloodshed at Rajneeshpuram. And that disaster was avoided not because of allegedly patient federal and state officials, but in spite of their tugging at the leash, foaming at the mouth impatience.

⁹²⁴ "My whole family - except me - was involved in the freedom movement. And they were angry with me." (*From Death to Deathlessness*, Chapter 22, August 27, 1985)

CHAPTER 10: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

In the East, too, one may yet travel disinterestedly to acquire wisdom only, and I have entered a mosque where Christians are not encouraged by pleading that I came as a "seeker after truth". But it is a reason which is never worth offering to the police.⁹²⁵

Half of what he said meant something else, and the other half didn't mean anything at all.⁹²⁶

Approximately 11 hours after Rajneesh was arrested on charges of immigration conspiracy, Ma Anand Sheela and two other sannyasins were picked up for attempted murder and conspiracy to commit murder in Häusern, Germany - 5,000 miles away. One of the many people they had wanted out of their hair - Swami Devaraj - was in a US Marshals' holding tank in Charlotte getting ready for an initial appearance hearing with his master in the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina.

"When the whole picture came out," Bob Hamilton told me, "everybody just assumed that it was inevitable that Rajneesh would have gotten booted out of the country. And it was inevitable that Sheela and her cohorts would have been convicted. Now it's easy to look back and say that. But that was certainly not the frame of mind that anybody could have, or should have had, as they were investigating this. There were plenty of times, and a few of these grey hairs attest to it, when that was not [a] foregone [conclusion] by any means."

One of my favorite authors, William Manchester wrote somewhere near the start of *The Glory and The Dream* that "historical events take on an aura of inevitability after they've occurred". And I thought of that quote many times in connection with this Rajneesh thing. So if you're a citizen looking at the media, this looks like a tremendously orchestrated, effective government. Bingo! Bingo! Sheela and her people are busted in West Germany!⁹²⁷ Rajneesh is busted in the United States, trying to flee! Those guys must be real well coordinated. And we were well coordinated. But in that incident we were also kind of lucky.

I agreed with Hamilton's assessment that the massively coordinated transatlantic arrests were history in the making. Or rather, history in the faking. Wildly different events were being deliberately yanked together to make it look as if they were one and the same event. And it was being done with the assistance of the US State Department, the

⁹²⁵ Freya Stark, *The Valley of the Assassins*, p. 163

⁹²⁶ Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Act II, Rosencrantz speaking to Guildenstern about a conversation with Hamlet.

⁹²⁷ His description of the sequence of events, while wrong, points toward what was supposed to happen.

Department of Justice, the Treasury Department, the Federal Aviation Administration and the media.⁹²⁸

Or, to be more specific, not the media in general, but one representative of the fourth estate in particular: *The Oregonian*. Thus luck had nothing to do with it. The how and when details of Sheela's arrest - which were not precisely reported in the German press - are only one set of factors that substantiate this contention.

The wide open countryside of southwestern Germany is the opposite of Central Oregon. It is green and resplendent with tall old trees. On the southern edge is Waldshut, a *gemütlich* garrison and market town dating back to the Middle Ages, with cobblestone streets and a shopping plaza restored in the old style.

While it is also a sizable modern town - with a population at the time of approximately 14,000 - and regional headquarters for government departments, it retains much of its *Märchen*⁹²⁹ charm. Church bells sound every quarter hour, including throughout the night. The Rhine River is narrow and clean there and postcard perfect except for numerous hydroelectric power plants slowing its flow. On a still day, one can see thick billowing white clouds rising straight up from *Atomwerk* towers on the south side of the river, in Switzerland, a stone's throw away.

Hans Peter Steiner⁹³⁰ worked for the local *Zeitung*, the *Süd Kurier*, at the time and wrote several articles on Sheela. He told me she was "a tourist attraction" and compared her to *Schwarzwaldlinik*,⁹³¹ a dazzlingly popular German television series. "It's filmed in this area and people come to visit that place. People came to visit Sheela in the same way."

In the fall of 1985, "*der Bhagwan*" had been news in Germany for nearly a decade.⁹³² There were an estimated 50,000 German sannyasins and their businesses netted about \$8 million per year. Earlier in the year an Oregon columnist had been rather miffed to learn that the only thing most Germans knew about his state was that "the Bhagwan" lived there.⁹³³

On September 20, 1985, Rajneesh told a *Stern* reporter that once the Americans gave him a green card, he would come to visit Germany.⁹³⁴ On October 18 the *Bundestag*, the German Parliament in Bonn, passed a decree⁹³⁵ denying Rajneesh entry into the country.

⁹²⁸ Stuart Wright describes this as "'convergence,' a rhetorical tactic linking two or more activities so as to implicitly or explicitly draw parallels between them" ("Construction and Escalation of a Cult Threat", in *Armageddon in Waco: Critical Perspectives on the Branch-Davidian Conflict*, p. 82).

⁹²⁹ fairy tale

⁹³⁰ Steiner was kind enough to come over to Waldshut from Switzerland on the same afternoon I called him - Wednesday, December 7, 1988 - to talk to me. I bought him dinner at my hotel and later that evening he drove me through the enchanting, snowy and moonlit landscape.

⁹³¹ Black Forest Clinic

⁹³² See Chapters 2 and 6.

⁹³³ *Eugene Register-Guard*, April 17, 1985

⁹³⁴ It should be Rajneesh, *The Last Testament*, Vol. 2, Chapter 29, September 20, 1985. But it is not on the Silver Platter. Referred to in Rajneesh, *From Bondage to Freedom*, Chapter 8, September 22, 1985

⁹³⁵ They had been working on the wording since July.

It said his presence would "conflict with the interests of the Federal Republic". Throughout September, October and November the German media was sizzling with reports about Rajneesh and the "*Jugendsekte*".⁹³⁶

Thus Hans Peter Steiner was only one of hundreds of German reporters who interviewed Sheela. But he continued to cover the story long after most of them had dropped out of the race - until his own editor told him, "Drop it, it's not news anymore". Steiner said local people were interested in Sheela and her money.

But others were upset because of the publicity and the possibility that she would bring Rajneesh to live there with her. Despite all that attention, however, there was no press the first time the police came to arrest Sheela & Co. in Häusern, a rural *Hochschwarzwald* village of 800 people about 12 kilometers north of Waldshut. But like everyone else - the police included - Steiner had stitched together stories about what happened after.

"Was the arrest of Sheela normal," I asked him.

"It was a completely abnormal arrest."

"Was it well planned?"

"Forget it. It was total comedy."

Sheela and two other women were arrested at the Hotel Sonnhalde, a three storey house in Häusern. They had been living there since Tuesday, September 17, 1985, three days after they had left Rajneeshpuram in a huff and a puff and I'll blow your commune down. The house was rented to them by Hans Gunter and Heidi Rieckmann, an elderly couple who live just opposite on the other side of the quiet residential street.

"The police came to us and wanted to have the registration forms of everyone in the house," Hans Rieckmann told me.⁹³⁷ "Shortly after that the *Kriminalpolizei*⁹³⁸ came to us. That was around the middle of October, maybe two weeks before they were arrested. They told us to watch for strange long parcels, a gun Sheela was supposed to have ordered from Frankfurt. We were supposed to warn the police when a strange long parcel arrived. This never happened. They had no guns."

The police came sometimes to ask us what the group was doing. We know that all their mail coming from the United States was opened and closed again with scotch tape. We asked the police about that and they said that was impossible. But we saw the letters arriving and they were closed with scotch tape.

Sheela said their telephone was tapped. The police told us that was impossible, because a special warrant from a court was needed for this. We

⁹³⁶ In addition to her getting much more than she gave deals with *Stern* (see Chapter 9), Sheela had signed a contract with a television program about "Youth and cults". She was going to tell about her life with Rajneesh.

⁹³⁷ My interview with the Rieckmann's was in German. I am translating.

⁹³⁸ from Waldshut-Tiengen

don't know if her phone was tapped, but we could see that the letters from the United States had been opened and closed again with scotch tape. We don't know where they were opened.

One of the sannyasins with Sheela, Ma Yoga Vidya,⁹³⁹ a South African Jew of German descent, applied for a German passport with the local *Bürgeramt*⁹⁴⁰ and received it in about two weeks. "This was unusually fast," Hans Rieckmann said. Heidi Rieckmann said, "Sheela was phoning the whole day. In the whole time she was here the phone bill was 6,000 Deutschmarks. She called Nepal, the Philippines, all over Germany. She got a lot of offers to purchase hotels and houses. Sheela said a friend had just inherited three million Deutschmarks. They wanted to buy a hotel⁹⁴¹ for 4.5 million Deutschmarks. She didn't need to get extra money [a mortgage] from a bank. But the people in the village were against Sheela buying the hotel and demonstrated against it."

Some time during their stay, the group threw away their *malas*, red clothes and Rajneesh books, Heidi said. The break with him, it seemed, was final and complete.

The point of this extensive lead in should be obvious. German authorities and the public at large knew for some time exactly who Sheela was and where she was living. So after Rajneesh exposed her crimes - which were at least *prima facie* substantiated by an outpouring of sworn testimony - why did it take so long to issue warrants and arrest her?⁹⁴² And if the arrest was so well planned, why was it, in Steiner's words, a "total comedy"?

At about 1 p.m. Central European Time (CET) - six hours after Rajneesh's arrest - the Rieckmanns heard about it on television. But, they said, Sheela and Shanti Bhadra knew about it even earlier. "I don't know how they knew," Hans Rieckmann said. "We only talked with Shanti Bhadra about it. Vidya was not there. She was about to buy a hotel that day."

Otmar Wachenheim, Sheela's German lawyer, told me that on the day of the double arrest Sheela called his office in Lahr⁹⁴³ twice. The first time to say she had heard of Rajneesh's arrest, but since she had a clear conscience was not making plans to do anything. The second was during her own arrest, at around 6:30 p.m. CET. It was 12:30 on Monday afternoon in Charlotte.

⁹³⁹ Ann Phyllis McCarthy

⁹⁴⁰ town hall

⁹⁴¹ Hotel Weisse Rossle in Hinterzartern

⁹⁴² For the same money, why did Frohnmayer and Bob Hamilton take the matter to a Grand Jury? In this context we should remember the words of Mike Inman (see Chapter 8). "The US Attorney, if he wants to, can create a criminal action in one or two ways. He could go and file a complaint tomorrow. Or he could go to the Grand Jury." The same was true of the Oregon Attorney General.

⁹⁴³ At the time of my visit - December 1988 - Lahr was the site of a major Royal Canadian Air Force base: about 6,000 personnel. I was assaulted by military license plates repeating like a bad dream and, even in mid afternoon, the alcohol and tobacco reek of off duty (I hope) airmen.

If an October 28 double arrest had actually been pre-scheduled, the German police would have had everything prepared in the early hours of Monday morning their time. International paper work, search and arrest warrants, and their plan of attack. If the Monday arrest had been pre-scheduled, they probably would have swooped in on Sheela and the others between 6 and 8 a.m. local time. Subtract the six hours time difference between Germany and the east coast of the US, and that would have been exactly - almost to the minute - when Rajneesh was being arrested in Charlotte. Are these guys good, or what?

But it didn't happen that way. In contrast with Hamilton's sanguine sequence of events - which, as he says below, was exactly how they had been planning for things to happen - Sheela was arrested *after* Rajneesh.

There was a whole array of German police on hand: about 25 local, regional and federal officers. A few from Häusern itself, some cars from the district police at St. Blasein and Waldshut, some *Kriminalpolizei* from Waldshut-Tiengen - including the Chief - and someone from the *Bundespolizei*⁹⁴⁴ in Cologne. According to Hans Rieckmann, they "surrounded the whole house. There were police at every corner, in front of every door, and on both sides of the street."

"If Sheela and her group didn't have any weapons," I asked, "why was it necessary to have so many police?"

"That's what we said as well," the Rieckmanns agreed. "We also don't know. The arrest was a demonstration."

Undoubtedly. But of what? The first several times I assessed the material I leaned unequivocally toward the conspiracy side of John le Carré's memorable hypothesis about history. "In our game there's two views of history: conspiracy and fuck-up."⁹⁴⁵ If an impression was to be tattooed onto hearts, minds and foreheads - which wouldn't wash out or fade away no matter how much factual bleach was added to the mix - it had to be written in pretty spectacular ink.

However, without subtracting one iota from that original evaluation, I would now like to focus on the other side of the equation.⁹⁴⁶ The presence of the small army demonstrates that the Germans had been revved up and let loose without a clue - *keine Ahnung* - about what to expect and do. Just like the thrown together at the last minute team in Charlotte 11 hours before.⁹⁴⁷

After the initial wham bam, the rest of the arrest *Erlebnis*⁹⁴⁸ happened in slow mo. According to the Rieckmanns, Puja, the Philippine nurse wanted for attempted murder, called from Freiburg, about 40 miles away, where she was shopping. She was told to

⁹⁴⁴ National police

⁹⁴⁵ *The Honourable Schoolboy*, p. 271

⁹⁴⁶ I return to this theme in Chapter 12.

⁹⁴⁷ See Chapter 1.

⁹⁴⁸ experience

hurry back so she could be arrested and go directly to jail. While waiting for her return the police chewed the cud with everyone else, repeatedly remarked that they had never arrested such friendly people, and drank coffee and ate food prepared and served up by people who were alleged to have been involved in preparing poisons to kill sannyasins, government officials, journalists and thousands of anonymous voters in The Dalles.

It was something out of Hitchcock. Or better yet, *Arsenic and Old Lace*.⁹⁴⁹ As far as "total comedy" was concerned, Hans Steiner didn't know the half of it.

Then came the second wave. After taking Puja away - at about 8:30 p.m. - the police returned around 11 p.m. Otmar Wachenheim, who had arrived in Häusern around 10:30 p.m., said that 15 minutes after he crossed the threshold the police returned with an *NBC* television team and three American officials. Two late arriving FBI agents - H. Hadley McCann and Paul Hudson⁹⁵⁰ - from Portland and one chief investigator for Dave Frohnmayer, Paul Keller.⁹⁵¹

⁹⁴⁹ A comedy about what we would these days call a totally dysfunctional family with two elderly and murderous spinster aunts (Joseph Kesselring, 1939). Later (1944) turned into a Frank Capra film with Cary Grant.

⁹⁵⁰ Hudson was in charge of the FBI SWAT team in Portland. We should recall that Ted Gardner, the head of the FBI in Oregon, and Turner were barely on speaking terms (see Chapter 9).

⁹⁵¹ Anyone reading *The Oregonian's* account of these events - namely, what the FBI men and Keller were sent to Germany to do - will feel like they're in yet another movie: *The Three Stooges in Kafkaland*. According to the three officials and reporter James Long, they were sent to help arrest Sheela and Vidya ("Oregon team travels paper maze to gain Sheela's arrest", December 30, 1985). According to me, they were there to gather evidence against Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram. And the evidence for my contention is all over the place.

First, even according to Long's story, the three men arrived with no arrest plan or paperwork in place. Their trip was basically a here's hoping, let's see what happens leap into the who knows. Throwing up a "Hail, Mary", as they say in basketball.

" Unless things fell quickly into place, the most complex criminal investigation in Oregon history could take a bad turn. Paul H. Keller, 44, a member of the attorney general's investigative staff since 1973, had slept hardly at all during the previous 24 hours. Neither had his companions, Portland FBI Special Agents Paul H. Hudson and H. Hadley McCann. The two agents were teamed up with Keller as part of a state-federal task force looking into multiple crimes at Rancho Rajneesh." (*Ibid.*)

"The three men faced a new kind of job in Germany - one that required them to be diplomats as well as investigators. They would have to feel their way along." (*Ibid.*)

Second, why on earth would the Germans need help in arresting the women? How many American assistants would it take to screw out two not very large light bulbs? If the German diplomatic and judicial systems had been sufficiently convinced that the Americans had a *bona fide* and worth bothering about case against her, they could have easily done everything on their own.

I wanted to interview Hudson and McCann about the details of their hurry up and wait excursion to Germany. Sleepless nights, a freshly minted passport, then moseying in a sort of jet lag stupor from one office to another (without appointments), and twiddling their thumbs over the weekend. But they told me that even at that late date - February-March 1989 - that already aired out story was part of an "ongoing investigation" and refused to talk to me.

I had more success with Oregon State Police Superintendent John Williams. And at some points during our interview he seemed to be agreeing with my interpretation of events. "They were going over there to gather evidence, and I wanted my man [Lieutenant Dean Renfrow] with them." But he also said, "Well, that was just to go over and interview and arrest Sheela, what we're talking about now". In other words, William's comments are a nudge in the direction of my hypothesis, but can't be considered definitive evidence, let alone nail in the coffin proof.

This was about 21 hours after Rajneesh's arrest. Despite the startling mishmash of police and firepower, there still weren't any search or arrest warrants. But they did have permission telexed from the Ministry of the Interior for the *Land*⁹⁵² of Baden-Württemberg.⁹⁵³ According to Wachenheim, the Americans had no legal right to be there, let alone search. And then they took over.

"We had the strong impression that the German police acted as their helpers and not vice versa." While he protested, he decided to let the Americans lead, because the Germans did not know anything about the case and would probably have taken the whole house apart. "McCann was a very important figure in the search." The FBI's activities were filmed and appeared on German television.

When we ask, "Why was it so important for the FBI to be on hand during the search and directing it?", the balance tilts back toward conspiracy. On numerous occasions Sheela had claimed to have enough material evidence to incriminate Rajneesh in all of the stuff he was accusing her of. Thus the Americans were eager to first find and then secure that "proof". But unfortunately for them, none of those fabled smoking guns ever materialized.⁹⁵⁴

There were about 20 sannyasins from Sheela's group at the scene of the arrest, including Ma Yoga Vidya, who had been named on the federal immigration indictment with Rajneesh. Wachenheim said the extradition request for Sheela, based on the immigration case, had come before October 28. But the Germans were not unduly impressed by that and told the Americans as much.

But then the murder indictment came back "almost immediately". He and the German judges thought this was extremely peculiar. I can more accurately "triangulate" that "almost immediately". It couldn't have been any earlier than Monday, October 28, and in all probability came a few days later.⁹⁵⁵ I know that because of something Robert Hamilton told me, which I think is worth quoting in full (including the pauses).

The original game plan to get the ladies out of Germany had been predicated upon using the immigration violations, which the feds had been investigating for a long time. And they were going to go to Grand Jury first on that. They were going to return the indictments on the immigration stuff, get the warrants, start the international extradition part of the process, and snag these ladies that were 12 clicks⁹⁵⁶ from the Swiss border, which was of grave concern to us.

⁹⁵² state, province

⁹⁵³ Baden-Württemberg (capital Stuttgart) was formed under the long occupational rule after World War II.

⁹⁵⁴ See the discussion about "Addendum C: Photocopies of Evidence Obtained by FBI From Germany" in Chapter 13.

⁹⁵⁵ See below.

⁹⁵⁶ kilometers: Which shows that officials not only knew where Sheela was, but also exactly how far she was from the Swiss border.

So that the original, maybe loosely agreed to game plan was that that was what was going to happen. Then we could just pursue, as we saw fit, all of this [other] stuff. They'd snag the ladies. We wouldn't need to worry about that. And then we could use Then we could make the right decisions at the right time about when we brought what.

It then Then, right around that time I think it was Dave Frohnmayer. Somebody in Salem - I was over in The Dalles - got information from the federal government, that their assessment was that if they arrested these people in Germany just on immigration violations, that that's like a parking ticket over there.

Not only will they probably bail out, and then they can go into Switzerland,⁹⁵⁷ but they might ultimately not be extradited. The word came down. Someone said, "Hey, you had mentioned that you might have had some more serious charges that were ... that [you] were at that stage" And I said, "Yes". And they said "If you can return those in time" - and this was like the same day.

According to Hamilton, the attempted murder indictments were "returned" at 5 p.m. Friday afternoon, local time. That was 2 a.m. Saturday morning in Germany. In other words, well into the weekend. Thus the earliest that the indictments could have been delivered was Monday. But even that forced, double quick time march doesn't take into account the minuets and minutiae of international diplomacy.

"When did you realize that Ma Anand Sheela and Ma Yoga Vidya could not be extradited from Germany on the immigration charges," I asked Robert Weaver.

"They were extradited on immigration charges," he asserted.⁹⁵⁸ "Before the arrest I was assured by our international office in the Justice Department,⁹⁵⁹ and by the State Department and by the Ministry of Justice in Germany, that Sheela would be extradited on that charge. And we went through a lot of hoops to verify that. My only concern was that she not escape into Switzerland, because she was not extraditable from there for that."

"When was the arrest scheduled for? And how was it to happen?"

"Well, we were going to arrest Bhagwan on the ranch on Monday [the 28th]. I can't recall if it was going to be in the morning or the afternoon. And after he was arrested, the German police were going to arrest Sheela. We had a system set up. We would give the

⁹⁵⁷ Where because of yet another dicey marriage - her own with Swiss national, Swami Prem Dipo (Urs Birnstiel) - it would have been almost impossible to extradite her even on charges of attempted murder. The reason I say dicey is just as it takes two consenting adults to get married, it takes the same number to get divorced. And Sheela's most recent husband, Swami Jayananda, who was not part of the criminal inner circle, seems to have believed that he was still married to her.

Apparently, Sheela married Dipo in Mexico City on December 14, 1984 while she was still married to Jayananda. If that is true, Ma Anand Sheela Patel Silverman Shelfer Birnstiel was never legally married to the last name on that long list and, therefore, might not be entitled to her Swiss citizenship.

⁹⁵⁸ As we have seen, that contradicts everything almost everyone else said.

⁹⁵⁹ where he himself had previously worked

word in Portland, who would pass it through our channels in the Justice Department, who would contact the German police."

"So you were going to alert the German police *after* you had arrested Rajneesh?"

"Yeah."

"Wouldn't it have been more prudent to notify them ahead of time, so they could get into position and just go with it?"

"Maybe it was that we were going to arrest Sheela first. I think they were going to be sufficiently close enough. Yeah. Yeah. I can't recall. The German police wanted to know when they were supposed to make the arrest. And then events overtook us with the Rajneesh leaving and then we had to call them."

Concerning the details of Rajneesh's arrest - which had been a work in progress for at least three months, and would become major scalps in Weaver's career and that of his boss, Charles Turner - both men were consistently, and necessarily, vague and forgetful. What was planned was very different from what happened. The discrepancies between the separate scenarios reveal fatal flaws in their logic and legal proceedings, and if discovered, pieced together and publicly exposed, would utterly ruin their hard earned heroics.

Perhaps both were consciously aware of the precariousness of their positions and were deliberately steering me away from the sore spots. Perhaps they still didn't know - or had conveniently forgotten - and were like sleepwalkers instinctively skirting disasters that lurked out there, somewhere, in the light. Who knows how many phases there are in the side streets, alleys and dead ends between knowing and not wanting to know – on the way toward, in one direction, confrontation and coming clean, and, in the other, obstruction and outright denial of the obvious?

"You had been trying to coordinate with the Germans for a while," I asked Weaver.

"On a daily, if not a thrice daily basis, from the beginning of October." From the beginning of October, when there wasn't even an indictment, let alone an arrest warrant, for anyone.

According to Turner and all other sources close to the investigation, the crucial bit of the transatlantic double arrest strategy was to arrest Sheela first in Germany. I'll touch up that highly probable game plan with some real world texture, which takes into account space and time and emphasizes, in the words of Richard Norton, the "escalatory nature of what we wanted to do".⁹⁶⁰

The plan was to approach Sheela sometime, but definitely not on Monday, October 28. Then, holding the Damocletian sword of the immigration indictment and extradition to the US over her head, she would be interrogated about Rajneesh's involvement in that and the other crimes she was being charged with. She would be asked to put up or shut up. That is, to finally make good on her promises and decisively - beyond a reasonable doubt

⁹⁶⁰ See Chapter 9.

- finger Rajneesh.⁹⁶¹ When - and if - that happened, they would then go after, in the imagery of a much later conflict, "the Ace of spades". Rajneesh himself.

At the very least, that whole process would have taken months. It most definitely was not planned to obey the rules of Aristotelian tragedy. That is, it all has to happen on the same day. But Rajneesh was a card of a different caliber - a non violent Joker. By stepping onto the Learjet 35 he threw a whole tool kit full of monkey wrenches into the machinery. And that is why the German police had to hustle together huge numbers of men and crash in 11 hours after his arrest, not knowing exactly who they were supposed to be arresting and for what and looking like the Keystone Cops with subtitles. A slapstick performance that, I'm sure, left a *sauer* taste in their mouths for months, if not years after.

It was a busy day for international relations. There was a blizzard of telexes from the US State Department in Washington, DC to the Foreign Ministry in Bonn urging the Germans to do whatever was necessary - even if it was on the flip side of the law - and ramrod Sheela's arrest through. The paper work could be fixed in the mix later to look approximately *gut genug*.⁹⁶²

On Tuesday night, October 29, lawyers in Frohnmayr's office were burning the midnight oil getting some of it together. The warrant for the arrest of the three women in Germany was finally issued two months later, on December 23, by the High Regional Court of Baden-Württemberg in Karlsruhe.

I was told in Washington, DC that Mollie Warlow at the State Department's Office of International Relations had a lot to do with both the arrest and extradition of Sheela. I called her and asked for an interview. She did not wish to discuss the matter.

In Germany I tried to discover how high up in the government the interest in the Rajneesh-Sheela case went. Where did the orders come from that upset orderly German machinery and circumvented some of its laws? My premise being that the level of involvement in Germany would mirror that in the US. If, for example, the German Foreign Minister was involved, he would have been getting signals directly from US Secretary of State George Schultz. If the Minister of Justice, from Attorney General

⁹⁶¹ This reconstruction is based not only on its total explanatory power - the way it accommodates other pieces in the puzzle: in fact, allows everything to click fit into one whole - but also on what Oregon State Police Superintendent John Williams said when I asked him about when the FBI and the man from the AG's office actually went to Germany. In a rather confused interchange, which continues for three pages in the transcribed version, he says things like: "Well, that was just to go over and interview and arrest Sheela, what we're talking about now."

"They were going over there to gather evidence, and I wanted my man [Lt. Dean Renfrow] with them."

"The only thing that's in my mind now - and I recalled very vividly at the time what was in my mind - was that I would've sent Dean Renfrow over there [earlier], but was waiting for a coordinated effort. But the reason for going over there would've been to gather evidence. You've got witnesses over there."

⁹⁶² good enough

Edwin Meese III. If Chancellor Helmut Kohl - the one who had toured Bitburg cemetery five months earlier with his friend "Ron"⁹⁶³ - then we could see President Ronald Reagan's fingerprints on this.

Juergen Klein, the *Staatsanwalt*⁹⁶⁴ in Waldshut, had been involved in authorizing and organizing Sheela's arrest. I went to hear his side of the story. Herr Klein came out of his inner office to show me how tall he was and what beautiful white teeth he had, shake my hand several times and tell me he had nothing to say. It was practically impossible to find sources within the German bureaucracy to talk about the matter, on or off the record. Anyone caught leaking information, I was told, was fired and had their pensions revoked. Nevertheless, I did find someone who promised to check out what happened between the Americans and the Germans over this case.

"There are five levels of secrets within the German government," he told me two months after our original contact. "Number one is the lowest level. Number five is the highest level. The questions you have asked involve level five."

"I can't understand why such a simple thing would be so highly valued," I said. "It has nothing to do with German national security."

"You are right. It has nothing to do with national security. It has to do with national pride. Our politicians do not want the German people to see how nakedly the Americans order them around, the strongest economic power in Europe. It hurts our German pride."

Six time zones away, Charlotte attorneys Ed Hinson and Bill Diehl, who had been up since 3 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), were trying to catch up to the runaway chain of events that was playing havoc with their daily routine. "That morning we tried to negotiate flying the Bhagwan back to Oregon on the same jets they had flown in on," Ed Hinson told me.

"Get them back right away and we'll deal with the charges out there. At the Bhagwan's expense. We made a reasonable, sensible offer. You put as many armed guards on these planes that you think you need to provide security and take them right back to Oregon right now. These people weren't heavily armed. I think they found one revolver amongst the bunch. They didn't appear to be heavy security type people at all. They weren't dangerous in any way."

We made the suggestion to Ken Andresen, the assistant US attorney here. He thought it sounded offbeat, but reasonable enough to talk about. When we deal with local people and make a reasonable offer, we expect a reasonable response. That's usually the way it works around here.

But the government came back with a "Hell, no!". The government took a hard and fast position. "We move to detain him. We're not interested in talking

⁹⁶³ See Chapter 8.

⁹⁶⁴ German equivalent of a district attorney

about shipping him anywhere. Period." They weren't willing to do anything to get him back, which is contrary to what they were claiming, that they wanted him back.

That was a mystery to me, and is a mystery to me to this day. Their conduct suggests that the government liked having him locked up in Charlotte, North Carolina, and they didn't want to have to deal with him on the ground in Oregon.

"The law is pretty clear," he said. "If the government moves to detain you and you have been arrested lawfully ..."

"... Do you think it was a lawful arrest," I interrupted. He paused five seconds and considered the question.

"I'm not sure."

"To this day you're not sure?"

"I'm not sure to this day. Because That's just the point that got passed up along the way."

"I'll say it did."

"Yeah. Yeah. Because they didn't have ... they didn't have any We never did see an arrest warrant that morning."

"Never?"

"I don't recall"

"Did you ever see it?"

"I don't remember seeing it now."

I read Hinson a quote from the Charlotte court record. "Bill Diehl on Thursday morning [October 31] in court said, 'I still haven't seen an arrest warrant.' On Thursday morning in Court."

"I never remember seeing an arrest warrant," Hinson said, "and it is my recollection that we raised the issue that [Monday] morning and right along. But the government had him in custody and they'd moved to detain him. And that was the end of the proposition until we had the detention hearing.

Bob Weaver, who had also been up all night and at his office since 1 or 2 a.m., took off from Portland late that morning. He was accompanied by Joe Greene, the INS' relatively new boy on the block in Portland. "With government contracting you've got to fly on the airlines and schedules that they approve," Weaver said.

"I had the secretary arrange the flight that morning at the office. I told her, 'Get me whatever'. And we went through some circuitous route to Charlotte. We were on the plane all day, something like 22 stops. Portland to Seattle to Denver to Kansas City to Chicago to Atlanta to Charlotte. And it was the same on the way back. It's one of the things your government does for you after being up all night and having worked for them for 12 years that makes you irritable."

Debra Stuart, an assistant US Attorney at the time who was representing the prosecution's case, said she spent most of Monday morning trying to "determine the validity of the process. And was there a warrant? Whose warrant was it? What did it say? And try to individualize the probable cause on each individual that was in the plane."

"Was there a warrant," I asked her. She paused for about six seconds and then sighed. "You know, I can't remember. My recollection is that eventually the process we used was a UFAP, unlawful flight to avoid prosecution of some of the state charges. I think the UFAP came out of their district⁹⁶⁵ rather than ours."

But legally speaking, and with no disrespect intended toward Debra Stuart, that was more smoke and mirrors. Because UFAPs are not applicable within the United States for federal charges, and there were no state charges against any of the people who had been arrested in Charlotte.

From 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. EST there was an initial appearance hearing in Charlotte before Magistrate Barbara DeLaney. Appointed in April 1976, she was at the time the only female magistrate in North Carolina. "Specifically," she said, "the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh was arrested upon a warrant issued upon an Indictment returned and filed by the Grand Jury in the District of Oregon."⁹⁶⁶

Bill Diehl, a short, rotund local attorney with a sense of flamboyance and sarcasm, said, "I'm representing in part six individuals who are charged with aiding and abetting flight to avoid prosecution of an Indictment that nobody knew about until today and concealing a person from arrest for whom there was no arrest warrant until today."

Both DeLaney and Diehl were talking about an arrest warrant neither had seen and never would.

The reason for that was simple: it didn't exist. To this day, it remains a mystery - to me, at least - why they would make a "look, Ma, no eyes" concession on a document that should have been the first thing demanded.

The defense entered into the record 800 pages of Rajneesh's medical records and documents showing that he had severe asthma, diabetes and a prolapsed disc. They attempted to negotiate some middle ground about the conditions under which he could be held without endangering his physical well-being. But Magistrate DeLaney shrugged off medical concerns.

Debra Stuart introduced some sinister tinges to the proceedings when she said, "I've been informed by United States Attorney Charles Turner of Oregon that the group has been involved in some rather violent activity." She also factored in an alarming piece of hearsay. "We had received information that the defendant, the Bhagwan, and Dr. Devaraj

⁹⁶⁵ Oregon

⁹⁶⁶ This account leans heavily on court records.

had talked about suicide and some other things like that. We have information that there are some circumstances that require the supervision of Dr. Devaraj also."

Unless you were a scrupulous student of recent history in real time the outrageousness of the charge couldn't be fathomed. But everyone else could pick up on and even enjoy the know what I mean. Remember Reverend Jimmie Jones and his mindless followers at Jonestown? They were a cult and they committed mass suicide. Well, these people and their guru are a cult, and they could commit suicide too. That's what people in cults do. When they weren't busy lying, cheating, stealing, smuggling drugs, running guns, marrying without meaning it, having orgies, upsetting all their neighbors, and threatening to murder or maim all good men and women who took a stand against their evil ways.

The traceable source for the fake suicide story was the ever credible Sheela. She had told one reporter that Rajneesh had asked Devaraj to prepare a recipe for a "perfect and painless suicide".⁹⁶⁷ It was repeated on Australia's *60 Minutes* later in October. "Bhagwan had always told me that, when things get too difficult for him, he will sit in his chair, take an injection, and disappear."

But one could wonder, as I have, who had whispered it into Stuart's ears and through her into the mindset of the Charlotte court? But hey, look, she just told us. She who didn't know anything about the matter - or not that much - was being directly fed "information" by Turner. Weaver and Greene were airborne on the milk run to Charlotte.

Neither Stuart nor DeLaney paused to wonder why Rajneesh, the take on all comers intellectual-spiritual street fighter who had been through much worse than this, would be willing to pull the plug because of a punk 35 count indictment. It could have been 535 counts. It boiled down to being accused of arranging 16 sham marriages and telling two or three fibs to the State Department and INS.⁹⁶⁸

But at this point disorder in the court was being called for. Some were deliberately jamming already overloaded circuits with stray signals so that reason - a frail, everything's got to go exactly right commodity at the best of times - would have an inordinately difficult time raising its voice and getting heard. An already molten confusion would be accelerated to maximum velocity and sub zero visibility.

On the Rajneeshee side there would be no good guys acting as normal human beings for comprehensible, you would have done the same thing in their shoes reasons. They would

⁹⁶⁷ *The Bend Bulletin*, October 3, 1985. This fits in perfectly with her could drop dead any second mindset and whatever plans she had had to do him in. Another source was Krishna Deva. "I listened to a copy of a tape from a bug in Bhagwan's room where he [Swami Devaraj] and Bhagwan discussed him assisting Bhagwan in committing suicide." From his testimony in the 1995 show trial of Sally-Anne Croft and Susan Hagan for conspiring to murder Charles Turner (p. 313), a case in which it was impossible to separate the "good guys" witnessing for the government from the "bad guys" being accused and convicted.

⁹⁶⁸ See Professor Moley's remarks (Chapter 8): "The importance of this tendency should be emphasized. Great numbers of indictments seem to be returned every year in which a crime is charged more serious in nature than the prosecutor is able to prove. He hopes in this way to 'bluff' the defendant into pleading guilty to a crime of less seriousness."

all be reduced to spastic "cult" followers who did "bizarre, strange"⁹⁶⁹ things - which were simultaneously aggressive and self destructive - because Rajneesh or Allah told them to. Let's not mince words here. For all intents and purposes, they were in the eyes of most people no better than *Untermenschen*.

Around 3 p.m. on Monday, October 28, the US Marshals called Chester William Kidd, sheriff of Mecklenburg County. The deputy marshal on the other end told him, "We gonna bring the Bhagwan to your jail." In other words, they already knew he was going there before the initial appearance hearing had begun and the issue of further detention had been decided.

"I had no idea what that was," Kidd told me. "I asked someone, 'What is "the Bhagwan"?' What kind of disease is that?' I thought it could give disease. They knew about it and told me that they had caught him earlier that morning. At 4:30 they called again and said he'd be here at around 5. They said, 'He's a very important person. You have to be careful with him. They said, 'Block off traffic and be sure to have plenty of guards around the jail. We don't want anything to happen to this man.'"

So I immediately got busy with Bob⁹⁷⁰ and we secured the perimeter of the building. We brought four or five of our deputies off the road and had the city police block off one of the local streets down here. Then we heard that he was on the way. And then we heard the sirens. About three police cars and the US Marshals flying around down there, and all of a sudden two or three deputy marshals jumped out with machine guns and Uzis.

"They had machine guns and Uzis," I asked in disbelief.

Yeah. We had our people on the walkways and the news people was coming to take pictures. And the marshals said, "Get back! Get back!", and ran everybody up against the wall.

The Bhagwan got out of one and I could not believe this was the Bhagwan. He was no bigger than a bar of soap. He had his waist chains, legs irons and this little small man was just creeping along. I thought, "You mean all this commotion is for that little man right there?"

The marshal said, "We do not want anything to happen to this man. You cannot let anything happen to him! For goodness sakes, don't let nothing happen to this man because he's very important!"

⁹⁶⁹ Charles Turner's words (see end of Chapter 9).

⁹⁷⁰ Bob Samuels, his chief deputy, who was present during the interview.

And they put him in this cell with four guys from South Carolina because he had just told his doctor, "What can I take to go to sleep and don't wake up in the morning?"

"He said that," I asked.

"Yeah. And so we was afraid that ..."

"... You heard him say that specifically," I interrupted.

"Yes," Kidd said with barely a pause in his narrative. "He said, 'I don't want to come back. I want to go to sleep and not wake up.' The doctor said something, but we didn't know what it was. Sandy⁹⁷¹ said she was going to take everything away so that they couldn't do anything like that. The marshals told us that, 'Whatever you do, don't leave him by himself.' We put him in a cell with four men, and I said, 'Guys, watch this guy. He's a voodoo man. You have to keep your eyes on him. No telling what he might do.' And we had the watch lights on all night. They was watching him because they didn't know what to think of him."

When I brought up the alleged suicide conversation with doctor disciple Devaraj, he reacted to it with a profoundly puzzled expression. "Haven't you ever heard that story before," I asked.

"No," he said. "And I can't understand why anyone would even bother to invent it. It's so unbelievable. First of all, I didn't even talk to Osho alone after the arrest. I was with him in the car with one of those humanoids who arrested us, driving around corners, up and down the dips and ruts in the road like a three year old with a new toy. I was shouting at the driver to slow down. I yelled that he was going to hurt Osho's back."

And his response was, "Who cares about his back? If he gets hurt, so much the better." Osho was kept in a separate holding cell in the district court and was taken separately back and forth between the jail and the court. So I don't know when I was supposed to have such a furtive conversation with him. And certainly I never said anything to him within range of Sheriff Kidd. So his memory there has to be certainly something less than reliable.

So where was Kidd's "information" coming from? Again, the answer is simple. The US Marshals, who had heard it from Stuart,⁹⁷² who had heard it from Turner. Kidd's testimonial fault was confusing hearsay with what he himself had heard said.⁹⁷³ As for Devaraj's babe in the woods perplexity about "why anyone would even bother to invent" the fake and, as far as he was concerned, "so unbelievable" suicide story, the reason is

⁹⁷¹ Sandy Carter, the nurse in the jail, who was also present during the interview.

⁹⁷² No sinister motives should be attributed to Debra Stuart. The misinformation had been given to her and, trusting in the system, she had passed it on. And if the entire proceedings had been proper and above board, she would have been right to do so.

⁹⁷³ In fact, at the end of this sequence he indirectly admits as much.

just as simple. For the same one US Treasury agent Jack Ballas had planted the fake East Indian factions story as the cause of the Portland Hotel bombing.⁹⁷⁴

Because it was a potent smokescreen for murder. If people within the US government were planning on hurting Rajneesh - which he later claimed they did - the alleged first day suicide conversation would have been a perfect set- and cover-up for his death and the framing of Dr. Devaraj as suspect number one. If I was putting together a psychological profile on Devaraj, I'd say he was erring more on the side of naivety than paranoia.⁹⁷⁵

Another sannyasin doctor - Edgar Miller, a former Lowville, New York dentist - was distinctly quicker on the uptake. On November 2 he told one newspaper that Rajneesh was in clear and present danger of being poisoned while in jail. "The major danger he's in right now," Dr. Miller said, "is that the government would like to have him rubbed out. He's a threat to any government that's as corrupt and incompetent as ours is - right to the top. It's very possible he could be poisoned by his jailers and then they could blame it on his followers. I think this is a real danger at this time."

What did the government have to say on the subject? "Federal authorities were quoted last week as saying they feared the guru might be poisoned by his followers or commit suicide while in jail."⁹⁷⁶ In the holiday from thinking atmosphere anything could and would happen and there would be no questions asked, let alone answered.

On Monday evening Rajneesh's defense attorneys sent a local doctor, Charles Feree, to the Mecklenburg County Jail to examine him. But he wasn't allowed in. The reasons for the refusal were recounted by Kidd. Despite its "all over the lot" tendencies, it is worth citing. "We did not let that doctor in. The main marshal says, 'No'. See we didn't have any idea what was going to happen. Could somebody give him an injection and he's gone? He's dead. So we wouldn't let nothing take place until we made sure that our nurse checked him out first... So we wouldn't let that ... that private doctor work on him."

Kidd's confusion - and ours - lifts somewhat when we turn to the "Motion to Permit Medical Examination - Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh".⁹⁷⁷ In that it was noted that Dr. Feree had been allowed to enter the jail. Further, Feree understood from the jail administration that he would be permitted to be present while Rajneesh was examined by the jail nurse. But then the Chief US Marshal in Charlotte, Ray Abrams, arrived with other ideas. He said no one was allowed to see Rajneesh except his lawyers. At who's behest and on what authority, one wonders, was Abrams laying down the law about what could and could not happen in Sheriff Kidd's jail?

⁹⁷⁴ See Chapter 9.

⁹⁷⁵ See his comments in Chapter 11: "You don't immediately think of poisoning."

⁹⁷⁶ *Watertown Daily Times*, November 4, 1985

⁹⁷⁷ Filed on Tuesday, October 29, 1985 in the US District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, Charlotte Division.

While the initial appearance hearing was taking place in Charlotte and the FBI were searching Sheela's house in Häusern, Turner was holding a press conference in Portland to release copies of the previously secret 51 page federal indictment charging Rajneesh, Sheela and six others with immigration conspiracy. It read like an attempt to murder English.

"Since December, 1980, the defendants conspired to knowingly and wilfully falsify, conceal and cover up by trick, scheme and device, a material fact in a matter within the jurisdiction of the United States Department of State and the United States Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), in violation of Title 18, United States Code 1001."

Further, the defendants "knowingly and wilfully" made "false, fictitious and fraudulent statements and representations of material fact." They worked "to aid, abet, counsel, command, induce and cause others to commit violations of Title 18 United States Code Section 1001". In short, over the years all eight indictees had been marching hand in hand to "arrange and cause marriages between alien and American citizens".

In addition to the 16 marriages the defendants were alleged to have jointly arranged, there was a charge that they had all been at the US Embassy in London on August 25, 1981 to cause a sannyasin couple to lie to State Department officials. On that date Rajneesh was demonstrably in Montclair, New Jersey, on the verge of flying to Rancho Rajneesh for the first time.⁹⁷⁸

Counts 34 and 35 of the indictment were reserved for Rajneesh alone. Count 34 said he had lied about his intent to remain in America permanently when on October 21, 1981 he filed his visa renewal application. Count 35 said he had lied on October 14, 1982. The indictment mentioned that "during an interview conducted by INS examiner George Hunter⁹⁷⁹ for the purpose of reviewing his application for permanent resident status, BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH stated that he had never discussed immigrating to the United States with anyone prior to coming to the United States, whereas in truth and fact as BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH then and there well knew and believed this statement and representation was false, fictitious and fraudulent; all in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1001 and 2."⁹⁸⁰

If convicted of all the crimes stacked up in the indictment, Rajneesh could have been fined up to \$350,000 and sentenced to a maximum of 175 years in jail. It was because of this, Turner implied, that Rajneesh had been so desperate to high tail it out of there. During the sleight of hand press conference - keep their eyes on this so they don't notice that - Turner didn't produce the smoking gun arrest warrants Rajneesh was fleeing. The ones Weaver claimed to have locked up in his desk drawer.⁹⁸¹

⁹⁷⁸ See Chapter 3.

⁹⁷⁹ See Chapter 4.

⁹⁸⁰ As we have already seen (Chapter 2), Sheela asked Joyce Smith about a possible permanent move. But it's 99% certain that she had never discussed that with Rajneesh, before or after the trip. See her comments to the press (Chapter 3). "I don't ask him how long he'll stay. If I ask him, he may say, 'Okay, I'm leaving in three weeks.'"

⁹⁸¹ See Chapter 9 and below.

And no one in the yes, sir, no, sir press - then or at any time since - wondered why not, or deemed it relevant to inconvenience the US Attorney about that trifle. Turner did, however, release a statement and affidavit.⁹⁸² "Provisional arrest and extradition has been requested from European authorities for defendants who have fled."

That 15 word sentence was palpably false on four counts. One, while Sheela was mentioned on the immigration indictment, she had not been arrested because of it. And according to the most up to date US-German extradition treaty, couldn't be extradited on those charges. Two, Ma's Shanti Bhadra and Anand Puja - the other women arrested in Häusern - were not on the immigration indictment and had nothing to do with any case Turner was working on. Three, as he spoke, Ma Yoga Vidya, who was on the immigration indictment, was cheerfully serving late night drinks and snacks to both American and German officials in West Germany. She was never arrested. Four, while all those women were in Europe, they hadn't, legally speaking, fled, because at the time of their departure there were no outstanding warrants against them

Any confusion that might have troubled a sensible person of good will - what some 18th century Scottish ethical philosophers⁹⁸³ used to call "an impartial spectator" - was wiped from the slate the next day by a banner headline in *The Oregonian*: **RAJNEESHEE SWEEP JAILS SHEELA**. The worlds apart arrests of Rajneesh and Sheela were being billed as one and the same thing. If the strategy of the previous weeks - attempting to pin the alleged crimes of Sheela on the whistleblowers: otherwise known as tarring with the same brush - couldn't generate enough evidence and enthusiasm to show up in a what you can prove court, it would have to be given a helping hand by the more than willing, indeed complicit, state newspaper of record: *The Oregonian*.

For sure, Turner and others were making history. They twisted and shifted facts to the press and deliberately lied - some under oath in open court - so that the way things didn't happen could artfully be made to pass for the way they did.⁹⁸⁴ Their joint intent - some unsympathetic souls outside the loop might even go so far as to call it a conspiracy - was to entirely discredit Rajneesh. To assassinate his character and work. And perhaps some of them wanted to assassinate him as well.

I asked Alan Nelson, commissioner of the INS, how, on a scale of zero to ten, he rated the Rajneesh case. "Certainly, at the time, it was one of the major items," he said. "I don't know if it was ever number one, per se, of the crisis items. I'd say during the heated time when it was coming to a climax - when obviously the investigations, the potential prosecutions were coming, and then the departure - I'd put that up high: nine, eight and a half, nine."

⁹⁸² For more on this affidavit, see below.

⁹⁸³ Francis Hutcheson and Adam Smith

⁹⁸⁴ "There are drugs enough, clearly - it is all a question of applying them with tact; in which case the way things don't happen may be artfully made to pass for the way things do." (Henry James, *The Art of the Novel*, Preface to *The American*, p. 34)

"What I found to be unusual about the thing," Ken Andresen, former Chief Assistant US Attorney in Charlotte, told me, "was the intensity with which it was being pursued, the urgency with which it was being pursued, and the interest that it seemed to attract." At 2 a.m. on the night of Rajneesh's arrest he was called from someone in the Oregon US Attorney's office. "And he told me that some very important defendants from their point of view had landed here in Charlotte and were being placed under arrest, and that he needed to have an Assistant US Attorney from this district to go to the Marshal's office to make certain that everything was being handled properly - which I found to be most unusual."

Andresen told the Oregon caller - it could have been Weaver - that the marshals knew their job and he would attend to the matter in the morning. "It was like, 'No way! This is something that has to be done right now!' So I inquired a little bit further, in the daze I was in at the time. 'Why is it such an urgent matter?' He certainly didn't want anyone coming in and bailing them out right away." His case load was filled that week and he had to pass the case to Debra Stuart. But from an on the outside looking in perspective, then and since, he was "surprised that the federal government, as an entity, if you will, had become so enamored with this thing".

It struck me at the time, and still does, as a particularly state matter. Whatever was going on within the state of Oregon, that is to say. And the incorporation of that territory out there, Rajneeshpuram, or whatever the hell it is called That if the people of Oregon didn't want that, that they had all the means and legal paraphernalia at their disposal, through their attorney general, and so forth, to address that matter, it seemed to me.

Now I might be mistaken about that. But it struck me as a state matter, and yet here the federal government was extremely involved. My initial impressions were, "I wonder why we, as the federal government, are involved in this thing? Are there particularly egregious aspects that are connected with this man and his followers that transcend the naked charges?"

Although in retrospect I have to say that I don't know a whole lot about what was going on out there. But I don't remember anything standing out as being particularly aggravating. It was quite clear to me that the federal government didn't want him being around Oregon any more.

"Is that your supposition or your experience," I asked.

"No. No. Just the way the case was handled. They were just real interested in closing down his shop out there. And that was quite clear. Sure, there was no doubt he was high profile out there. And for some reason - and maybe you can tell me - they didn't like him."

The bail hearings for Rajneesh and six sannyasins began at 10 a.m. on, appropriately enough, Halloween. One of the first things Bob Weaver did was present Magistrate Barbara DeLaney with a "certified copy of the warrant for arrest of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh issued pursuant to that Indictment for those charges". "Your Honor," Bill Diehl, one of the defense attorneys, asked, "can we obtain copies at some point during the proceeding of the arrest warrant, Item No. 2, dated October 23? That's never been served, nor has it been seen by us before."

"You're speaking of the arrest warrant for whom?" Magistrate DeLaney queried. "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh," Diehl responded.

The "arrest warrant" submitted that morning as evidence was dated October 23, 1985. But it was completely blank and not even initialed by a court clerk, let alone signed by an authorized, and authorizing, magistrate. In other words, it wasn't an arrest warrant at all. This was what I found in the archives of the local defense attorneys, but not in the official federal court house records in either Charlotte or Portland.⁹⁸⁵

Had common sense prevailed, it should have been point, set, match for the defense. An arrest had occurred without a warrant and the detention aspect of the case should have been dismissed. What's more, the government in general and a hell of a lot of officials in particular would have had a lot to answer for.⁹⁸⁶ My head spins trying to picture the amount of finger pointing that would have occurred in the wake of this revelation and the law suits that would have quickly ensued on its heels. Including from the four outside pilots and their charter companies for false arrest and other rights violated.

But in these "bizarre, strange" proceedings, played in the spotlight of the world press, common sense did not prevail, and this game changing fact slipped by unnoticed.⁹⁸⁷ As previously mentioned,⁹⁸⁸ I displayed a lineup of Rajneesh "arrest warrants" for Weaver 3½ years after these events. I asked him why there were three of them and why they were all so different.

"The copy that I brought with me to Charlotte was probably the copy from the United States Attorney's office file, which I brought when I left Portland. The original warrant stays with whoever executes it. When you get an arrest warrant, like everything else with the government, there are many, many copies. And my guess is that this one, not having been signed, was the United States Attorney's office copy of the original indictment.⁹⁸⁹ The original indictment is signed there by Judge Dale."

⁹⁸⁵ See Chapter 9.

⁹⁸⁶ Recall Ron Taylor's words (Chapter 1). "I do remember thinking and I got to giggling to myself. 'This is hilarious. Here I am a grown man, laying [sic] under a car, waiting for the Bhagwan. I hope he's on that second plane. Because if he's not, we in trouble.'"

⁹⁸⁷ See Borges quote in the Preface.

⁹⁸⁸ See Chapter 9.

⁹⁸⁹ Even a non lawyer can hear Weaver sweating for a solution. The sequence of events for a real search warrant must go like this. The prosecution - the executive branch - takes its indictment to the magistrate - the judiciary. The latter ponders the merits of the case. Considering how long this one had been before the Grand Jury, that shouldn't have taken more than 39 seconds. If the latter is convinced that the case is

"The original arrest warrant," I corrected him. I had spent a lot of hours in New York City law libraries learning to distinguish the worlds apart difference between "indictment" and "arrest warrant". An indictment, like a Grand Jury that nods its collective head to it, is in the hands of the prosecutor. Search and arrest warrants, by contrast, are in the hands of another branch of the government, an allegedly independent, objective and impartial spectator: the magistrate.

"The original arrest warrant, right," he said, "is signed by Judge Dale and that was in my drawer. That was in my drawer, and why we didn't offer a copy of that, I don't know. This was the government's copy, and I went down to Charlotte with my file, and made photocopies of what I needed to photocopy. I don't even know why, today, I would have brought a copy of the arrest warrant. Why, I guess I would have offered it as proof of, 'Your honor, here is the copy of the arrest warrant that showed there was a warrant outstanding, and he is a fugitive.'"

Let me, a non lawyer, help Weaver out on this one. He would have brought the arrest warrant to show that, indeed, an arrest had been scheduled for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, and there was something he could actually be fleeing. He would have brought a *bona fide* arrest warrant to demonstrate that the arrests of not only Rajneesh, but all the others were, in fact, legal.

He would have brought a real arrest warrant to prove that he was not criminally guilty of massive malfeasance in the performance of his duty and had not aided, abetted, counseled, commanded, induced and caused others to commit illegal arrests and ensuing prosecutions that, in turn, caused untold damage to many people - to their reputations, property and persons - and was costing the government tons of taxpayers' money.

Actions that, if discovered and made to stick to him - as I am doing here - should, hopefully, have cost him his job, reputation, and some serious down time at Club Fed.

The prosecution's first witness was Joe Greene, who was to receive one of the 11 distinguished service citations US Attorney General Edwin Meese III handed out in 1986. Later that year he told a reporter that the Rajneesh investigation had "taught him the power of evil".⁹⁹⁰ He neglected to mention - and perhaps still doesn't know - that the powerful evil he was referring to was his own.

After going through the preliminaries of the defendants, he told the court that, "Ma Anand Sheela is in the custody of Western German authorities, based upon an arrest and extradition request based upon that [immigration] Indictment. Ma Yoga Vidya left the United States sometime on September 14th or 15th this year, her current whereabouts are unknown, and Ma Prem Karuna is in England, having left the United States

"righteous", he draws up and signs an arrest warrant. The prosecution keeps the original and makes and distributes copies. Therefore, all of the arrest warrants would be signed and look exactly alike.

⁹⁹⁰ *Salem Statesman-Journal*, December 29, 1986

approximately the same time, September 14th or 15th of this year, and intends to turn herself in to the authorities there."

Like Turner at his Portland press conference, Greene was "knowingly and wilfully" making false and fraudulent statements and representations of material fact. But unlike him, Greene was under oath and, therefore, bound by the laws of perjury if he got caught. Sheela was not under arrest because of the immigration indictment. The whereabouts of Vidya were available to anyone who could read. Hans Gunter Rieckmann told me that she remained at the Hotel Sonnhalde in Häusern for more than three weeks after Sheela's arrest. And Ma Prem Karuna, a home grown American and former mayor of The City of Rajneesh (Antelope), had left the United States in July 1985 to teach at a sannyasin school near Cambridge, England. She had already voluntarily returned to the United States, turned herself in, and would appear that morning in a Portland court.

Peter Schey, the Los Angeles based immigration expert, cross examined Greene. Referring to count 35 of the indictment, which charged Rajneesh with lying to George Hunter at his INS interview, he asked him to describe the credibility of his information. "My testimony is essentially the same," Greene said. "Among the witnesses are those who were present during discussions and who are - who were at one time sannyasins and who are no longer."

Weaver, who had rehearsed the evidence with Greene over a number of years,⁹⁹¹ asked, "Would it be fair - what types of evidence do you have tying Rajneesh - proving his guilt of every count in the Indictment for which he is charged, what types of evidence?" "Testimony from specific witnesses who were present during discussions during which agreements were made and decisions made and actions taken as a result of those agreements," Greene replied.

At this point Magistrate DeLaney addressed Greene. "And do you have such evidence as to each of the counts in the Indictment?"

"That's correct."

"Do you also have documentary evidence to support that," Weaver continued.

"With respect to Counts 2 through 33 documentary evidence does exist," Greene said.

"With respect to Count One, documentary evidence exists, and ..."

"... And with respect to the last two counts, 34 and 35," Weaver interrupted.

"Documentary evidence exists."

Three and a half years after these events I asked Weaver, "What crucial evidence did you have on October 23, 1985, the day the indictment was handed down, that you didn't have earlier? What was that evidence? Who were your key witnesses?"

"I can't tell you the witnesses."

"Okay, then, what was the evidence directly linking the Bhagwan to the marriage fraud?"⁹⁹²

⁹⁹¹ Weaver told me, "I talked to Joe a hundred times a day every day during that period of time".

⁹⁹² See Chapter 8 for Mike Inman's assessment of the evidence presented to the Grand Jury.

"First of all, it was a conspiracy theory. Marriage fraud is not the crime of the century when it's one or two marriages. But when it's 500, it tends to be a rather significant case.⁹⁹³ The first thing you need to do is to document the existence of a large conspiracy. The next thing, of course, was eyewitnesses who had participated in conversations that the Bhagwan was involved in, which showed his involvement in all these various steps, of getting the false visa application, of being involved in the marriages."

"He was involved directly? There were eyewitnesses to his direct involvement?"

"Yes, there were. Those people gave sworn testimony before the Grand Jury, and you will not see their names mentioned anywhere. I can't tell you who appeared before the Grand Jury, and I can't tell you what occurred there."

Remember, this is a case that was supposed to go to open court. With real witnesses finally coming out of the shadows and testifying under oath about real events that they and Rajneesh had participated in together. With not only carefully rehearsed and choreographed examination on the part of the prosecution, but also anything but "I'm not looking to get anybody into trouble or anything" cross examination by the defense. It was a case that Weaver and Turner contended could and would be proved. And they were insinuating that it was so thermonuclear that it made Rajneesh shake in his sandals, try to flee the country "at the last minute", and, presumably, think about killing himself over.

If all of the above were actually true, it should have been able to withstand hardball evisceration.⁹⁹⁴ Yet it showed numerous signs of vulnerability and unraveling with a little pussycat pawing. Which, let's face it, is exactly what so-called hard hitting, no holds barred investigative journalist interviews are. If the person under the gun sniffs even a molecule of malevolence in the person sitting opposite him, he will just chuck the impudent rascal out of his office or house.

At the time of my interview with Weaver I didn't know what I was to learn a few weeks later from Peter Schey. Namely, that technically speaking, Weaver had no cause to be so coy about what had happened in the Grand Jury proceedings, because transcripts of them enter the public domain after indictments have been handed down and the cases go to court. In fact, Schey encouraged me to get hold of them - probably stored in a mine shaft somewhere - "so that a better understanding could be reached regarding how this indictment was obtained. How was a Grand Jury convinced that Bhagwan had committed all these various crimes that were alleged in the indictment?"

He said that even at that late date - 1989 - the indictment could be thrown out if it "was improperly obtained through false statements or perjured testimony".

"Are we also talking about prosecutorial misconduct," I asked.

"Yeah. Yes."

⁹⁹³ This is just one more example of Weaver's tendency to exaggerate and in so doing play fast and loose with the facts. There were only 16 marriages mentioned on the indictment.

⁹⁹⁴ Weaver told me (see Chapter 8): "The other side, whoever you have indicted, is going to attack, viciously attack your indictment and try to get it dismissed on any grounds that they can!"

But not equipped with that critical information and fully aware of the by Weaver's leave only nature of my position, I danced around his sensor security system. "I mentioned two names," I said, "Andrea Geiger⁹⁹⁵ and David Berry Knapp,⁹⁹⁶ and you told me that neither of those people were your key witnesses."

"There was no key witness," he said.⁹⁹⁷ "There was no person who was going to commit and tell all. There was no John Dean of the case. There was nobody like that. I don't think there was a key event."

"Was there anything besides a mass of circumstantial evidence?"

"There was a massive circumstantial case."

When I line up Weaver's remarks alongside the testimony of Joe Greene - that is, to repeat, "Testimony from specific witnesses who were present during discussions during which agreements were made and decisions made and actions taken as a result of those agreements." - I'm in parallel running universes. I look, look, and look some more. But I don't see any point where they actually meet.

What Bob Weaver told me during our interview was radically different from what Joe Greene said in court. Andrea Geiger, the government witness I mentioned to him, was on the indictment in counts two and three. According to that, on February 10, 1983 Rajneesh and the seven other accused had caused her to marry Dr. Devaraj. If, as Weaver said, she hadn't provided any evidence directly linking Rajneesh to her own marriage, it is hard - to say the least - to fathom how she could possibly have provided convincing testimony about anyone else's.⁹⁹⁸

When questioned by Weaver, Greene said Rajneesh had been an overstayed alien since March 31, 1982. When questioned by defense attorney Schey, Greene changed the date to March 31, 1983. This conversation echoes aspects of my interview with Weaver.⁹⁹⁹ He said Rajneesh was an overstayed alien. I said my research showed that that was not the case. He acquiesced immediately. "He may not have been. He may not have been." Schey asked Greene if Rajneesh had not submitted all the forms and complied with all the INS rules. Greene admitted that he had.

"In other words," Schey said, "he was not hiding out in the mountains."

"I can agree that he was not out in hiding in the mountains, yes, sir," Greene said.

⁹⁹⁵ Ma Prem Astha

⁹⁹⁶ Swami Krishna Deva

⁹⁹⁷ Dave Frohnmayer said something completely different. "K.D. brought down Rajneesh himself. He was the last guy. He was able to finger Rajneesh in immigration violations. They'd come real close to him, but it was only a problematical, circumstantial case until K.D. was turned." See Chapter 11.

⁹⁹⁸ According to Greene, Hemlata DesRosiers, an Indian woman who cooked for Rajneesh, got married on May 12, 1981, the day before Rajneesh's passport was issued (see Chapter 2). He said, "We have witness testimony that indicates that this request was made by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh himself." While her name was not on the indictment, she was in the court that day, as a defendant charged with aiding and abetting flight.

⁹⁹⁹ See Chapter 9.

"Is it not true to state that if Defendant Rajneesh was released from detention today or tomorrow he would not be facing imminent deportation from the United States?"

"That is correct."

"Now, as the Count 34, you state that when Bhagwan applied, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, for an extension of his non-immigrant visitor's visa, that, in fact, he had the intent to remain permanently in the United States and that's a felony; is that correct?"

"That is a violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001."

"Which is a felony?"

"That's correct."

"Now, isn't it true," Schey pursued, "that under the Immigration and Nationality Act, as most recently interpreted in a memorandum from the central office of the Immigration Service dated September 23, 1985, policy instructions for H-1 aliens, that, in fact, an alien applying for a non-immigrant visa can have the intent to later on seek permanent status, as long as they don't intend to violate the law in doing that? Now, isn't it also true though that the person can have what is sometimes called, according to your agency's central office, a dual intent?"

When Weaver objected to that line of questioning, Schey said, "Your Honor, what I'm trying to draw out is what the understanding of the law is of the Portland INS district office, because I believe that does go to the weight of the evidence." Nonetheless, Weaver's objection was sustained.

"Have you ever monitored a case," Schey asked Greene, "in which a Defendant charged with these two types of immigration violations¹⁰⁰⁰ proceeded to criminal trial?" Weaver objected again, and DeLaney sustained it.

When questioned by Weaver, Greene had introduced testimony about Swiss bank accounts containing \$20 million in Rajneesh's name and for his use. But his testimony shrank substantially when Schey asked, "Do you have any evidence you can provide the Court today to indicate that this Defendant has a bank account in Switzerland in his name that he has access to?"

"I would have to say no to that, Mr. Schey," Greene said.

Weaver asked, "Mr. Greene, as the case agent in the case, when was the arrest planned at the ranch for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh?"

"October 28th of this year."

Even if we have accomplished nothing else in this book, at least one thing has been made excessively clear. Namely, that there was no arrest planned for Monday, October 28. To repeat here all the elements of that proof would be like beating a whole herd of dead horses. But one point is worth mentioning and extending. German and American officials were not in place for the "RAJNEESHEE SWEEP" in Germany, and there was no arrest

¹⁰⁰⁰ Counts 34 and 35. See above.

warrant for Sheela & Co. either. And the FBI and Oregon Attorney General's man had to hip hup to arrive late for first act of that "total comedy".¹⁰⁰¹

That means Joe Greene was lying under oath. He knew it and so did Weaver. Even in a bail hearing that's perjury for the former, and conscious complicity for the latter.

Greene characterized Schey as knowing on Sunday, October 27, 1985 that an indictment had been handed down against Rajneesh and arrest was imminent. Both Greene and Turner said Schey had tipped Rajneesh and he had fled. This is an odd assertion, I think, when placed next to something Schey told me in April 1989. Because even then he wasn't sure when the indictment was returned.

"I don't think there was a lot of meeting ground between the US Attorney's office and myself. They essentially developed a hard line on every issue that came up. They circled the wagons. They were not flexible on the issue of Bhagwan testifying before the Grand Jury. They were really not open to discussing the merits of the case. One of the things you might check out is if the Grand Jury indictment was returned before Bhagwan left." I could hardly believe my ears and eyes. How was it possible that he did not know that the indictment - which was the foundation of the so-called arrest warrants and, therefore, the legitimacy of the arrest - was handed down four days before Rajneesh left Rajneeshpuram? "The Grand Jury indictment was returned on October 23, 1985," I said.

Joe Greene testified about the violent crimes of Sheela - poisoning the water supply and salad bars of The Dalles, arson and, something new for the press at this point, plots to assassinate Turner, Frohnmayer and Les Zaitz, a reporter for *The Oregonian*. As they had done with the marriage conspiracy, Greene and Weaver tried to link those crimes to Rajneesh - and the other defendants in the court - and thus prove that Rajneesh was not only a flight risk, but also a danger to society.

"Your Honor," Peter Schey objected, "if I might respond for a moment. I think the only danger here is to the United States Constitution presented by the outrageous conduct of this Assistant U.S. Attorney. He knows full well and yet does not bring to the attention of this Court the fact that the only reason why the people who attempted these alleged assassinations today are in custody is because my client, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, called for complete and total cooperation with law enforcement. The attempted murder is against one of these Defendants. The reason why this person is being held in Germany today, Ma Anand Sheela, is for attempting to murder one of these Defendants and yet this attorney has the gall to come here and try to hoodwink this court into thinking that these Defendants are involved in those attempted murders."¹⁰⁰²

¹⁰⁰¹ After scrutinizing the pieces of the puzzle and assembling them this way and that, I reckon they left the US about 10 hours after Rajneesh was arrested in Charlotte. Their mode of transport probably included military flights.

¹⁰⁰² Two weeks later, at a November 8 bail hearing in Portland, Joe Greene was on the stand again and being questioned by Assistant US Attorney William Youngman. Youngman got him to divulge some information about the plot to assassinate Charles Turner. "Who was involved in the conspiracy," Youngman asked. "Among others," Greene replied, "Ma Anand Sheela, Sheela Silverman, Ma Yoga Vidya, also known as Ann Phyllis McCarthy, and Ma Shanti Bhadra." Two of those women were in jail in

Weaver persevered with the danger line of attack until even DeLaney got fed up with it. She finally ruled that the sensation mongering stories were inadmissible. Still, they had already done the intended damage by making an impact in the newspapers, the brain cells of public opinion and memory, and the magistrate herself.¹⁰⁰³ When determining whether Rajneesh should be held without bail, it would have been virtually impossible for anyone to find the few pearls of genuine facts in the toxic dump of allegations, misinformation and sheer smear.

Weaver continued on the "danger" track from a slightly different tack. "I should proffer at this time that we're going to be able to establish through the testimony of another witness that the gun which was taken off the plane was loaded, had teflon bullets." Later in the hearings he introduced his second major witness, Special US Customs' Agent Ron Taylor, who had coordinated the arrest, and whose name should have been on the backdated arrest warrant.¹⁰⁰⁴

When asked what was in a bag the US Marshals had found on the airport tarmac,¹⁰⁰⁵ Taylor said, "One .38 revolver, Model 37 Smith and Wesson pistol, five rounds of ammunition, .38 caliber ammunition, appear to be teflon coated bullets."

"In your experience as a law enforcement officer, are you aware of the purpose of teflon bullets," Weaver asked.¹⁰⁰⁶

"Yes, sir, they are used to penetrate body armor or bullet-proof vests."

Weaver and Taylor were planting in the minds of Magistrate DeLaney and everyone else a "significant danger" suspicion. Why would these people have teflon bullets? The easy, but incorrect, reading was they were fleeing something real bad and knew they might be encountering law enforcement officers with bullet-proof vests. No matter that there was only one piddling pistol and five bullets - which along with the bag they were in was immediately ditched on the tarmac - that "teflon" would handle any contingency. It was widely repeated and reported. Like much in this story, it was an automatic weapon all by itself. Once turned on, it was impossible to turn off.

In Charlotte I tried to discover its source. Deputy US Marshals Ray Abrams and Wade McGalliard had heard about the famous teflon bullets, of course. But they, who had grabbed the bag they were in, had never seen them. They told me to nail down the story with Taylor. His first impulse was to send the not from around here journalist back to the marshals. "They'll know about it," he said.

Germany for attempting to murder Dr. Devaraj, not for an alleged plot against Turner. The third, Vidya, was never arrested despite the fact that prosecutors knew where she was living.

¹⁰⁰³ See Turner citing legal truisms in Chapter 7. "When the judge instructs the jury, there is no difference between direct and circumstantial evidence. There is no difference. One is not better than the other. When the jury comes to weigh the evidence, they are weighed exactly the same." Apparently, the same dirty tricks also work on some judges.

¹⁰⁰⁴ See Chapter 1.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Thus not "taken off the plane", as Weaver had contended.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Given that "appear to be", anyone really interested in discovering the truth would have first tried to establish if they were, in fact, teflon bullets. But, as Weaver had told me (see Chapter 9), "It's not the government's job to make those guys' jobs any easier."

"They don't know anything about it. They said you would know." And how about that? Just as I had discovered that the "arrest warrant" was not an arrest warrant, Taylor and I eventually discovered - by looking at an "Evidence Control Sheet" - that the "teflon" bullets were not what he said. They were, in fact, five "38 Cal Spl + p" - .38 caliber, special plus p - bullets, which do not penetrate bullet-proof vests.¹⁰⁰⁷ The date on the inventory sheet was October 28, 1985, three days *before* Taylor testified. But the teflon bullets story was never challenged or rescinded.

When the danger argument for denying bail ran out of gas, Weaver switched over to Plan B: flight risk. At face value, Rajneesh's night flight was the clearest possible proof that he was attempting to flee the long arm of the law. Weaver, who contended that "all intent is proven circumstantially", said "I think it's fair to say that it was known at the ranch that if he [Rajneesh] was going to get out it was now or never."

But as was so often the case, he wasn't reading from the same page as his closest co-workers. In this instance, his boss, Turner, who told me, "There are so many things he could have done. If he had simply surrendered, he would have been released on bail, and he may never have been convicted. Who knows? He could have gone to trial. He could have had the option of fleeing at a later time, because there would have been months, and months, and months, and months between the time that he was released and the time that the case went to trial."¹⁰⁰⁸

But that assessment was nowhere in sight when later in the bail hearing Weaver said with full of beans conviction, "When they came down to the last minute they came down and got on the plane and took off."

At the Monday, October 28 press conference briefly mentioned above Turner released an affidavit written by Lawrence LaDage, a US Customs agent in Portland. That affidavit, which set the stage for believing in the flight risk, contained a number of curious points. "On or about September 30, 1985, Charles H. Turner, United States Attorney for the District of Oregon, requested me to order a Customs Border alert for those defendants named in the indictment who were known to be still within the United States. I was to immediately notify Mr. Turner, or one of his assistants if any of the defendants attempted to leave the United States."

We did one *Gedankenexperiment* in Chapter 9. Let's do another here. If on September 30 any of the people eventually named in the indictment - which at that time didn't exist - had hopped on a plane or a Trailways bus and attempted to leave the country, would Turner and LaDage have seen that as "flight"? Would they have been arrested? And if so, on what grounds? The answer to the first question is "Yes!". The second, "Possibly". The third, "We'll think of something".¹⁰⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰⁷ On the same evidence control sheet there was a list of the passports confiscated. Oddly enough, Rajneesh's name and passport were not on that list.

¹⁰⁰⁸ See Chapter 9.

¹⁰⁰⁹ And lo and behold, this reconstruction is actually confirmed by the frequently cited "Infighting" article in *The Oregonian*, and that "something" is actually named: "probable cause". "Matters grew worse during

LaDage wrote in his affidavit, "On Thursday, October 24, 1985, I received a copy of the arrest warrants for the defendants named in the indictment. At that time I placed my officers on standby alert to assist in making arrests based on those warrants. I also increased airport surveillance in the State of Oregon concerning air traffic going to and from Rajneeshpuram, Oregon."

If he had received copies of those arrest warrants, he was the only one.¹⁰¹⁰ One thing he failed to mention in his affidavit - in politer circles it is known as "economizing with the truth" - was that the US Customs' regional headquarters had steadfastly refused to allow him and his agency to get involved in any arrest of Rajneesh based on the immigration indictments.¹⁰¹¹ In other words, neither LaDage nor Customs had any authority to participate in Turner's alleged scheme. Instead of accepting that direct order, another renegade agent, William Gleason, took charge of organizing a nationwide alert for the two Learjets. At the other end, in Charlotte, Customs ran the show, using US Marshals and local police as backup.

"Basically," I only half asked Ron Taylor, "your whole psychology was geared towards believing that they were fleeing?"

"Exactly," he said. "They were in an extreme hurry to get out of this country, to get to a place that didn't require visas, passports and that kind of thing. Maxine Levine¹⁰¹² was trying to make arrangements for two more Learjets. She had already hired them, and they were coming out from Pennsylvania." In the Charlotte court he had said, "Northeast Jet¹⁰¹³ did not have time to send the jet, since these people were placed in custody before the jets were sent."

While that was more accurate than what he told me, it was still not the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Shortly after midnight, Northeast Jet Vice President Meta Bittenheim was awakened by a call from Charlotte. He "told the caller that the two Learjets parked at A-B-E Airport could not be flown to Charlotte-Douglas Airport earlier than 4 a.m."¹⁰¹⁴ "Although a two-hour response in the early morning would have been unusual for any charter service, Northeast Jet's reply did not satisfy the caller, and the request was turned down."

the second week of October. Turner, acting on an early, false report that Rajneesh and others were about to flee Rancho Rajneesh by air, telephoned FBI Special Agent Lynn K. Enyart at the investigative task force headquarters on the ranch and asked him to arrest the guru and everyone with him if they tried to leave. The arrest authority that Turner gave him was "probable cause" based on the impending Immigration indictments."

¹⁰¹⁰ This also contradicts what Weaver told me (see Chapter 9). "When it came down to the day of the indictment, they [the INS in Washington, DC] decided not to do the arrest. We were literally sitting with five or six arrest warrants locked in my desk drawer, and I had nobody to execute them."

¹⁰¹¹ "Infighting mars probe of Rajneeshes", *The Oregonian*, December 30, 1985

¹⁰¹² A local Charlotte resident, also a sannyasin (Ma Hanya), who was arrested when she came to meet the Learjets.

¹⁰¹³ based in Allentown, Pennsylvania

¹⁰¹⁴ *Allentown Morning Call*, October 29, 1985

In other words, no jets were ordered, and none were sent. "In a telephone interview yesterday," the Allentown paper reported, "Buttenheim said that Northeast Jet was relieved that it did not become involved with Rajneesh."¹⁰¹⁵

In the Charlotte court Taylor said, "Agent Thomas had told me that he had been in touch with the FAA tower in Charlotte, North Carolina, and we were attempting to control the situation as best we could. Agent Thomas told me that he instructed the tower to instruct the pilots of both aircraft once they landed to go to the Thurston terminal¹⁰¹⁶ to refuel." Taylor told me, "And we kept communicating with the tower every five minutes, asking, 'What's the status? What's the status?' The dispatcher at Thurston said he had had direct communications with the planes. He was expecting the plane. So it was confirmed that they were coming to Thurston."

We were running out of time. Then we heard one of the jets landing. You could really hear it coming. And then they said, "It's going to the other¹⁰¹⁷ terminal." And we said, "WHAT?!" We were told by the tower and the people at Thurston that it was coming there.

We were really caught off guard that time and the whole plan went out the window. We didn't know what the plane was going to do. We didn't know if they had been tipped off and if they were going to truck around and take off again. I told one of our cars parked out on the tarmac to get over to Butler¹⁰¹⁸ as fast as possible and "Just stop that plane until we get there! Hold it any way you can!" You could see the car streak out across the tarmac from Thurston to Butler, and the rest of us bolted out of Thurston, running.

Taylor reminded me of an old soldier from Russian literature with "the peculiar expression of a man who very long ago had been extremely surprised at something and had never recovered since".¹⁰¹⁹ His mind was so geared to the cops and robbers heroics of last minute flight and imminent danger that he still couldn't separate what he was doing, thinking and wanting to happen from what had actually happened.

Dale Curlin, the controller in the Charlotte FAA tower on the night of the arrest, set me straight on some of the facts. At that time he didn't know who Rajneesh was, he admitted on the porch of his house in Peachtree City, Georgia, just south of Atlanta.

I came to work around 11:30 p.m. that night.¹⁰²⁰ I was on the midnight shift, the one controller in charge of the whole thing. I was told by the guy I was replacing that the US Marshal had called and said there were fugitives

¹⁰¹⁵ Two weeks later he would change his tune (see below).

¹⁰¹⁶ A private company at Charlotte airport.

¹⁰¹⁷ Butler Aviation

¹⁰¹⁸ about 300 yards away

¹⁰¹⁹ Ivan Turgenev, *The Hunting Sketches*

¹⁰²⁰ That is, just after Ron Taylor was told to wake up and get a move on.

inbound to Charlotte, and they were about to flee the country. I don't think they knew a whole lot then.

I didn't hear another thing about it until 12:45. I was called on the phone by the marshal and he told me to call him as soon as I made contact with the planes. He called quite a bit. And I just kept them informed of where they were at. I'm the only guy there. I'm working the radar off the scubs in the tower.

The first time I talked to them¹⁰²¹ would be 40 miles out. And the kind of planes they were on, from 40 miles out, you're only talking about 5 or 10 minutes at the most. I think they were a pretty good distance apart from each other, maybe 50 or 60 miles. They were the only airplanes I had talked to within that time period. They just came straight to the airport and landed.

"Was there anything weird about the way the pilots were behaving," I asked. "Did they violate any FAA regulations?"

"No. Actually, I would have expected something, a little more nervousness. You can hear a little nervousness in the voice."

"Did you have anything to do with directing the planes towards Thurston Aviation terminal?"

"The marshal wanted me to get them to park at Thurston. I also communicated with the airport police. They called a few times on their radios. I asked them not to do that any more. I don't think they realized that anybody can listen to those frequencies. If they were trying to be secretive, they were having the reverse effect. They were broadcasting all over the airways. The pilots wanted to go to Butler, but I told them it was closed, something of that nature, to divert them towards Thurston."

If pilots and passengers were fleeing and fearful of being caught, they would have been listening carefully to the radio and picking up all that traffic. Their minds would have been in it doesn't get any worse than this mode, which would have been made worse by Curlin's weird behavior and lying about Butler being closed.¹⁰²² They would have, in Taylor's words, "smelled a rat"¹⁰²³ - in fact, sewers full of them - and wouldn't have landed.

"So you were trying to steer them," I asked Curlin.

"Yeah. I lied. But I had to get a way to get them to go to the other terminal."

"Did you have any authority to do that?"

"No. You see, the way things work at Charlotte airport, once the planes are off the taxiway, they can do whatever they want. They can crank up their engines and go as fast as they want. We have no control. Actually, we don't really care what goes on over there.

¹⁰²¹ the pilots

¹⁰²² They knew it was open, because they had already made contact with the people waiting for them there. Butler was their plan, Thurston was Taylor's.

¹⁰²³ See Chapter 1.

In fact, it's actually illegal for us in the tower to suggest parking at one terminal or another, because they're two competitive businesses."

"So on a technical basis, the marshal was telling you to do something illegal?"

"I don't think they really knew they were telling me to do something illegal. I didn't tell them that."

"But the planes weren't doing anything illegal by ignoring your instructions?"

"Oh, no. No. No. No."

In the Charlotte bail hearing Curlin was not called to the witness stand by the prosecution - which is understandable - or the defense - which is not.

Weaver asked Taylor if the Learjet pilots had filed a flight plan? "No, they did not," Taylor asserted. Again, he was wrong. If the flight plan had not been filed and followed, they couldn't have known hours in advance that the planes were heading to Charlotte and couldn't have been waiting there to arrest all the people on board.

Another point that pushed the magistrate toward accepting the flight fantasy was Taylor testifying that one or more of the sanniyasins cried out, "You have the wrong people!" *before* he read out a list of names telling them who he was looking for. Even under cross Taylor stuck to his guns. They had shouted out "You have the wrong people!" before he had read his list of names. But the next day, Friday, November 1,¹⁰²⁴ Taylor climbed down on the sequence.

"And prior to any of these individuals telling you you've got the wrong person, you've got the wrong person, you had read those names off to one or more of them, had you not," Bill Diehl asked.

"That is correct," Taylor said.

"Things were happening so fast, really very, very, very, very fast," Taylor told me during our interview. "There was so much going on. I think that for four days I never went to bed. All these details you have to keep straight in your head and testify. You're under a lot of pressure. The whole world press is there, and you want to do a good job and treat everybody fairly."

"I testified that she made the remark before I called out the names. But she had made the remark after I called out the names. I got it backwards. This had never happened to me before, and it had to be about such a crucial thing. I was really, real upset about it. I was real upset about it.

"Because I have a reputation, and it made me look like a liar. It was an honest mistake, a totally honest mistake. I personally believe that they knew what they were doing, but it put a bad light on the other defendants in the court. But I think it was based on my

¹⁰²⁴ According to *The Oregonian* (see Chapter 9, note 798), this was the day scheduled for the immigration indictment.

reversal of testimony that the other defendants were released. At least it wasn't murder or anything. But it was a critical piece of information against them."

"I certainly thought it was a critical piece of information," I said. "But I didn't see the reversal mentioned in any of the media reports."

"No, nobody likes to make a big deal about it."

I'm sure Taylor wasn't intending any puns, but I'm going to use his choice of words to transit to the real sequence of events that led to his change of testimony. "I asked him [Big Bill Diehl]," Taylor told me, "'Can I see you outside the courtroom?' And we got outside and I said, 'Bill, I made a He and I had a little thing there out in the hall. And I said, 'I made a mistake. It was really' He was sort of upset. I said, 'I'll get back on the stand. I want to get this straight' [That] kind of thing."

Again, Taylor was putting the cart before the horse, and mistaking the effect for the cause. In other words, he didn't approach Diehl for that *tête-à-tête* in the corridor. It was the other way around. Diehl went up to him and said, in effect, "Tell it like it was, or else!"¹⁰²⁵

"If you had asked [anybody], at least if you had asked me," Bob Hamilton told me, "'what's the best thing that Rajneesh could do right now?' - recognize we're in a context that we're going to have a problem arresting him. It's going to have a problem arresting that's going to impact all of the other things we are trying to do. To me, to have him It would be to have be [him being] stupid enough to try to escape and get caught. Which is what he did. It was It was terrific."

"Did anyone expect him to leave," I asked.

"It dumbfounded me," he answered. "It was a real surprise to me. He did everybody a great favor when he fled."

It also surprised Kernan Bagley, US Marshal in Portland, who said, "It's the greatest thing that happened to us all. That was, by far, the best thing that happened. That was an act of God. We couldn't find anything better. I mean there was no defense out there by himself with just a couple of people."

As we have already seen,¹⁰²⁶ Turner said something similar. "And as a matter of fact, we said in the office if we could have asked him to do one thing for us, any one thing, we would say, 'Would you please flee and then be caught inside the country? Would you do that for us? So we could solidify our case?' Because 'the guilty flees where no man pursueth'. And that's what he did. It's bizarre. I can't understand it."

¹⁰²⁵ For a similar cause and effect sequence, see the case of former Portland Mayor and Oregon Governor, Neil Goldschmidt, the *Willamette Week* and *The Oregonian* (Jill Rosen, "The Story Behind the Story", *American Journalism Review (AJR)*, August/September 2004).

¹⁰²⁶ See the end of Chapter 9.

Ed Hinson, one of Rajneesh's defense attorneys in Charlotte, believed the government provoked the flight. "If you're going to get a quail," he said, "you have to flush him out of his thicket, get him into the air. That's the best time to shoot him."¹⁰²⁷

Oddly enough, Bob Weaver had a similar idea. "I think their¹⁰²⁸ plan was I don't know. It's pure speculation on my part. Somebody leaked the existence of those indictments to the ranch. Rajneesh got wind of it and he attempted to flee. Now I don't know who leaked it. But I think it was leaked to the press. If your plan was to scare the guy enough through the existence of an indictment and potential criminal charges and potential imprisonment, and cause him to flee, then they prevailed."

"Is that a possibility," I asked.

"Yes. It makes some sense, because, one, the guy's gone. They don't have to do any of their deportation things. You've got a warrant for him so you know he can't come back in the United States. He'll be arrested at the border. That thing lasts forever. So in a way, the INS would have achieved its purpose. And so the next time they got a call from Senator Hatfield's office saying, 'What are you doing with the Rajneesh case?', they could say, 'Well, Senator, as you well know, he's gone. He'll never come back.' It's bureaucratic, Potomac River intrigue. Goes on every day in every agency. Looking back on it, if somebody's plan was to use the criminal justice system in order to scare the hell out of Rajneesh and cause him to leave the country voluntarily, then it almost worked."

I suggested Weaver's scenario to Mike Inman. "He [Weaver] thought the INS in Washington was trying to spook the Bhagwan into flying so he would just deport himself in a way, make it so hot for him that he would just leave on his own, and they wouldn't do anything to stop him." Inman said, "Somebody in the Attorney General's office in Washington posed that question. Somebody who had authority over the criminal stuff¹⁰²⁹ posited a hypothetical question when this question of 'storming the Bastille' was raised. 'What would happen if the Bhagwan escaped and left the country?' And our legal response to that was, if he left voluntarily - because"

Inman laughed. "If he's fleeing prosecution, if he's not being forced out - that we would have to take further proceedings to deport him upon an attempted re-entry. And so he wanted that information. I don't know if anybody said, 'Well, why don't we let him go and then prevent his re-entry and avoid all this nonsense.' I never heard that. I suppose they could have turned the other cheek and let him fly out."

"If it was the INS' strategy to scare Rajneesh into fleeing," I asked Weaver, "why wasn't he just allowed to flee?"

¹⁰²⁷ In this context we should recall the words of James Baker (quoted at the beginning of Chapter 6). "The trick is getting them where you want them, on your terms. Then you control the situation, not them. You have the options. Pull the trigger or don't. It doesn't matter once you've got them where you want them. The important thing is knowing that it's in your hands, that you can do whatever you determine is in your interest to do."

¹⁰²⁸ the INS in Washington

¹⁰²⁹ While Inman could not remember the name at that time, this had to be either Steve Trott or Lowell Jensen.

"Because I Then we were back in charge of the case."

"So you prevented it?"

"You bet! I got a call Sunday night from an agency who had an informant on the ranch."

"Customs?"

"Yes."

"Laurence LaDage called you?"

"Yes. And he informed me that all the signs pointed to the fact that Rajneesh had departed. And from that minute forward we were back in control. And I was the one who issued the order to the Customs' agents that they were to arrest everybody on both airplanes when they arrived in Charlotte. I say when they arrived in Charlotte. But my greatest fears were that they were not going to go to Charlotte, that they were going to go to some other airport nearby."

As with so much about the government's approach to the Rajneesh case, there are so many contradictions just waiting here for even born yesterday investigators to trip over. This is hardly surprising, because as we have already seen there were so many agencies coming at them from so many angles and officials thinking radically different things.¹⁰³⁰ In other word, while "government" may be a convenient catchword to summarize the buzz of "official" developments and plans, it hardly does justice to what was actually going on.

But before closing this section I would like to take a stab at something I was approaching at the end of the last chapter but couldn't get around to. Something I have cracked my numbskull on each and every time I tried to think about it. Out of all the officials I talked to Turner was the only one who thought Rajneesh would flee if he got wind of an indictment. That was his self justification for being less than candid and aboveboard with Peter Schey. Yet almost in the same breath, he said he was surprised that Rajneesh actually did flee. "It's bizarre. I can't understand it."

What was it? "Think he's going to flee"? Or, "My God, he's fled!"?

In the aforementioned affidavit Lawrence LaDage noted - I mean flat out lied - that on Thursday, October 24, he "increased airport surveillance in the State of Oregon concerning air traffic going to and from Rajneeshpuram, Oregon". If that was actually the case, those two A-7 military jets that buzzed low over the city the next morning¹⁰³¹ should have showed up on his radar screen. He should also have been on top of the Learjet 35 that landed at Rajneeshpuram at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday morning and the Lear 24 that flew in at 3:30 p.m. the same afternoon.

Given that, Turner's suspicions, Schey's pain in the ass persistence - calling Turner at his home on Sunday afternoon - and the monumental, everyone's sweating it arrest scheduled for the very next day, what were Turner and Weaver doing at home, and why were they,

¹⁰³⁰ We have also seen (Chapter 9) that inconsistencies permeated the thinking of single individuals (Turner). For more on this, see US Marshals Max Wilson and Stuart Earnest below.

¹⁰³¹ See Chapter 9.

the ever vigilant Customs and everyone else on the Oregon side of things caught with their pants down?

Questions struggling in that direction were being asked at the time by Swami Satyam Anando.¹⁰³² But he couldn't pull it all together and do something major with it. Which considering all the time it has taken me to figure it out - with a much bigger budget, tons more material and a slight edge in *sophrosyne*¹⁰³³ - is hardly surprising.

With all of the above in mind this is how I reconstruct events as they were actually unfolding. While with 20-20 hindsight Turner said he thought Rajneesh would flee, in real time he thought no such thing. That's why he said, "It's bizarre. I can't understand it." That's why he and other federal officials were running two hours behind Matt Shelly at *KGW*¹⁰³⁴ in knowing that (1) two Learjets had flown out of Rajneeshpuram; and (2) Rajneesh was on one of them. And they misrepresented - and perhaps even misinterpreted - their own last minute desperation to catch up to fast moving, and unexpected, events¹⁰³⁵ as Rajneesh's haste to get away.

That's the psychological set and dynamics. But there's also politics and public relations. In order to cram the whirlwind of fundamentally flawed and incompatible scenarios into the same plot and - against all the odds - make it look like they actually fit and belonged together, they had lots of impulse planning and thinking to do. Thus running around with their knickers in a twist and not much shut eye, they had to coordinate the image of, in Bob Hamilton's words, "a tremendously orchestrated, effective government" - with the nasty, but recalcitrant fact that "he almost got away".

Both conspiracy and fuck up. In the process they kept telling lie after lie, without remembering that they were lies, and sometimes probably even convincing themselves that there was some truth in it somewhere. And that was, in Turner's words, "close enough for government work".

More than once Rajneesh had said things like, "A very simple principle has to be understood. If you lie once, then you will have to lie a thousand and one times to protect the first lie. Still it remains unprotected. Those one thousand and one lies cannot make it a truth. They may repress it, but it is there. And in fact they are all lies. So every lie in its own turn again needs protection."¹⁰³⁶

That principle and dynamic forced the "government" into providing an ever expanding and deepening peek hole into its fucked up conspiracy against both Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram, the city-commune on the high plains of Central Oregon with an alternative vision and life style.

¹⁰³² "Affidavit reveals much", *The Rajneesh Times*, November 8, 1985

¹⁰³³ An ancient Greek word that we'll translate here as making the most out of what you've got.

¹⁰³⁴ See Chapters 1 and 9.

¹⁰³⁵ In Weaver's words (see above): "then events overtook us".

¹⁰³⁶ Rajneesh, *From Unconsciousness to Consciousness*, Chapter 16, November 14, 1984. Already quoted in Chapter 8.

In the Charlotte court Bill Diehl described the "fatal deficiencies in trying to flee from Oregon to Carolina and thinking that you have left the United States". He said flight attempts could only be considered on the basis of state charges, not federal one. "We don't have a case," Weaver conceded on the subject of flight, and then added what I fear was probably not a novel ploy.

"I suggest they [the defense] don't have a case either. But we're looking for one." The deficiency in Weaver's logic - though no one in any position of authority paid much attention to it - was that in an allegedly innocent until proven guilty society and system, the burdens of proof are on the prosecution, not the defense.¹⁰³⁷

Magistrate Barbara DeLaney dismissed the charges of aiding and abetting flight and harboring a fugitive for the three defendants who were not on Rajneesh's Learjet. She released the other three on bonds of \$25,000 each. But she moved to hold Rajneesh in custody on the grounds that he had the capacity and tendency to flee.

"I think this was a flight situation," she said in her summing up. It wasn't a classic decision, something to write up in the books, and get lauded, applauded, cited and followed by scholars and law students for generations to come. But it wasn't all her fault. The prosecution had done everything possible to make a relatively straightforward case look as complicated as the first few hours in hell, and the basically small town magistrate succumbed to that and the sudden pressure of intense and unaccustomed media gang rape.

Nevertheless, it was a wrong decision, and she shouldn't have made it. For even if Rajneesh imagined he was high tailing it, all the people on the two Learjets and those meeting them at the airport in Charlotte were acting as furtive as hell, and they were all secretly skipping the country that night, that second,¹⁰³⁸ that would not have satisfied the primary requirements for flight. For in order to flee - in a legal or illegal manner - there has to be something to flee from.

And that first condition was conspicuous by its absence. All the charges against Rajneesh and the others, and all the reasons for either granting or not granting bail hung from that thread,¹⁰³⁹ and without it everything fell into a stupid, vicious and criminal heap.

Bill Diehl put the point succinctly. In order to have flight, one needed "actual knowledge of actual warrants". One required "proof that a federal warrant had been issued for the fugitive's arrest. That's the first item, Your Honor. All the evidence in this case is that the

¹⁰³⁷ This issue has been discussed in Chapters 6 and 9, and will be returned to in Chapter 11. It seems that "burden of proof" is like the "white man's burden". No one's exactly sure who is supposed to bear it.

¹⁰³⁸ Which, again, wasn't the case.

¹⁰³⁹ Which is why Weaver, Turner, Greene and everyone else directly involved in setting the arrest in motion can never stop lying about it.

federal warrant issued for Bhagwan, the fugitive in this particular case, was unsealed, as Your Honor is aware, on the 28th, last Monday, of this month."

Diehl was wrong. What had been unsealed on Monday morning at 11:29 a.m. PST - 2:29 p.m. EST, 12 hours after the arrest - was an indictment, not an arrest warrant.¹⁰⁴⁰ He should have known the difference.

"In other words," DeLaney asked Diehl, "as in your memorandum, you're conceding the existence of the federal warrant but not knowledge?" Diehl conceded "that there was a federal warrant". His concession was - to use his own words - a "fatal deficiency".

"I think we've lost the perspective on this a little bit," Weaver said at one point in the proceedings. "I would say that's a correct statement," Diehl said with the direct implication that it was Weaver himself who had lost it.¹⁰⁴¹

But he was wrong again, because in order for Weaver to lose perspective "on this" he would have had to have it to begin with. Weaver ignored Diehl's dig and continued by saying that the issue at stake was no big deal, merely the circumstances under which Rajneesh would live over the next few days until he was transported back to Oregon.

Rajneesh's flight back to Portland was by no means routine. Prison transportation schedules were jimmied to take him to Oklahoma City and changed again to keep him there. He was mysteriously "disappeared" for days and would have been lost longer had his whereabouts not been discovered by an enterprising and determined Oklahoma City television reporter and Bill Diehl himself. And everything that happened and why has been constantly - but not consistently - obfuscated ever since. What happened next, some say, would cost Rajneesh his life.

Founded in 1789, the United States Marshals have a long history and short historical record. Most people think of them as television good guys: Bat Masterson, Wyatt Earp, Marshal Dillon and other legends of the *Gunsmoke* west. But Dr. Rita Cooley of New York University had another take on their character. She wrote, "many of the now-glamorous marshals were 'bad men' themselves. Erna Fergusson has observed:¹⁰⁴² 'A man might be a law officer or an outlaw, according to political changes, and many who started

¹⁰⁴⁰ It is interesting, and possibly significant, to juxtapose two things here. One, what Peter Schey told me (see Chapter 9). "They could indict somebody and then not unseal the indictment for a week or a month or six months. But when they were ready to unseal this indictment and serve the warrants, they told me that they would give me one day to get to Portland and get my client to the court house." Two, what Weaver said about the five or six arrest warrants locked in his drawer (see Chapter 9 and many references above, especially note 1010). What he had locked in his drawer was the unsealed indictment, not arrest warrants.

¹⁰⁴¹ Those were also Mike Inman's sentiments about Turner. "I mean somebody has lost reality on that" (see Chapter 9).

¹⁰⁴² *Our Southwest*, 1940, p. 105

as outlaws became most law abiding."¹⁰⁴³ From the beginning, the marshal was a political appointee.

The US Marshal in the Western District of North Carolina at the time of our events was Max Wilson, a tall good ol' boy who liked to bust it up a lot in his youth. He was appointed by Ronald Reagan.¹⁰⁴⁴ Over the years, he had private conversations with three presidents. But eventually he was forced to resign because of political squabbles and corruption charges.¹⁰⁴⁵

"There was something about the man [Rajneesh] that was different from most people," he said when I interviewed him at his home in Asheville,¹⁰⁴⁶ 120 miles northwest of Charlotte. His daughter, Christie, who was in high school at the time of the bail hearings and wanted to go down to meet him, sat in on the conversation. "I don't know what it is," Wilson said. "I can't explain it. I can never explain it. He made you feel uneasy. You know he thought he was God. I asked him if he thought he was God. And he said Well, I forgot how he answered me."

Like many Southerners, he was a good yarn spinner. In the tales he told about Rajneesh he had a noteworthy quirk: two distinct voices Every time he spoke Rajneesh's alleged dialogue, he became all soft, and gooey. Every time he switched to his side of things, he got gruff, rough and scolding. "You get around the guy and he gives you a funny feeling. I don't know whether it's me or what. I mean if you touch him, shake hands with him. I'd usually hold him by the shoulder. There's something about the guy that's not normal!"

I don't know what that means. There was women all over the court room, and when I took him in they just started trembling like that! And I didn't see nothing to tremble about. I've been with several prisoners on death row and talked to them. There's something about a person that's going to be put to death the next morning or the day after. There's something about them.

And it's a different feeling from what it was with this man. But in a way it was the same feeling. I talked to Richard Nixon in person several times. And I

¹⁰⁴³ Cooley, "The Office of the United States Marshal," *Western Political Quarterly*, March 1959, p. 129. While I have no reason to believe that Rajneesh had ever heard of Fergusson, this sounds amazingly like something he said in his discourses (see Chapter 9).

¹⁰⁴⁴ Through the more immediate intervention of Senator Jessie Helms.

¹⁰⁴⁵ In our discussions about those charges Wilson said US Attorney Charles Brewer asked him to sign a petition. When he refused Brewer said he would make him pay for it. "He said, 'I can make you pay'. I said, 'Well, how are you going to make me pay, Charlie? I haven't done anything wrong. I've done my job, and I haven't done anything wrong.' "He said, 'It don't make any difference.' He said, 'I'm a US Attorney.... I can indict anybody, any time that I want to, whether they're guilty or not.' I said, 'Well, I'm not guilty of anything, Charlie! How can you indict me when I'm not guilty?' And he said, 'You know, Max [Wilson]. It don't work that way.' He said, 'You can I can indict anybody that I want to. Whether they're guilty or not is immaterial.' I said, 'Well, I'll tell you one damn thing. You go ahead and do it. You just go ahead and do it.' So, then, Charlie started right then on me. He ordered a Grand Jury investigation into my office. They went back for one year."

¹⁰⁴⁶ Some might recall that Asheville was the birthplace of the enormously poetic and prolific American novelist, Thomas Wolfe.

didn't feel that way about him. He was just an ordinary person, and you didn't feel strange. And I talked to Ronald Reagan many times. I spent three hours once with Reagan, just me and him.

Of course Reagan made you feel real welcome and everything, and he's real friendly. I had a chance to talk to Dwight Eisenhower. He was a different type of person. He's [Eisenhower] nice, but he [Rajneesh] made you feel STRANGE, by talking to him.¹⁰⁴⁷ That's the kind of feeling you got. No, that's not really it. No, not really. This man [Rajneesh] makes you feel, when you talk to him or you put your hand on him, he would make you feel like he was something special.

"Like he knew something you didn't know," Christie Wilson suggested.

"That's right," her dad said. But the next minute he assured me that he knew Rajneesh was a crook, and so did I.¹⁰⁴⁸ On and on went the double image he had of Rajneesh. Then I pulled him up on it. "Excuse me," I said, "but I'm coming up with two Max Wilsons here. One who sees that this guy is special and another who's sure he's a crook."

"You are exactly right! And I thought about that a lot! But I still say both Max Wilsons are right. I don't understand! I don't understand!"

At the time I didn't realize exactly how right I was. Suckered by the honey voiced charmer, I missed seeing the liar frequently tripping over his own forked tongue.

I asked him, "Was there a lot of conversations back and forth between you and Washington while Rajneesh was in Charlotte?"

"Well, yeah. I talked to them every day. I know that. Headquarters told me not to give him any special treatment. And we didn't. We treated him just like we treated everybody else."

"Headquarters called specifically to tell you, 'Don't give him any special treatment'?"

"Not specifically. But they asked me how I was getting along, and how we were handling it. And I told them what I was doing. They had been looking at and listening to the news reports. And they said, 'Everything looks great!'. And I told them I wasn't going to give him any special treatment. And they said, 'That's good! We don't want you to!' The Director, Stanley Morris was in England during this time and he called headquarters. And somebody in headquarters called me and said that Stan Morris had seen me on television over there with him [Rajneesh]. And he just wanted to let me know that it looked good! They were with me and all. I talked to Stan later about Stan seeing me on television."

¹⁰⁴⁷ My insertions in the conversation are approximations. Because the reference shifts are so swift that it's hard to tell who Wilson is talking about at any given time.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Max Wilson: In my mind, I know he had to con these people to get There's nobody in the world could do anything for people and get 96 Rolls Royces, free, without being a con artist. You know that!

Max Brecher: I don't know anything. That's why I'm doing the interview.

Wilson: [laughs] Yeah, I know it. I know it. But ... but ... they's

Brecher: I don't know anything. I'm starting off with a clean slate, looking at it.

"Stan Morris was your direct supervisor and you didn't report to anyone except him," I asked.

"Well, you don't report to him directly. You don't have to! Stan was not our boss. He's not our boss. He didn't hire us, and he couldn't fire us."

"He wasn't your boss?"

"No! He's appointed by the Attorney General of the United States and we marshals are appointed by the President. He couldn't tell us what to do. Stan Morris' job is to coordinate the efforts of the marshals throughout the country. He was just a coordinator."

I had read in the *Asheville Times* that on Monday, November 4, Wilson was still checking out the possibility of accompanying Rajneesh back to Oregon on a commercial air liner. I asked if that was true. "Yeah, I could have done that if I had wanted to. I could do it however I wanted to do it. I could either fly him out or send him on our prisoner transportation system."

I had raised the issue earlier with Steve Boyle, public information officer for the US Marshals Service in Tyson's Corner, Virginia. "It was never seriously considered to use a commercial airline," he said crisply.

"That's not what I heard," I said.

"I'm telling you," he said with sudden steel in his voice.

"It was never considered?"

"No."

"Why is that?"

"As a matter of practice we only use commercial aircraft in extreme circumstances. And certainly wouldn't do that for a high profile individual."¹⁰⁴⁹

Max Wilson said he called the Marshals Service headquarters on November 4, 1985. He wanted to know if the National Prisoner Transportation Service's (NPTS) recently acquired Boeing 727,¹⁰⁵⁰ capable of transporting 100 plus prisoners, was going west and if so where he could meet it. "They checked and radioed the plane. Big plane. It's a big ol' plane. It was somewhere in the New York area¹⁰⁵¹ at the time. They said, 'the plane is coming across North Carolina today, going to Florida'. I believe he said it was going to Miami and then to Los Angeles. I said, 'Why don't you radio the pilot and have him drop down here in Charlotte and pick up this man'. I don't even know if he knew who the prisoner was. It didn't cost us anything, because he was flying over North Carolina anyway."

¹⁰⁴⁹ Three months later, in February 1986 (see Chapter 11), the Marshals Service transported high profile Sheela and two confederates by commercial airlines. US Marshal in Portland Kernan Bagley, who was on those flights with other marshals and several Oregon State Police officers - I believe there were eight of them all together (see Chapter 11) - told me it was standard procedure.

¹⁰⁵⁰ The 727 - tail number N2777 - had been transferred to the Marshals four months before, on June 25, 1985. Manufactured in the early 1960's - 1964 or 1966 - it had originally been owned by "Langley Research Center" in Hampton, Virginia. According to one pilot source with a grudge - thus I'm not guaranteeing accuracy here - it and a lot of the other NPTS planes were full of corrosion and violated many FAA regulations.

¹⁰⁵¹ Englewood, New Jersey

"You said the plane was going to Miami from around New York and it would be flying over North Carolina anyway," I asked.

"Well, somewhere south. That's what they told me."

"It didn't go to Miami or anywhere south that day. It went to Springfield, Missouri, which is west of here. And from there it went to Oklahoma City. And flying from New York to Missouri you don't pass over North Carolina."

"I don't know where he was going! The man in Washington told me he'd be going over North Carolina sometime today."

I didn't know it at the time, but this is where Wilson's own story went south. He made it sound like that "big ol' plane" coincidentally happened to be flying over North Carolina and, just as coincidentally, Rajneesh hopped on board and was stranded in Oklahoma City. But Stuart Earnest, US Marshal in Oklahoma City, and others had another tale to tell.

Earnest told Swami Prem Niren,¹⁰⁵² Rajneesh's attorney, that he was "made aware" on the day of the arrest, "that he would be transported back to Oregon via Oklahoma City Oklahoma City is one of our routine overnight stops in our National Prisoner Transportation System, which is headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri."¹⁰⁵³ I was notified by the district in North Carolina."

Rajneesh was arrested on October 28 and denied bail on November 1. Was Earnest admitting that denial of bond and transportation by the marshals back to Oregon through Oklahoma City had been a foregone conclusion from the start? Smelling pay dirt, Niren asked, "You were told he was coming through at approximately the same time of his arrest?" Earnest backpedaled. "Well, after he appeared before the magistrate and it was apparent he was going to be transported, yes."

"Wasn't that a pretty unusual request for you to make," I asked Max Wilson. "I mean you wouldn't call that big plane to drop down for just anyone, would you?" He admitted that the November 4 arrival of the NPTS Boeing 727 was the first and last time it had touched tarmac in Charlotte, but said the last minute scheduling was not unusual.

Most of the press accounts I had read about NPTS implied that it had only one plane at its disposal, and that's why they had to keep juggling schedules. However, rather dogged and dull research through records of congressional appropriations committee meetings led me to the discovery that it had access to at least 20 planes of varying sizes and capacities. In other words, there were any number of options available to take Rajneesh back to Oregon, directly, rapidly and safely.

"Was there any thought given to not using the big plane this time," I asked Wilson. "Maybe they could have used a smaller plane? The Marshals had about 12 of them at that time."

¹⁰⁵² In a December 1987 interview with Swami Prem Niren.

¹⁰⁵³ I may be wrong, but it seems to me that Wilson should have been calling NPTS headquarters in Missouri, not Marshal Headquarters in Washington (Tyson's Corner, Virginia, actually).

"No, they won't do that. Those planes are always scheduled. They are already scheduled. They won't send it [sic, "them"] to get just one person."

"But they would send the big plane to do that?"

"No! No! Lord, no! They wouldn't do that, unless it was flying over anyway. If it's already going overhead, they will. Those planes are usually scheduled in advance, where they're going to go, where they're going to be landing."

Despite his protests to the contrary, we have already seen that the plane had been diverted for one VIP - "Very Important Prisoner" - who was not supposed to be getting any "special treatment". Wilson inadvertently admitted as much when he answered my next question, which I asked long before I had read the Earnest interview.

"Did you ever talk to Marshal Stuart Earnest?"

"I might have. I believe I did! I believe I talked to him that night,¹⁰⁵⁴ because I had some time to go back to the office in Charlotte. *Well, we didn't know until the last part there, until a day or two before, that he would be going to Oklahoma.*"

I emphasize that last sentence here to compensate for letting it slip by me during the interview without even a quick frisk. In one sentence two tongued Wilson said that on Monday, November 4, he was still thinking of taking Rajneesh to Oregon on a commercial air liner. In another, he knew a day or two before that he was going to Oklahoma. In other words, he knew the plan at least as early as the weekend, and all that stuff about "last minute" schedule changes was a lot of good ol' boy hooley.

"We were looking into taking him back," Wilson told me. "I was thinking of taking him plumb back to Oregon myself."

"So you really were thinking of taking him back to Oregon?"

"Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I thought that was where he was going until one of the assistant US attorneys in Charlotte told me that That he was going to That he's going to I didn't know where to take him!"

US Marshal Max Wilson, who emphasized that he had been appointed by the President of the United States and was not under the authority of the director of his own agency, was telling me something I was not sufficiently clued into at that time to hear, let alone fully comprehend. But that is not at all the case now. An Assistant US Attorney in Charlotte was directing the transport of Rajneesh, and not whaddya know twists of fate.

But which Assistant US Attorney? Here is where ambiguous grammar might wrongfoot the unwary. Because they might think it was an "Assistant US Attorney resident in Charlotte". However, based on my contacts with those two "Assistant US Attorneys" - Debra Stuart and Ken Andresen - that is utterly unlikely.

Stuart, a very pleasant young women and pilot - who took this Yankee writer for a spin in a single engine Cessna - was just following orders from Oregon. And Andresen couldn't

¹⁰⁵⁴ November 4, 1985

understand what all the fuss was about.¹⁰⁵⁵ That leaves only one other "Assistant US Attorney" in Charlotte. Namely, the one from Portland, who was in Charlotte. Bob Weaver, the man who said that Diehl, and by extension the whole defense team, had "lost the perspective on this a little bit".

I asked Wilson if there was anything he wanted me to ask Rajneesh when I went to India for some interviews. "He would remember me," he said softly. "I guarantee you that." He was right. I submitted his photo months later through Ma Deva Anando and asked what Rajneesh remembered.

Still under the influence of him, I was expecting a positive response. So I was shocked - it felt like a mental electrocution - by the answer I got.

Max Wilson may be playing the nice guy now. But he was the nastiest of them all. He was the one who was in charge of the first jail where Osho was forced to sit on a hard steel bench all night. He was the one who drove very fast in the car and then slammed on the brakes when Osho was in the car chained up. He used to accompany him back and forth to the county jail. So he did have conversations with Osho. But he only became nice after the press conference in the jail.¹⁰⁵⁶ Osho thinks it's because he was jealous of Sheriff Kidd getting all the publicity.

Around 3:30 p.m. EST on November 4, 1985, Rajneesh was taken from the Mecklenburg County Jail to the Charlotte Airport in a cavalcade of five cars and a charade of concern, importance and high security. No "special treatment" here. He was accompanied by Max Wilson and eight deputy marshals armed with machine guns and shotguns. If anything happened to him in transport, through the actions of some can't figure them out sannyasin or hate obsessed assassin - and even the words "sannyasin" and "assassin" could be readily run together in the minds of the don't much care - it certainly wasn't going to be the marshals' fault.

It was a perfect setup for something to happen.¹⁰⁵⁷ In fact, the press was already being further mushed up for the "inevitable". That same day on the 6 o'clock news one anchor said: "Tonight the guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is flying west to face charges ... charges of immigration fraud. He left a North Carolina jail today for the first time in a week, moved under heavy security by federal Marshals. They say former followers of the Bhagwan have made death threats against him. That's the reason for the special motorcade straight from the jail to a waiting US government plane. The Bhagwan is

¹⁰⁵⁵ I have already quoted some of his remarks on this subject (see Chapter 1 and at the beginning of this chapter).

¹⁰⁵⁶ On October 29, with Ted Koppel and other national news media representatives.

¹⁰⁵⁷ British journalist Anthony Summers investigated the events around the Kennedy assassination. He noted that in November 1963 there was talk about an assassination on the President's visit to Miami. One informant, William Somerset, said, "Yeah. Well, he will have a thousand bodyguards, don't worry about that." A right wing extremist, Joseph Milteer, replied, "The more bodyguards he has, the easier it is to get him." (*Conspiracy*, p. 429)

expected to be in court in Portland, Oregon tomorrow morning."¹⁰⁵⁸ The next evening – same time, same station - he expanded on the theme. "The Marshals say death threats have been made against the guru and against them."

Max Wilson told the press that Rajneesh was expected to arrive in Portland sometime the next morning. Like so much else he told them, and me, he had to know it wasn't so. Around 4:55 p.m. the red, white and blue Boeing 727 landed in Charlotte. There were 66 prisoners on board. Security was tight again when it landed about three hours later - around 7 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) - at the Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Associated Press photographer David Longstreach was on hand. He told Dorothy Amore, one of my research assistants, that Earnest had notified him of Rajneesh's arrival in advance. Curt Autrey, television reporter for *KTVY*, the local *NBC* affiliate, was also there. He knew the night before - November 3 - that Rajneesh would be passing through Oklahoma. He too had gotten the tip straight from the horse's mouth. But "for security reasons" both Longstreach and Autrey were kept so far from the plane that they couldn't get any decent pictures.¹⁰⁵⁹

All of the 60 or so prisoners were taken in buses to the normal overnight housing facilities at El Reno federal penitentiary, about half an hour due west of the state capitol. Except for Rajneesh and a heavy set mulatto woman, who were secretly taken to the Oklahoma County Jail in downtown Oklahoma City. Again, "for security reasons". The woman was taken into the county building through the normal side door. Rajneesh, however, was taken through the basement entrance reserved for VIP's. Up on the 11th floor, both were signed in at around 8:30 p.m., 1½ hours after the 727 had landed.

This stretch of the story has been thoroughly and painstakingly covered in published works by two Australian sannyasins.¹⁰⁶⁰ Both authors presented direct and circumstantial evidence and asserted that Rajneesh was poisoned while in Oklahoma City. When one of the books was publicized at a press conference in Charlotte in September 1989, Earnest was asked to comment on the charge. He said, "That's such a ridiculous claim it doesn't deserve a comment."¹⁰⁶¹

That's a typical stonewalling technique of government officials,¹⁰⁶² and sometimes they are right in adopting it. Because just as not all US Attorneys - and probably District Attorneys as well - have a strictly judicial sense of who to indict, when and for what, not all accusers feel compelled to stick to the rules of rational discourse. In other words, they

¹⁰⁵⁸ Dave McElhatton, *KPIX-TV (CBS) Channel 5*, San Francisco

¹⁰⁵⁹ The day Rajneesh arrived was, coincidentally, the 106th anniversary of the birth of the airport's namesake, Will Rogers - an American philosopher wit of Cherokee Indian descent.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Sue Appleton (an attorney), *Was Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Poisoned by Ronald Reagan's America?*, and Juliet Forman, *Bhagwan: Twelve Days that Shook the World*. While I'm sure the latter took the title from John Reed's classic, *Ten Days That Shook The World*, she might not have known that the author was from Portland, Oregon.

¹⁰⁶¹ *The Daily Oklahoman*, September 7, 1989

¹⁰⁶² For example, Dave Frohnmayer (see his "utter nonsense" response in Chapter 9).

just go on and on with this and that, and even their most sympathetic listeners eventually want to shout "Shut the fuck up!".

But here it would be better to be less dismissive. Because based on my independent research and the evidence I've presented so far, this claim deserves more than just a comment. It deserves a no holds barred investigation. And if and when that ever happens and Stuart Earnest is still alive, his name will be near the top of the list of those subpoenaed to appear.

On arrival at the Will Rogers World Airport, Rajneesh and Juliet Forman assert, Rajneesh heard one of the deputy marshals from the prisoner transport say to Paul Mayfield, a heavy set deputy marshal meeting the plane, "This guy is world-famous, and all the world news media is focused on him. So don't do anything directly. Be very careful."¹⁰⁶³

Is that credible? That depends on what you mean? If "is this a strict word for word of what was said", probably not. If "was one trying to communicate a message to the other he didn't already know", no way. Because even if Mayfield hadn't been following the news, Stuart Earnest had. And if he knew who Rajneesh was, Mayfield did too. So if he had been sent to do a job, no one had to remind him what it was and how to do it. If "is that the way deputy marshals talk among themselves", sure, what's the problem? If "would the US government ever do anything like that", are you kidding?

At the Oklahoma County Jail, Mayfield wanted Rajneesh to sign in under the name "David Washington". This is fact. I've seen the jail records and have copies of them. Rajneesh didn't want to. Mayfield insisted. "If you don't sign the name 'Washington', you will have to sit this cold night on this hard, steel bench," Mayfield said. Mayfield printed out the name David Washington on the form and Rajneesh signed it with his own unique signature in Hindi.

"This will be a reminder to you that anything you want to do, directly or indirectly, you will be caught," he said to him. "It is with your handwriting that you have written 'David Washington', and it is my signature, which is world famous, which can be recognized without any difficulty. Your whole conspiracy has failed. I can see it clearly in your eyes, in your nervousness, in your trembling hands."

"Is it common practice to sign a transported prisoner in a jail under a false name," I asked Steve Boyle, the US Marshals' public information officer.

"It's not common," he said. "But it's not unheard of. It's done to protect a high profile individual from too easy a recognition from other inmates and to keep from calling unnecessary attention to where the individual is being housed."

The first part of Boyle's rationale does not apply. Because not only was Rajneesh high profile - the media had splattered an unforgettably odious version of him on the public mind - but he looked completely different than "normal people". Especially in his robes

¹⁰⁶³ Forman, *Bhagwan: Twelve Days that Shook the World*, p. 410. This and the following paragraph (considerably abbreviated) rely heavily on her (pp. 410-13). Anyone interested in more minute to minute facts about this whole period should consult her admittedly special pleading account.

and hat. Thus concealing him under a false name was like trying to hide an elephant under a blade of grass. That rationale is further sent packing by his placement in solitary confinement: tank "MS-2", male solitary, # 2. He didn't have any contact with the VUP's: very unimportant prisoners.

That leaves reason number two, which was my guess even before talking to Boyle. But that was before I had heard of Earnest's kinky tactics. First calling Longstreach, Autrey, and the rest of his pals in the media to let them know that Rajneesh was coming to town, and then keeping them at arm's length and out of the picture. Eat your hearts out, suckers!

According to Sgt. James Heitmeyer, who was working the check in window at the Oklahoma County Jail on the 4 p.m. to midnight shift, it was fairly common knowledge hours before Rajneesh's arrival that he was on his way there, and everyone recognized him when he came in. "At that time the news media were trying to locate this gentleman. They were trying to locate him, to find out which jail they were going to put him in. All the news media called asking about this individual. They asked and asked me, 'Had he arrived?'. And I said, 'No, they have not.' But after he did arrive the word was put out that he was staying at the Canadian County Jail or whatever."¹⁰⁶⁴ So we didn't have any more phone calls."

The marshals had called and told Heitmeyer they were bringing a VIP. The gate was to be made clear, and there were to be no complications.

"Is 'David Washington' the 'John Doe' around here," I asked Heitmeyer.

"No, normally we use John Doe. But the marshals requested the use of Washington. The marshals told me they wanted him booked in under another name for his protection."

Rajneesh said Deputy Marshal Mayfield gave him a filthy mattress and told him to carry it into his solitary cell. It was a cold November night, but he was not given either a blanket or pillow. Rajneesh and his doctors later suspected that there was a medium strength radioactive source inside the mattress.¹⁰⁶⁵ Kristian Dahl-Madsen, a Danish sannyasin and nuclear engineering expert with an M.S. degree from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Sweden, described for me how radioactivity works.

"A normally sensitive person can feel if he is being given a substantial dose of induced radioactivity. However, this sensitivity can be avoided by either creating a stress situation or by making sure that the subject is cold and, therefore, insensitive. This could explain why Osho was not given a blanket in November. He would not receive a pillow because they would want to get his head as close as possible to the source of radiation. Apparently, they wanted to destroy his mental abilities, faculties of speech and his immune system."¹⁰⁶⁶

¹⁰⁶⁴ El Reno

¹⁰⁶⁵ More details are given and discussed in Chapter 11.

¹⁰⁶⁶ According to Associated Press reporter Robert Burns, the US Defense Department was already exploring such assassination techniques at the end of the 1940's ("U.S. Weighed Radiation Poison: Cold War Papers on Potential Assassination Methods Uncovered", *The Washington Post*, October 9, 2007). It

Some time the next day - Rajneesh didn't know when because his watch had been taken away - another man in plain clothes came to see him. He was not wearing the uniform worn by all Oklahoma County Jail personnel, and Rajneesh didn't know who he was. He asked how he felt. Rajneesh said cold and shaky, but otherwise okay.

The man brought him a new mattress, blanket and pillow, and took the old mattress out in a hurry. He brought him a meal consisting of two slices of bread soaked in a tasteless, odorless sauce. He was told to eat up, because he was leaving soon. Immediately after eating, Rajneesh felt nauseous. He and his doctors later suspected that he had been poisoned with thallium, a heavy metal used in rat poison.

Since he doesn't remember much of what happened during the rest of the day, they also believe he was heavily sedated. At around 3:46 p.m. on Tuesday, November 5, Rajneesh signed out of Oklahoma County Jail. There is a radical difference between that signature and the one from the night before. He had obviously been severely traumatized. The same afternoon he was secretly taken to El Reno Federal Penitentiary. A 30 minute drive, the trip took two hours.¹⁰⁶⁷

Louis Bullock, an ACLU attorney in Tulsa, Oklahoma fighting for reform in the state penal system, told me about general health conditions on the inside. "The Oklahoma County Jail is an awful facility, an unholy mess." He went on to say that "jails are designed for young, healthy people and the reality is that people committed to jails are in much poorer health than the general population. Health problems in jails are relatively common and contagious. The quality of health care is usually quite poor."

After I ran the poisoning scenario by him, he said, "It would be difficult to pull off. There is a code of the west and poisoning doesn't fit in with that. There are certain ways you take a man on. I've known the good and the bad that come into prisons to work. I've seen goon squads at McAlester¹⁰⁶⁸ who have beaten the crap out of inmates identified as troublemakers. They'd say something like 'He was mouthing off so I just went in and flattened the son of a bitch.' Jailers have a certain ethic and poisoning doesn't fit into that culture. You don't do things that are cowardly. Poisoning is offensive to that code. If poisoning happened, it would have to be from the outside."

Deputy Marshal Mayfield and the second plainclothes warder bringing Rajneesh the new mattress and meal were from the outside. Custody of federal prisoners shifts at the door. Inside the jail, Sheriff John Dorsen Sharp assured me, Rajneesh's welfare was his responsibility. If, as Rajneesh said, Mayfield was ordering him to lug the mattress to MS-2, he had crossed the not so invisible line separating inside from outside, and was in clear violation of both normal procedure and the law.

eventually dropped the idea in the early 50's. "Whether the work migrated to another agency, such as the CIA, is unclear."

¹⁰⁶⁷ I know because I did it.

¹⁰⁶⁸ another Oklahoma prison

Dorothy Amoire called Stuart Earnest to set up an interview. He first scheduled it for the following morning at 11 a.m. Then he asked what it was about. When she told him I was writing a book about Rajneesh's passage to and through America, he told her that he had been given orders from the US Marshals legal division in Virginia not to give any interviews on the subject because there was litigation involved.

No one else in the Marshals Service had said anything remotely like that. Not Steve Boyle, the slew of marshals I had talked to in Charlotte, Max Wilson, or Kernan Bagley and Mike O'Brien in Portland. And neither did the deputy marshals I talked to in Oklahoma City, who were under Earnest's command. What's more, as we have already established, marshals are appointed by presidents, and they don't have to take orders from national headquarters. When they don't feel like it.

Earnest said one of Rajneesh's followers, a professor at the local university, had accused him of poisoning Rajneesh and had initiated legal proceedings. "I couldn't possibly do that," Earnest said. "And I don't want any more to do with it." I contacted the professor. He told me he had not accused Earnest of anything. He had merely presented him with a copy of Sue Appleton's book. He had not initiated any legal actions against Earnest, and had no intention of doing so.

In fact, up until now - more than 25 years after these events - there have been no court cases against any of the government officials involved in the crimes I have exposed in this book and, in my opinion, have proven.

In November 1985, Earnest told the press that Rajneesh was at El Reno when he was at the Oklahoma County Jail. When Rajneesh was moved to El Reno, he told them he wasn't there. He first told them Rajneesh would be staying only one night in Oklahoma City and would be arriving in Portland on Tuesday, November 5. Then Rajneesh's stay in Oklahoma was extended until Wednesday.

One time the reason for the extension was inexplicable schedule changes mandated from NPTS headquarters in Kansas City. The next there weren't enough prisoners for the flight westward. "'We'll keep waiting until we assemble more prisoners for the flight west,' said Stuart Earnest, U.S. Marshal in Oklahoma City. Asked to explain the secrecy around Rajneesh's movements, Earnest said, 'We don't want to serve this guy up on a platter. They are [sic] people out there who want to kill him.'"¹⁰⁶⁹

In the December 1987 interview with Niren Earnest said, "For some reason, and I'm still not clear why, the airlift schedule was changed the following day to ... by NPTS in Kansas City. And it became apparent to me early the second day that Rajneesh would be with me possibly as long as four days, due to changes in the air schedule." In real time, on Wednesday afternoon, November 6, Earnest said Rajneesh might remain in Oklahoma another few days. "Federal authorities will keep Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in Oklahoma

¹⁰⁶⁹ *San Jose Mercury News*, November 6, 1985. Here it is again. There are people out there who want to kill him. And everything we're doing is for his protection.

'two or three days' more¹⁰⁷⁰ returning him to Oregon to face immigration charges, but say he is resting well, despite fears of his followers."¹⁰⁷¹

At the beginning, I was willing to give Earnest every benefit of the doubt. Perhaps he was being manipulated from above. Or by circumstances beyond his control. Perhaps he was being told something out of sync with what was happening just then and, therefore, it only appeared like he was lying at every opportunity and as if his life depended on it. I ran those possibilities past Curt Autrey, *KTVY's* news anchor who followed Rajneesh's stay in Oklahoma City with admirable intensity.

Autrey deep sixed all that. "There's no doubt about it. Earnest knew exactly what was going on." He also described Earnest as a "high profile, public relations oriented person", who in the past had been one of Autrey's good sources. But at some point - he wasn't quite sure when - Earnest wasn't as open as he had once been.

After some on the ground research and lining up the soldiers on my mental battle field, I called

Earnest. "Stuart" is how he answered the phone. He started repeating his stories about the litigation and orders from superiors being the reason why he could not talk to me. But by then I was thoroughly pissed off with his for public consumption attitude toward facts and truth. I challenged his assertions. He was quite taken aback.

"I don't want to make any further comments on the story," he said.

"That's your prerogative," I said heatedly.

"I know that's my prerogative."

"But let's be clear about it. It is a 'no comment', and not some bogus orders being handed down from on high, from some vague headquarters somewhere. And under these circumstances, the 'no comment' rings like thunder."

On Monday night, November 4, 1985, *KTVY* reporter Autrey was told by Earnest that Rajneesh was in El Reno. He wasn't. He was in Oklahoma County Jail. The next day, Tuesday, he discovered through one of a colleague's reliable sources inside the jail that Rajneesh was there. He called Sheriff Sharp immediately for confirmation. Sharp neither confirmed nor denied the story. "He was not real helpful," Autrey said.

But Earnest decided to move Rajneesh to El Reno the same day for - you guessed it - "security reasons". It doesn't take an Einstein to see the nearly push button cause and effect relationship.

"When I found out we were going to have him up to four days," Earnest told Niren, "I made a decision early Tuesday morning to move him to El Reno." Was Earnest now admitting that as early as Tuesday morning - and possibly the night before - he knew they would be keeping Rajneesh for up to four days?

¹⁰⁷⁰ to either November 8 or 9

¹⁰⁷¹ *The Bend Bulletin*, November 6, 1985

"For various reasons," Earnest continued. "One, that the Oklahoma County Jail was very much overcrowded. Conditions in the Oklahoma County Jail, as most county jails, are overcrowded. For that reason as well as security reasons I decided mid-morning on Tuesday to quietly move Rajneesh to El Reno."

Once again Earnest's that's why's - if you can actually figure out what they were - doesn't cut the mustard. Because, one, if the county jails are so overcrowded, why was Rajneesh taken there in the first place? And then given a cell all by his lonesome? And, two, ACLU attorney Bullock told me that generally speaking jails fill up over the weekend and start emptying out on Monday morning when the courts open. By Tuesday and Wednesday, those who are getting out already are. In other words, Tuesday afternoons are no more crowded than Monday evenings. Thus the real reason Earnest moved Rajneesh to El Reno was because Autrey had discovered where he was.

Bill Diehl found out that Rajneesh was at the Oklahoma County Jail and on Wednesday evening flew from Charlotte to Oklahoma City.¹⁰⁷² Autrey went to the airport to get him live on television. "I was told to look out for a short guy with red hair who looked like he was going to get a stroke any minute," he said. It was a windy night and the television cameraman broke a \$50,000 camera. "He was suicidal."

Diehl arrived around 10 p.m. and was immediately on the air. "I am going to demand to see him right now!", Diehl said to everyone who was watching. He said defense attorneys in the Charlotte court had produced a two to three feet high stack of medical documents and testimony about Rajneesh's frail medical condition. And the government had simply chosen to ignore it.

On arrival Diehl still thought Rajneesh was where he had been. But Autrey told him he definitely wasn't. He had a "strong hunch" that he was at El Reno, but he didn't actually know where he was when he was actually there until after midnight. He offered to drive Diehl out to El Reno if the latter promised him an exclusive interview. Diehl said he would follow behind in a rented car.

Diehl called Earnest. At first, Earnest wouldn't say where his client was. But the short fat guy from Charlotte roared. Earnest didn't want to come out to El Reno. Diehl cajoled and threatened. Diehl won. Earnest drove out. "It was a little out of the ordinary for me to get out of bed and meet an attorney at the correctional institution," Earnest told Niren. "But I felt it was important and it did require my personal attention. It was a courtesy."

Accompanied by two deputy marshals, Earnest arrived around 1:30 a.m. Dressed in an impeccable three piece brown suit, he was filmed by *KTVY* looking not a bit amused as

¹⁰⁷² Since I didn't interview Diehl, I'm not sure how he found out (I now think Autrey called him with the tip and asked for a comment). The reason for this lacuna in my *dramatis personae* is that Diehl was down in the Bahamas and out on his sailboat during my stay in Charlotte. I joked through my tears about it with his partner, Ed Hinson. "That SON OF A BITCH! ... Is he fleeing the country?" "Probably, yeah," Hinson said. "He is fleeing the country. It's the second time he's fled the country since he's got his boat out there."

he met Diehl and entered El Reno. If Autrey wants to pinpoint when - and why - Earnest dried up as a source for him, he should begin here.

Earnest told Niren, "There were all sorts of allegations flying around that Rajneesh was desperately ill, that he was not receiving his medicine, and one or two more. All were found not to be true. I agreed to meet Mr. Diehl at El Reno. I did that to help dispel the rumors. We stayed out there between 20 and 30 minutes and Rajneesh himself said he was getting his medication and denied that he was being mistreated."

"Was Rajneesh scheduled to go on Thursday morning before Mr. Diehl's arrival," Niren asked Earnest. "Or did Mr. Diehl's visit in any way affect the schedule change?" At first Earnest appeared not to understand the question and then changed the subject. But as gently as possible Niren brought his feet closer to the fire. "No," Niren said, "I was asking about his scheduled departure for Portland. Was that changed after Mr. Diehl's arrival?"

"NO," Earnest insisted. "That was the way it was scheduled." When I asked Autrey the same question - I hadn't yet read Niren's interview with Earnest, but you didn't need cribbing from someone else's notes to think of it - he said, "It was cause and effect". He slept that night in the parking lot of El Reno. Then he went home to get some sleep. It wasn't until noon - when watching it on television - that he learned that Rajneesh had been released from El Reno at 6:30 a.m. and flown out at 8 a.m. on the same NPTS 727 he had been flown in on four days before.¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁷³I am faced with a major problem, and discriminating readers should hear it from me. While I have been building steadily toward Autrey's cause and effect scenario, during the rewrite I bumped into an "inconvenient fact", which, if true, falsifies that hypothesis. Namely, that according to Jerry Hurd, co-pilot of the NPTS 727, the plane returned to Oklahoma City on Wednesday night. (Foreman, *op. cit.*, p. 412). While he didn't say exactly when - and in the colloquial "Wednesday night" can refer to any time between sunset on Wednesday and sunup on Thursday - it tends to make you believe it arrived *before* Diehl's arrival. And that makes perfect sense. Because in order to take off so early the next morning, you would think it came in sooner rather than later. That gives the pilots time to recuperate, tank up, discharge and load prisoners.

But there are three other things that at the very least throw cold water on the *before* sequence. One, Hurd's veracity. He asserted that the NPTS "only owned one plane", which wasn't true and he knew it. Two, if the plane had come in before Diehl, Autrey, who was following the story so closely and was actually waiting at the airport, would have known about it. Either directly or through his network of sources, in real time or retrospect. But he didn't.

And, three, Earnest would have known about it. But he didn't. Because if he had, he could have communicated that information to Diehl on the phone and saved himself the hassle of shaving in the middle of the night, spiffing up and driving all the way out to El Reno. He could have used that information in December 1987 when Niren asked, "Was Rajneesh scheduled to go on Thursday morning before Mr. Diehl's arrival?" in a candid and, for once, truthful, answer. "Wait a minute, Mr. Niren, I'll get you the records and show you exactly when that plane came in." That would have gone a long way toward removing any suspicions about what he was up to. But instead of reaching for the obvious solution he tried to distract Niren from where they both knew he was going.

Obviously, the bottom line is either the plane came in before the encounter between Diehl, Earnest and Autrey or after. If before, a lot - but definitely not all - of the cloak and dagger goes up in smoke. If after, the plot thickens considerably.

Was there a high level US government conspiracy to slow poison Rajneesh with thallium and medium strength radioactivity over days or possibly weeks in Oklahoma City? That is a question that can only be approximately answered if those with power and authority - either in government or the media - are willing to make a big deal out of it and get all sorts of people into all sorts of trouble. Namely, in a full scale inquiry where otherwise unwilling and outright hostile witnesses are subpoenaed and forced to testify.

Pleading fifth amendment rights - I refuse to answer on grounds that it might tend to incriminate me - will, of course, be an option. But it could prove counter productive. Using "That's such a ridiculous claim it doesn't deserve a comment" or variations on the same theme will be considered contempt of court. But the most we can say here is that we have seen the wheels of the setup in motion. And if there was such a conspiracy, it was partially foiled by the persistence and courage of Curt Autrey and Bill Diehl.

The NPTS 727, which usually came into Oklahoma City twice a month, came in twice in the first week of November 1985. After offloading Rajneesh and the rest of its human cargo on Monday, it took off on Tuesday morning, making "round robin" runs to New Orleans, Miami and Birmingham, Alabama. Is that any way to run an airline? You bet it isn't.

After taking off on Thursday morning with Rajneesh on board it touched down in Tucson, Arizona, Luke Air Force Base near Phoenix, Long Beach, California, Vandenberg Air Force Base and Sacramento before landing at around 5 p.m. PST at Boeing Field in Seattle. The US Marshal in Portland sent a special Beechcraft turboprop to pick up Rajneesh.¹⁰⁷⁴ No "special treatment" for this prisoner.

"We did that for security purposes," US Marshal in Portland Kernan Bagley told me. "We had a hard time keeping his actual position from the news media. We didn't want his followers to gang up and try to take him away."

"Do you think they would have done that," I asked. "After all, that would have jeopardized his life."

"It's possible. We had no idea really."

"You never know what they will think," Chief Deputy Mike O'Brien said. "So you have to plan for everything."

When the marshal plane arrived in Portland around 8 p.m. Rajneesh was greeted by the press, his lawyers and a few disciples. "We had a good relationship with them," Bagley said. "We told them we were small time people. We're from the country and we pretty much take care of problems here in Oregon. Our main philosophy is, if you deal with us, we'll deal with you. If you don't deal with us, you'll deal with headquarters and you'll deal with SWAT."

He said if the sannyasins wouldn't go along with marshal law, they would call national headquarters and tell them the problem was so big that the local marshals couldn't handle

¹⁰⁷⁴ I don't know if this Beechcraft was part of the marshals fleet or rented for the occasion. In any case, it's another example of what could have been done much sooner.

it. "Then they take it over in their own style, and that's different from what we use. And we wouldn't have any control. They'll do whatever they want. You'll never see the Bhagwan. They'd block off the streets when he came down and basically haul him in and out of here in a freight truck. So we tried to convince them to deal with us, and they did. We fixed it to bring him through our normal transportation channels and they saw him going to and from the court."

Marshal Bagley was telling the sannyasins that the Justice Department could do whatever it wanted and wasn't going to let up on the pressure. A signal it had been sending loud and clear ever since the arrest 12 days before. Indeed, since September. According to Ma Prem Hasya, Rajneesh's recently appointed secretary, Bagley said sannyasins could not sing or dance or even carry a single placard. She said it was a clear violation of their freedom of expression. But he was in charge and making her, the co-producer of *The Godfather*, an offer she couldn't refuse.

The day after Rajneesh left Oklahoma City, November 8, 1985, Deputy Marshal Paul Mayfield, the man who had brought him to the Oklahoma County Jail and forced him to sign in under "David Washington", left the Marshal Service. He allegedly went to work for US Customs in San Antonio, Texas. But only for seven months. After calling three separate Customs' offices in San Antonio, I discovered that no one there had ever heard of him.

Through Mayfield's social security number, a friend of mine's computer wizardry, and that day God was on my side luck, I tracked him to Dallas, Texas on the very day I was passing through en route to Portland. His telephone was listed under his wife's name, Debra Mayfield. I also discovered that at the same time Mayfield was supposed to be working for Customs in San Antonio he was also working for Wells Fargo Security Services in Dallas.

I called Wells Fargo and talked to one of Mayfield's old friends. He told me he was working for the INS somewhere by the Texas-Mexican border. One research assistant called the personnel division of the INS in Washington, DC and asked for some information about him. After a hushed silence and some background conversation, he was asked, rather cryptically, "What makes you think he works for us?". I called Mayfield's old friend again and told him the story. He laughed.

"It seems," I said fishing for more information, "that Paul's back into his old spy games."
"I wouldn't be a bit surprised," he said and laughed again.

"That doesn't surprise you that Paul's doing his spook bit again?"

"No. Not a bit."¹⁰⁷⁵

¹⁰⁷⁵ A sannyasin named Sam published the following on the Internet. "Brecher, after a lot of detective work, did in fact get a lead as to where this man was, but failed, for reasons that are not made clear in his book, to follow it up." (Sam, *Life of Osho*, p. 228). For Sam's and everyone else's information, investigative journalists, like everyone else, have to make choices and a living (see note 1086 below). There are, say, 75

Still searching for his voice and unable to sell any of his "literary" creations, wannabe writer Henry Miller was struggling to keep his head above water in 1920s New York. Then he got a commission to write six pieces for a *True Confessions* type magazine: "Scurrilous Stories". It was a hard slog until he got the bright idea to wade through their back numbers, copy out already printed material, and resubmit it with changed names and beginnings and endings. "It not only worked - they were enthusiastic about those forgeries. *Naturally*, since they had already savored the stew."¹⁰⁷⁶

On November 8, the day Paul Mayfield left the US Marshals in Oklahoma City, the government tried something similar in the US District Court in Portland. But without changing anything. Joe Greene was sworn in and asked to repeat in lurid and leering detail gory stories of teflon bullets and murder and mayhem. Greene mentioned the government's two star performers - Swami Krishna Deva and Ava Avalos - and Assistant US Attorney William Youngman asked a leading question, which he already knew the answer to.

"Have those two perhaps expressed concern for their personal safety if Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is released on bail?"

"Yes, sir, they have."

Krishna Deva and Ava Avalos, some readers may recall, were directly involved in the salmonella poisonings in The Dalles.¹⁰⁷⁷ But they had since seen "the error of their ways" and were now on the side of the angels. Both were enrolled in the Marshal's Witness Protection Program.

What link there could be with Rajneesh's being released on bail and their personal safety was anyone's guess. But their fear conjoined with the other bloodcurdling tales in the stew were supposed to take care of the danger motif. Then it was time to address flight risk.

Weaver conjured up the imminent October 28 arrest and said, "The attorneys had repeatedly, repeatedly come to the United States Attorney's Office, whenever there was

leads, and they can only follow up 10 of them. Paul Mayfield fit into the category of too much money and time, and very little possibility of even long term payoff. We actually called him from the Dallas airport (I had Dorothy Amore do it). But at that point we didn't know what to make of him, what to ask and how to ask it.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Miller, *Plexus* (Book Two of *The Rosy Crucifixion*), pp. 518f. I owe this reference - and so much more - to my twin brother, Mark Brecher. One English writer, however, set out to prove the opposite: even old classics would be turned down these days. He submitted Jane Austen's work to 18 publishers under an assumed name. None of them wanted it. Penguin, which had republished *Pride and Prejudice* the year before, rejected *First Impressions* - its original title - by "Alison Laydee" (a hint at Austen's pseudonym, "A Lady"). They described it as a "really original and interesting read" but not right for their list. ("Publishers reject classic titles", BBC News website, July 17, 2007)

¹⁰⁷⁷ See Chapter 7.

some sense in the wind of an indictment and arrests.¹⁰⁷⁸ And the one issue they were concerned about is not quashing the indictment or not appearing before the Grand Jury, but is there going to be bail, is he going to have to go to jail, what's going to happen when something happens in the Grand Jury? They're most concerned about his surrender. And that's the reason I submit that the evidence in this case shows he took off at the most and last most available point that he had to get out of the country."

Two things. One, as we have seen,¹⁰⁷⁹ Peter Schey, Rajneesh's Los Angeles attorney who was not present at the Portland bail hearing, told me he had talked to Weaver and Youngman on numerous occasions about his client testifying before a Grand Jury to give exculpatory testimony. But the two assistant US attorneys never even let him know that it had been convened. Two, Weaver's boss, Turner, had a different opinion about "the most and last most available point that he had to get out of the country".¹⁰⁸⁰ That opinion bears repeating for a third and last time.

If he had simply surrendered, he would have been released on bail, and he may never have been convicted. Who knows? He could have gone to trial. He could have had the option of fleeing at a later time, because there would have been months, and months, and months, and months between the time that he was released and the time that the case went to trial.¹⁰⁸¹

It wasn't, however, just the same old meatloaf. Weaver also served up something that was incredible in the extreme. Especially when taken in the context of what had happened since the arrest and would happen later that afternoon. Namely, that the only way to guarantee Rajneesh's personal safety was to keep him "detained until the time of trial".¹⁰⁸²

But Judge Edward Leavy wasn't biting or buying. When it became apparent that he would be released on bail, Weaver wanted it set at a thermonuclear \$5 million. Leavy set it at \$500,000, which was raised in a couple of hours on a Friday afternoon. Minutes after the decision was announced on *KOIN-TV* Channel 6 someone called the station several times.

At 15:55 p.m. - it was clocked in by the person picking up the phone - the caller said, "I've got a hot tip for you, there's gonna be a bomb go off at the [Multnomah County] Justice Center at 1755 between the 3rd and 6th floors, that's all bye."¹⁰⁸³ In other words, it was scheduled to go off two hours from then in the "General Housing" area where Rajneesh had stayed the night before and would have been staying that night had bail been denied. According to the witness from the television station, "the caller didn't speak fast, but talked as if he was reading his message".

¹⁰⁷⁸ He is confirming what we already know. Namely, that there were loads of times when imminent indictment and arrest were in the air and Rajneesh wasn't.

¹⁰⁷⁹ See beginning of Chapter 9.

¹⁰⁸⁰ See the end of Chapter 9 and halfway through this chapter.

¹⁰⁸¹ See below for more on this not insignificant point.

¹⁰⁸² Which would have begun three months later, in February 1986.

¹⁰⁸³ I'm quoting from the police report. The person at the station was Marsha Sanford.

I asked US Marshal Bagley, who was responsible for Rajneesh's safety everywhere in Oregon except inside the jail, if he had heard anything about the bomb threat. "I'm not quite sure I heard that one," he said. "I never heard that one," said Chief Deputy O'Brien.

I asked Sergeant Jim Davis, public information officer for the Multnomah County Sheriff's office. He put a minimalist slant on the incident. "It's not unusual to get bomb threats. We get them all the time. We get them in court rooms, in the schools around here. Government buildings really get them! It's almost to the point of being as routine as something like that could ever be."

About this one in particular he said, "I have a phone in my car and happened to be in the area when the bomb threat was called in. By the time I arrived the Portland bomb technicians were already conducting a procedural search. We went through the standard evacuation of the public areas. All our security people found was a very questionable gym bag in a public locker downstairs. The bomb technicians found it was absolutely nothing."

"Didn't it have something to do with a bomb," I asked.

"No."

"There weren't books on bombs or anything like that?"

"No. No. No. No. They were school books from Portland State University."

"Nothing about bombs at all?"

"Nah! Not at all."

But a report filed at 10:25 p.m. on the night of the incident, which Davis himself gave me after our interview, showed there was a bit more to it than that. According to Detective Sergeant Dennis Branagan, "a suspicioned [sic] explosive device" had been found before Rajneesh's arrival. "I immediately responded to the location and observed a mass of people in front of the building as well as various reporters from the TV news media. The lower portions of the Justice Center had been evacuated and public safety aids were blocking the entrance and exit doors."

An "athletic bag had been found in locker # 19 in visitors lower area. Further [,] the bag had a computer circuit board visible on top with wires going into the bag." Branagan called for an "explosive dog" - that is, a dog that sniffs for explosives - but there were none available. The bomb squad "after inspecting the device, attached a rope to it and after clearing the area pulled the bag from the locker". Inside were two books - *Digital Circuits and Micro-Computers*, and *Electronic Circuits and Devices Electronic Engineering Technology EET III* - "wires, diodes, etc.", "resistors, etc.", and an "all circuit evaluator".

"Was there any relationship between the bomb scare and the presence of Rajneesh there," I asked Sergeant Davis.

"I think we were all concerned that that potential was there," he said. "It would be ridiculous not to worry about that."

But he then tried to wave away the alarm factor, as he did consistently throughout the interview. He said Rajneesh was at least six floors away from the place where the "bomb" was found.¹⁰⁸⁴ But according to Sue Appleton,¹⁰⁸⁵ two deputy marshals left him alone in handcuffs and chains in the ground floor reception area. In other words, he was taken into the building *after a prima facie* plausible bomb threat had been received and evacuation procedures initiated, and abandoned on the same floor with a "suspicioned" bag.

Now I don't have a clue about what all the aforementioned techno talk means and the sophistication and true value of the books found. It might have been just another crank. And then again it could have been the work of someone who wanted to show experts he knew the score and was a "credible threat". This time, or the next.

In either case, it was not nothing and was bound to have psychological impacts on the sannyasins, who now felt - with lots of good reasons - that they could no longer protect their beloved master. Yet another strike - let's call it strike five - against Weaver's theory - either incredibly stupid or cynical - that the only way to guarantee Rajneesh's personal safety was to keep him "detained until the time of trial".

Rajneesh, who didn't know about the bomb threat until later, said a Justice Center jailer handed him his belongings and a form to fill in to acknowledge receipt. This was standard procedure. What wasn't was the man disappearing for a half an hour - under those circumstances - to get a signature from his boss. He finally returned without the signature.

Sergeant Davis said, "He [Rajneesh] entered in the reception area down in the basement. And he exited in the same area. I happen to be the one who walked him up the ramp the day that he was released. Captain Tom Slider and I walked him up the ramp."

"That was the day of the bomb threat," I said.

"Was it that day? You're right. Because we held him a little longer until we got that cleaned up before we released him. We wanted to make sure it was totally safe before we released him. Obviously, everybody was concerned for his safety."¹⁰⁸⁶

¹⁰⁸⁴ Here we might note that the bomb was reported as being between the 3rd and 6th floor, but the bag that was found was on the ground floor. I don't know why they started looking there.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Was Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Poisoned by Ronald Reagan's America?*, p.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Detective Sergeant Branagan was still on this nothing to it case at least as late as February 6, 1986.

After almost immediately tracking the phone call to a residence in north Portland he interviewed the suspects, and with their permission taped their voices to compare them with the original caller (or callers). The suspects, who claimed that they hadn't made the calls, said there had been something wrong with the line on the day in question. In a follow up on the original report, Branagan wrote, "Apparently another party was on their line and while [blacked out] was talking to directory assistance a voice said, 'Fuck you, kiss my ass.'"

Branagan called Phone Security and "Renee" eventually told him that the trouble apparently was a "'bad cable pair' [,] which could be a 'crossed line'." On December 6, 1985, Branagan "received a phone call from Mr. Jim Umsted of PNB Security. He informed me that he had been in contact with ... [blacked out] about this case. He further states that repairs were effected 11-13-85 and there apparently was a 'high resistance cross' on the line. He further said that somebody with a repair phone, possibly could hook into the line. (No way to prove this)"

On Tuesday, November 12, Rajneesh's trial was set to begin on February 18. But almost everyone in court that day knew it wasn't to be. According to Swami Prem Niren, "within a day or two after Judge Leavy had granted bail, I met with Osho". Present at that weekend meeting - probably Sunday, November 10 - were two top gun lawyers who had recently been brought on board.

Jack Ransom, a former Assistant US Attorney who had previously worked with Turner in Portland. And Brian O'Neill, a former head of special prosecutions for the US Attorney in Los Angeles and a partner of Niren's when both had been at Charlie Mannatt's in Los Angeles. Rajneesh wanted to know if they would win. Both Ransom and O'Neill thought the government's case was very weak and they knew it. Ransom backed that up with the news that he had had a feeler about a deal from Turner. He wanted to negotiate.¹⁰⁸⁷ After they had given their opinions Rajneesh asked Niren what he thought.

Niren "agreed with the other lawyers [about the strength of the government's case]. But I just didn't think the government would quit, even if he won. That they had already proved that they would do whatever they needed to do in order to get him out of the country."¹⁰⁸⁸ Niren started crying "and said I just didn't think we could protect him. The government had arrested him, abused its own laws and held him where we couldn't find him. They could do the same again. I also pointed out that the trial could go on for weeks, and he would probably have to sit in court through all of that. He sat for a bit, and then instructed us to make a deal that permitted him to leave the country immediately. Ransom contacted Turner and then the deal was done within a few days."

"The bottom line," said Myles Ambrose, "was if the Bhagwan pled guilty to two counts, they would accept his plea and then let him leave the country. I objected to it. I said, 'You don't realize that if he's been convicted in the United States, he'll never be able to return here. And not only that. He'll be considered a criminal in other jurisdictions. I told Niren that the Bhagwan could do what he wanted. But I didn't want to be counsel on record on any guy who was pleading guilty for a crime he didn't commit.'"

"So you are saying that you believe that he did not commit any crimes," I asked.

That is, someone might have tapped into the phone line and made the calls. He could have easily dumbed down his voice to make it sound like the work of the poor and downtrodden. Nevertheless, as far as I know, no further research was done, and no conclusions were drawn. I regret not having the time, energy and good sense to contact Branagan to ask his opinions about it, but see note 1075 above.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Myles Ambrose corroborated this sequence of events - the prosecution offering the deal.

Ambrose: The prosecutors offered a deal to let the Bhagwan plead guilty to some ... whatever the hell it was

Brecher: Two counts.

Ambrose: Two counts. And then he would be permitted to leave the country as part of the package.

Brecher: You said the prosecutors offered the deal?

Ambrose: Yeah. Well, they were the ones who would offer the deal.

See also Steve Trott's remarks in Chapter 11.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Ambrose said something similar (see Chapter 9). "Turner was the focal point of getting rid of the Bhagwan. If they hadn't done it for the INS thing, they probably would have done it for something else."

"I have absolutely no knowledge that he ever committed a crime."

Before and during the negotiations, state and federal attorneys were frantically debriefing Swami Krishna Deva to come up with enough evidence to tag Rajneesh with the violent crimes of Sheela. If there had been a scrap of what they were all looking for, the very idea of sleeping with the enemy would have been out of the question. The prosecutors would have gone after the guru from all sides and with such ferocity that packs of hyenas would have looked compassionate in comparison.

And all their sticking with it persistence would have been paid for in spades. "People would have said" - in Frohnmayer's words - "My God! This is a real enemy! We haven't been imagining this!"¹⁰⁸⁹ I stress the conditional nature of those sentences, because by the second week in November, those prosecutors knew all too well that as far as Rajneesh was concerned Krishna Deva was shooting with blanks. In Bob Hamilton's best case scenario description, it "wasn't sufficient".¹⁰⁹⁰

Still, they had roughed him up a lot over the past few weeks - showed him what they were made and capable of. And they had him over a barrel now. So they pushed for what they could get. The deal was that Rajneesh would plead guilty to Count One, an all purpose conspiracy charge, and one other count.

On November 14, 1985 in Portland's federal district court Weaver presented a list of 42 points the government "could have proven" if the case had gone to trial. The major thrust was that beginning around December 1980 Rajneesh plotted with his closest confidantes to move both himself and his commune to the US. The conspiracy revolved around and was absolutely dependent on sham marriages. Apparently, there was no Plan B. The 16 sham marriages in the October 23rd indictment had suddenly exploded to 400 plus. More rabbits on viagra. Point 14 read, "Shortly before Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh came to the United States, approximately 400 such [sham] marriages occurred."

Peter Schey, who wasn't at the Sunday pow wow, told me, "There was a very weak case and they literally threw the kitchen sink at Bhagwan. They over charged him with the hope that they could make one or two charges stick. He also had a visa application pending for permanent residence on the basis of his religious work. That was another reason for the indictment. They didn't want to decide on the application. The indictment was a way to short circuit that application."¹⁰⁹¹

In other words, defense attorneys Ransom, O'Neill, Schey and Niren were all saying that the immigration case, which had been about two years in the making, was not a smoking gun. It was just smoke. Nothing to lose sleep about, let alone be shaken into fleeing from "at the last minute".

¹⁰⁸⁹ See Chapter 8.

¹⁰⁹⁰ See Chapter 7.

¹⁰⁹¹ See Chapter 11.

I asked Turner if there was anything besides the plea agreement that proved his marriage conspiracy case. "If you look at the agreement," he said, "you will recognize there was a carefully orchestrated plan in which they would come over here, and bring followers over here, and how they would bring assets over here ... etc. So there wasn't any question, either in terms of how we viewed it or in terms of how the INS viewed it."

"To prove your plea agreement by the plea agreement itself is basic sophistry," I said. "It is begging the question. Is there any other proof for your contentions besides that agreement?" Turner said the signed plea agreement was the proof of his entire case. In other words, despite what he crowed about in public at the time, the proof was not in the pudding, but in putting it to those he wanted to ride out of Dodge. Trial by ordeal, not evidence. First bleed, then plead. Winning ugly.

As for the plea itself, it was a legal duckbill platypus. It was neither a plea of guilt nor a *nolo contendere*.¹⁰⁹² It was an Alford plea. The defendant maintained his innocence, but declared that the government had sufficient evidence to convict him if there was a trial.¹⁰⁹³ Brian O'Neill stated the matter before Judge Leavy, who, like him, was Irish-American and a graduate of Notre Dame.

"Specifically, the defendant accepts and acknowledges and agrees that that evidence which the prosecution has just recited is evidence which they would be able to produce at trial and would be sufficient to convict. At the same time, the defendant asserts his innocence of those charges and the reason - and wants to express to this Court his concern for entering this plea, and they are these: As a concern for the possible danger or possible harassment which might attend to himself and or his followers were he to remain have prompted him to enter into this plea."

According to the concocted agreement, Rajneesh was given a 10 year suspended jail sentence and ordered to pay \$260,000 in fines and \$140,000 for the prosecution's expenses. In addition, Rajneesh corporations would agree to drop participation in the class action conspiracy suits against the INS, the US State Department, and all Oregon and federal officials.

Rajneesh stepped into a burgundy stretch Rolls Royce limousine and was whisked directly from court to airport. Portland City Police in tandem with Oregon State Police gave him a "Code Three" escort, complete with sirens and motorcycle outriders in the lead blocking off entrances to the freeway.

Around 5:30 p.m. a privately rented Gulfstream 2 jet took off with him and about 12 disciples on board. It landed later at Allentown, Pennsylvania. They switched over to a Jetstar 731, rented from a man who two weeks before had told reporters he was glad not

¹⁰⁹² no contest

¹⁰⁹³ In the guilty until proven innocent climate, one wonders just how much evidence would have been sufficient. For more on that theme, see Chapter 11.

to have had anything to do with those people: Meta Buttenheim at Northeast Jets. The Jetstar 731 flew onwards through the night and refueled in Shannon, Ireland.¹⁰⁹⁴

First thing the next morning, November 15, Steve Trott reported the "successful" conclusion of the Rajneesh saga to the 8 a.m. gathering of "the group" at Justice Department headquarters. It consisted of key personnel - the heads of all the agencies, or their representatives - and included the INS, the US Marshals and the US Attorneys' Office.

The meeting, which was filmed for a *PBS* documentary, *Justice For All*,¹⁰⁹⁵ featured Attorney General Edwin Meese III muttering "Rajneeshburg" instead of Rajneeshpuram and saying silly things about "the Bhagwan" flying off into the sunset. He seemed to be trying to live down to his reputation of forgetfulness. "If Ed has one thing to do, he'll make a list. If he has two things, he'll make two lists."¹⁰⁹⁶ In his dissimulating voice one can detect an echo of Sheela's surprise as she looked in the newspapers the morning after the fire bombing of the Wasco County Planning office and exclaimed, "Oh, look what happened! Isn't that strange! Oh, isn't that funny!"¹⁰⁹⁷

The India bound party spent Friday night in Larnaca, Cyprus. On Saturday they flew on through Bahrain and landed in New Delhi's Palam airport around 2:30 a.m. local time on Sunday, November 17 - one day short of the 7th anniversary of Jonestown. About 500 disciples, who had camped at the airport for days, threw rose petals in front of him as he walked. He was chauffeured away in a Mercedes driven by one of India's brightest films stars, Vinod Khanna, also known as Swami Vinod Bharti.

¹⁰⁹⁴ This wasn't Rajneesh's last contact with Shannon, Ireland and Northeast Jets. See Chapter 11 for both (note 1220 for the latter.)

¹⁰⁹⁵ Already referred to in Chapter 9.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Arthur Burns, Associate Attorney General on Meese's watch, who eventually resigned in protest over the sleaze he found in his boss, had this to say about him: "Contrary to opinions held by some detractors, he was bright and had a fine legal mind. He had a deep understanding of legal and policy issues. He was a hands-on leader. Key personnel at Justice met every morning at 8 a.m. Ed was accessible to his people. The Department was well run under his leadership. That was the upside." (*Preparing to be Lucky: A Public and Private Life Shaped by Humor*, Chapter 1)

The downside was that America's top cop was almost continually being investigated for one thing or another. *The New York Times* editorialized: "The difference between escaping indictment and vindication has long eluded Edwin Meese. He claimed vindication when one special prosecutor failed to indict him, thus clearing the way for his confirmation as Attorney General. He claimed vindication again last summer [1988] when another special prosecutor declined to file criminal charges. Now the Justice Department's own ethical watchdog, the respected Office of Professional Responsibility, reasserts the critical distinction. Concluding its 61-page review of an independent counsel's report, that office says: 'We trust that this analysis will lay to rest the claims by Mr. Meese that the appropriate standard for official behavior is whether an independent counsel seeks an official's indictment. We found that the independent counsel's report far from vindicates Mr. Meese; rather, it details conduct which should not be tolerated of any government employee, especially not the Attorney General of the United States. Were he still serving as Attorney General, we would recommend . . . that the President take disciplinary action.'" ("Mr. Meese's Disgrace", January 18, 1989)

¹⁰⁹⁷ See Chapter 8.

About six hours later, around 8:30 a.m., he held a one hour press conference at the Hotel Hyatt Regency in South Delhi. "Good Morning, India," he said. He was glad to be back in the land of the Buddhas, the land of the enlightened ones. He described America as a "barbaric, uncivilized country".¹⁰⁹⁸ After the conference he was flown to Himachal Pradesh in Northern India to a resort halfway between Kulu and Manali in a place called the "Valley of the Gods".

It was at Kulu Manali in January 1970 that he had initiated his first disciple. Not Ma Yoga Laxmi - as I had been led to believe by her and other sannyasins¹⁰⁹⁹ – but Ma Anand Madhu. He did so with some secret trepidation.

The day I started initiating, my only fear was, "Will I be able to some day change my followers into my friends?" The night before I could not sleep. Again and again I thought, "How am I going to manage it? A follower is not supposed to be a friend." I said to myself that night in Kulu-Manali in the Himalayas, "Don't be serious. You can manage anything, although you don't know the A-B-C of managerial science."¹¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁹⁸ *The Hindustan Times*, November 18, 1985

¹⁰⁹⁹ See Chapter 2.

¹¹⁰⁰ Rajneesh, *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood*, p. 326 (first version), p. 219 (second).

CHAPTER 11: IN SPAIN, MAINLY ON THE PLANE

The enjoyment of a reader or audience comes from being a spectator at the exaggerated and elegant contest, without having to hear any arguments for the other side.¹¹⁰¹

As much as the press had been co-opted over the years and diverted from its original adversarial course, there still beats in the journalistic heart, admittedly more faintly at some times than others, an instinctive resistance to consistently reporting what was not true.¹¹⁰²

Ma Anand Sheela, Shanti Bhadra and Anand Pujja were arrested on October 28, 1985, 11 hours after Rajneesh, in what from a distance was made to look like a convincing demonstration of *blitzkrieg*.¹¹⁰³ But it was a hurry up and wait affair, because they were not extradited to Portland until February 6, 1986, nearly 3½ months later.

I asked Robert Hamilton why. "Even with attempted murder charges against Sheela and her group, Charles Turner, Barry Sheldall and Steve Peifer¹¹⁰⁴ still had to travel to Germany to make sure that that extradition occurred," he said. "The German authorities were concerned that this was some sort of religious persecution business. And they wanted to make sure there wasn't too much religious persecution. Or there was no religious persecution mixed into this. Or at least that's what they were saying."

At the beginning of December 1985, Turner, Sheldall and Peifer, traveled to Bonn to discuss the case with top officials at the Ministry of Justice. Clearly, there were going to be *Problemen*. For one thing, the latest extradition treaty between the United States and Germany, ratified by the House of Representatives and Senate in 1978 and signed by President Jimmy Carter, did not include immigration conspiracy in its long list of extraditable offenses. Or at least it couldn't be read that way without exceptionally powerful lenses and a keen urge to bend over backwards.

But the US Attorney's office - which had been pushed and pressured into pursuing the immigration case and had allocated an inordinate amount of time and lawyers in that endeavor - needed to make sure that Sheela was extradited for something it could prosecute. So that wide white space in the treaty, which as far as the feds were concerned was large enough to drive East Germany through, would have to be patched up and papered over. And even then the extradition was by no means a done deal.

Otmar Wachenheim, Sheela's German attorney, told me that while Sheela and the two others arrested were in a women's prison in Bühl, a team of Chicago and Portland attorneys was negotiating a deal with Turner and Dave Frohnmayer. If she let herself get extradited, she would be sentenced to nine or ten years in jail. Sheela asked his opinion.

¹¹⁰¹ Amy Richlin, *The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor*, p. 212

¹¹⁰² Mark Hertsgaard, *On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency*, p. 90

¹¹⁰³ Up close it was not particularly *leistungsfähig* (impressive). See Chapter 9.

¹¹⁰⁴ Who worked in the Oregon Attorney General's office.

He told her not to accept, and then flew to America - on December 15 - to make it clear to Turner that this extradition was going to be a *do ut des*: the gentle art of compromise. If he wanted to get something, he would have to give something in return.

In their haste to accommodate the *Amis* and make arrests for them the German police might have violated German laws. As with many, and perhaps even most, legal issues, this could be argued in many ways, and there is much room for reasonable differences of opinion. Why? Because there are so many not always perfectly aligned or even compatible laws, and it's always a toss up which one or ones are being applied at any given time, and which are going to be deemed paramount. Thus a shrewd lawyer might even have fought for a dismissal of the arrest itself, which would have rendered the entire ensuing extradition process null and void.

"I wanted to fight the extradition," Wachenheim said. "We would have had ammunition to fight the case. But I can't say for certain that we would have won." In December 1985, Wachenheim was a lot more fiery. At least in the press. "America may be a powerful nation but she cannot hijack my client without adequate evidence," he said.¹¹⁰⁵ He would protest the FBI's illegal and unwarranted behavior inside the house in Häusern. "But I wonder where it will get us. After all, the Americans are bullies. But this much I assure you. I will take every legal step to prevent Sheela's deportation to the United States.

Wachenheim told me that Turner was always trying to influence the American public in an attempt to justify his trip to Bonn. "He was saying that extradition would not be granted unless he had had discussions there. But, actually, those discussions had nothing to do with the judicial procedures, which were happening in Bühl, under the jurisdiction of Judge Eckhart von Bubnoff, a leading extradition expert who was not influenced by the politics of the case. Turner said one thing to the public and there was another thing going on secretly. The public never knew that Sheela would only have to serve four years minus time off for good behavior, and that deal was cut in broad outlines in December 1985. The final form was decided in July 1986."

Nine days after the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after takeoff, Sheela, Shanti Bhadra and Anand Puja boarded a Trans World Airline flight in Frankfurt. They landed in New York about nine hours later and flew on separate flights back to Portland. Sheela flew TWA and Eastern Air Lines and arrived in Portland at 11:45 p.m the same day.¹¹⁰⁶

The relatively swift - 21½ hours - and luxurious trip of the three women back to Portland from Germany was in marked contrast to the one Rajneesh had made across America on "Con Air". "There were half a dozen Marshals, three men and three women, and some Oregon State Police officers," US Marshal in Portland Kernan Bagley said. "Governor Vic Atiyeh ordered that. Across the Atlantic, they didn't have that many passengers, so we had the last 12 rows all to ourselves. It was personalized service."

¹¹⁰⁵ *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, December 8, 1985

¹¹⁰⁶ *The Oregonian*, February 7, 1986

Bagley said flying commercial air liners was cheaper than using the National Prisoner Transportation Service (NPTS) and faster. Further, using NPTS "would have compromised our security. We were worried about security. They had a lot of followers all over the world. We thought security was of primary importance."

"Sheela, Shanti Bhadra and Puja had followers all around the world," I asked.

"Well, the Bhagwan did. But she represented the Bhagwan."

Listening to the potpourri of reasons for doing this and not doing that even the toughest of investigative journalists - which doesn't include me - are bound to have moments when the wiring has had enough and fuses start popping. Sheela had ceased to represent Rajneesh on September 14, 1985. At that time her so-called following dropped faster than the share prices of Lehman Brothers. From, say, half a million to thirty. Not including, of course, the nobody else could see them trillions of angels and other admirers blowing *gachchhamis* her way.

By February 1986 she represented herself and a morality tale about a Gujarati girl who got too big for her britches and in way over her IQ. But despite the simple facts, both officials and the lapdog press insisted on referring to her as a "Rajneeshee official", or "ex-Rajneeshee official". Which they would have to do to keep the wrong stories running and justify squeezing Rajneesh corporations bone dry.

"So we went on three separate aircraft," Bagley said. "Our aim was to arrive in Portland at the same time. But that became impossible because of fog and other things."

"Isn't it dangerous transporting these kinds of criminals on a commercial airliner," I asked.¹¹⁰⁷

"No, not really. No. We were in total control. We had no problems."

"So it's possible to transport high profile prisoners on commercial airliners?"

"It's always done that way."

In a joint statement to the press immediately after Sheela's return, Turner and Frohnmayer said they "intend to prosecute all of the outstanding criminal charges".¹¹⁰⁸ Then a detention hearing was held in mid February, mostly in secret, and the federal and state government submitted their cases under seal. *The Oregonian* editorialized against that. "The issue here is not whether Sheela should be held without bail but whether any person not convicted of a crime should be held without public disclosure of the reasons for that detention. Keeping the reasons secret removes an important safeguard of a fair criminal justice system: the ability of the public to make its own findings of whether prosecutors and judges are acting reasonably and properly."¹¹⁰⁹

Now that the women were back on America soil and likely to stay put until trial, another problem had to be contended with. Turner and Frohnmayer said publicly that they were

¹¹⁰⁷ The danger argument was one Steve Boyle had used when I asked why Rajneesh himself had not been transported commercially. See Chapter 10.

¹¹⁰⁸ *The Dalles Chronicle*, February 7, 1986

¹¹⁰⁹ *The Oregonian*, February 14, 1986

going make Sheela face the music for everything. Brave, bold words. But there was still the small print in that pesky and far from cooperative German-American extradition treaty, which clearly stated that the people handed over must be tried on the charges they had been extradited for. That, and that alone.

And in this case that was the attempted murder of Swami Devaraj. "When Sheela got back to America," Wachenheim said, "the position of the authorities seemed to be that they didn't care about the extradition treaty. Turner wanted Sheela to admit publicly that she was guilty of everything he was accusing her of. He wanted to appear in public as the person who had gotten Sheela for everything."

In March 1989, four months after I had spoken to Wachenheim, I asked Weaver, "When did you realize that Sheela and the other woman, Ann Phyllis McCarthy¹¹¹⁰ could not be extradited on immigration charges?"

"They were extradited on immigration charges," he affirmed.

"Only after a lot of repairs on the extradition treaty."

"The initial report we had was that they would be extradited from Germany on the immigration charges, and not necessarily ..."

"... When was that?"

"That was before the arrest."

"I actually spoke to the attorney for Mrs. Silverman¹¹¹¹ in Germany," I said, "and he said that on Friday, October 25, the German government told the American government, no way you were actually going to extradite these people on immigration charges."

"What was that guy's name?"

"Otmar Wachenheim."

"Yes. I do not trust anything Mr. Wachenheim would ever say. So, certainly, his interpretation of extradition matters as regards the United States Treaty would not be something I would put any stock in."¹¹¹²

On March 19, Sheela and Puja were indicted on a federal conspiracy charge in connection with the salmonella poisoning in The Dalles. But they hadn't been extradited for trying to poison a town. Technicalities, technicalities! The government's key witnesses, Rajneeshpuram's former mayor, Swami Krishna Deva, and Ava Avalos, were named as co-conspirators, but weren't charged.

In April, federal prosecutors wanted to include wiretapping in the charges and faced the same problem as with the poisoning. While lawyers wrangled, the Sheela trial was delayed once again, this time until May 5. "As a part of those negotiations", Assistant US

¹¹¹⁰ Ma Yoga Vidya

¹¹¹¹ I don't know why everyone - myself included - kept referring to her as Mrs. Silverman. Because as far as I can see, she was now "Mrs. Shelfer" - after her on the fly marriage to John Shelfer in January 1981 (see Chapter 2) and "Mrs. Birnstiel, after her Mexico City marriage in December 1984 (see Chapter 10, note 957).

¹¹¹² When I mentioned this to Wachenheim in 2004, he said "I had forgotten how arrogant the Americans can be."

Attorney William Youngman wrote in an April 17, 1986 affidavit, "application has been made to the Federal Republic of Germany to expand the extradition treaty to allow prosecution of Ma Anand Sheela for the outstanding charges mentioned above. Ma Anand Sheela has joined in the Government's request to expand the treaty."¹¹¹³

I have known cases of severe contrition leaping over into life threatening masochism, and in some catastrophic moments have even experienced the same in myself. But asking the Germans to expand an extradition treaty so I can be prosecuted for as many things as the US and Oregon state governments want to throw at me has never once crossed my mind. And even if in an outburst of *mea culpa* Sheela had wanted to smash the tablets of the legal 10 commandments - which doesn't remotely fit into any of her psychological profiles - her lawyers would have put down all eight or twelve feet. That is, if it weren't anything more than legal make believe after the long worked on deal had been signed, sealed and delivered.

On Monday, July 21, 1986, eight days after the people of Wasco County unveiled an aren't we wonderful statue in The Dalles,¹¹¹⁴ the getting under the limbo stick West German government finally agreed to an expanded definition of the treaty and the crimes Sheela could be charged with. This included the attempted murders of Wasco County Judge William Hulse, Wasco County Commissioner Ray Matthew, Swami Devaraj, salmonella poisoning over 700 people in The Dalles, the largest wiretapping scheme in history, and the January 14, 1985 fire bombing of the Wasco County Planning Office.

It also included what Turner called "the largest recorded marriage fraud in the history of this country. There has never been a recorded marriage fraud of these proportions in the

¹¹¹³ Two things. One, this retrofitting the extradition treaty reminds me of what some pundits have said about tradition: adjusting the past to fit the needs of the present. And it wasn't the first time this strategy was fine tuned for the Rajneeshee "situation" (see Chapters 5 and 8 when existing laws were altered). Two, the US' understanding of its own extradition treaties is, to say the least, quirky and jerky. While I'm certain that loads of cases could be cited to support that contention, I'll have to settle for a few. Dr. Humberto Alvarez Machain was kidnapped from his surgery in Guadalajara, Mexico, "by Mexican bounty-hunters paid by the American government". The case was thrown out of court by a federal judge in Los Angeles. "He ordered Dr. Alvarez to be released, and he is now back in Mexico; though not before the United States immigration authorities, in an almost comical show of *chutzpah*, had tried to detain him as an illegal immigrant.... Although the case has collapsed, the judge did not give an opinion on the most controversial part of it: the right of the United States to seize citizens of other countries and bring them to America for trial, even when extradition arrangements already exist.... The [Supreme] court had already ruled, in a related case, that foreigners were not entitled to the same protections as Americans against unreasonable search and seizure; so that another Mexican suspect, Rene Verdugo Urquidez, could perfectly legally be abducted by Mexican policemen in the pay of the United States, and shoved through the border fence into the arms of American officers.... In the Alvarez case, taking the principle further, the court argued that the extradition treaty 'does not purport to specify the only way in which one country may gain custody of a national of the other country for the purposes of prosecution'. In other words, abduction, though not specifically allowed, was not ruled out - not only in this case, but also, by implication, in the extradition treaties between the United States and other countries." ("A hunch too far", *The Economist*, December 19, 1992) Thus according to them, as far as foreigners and legal rights are concerned, all bets are off. But in times of Guantanamo, "extraordinary rendition", and the "extradition" of Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan all of this legal hair splitting is silly and beside the point.

¹¹¹⁴ See Chapter 4.

history of this country." In other words, if convicted for all of those crimes, Sheela should have been doing hard time until Hell froze over.

But what do you know, the very next day, on Tuesday, July 22, Sheela and the other women made an Alford plea to all of the above. She was fined \$469,000 and paid \$200,000 immediately. She was given 69 years.¹¹¹⁵ But even then it was clear that she would serve no more than 4½. "I hate to hold animosity, but I think she's getting off lightly," said Judge William Hulse.¹¹¹⁶

In August Hulse and Commissioner Matthew filed an \$800,000 damages suit against Sheela and others involved in their poisoning. Since by then Sheela had pled poverty, and Krishna Deva was in the Witness Protection Program, they extended their suit to include Rajneesh corporations. As if the Rajneeshees had banded together to corporately poison them.

The sentencing of Sheela and the other women brought up a lot of unanswered questions about Rajneeshpuram and Rajneesh. Some wondered if Rajneesh had gotten off too easily. They assumed that he was guilty of a lot more than he had gotten nailed for and thought he should have gone to jail. To defend their actions, past and present, Frohnmayer and Turner held another in tandem press conference in Portland.

"Asked if the big fish hadn't gotten away, Turner said the government did not have sufficient evidence to convict Rajneesh of other charges."¹¹¹⁷ The sentences handed out to Sheela and the other women were widely perceived as light and incomplete. Turner said they were "tough, fair, proportionate". He also noted that "he had taken into account the feelings of the people of Wasco County".¹¹¹⁸ Frohnmayer and Turner said "some of the other costs may be recovered as racketeering proceedings continue against the commune and its leaders on the civil level".¹¹¹⁹

A few days after the press conference Frohnmayer was dressed in sport shirt and shorts and relaxing at a state district attorneys' conference in Sun River. He defended Sheela's sentence. "Sheela raped Oregon," he said and she would be serving more time "than a hard-core rapist would serve".¹¹²⁰ A "hard-core rapist" could have received more than 60 years in prison with a 30 year minimum. The penalty for raping the entire state - if such things were actually possible, especially by a woman - would have been incalculable.

"We have reached largely the conclusion of this story," Frohnmayer said, "and the bad guys lost and the good guys won".¹¹²¹ Neither Turner nor Frohnmayer ever told the press what Wachenheim told me. Namely, that Sheela's prison sentence had already been

¹¹¹⁵ *The Bend Bulletin*, July 25, 1986

¹¹¹⁶ *The Oregonian*, July 23, 1986

¹¹¹⁷ *Salem Statesman-Journal*, July 23, 1986

¹¹¹⁸ *The Dalles Weekly Reminder*, July 24, 1986

¹¹¹⁹ *The Dalles Chronicle*, July 25, 1986

¹¹²⁰ *The Bend Bulletin*, July 25, 1986

¹¹²¹ *The Bend Bulletin*, July 25, 1986. That was a line I had read often in my research, and was to hear in a lot of the interviews.

worked out in broad outlines in December 1985, more than a month before she had been extradited.

On Friday, July 26, Sheela and the other women were taken to the Federal Correctional Institute at Pleasantown, California, just outside San Francisco. Some people have described the facility as a kind of "Club Fed". In other words, soft time.

Sheela was released from another federal prison - in San Diego - on Tuesday, December 13, 1988. She had spent slightly more than three years in jail. The woman who had pled poverty to avoid paying what she owed purchased a \$1356 one way, business class ticket on a nonstop flight from Los Angeles to Frankfurt.¹¹²² Frohnmayer was publicly outraged, because she still owed Oregon \$269,000. Germany, which had passed a decree in the *Bundestag* denying Rajneesh entry,¹¹²³ once again accepted Sheela with open arms and no questions asked.

On Friday evening, July 28, 1978, a tall, strikingly handsome and well educated 29 year old from a wealthy Jewish family in Highland Park, Illinois sat before Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in Poona. Like so many before and after him, David Berry Knapp¹¹²⁴ stared in deep trembling wonder. Rajneesh beckoned him to close his eyes and wrote out his new name.

When Knapp opened his eyes for what he then thought was the last time as his old self, Rajneesh said, "This will be your new name, Swami Krishna Deva." Krishna, he explained, was one of the incarnations of god. God appeared in every age, every place. "God still hopes that man can be redeemed, that man is not a hopeless case, so god comes again and again."

"The word 'krishna' means enchanting, that which attracts, magical, that which is like a magnet and by which people's hearts are suddenly moved." He said Jesus was a little sad, apparently incapable of laughter. Krishna, on the other hand, "goes perfectly well with the flute, with flowers around his neck, with beautiful clothes - the clothes of a dancer, with ornaments on his body and with a throne, with all the grandeur, with a crown made of peacock feathers - utterly beautiful, utterly affirmative. The message is that religion should be a matter of dance, laughter, love. It should not be serious. It should be light. It should not be grave. It should be capable of loving this world and of affirming life, not negating it."

¹¹²² *Salem Statesman-Journal*, December 16, 1988

¹¹²³ See Chapter 10.

¹¹²⁴ A Dutch variation (*knap*) on the original German - *knapp*, "scarce, a little" - means "handsome" and "intelligent".

The new Swami Krishna Deva said he had already gone through a lot in the week he had been there. "I feel as if you know me," said the man who, seven years later, Rajneesh singled out as someone who could kill him.¹¹²⁵

"I do."

"Very strange!"

"It is, but strange things are possible in life. Life is so full of strange things, things which one cannot believe but which one has to believe because they happen, things which are incredible. If somebody else tells them to you, you will not believe them. But when they happen to you, you have to believe. And that's why life has value. It is a constant surprise. You can never exhaust it. And each moment something turns up which you had never expected, never dreamed about. Life takes such sudden turns, unexpected, unpredictable. That's the beauty of it."¹¹²⁶

One of those strange twists of *karma* took place on Friday, November 22, 1985. Swami Krishna Deva was back in business as David Berry Knapp - KD to DK - and pleading guilty in two separate courts. In the morning in The Dalles to charges of wiretapping and racketeering. In the afternoon in Portland to participating in a massive marriage conspiracy. The born again Knapp submitted an affidavit and guilty plea agreement that had been signed by Turner and others on October 28, 1985. It was signed by Knapp on Tuesday, October 29. In exchange for immunity he had agreed to give testimony to everybody about everyone and everything.

"Mr. Knapp represents he is not involved in any homicide, poisoning or arson, or any attempt to commit those offenses except as described in the aforementioned proffers," the affidavit read. Later in the document, all participants recognized "that Mr. Knapp's personal safety may be jeopardized by virtue of his cooperation". It was another way of saying that the other sannyasins, those not cooperating fully with government prosecutors against old lovers and friends, were the threat, not the big mouth with the clipped wings in front of them.

Despite what everyone there knew, they were saying that Knapp himself was not and never had been dangerous. Then, to ratchet up the rat's credibility and on the side of the angels' appeal, so people could memory hole what Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith had said only one month before - "Krishna Deva will get immunity over my dead body"¹¹²⁷ - his steadfast non participation in the nasty stuff was repeated.

"Based upon the proffers made by Mr. Knapp through his counsel, Des Connall, and except as described herein, and in the representation that Mr. Knapp has not committed any homicide, attempted homicide, arson, attempted arson, poisonings or attempted poisonings, the State and Federal Governments agree that he has immunity" The

¹¹²⁵ See Chapter 9.

¹¹²⁶ *Don't Look Before You Leap*, a darshan diary. About 2½ years later, Krishna Deva asked a question. "What is the difference between a sannyasin and a virgin?" Answer: "A sannyasin stays a sannyasin." (Rajneesh, *The Wild Geese and the Water*, Chapter 9, February 19, 1981)

¹¹²⁷ See Chapter 9.

guilty plea agreement was founded on the you can't be serious premise that Knapp was not guilty of violent crimes.

But as we have already seen,¹¹²⁸ that premise could only be kept aloft by sky hooks and lots of anxious prosecutors blowing at it from below. KD-DK had concocted the Share-a-Home program and the madcap scheme to take political control of Wasco County. He had been involved with spiking salad bars and the water supply in The Dalles.¹¹²⁹ He was fully involved in the arson at the Wasco County Planning Office and was at least knowledgeable about the attempt to murder Swami Devaraj, and the assassination plots against Frohnmayer and Turner himself. Such is the stuff that some federal witnesses "in fear of their lives" are made of.

In the Portland federal district court before Judge Edward Leavy, the same man who had heard Rajneesh's Alford plea,¹¹³⁰ there was some confusion about when Knapp's involvement with the immigration conspiracy ended. If the cut off date was *after* January 31, 1983, the maximum penalty was five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. But if it was *before*, the maximum fine was \$10,000. In open court, all the lawyers hemmed, hawed, jiggled, juggled, wiggled, wormed, fudged and fiddled. In a conjuring stunt that must happen thousands of times every day - 'cause how else are hard working magistrates and judges going to push through the ever accumulating and backlogging case load and get the jobs done - Knapp's involvement in the marriage conspiracy ended *before* January 31, 1983.

One year later, on Monday, November 24, 1986, Judge Leavy sentenced Knapp to two years in prison for immigration conspiracy. Knapp was shocked, probably because he had been promised so much more - or less. "U.S. Attorney Charles H. Turner, who had credited Knapp, 37, with being 'instrumental' in ridding Oregon of the Rajneeshees, said it 'would be putting it mildly' to say he was surprised by the prison term."

The Oregonian said Knapp "had helped topple the Rajneeshee sect in Oregon through his cooperation with authorities".¹¹³¹ On the same day in The Dalles, Knapp was given a suspended five year sentence for wiretapping and racketeering. "Knapp said he considered his seven years as a Rajneeshee a prison sentence, and said: 'No apology is going to wipe anything away from those who suffered senseless, stupid harm.'"¹¹³²

"The very serious crimes weren't seriously prosecuted," I said to former Governor Vic Atiyeh. "The main perpetrators of the activities, people like David Berry Knapp and Ma Anand Sheela, were given very paltry sentences. Knapp, for example, seems to have been

¹¹²⁸ See Chapters 7 and 8.

¹¹²⁹ In fact, two weeks after Knapp pleaded guilty a restaurant worker testified in the Wasco County Circuit Court that she had seen him and another sannyasin in the Portage Inn on September 12, one day before a salmonella epidemic affecting 715 people broke out (*The Oregonian*, December 10, 1985). I don't know how that "eyewitness" could be so sure of the exact date more than 14 months after the events.

¹¹³⁰ See Chapter 10.

¹¹³¹ *The Oregonian*, November 25, 1986

¹¹³² *Salem Statesman-Journal*, November 25, 1986

a linchpin of the organization, and he just danced his way through the courts. Why was that?"

"I suppose it's just a matter of saying, 'Get it over with,'" Atiyeh said. "Plea bargain from Sheela, plea bargain from the Bhagwan. Just to sit around dragging it out, and continuing the emotional torment over a long period of time. 'Let's close this book as quickly as we can.'"

"Nothing more than that?"

"I don't think there's any more than that."

"There wasn't a lot of protest about it?"

"No. I think people were satisfied that there was admitted guilt. It was guilt we suspected to be the case, and they were convicted. And there wasn't much hue and cry about Sheela getting out."

Frohnmayr told University of Oregon Professors Norm Sundberg and Carl Latkin that Krishna Deva had given a "killer affidavit" in his church-state case against Rajneeshpuram. On December 10, 1985, a federal judge gave a summary judgment in his favor. With a characteristically cavalier attitude towards mundane details, he neglected to mention that the reason he won the two year old battle so easily was because there were no lawyers left standing on the other side.¹¹³³ In fact, there was no other side. In November 1985, officials at Rajneeshpuram and Rancho Rajneesh decided that it was no longer an emotionally and economically viable enterprise.

The major economic burden came in the form of "legal" assaults on Rajneeshpuram's wealth. This included a \$10 million salmonella suit and Frohnmayr's \$6.5 million RICO (racketeering) action against the city and Rajneesh corporations. On August 15, 1986, the RICO action suit was finally settled against Rajneesh corporations - not Krishna Deva, Ava Avalos, Ma Anand Sheela, Ma Anand Puja or any of the others actually responsible for the activities - to the tune of \$5 million.

It was a decision equivalent to making ordinary law abiding citizens and shareholders - whoever and wherever they may be - pay out of their own pockets for the corruption of their leaders. Morally, there might be something in that. Because, after all, at least a majority elected and cheered them on in the good times. So maybe they should also be held accountable for the bad. But if that ever becomes a legal precedent, everyone everywhere should head for the hills and cover their assets.

In the July 1987 interview, Professor Carl Latkin asked Frohnmayr, "How many people were in the core decision-making group?" Frohnmayr said, "I have the sense that the power structure was fairly restricted. Thirty people at the maximum."

Thus it was for the sins of those 30 people, who were exposed by the Rajneeshees themselves, that thousands of others would suffer and pay the price. While destroying Rajneeshpuram Frohnmayr and others "brought to justice" less than the full deck of them. Rajneesh corporations would immediately pay \$900,000 of the \$5 million RICO

¹¹³³ The professors, who knew who they could and could not offend with impunity, didn't bring it up either.

settlement. Of that, \$500,000 would go to the victims themselves, and the rest to the state for investigation costs.

The remaining \$4.1 million would be collected once remaining Rajneeshee properties were liquidated and would be evenly divided between victims and state.¹¹³⁴ One lawyer for the victims - on the side of Oregonians, that is - said the settlement was too small. He wanted to squeeze \$25 million out of the Rajneesh corporations.¹¹³⁵

On March 10, 1986, the INS seized a twin engine airplane at Rajneeshpuram. Joe Greene, the star perjurer for the prosecution in Charlotte and Portland, said the plane was seized because it was suspected of bringing in illegal items and persons into the United States.¹¹³⁶ In May, the federal government filed a suit in US District Court in Portland to keep more than \$1.5 million in jewelry and watches and the \$58,522 dollars seized when Rajneesh was arrested in Charlotte.

Included in the merchandise are a woman's platinum diamond and sapphire bracelet watch valued at \$125,000 and a 61-carat woman's platinum diamond bracelet appraised at \$210,000.

Affidavits attached to the lawsuit quote customs and immigration agents as saying that Rajneesh and the others were trying to flee the United States to avoid facing the charges pending against them.¹¹³⁷

The lawsuit alleged that the watches had been smuggled into the United States in June 1981. They were allegedly not properly declared, Greene said.

"We did get a million bucks from the Rajneeshees," Weaver told me. Rajneesh "paid a \$400,000 fine. We seized an airplane and got about half the jewels. They claimed them and we settled out of court. We took half and they took half. Which is customary. I mean it's not customary. It doesn't make logical, legal sense. But as a practical matter, a lot of forfeitures are just settled. It's like settling with the Internal Revenue Service. They want \$100,000. You can only pay \$70,000. They take that and close the case."¹¹³⁸

Even with that pig sticking logic, Weaver's analogy was irrelevant. Because the government had demanded \$400,000 from Rajneesh. And it was paid in full and on time. Then it came back for more. And more. Oink oink.

"I don't know what our theory on the forfeiture was now," Weaver said.
"So you made money on the case," I asked.

¹¹³⁴ *The Bend Bulletin*, August 15, 1986

¹¹³⁵ *The Oregonian*, August 14, 1986

¹¹³⁶ *Salem Statesman-Journal*, March 11, 1986

¹¹³⁷ *The Oregonian*, May 23, 1986

¹¹³⁸ Which reminds me, once again, of what Peter Schey said about government charges (see Chapter 10). "They ovecharged him with the hope that they could make one or two charges stick." See also the comments of Professor Raymond Moley in Chapter 8, note 728.

"Yeah. Actually, the government is now making a lot of money, particularly in forfeitures on drug cases."

"Isn't that a bit like getting screwed and then having to pay for it?"

"Well, yes. But it is customary. It is customary."

Beyond the economic strains placed on Rajneeshpuram, there was the emotional stress on the sannyasins themselves. Broadly speaking, that included the ordeal of watching their beloved spiritual master being arrested, placed in jail, dragged in chains around the country, disappearing from sight, reappearing, getting deported and having his name and life work dragged through the big muddy. To get a taste of how that might feel modern Christians should imagine themselves lining the *via dolorosa* while their own master was being pushed, whipped, taunted and tainted. It also included having homes, lives and their whole sense of who they were suddenly yanked out from under.

On November 17, 1985, the same day Rajneesh was arriving in India, Patricia Ryan and about 50 close friends from the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) gathered next to the US Capitol building to commemorate the sort of 7th anniversary of Jonestown. Commemorating it and the memory of her dear dead dad had become a career choice and full time crusade. She addressed the rally about the dangers of cults and her fears that Rajneesh's sannyasins would commit mass suicide.

"Patricia Ryan added that the Rajneesh group has been thrown into a panic by the guru's flight from the United States last week, and that their 'paranoia' made mass suicide 'not inconceivable.' ... A spokeswoman for the Rajneesh commune said Patricia Ryan's statements were 'utterly absurd.'"¹¹³⁹

Despite everyone's greatest fears - or lowest hopes - Jonestown II at Rajneeshpuram was cancelled because of lack of interest. Most of the sannyasins quietly cleared out of the closing down city commune with jokes, such as "What's a sannyasin with matching luggage?"¹¹⁴⁰ There was a great deal of emotional upheaval and struggling to get back on their economic feet, but not a single suicide.¹¹⁴¹

"K.D. brought down Rajneesh himself," Frohnmayer told the University of Oregon professors. "He was the last guy. He was able to finger Rajneesh in immigration violations. They'd come real close to him, but it was only a problematical, circumstantial case until K.D. was turned."¹¹⁴² That was a very key point in the criminal investigations.

¹¹³⁹ *Washington Post*, November 18, 1985. For more on Patricia Ryan, see Chapters 8 and 12.

¹¹⁴⁰ Two pillow cases in the same color.

¹¹⁴¹ I'm not saying that no sannyasin anywhere ever committed suicide. Of course they did. Like individuals from any other grouping, stigmatized or not. And they did it pretty much for the same reasons. Because a girlfriend had left them, the unbearable pain of an ongoing illness or being alone, or had lost all oomph to soldier through. But they didn't do it *en masse* and for the reasons that Ryan and others of her ilk "feared". See also similar hints and implications picked up by Joyce Smith in the US Consulate in Bombay (see Chapter 2).

¹¹⁴² Not a pack your bags and flee immediately case that Turner and Weaver profiled it as. I don't think Frohnmayer's colleagues on the federal side would take kindly to his characterization of their hard work.

It's ironic. But nobody has picked that up in the published media. He may have pled guilty after Rajneesh's deportation, but the guilty agreement was signed before."¹¹⁴³

Maybe Frohnmayer was born that way or it's part and parcel of the profession and life style he had chosen for himself, but once again he was smugly smuggling in unwarranted assumptions. Namely, that: (a) Rajneesh had been fingered; (b) there was a provable case of immigration conspiracy against him; and (c) Swami Krishna Deva had done it. But I was to discover that his staircase to the stars was built on very problematical premises.¹¹⁴⁴

"Did Krishna Deva give any evidence on the immigration case," I asked Robert Hamilton.

"Yes!" he said.

"First hand stuff? Can I see it?"

"My understanding was My understanding was that KD put the finishing touches on the immigration case against Rajneesh. All the dealings with KD had to occur before his evidence was available to take into consideration. That occurred before the indictment. The deal with KD was cut before the indictment."

"But it wasn't signed until after the indictment." The arrangement wasn't signed until after Rajneesh was arrested, and according to a US Attorney affidavit filed on June 22, 1986,¹¹⁴⁵ Krishna Deva was debriefed between October 29, 1985 and February 20, 1986. Hamilton knew about that, because he had also signed it. His voice dropped considerably and he began to stutter uncharacteristically.

"That may have been ... er ... the ... the ... the ... the ... the ... the ... the ... the.... The information was known. The key factor with KD, especially on the federal end, was that he possessed information that made the immigration case against the Rajneesh a lot better."

"Do you know what that information was?"

"No, I wouldn't do justice to it."

I asked Turner if Krishna Deva had supplied any key information for the Rajneesh immigration case. "Krishna Deva didn't give us any information on the immigration case," he said. "My recollection is that we had developed the case in the office. We already had a case, because we were going to return the indictment. He played little, if any, role in our decision to return the indictment."

"Do you have any impression to what extent the Bhagwan was actually masterminding everything," Professor Sundberg asked Frohnmayer. "I have an impression that he did lots," was the response. "Ironically, though, that will never be known because the archive that would prove it is in federal hands. And it's a felony for anybody to get access to it for purposes other than proving electronic eavesdropping. But, I'm sure that amongst those

¹¹⁴³ On October 28 and 29 (see above).

¹¹⁴⁴ See Chapter 10 (note 997).

¹¹⁴⁵ Already referred to in Chapter 7.

3,000 cassettes there's probably some fairly revealing conversations between Sheela and Rajneesh as to what actually took place."¹¹⁴⁶

In those few sentences Frohnmayer's certainty level is, in Myles Ambrose's words, "all over the lot". "I have an impression". "I'm sure". And "probably". Thus without proving anything - by merely speculating and implying, sneering and smearing - he put Rajneesh at the heart of Sheela's schemes and violent crimes.

These are very well known - but under-reported and -appreciated - tactics used by lawyers, journalists and others who are more interested in their own pride and prejudices than arduous inquiries into what really happened and discovering things they don't already know. Since knowing what you know, or have been told, is so easy, and discovering the extent and rigidity of your ignorance is so painful and potentially earth shattering, the everyone knows that "realists" have always been and always will be in the overwhelming majority.

"Whatever they did they were in cahoots," lawman Kernan Bagley said about Rajneesh and Sheela. "They did it together. He knew what she was doing. And she knew what he was doing. He was the one who caused the organization to be. He had to know what was going on. She was doing too many things. I didn't buy any of that. It was just a smoke screen to turn the attention away from him and the indictments that he was personally facing and put them on somebody else."

"Was there ever any proof to support your contention that he was responsible," I asked. "No. No. But there was nothing to the contrary either. There was nothing to the contrary either."¹¹⁴⁷

According to US and most modern civilized law, guilt must be proved, not innocence. In fact, it is impossible to prove innocence. The reasons for that could easily fill volumes, and I hope teams of scholars more competent than me will one day get around to writing them, in the vernacular. Here we will have to content ourselves with just two of them.

One, innocence, which comes from Latin, is a negative. It means, literally, "not-noxious". The same is true in Germanic languages. *Unschuldig* means "not guilty". You can't prove a negative.¹¹⁴⁸ Two, in Western societies – and probably in many Eastern ones as well -

¹¹⁴⁶ Tapes that the sannyasins themselves had turned over to the FBI (see Chapter 9).

¹¹⁴⁷ Weaver used this same top that argument in Chapter 10.

¹¹⁴⁸ We have dealt with this issue of "innocence" in general in Chapters 6, 9 and 10. Here's another take on the subject. "For a government that professes to champion the individual against the state, the right to silence is an odd target. This was one of the first, and has long been one of the most basic, protections of the individual against the abuse of state power. Written into British law for the past 300 years, and a common-law right long before, it has been copied by many other countries. Its message has been clear: anyone accused of a crime is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. It is up to the state to prove its case, without coercion. An accused person is not required to prove his innocence, and so need not testify against his will or help the prosecution. In a famous phrase, a senior judge once called the right to silence the 'golden thread' running through English justice." ("The right to silence", *The Economist*, January 29, 1994)

there is a long standing tradition of presumed guilt. Especially when someone in a position of authority - often abbreviated as "officials", "the law", "the government" or "God" - has accused you.

We only have to recall ex cult member Aurelius Augustine, his earthquake notions of "original sin",¹¹⁴⁹ and the *tsunamis* of legal and moral texts that have washed across this planet ever since. The waters of those floods "of Biblical proportions" have yet to recede. And according to some – like Rajneesh himself – all of us have grown up in this polluted turbulence and are still thrashing around looking for a way out.

How do you reconcile one tradition of presumed innocence with its opposite of presumed guilt? Pretty much in the three pronged approach favored by Governor Atiyeh when I asked him about it. That is, one, say, as he did, that "even including the Bhagwan, you're innocent until proven guilty". Two, presume that guilt without any evidence, let alone conclusive, beyond a reasonable doubt proof. And three, hope that either no one will notice, or if they do, won't kick up much fuss about it.

I asked him, "Did you ever find any evidence that Rajneesh was directly implicated in all those crimes that he exposed publicly in his press conferences, and on television? Was there ever any evidence?"

"You mean the crimes themselves," he asked.

"Yes. Was there ever any evidence that implicated Rajneesh in Sheela's crimes?"

"No. No. You'd have to guess at it." Nevertheless, he said publicly that he believed Rajneesh could get a fair trial in Oregon.¹¹⁵⁰ He also said he believed, again without any evidence, that "most of the sannyasins" knew about Sheela's crimes.

I asked Peter Schey, "Was there ever a possibility of Rajneesh being found guilty of the two immigration counts in a real court of law with real evidence, a real judge and a real jury? Outside of Oregon?"

"I don't think he would have ever been found guilty by a court or jury even in Oregon. There was no chance. The evidence was not there. And it certainly was not there beyond a reasonable doubt. That's why I was so upset about his departure from Rajneeshpuram."

"Do you think Rajneesh was treated fairly?"

"They were clearly not out to treat Bhagwan fairly. That was not their purpose. That was not their intent. They were out to indict him and use that indictment as a big stick to enforce his departure from this country and the subsequent dismantling of Rajneeshpuram."

"So on what basis do you say he would have gotten a fair trial?"

"I didn't say he would have gotten a fair trial. I don't think he would have gotten a fair trial. I don't think too many people who hold unpopular religious, political and social

¹¹⁴⁹ See Chapter 3.

¹¹⁵⁰ *The Bend Bulletin*, November 4, 1985

views get a fair trial in this country. So I'm not saying he would have gotten a fair trial. But at the same time, the evidence against him was simply non-existent!

"So regardless of whether it was a fair trial or not, the chances of him ever being found guilty on any of the charges were close to zero. I feel 99.9% certain that he would have prevailed in a trial, and I never would have or did, advise him to plead guilty. It would have been useless to have the trial in Portland. I would have moved to have it transferred to San Francisco."

I asked Weaver, "Would the failure of your case after the indictment have led to the granting of Rajneesh's green card?"

"Yes. A lot of the reasons that INS would have relied upon to deny a green card would be part and parcel of the criminal case, and if we lost, there would have been nothing left to base that refusal on. Suppose that we went to trial, and we lost everything! I would probably go home and have a stiff drink, and the INS would have to decide the green card stuff. Public relations wise, had we lost the criminal case, it would have been very difficult for the government to prevail."

The prevailing of the government sentiment is in the same category as what was earlier called "getting the job done". Nearly every government official I spoke to was geared toward getting rid of Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram. Almost everyone was thrilled with the wildly successful final solution to the "problem" - the plea bargain.

"You can't argue with the results in that case," said Steve Trott, former US Attorney General in charge of the criminal division. "I thought it was wonderful. I remember Turner called me and he said, 'I think I've got a hell of a solution on this thing. Let me tell you what it is.' He ran it by me, and I approved it, and away we went."

"What was his solution?"

"That would ... you know, get the guy out of town. You see, I always look at things as the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and this one turned out well. As a matter of fact, it was just a master stroke the way Turner was able to get that guy out of there at the end. That was a perfect resolution to the whole matter."

"Bottom line," said Former INS Commissioner Alan Nelson, "when you look at the situation, both Rajneeshpuram and the situation out there, and the cult aspects, and the community impacts, and the dangers of physical ... and armaments, and all of those things. I mean this was certainly a very serious situation. The bottom line has to be nothing but a tremendous success story."

I think there was a potential for all kinds of terrible, terrible things happening, and the fact that it ended well was a very good sign. It did end very well. I don't think anyone can argue with that. He [Rajneesh] left the country, avoided lengthy litigation and other problems. It ended well. The whole unit up there, of course, disbanded, I think to the benefit of the community. The

result was outstanding. And we're very proud of that, that we were able to resolve a difficult situation very satisfactorily.¹¹⁵¹

"Clearly," Nelson continued, "I think there is one thing we could say - the circumstances here are clean. It's not that we encouraged it; he did it on his own. But after being apprehended and jailed for a few days, he decided to leave. It turned out to be a very effective result."

Similar strong sentiments about the success of dismantling Rajneeshpuram were expressed by Edwin Meese III, Bob Smith, Kernan Bagley, John Williams, Bob Hamilton, Dave Frohnmayer, Vic Atiyeh, Joe Greene, Bob Weaver, and Rick Norton.

"The plea bargain," Norton said, "was, to say the least, to the United States' advantage, that he agreed to admit to certain crimes which made him clearly deportable, that would subject him both to a criminal penalty and incarceration on immigration violations if he should ever return to the United States. This seemed like the perfect plea bargain: that the person left, and the disintegration of the organization out there would only be a matter of time. At the time, in fact, I joked with Joe [Greene], that in six months I thought the place would be a ghost town after the Bhagwan left. And, in fact, it took more like about eight weeks. Of course now I am sure the tumbleweeds have pretty much covered up a lot of the stuff out there."

In November 1985 Rajneesh settled in at the Span Resort, a six acre, \$10,000 per week holiday resort complex equidistant between Kulu and Manali in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh. He took walks twice daily and sat for 10 or 15 minute at a time by the Beas River, which flowed through the complex. In the distance, on both sides of the valley, were snow covered Himalayan peaks.¹¹⁵²

There were two or three press conferences a day. Television, radio and newspaper reporters flew up from New Delhi and asked questions about his passage to America, his ideas on the world in general, and what he would do next. Ma Yoga Neelam, an Indian disciple and sometime India secretary to Rajneesh, told me that one morning council members from 10 surrounding villages came to pay their respects and breakfast with him by the Beas.

They and members of the Himachal Pradesh Bar Association wanted to help sannyasins buy land and set up their new commune. In a way, they were picking up where they had left off 4½ years before, when Ma Yoga Laxmi and her Australian driver, Swami

¹¹⁵¹ Already quoted in Chapter 1.

¹¹⁵² Many, but not all, of the following events are covered in an admittedly partisan - but, nevertheless, interesting, intimate and pacy - book: Juliet Forman's *Bhagwan: One Man Against the Whole Ugly Past of Humanity*. While I have used much of the same source material as her, I have steered an independent course throughout.

Anandadas, were told in New Delhi that the new commune was going to be in America, not northern India.¹¹⁵³

"The 'Bhagwan' and his disciples had proposed to purchase the sprawling Rajgarth Complex at Chail, nearly 45 kilometers from here [Simla] in 1981, before leaving for the United States They were also unsuccessful in purchasing another complex called 'Blossom', which is still owned by the former rulers of the area."¹¹⁵⁴

But by the end of December it was evident that Rajneesh's hassles with the governments of the world were far from over.¹¹⁵⁵ On the day before Christmas his western disciples were told there was no room for them at the inn. Their visas were summarily revoked and Ma Prem Hasya, his new personal secretary, was ordered to leave India by sunset. Three days later, a Calcutta newspaper reported that the "government has imposed a blanket ban on the entry of Bhagwan Rajneesh's foreign followers into the country.... According to sources, Indian foreign missions had been instructed not to issue visas to Bhagwan Rajneesh's followers."¹¹⁵⁶

Rajneesh told another Indian newspaper the Americans were pressuring the Indian Home Ministry to isolate him from his world organization and the world press. He promised "not to take any bullshit from the Prime Minister of India or anybody else".¹¹⁵⁷ After he announced that he would leave India, rumors started to fly about where he would go next.

Fiji, an island nation east of Australia, reached the top of the guess list. So Robert Benzinger, an American diplomat in charge of Pacific Island affairs, threw in his two cents. He told reporters that most of "Fiji's indigenous citizens were devout Christians and had a strong, family oriented culture. I really would not anticipate that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh would have a long and happy career in Fiji".¹¹⁵⁸

On January 3, 1986, he flew to Kathmandu (Nepal) and set up shop in the Hotel Oberoi. He discoursed and gave press conferences daily. Meanwhile, Hasya, now his international secretary, was crisscrossing Europe trying to simultaneously organize a world tour and locate a country that would grant him permanent residence. For weeks at a time she was in near constant motion: Zurich-London-Cologne-Athens-Madrid.

In January, a South American sannyasin, Ma Vedanta Suravi, made contact with a kindly and elegant elderly man of influence who said he could help Rajneesh get residence in Spain. He asked Miguel Fernandez-A. Robles, the General Commissioner of Police in Madrid, to write a letter for Rajneesh. Dated February 8, 1986, it was addressed to Señor Don Arturo Seligrat Delgado and read:

¹¹⁵³ See Chapter 2.

¹¹⁵⁴ *The Indian Express*, November 19, 1985

¹¹⁵⁵ As Myles Ambrose had predicted (see Chapter 10).

¹¹⁵⁶ *The Telegraph*, December 28, 1985. Calcutta is now known as Kolkata. See Chapter 4 for problems foreign sannyasins were having getting American visas.

¹¹⁵⁷ *The Indian Express*, December 30, 1985

¹¹⁵⁸ *The Oregonian*, December 28, 1985

Regarding the urgent petition endorsed by you requesting residence¹¹⁵⁹ for the person of the humanist¹¹⁶⁰ Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, I inform you that within the legal norm we have dispatched all the instructions so that in the first place, the special visa is granted by the corresponding consulate, and once in our country the application for residence is authorized.

At Hasya's urging, Seligrat Delgado sent a fax to the Spanish Consulate in Kathmandu, which was located in the Indian Embassy. The next thing he knew the alarm bells went off at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Madrid. According to Hasya, someone in the Indian Embassy had telexed them to the effect that they were mad to even consider letting Rajneesh into their country. He was a notorious and dangerous man.

Despite his initial, and understandable, distress, Seligrat Delgado persevered and introduced Suravi and Hasya to Eduardo Junco Bonet, assistant director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prior to the meeting, they prepared a detailed biography of Rajneesh, an unraveling of the complex events in America,¹¹⁶¹ and a presentation of all the benefits Rajneesh's presence in Spain would have for that country. Suravi also brought along eight of his books to show the quality of the man.

According to Suravi, Junco Bonet literally flinched when she offered him the books. She had the impression that he was superstitiously afraid to even touch them. Hasya thought he might have misconstrued them as a bribe. In any case, he refused them. "I will investigate in my own way," he said.

Meanwhile, through the intervention of Ma Amrito, a former model and daughter of a Greek general, Greece opened up for Rajneesh. Amrito and Hasya met with George Papandreou, the son of then Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou,¹¹⁶² and assistant to the Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri.¹¹⁶³ George Papandreou arranged for the private plane carrying Rajneesh - a Learjet 55 this time - to land at Heraklion airport on Crete instead of, as was customary in those days, the Eleftherios Venizelos International airport at Athens. Rajneesh's visa would be waiting for him on arrival.¹¹⁶⁴

On Saturday, February 15, 1986 he flew by Royal Thai airlines from Kathmandu to Bangkok (Thailand). Meanwhile, the Lear 55, which was supposed to have flown him

¹¹⁵⁹ *residencia*

¹¹⁶⁰ *humanista*

¹¹⁶¹ Which they had no way of knowing in the detail presented in this book.

¹¹⁶² Greek politics, especially on the national level tends to be dynastic. As in India and now in the US. Andreas' father, George, was the Prime Minister of Greece three times. George Papandreou himself later became Prime Minister.

¹¹⁶³ Mercouri is best known in the US for her role as Ilya, the hooker with the heart of gold, in *Never on a Sunday* (*Pote Tin Kyriaki*, 1960), directed by her husband Jules Dassin. Less well known is that her grandfather was mayor of Athens for decades, her father was a member of the *Bouli* (Parliament), and an uncle was the leader of the Greek National Socialist Party, who under the Nazis became president of the Bank of Greece. (*Wikipedia*)

¹¹⁶⁴ According to Dr. James Gordon, a "temporary residence permit" - whatever that is - good for 30 days (*The Golden Guru*, p. 214).

from Nepal to Greece was waiting in Bahrain.¹¹⁶⁵ A snag occurred in the jump from Bangkok to Bahrain. Attempts were made through an international network of sannyasins to book him on KLM, the Royal Dutch Air Lines. But according to Juliet Forman, KLM offices in Europe refused to sell the ticket. A call was then put through to KLM's New York office and a ticket was purchased for a "Shree Raj".¹¹⁶⁶

He arrived at Heraklion on Sunday, February 16 at 7 a.m. local time. Heraklion is the birthplace of Nikos Kazantzakis, author of many exceptional books.¹¹⁶⁷ The most famous - but definitely not his best - used to be *Zorba the Greek*. It was from this book that Rajneesh had derived half of his template for the New Man, "Zorba the Buddha".

Zorba, the dancing, drinking, hard working and loving man of the earth who lives passionately and to the hilt. Buddha, the silently sitting compassionate man of the sky who has gone beyond attachment to and identification with everything finite. Together in one body, under one roof. Not the lethal schizophrenia of millennia, either/or, east/west, this world or that, make up your mind. The classic *hieros gamos*¹¹⁶⁸ mentioned or referred to in almost all seasoned, deep rooted wisdom literature.

Off season Greece was a breeze for a few weeks. Rajneesh was installed in the cliff top villa of Nikos Koundouros outside of Ayios Nikolaos in northeast Crete.¹¹⁶⁹ There was an initial influx of about 500 sannyasins, mostly from Europe, and the world press. He spoke twice daily, in the morning and evening, about religion, politics, spirituality and so few countries letting him in.

Such cowardliness, about a man who is for peace, for nonviolence, against war, against nuclear weapons, whose whole message is peace and love, whose

¹¹⁶⁵ It had turned around after not being allowed to land in Kathmandu, due to preparations for the official state visit of Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain. She flew in two days after Rajneesh left: Monday, February 17.

¹¹⁶⁶ Forman, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-63. She wrote, "Later, in response to a letter sent by the author, IATA stated that 'government advisory notices' helped airlines identify 'potential terrorists.'" (p. 163) From allegedly helping to arrange sham marriages to "potential terrorist", Rajneesh had come pretty far pretty fast.

¹¹⁶⁷ Kazantzakis was born in Heraklion on February 18, 1883 and was also buried there, with full religious honors but not in consecrated ground. "A paved area and a simple wooden cross (recently replaced) mark the spot." In place of a name there's a quote from one of his book, *The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises*. "I hope for nothing. I fear nothing. I am free". (Roderick Beaton, "Kazantzakis' Undying Allure", *Athens News*, August 17, 2007)

And the international airport there is now named after him. He's a Cretan hero, and lots of *tavernas* and pizzerias on the island are called "Zorba's". But between the alpha and omega, his birth and death, he was frequently on dangerously bad terms with his fellow citizens, the Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek government because of his "radical" and "unheard of" ideas about Jesus, Christianity, and lots more. These days his most famous novel is *The Last Temptation of Christ*, which was the sort of basis for Martin Scorsese's "controversial" film (1988).

¹¹⁶⁸ sacred marriage

¹¹⁶⁹ Frances Fitzgerald wrote that "he was staying with a Greek producer of X-rated films" (*Cities on a Hill*, p. 375). Gordon said the villa was rented (Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 214). As for how Greek film director Koundouros and his work - about 11 films and some more television documentaries - should be viewed and characterized, *Wikipedia* writes that he has won important awards in Greek and international film festivals. *Chacun à son goût*.

whole effort is to bring man into a blissful flowering. What harm can he do you?

What is their fear? Their fear is that they have promised people and they have not delivered a single thing. They have been deceiving people continuously, and people are becoming more and more miserable. And if somebody comes and can make a few people blissful, silent, happy, that makes them afraid.¹¹⁷⁰

"My whole effort will be to expose America completely," he said three days later. "It is not against the American people. I love them. They are beautiful. It is against the bureaucracy and the politicians. They have to be overthrown. They are the most dangerous people in the world today because they have the greatest power, and I don't think they have any brains."¹¹⁷¹

The next day he shot his barbed arrows into the sides of the Pope and other religious leaders. "Their fear is basically because they are standing on fictitious ground. They have no argument for existing anymore. They cannot provide any reason why they are needed. And I can provide every reason why their very existence is a hindrance for human progress, for the coming of the superman. They are keeping people in every way retarded just so they can exploit them."¹¹⁷²

Shut down hotels and restaurants in Ayios Nikolaos opened up and were filled with the zany *xeni*.¹¹⁷³ Business was booming and businessmen were thrilled. But a shouting campaign agitating for Rajneesh's expulsion was launched in the press. It was described to me in Athens by a retired Greek diplomat, Theodoros Papanthakis.¹¹⁷⁴

Born in 1915 in Alexandria, Egypt, he was educated in law at the University of Paris and received his nation's highest honor, the Gold Medal of Valor, for parachuting into German occupied Greece and working with the *andartes*.¹¹⁷⁵ He was away in the mountains when Rajneesh arrived and only heard about events after he was given the boot. "When I arrived in Athens," he said, "I spoke with many educated people there. It was obvious that the newspaper campaign had been organized from abroad, specifically by the American CIA."

¹¹⁷⁰ Rajneesh, *Socrates Poisoned Again After 25 Centuries*, Chapter 3, February 20, 1986

¹¹⁷¹ Rajneesh, *Socrates Poisoned Again After 25 Centuries*, Chapter 8, February 23, 1986

¹¹⁷² Rajneesh, *Socrates Poisoned Again After 25 Centuries*, Chapter 10, February 24, 1986. The use of this word, "superman", would have undoubtedly triggered the gloat reflex in Dave Frohnmayer. "See, I wasn't imagining this!" (see Chapter 4 for the reference). But once again there would be problems with his premature ejaculations. For essentially two reasons. One, even lifetime Nietzsche scholars disagree about what he meant by "superman" - the concept, not the comic. Two, you can't just jerk words and ideas out of context and claim understanding. Which is a bummer for people like the Harvard *summa cum laude* and Rhodes scholar. Because it means that worth listening to thinking isn't something you can dabble in and posture about.

¹¹⁷³ foreigners

¹¹⁷⁴ His postings included Turkey, Iran, Italy, the former Soviet Union and the UN in Geneva.

¹¹⁷⁵ resistance

Papanthakis, who because of his background has a good idea of how strings are pulled and people dance, described the probable sequence of events. "Rajneesh arrived and the next morning all the newspapers had printed full dossiers about him. Those dossiers were full of rumor and innuendo, that Rajneesh was a free sex guru who was against the family, the church, the nation. In short, he was against everything that decent people are for. So much clamor was raised by the most fanatical religious organizations, organizations that are against everything: Sigmund Freud and Charles Darwin."

If he was right - and we should remember that many Greeks have a knee jerk tendency to point all ten fingers at the CIA¹¹⁷⁶ - what was happening to Rajneesh in Greece in the late winter of 1986 was remarkably like what had happened to him when he arrived in Montclair, New Jersey in June 1981. At that time, a German Rajneesh "expert" materialized and passed on not in my neighborhood cult stories. A few months later, a German television reporter rang up Margaret Hill, the mayor of Antelope, to tell her to "Get those people out of there!".¹¹⁷⁷

"The anti-Rajneesh campaign was well-organized," Papanthakis told me. "The professional journalists and general public were provided with no alternative information. It was not done by the Greeks. It was done in spite of them."

On Crete, the Metropolitan Dimitrios of nearby Petra denounced Rajneesh as a "menace to society". He told Associated Press reporter Kerin Hope that Rajneesh "is a charlatan. He buys peoples' consciences and leads them astray and he shouldn't be permitted to stay here".¹¹⁷⁸ He said "blood will flow" if Rajneesh was allowed to remain.¹¹⁷⁹

And if blood had flowed, practically everyone would have assumed that, once again, Rajneesh and his sannyasins were at fault. They had only themselves and their aggressive-self destructive character tics to blame.

Dr. James Gordon, the research psychiatrist told not to visit the Poona ashram on the US government's dime,¹¹⁸⁰ flew in to interview the "sex guru" on an all expenses paid

¹¹⁷⁶ And with good reason. Because both the Americans and the CIA have played havoc in their history ever since they took over the "torch of freedom" from the running on bankrupt British empire in the late 1940's. "But the government's dependence for its political and military survival on external patronage effectively made Greece a client state of the United States. Few major military, economic or, indeed, political decisions could be taken without American approval, testimony to a degree of external penetration that had scarcely existed even when British hegemony was at its height." (Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 146) "Yet a certain heritage of distrust and estrangement remained. And [Henry] Labouisse [John Kennedy's Ambassador to Greece], whatever his personal inclinations, could not alter the basically military orientation of American policy - and hence its built-in bias - in the Greek situation, in favour of the palace and the right. Nor did he have the power to control the activities of the military mission and the CIA, both of which had more resources at their disposal than the Embassy, despite his nominal authority over them." (Maurice Goldbloom, "United States Policy in Post-War Greece", in *Greece Under Military Rule*, p. 234)

¹¹⁷⁷ See Chapter 3.

¹¹⁷⁸ *The Oregonian*, February 25, 1986

¹¹⁷⁹ *The Oregonian*, March 6, 1986

¹¹⁸⁰ See Chapter 2.

assignment from *Penthouse*. Obviously believing that most of the trouble out in Or-e-gun should be placed squarely in the sannyasins' debt column - and thus seriously underestimating governmental attempts to get 'em - he was boiling with hard to smile over ambivalence toward Rajneesh.

But unlike the purportedly cooler and more contained - thus, more objective - Frances Fitzgerald, he was man enough to put that in black and white. "I am trying to figure out how I feel about Rajneesh, to piece together my experience of him - his friendliness and intelligence, the catalytic power of his presence on me, my affection for him - with what he and Sheela did in Oregon, his cowardly flight from the United States, and his petulance. Maybe, I think, if I spend more time with him, get to know him better, my picture of him will become clearer. Besides, I am still drawn to him, still eager to be in his presence."¹¹⁸¹

But Gordon went about it all wrong. Because after he was specifically told that Rajneesh didn't want to talk about Sheela, he submitted those sorts of "pointed and political" questions. He was told through an intermediary that that evening's interview was off. According to Rajneesh, "The questions are all rubbish. They are yellow journalism. I don't want to be interrupted. You're welcome to ask other questions."¹¹⁸² Gordon flipped and again - more power to him - let it rip in print.

My sense of well-being evaporates. I feel momentarily hurt and rejected. This surprises me. And then the anger is rising.... He's arrogant and petty, cowardly and defensive. He's no Socrates taking on all comers, just a self-protective man, a child who wants to play according to his rules. He won't allow me or anyone else to get too close, to engage him too intimately, push him too hard.¹¹⁸³

Somewhat chilled out the next day - Wednesday, March 5 - Gordon was putting together, with the help of two sannyasins, a B list of juicy sex questions. Such as, "what is the connection between sexual and political repression?". Then all hell broke loose.

A former English intelligence officer from MI5 - hired by Hasya in London to take care of security - had just arrived at the villa and was surveying the grounds when about 50 Greeks bearing guns stormed in.¹¹⁸⁴ They were not local police, one Greek sannyasin told

¹¹⁸¹ Gordon, *op. cit.* (note 1164), p. 215

¹¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 218

¹¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 218. Both Gordon and Rajneesh romanticized Socrates' mission and achievement. As anyone who reads the Platonic dialogues without hero worship will notice. Socrates was not above playing fast and loose with the logic and using low "sophistic" tricks and sophomoric word play to bamboozle his opponents into submission. However, just as there is a raging controversy about the "historical Jesus" (see Chapter 5), there is also one about how far Plato's "Socrates" accurately reflects his master. And if I'm lucky, there will be the same sort of controversy about how I've portrayed Rajneesh.

¹¹⁸⁴ According to Ma Anand Bhagawati, an Austrian sannyasin working as press liaison, the receptionist at the Hotel Ormos told her of the impending arrest hours before it happened. She passed the information on to the house, but, apparently, nothing was done about it.

me. The majority were special troops from Heraklion, and some were from the Greek Secret Service, then known as the KYP.¹¹⁸⁵

They smashed windows and threatened to blow up the villa if Rajneesh did not surrender immediately. The arrest was made on orders from the Ministry of Public Order and in the presence of the local public prosecutor. It came in the wake of more threats and protests from conservative leaders of the Greek Orthodox Church, who claimed that Rajneesh "destroys our youth, our morality, our religion".¹¹⁸⁶ Rajneesh was whisked away in a police convoy to Heraklion, and Dr. Gordon had a shit fit.

Within five minutes I'm in my car with Mary Catherine¹¹⁸⁷ and a Greek sannyasin whom we've brought along to interpret. We careen around Ayios Nikolaos, up and down the hills, past fruit sellers, around circles, the wrong way on one-way streets, shouting to get directions, looking for the road to Heraklion. All the while I'm alternating between paying attention to my driving and thinking about my story. Now it's not just a question of my interest or good journalism but of economics. If I don't get my interview at all, I wonder if *Penthouse* will even pay my expenses."¹¹⁸⁸

In such moments of existential crisis - not soft, white wine sipping discussions about what side of the road God drives on and how many angels can dance on the head of a pin - people find out what they're really made of. At least that's the theory. And if I have understood any of this correctly, Rajneesh would have agreed in spades.

In fact, much of his work could be seen as getting his sannyasins into exactly those sorts of fixes so that whatever was pompous, pretentious and preposterous in them could start burning off and fall away. Because only by eliminating the accidental dross could the essential, eternal and imperishable gold shine through.

While all this was happening the general's daughter was running around in the rain in Athens trying to stop it. Amrito, who had been trying to see Papa Papandreou for three days, called his secretary, Mrs. Kokola, and said "I have to see him now!". She was told to come over in 1½ hours.

She grabbed a cab and went to the prime minister's residence. Her cab was surrounded by security personnel, who were friendly but non-committal. Mrs. Kokola came out and said

¹¹⁸⁵ *Kentriki Ypiresia Pliroforion*, Central Intelligence Service. Later that year its name was changed to EYP.

¹¹⁸⁶ *The Bend Bulletin*, March 5, 1986

¹¹⁸⁷ Editor of *The Rajneesh Times* in Rajneeshpuram and at that time editor of *Rajneesh: The Newspaper*, coming out of Boulder, Colorado.

¹¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 219. While waiting in the Heraklion airport to be transported to Athens and then deported Rajneesh helped Gordon out by giving him an interview about the sex questions. Gordon described the interview as a dance and mutual flirtation. But as far as Gordon's summing up was concerned, the die was cast and it wasn't favorable. I don't know if *Penthouse* ever published the article or paid for Gordon's own "strange journey".

Papandreou would see her in an hour. Half an hour later she returned with a different message. He was too busy.

Then Amrito called up payback for an old favor. She sent in a letter reminding him of the Colonels' coup. At that time a friend of his was wanted by the government, and it was very dangerous for anyone to harbor him. Nevertheless, she, only 17 at the time, kept him in her apartment for a week. "I helped you then. I need your help now." He never answered. It wasn't personal, she thought. Rather, she had the distinct impression that he was more played than player, and was fuming about it.

She told me that the real pressure for Rajneesh's arrest and deportation came not from the Greek Orthodox Church, but from the newly posted (1985) American ambassador to Greece, Robert Keeley. More tea leaf reading evidence *à la* Krishna Deva, checking the stars for clues about what happens here on earth?

"What is your evidence for this claim," I asked. "There are numerous sources, from different people placed high in the government, all indicating the same thing. When I asked someone close to the Minister of Economy who was responsible for the arrest, she said, 'I cannot tell you. I can only say that the order came from very high up.' It was later confirmed that Ambassador Keeley made a call to someone in national security and ordered the deportation. It was just a call. And the deportation happened the same day."

And that's where I left the story in the first edition of this book. I didn't bother to contact Keeley, because by then I had grown sick of official refusals to respond to my letters, let alone answer the questions contained therein.¹¹⁸⁹ But 15 years later, in January 2006, when I was doing research for another book - a novel set in Greece¹¹⁹⁰ - the name Keeley kept popping up.

James Keeley, US Counsel in Athens in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Edmund Keeley, poet, translator, writer, critic, *bon vivant* and a bit of a lad. Could Robert Keeley be part of that brood? I googled him and came up with stuff that completely changed my opinion about him. He was a writer, lifelong rebel, ran his own alternative publishing company, and was one of 26 former diplomats and retired military officials who had called for regime change in Washington, DC.¹¹⁹¹ This was a career diplomat with class, not someone's puppet on a string.

I contacted him by email to finally get his side of the story. I warned him in advance that I would be asking some tough questions, but considering all the coincidences I had come across on my way to his door, this was more than a chance meeting and it was an offer he probably shouldn't refuse.

After a year of tugging on a sometimes unresponsive line - he was extremely busy - he agreed to comment on the first published version of this story. He wrote:

¹¹⁸⁹ See below.

¹¹⁹⁰ *Oedipus' Reckoning: A Comedy of Oracles*

¹¹⁹¹ June 2004

This is the first I have heard of Rajneesh, and if I did ever hear of him it has long since faded from my memory. I do not recall any of this story of his arrival on Crete in 1986 and his subsequent deportation to India from Athens. I have no way to refute that I had any involvement with this affair, since I have no memory of it at all.

If the American embassy would have been in any way involved, it would have most probably been for two possible reasons: that he was an American citizen, in which case he would merit appropriate assistance, or that he was wanted in the U.S. on some sort of criminal charge, in which case the embassy would most likely have sought his extradition to the U.S. to face the charge, not deportation to India.

If none of these applied, then it would not have been appropriate for the embassy, much less the ambassador, to become involved. The embassy to be involved would have been the Indian embassy.¹¹⁹²

¹¹⁹² In an email of December 5, 2006. As part of the string of coincidences I was unintentionally able to clear up an old mystery for Keeley. "There is only one aspect of your story that rang a bell for me, and it relates to 'Ma Amrito,' whose other or real or full name means nothing to me. [Which I hadn't supplied, because I didn't and still don't know what it is.] I should add that her remarks about me are second hand or hearsay and therefore of no reliability. She should be asked to provide the names of these 'numerous sources from different people high in the government' and support for her statement that 'it was later confirmed that Ambassador Keeley made a call' confirmed by whom and on what basis? I did not have the capability of 'ordering' a deportation in any case.

"What I found intriguing was the paragraph about her letter to Papandreou reminding him that she had helped a friend of his during the time of the Colonels by hiding him in her apartment for a week. I believe I know who she is referring to and remember the incident vividly, but am surprised that she was only 17 at the time. The clue is that you earlier mention that Ma Amrito was a Greek general's daughter. I never kept a diary but I have a good memory for some things.

"On the day of the Colonels' *coup d'état*, [Friday] April 21, 1967, we in the embassy were very busy trying to figure out what was going on. [At the time he was working there as a career diplomat, not the ambassador.] My colleague in the political section, John Day, was particularly busy as he was the mid-level officer who followed domestic Greek politics most closely. He asked me to help him out in that a friend of his, named Leonidas Lagakos, was down in the lobby and was seeking asylum by and in the U.S. embassy, as he feared he would be arrested by the Colonels' police. Day asked me to deal with him. Lagakos was the youngest deputy in the parliament, a Center Union member and close to the leader of the more leftist faction of that party, Andreas Papandreou, later the Prime Minister that Ma Amrito appealed to in 1986.

"I brought Lagakos to my office and convinced him that the asylum request was not a solution for him, even for just a night or two, as the Colonels certainly had spies among our Greek employees and would soon learn of his whereabouts and would demand we turn him over to them. Andreas had of course already been arrested and jailed by the Colonels, so Lagakos' apprehension was well-founded. He lived with his mother in an apartment he owned not far from the embassy and had observed police in the immediate area that morning.

"After we considered some alternatives Lagakos said he had a girl friend (whose name he didn't provide) who was the daughter of a general who was probably in on the coup, but he thought that he could hide out in the girl's apartment, where no one would look for him, and then assess the situation. Lagakos was a wealthy bachelor and man about town who was notorious for dating a whole series of beautiful girls. (You noted that Ma Amrito was a 'former model'.)

"Subsequently, Lagakos and I became good friends and he was one of my best sources in the opposition to the Colonels. He was back in circulation after spending a week in the girl's apartment and was never arrested, which caused him some disappointment [,] because it indicated that the Colonels didn't think he

You could look at this response in two ways. Standard official denial. Or you could believe him. Call me gullible if you like, but everything I've since learned about Bob Keeley - who has become an acquaintance and Facebook friend - has convinced me that he couldn't possibly have been involved in such sordid machinations. No way! In other words, in my opinion, Ambassador Keeley is and will remain innocent until proven guilty of any involvement in Rajneesh's sudden arrest and deportation. And I am pleased to apologize to him in writing for any unwarranted aspersions I have cast upon his good name.

What's good for the Ambassador is also good for the Embassy under his watch. Officially. But that still leaves the unofficial channels wide open: the cloak and dagger boys in the back rooms. This is particularly interesting when we consider that the Greek CIA - the KYP - was more or less "a subsidiary of the Langely, Virginia, parent corporation".¹¹⁹³ And both George, Sr. and his son Andreas Papandreou had clashed with the KYP "when the new government revealed that KYP's financial support came directly from the C.I.A. without passing through any Greek ministry".¹¹⁹⁴

This division between the official and unofficial channels is confirmed and made abundantly clear in Keeley's own book, *The Colonels' Coup: An American Diplomats' View of the Breakdown of Democracy in Cold War Greece*, a personal and professional account of his time as a junior officer in the embassy before and after the *coup d'état* (in April 1967). In his Prologue to that work Greek scholar John Iatrides wrote:

Although in theory the ambassador remained the top American official in Greece, in practice the military mission and the CIA station quickly evolved into autonomous agencies whose heads with Washington's tacit consent, could operate virtually on their own.¹¹⁹⁵

While I tried at the time of my first investigations into these matters to conduct some more pushy research I didn't get to first base. Those kinds of expeditions require

was much of a threat who needed to be jailed. This deflated his ego, but was a happier outcome than what he had expected. This is surely the 'favor' that Ma Amrito was reminding Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou of in her letter to him."

¹¹⁹³ James Becket, *Barbarism in Greece: A Young Lawyer's Inquiry into the Use of Torture in Contemporary Greece with Case Histories and Documents*, p. 13

¹¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13. Maurice Goldbloom wrote: "The clash with the CIA resulted from the efforts of Andreas Papandreou, who as Minister to the Prime Minister had nominal supervision over the Greek Central Intelligence Service (KYP), to bring that agency under the effective control of the Greek government. Discovering that it had been funded directly by the CIA, which thus was in a position to exert a decisive influence on its activities, he demanded that all funds supplied to KYP pass through the Prime Minister's office. The CIA blocked this attempt to subject its activities in Greece to a democratic control from which they were exempt in most of the world, but it did not forgive it." (Goldbloom, *op. cit.* (note 1176), p. 234) Richard Cottrell, a former UK Eurodeputy and author of *Blood on Their Hands*, describes the Greek intelligence services as "a wholly-owned subsidiary of the CIA" ("Ann Chapman: CIA victim?", *Athens News*, August 17, 2007). See also Congressman Leon Ryan's clash with the CIA (see Chapter 7).

¹¹⁹⁵ Robert Keeley, *The Colonels' Coup: An American Diplomats' View of the Breakdown of Democracy in Cold War Greece*, p. xvii. My only criticism of that book is that it didn't include - even in an afterword - anything about his time as ambassador and interactions with another main character in it: the ex-VIPP (very important political prisoner) and later Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou.

specialist knowledge - which in a smoke and mirrors world is also suspect - deep, on the ground sources and more often than not sizable cash flows. Just another lead I had to let go of.

Police escorted Rajneesh on Olympic airways from Heraklion to Athens. On arrival he was threatened with immediate deportation on a ship bound for India. While a \$20,000 sweetener delayed the inevitable sannyasins arranged to have yet another private jet - a Falcon 50 - take him more in the direction of where they wanted.

It took off around 1:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 6. Up in the dark air over the Mediterranean in the early hours of Thursday morning, the immediate question was "where next?". The press got word - probably from filed flight plans - that he was bound for Madrid. But the Spanish visa - and *residencia* permit - was still floundering in the *mañana* zone, and Spanish aviation officials denied the rented plane entry into Spain's air space.

After a pit stop in Nice, France, it flew on to Geneva, one of the UN's international headquarters. Rajneesh and the sannyasins made it through customs and were getting ready to leave the airport when they were suddenly surrounded by armed airport police and ordered to leave immediately.

"The order had come two days before," Hasya told me.

"From where," I asked. "From the national capitol at Berne? Or from outside the country?"

"I don't know," she said.

Nearly three years later - at the end of 1988 or the beginning of 1989 - Switzerland would accept Ma Anand Sheela within its borders.¹¹⁹⁶ Which only goes to show that "You murder a wife, it isn't nearly as bad as murdering an old wives' tale. Kill one of their fairy tale notions, and they call down the wrath of God, Brady and the state legislature."¹¹⁹⁷

Around 4 p.m. they landed at Arlanda airport outside of Stockholm. The place where they hand out Nobel prizes for peace and literature. Rajneesh wasn't on that list, but he was on another. So it was a *déjà vu* of Geneva in Swedish. Rajneesh and the sannyasins were on their way out of the airport when they were once again surrounded by armed police and ordered to leave by Arlanda Police Chief Sven Smedjegarden. They flew out at 7 p.m.¹¹⁹⁸

Next up was Heathrow in London. A stop was mandated for the pilots, who had been flying for 12 hours. But Rajneesh, who was not trying to gain entry into the UK, was not allowed to spend the night in the airport lounge. He was locked up in the airport's crowded holding cells, along with two American disciples, until morning.

¹¹⁹⁶ See Chapter 10. As of this rewriting she was still living there.

¹¹⁹⁷ See beginning of Chapter 5.

¹¹⁹⁸ *Aftonblatt*, a Stockholm daily, March 8, 1986

In the meantime, Paul Travis, operations manager of Marine and Aviation Management International at Terminal Four, Heathrow, had been contacted at around 8 p.m. GMT¹¹⁹⁹ that same evening. After £65,000 had been transferred to the firm's account, Travis took up the torch of responsibility for Rajneesh's travel arrangements. He sought assurances that the next jet he would be traveling in – a Gulfstream 2 - would actually be able to land somewhere and discharge passengers. English immigration authorities assured him that it could land in Antigua. Unbeknownst to Travis, these arrangements had been handled through the ex-MI5 intelligence officer on Crete¹²⁰⁰ who had contacts on that Caribbean island.

The next morning, March 7, Travis knew the Gulfstream 2 would have to use Gander, Canada, to reach Antigua. While transit visas were not normally required for passengers in chartered aircraft, he told me that he "rather naively" sought a guarantee from Canadian authorities that Rajneesh would be permitted to touch down. He assured them that the passengers "will not leave the aircraft under any circumstances". The Canadians then saddled Travis with yet another no way out - or in. They said their passengers would require in transit visas and then refused to grant them. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!

The Gulfstream 2 with Rajneesh on board would not even be allowed to catch its breath on Canadian soil. Repeated contacts were made with the Canadians through their embassy in London and lawyers in Ottawa, its capital. But to no avail. Later research turned up a flurry of telexes and faxes heating up the heads of those who sent and received them. They contained some facts, quarter facts, and unadulterated gibberish. In the latter category was a handwritten fax from the "Intelligence" branch of the Canadian government - dated March 7, 1986. According to that unimpeachable source, "he's apparently on the run from the U.S. (tax evasion or whatever)".

"I've never come across anything like it before or since," Travis told me on January 10, 1990, nearly four years after the events and nine days before Rajneesh passed away. "I couldn't understand at the time what was going on. 'What has this bloke done?'"¹²⁰¹
"Do you understand now," I asked.
"No. The bottom line is I still don't understand why."

While negotiations were continuing with the Canadians, the sliver of opportunity in Antigua slammed shut. Rajneesh wouldn't be slapping on sun screen and lounging around on its beaches any time soon.

He and the others were allowed to land in Shannon, Ireland.¹²⁰² You could call that finding a four leaf clover and "Irish luck". But for the same money it could be another example of the men who knew too little. They didn't know who the man dropping out of their rain drenched skies - "as uncertain as a child's bottom" was how another perennial

¹¹⁹⁹ Greenwich Mean Time, aka "Zulu".

¹²⁰⁰ See above.

¹²⁰¹ A by now all too familiar refrain.

¹²⁰² Rajneesh's plane had refueled in Shannon en route from the US to India four months before (see Chapter 10).

exile, James Joyce, put it - was, what he had done, and what he was likely to do on their emerald green isle.

When they finally found out the blarney hit the fan and splattered over Travis, Marine and Aviation Management International, and English immigrations. Ireland - home of top of the marnin' te ye, Paddy, and a textbook case of the disastrous effects good old fashioned religions can have on a country and its people – would let Rajneesh in for two weeks if and only if he kept a zero visibility profile in a hotel in nearby Limerick. The Irish government would later deny that any of it had ever happened. In effect they were saying "Rajneesh did not sleep here".

After he was given the old heave ho in Greece, Ma Prem Arup, a Dutch sannyasin we have met many times in these pages,¹²⁰³ petitioned her government to let him in for a few weeks. She comes from an influential family. Her father used to be on the board of directors of AMRO Bank – now ABN-AMRO - as of this writing (you never know) still one of Holland's major banks.¹²⁰⁴ Her grandfather, Leonardus Gerardus Kortenhorst, was a force in the *Katholieke Volkspartij*¹²⁰⁵ and head of the *Tweede Kamer* (Parliament) for 15 years (1948-63). She said:

Within a day, the Dutch denied his entry as a tourist on grounds that it might upset certain parts of the population if he came to Holland. Because of some statements he had made, some of the parts of the population might be upset, and then those parts of the population might cause unrest.

At the same time, the Pope came to Holland, and generated an incredible amount of unrest.¹²⁰⁶ There were big demonstrations and bombs were thrown. The police had to come out in huge numbers. The Dutch government knew ahead of time that this was going to happen. It always happens.

In Europe alone, Greece, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy and the UK had officially bolted their doors, windows and chimneys to protect public order and ordinary decent citizens from the Pied Piper of Poona. The good news for the sannyasins was that on Friday, March 14, things were looking up in Madrid. Eduardo Junco Bonet, the man who wanted to investigate Rajneesh in his own way, told Hasya and Suravi, to return on Monday for his decision about the visa.

"Absolutely no!", he said on the same day they were celebrating St. Patrick in Ireland.

"Why," Hasya asked.

"We don't have to give you any explanations."

¹²⁰³ introduced in Chapter 2

¹²⁰⁴ Actually, its *Raad van Bestuur*, a supervisory board.

¹²⁰⁵ KVP, now CDA.

¹²⁰⁶ Pope John Paul II's spectacularly unsuccessful visit to The Netherlands - which he described as a renegade province of the Church - actually occurred in May 1985, one year before these events.

Hasya and Suravi later found out that he had excluded Rajneesh based on dossiers supplied to him by the friendly, we're just here to help Americans and Germans. The American low down contained gutter journalism press clippings. The German stated that Rajneesh was involved in gun running, drug smuggling and international child prostitution rings. It further mentioned that he enslaved his disciples both financially and sexually. It was the same kind of unsubstantiated drivel that had happened in New Jersey in 1981 and Greece a month earlier. If they had bought it once, they'd buy it again.¹²⁰⁷

"After he left the United States," Myles Ambrose told me, "no matter where he went, people in either our State Department or whatever would quietly let the other government know. I got this story from Niren." Swami Prem Niren, Rajneesh's attorney, had asked Ambrose to go to the State Department and find out what was going on and who was behind it. "They denied they were doing it," Ambrose said. "All they would do is respond to questions from any foreign government about the Bhagwan's status. They would tell them he had been convicted of a crime in the United States."

Rajneesh's time in Ireland was running out and there was still nowhere else to go. Suravi contacted an old friend in Spain doing public relations for Uruguay. She wanted \$20,000 to get Rajneesh in. After some haggling the price dropped by half. A call was put through to Limerick. A sannyasin communicated the new possibility to Rajneesh and he said, "Okay, let's go north to Uruguay".

The chartered Gulfstream 2 jet, which had been sitting idle in Shannon for ten days, was still ticking up rental time. It finally took off, reached altitude, and headed for Spain on Tuesday, March 18. Wiser and warier now about "shooting off my mouth to the authorities", Travis didn't tell anyone who was on board. He happened to be a passenger on the flight deck of another plane and was listening to the traffic when the Gulfstream 2 made contact with the Madrid Control Tower. "I was quite relieved when they were allowed to land."

But when it touched down at Madrid's Barajas International Airport around 3 p.m. there were boots on the ground. In the form of the *Guardia Civil*, a combination army/police force. Armed with orders not to let Rajneesh off, they surrounded the aircraft and escorted the terminally naive and unsuspecting Uruguayan consul onto the runway with his visa stamping equipment.

The Uruguayan official, who didn't receive a single peseta of the \$10,000 inducement, also didn't realize he was making a fatal career choice. One month later, on April 19, 1986, he was defending his actions in a secret political telex to Montevideo. He issued the visa, he wrote, because he had been told that Rajneesh's presence would benefit

¹²⁰⁷ In the bad old days, when early Christians were on the receiving end of outside smears, they were being accused of cannibalism (a misinterpretation of the Eucharist), incest (a misinterpretation of *agape* feasts and brotherly and sisterly love) and all sorts of sexual promiscuity. Peter Brown writes: "Pagan conviction that Christians met in order to indulge in sexual promiscuity died hard. This was hardly surprising: by the year 200, every Christian group had accused its own Christian rivals of bizarre sexual practices." (*The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, p. 140)

Uruguay. He was also told that the visa had to be given on the plane because the man was too ill to get off.

"I want to make it clear that at no time did the acting officials of the *Guardia Civil* or the immigration authorities from Barajas airport tell me or even hint that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh was legally forbidden to enter Spain." A few months later he was looking for another job.

After getting the visas the chartered jet took off and landed at a deserted West African "international" airport in the middle of the night. After the informalities - greased with \$100 bills - Rajneesh and company rode in a broken down taxi into Dakar, Senegal. They spent the night in a mosquito-infested rathole and Rajneesh suffered a minor asthmatic attack. Next morning the party took off for Recife, Brazil. Around 10 p.m. the same day, March 19, they landed at Carrasco International Airport just outside of Montevideo, Uruguay.¹²⁰⁸

That same day 12 leading members of the European Parliament's second most influential party - the right wing Christian Democrats - introduced a motion into the political committee at Strasbourg (France). It called on ministers "meeting in the framework of European political cooperation to do their utmost to ensure that the Bhagwan Leader is no longer allowed to settle in any Community Member State."

It further expected all members "to take measures provided for in their legal systems to prevent his [Rajneesh] residence on their territory". The European Parliament president was asked to pass on the all points bulletin. Even without the resolution - which died in committee - all governments, right, left and center didn't have to think once about letting him in. No one was hallucinating about letting him live there.

The area now known as Montevideo was first visited by Portuguese mariners in August 1502. On board was a hired hand from Florence, merchant and cartographer Amerigo Vespucci. After that passage to "India" - his second¹²⁰⁹ - he wrote some letters, which then caught the wind and fired the imagination.

For according to him, Europeans were not then sniffing around India, as Cristóbal Colón was claiming. Rather, they were in a whole new ball world: a *Mundus Novus*. Cartographers originally applied his name to the land mass now known as South America.¹²¹⁰ Later it was extended to include North America as well.

¹²⁰⁸ At that time, Marine and Aviation Management International was in the glory days of its commercial existence. That year in a normally fallow five week period of late winter/early spring - a time for sharpening pencils and twiddling thumbs - they raked in a handsome £250,000, £100,000 of which had come from the sannyasins.

¹²⁰⁹ On Vespucci's first voyage, 1499-1500, the Spanish ship he was on touched land at what is now Guyana.

¹²¹⁰ "He describes the land they had reached on the 7th of August as 'a continent inhabited by a greater multitude of people and animals than our Europe, or Asia or even Africa We knew that land to be a

A few weeks after arriving Rajneesh and friends moved into two adjoining houses with a swimming pool in Punta del Este - a plush Montevideo suburb - across the boulevard from the Atlantic ocean. At the beginning of April he began speaking again, twice daily. "All the European governments are agreeing on the point that I cannot land at their airports. They do not understand that this is defeatism, that they have already accepted defeat. They are showing that they have no arguments to save their religion, their morality, their politics. It is all rotten."

I am ready and willing to change my ideas if somebody can show me they are wrong, that they will not lead to the good of the people. But nobody is ready to do that. They simply accept it. No argument is needed. No discussion is needed.

But their rejection of me is simply an acceptance of their defeat, their impotence. Sooner or later they will have to pay for it, pay highly for it, because in every country there are intelligent people. How long can these intelligent people tolerate this? Sooner or later it will become a revolution. Without my entering these lands, I will find my friends there. I have become representative of a worldwide intelligence of creative, talented people. This is my country.¹²¹¹

The Uruguayan discourses were given in an intimate house setting with only a few sannyasins present. They were primarily about mysticism.¹²¹² But it was not a mushy, murky variety teeming with science fiction fantasies about heaven and hell and boogey men and women for plasterboard saints to tilt their lances at. It was a nuts and bolts approach, with methodology, muscle and far ranging psychological, social, political and economic insights and benefits. "In utter silence," he said in one discourse, "you are no longer confined to your body. Your body is under the impact of gravitation. It cannot fall upwards."

But you are not the body. You are pure consciousness. In fact, it is a miracle that you are in the body But in absolute silence, suddenly all your

continent and not an island" (quoted in Roberto Levillier, "New Light on Vespucci's Third Voyage: Evidence of His Route and Landfalls", *Imago Mundi*, 1954, p. 39). That same year a Portuguese trading post was established at Cochin, (southwest India).

Vespucci's career, character and actual accomplishments have been cause for both repute and dispute. How about that. The major issues revolve around whether he actually wrote the famous letters and how much evidence for and conviction about the "New World" thesis was contained therein. What seems to be firmly established is that the German cartographer, Martin Waldseemüller, named the new continent "America" on his 1507 world map. Yet, as often happens - if not always - ideas of the new were cut and pasted on to the old and decrepit. For Waldseemüller's new world map was squarely situated in a Ptolemaic universe in which sun, planets and fixed stars revolved around a stationary, lowest of the low earth.

¹²¹¹ Rajneesh, *Beyond Psychology*, Chapter 10, April 17, 1986. At first and second reading it is possible to misread this quote. I know, because I have done so myself. I thought that last "This" was a reference to Uruguay, and was a public relations gesture toward the officials who had let him in. But I now see it is a country based not on land and language, but self selected and intelligent individuals. On this topic, see the end of Chapter 3.

¹²¹² I have already quoted from this series at the beginning of Chapter 2.

attachment to the body disappears. Your attachment to the mind disappears. Because now words have become sound. The mind cannot conceive it. The voice has become music. For the mind to figure it out is not possible, and because the mind is in a state where it cannot control, your connections with the body become loose.

Mind is your connection, and in that looseness you can feel as if you are floating upwards. Your body is still sitting on the ground, so if you open your eyes you will be puzzled. But what you have experienced is not imagination. It is as true as gravitation. It is just invisible. You can feel it, but you cannot see it. Don't be afraid of it. Let it happen more and more. Suddenly one day you will find you are close to the stars and not to the earth.¹²¹³

At the end of March Rajneesh was issued an Uruguayan identity card and one year provisional residence. Permanent residence was expected to be granted about a month later after a routine check with Interpol to see if he had any criminal record worth mentioning. Again, there was a flurry of negative press reports and some rather amusing misconceptions. One account described him as an 80 year old man who had lived luxuriously in London, Paris and Rome before going to America and trying to buy Oregon.¹²¹⁴

Some of the more damning reports were coming hot off highly confidential political telexes originating in Uruguayan Embassies in the US, Germany and Spain. These official telexes contained the usual accusations. They said he was involved in drug smuggling, gun running and child prostitution rings. Junco Bonet¹²¹⁵ was the source of an April 21 telex sent from the Uruguayan Embassy in Madrid to Montevideo. He portrayed Rajneesh as a modern day Rasputin seeking to "captivate" the wills of minors and to foster sexual and economic dependence of his disciples.

Busqueda, the nation's most prestigious magazine, investigated the subject and printed an exclusive interview at the beginning of May. It reported that Interpol had nothing even faintly incriminating against Rajneesh. After that President Julio Maria Sanguinetti and other top members of the government were getting ready to announce the granting of permanent residence. Then, according to highly placed sources, the President was called by the new American Ambassador Malcolm Wilkey.¹²¹⁶

Ambassador Wilkey said to President Sanguinetti, "You are a free country. You can do what you want. But you owe the United States \$6 billion. And this is the year for re-negotiating a new loan. If you do not make your payments on time, we will raise the interest rates." The anonymous source in the Uruguayan government said the arm twisting was about Rajneesh's permanent residence status. President Sanguinetti was

¹²¹³ Rajneesh, *Beyond Psychology*, Chapter 44, May 4, 1986 (morning session)

¹²¹⁴ *Punta del Este*, April 4, 1986. A lot of similar money shot stories had made the rounds in Oregon, some nasty, some just good fun. See Chapter 5.

¹²¹⁵ See above.

¹²¹⁶ Nominated by President Reagan in late August 1985, he took up his post at the end of November.

reported to have said, "But why?" Then the Ambassador read him a confidential CIA report on Rajneesh. "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is a highly intelligent man. He is very dangerous. He is an anarchist. He has the power to change men's minds."

This material was covered in an article by Swami Satyam Anando in *The Rajneesh Times*.¹²¹⁷ In March 1989 I sent a copy of it to Ambassador Wilkey and asked him to comment about the allegations. He did not deem it or me worth his stamps and stationery.¹²¹⁸

"Did you ever hear of Malcolm Wilkey," I asked Myles Ambrose. "Oh, sure, we [he and his wife] know Malcolm very well. What would he have to do with this?" I told him the Wilkey/Sanguinetti story. He then remembered that he had already heard it from Niren. "Malcolm's a nice man. If he did anything in Uruguay, I certainly don't think he would have done it on his own behest. If he did something, somebody may have called on him to do it. But I have no knowledge of him ever doing anything on this subject at all."

In any case, the Uruguayan government did an abrupt 180 and Rajneesh was "invited" to leave by June 19 - less than three months into his one year provisional residence. Uruguayan attorneys suggested fighting it on constitutional grounds. But Rajneesh had had enough of the endless legal haul and maul in North America. He didn't want to go through it all over again in the south.¹²¹⁹

Thus on Thursday, June 19, 1986, he made yet another retreat on yet another rented jet. And yet again he was immediately in the spotlight and cross hairs. "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, the Indian guru who left the United States last November after immigration charges were brought against him, has left Uruguay and flown to Jamaica via the Brazilian city of Manaus, the Brazilian Air Force said today."¹²²⁰ One wonders why the Brazilian Air Force was keeping such close tabs on this particular plane.

Ma Prem Arup, the Dutch sannyasin who had failed so miserably with her own government, had arranged a two week Jamaican visa with an option to extend and rented a \$25,000 a month villa belonging to a local tennis hero. But the cops were banging on the door before breakfast. They said he would have to get out before sundown. The good news was it was just about the longest day of the year. He left Jamaica at 8 p.m. that evening.¹²²¹

¹²¹⁷ "The Sun Never Sets on the U.S. Empire", *The Rajneesh Times*, September 1, 1988. The sannyasin newspaper at that time was being written and published in Poona. The writer, some readers may recall, was trying to connect the dots while Rajneeshpuram and the rest of his world was collapsing around him (see Chapter 10).

¹²¹⁸ It was because of his arrogance and similar official disdain that I hadn't bothered to contact Ambassador Robert Keeley.

¹²¹⁹ Ma Prem Hasya told me this.

¹²²⁰ "Guru Heads for Jamaica", *The New York Times*, June 20, 1986. The *Times* was using UPI as its source.

¹²²¹ According to Juliet Forman, he flew out of Jamaica on a Jetstar owned by Northeast Jets of Allentown, Pennsylvania (*Bhagwan: One Man Against the Whole Ugly Past of Humanity*, p. 376). See Chapter 10, note 1094.

Not wanting to rightfoot the hounds from heaven chasing them around a planet they thought they owned, the never missing a chance to conspire about something sannyasins finally got smart. They told the pilots they were going to Madrid.

Meanwhile, back in Portland, Tom Casey was still on top of what for him should have been a very closed case. Casey was Joe Greene's sidekick at the Portland INS and the agent who had stalked Rajneesh and Rancho Rajneesh from as early as the fall of 1981.¹²²² Seven months after game over, he was still religiously dedicated to making sure that the guru couldn't touch down and take root anywhere in America's front- and back-yards.

According to secret documents obtained from the Canadian government, Casey told them the Rajneeshees were coming. He had been "removed from Jamaica on 20 June 86 bound for Newfoundland (Gander) enroute to? Traveling with 4 others". Casey's vigilance at this late date confirmed the sannyasins' notion that there was a conspiracy afoot - that their movements were being closely monitored in up to the minute real time - and they needed to be cautious about divulging flight plans in advance.

This time they were a jump ahead. Without the knowledge or permission of Canadian authorities - no requests for in transit visas - they refueled in Gander. The plan was to change course halfway across the Atlantic. But the sannyasins were tired and stressed out and forgot to tell the pilots their real destination was Lisbon, Portugal, not Madrid. Yet again, they landed in Spain, and yet again Rajneesh stayed on the plane.

After a mostly, but not completely, uneventful stay in Lisbon and Sintra - a charming, fairy tale resort a few hours north of the capitol - Rajneesh and a few sannyasins returned to India. They landed in Bombay on Wednesday, July 30, 1986 in – you guessed it - a private jet. Since leaving Rajneeshpuram about eight months before more than 20 countries had either denied him entry or deported him. About \$500,000 had been spent on rented jets alone. I don't know if anyone has crunched the numbers to figure out how many air miles they had racked up.¹²²³

¹²²² See Chapter 4.

¹²²³ In a July 2013 review of the latest version of this book (<http://www.oshonews.com/2013/07/a-passage-to-america/>), Ma Anand Bhagawati wrote:

But sometimes even they [the mainstream media] can't ignore stories clamoring to be told and heard. Like the spectacular and on edge of your seats case of Edward Joseph Snowden and the Noah's flood of documented revelations of across the board spying. Not only on the part of "yes, we can" big [US] government, but also big business. Your friendly hi-tech giants: "do no evil" Google, not at all monopolistic Microsoft, just smile Skype, and "what's on your mind?" Facebook.

Breaking and entering on a biblical scale into what's left of our individual privacy.

And here's where those two tales – Osho and Snowden – intersect. In fact, have a mid-air collision over Europe. Because even after being hounded out of the US, Osho was chased around the globe. The US used its unprecedented power and influence to either persuade or strong arm countries into not letting his private planes land or use their air space.

Back then it all happened in the dark and behind closed doors – down the non-Wikileaks diplomatic channels. Much of this is detailed and documented in *A Passage to America*

Rajneesh settled into Sumeela bungalow, the swank north Bombay home of Govind Siddhartha, one of his wealthier Indian disciples.¹²²⁴ He held a well attended press conference the next day. "Everybody has problems with me," he told reporters. "I don't have problems with anybody. The U.S. government is putting pressure on the Indian government to restrict my movement around the world and confine me to this country."¹²²⁵ He remained in Bombay until January 1987 and discoursed daily to old and new sannyasins who appeared in ever increasing numbers. In more ways than one, Rajneesh was back.

On Sunday morning, January 4, 1987, at around 4 a.m., he returned to the old Poona ashram. Yet even that ungodly hour didn't dissuade the vigilant Poona Police Commissioner, Bhaskar Misar. Almost immediately, he burst into Rajneesh's bedroom and ordered him to leave the city within half an hour. He said Rajneesh's presence in Poona would disturb the "public tranquility".

Sannyasin attorneys won a four month interim stay of this decree. Temporarily thwarted, he laid down some surprisingly strict rules for the sannyasins. They could not smoke or drink, in or outside the ashram. I'm not sure whether he included anything about saying prayers and brushing their teeth before nighty night. But he did stipulate that only 100 foreign disciples could be in the ashram at any one time, and only 1,000 people could attend discourses. He also posted guards at the ashram gates.

I wasn't aware that in India - consistently billed as "the world's largest democracy" - police commissioners have such far ranging authority. When asked about his actions, Misar said "his duty was to ensure that the ashramites were protected and that they did not break any rules. He also pointed out that restrictions had been imposed on discourses which could either hurt the religious feelings of any community or harm the nation in any way."¹²²⁶

Vilas Tupe, who had tried to assassinate Rajneesh in May 1980,¹²²⁷ clamored for his immediate expulsion. He then demanded his arrest. A leading member of a fundamentalist Hindu organization, *Hindu Ekta Andolan*, he ordered local merchants to boycott sannyasins.¹²²⁸ He said he was going to take 200 of his judo and karate trained *goondas* and storm the ashram. Tupe, who apparently fit in perfectly with the prevailing "public tranquility",¹²²⁹ threatened to use more violent means if the not quite as enraged didn't see things his way.

(Chapter 11, "In Spain, Mainly on the Plane"). But now it's happening *en plein jour*, for all the world to see.

¹²²⁴ We have touched base with this man in Chapter 2 (note 51).

¹²²⁵ *Bombay Free Press Journal*, August 1, 1986

¹²²⁶ *Indian Express*, January 29, 1987

¹²²⁷ See Chapter 2.

¹²²⁸ That would have made sense if the sannyasins were the sellers. But they were the buyers.

¹²²⁹ For more on Poona's prevailing public tranquility, see Chapter 2 (note 74). The subcontinent's ideas about heroes and villains aren't always in perfect sync with those of Westerners. For example, most of us would revile the killer of a state governor as a villain. But in Pakistan he can easily be revered as a hero.

The dust settled. Ruffled feathers were either smoothed or clipped. Arrangements were made, and both Rajneesh and the ashram were allowed to not only remain in Poona, but also flourish. Despite his inexplicably failing health, he gave regular public discourses daily, once in the morning and again in the evening.

Then, in the fall of that year, 1987, a simple infection in Rajneesh's right ear, which should have taken four days to heal, refused to respond to normal treatment. A Poona specialist, Dr. Jog, was called in and finally had to operate. Still, the body refused to heal. Rajneesh's condition was critical. His doctors secretly sent out blood, urine and hair samples to colleagues around the world. They described the symptoms and asked for advice on both the diagnosis and cure. After seven weeks of severe pain, Rajneesh recovered and spoke about his condition and the possible source of the problem.

Since those twelve days in the American prisons, all sleep has disappeared. Many things started to happen in the body which were not happening before: disappearance of all appetite, food seeming to be absolutely without taste, a churning feeling in the stomach, nausea, a desire to vomit. No feeling of thirst, but a tremendous sense as if one is uprooted.

Something in the nervous system also seems to have been affected. At times there has been a sensation of tingling all over the body which was very strong - particularly in the hands - and a twitching of the eyelids.

The day I entered the jail I was 150 pounds. Today I am 130 pounds. My food is the same. But I have been losing weight for no reason at all. And a subtle weakness. And just three months ago, the bone in my right hand started hurting me tremendously.

These are symptoms of certain poisons. My hair has fallen out. My eyesight has become weaker. My beard has become as white as my father's beard was when he was 75. They have taken away almost 20 years of my life.¹²³⁰

During the same discourse Rajneesh revealed that Harley Street specialists in London suggested that he might have been poisoned by thallium, a tasteless, odorless heavy metal compound used in rat poison. Japanese scientists who had worked on victims of atomic blasts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki suggested he could have been poisoned by radioactivity.

I discussed the medical evidence with Dr. Amrito, Rajneesh's personal physician.¹²³¹
"Before going into jail, Osho was in pretty good health. One of his spinal discs was out

See Owen Bennett Jones, "How Punjab governor's killer became a hero", January 9, 2012 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16443556>).

¹²³⁰ Rajneesh, *Jesus Crucified Again: This Time in Ronald Reagan's America*, Chapter 1, November 6, 1987

and he had to be careful when he walked. He had diabetes and occasional asthmatic attacks. But he was still healthy."

He swam twice daily. And when you looked at him sitting bare chested and cross legged on the bed, he looked wide eyed, incredibly alert and youthful. But from that time to now his body has practically fallen off him. The problems started immediately after he came back from jail. Bone pain, disability, hair loss, weight loss, unsteadiness, a seemingly endless series of small problems, intermittent in nature, which were wrecking his health.

Eighteen months after he left America his thyroid gland died. We originally put it down to the experiences of being in jail. You don't immediately think of poisoning.¹²³¹ I don't even remember where the suggestion came from two years later. But when thallium poisoning was suggested, all the stray pieces suddenly fell into place. His symptoms are clearly a textbook case of thallium poisoning.

Amrito and other doctors were considering what else might have been added to the thallium "brew" to confuse the picture of symptoms and produce in Rajneesh short-, middle- and long-term disabilities. He said, "Osho is certain. There's some kind of hot process still going on in his body. That's how he describes it. Something hot."

Over the next two years the number and length of his discourses diminished substantially. His public appearances were more sporadic. He continued to suffer from minor infections that refused to respond to treatment. There was a marked increase of asthma attacks and evidence of nerve damage. At one point Rajneesh said his arms felt "crippled".

Amrito said the nerve damage was another indication of thallium poisoning. There were at least three occasions when he nearly died. In the spring of 1988, he reappeared during the nightly discourses wearing sunglasses. He and his doctors said the poisoning had made his eyes hypersensitive to light.

In May of the same year, Amrito said, "Osho started suffering from syncopal episodes, 'drop attacks', suddenly falling to the ground, which raised the possibility of damage to his blood vessels, particularly to the heart." During the same month he suffered more episodes of severe chest pains, which indicated a worsening heart condition.

A year later, on May 19, 1989, he said he felt he would not be able to speak to his disciples on a regular basis. That summer he had a wisdom tooth pulled from his lower right jaw. It was a simple operation. But, again, he nearly died. He complained about deep bone pain in his right jaw and finally, within the space of several weeks, another nine teeth had to be pulled. After the oral surgery he took all his food in liquid form. It consisted mostly of peppermint flavored milk infused with soya products and nuts.

¹²³¹ This is Swami Devaraj with a new name.

¹²³² See his naivety about the suicide stories in Chapter 10.

The radiation thesis¹²³³ seemed to provide other crucial clues. "The blanks are filled in," said Swami Devageet, Rajneesh's English dentist, "when one considers that Osho sleeps on his right side. Without a pillow, he sleeps in the crook of his right arm. Now look at the facts. All the pain has been on his right side. He had bone pain in his right wrist, his right elbow, and his right shoulder. The nearly fatal ear infection was in his right ear. The nine teeth that had to be extracted were all on the right side."

Chuang Tzu auditorium had recently undergone a year's worth of renovations. In the old days of what was now being billed "Poona One" it had been used for *darshans*¹²³⁴ and initiations and discourses when the much larger Buddha Hall was either unavailable or unnecessary. In Poona Two it was transformed into a palatial white Carrara marble "bedroom" with glittering chandeliers and semi-circled by 20 foot tall windows looking out on tropical gardens and artificial waterfalls built out of tons of more marble specially quarried and trucked in from Rajasthan.

"We thought we were building it for him," Ma Deva Anando, Rajneesh's personal secretary, said in February 1990. "But right from the beginning, one and a half years ago, he said to me: 'Remember that this will be a place for people to come and sit and meditate when I am gone.'" Rajneesh moved in, lived there for two weeks and then returned to the smaller, darker bedroom he called "my cave".

That same summer, 1989, British television aired another "exposé" on Rajneesh. Entitled *The Man Who Would Be God*, the 90 minute program was part of the Thames News *Scandal* series. The filmmaker interviewed Hugh Milne, a Scottish ex-sannyasin who said he had spent ten years¹²³⁵ with Rajneesh and was then earning a living selling disappointment door to door.

The program was in tune with most of the stories about Rajneesh that had sexed up European, American and Asian tabloids for more than 15 years, the inflammatory scraps contained in press kits and official black channel packets that had followed - or preceded - him around the world. It provided an abundance of scare and blare - buzz words like sex, drugs, violence and cult - and inundated audiences with images of naked men and women engaged in nearly lethal pillow fights.

Scandal was an example of a media first principle. Throw enough words and footage at a theme and it looks like you have actually done it justice. More is more. But more curious, concerned and intelligent observers realize that this strategy is more coverup than coverage. Covering up, first, your own ignorance about the objects of your desires - absence of facts, evidence and worth repeating opinions - and, second, burying the bastards alive.

¹²³³ See above and Chapter 10.

¹²³⁴ being with the master

¹²³⁵ See Chapter 6 for more on Milne. Like Sheela, his idea of "ten years" might not actually refer to ten revolutions of the earth around the sun (see Chapter 2).

Which should shut them up and out until some other hot shot in search of a ready made topic wants to do it again. Dig up and bury, D&B. On and on it goes until everyone has heard it all before and it becomes part and parcel of what's the problem history.

However, even if the program revealed nothing new about Rajneesh and the news itself, it provoked an unexpected response from Elsie, an 82 year old working class English woman. Five years before, her 40 year old son had become a sannyasin in Oregon. She had never understood why, and maybe he didn't either. But she was coolly pleased that he had found what he wanted. After watching the show she wrote a letter to him, Swami Antar Pyasa, then 45 and working as a guard in the Poona ashram.

One evening a late film came on TV called Scandal. I was interested to see what it was. I got a big surprise. It was about Bhagwan. It started by showing Oregon before it was built into Bhagwan's world. Then the buildings grew. It was a town of its own.

The big building held 20,000 people. We saw the followers, all in red, lining the long road. Then Bhagwan came along slowly, just like you told me. Then one of the narrators told how Bhagwan was persecuted from people (Americans) living nearby in a place named Antelope.

We saw on film Bhagwan was arrested, handcuffed and put in prison, and he was almost crucified by America.

The next scene on film was taken in Poona where we saw a white wall and stage with one armchair. Bhagwan came onto the stage in a beautiful light blue silk robe, and hat. He sat in the chair and talked. There were other scenes on the stage, only Bhagwan had different robes, one white, another black and white. It was all very very nice. I was pleased I had waited up to see Scandal.

One of Pyasa's friends went to visit her in East London. "We popped down to see your Mum on Wednesday evening", the friend wrote. "She is really well and has enjoyed her summer with many activities. I think she is talking more than ever and I found it really amusing her telling me all about the TV program. It was as if I didn't know about Oregon or Poona, as if I had never been there."

It was also lovely as well. You know how within minutes your Mum changes from a little girl, into a clown, into an angry old lady. Well, the anger really came out when she talked about Sheela. And then she went on to tell me about "the stage" in Buddha Hall and how Osho comes in and how beautiful he looked in his blue silk robe, describing that and his hat in minute detail, and as he sat down the peace that she felt. She said she finally knew how you must feel.

Then she began to tell me about when he was arrested and put in chains and she was crying. She thought that the word "Scandal" referred to the scandalous way that Osho had been treated in America.

Pyasa told me that Elsie is hard of hearing. She saw the story of Rajneesh and his sannyasins, but could not hear the overlying commentary. I was then reminded of another television truism. Whenever there is a fundamental conflict between what is seen and heard, the eyes have it.¹²³⁶ With that in mind, I watched a videotape of *Scandal* from Elsie's perspective, with the sound turned off.

There was, indeed, an unbridgeable gap between the sensually visual and viscerally vicious verbal messages. The sannyasins looked strange, true, but also wonderful. Like people who might have secrets to share if only you could pluck up enough courage to ask and humility to shut up while they gathered up a few handfuls of what they'd been through and tried to put that into words a sympathetic outsider might understand. The only terrifying thing about them was their intense, seemingly endless energy.

By contrast, those who condemned them were self righteous and morally outraged at the drop of a hat. People perfectly at home in a 36 inch screen world, where life and all it does and could contain is reduced to questions of good- and evil-doers. Where essential and structural issues in both the social and individual spheres are systematically postponed and side stepped by serially spotlighting one crisis, tragedy and scandal after another. Where business as usual muck-raking and -making journalism and hand-holding and -wringing talk show tsk tsk is mistaken for reality and civilization as we know it.

¹²³⁶ In *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, Oliver Sacks described the differences between how aphasia patients and non-patients watched a speech by then President Reagan. While the former couldn't follow the words, they could follow the facial expressions and other nonverbal clues. In fact, they are so good at it that they have acquired the reputation of being impossible to lie to. They see right through them. Sacks concluded that the speech "so cunningly combined deceptive word-use with deceptive tone, that only the brain-damaged remained intact and undeceived". (Quoted in Frans de Waal, *The Ape and the Sushi Master: Cultural Reflections by a Primatologist*, p. 383f)

CHAPTER 12: A PASSING

Obscurity always surrounds great issues. Some people are ready to take on trust what is only hearsay; others falsify the truth; the passing of time amplifies both kinds of distortion.¹²³⁷

Passage, immediate passage! the blood burns in my veins!
Away O soul! hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers - haul out - shake out every sail!
Have we not stood here like trees in the ground long enough?
Have we not grovel'd here long enough, eating and drinking like mere brutes?
Have we not darken'd and dazed ourselves with books long enough?

Sail forth - steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O soul exploring, I with thee and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.¹²³⁸

There's a joke in and about the legal profession. If the facts are against you, argue the law. If the law is against you, argue the facts. If the law and facts are against you, yell like hell.¹²³⁹ As so often with jokes, this one contains lots of truth, which can be explored and unraveled, or left buried alive in the laughter.

But it also works the other way around. If both the facts and the law are for you, you don't have to pile up the insinuations, make full use of lung power - yours and the whole choir of the morally outraged - windmill with your arms, feet and all ten fingers, and take shelter inside thick bunkers of ignorance and begging the questions. There's no need to spray and pray, keep firing from all sides and in all directions, with the increasing possibility that sooner or later you're bound to hit something.

In theory at least, you can lower your voice and still be heard. That course is the one I have chosen to sail in a case that still splits huge sections of the world population into for and against. The only thing preventing shouting matches and fur flying from breaking out between them is their being separated by huge distances - oceans and worlds apart - and the steadfast refusal to have anything to do with each other.

While taking those seemingly endless conflicts into account - because conflict is an apparently indispensable given in drama in general and almost all of our more modern

¹²³⁷ Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 3, 19

¹²³⁸ Walt Whitman, "Passage to India" (1868)

¹²³⁹ At the risk of ruining a perfectly good joke, we should note that the distinctions between facts and law have not always been appreciated - even to legal minds. "In medieval villages wise men concerned themselves with social problems; distinctions and definitions came slowly as needed. The legal notion of evidence, for example, barely began to be clarified before the central Middle Ages, and in the royal courts of England, as doubtless elsewhere, there was still much confusion between fact and law in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries." (Rebecca Colman, "Reason and Unreason in Medieval Law", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1974, p. 580)

and "newsworthy" tales in particular - I also wanted to get past it. Because like Mircea Eliade,¹²⁴⁰ I believe we are "not here in the world like stones, unable to move". And aren't necessarily doomed to repeat and improve on all the murderous mistakes made in the past and continue spinning and drowning in the same shallow and dirty water.

So up front I decided to chill out the story. In other words, not only didn't I sex it up, I deliberately dulled it down. This attitude can also be noticed in my interview style. Like when, for example, INS Chief Counsel Mike Inman asked me, "Can you imagine what a confrontation with Uzis and rifles and FBI stuff would look like?", I said "A couple of people could have gotten killed".¹²⁴¹ Or when the normally sober and solid Bernie Smith, Wasco County District Attorney, was trying to lead me down the garden path toward one of his more lurid - and harebrained - "death cult" theories.¹²⁴²

He was trying to help me rouse my readers' enthrallment and boost sales in real time. And while I was of course not immune to the charms of fame and fortune, I was more interested in and attracted to their older sister. What some with a perhaps old-fashioned, pre-postmodernist perspective might still call "the heart of the matter". What actually happened, as opposed to what people said and/or thought. And, besides, it wasn't necessary. Because there was already enough sensationalism in this story to sink New Jersey. What was needed now was more light, not heat.

At the same time I have avoided as much as possible the cliché meganouns. Words like "God", "reality", "nature" and "truth", which from a distance seem to contain everything you'll ever need to get the job done, but closer up prove to be cardboard and sawdust. They won't keep you warm during long dark nights of the soul or show you the way.

I emphasize "as much as possible". Because you can't even begin to hook into this story - or any other - without some of the embedded code. Thus in my opinion they are admissible evidence if and only if both writer and reader aren't silly enough to believe that by kissing, sucking and fondling them any of their basic human needs will be satisfied, and they aren't asked to function as the weight-bearing elements in the argument.¹²⁴³

I have followed as much as possible Sherlock Holmes' methodology, which is "founded upon the observation of trifles".¹²⁴⁴ Not necessarily because I'm myopic, anal retentive, and can't hot air about the "big picture" with the best of them. But because trifles are "invisible" and there are so many of them that no one can be bothered to keep track of, let

¹²⁴⁰ See the second quote leading into Chapter 1.

¹²⁴¹ See Chapter 9.

¹²⁴² See Chapter 8.

¹²⁴³ In the Middle Ages, the "wild man" was sometimes portrayed as an insane, half-naked brute trying to bite stones. A beautiful image, which probably speaks to something in many of us. Unfortunately, that beauty is somewhat corrupted by how the *clerici* abused it. For included in their definition of insanity was someone who did not believe in the existence of the Christian God. See Pope John Paul II's remarks in Chapter 5. "To deserve the name at all, a civilization must be a Christian civilization."

¹²⁴⁴ Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Boscombe Valley Mystery".

alone conceal or lie about, all of them.¹²⁴⁵ Especially when, in the words of Ron Taylor, US Customs Agent in Charlotte, "Things were starting to cook. I mean really cooking!"¹²⁴⁶

Because trifles are sneaky and stubborn little bastards that creep into the telling of a story - or when doing the research - that are noticed, if at all, only when it's too late and the damage has already been done. After what really happened has oopsed out and any attempt to coverup or disguise that now only makes matters worse. Because trifles - the difference between, say, indictments and arrest warrants, the exact time something happened, pesky prepositions (SWAT teams going *in to* or *out of* the ranch) - are recalcitrant fossils that linger on the shelves long after the shouting and shouters have returned to where they came from.

Because you can hold and turn trifles in your hands, and look at them from many angles. Slow them down and speed them up, put them under a microscope and next to their close kin, other trifles. Because there's not much leeway for differences of opinion about them, and they can help you see - and even prove - the bigger picture. These days this trifle methodology is no longer the exclusive preserve of Sherlock Holmes. Rather, it is part of the standard tool kit of detectives - including scholars - and lawyers.

What did [Charles] Haydon learn for his own professional life from [Wilhelm] Reich? One lesson was that, in Reich's words, "people cannot lie"; one way or another, through grimace, body movement, or whatever, the truth emerges. Reich attributed such revelation to "the energy of truth." Apparently, this affected Haydon's life and his practice of law. For example, in cross-examinations, he found that while witnesses were well prepared to defend themselves on central issues, they would reveal the truth, if questioned clearly, on peripheral matters.¹²⁴⁷

My methodology was also founded on demanding a high level of proof from my "witnesses". That means I wasn't going to swallow and repeat any of the CIA/FBI/Satanic conspiracy crap I heard by the cart load. Not without some evidence and a good argument. But I wasn't going to reject it out of hand either. My premise being, you make a good argument for reincarnation or UFO's, and I'll take it under advisement and maybe factor it into the equations.

But no matter how tough I was on others, I was even tougher on myself in what I have contended up to now and am about to round off with here. In other words, I have aimed at 100% certainty. And while it would be pathologically pedantic to insist that I have achieved that probably impossible goal, I don't think it's fair to say that I am well within spitting distance.

¹²⁴⁵ The penetrating and cantankerous journalist I. F. Stone used to say that the Washington bureaucracy churns out so much information each day that it's bound to let some truth slip through. The same could be said for the media and people in general.

¹²⁴⁶ See Chapter 1.

¹²⁴⁷ Myron Sharaf, *Fury on Earth: A Biography of Wilhelm Reich*, p. 436

In any case, as far as the comprehensive and in depth political-legal aspects of the cases are concerned, this book has done far better than anything else so far in print. And in the well known metaphor of science historian Thomas Kuhn,¹²⁴⁸ it should become the new paradigm and the standard of accuracy that future accounts measure themselves against. Whether that actually happens any time soon or even within our lifetimes remains to be soon.

Thus I have established beyond a doubt - reasonable or otherwise - that there was an illegal conspiracy against Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and the city-commune of Rajneeshpuram at nearly every level of government in Oregon and large and powerful patches in Washington, DC. The tough question is no longer, "who was involved?", but "who wasn't?". One of those not involved was former chief council for the INS, Mike Inman. He told me, "Every issue has two sides. There were people within the INS arguing for the Sanctuary movement, for example, and there were others arguing against it. But with the Bhagwan there was only one side. Everyone was against the guy."

"Conspiracy" comes from the Latin, *con spirare*, literally "breathing together". And that's definitely what the conspirators were doing. Breathing together, and heavily. Even when not in the same room - as they hardly ever were - they were inhaling and exhaling the same oxygen depleted air and toxic fumes crammed with bits of poorly digested information, *dezinformatsiya* and sheer black propaganda.

The kind of junk that was ranted and repeated by the Nazis about *die Untermenschen*. Or Christians about Jews, infidels, witches, magicians, or other Christians among them - the schismatics and heretics. The kind of dangerous rubbish that "good", "well meaning" people everywhere nearly always "sincerely believe".

In this specific case, the names were changed, but the contents remained essentially the same. It was understood by the conspirators that Rajneesh and the sannyasins were not only guilty, but also criminally and dangerously so, not only as individuals, but as a group. They were an affront to the decent, law abiding people of Oregon, and - in some circles - God and the "natural order of things".

In other words, whatever could be thought of as illegal and/or immoral, they were either doing it or thinking of doing it. And that was probable cause justification for launching a strip search investigation - past the underwear and up the intentions - into all their activities. In this thick conspiratorial air were the never say die prejudices of people who were sure their case was "righteous",¹²⁴⁹ and by pursuing it, no matter how and how far, they themselves were doing the right thing.

Like all conspiracies, this one was sometimes haphazard, easy does it and dead slow. And sometimes it was centrally directed and a high profile all hands on deck, even if it was two o'clock in the morning. Sometimes it took the form of irrevocable stances, which provoked equally implacable reactions in the designated enemy.

¹²⁴⁸ *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*

¹²⁴⁹ Rick Norton's characterization (see Chapter 6).

For example, George Hunter, the INS' crack interviewer in Portland, deciding in September 1981 that large numbers of foreign sannyasins would not qualify for US visas based on "religious worker" status, because who they were and what they were doing did not fit into his extremely limited - both historically and "spiritually" - belief system about what true religion and, therefore, religious work, are.¹²⁵⁰

Their response was basically, "Okay, Mr. Hunter, if you won't let us in as religious workers - which is definitely our right, because we are a religious movement - then we'll find some other way. If you won't let us through America's 'open door', we'll come in the windows, or dripping through the hot and cold water taps. One way or another, we're gonna getcha getcha getcha getcha."¹²⁵¹

This was the source of the "sham marriages", which undoubtedly happened, and possibly in substantial numbers. Say, 100 or more. But just as 100 swallows don't make a summer, that does not constitute a criminal conspiracy on the part of Rajneesh, the sannyasins as a group, or even Sheela and her confederates to hurt, harm or defraud the United States government and its people. What's more, it began long after "Poona One", after the battle had begun and the battle lines drawn by the INS itself.¹²⁵²

Sometimes the governments' conspiracies - because there was more than one government and more than one conspiracy - took the form of extended legal quibbling. Like the millions of dollars worth of investigations, lawsuits and box loads of exhibits stretching out over years and likely to continue until His Kingdom Come. All with the openly expressed purpose of not granting Rajneesh permanent resident status for anything and ridding the "Redneck Riviera" of the "red menace".

Sometimes the conspiracies threw curve balls at the conspirators themselves. For example, while the INS was dogmatically declaring that there was no religion, religious leader, religious work, and religious workers, Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer was merrily trying to prove - and in his own mind at least had proved it the minute he thought of it - that there was no city at Rajneeshpuram because it was inextricably entangled with the Rajneesh church.¹²⁵³

Sometimes the conspiracy was frankly ridiculous. Like when 1000 Friends of Oregon, an alleged environmental protection group, claimed in effect that sannyasins were ruining

¹²⁵⁰ See Chapter 3.

¹²⁵¹ With apologies to Blondie (Deborah Harry), "One Way or Another" (1978). In fact, both sides were singing the same song.

¹²⁵² Some of the possibly legitimate fears about immigration - legal and illegal - in the US and elsewhere is that newcomers will unduly burden social services - welfare and health facilities - and educational systems. Further, they will crowd home grown folks out of the job market.

While I myself have suffered from occasional bouts of those very same fears, I'm not sure they are legitimate. But that is neither here nor there, because I am not qualified to argue the matter one way or the other. However, I can say that the sannyasins being sweated about by citizens and state and federal government officials didn't have their hands in anyone else's pockets. They were completely self reliant. And it is my contention that things would have remained like that if they hadn't been attacked from all sides and driven to resort to doomed to disaster schemes like the Share-A-Home program.

¹²⁵³ See Chapters 5 and 6.

the natural integrity of the "pristine" desert by turning it into an oasis. Even those who were dead set against the sannyasins at every turn were forced to admit that, ecologically speaking, the work they did was superb. They made the desert bloom.¹²⁵⁴

As for the alleged speed at which the city-commune grew, three facts of American history should put paid to all notions of undue wham bam. One, a quote from what some still consider the best book about American "democracy", Alexis De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. "At present the interests of the different parts of the Union are not opposed to one another, but who can foresee the various changes of the near future in a country where new towns spring up every day and new nations every five years?"¹²⁵⁵ This was in the early days of the US, when the states were strong and the central government often virtually helpless. The "new nations" he refers to were what we now know as "states".

Two, "In 1848, the population of San Francisco was eight hundred; three years later, thirty-five thousand people lived there. In 1853 the population went past fifty thousand and San Francisco became one of the twenty largest cities in the United States."¹²⁵⁶ That is, in five years its population increased from 800 to 50,000. In a comparable time span - and area - the population of Rajneeshpuram rose from about 50 to 2,000.

Three, Oklahoma City had an even more rapid spike. On the day of "The Run" - April 21, 1889 (the day after Adolf Hitler was born) - what had been Cherokee Indian Territory was opened up for "white" settlement, and the population soared from 0 to 10,000 in a matter of hours.

Sometimes the conspiracies took a more sinister turn. Like when "We were trying to develop this case, because we were using the criminal process to solve what was really a political problem."¹²⁵⁷ As US Attorney in Portland Charles Turner told me without any sense of coyness or embarrassment, and not under the influence of anything more intoxicating than Diet Coke.

"A political problem"? Sure. Throughout the first half of the 1980s everyone saw and commented on it. The sannyasins were different and on that basis alone they were not liked. As early as March 1982, former Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh said if the sannyasins wanted to be good neighbors, they should just pick up stakes and leave the neighborhood.¹²⁵⁸

As with all conspiracies, there were agreements about the bottom line, but disagreements about almost all the details. Some - like the INS' supercop Joe Greene and Tom Casey - had four fat flat feet on the accelerator for years. Others - like Turner and Assistant US

¹²⁵⁴ See Chapter 5.

¹²⁵⁵ *Democracy in America*, p. 377.

¹²⁵⁶ Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water*, p. 54. I am sad to report that Reisner died in July 2005. He was only 51.

¹²⁵⁷ See Chapter 6.

¹²⁵⁸ See Chapter 4.

Attorney Robert Weaver - opted for a more white collar approach. In the beginning their attitude was, in effect, "Let's develop this thing slowly, within the context of the law. And meanwhile we can hope for the best. Maybe they'll succumb to the never gonna let up pressure and/or fall apart from within. Maybe some other agency will do the dirty work." And some were thinking, "Maybe somebody will just go in there and kindly shoot the sonuvabitch".¹²⁵⁹

Many people could think and would argue that this wealth of disagreements among the "conspirators" argues against "conspiracy". But they are wrong. Why? Essentially, for two reasons. One, because just as George Hunter had grandma's underpants ideas about what is, and isn't, a religion, they have extremely limited notions about what constitutes a conspiracy. What they are and how they work.

They "think" - as Hollywood has taught them to - that "conspiracy" means an exceptionally well orchestrated symphony, craftily composed and performed, all the instruments coming in at exactly the right time and playing the proper sequence of notes in the right mood and key. Everything else is just standard muddling through. In other words, as John le Carré so succinctly put it: either conspiracy *or* fuck up.¹²⁶⁰

Two, they don't have much hands on experience with how governments actually function. Not only within any given agency or department - or section or office - but also how they interact with each other. The king of the heap egos, the varying methodologies, procedures and precedents about what is standard and legal, or something we can talk ourselves into and out of (plausible deniability). The competition to: (a) claim victory "for our side", "for our department", "for ourselves";¹²⁶¹ (b) earn publicity, praise and promotion; and (c) justify the splurge sums spent on any given operation in a cut costs climate - in terms of budget, man hours and efforts *not allocated* to other, perhaps more important and urgent issues.¹²⁶²

¹²⁵⁹ See Chapter 7.

¹²⁶⁰ See Chapter 10 for the reference.

¹²⁶¹ "Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan." This is one of those "triumph of evil" quotes (see Chapter 4). I thought the source was Napoleon, but others on the Net have corrected me on that score. John Kennedy said it after the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion (Press conference, April 21, 1961, in response to a question asked by journalist Sander Vanocour, *Public Papers of the Presidents: 1961*, pp. 316-17, question #17). But the buck didn't start there. Count Galeazzo Ciano, Benito Mussolini's son in law, said something similar in 1942. "Victory finds a hundred fathers. No one wants to claim a failure." (*La victoria trova cento padri, a nessuno vuole riconoscere l'insuccesso.*) (*The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943*, Vol. 2) The farthest trace back on that particular website goes to Tacitus. "It is the singular unfair peculiarity of war that the credit of success is claimed by all, while a disaster is attributed to one alone." (*inquissima haec bellorum condicio est: prospera omnes sibi indicant, aduersa uni imputantur, Agricola, 27*) Thanks to everybody at Quoteland.com for all of that.

¹²⁶² I'm sure many would support this contention and some would take it a few steps further. But one quote seems to be tailor made for the occasion. "The conceptualizations to follow are predicated on the assumption that actors in crisis situations are not so much oriented toward specific behaviors or outcomes but, rather, seek to sustain a narrative or account of what is happening so as to render their own behavior legitimate." (Anson Shupe and Jeffrey Hadden, "Cops, News Copy, and Public Opinion", in *Armageddon in Waco: Critical Perspectives on the Branch-Davidian Conflict*, p. 180)

In such tense and dense working conditions, tripping over each other, getting stuck for months or years in gridlocks or caught in "friendly fire", are not exceptions to the rule of conspiracies. They are the rule. Rather than arguing against it, they argue for it.

The conspiracy consisted of a well fed misinformation campaign that would prepare the public years in advance for any eventual disaster scenario at Rajneeshpuram, just in case that couldn't be avoided. It was repeated *ad nauseam* that Rajneesh was another Reverend Jim Jones, and his ashram - whether it was in India, Oregon, or outer space - would sooner or later self destruct and end in a "death trip". It had happened once before - at least that's what people who believed what they saw on television and read in the papers thought - and, therefore, it was bound to happen again, and again. Because that's the very nature of cults, and if you've seen one, trust me on this, you've seen 'em all.

Some of the misinformation came complete with name tags. A US Treasury Department agent, Jack Ballas, told reporters he knew the Portland Hotel bombing was the result of factional East Indian religious warfare.¹²⁶³ There were the stories about armed and dangerous hardened felons with machine guns fleeing the country at "the last minute" planted and flushed through the system during Rajneesh's night "flight" from Oregon to North Carolina.¹²⁶⁴

These latter stories were lit and fanned by a consortium of government officials: Robert Weaver, Joe Greene, and US Treasury agents William Gleason and Lawrence LaDage. Perhaps at the back of their minds they were hoping that their jump started colleagues in Charlotte using "assault type tactics" would solve everything with some real life, nothing metaphorical about them "magic bullets".

Others sowed and spread the fake story about Rajneesh's suicidal tendencies. While this surfaced in Charlotte, it didn't originate there. And it doesn't require any kind of expertise to locate the source - Portland. It was factored into the food chain by the marshals and Sheriff Kidd.¹²⁶⁵ The latter wasn't intentionally part of the conspiracy, but he fell into traps set by those who were. And just because "intention" is one of the jewels in the crown of modern ethical theory it doesn't necessarily mean that doing something unknowingly is going to impact the outcome any less. In fact, a case could be made for "unknowing conspirators" being more armed and dangerous than their knowing brethren. Because there are more of them and they have more arms.

The government's conspiracy included the fears for Rajneesh's "safety", palmed off on the press and public by the marshals in Charlotte. "They say former followers of the Bhagwan have made death threats against him." And there were also "death threats" against the marshals themselves.¹²⁶⁶ These were more sneak peek, semi-official statements intended to soften up journalists and other "historians" of the instantaneous and set the stage for the next act.

¹²⁶³ See Chapter 9.

¹²⁶⁴ See Chapters 1 and 10.

¹²⁶⁵ See Chapter 10.

¹²⁶⁶ See Chapter 10.

Namely, Rajneesh dying under mysterious circumstances in prison or transit, due to some hard to nail down "overdose", "allergic reaction", "heart failure", or getting shot during a desperate, end of the time break out attempt.¹²⁶⁷ These rumors with a view say nothing about Rajneesh and the sannyasins. But they speak volumes of malicious and violent intent on the part of their creators, and the credulousness of those who swallowed them hook, line and sinker.

In a league - and world - by himself was Major Robert Moine of the Oregon State Police. Like so many others I interviewed, he kept his Rajneesh trophies and memorabilia¹²⁶⁸ in his office - at State Police headquarters in Salem - and fancied himself something of a "Rajneesh expert". He was stationed at Rajneeshpuram in the fall of 1985 and nominally in charge of a multi agency task force allegedly investigating the alleged crimes of Sheela.

He believed that he, a lowly major, was actually directing those investigations. That he could command and control the actions of all the other hepped up and raring to roll state and federal agencies, and could personally guarantee Rajneesh's safety. Rajneesh's safety against what? At this point Rajneesh was, in theory anyway, the accuser, not the accused.

Moine still believed in his exalted position and power when I talked to him in February 1989. He also believed, then and later, that the hard core criminals had not gone with Sheela. They remained behind in the form of the new secretary, Ma Prem Hasya, and others. Their plot was to get rid of Rajneesh so they could reign supreme without him.

There was a plot, Major Moine told his colleagues - and me - to surround state and federal officials at Rajneeshpuram with children.¹²⁶⁹ The sannyasin security forces -

¹²⁶⁷ See the mindset of Kernan Bagley in Chapter 10. "We didn't want his followers to gang up and try to take him away."

¹²⁶⁸ On the shelf behind his desk was one of the last remaining copies of *The Book of Rajneeshism*, the Rajneesh "catechism" Rajneesh ordered to be burned (see Chapter 9), and a color photo of Rajneesh in a Rolls Royce.

¹²⁶⁹ Brigadier General Ervin Osbourn, who at the time was the commander of the Oregon National Guard's 41st Brigade, and I had the following interchange.

Osbourn: In fact, one Oregon State policeman came up and said there's a relatively new law in the state of Oregon that prohibits paramilitary type training going against What we got up in Idaho - the White Supremacists - and that law has only been on the books about, well at that time it had only been on the books about two years. And I remember one Oregon State Police officer says, "We don't have to wait for an overt act from the Bhagwan's bodyguards". He says, "They're carrying weapons. They're a paramilitary organization. We can go in and make an arrest."

Brecher: That wasn't Moine?

Osbourn: Well, Rob Moine would be one of them that was ...

Brecher: ... He's the one who said that?

Osbourn: I'm not sure. But Rob was in favor of taking more aggressive action ...

Brecher: ... He was in favor of taking more aggressive action?

A little bit later in the interview I said, "So to recap a little bit. The ones who were pushing for more aggressive action were Bob Moine ...

Osbourn: ... Have you met him?

Brecher: Sure. I interviewed him.

Osbourn: Well you can appreciate what I'm saying. He's a very aggressive person.

supposedly knowing that the good and decent cops wouldn't shoot at children - would use them as a human shield to massacre the investigators. While Moine's story is beyond preposterous, even if it were true, or the sanniyasins had fired a single shot in anger or self defense - something they never did - they would have brought down the wrath of the world on their heads and gotten themselves and Rajneesh killed.

It would have been manna from heaven for those conspirators on the perimeter. "Hell, this is it!", they would have said. "We told you this would happen, and here it is happening. So let's stop mickey mousing around. Let's saddle up, send in the State Police, FBI, and National Guard, and restore the rule of law and order in central Oregon."

Similar events - often eulogized and euphemized as "justifiable homicide" and "lawful killing": indeed, "sensible violence" - have happened more than once in the stories of "what men have done, what they have the power to do". For example, to the Indians at Jallianwalla Bagh.¹²⁷⁰ All those other Indians.¹²⁷¹ The blacks at MOVE in Philadelphia.¹²⁷²

And at Waco, Texas on Monday, April 19, 1993, when after a 51 day siege of another cult BATF agents and others got their asses into gear and stormed the Branch Davidian compound with tanks and the Air Cav. Because lives, especially children's lives, were at stake. Somehow a huge bonfire of the insanities started. "Things were starting to cook. I mean really cooking!" And when the shouting stopped and the smoke cleared 77 of the self destructive and aggressive cult members - men, women and children - were dead, most through incineration and asphyxiation.

To begin with most of the public was not overly nonplussed about the "tragic" deaths of the "whackos". In fact, as with MOVE, the alpha male getting the job done decisiveness sent a surge of testosterone through huge sections of the citizenry. Men and women alike. Alexander Cockburn wrote:

So fifty years after the Nazis' attack on the Warsaw ghetto, the F.B.I. gassed a religious community on national television, with the near total support of the press. Once you are efficiently designated a "cult," the cops can burn you alive or drill you with machine-gun fire without much public demur. They could have fired on the Scientologists or the Family and it would have been hats in the air from the liberals. You have to go to the far left (maybe) and the far right (more likely) to get some respect for citizens' rights in these situations.¹²⁷³

¹²⁷⁰ See Chapter 2.

¹²⁷¹ See Chapter 3.

¹²⁷² See Chapter 8.

¹²⁷³ *The Nation*, May 9, 1994

But eventually some of the hey, hang on voices, which had been clamoring to be heard from the beginning, began to seep through the sweep of *opinio communis*. Lots of articles and books were written. There has even been at least one documentary film.¹²⁷⁴

The focus of the bulk of that is not only the destructiveness of public prejudice - in which cult busters and the mainstream media had played a cheerleading, some might say a decisive, role - but also governmental malfeasance. I won't trivialize that substantial body of arduous and authentic investigative work by trying to sum it up here. Even if I had the space in this story, I haven't done enough homework to get to first base and add anything new.

Having said that, however, I am more than a little impressed by the arguments of those who claim that the fire was started by the government, not the Davidians.¹²⁷⁵ In other words, this was murder, not "Nearer, My Lord, to Thee" mass suicide. Some say the murder was unintentional, others intentional. But as far as the consequences and victims were concerned, a syllable more or less doesn't make the slightest difference. And that makes "Waco" even more evidence for the argument I had made in the first edition of this book,¹²⁷⁶ which had come out two months before (February 1993), and am repeating with more emphasis and insistence here.

But there are at least three more tangible and direct connections between "Waco" and "Rajneeshpuram". Two of them are interconnected - I think - and unusual, but still well within the natural order of things. And I'm not referring to the so-called New Age cult aspect. For as with the Peoples' Temple, there was nothing New Age about the Davidians. They had been at Waco since 1935, and as far as I can see were a pretty standard sub-sub-subdivision of Hallelujah Christianity. The third is eerie and - for me at least - spooky.

At Waco the names of Don Stewart and Patricia Ryan came to the fore. According to Linda Thomson, an attorney for the Branch Davidians, during the first days of the siege the group hung out a white sheet with a message to send in several people. Among those being called for was Don Stewart.¹²⁷⁷ Also lurking with intent around the edges of the event was Patricia Ryan, the daughter of the Congressman murdered at Jonestown, the sister of sannyasin Ma Amrita Pritam,¹²⁷⁸ and someone Stewart had repeatedly referred to in our conversations as one of the main players stoking fires under governmental butts to do something about Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram.

¹²⁷⁴ *Waco - The Inside Story*, a PBS Frontline documentary, aired October 17, 1995.

¹²⁷⁵ In July 2000 a government appointed investigation cleared the FBI of any wrongdoing in starting the fire. For what that's worth.

¹²⁷⁶ See end of Chapter 9 and revisited in this chapter.

¹²⁷⁷ Linda Thomson, "Waco: The Real Story?", *Nexus* (an Australian magazine), August-September 1993, p. 34. Thomson then proceeded to get almost everything wrong about Stewart and his connection with the assassination plots at Rajneeshpuram. I wrote to ask about Stewart's direct connections with her clients, but I never got an answer.

¹²⁷⁸ See Chapter 2.

In April [1993], Patricia Ryan, president of the Cult Awareness Network [,] was quoted in the *Houston Chronicle* as saying [David] Koresh should be arrested, using lethal force if necessary.¹²⁷⁹

This wasn't the "concerned" Patricia Ryan agonizing about the possibility of mass suicide at Rajneeshpuram.¹²⁸⁰ Or the saving angel Patricia Ryan who on November 18, 1992 - five months before Waco - walked into the lion's den at the Evergreen Cemetery in Oakland, California to shake hands with the Devil's son. At the annual get together of some Jonestown survivors and their relatives, she stepped up to Stephan Jones, the only natural offspring of James and Marceline Jones, and said, "I heard you were here. I just wanted to introduce myself and meet you. I'm Pat Ryan, Leo Ryan's daughter."¹²⁸¹ She then spent several hours talking to him at a restaurant in Berkeley.

This was a cleaning up America and getting ready for the millennium Patricia Ryan talking in the same tough tones as other "cult experts". Such as Donna Quick Smith's alleged Bombay pen pal, who wrote, "The only way to defeat these criminals is by dirty tactics, the same methods they use themselves. Don't entertain any scruples. If necessary, slaughter them because if not, they'll do the same to you when they achieve power."¹²⁸²

This is the venom and vitriol she and others like her were spewing into the thick, conspiratorial atmosphere, which was being inhaled and exhaled not only by press and public, but also the police.

Police agencies have long relied upon outside "cult experts" when surveilling groups deemed deviant or bizarre. Some of the information has been biased, and much of it just incorrect - evangelical *samizdat* posing as criminology.¹²⁸³

The third connection happened exactly two years later, on Wednesday, April 19, 1995, when in apparent retaliation for Waco, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was blown up by some members of the vague "far right" Cockburn had been referring to less than a year before. Many more than the official statistics lost their lives. The 168 trapped in a flash at ground zero plus their nearest and dearest who never got over the aftershocks.

They were victims. Of course they were. Innocent victims. Without a doubt. But were they any more victimized and innocent than those on the inside at Waco? Yes. Why? Because, that's all. We don't owe explanations to anyone who doesn't already and instinctively know the answer. But if you insist, because they are "our" victimized and innocents, while those at Waco aren't. They, by contrast, "had brought it on themselves" and probably "had it coming".

¹²⁷⁹ Alexander Cockburn, *The Nation*, October 18, 1993

¹²⁸⁰ See Chapter 11.

¹²⁸¹ Lawrence Wright, "Orphans of Jonestown", *The New Yorker*, November 22, 1993, p. 84

¹²⁸² See Chapter 4.

¹²⁸³ Gerry O'Sullivan, "Cults and Cops", *The Humanist*, July 1993

The uncanny thing is that, as far as I can determine from aerial photographs and my memory, the Alfred P. Murrah building was straight across the street from where the local US marshals - Stuart Earnest & Co. - were housed.¹²⁸⁴ And I still don't know why this particular building was singled out as payback for something that had happened about 350 miles due south.

Back to Oregon. In September and October 1985 there were 17 local, state and federal agencies finally getting it together and more or less coordinating their efforts against Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram. The FBI was there. The Oregon National Guard was on alert. US Navy SEALs were searching the commune's lakes for weapons, and all sorts of military jets of undetermined origin were screeching overhead.

Everyone was on the phone with everyone else, to Washington, DC, and in Oregon to Portland, Salem, Madras and The Dalles. According to Robert Hamilton, sometimes every two hours.¹²⁸⁵ Some officials were deliberately leaking stuff to the press, and others were playing the usual cat and mouse games. The conspiratorial air was bristling with violence, never say die paranoia, and the determination to strike when the iron was hot.

"It's our time!", Hamilton said to me and thumped his desk as he did so. The conspirators were juggling with hundreds of worst case scenarios and bumping into each other like cattle trying to be first out of the gate.

"Tell me," I said to Hamilton, "what's the difference between 17 agencies coordinating against Rajneesh and his people, and a conspiracy against Rajneesh and his people? What's the difference?" His voice suddenly became very cold and angry. "Well, I don't accept either one of those. I'm not going to answer that. There was no law enforcement conspiracy that I participated in against the Rajneesh or his people."¹²⁸⁶

While we can at least hope that no one was intentionally steering events toward and over the brink, there's no guarantee of that. It remains to be argued, and by now a fair share of the burden of proof must be on those accused. But to a certain extent it doesn't matter. Because by the fall of 1985 the conspiracy had gone so far and was moving so fast that chaos itself was running the show, and that alone could easily have triggered "the unthinkable".

There were, however, some braking vectors at work. Some of the conspirators were afraid that a massacre might make martyrs out of Rajneesh and the sannyasins. The "deeply religious" among them were particularly sensitive to the fanatic motivating power of martyrdom. Others worried about public perceptions and how to sell it to Americans, who even on good days are not universally enamored with their government.

¹²⁸⁴ See Chapter 10.

¹²⁸⁵ See Chapter 9.

¹²⁸⁶ Compare that with his remarks at the beginning of Chapter 10. "And we were well coordinated. But in that incident we were also kind of lucky."

Others wondered how such a stunt would look on their résumés. Some were praying to find a miracle crime against "the Bhagwan", a smoking 21 gun salute. Others were hoping that the sannyasins would "fall apart from the inside". And others were scheming in "what if" whispers. What if, with all of us breathing hot and heavy down his neck, he flees? "That would be the best thing that could happen. That would be an act of God."¹²⁸⁷

And that's exactly what did happen. But the God they were thinking about had nothing to do with it. Rather, it was Rajneesh himself, who decided that enough was enough and discretion was by far the better part of valor. As he had done many times before.

For example, when he stopped traveling in India during the 1970s due to accelerating tensions between those against and for.¹²⁸⁸ Again when Reverend Mardo Jimenez instigated protests against the "anti-Christ".¹²⁸⁹ And so many times in his discourses.¹²⁹⁰ Such as when he said, "I don't want to be crucified - no interest in it at all. I don't want to be deified - no interest in it at all."¹²⁹¹

But even though his action prevented some kind of confrontation and blood on the hands and consciences of some of those responsible - when they woke up in the middle of the night years later sweating, screaming and realizing what they had done - it has been gone down in history as "cowardice" and a supposedly postcard perfect proof of guilt.

While playing with tens of worst case scenarios the conspirators skirted the, for them, worst of all. That would have occurred if the US Attorney's office had played the game by the rules of law, not politics. Rajneesh could have been invited to testify before their slow and dead slow Grand Jury. Or his attorneys could have been informed that an indictment had been handed down, arrest warrants were in the making, and would they please bring their client to appear before the magistrate on Does Friday fit in with your schedule?

It would have been the worst of worst case scenarios because Rajneesh would then have been released immediately on his own recognizance, without any bail, punitive or otherwise. At a trial the government would have had to provide the "massive circumstantial"¹²⁹² evidence its representatives kept boasting about and put it all together to reach judicial as good as it gets: a beyond a reasonable doubt proof that would withstand the onslaughts of two or five appeals.¹²⁹³

¹²⁸⁷ Kernan Bagley (see Chapter 10), with slight adjustments.

¹²⁸⁸ See Chapter 2.

¹²⁸⁹ See Chapter 4.

¹²⁹⁰ See Chapters 8 and 9.

¹²⁹¹ Rajneesh, *From Personality to Individuality*, Chapter 10, January 8, 1985. Already cited in Chapter 8.

¹²⁹² Weaver in Chapter 10.

¹²⁹³ In this context it is important to recall what Frohnmayer said in his July 1987 interview with the University of Oregon professors. That is, if Rajneesh "had allowed himself to be arrested at the ranch, he'd still be there. They'd have to try him and the appeals could drag on forever. If he were here, the ranch would still be populated by the faithful. We would still be dealing with them today if it had not been for his precipitous flight. People accused me of having engineered that and I take full credit for it." Compare that with his remarks to the German documentary makers in Chapter 9, and note 923 in the same chapter.

Since, undoubtedly, there were no paper trails, it would boil down to oral history. Who said what and when, in what context and tone - what some critics call "register" - and how it was heard, remembered and dished out. Was so and so serious that night or kidding? Was she running up and down the scales between the two and talking out of all sides of her mouth? Who exactly was talking: her/him or the whisky?

The witnesses' level of involvement would also be run through the ringer.¹²⁹⁴ What were they doing when all this alleged criminal conspiring was going on around them? Just scratching their heads, picking their noses, and serving tea? And what did their current trustworthiness and motivation look like up close and closer still? Were they determined to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help them God and no matter what? Or were they doing it under the gun, as part of a passel of plea agreements designed to keep their culpable asses out of state and federal slammer?

The government would have been forced to fill in lots of gaps, constantly growing wider and deeper as defense attorneys poked, probed and challenged, and make logically and legally inconsistent and impossible inferential leaps. It would have had to argue both the facts and the law. Winking, nodding, nudging and singing in the shower leering, sneering and smearing wouldn't cut the mustard.

In other words, the government would have been "defeated in detail" - as military men like to put it. What next? The conspirators would have been at each other throats. Having lost case and face, some would have been axed and those still on the payroll sent back to the big bang. If the state paper of record, *The Oregonian*, had been on the job actually investigating the conspiracy - instead of being a fully paid up, card carrying member of

Frohnmayr did not say - and the *toujours la politesse* professors did not ask - how that version of events tallied with his other assertion that Swami Krishna Deva had decisively fingered Rajneesh (see Chapter 11). I sort of asked Professor Carl Latkin about their approach to and attitude about Frohnmayr, and suggested - rather than said - that they had been accepting everything he had said as gospel, without challenging him on anything.

Latkin said Frohnmayr was "a very good politician. He didn't say anything off the record.... He didn't say that the state deviated one iota ... that there were any problems. It was in a way too perfect. "We followed the legal course: this way, this way and this way. No politics got in the way of our judgment. It was purely following the law."

Brecher: And you believed that?

Latkin: I believe that he believes that. I believe that he didn't understand the Rajneeshees. His sources of information were limited.

Looking back at that Latkin interview years later, I saw it as botched job on my part. A personal worst. I should have been sharper, more probing. But when I became more acquainted with his still unpublished work on the sannyasins - "The Self-Concept of Rajneeshpuram Commune Members", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, March 1990; "From Device to Vice: Social Control and Intergroup Conflict at Rajneeshpuram", *Sociological Analysis*, Winter 1991; "Seeing Red: A Social-Psychological Analysis of the Rajneeshpuram Conflict", *Sociological Analysis*, Fall 1992 - I wondered how much ground we could have covered over coffee in the Portland Hilton. Because he clearly believed he could do good sociology on this subject without tackling the politics head on. For that reason alone, his thoughts on this subject while interesting and worth considering, are fatally flawed.

¹²⁹⁴ Weaver told me, "My view was that he [Rajneesh] was going to retain the most competent, aggressive defense lawyers he could and, for once, the government would be outspent and outnumbered." (See Chapter 8.)

it¹²⁹⁵ - they would have been dragged kicking and screaming into the spotlight. And perhaps by some miracle conjunction of sustained outrage and outlay they would have been made to answer whole series of tough and uncomfortably specific questions with hands not over their hearts but on the big black book. Questions like those I've raised throughout this book.

Near the beginning of these pages I quoted the eloquent words of Alexander Cockburn.¹²⁹⁶ They are worth repeating here.

Critical mass in a scandal is achieved when half of the wild rumors turn out to be true, and people start giving the other half their undivided attention. This is when official denials have the same effect as matches on gasoline.

We have moved on since then. More than half of the "wild rumors" about governmental conspiracies have turned out to be true. It's now time to start giving the rest our "undivided attention". Those involved can repeat "ridiculous" and "utter nonsense" as much as they like, but they can only continue to get away with that tactic if and only if intentionally ignorant Oregonians and the rest of the world agrees. In other words - here it comes again, but with a twist - "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

What next after the worst had happened? The INS might have been shamed - assuming that institutions in general and the INS in particular are capable of any such feelings - into granting Rajneesh permanent residence status.¹²⁹⁷ The sannyasins would be working less and meditating more in their Sheela free city-commune and could begin mending fences with Oregonians who paid more than lip service to supposedly inherent attitudes of "live and let live" and "let bygones be bygones".

The evidence of ongoing and very real, "We haven't just been imagining this!"¹²⁹⁸ conspiracies against the commune-city might have softened some hearts and contributed to that reconciliation. A win-win resolution? Peace, love and prosperity in Central Oregon? Hardly. Most people didn't much care for the sannyasins sight unseen, when they hadn't done anything. And that dyed in the wool hate and aversion wasn't going to dwindle or disappear any time soon. But so what? There's animosity in the best of families, neighborhoods and societies. That doesn't mean people have to shoot at each other, organize and agitate for immediate action at the state legislature in Salem.

Back in the fall of 1985 there was some movement towards *rapprochement*. For example, Professor Carl Latkin told me that after Sheela left "people's attitude towards the

¹²⁹⁵ See Chapter 13.

¹²⁹⁶ Chapter 1

¹²⁹⁷ Weaver said (Chapter 11): "A lot of the reasons that INS would have relied upon to deny a green card would be part and parcel of the criminal case, and if we lost, there would have been nothing left to base that refusal on. Suppose that we went to trial, and we lost everything! I would probably go home and have a stiff drink, and the INS would have to decide the green card stuff. Public relations wise, had we lost the criminal case, it would have been very difficult for the government to prevail."

¹²⁹⁸ A modified Dave Frohnmayer quote (see Chapter 8).

Rajneeshees became slightly more positive. Now people who didn't know the Rajneeshees talk about them in positive terms."¹²⁹⁹ Ma Anand Sarani, an Oregonian who became a sannyasin, thought she understood the state temperament. She said that "if you persevere", original hostility and judgments "will turn into a begrudging respect - and then it will start to grow from there".¹³⁰⁰

Did that mean Oregonians started off with an attitude of "We don't like strangers here, stranger"? But they'll accept you after you've proved yourself? "Is that how it works," I asked.

"That's the way it seems to work," she said. "That's my experience. Even when you're an Oregonian and you move to a new town, you have to go through a break in period. And it just seems to be the nature of the type of people who settled that state, or of that area of the country. That they had to persevere themselves. Maybe. I don't know. So that they require that kind of proving period for somebody else."

Governor Vic Atiyeh had distinctly other ideas on the subject. When I asked him if the farmer and cowman could be friends, he insisted at great length that that wasn't even remotely possible.¹³⁰¹ And even those addicted to happy could have beans must take that conviction on board, even if it threatens to sink the whole ship. First, the two groups had a bitter history. Second, there were major differences in attitudes and lifestyles. So what common ground could they meet on? The answer to that question might be in the vicinity of an argument I was making earlier in this chapter about unknowing conspirators - so-called innocent bystanders - being more dangerous than their more intentional and focused kin. The same moral could be applied here.

While almost everyone I interviewed agreed¹³⁰² that the overwhelming majority of sannyasins didn't knowingly conspire with Sheela, they indirectly contributed to what she

¹²⁹⁹ See Chapter 9. Simon Potter wrote that if Rancho Rajneesh had had "the luxury of another few years of existence after Sheela's departure, it most likely would have evolved into a reasonably self-sufficient, ecologically compatible experiment in communism akin to what such writers as the anarchist Peter Kropotkin had envisioned on either side of the turn of the twentieth century." ("Osho in America: A Moment of No-Mind Visiting an Unliberated Landscape", p. 178f. An article on the Net that was delivered orally at a GORABS - Geography of Religions and Belief Systems - session during the annual conference of the Association of American Geographers in Denver, 2005)

¹³⁰⁰ See Chapter 4.

¹³⁰¹ See Chapter 9.

¹³⁰² Governor Atiyeh was a notable exception. I couldn't figure out what Major Robert Moine thought (see above). Maybe he couldn't either. Some people farther afield found such hair splitting puerile and unnecessary. For example, reporters for *The New York Times* Stephen Engelberg, Judith Miller and William Broad (*GERMS: Biological Weapons and America's Secret War*). They appeared on a PBS special to promote their book and the following discussion ensued.

STEPHEN ENGELBERG: In our book research, we discovered exactly one terrorist group, uh, the Rajneeshis who carried out a successful terrorist attack using germs in Oregon.

HARVEY "JACK" MCGEORGE (Public Safety Group, Inc.): They were the followers of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. There was quite a lot of them. It was over 10,000 of these folks had gathered together and settled on a ranch that they had purchased. Their goal was to take and incorporate the ranch as a city. They could count votes ahead of time, as well as any politician, and it didn't look good for them apparently.

NARRATOR: Afraid they would lose the election, some Rajneeshees tried to make townspeople too sick to vote against them.

was doing. By not taking time out during their on the run days and nights to discover exactly what was going on, both inside and outside their group. All the thousands of what came firsts, the push or shove, he said or she said?

By not standing up in a loaded auditorium and shouting, "Shut the fuck up, you stupid crazed bitch!". Even if that would definitely have immediately cost them everything they cherished - indeed, worshipped - and probably wouldn't have changed much inside or out. But what's good for the goose is good for the gander. In other words, the same goes for those Oregonians who weren't knowingly and willfully conspiring against the sannyasins.

Perhaps this is as close as I'll get to a task I swore off at the start. Namely, squaring the circle and spanning bridges across the chasms separating those who would praise Rajneesh and those who would bury him.¹³⁰³ Perhaps this is the common ground where those who care and dare to encounter never forget or forgive traumas can nod to each other from across a very crowded room - packed to the rafters with Israelis and Palestinians, Nazis and Gypsies and Jews, Hindus and Moslems, Catholics, Protestants, whites, blacks, cavalry, Indians, husbands, wives, parents, children, rich and poor - and recognize in the face of the eternal other, if not the eyes, something of themselves, and something like healing can happen.

In the winter of 1990 Don Stewart went public in Portland with stories of Wolfgang's assassination plots against Rajneesh and the latter's connections with people in high places. Some members of the "fourth estate" were interested enough to call and hear his side of the story. But there wasn't enough oomph or budget to do real sleuth work and track down more conclusive evidence. Or so it seemed at the time.

This is where Swami Anand Vibhavan, a millionaire sannyasin living just outside of town, stepped in. He hired three lawyers to depose Stewart. They listened to three hours of tapes he had compiled from his conversations with Wolfgang and tried, through him,

STEPHEN ENGELBERG: They used Salmonella to poison a salad bar and got seven hundred people sick, which is pretty good. I mean if they had used a worse germ, they would have gotten people dead.

NARRATOR: The Rajneeshis chose a disease that would incapacitate their enemies rather than kill. ("Bioterror", Airdate: February 12, 2002)

At the time Engelberg was, or about to become, the managing editor of *The Oregonian*, a post he held between 2002 and 2007. Judith Miller, a Pulitzer Prize winner, was later massively disgraced for much of her reporting in and around the Iraq war - specifically over claims about the clear and present danger of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and her dubious role in the outing of CIA agent Valerie Plame. According to *Wikipedia*, "A number of stories she wrote while working for *The New York Times* later turned out to be inaccurate or completely false." All three experts and everyone else present seem to have conveniently forgotten the US government's own involvement in biological warfare and weapons of mass destruction.

For more on guilt by association and taking "the sins of one" to smear the whole phenomenon, see the comments of Dr. Melton in Chapter 8.

¹³⁰³ See Preface.

to construct a coherent framework of government involvement. Something that would stand up in a real court of law.

One thing was non negotiable. They were not willing to risk their time, money, reputations and safety on a bag of hot air story that would blow up in their faces. Hard questions were asked - names, functions, dates and telephone numbers. The answers were not up to snuff. An impasse was reached, and negotiations came to a standstill.

The story looked like it would die in the might have been. The tapes, which the reader has already sampled,¹³⁰⁴ were made available to me, free of charge, and I drove off to Salt Lake City, Utah to interview Wolfgang. What I didn't know was that between the time pesky reporters had called for his comments about Stewart's allegations and my arrival, he had picked up stakes and left the area. That was at the beginning of March 1990.

Wolfgang's real name is William Pratt Gossett, but his friends know him as Wolfgang. According to Steve Collins, an FBI agent in "Salt" - as the locals call their town - Gossett is a very religious man, some kind of priest in a breakaway Catholic sect. According to Brent Gunderson, a private investigator in town, Gossett's mother was a Mormon and he had a brother who was a Mormon bishop in Provo, Utah, but he himself doesn't take religion seriously.

Gunderson worked with Gossett for 15 years in a partnership they called the National Intelligence Agency. Gunderson's name was mentioned on the Wolfgang-Stewart tapes as a potential accomplice on the Rajneeshpuram job. When I phoned him at his office to ask if he knew Gossett, he said, "I may. I don't want to get too involved here over the phone. If we were talking eyeball to eyeball, I'd be more free to tell you things that I normally wouldn't want to tell you over the phone. Understand?"

The next morning I went to see him. Fully realizing that I could be walking into a death trap, I told friends around the world that if they didn't hear from me in the next 90 minutes, they should call out the Marines.

I told Gunderson about the book and his name on the tapes. His Plan A was to laugh off the idea that Wolfgang Gossett could be brokering an assassination plot for the FBI or the US Treasury Department. "I don't think either Wolfgang or the story is very funny," I said. He sobered up and told me that Gossett was born in San Diego, California on July 29, 1930 and spent 25 years in the US Army.

Part of that was as a major in the legal division, the Judge Advocate General's office. At one point he had been a military science professor at Weber College in Ogden, Utah. He also worked for the public defender's office in the same town. From 1982 until February

¹³⁰⁴ See Chapter 7.

1990 he worked with repeater (less than five times) juvenile offenders in the Salt Lake City Detention Center.¹³⁰⁵

By the end of the interview, Gunderson admitted that Gossett could be involved in a conspiracy at the level Stewart had talked about. While he had known him for over 15 years, he said he didn't know him all that well. He promised to get me his new address and telephone number by the next day.

Coincidentally enough, Gossett called Gunderson hours after we spoke.¹³⁰⁶ When I talked to him the next day he was the life of the party, saying things like, "Hey, you're asking me to sell my buddy up the river." He could be bought, but Gossett's new address and telephone number was going to cost me \$3,000. I didn't give him a dime. I got it instead it through a trifle he had let drop the day before. Namely, the telephone number of Mrs. Clyde Smith, Gossett's mother in law, still living in town. Through her I obtained the address and telephone of my dear old friend Marilyn, a painter suffering from a crippling disease and Gossett's second wife.

I called him at his new home. The voice I knew so well from having ransacked the tapes for any stray clues I could coordinate and pursue was not happy to hear mine. "I only have a couple of minutes," he said. "I'm doing some house repairs. I just got back in the country and I'm up to my neck." Just back in the country, I wondered. He was supposed to have moved just ten days before.

"Where have you been," I asked.
"In Europe."

He bristled when I told him I wanted to do an interview about the tapes. "Well, let me tell you something about those tapes. You got those tapes from a fellow named Don Stewart, a fellow that I have never met in my life. He is an individual who sort of intruded in a rather in depth investigation that we were conducting and some things that we were doing. He made those tapes without permission. He violated Title 18 of the United States Code. I was not advised that I was being taped. He did it interstate and the use of those is a criminal offense for any purpose."¹³⁰⁷

Considering how smutty he had talked on those tapes, I was not unduly impressed by his sudden concern for common decency and his constitutionally guaranteed civil rights.

¹³⁰⁵ Bernie Twitchell, a management services specialist at this state agency who had worked with Gossett for eight years, was shocked by my statements. He was as close to him as anyone else outside his family and had got especially close in the last two or three years. He thought him an outstanding worker, "neat and polite", and "with three times as much qualifications as anyone else in the same position". He held him in "the highest personal and professional regard". According to Twitchell, Gossett was on television a few times and knew lots of lawyers and district judges. "He knew lots of people."

¹³⁰⁶ Alert readers will remember a similar "coincidence" of the INS' Tom Casey calling Ma Yoga Laxmi immediately after her conversation with an American sannyasin in Ashland, Oregon (see Chapter 4).

¹³⁰⁷ I also didn't tell him I was recording this conversation. But since we were both in Oregon at the time I wasn't doing it interstate.

Considering the vastness of Title 18 - citing it is like saying "it's somewhere out in Kansas" - I felt the same about his legal acumen.

"You told me that Stewart intruded upon an investigation. What does that mean exactly?"
"Well, let me tell you," Gossett said and started laughing. "I'm really a nice guy, but I really don't have any obligation to answer any questions. And I have clients who were deeply involved in the ... have the right to all of the information pertaining to this because there was an intensive investigation in one or two of these matters ..."
"... Who was conducting these investigations?"

"I cannot answer that for you. There's a matter of a canon of ethics and the confidentiality of clients."

"So you were conducting these investigations on a totally private basis, is what you're saying? For clients?"

"I cannot answer that. And I'm not trying to be clandestine or ..." He paused to discharge what in his world probably passed for a laugh. "... am I trying not to be a good guy. But I just recently retired, almost retired, got brought out of retirement again three weeks ago."
"Got brought out of retirement? Into what?"

"Well, I Again, you're getting into areas of privity¹³⁰⁸ and I ..."

"... Are you, in fact, working for the FBI or the Treasury Department?"

"I'm not going to answer any questions for you because you're intruding now." He told me that Gunderson had said I was a "nice guy". To this day I can't figure out how Gunderson had got that mistaken impression. I told Gossett he was in my book. He warned me about possible lawsuits. I gave him a chance to change the picture I had of him.

He gave me some advice, "from one writer to another. Number one, you don't have a First Constitutional right¹³⁰⁹ to invade into my privacy. And number two, any information you publish concerning me, if it is absolutely true information, then you're on *terra firma*."

"I'm on *terra firma*, because basically I'm using words that come out of your own mouth."

Gossett refused to answer any of my questions by continually asking questions about me. We quarreled. "I'm trying to ask you a few questions and you're just arguing with me."

"I don't think that you're intellectually or physically up to this," he said. That could have been taken as a threat. I took it as a provocation.

"Oh, yeah? Wrong! You're wrong, Wolfgang."

"No, I'm not."

"You're just bullshit ego. Okay? You think you're superior and you're not."

¹³⁰⁸ Sic. "Privity" is a term used in contract law. I think "privacy" is the word he was searching for.

¹³⁰⁹ Whatever that might be.

Don Stewart phoned a month later.¹³¹⁰ There had been some bad blood between us. He didn't quite trust me. Fair enough. I was an investigative journalist and almost by definition we're not to be trusted. Because for one thing, if you're not completely on the up and up and we're doing our jobs, sooner or later you'll have something to complain about. But to put that in perspective, he didn't quite trust anyone. Which is not surprising when you consider the hot potato stories he had in the sack on his back and what he was trying to do with them.

From my side, I thought he was jerking me off. Flashing a tit of information, and then asking me to marry the whole body. Years later he would piss me off with some of the rant and rave things he said in a kind of drunken euphoria on right wing talk radio. But to put that in perspective, living on the run in the gonna getcha getcha lane is not conducive to a steady heartbeat.

He recommended that I file a court case and subpoena Gossett and various federal agents. "Who are these government agents," I asked wearily.

"I've got a list."

"Well how come you never gave the list?"

"Allen [Knappenberger]¹³¹¹ didn't want it!"

"Oh, come on!"

"He said if I couldn't substantiate to him absolute written, sworn things that they were involved [in] by their own admissions, it wouldn't make sense for him to have them."

"Oh, I can't believe that!¹³¹² Just give him the list."

"You can call the people in for the depositions and secure certain documents, if you know where they're at, and I do. Which offices were heading the investigations. Then you'd see the little empire crumbling. You'd be surprised at what you'd find. I'm serious."

He had my number in more ways than one. But as mouth watering as all that was, I bit my lips and didn't bite. "Because," Stewart said, "he [Gossett] invoked the names of the gods, so to speak, because he blasphemed, he was disowned by them. They pulled all of his capabilities, computer access, assistance on investigations and all contracts. When he lost his capabilities, his National Intelligence Agency fell apart." Stewart was surprised and a bit more when I told him Gossett was in Oregon. For once I was telling him something he didn't know, and it felt good.

"Looking ... [for]?"

"No, he lives there."

"That's awful strange that he's moved to Oregon. Most interesting. What part of Oregon?"

"Newport."

¹³¹⁰ How he had located me was his magic. He said he did it through files "a government agency that was doing some investigative work up there" had on me. "That doesn't narrow it down very much," I said. "No. I'm always vague."

¹³¹¹ One of the Portland lawyers who had deposed him.

¹³¹² I can now.

"It makes me nervous when he's too close. It wouldn't take too much to drive him over the edge."

"As far as I'm concerned, he's already over the edge."

"I mean way over the edge. Way over the edge. He's too hung up in certain things and he can be a danger. That's one of the reasons I called, to tell you that. When you're dealing with him be careful."

Gossett wasn't the only one living on the edge. After more than a year of I still don't know how I managed intensity - during which I did the background research, planned the investigation, carried it out, analyzed the results and wrote this book - all my habitual physical and mental shortcomings were ganging up and fizzing out of me. Perhaps Gossett had been right about at least one thing. I wasn't "physically up to this".

It was time for some rest and recuperation, not a wild gossett chase into the Siberian vastness of governmental "that's absurd", "utterly ridiculous" and refusal to return calls and comment. I had done my bit for truth, justice and the American way. Now it was someone else's turn to track down the man and his network of strictly legit hit men. Someone inside the shadowy corridors of power would have to step into the light and do the right thing. An official, perhaps, prison guard or secretary who had seen this, heard that and knew where a few of the bodies were buried.

Two hours before leaving America and setting sail for a less they're gonna get me lifestyle¹³¹³ - which first consisted of swimming myself back into shape and sanity on the Costa del Sol and then getting married - I threw an air ball from one end of the continent to the other. I called Eric Mason, a Portland television reporter for *KOIN-TV* who had shown some interest in the Stewart story. He wasn't in the office on a Saturday afternoon. So I left the message with a secretary: Gossett's address and telephone number and "Good luck. He'll know what I'm talking about."

I didn't expect anything to come of it. So I was pleasantly surprised when seven months later, at the end of October 1990, William Pratt Gossett, aka "Wolfgang", appeared on *KOIN-TV* as a get the fuck off my porch interviewee.¹³¹⁴ Just under six feet tall with long grey hair and a full goatee, he was filmed with a scowling mouth near his not so safe house in Newport. Mason noted that Gossett had repeatedly refused to be interviewed before a camera.

Gossett told him the same sort of things he had told me. He didn't want to discuss the assassination story because it would jeopardize his and his clients' right to privacy. At one point he told Mason he was retired. At another he said he was still running the National Intelligence Agency and had ongoing cases. He said that use of the Stewart tapes without his permission violated Title 18 of the United States Code. Mason used them anyway. But his selection was considerably more limited than mine.

¹³¹³ Not only me, but also those close to me.

¹³¹⁴ This program has already been referred to in Chapter 6.

At one point during the program Gossett called Don Stewart a "psycho". Stewart countered with: "Let's suppose I'm the worst schizophrenic, the worst psycho the world has ever known. Then why do I have hours of taped conversations with him?"

Dave Frohnmayer, who was campaigning for Governor at the time and once again bragging about ridding Oregon of Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram, was asked about the assassination plot. With characteristic disdain for facts, timelines and the intelligence and historical memory of his audience, he summarily dismissed the whole story.¹³¹⁵

He said there was no need for any assassination plots to get rid of Rajneesh. His demise was accomplished by a federal immigration indictment. In the fall of 1984, when the assassination plots were in full swing, the sannyasins were fully entrenched in Central Oregon and looked like they were there to stay. At that time no one could have imagined the "sudden turns, unexpected, unpredictable"¹³¹⁶ that would lead to the October 1985 federal immigration indictment and other plot twists that precipitated the fall of Rajneeshpuram.¹³¹⁷ As always, Frohnmayer neglected to tell even a fraction of the truth.

¹³¹⁵ Gossett said at one point on the tapes I listened to, "I'm going to contact Oregon. I'm going to contact the Attorney General's office." And "And if ... and if they do [go] that way, I'm gonna ask them to, as a favor, simply to have someone in authority in the State of Oregon, who can come up with some bucks to have someone from outside their state go in, and have them contact me. And then what I can do is then fly up, meet you, and go there and meet them." See Chapter 7.

Skipping ahead to the spring of 2012 - which you can do quite easily in footnotes.- I decided to Google Gossett on the wild card chance that I might come up with some new and relevant information. Much to my surprise, I came up with lots. Including this.

"Gossett worked at Weber State College and became a private detective who specialized in money fraud, cults, and missing persons. He assisted and was commended by the FBI for his help in rescuing a woman from the Bhagwan Rajneesh's compound in Antelope, Oregon." (<http://voices.yahoo.com/db-cooper-suspect-named-william-pratt-gossett-1518669.html>)

Readers who have gotten this far will know that there was no "compound" in Antelope and no one who needed rescuing by the likes of William Pratt "Wolfgang" Gossett. Anyone wanting to leave just left. In fact, more people were worried about getting kicked out.

But I was curious to know where the writer's so-called facts came from. So I emailed him at the University of Colorado in Denver. The response was almost real time immediate (same day, May 7, 2012).

John Craig, the author, said that most of his information, including the sentence quoted, came from Galen Cook, a Washington State attorney who believed and was trying to prove that Gossett was the legendary (in some very hermetically sealed circles) DB Cooper, the man who hijacked Northwest Airlines Flight 305 on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving 1971 (November 24), demanded a \$200,000 ransom and then bailed out of the back of the plane.

I said I had tons of information about Gossett and would be willing to swap it for some back from the attorney, who, incidentally, had been working on this case since 1982. But neither Craig nor Cook were the least bit interested in anything about Gossett that didn't relate to the Cooper obsession and might even show their "hero" in an unfavorable light.

There was even a "Cooper" symposium held in Portland, Oregon on Saturday, November 25, 2001 and reported on in *The Oregonian*, the next day. So much for the narrowly focused entertainment interests of so many purportedly grown up Americans and the media catering to their tastes.

The good news is that when chasing down the leads in this story I was able to learn that Gossett had died on September 1, 2003 (*The News Times*, Newport, Oregon, September 5, 2003) and confirm a lot of the information I had previously gathered on my own.

¹³¹⁶ Rajneesh's words during Swami Krishna Deva's initiation (see Chapter 11).

¹³¹⁷ Turner was by no means convinced of the instant effect of the immigration indictment (see end of Chapter 9) and neither was Frohnmayer's own man, Bob Hamilton (beginning of Chapter 10).

The *KOIN-TV* program, which as far as I can see from searching the archives was not even mentioned, let alone followed up by *The Oregonian*, aired one week before the November 1990 elections. In it Frohnmayer said, again incorrectly, that the Rajneesh case was "the largest case of sham marriages in US history". He then built up some steam of moral outrage about the poisoning of people in The Dalles, but conveniently forgot to mention that:

- ❖ Rajneesh had nothing to do with that poisoning.
- ❖ In fact, he had exposed it.
- ❖ That poisoning had nothing to do with the questions then being asked.
- ❖ The real culprits in that crime included his star witness and co-conspirator David Berry Knapp.
- ❖ And thanks to his intervention and protection Knapp had never been adequately tried and punished.

A week after the three part program was broadcast, Frohnmayer lost the race for governor to the Democratic candidate Barbara Roberts.¹³¹⁸

In the meantime Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh - then known simply as Osho - had died at his ashram in Poona. Some said he left his body. Others that his body had left him. Around 7 p.m. on January 17, 1990, in a nightly gathering called *satsang*, he greeted his disciples for the last time.

He normally glided out of a Rolls Royce limousine onto a slightly raised podium and entered the white marbled Gautama the Buddha auditorium smiling, dancing and moving his arms somewhat in tune with the huge sounds coming from a live sannyasin band. The 3,000 or so sannyasins, all dressed in white robes, sat before him, clapping, swaying, laughing and singing. Sudden stops in the music were punctuated by everyone throwing up their arms, shouting "OSHO!", and, when they got it right, becoming dead still until the music started again.

Sometimes he was fiery, flirtatious or whimsical as he looked and shook out at the sannyasins. Sometimes so soft and pleased you could almost hear him purr. After three or four or ten of the "Oshos" - as they were called - he sat down and closed his eyes, and so did they. Master and disciples sat in a silence underlined and italicized by passages of music. Fellow travelers on what from the outside looked like a mad journey to nowhere.¹³¹⁹

¹³¹⁸ After serving as dean of the University of Oregon's law school (1992-4) Frohnmayer was appointed president of the entire university. At the starting line of the university's Hayward Field track is a statue of Bill Bowerman, who died in 1999 (for more on him see Chapter 5). "Every weekday morning, Dave Frohnmayer goes past the statue of Bowerman as part of what he calls a 'power-walk' around the University of Oregon campus. Frohnmayer remembers Bowerman the track coach, but it's Bowerman the family friend that jogs his memory." (Jeff Baker, "The man who invented running", *The Oregonian*, April 6, 2006)

¹³¹⁹ Rajneesh had often said that "MAD" was an acronym for "master and disciple".

But on that last Wednesday of his life it was obvious to everyone in the hall that he was in intense physical pain. He didn't come out the next evening, and grew weaker through the night. The next morning, Friday, January 19, Rajneesh's personal physician, Dr. Amrito, took his master's pulse. It was weak and slightly irregular.

"I think you're dying," he told him. He asked if he should prepare for cardiac resuscitation.

"No," Rajneesh said. "Just let me go. Existence decides its timing."

Over the years he had said much about death. If life was lived totally, with full intensity and spontaneity, death would be its ultimate unfolding and crowning glory. He had taught his disciples to look closely at death - and everything else - and see it for what it was, not what everyone nightmared about. Even for the most resilient and devoted, that had to be a tough nut to crack.

Over the years he had talked about how enlightened masters die. Like dead leaves falling, last stars disappearing into the dawn, in perfect acceptance and grace. In "Poona Two" he had paid special attention to Zen masters. Seeking a never been done before, one of their lot died standing on his head.¹³²⁰ When disciples asked another how they should arrange his funeral, he said, "Surprise me".¹³²¹ Yet another had loaded his ceremonial robes with firecrackers and when the funeral pyre was lit¹³²²

Some of his disciples probably expected something equally outrageous from him. But he went with neither a bang nor a whimper. Late in the afternoon of that same Friday, he sat in his nearly empty bedroom, looked slowly, but methodically, at his few worldly goods, and said who should get what.

"He was very matter of fact," Amrito said, "relaxed, as if he was going away for the weekend." Towards the end, he sat on the bed with him. The doctor disciple started crying. Rajneesh looked at him, almost sternly, and said, "No, no. This is not the way." He stopped and Rajneesh smiled.

After his death, Rajneesh said, his body was to be taken to the auditorium for about ten minutes and then carried off to the burning *ghats*. "And put my hat and socks on before you take my body." He repeated the story of his poisoning at the hands of the US marshals in Oklahoma City and said that ever since his arrest and imprisonment living in his body had been hell.

Swami Prem Jayesh, the son of a Canadian Supreme Court judge who had been arrested with Rajneesh in Charlotte, was also present at the end. He sat on the bed listening to his master's instructions about the continuation of the work and the expansion of the ashram. "Never speak of me in the past tense. My presence here will be much greater." He said

¹³²⁰ Rajneesh, *Live Zen*, Chapter 19, May 5, 1988

¹³²¹ Rajneesh, *The New Dawn*, Chapter 25, June 30, 1987 (evening session)

¹³²² Rajneesh, *The Invitation*, Chapter 7, August 24, 1987 (evening session)

more people would come after his death and the work would flourish as never before. To Jayesh he said, "I leave you my dream".

Amrito held Rajneesh's wrist and felt his pulse. "Slowly, it faded. When I could hardly feel it I said, 'Osho, I think this is it'. He just nodded and closed his eyes for the last time." It was around 5 p.m. local time. At 8:30 p.m. his flower decked body was carried into Buddha Hall and 5,000 white robed sannyasins celebrated through their shock. They laughed, cried, danced, stared or just sat quietly.

"Osho's mother, who is also a sannyasin, was sobbing," Swami Dhyan Arjuna told me. Ten minutes later, the body was carried out and taken in a tumultuous white robed throng through the narrow streets of Koregaon Park. The January night was clear and cold. The stars sparkled. A mile or two away, at the burning *ghats* beside the Mutha River, the funeral pyre was prepared. Rajneesh's face disappeared beneath a stack of wood, and in accordance with Indian tradition two of his brothers set him ablaze.

Arjuna stayed until just before dawn and watched as bone after bone was revealed through the searing, crackling flames. "This fire will burn forever," said Swami Prem Joe, a large, laughter loving English sannyasin.

By the second morning, Sunday, January 21, the physical fire had cooled. Rajneesh's immediate family, all disciples, came to bring what was left of him home. "First, they poured water on the ashes," Arjuna said. "As the steam dissipated I could see Osho's skeleton. The bones were broken, to be sure, into small pieces by the intense heat. But they were bones all the same, in the approximate outline of his body. There was his left shoulder joint and some teeth. There was also his skull, charred black."

They glowed with a kind of iridescence. Osho's immediate family were up to their elbows in wet ashes and bone. One of his brothers carefully, lovingly and painfully picked pieces of bones from the grey mess, crushed and placed them in a copper urn. Sometimes he did it in silence and sometimes he cried like an innocent child. But he never stopped.

The procession back to the ashram with urn and ashes was accompanied by music and 10,000 sannyasins, now red robed, along streets smeared with flowers. Rajneesh's remains were placed in Chuang Tzu auditorium, the opulent former "bedroom" transformed into meditation hall and shrine. His *samadhi* stone, generously adorned with flowers, reads:

Osho
Never Born Never Died
Only Visited This Planet Earth
between December 11, 1931 - January 19, 1990

Many of those present had become disciples 10 or 15 years before, at the exact spot where their master's ashes now lay. Since then most had dreaded the moment where they

now were. Yet somehow they and their master had surprised them. Some were happy for him, because he would no longer have to suffer the excruciating physical pain he had been living with. Others felt a surge of freedom, a sense of release and lifting of personal pain.

"Osho's body," Swami Satyam Anando told me, "was a constant hurt to many of us. It was so beautiful. And still we couldn't get close enough to him all together. We competed with each other in many ways to get closer and closer. To be there in front of his face, to be in his eyes, smile and heart. And still, no matter how close we were, it was never close enough. We always wanted more."

Many felt a new responsibility. Over the years Rajneesh had urged sannyasins to spread his message throughout the world. Not in a spirit of better than thou sense of mission, loud, proud self righteousness, and scaring the shit out of all those sinners who hadn't seen the light. But in an atmosphere of love and receptivity. If people were interested, good. If not, good bye.

In one discourse he said, "You can reduce my whole vision of life to a single sentence: not to betray the earth. Trust it, it is your mother, it is your very source of life."¹³²³ Six months before his death he told an Italian television interviewer, "If there is any truth in what I say, it will survive."

No one jumped onto his flames. There were no suicides. Life went on with the tangible sense that he hadn't slipped into the past tense, and perhaps death really was, in his words, "the greatest fiction".¹³²⁴

Khushwant Singh, a Princeton educated grand old gadfly of Indian journalism who had interviewed Rajneesh several times at the beginning of his meteoric career as a "godman", described him as "the most original thinker that India has produced: the most erudite, the most clear-headed and the most innovative".¹³²⁵ That obituary, which appeared in 50 Indian newspapers, went on to say: "With the going of Rajneesh, India has lost one of its greatest sons. India's loss will be shared by all those who have an open mind throughout the world. Within a few years from now, his message will be heard all over the world."

Tom Robbins, an outspoken American novelist, wrote: "I am not nor have I ever been a disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, but I've read enough of his brilliant books to be convinced that he was the greatest spiritual teacher of the 20th century - and I've read

¹³²³ Rajneesh, *Sat Chit Anand*, Chapter 16, November 29, 1987 (evening session)

¹³²⁴ For example, Rajneesh, *Hari Om Tat Sat*, Chapter 4, January 19, 1988 (morning session). Exactly two years before his own death.

¹³²⁵ He was also kind enough to write the foreword for the first edition of this book.

enough vicious propaganda and slanted reports to suspect that he was one of the most maligned figures in history."¹³²⁶

But this was definitely the meager minority report. Most of the world's press pack rushed to bury Rajneesh, not to praise him. They reveled in his passing and used it as another opportunity to revile him as an utterly discredited charlatan. Yet another rebel angel who had singed his wings flying too close to the sun.

Sorting through the mass of newsprint I looked for some bones of contention. But unlike Rajneesh's brother at the burning *ghats*, I couldn't find a tooth of critique in the criticism, a knuckle of refutation in the refusal. Just grey mess and smoldering fear and hate masquerading as legitimate skepticism and contempt.

It was the same in the literary world. I was on the road peddling this freshly finished book when the news of his death hit. It seemed like an auspicious conjunction of circumstances for an upsurge of interest in revisionist history and pre-deal publicity. But I must have been smoking something. For in that climate if you had something scandalous to report, you could get it published in a wink and on your say so alone. If you had something neutral to positive to report, however, and could back it up with facts, laws and timelines, no one wanted to know.¹³²⁷ It was like being in Nazi Germany trying to find backers for *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Intellectuals on the right and left didn't take kindly to him. "Why," I asked. "What's the matter with him? What has he done that's so awful?"¹³²⁸ The knowing looks I got told me that those cowering behind them didn't know and wouldn't take kindly to anyone calling their bluff. Of course, if I actually expected to get answers or anything like honest dialogue, my mission was doomed from day one. For insofar as a homogenous intellectual community exists - which isn't very - it would have as much probable cause to keep on killing Rajneesh as traditional and conservative religions.

Why? First, there were basic disagreements about values, methodology and tone. What is essential? What's just fooling around in sandboxes full of curious, but won't fundamentally change anything minutiae? How did you approach "things", and with what eyes and attitudes?

If I have understood him correctly - and as I have already said more than once there's no money back guarantees that I've done anything more than toe touch the deep water - Rajneesh was saying that intellectuals *qua* intellectuals¹³²⁹ are chatterboxes, windbags

¹³²⁶ *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, January 1990

¹³²⁷ I approached about 40 publishers in the US, UK, The Netherlands, France, Spain, Germany and Italy. Some appreciated the value of my work, but said there was no market for it. Some signed contracts and then begged out.

Most said the story had already been told, and nothing new was to be learned now. One editor characterized this book as "a puff piece" to my New York agent.

¹³²⁸ This reminds me of something Ken Andressen, former assistant US attorney in Charlotte, said (see Chapter 10). "And for some reason - and maybe you can tell me - they didn't like him."

¹³²⁹ In other words, not as individuals who just happen to be in that line of work.

with words who, darkened and dazed by books, focus passionately and myopically on the mundane, because they can manipulate that with their technology and expertise. But they avoid the existential stuff - like love, being, death and other perennial questions that are always asked but never answered - because that consistently eludes and mocks their poor powers to add or subtract.¹³³⁰

Life is a quest not a question, a mystery not a problem, and the difference is vast. The problem has to be solved, can be solved, must be solved, but the mystery is insoluble; it has to be lived, experienced. The question has to be solved so that it disappears; encountering a mystery, you have to dissolve in it. The mystery remains, you disappear.¹³³¹

Second, intellectualism itself is a kind of religion,¹³³² and Rajneesh was the competition. Students and many others who have spent any time reading or listening to him tended to have less than the whole nine yards of reverence for merely mental mentors. People who have learned a lot and can perhaps speak and write well, but can't translate any of those reassuringly kind wise words into actual practice.

Who in daily life are just as jealous and mean minded as the less well educated, and often more so.¹³³³ Who on their deathbeds are just as scared of the dark. In Rajneesh's universe such types were frequently roasted in the same pots as "priests" and "politicians". Among the sannyasins they were a running ethnic joke.¹³³⁴

And even many fully accredited intellectuals recognize some truth in his characterization of the species. At least as far as their more positivistic, pedantic and pompous peers are concerned. Many of them admire Rajneesh off the record. They agree with a lot, but definitely not all, of his ideas about psychology, society and organized religion, and

¹³³⁰ "Again [William] James was recognizing the problem that psychologists avoided studying certain kinds of experience because of their implications for the very methods used in experimentation." (Eugene Taylor, *William James on Consciousness Beyond the Margin*, p. 36) This theme of letting methodology determine what is studied, instead of the other way around, is an ongoing theme in scientific and academic circles.

¹³³¹ Rajneesh, *Come, Come, Yet Again Come*, Chapter 4, October 30, 1980

¹³³² Just look at the over the top regalia trotted out at graduations and investment ceremonies.

¹³³³ In a 1964 interview Hannah Arendt said: "The problem ... was not what our enemies did but what our friends did. In the wave of *Gleichschaltung* [the total regimentation of German society under Hitler], which was relatively voluntary - in any case, not yet under the pressure of terror - it was as if an empty space formed around one. I lived in an intellectual milieu, but I also knew other people. And among the intellectuals *Gleichschaltung* was the rule, so to speak. But not among the others. And I never forgot that. I left Germany dominated by the idea - of course somewhat exaggerated: Never again! I shall never again get involved in any kind of intellectual business. I want nothing to do with that lot." (cited in Richard Wolin, "Hannah and the Magician", *New Republic*, October 9, 1995, p. 33)

¹³³⁴ Rajneesh's views on intellectuals is extremely nuanced and cannot be summed up in a hundred sound bites. For those interested in more details, a good place to start is *The Tantra Vision*, Vol. 2, Chapter 9, May 9, 1977, where he discusses at great length the difference between intellect and intelligence. It is important to stress here that he was by no means a back to nature freak and didn't advocate a dumbing down book burning approach to higher education. He was very much in favor of science and technology creating wealth and solving very real social and economic problems (see Chapter 2). But he was against them being used to improve tools of domination, destruction and death.

might have said something similar - in more timid, less throwing down the gauntlet terms - if they weren't so justifiably afraid of losing caste among their colleagues and what the neighbors will say.¹³³⁵

They also get his drift on the spiritual side, which seems to be hard wired into human nature and deep rooted in tradition. West as well as East, North as well as South. They recognize the vague but gnawing longing for something beyond what deadly normal people, including themselves, say, think and do. But for the time being at least they'd rather not dive or even dip into anything that life changing and deal breaking.¹³³⁶

In a category all her own - neither fish nor fowl - was Frances "Frankie" Fitzgerald. Who was that lady? We can approach an answer from two angles: personally and professionally. Since I am not one of her friends or acquaintances - or ever likely to be if she ever reads what I write here - I'll take the second tack.

How should we classify her piece on Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram?¹³³⁷ Historical-factual-journalistic?¹³³⁸ I've got a "trunkful of clippings from the Oregon press",¹³³⁹ talked to a couple of anonymous professors and mostly unnamed officials, and even went down there several times to meet and get to know some of the natives - "the Rajneesh".

Well, no, not exactly, or even approximately. Because she doesn't employ any of the traditional instruments utilized by more credible practitioners of those crafts. Such as references, fussy footnotes and pinpointed attributions so any really interested reader can go back to the sources and determine if: (1) they actually exist and she's using them correctly; and (2) her interpretations are a fair or even legitimate contextual reading. Further, while she obviously did shoot the breeze with some people, you can't call the results structured, systematic and in depth interviews that allow those taking her word for it to hear two or ten people actually talking about the same thing. No parallax views here.

What about what used to go under the rubric of "new journalism"? The personal account of a woman who thinks she knows a thing or two about religion (including Eastern religion), sociology, history, and the latest trends in culture and psychology, going out to

¹³³⁵ One of the many books remaining to be written (insofar as I know) is the history of scholars and other "wise men" who knew a lot in real time, but said little or nothing. At least not in a language the uninitiated could comprehend and do something with. Yet another example of "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." But at the same time, it's high time to ask ourselves, "Who are these evil and good men?". Are they not one and the same men (and women) from different perspectives and/or in different phases of their lives? In other words, variations of each other and the rest of us.

¹³³⁶ Some of that class became disciples, many "in spite of" themselves (see end of Chapter 9). But insofar as they made the jump, they often ceased being intellectuals. Not only in the eyes of others, but their own as well. Sometimes for a few weeks or decades. Sometimes for the rest of their lives.

¹³³⁷ *Cities on A Hill*, Chapter 4. In a letter to Ma Prem Sambodhi (pen name Susan Clare), author Ursula LaGuin, who has lived in Portland Oregon since 1958, described Fitzgerald's style as "running look and hearsay journalism" (February 24, 2011 email to Ma Anand Bhagawati). Sambodhi then used that in the Aftermath section of her own book, *A Surprise Life: The Spiritual Journey of A Girl From Brooklyn*.

¹³³⁸ Like I've done here.

¹³³⁹ *Cities on A Hill*, p. 7

study contemporary tribes trying to create utopian societies: cities on the hill.¹³⁴⁰ The sympathetic big sister or auntie coming in to understand what makes those red people tick.

While this is closer to the mark, it still doesn't hit it. Because in contrast with Dr. James Gordon,¹³⁴¹ she never gets personal. She hardly ever says directly what she felt - not thought - about the people passing in front of her.¹³⁴² True, she was on a first name basis with a few sannyasins and produced some swift stroke sketches of "who they were". But she also kept them at arm's length and under both her thick thumbs. They were only acceptable and understandable insofar as they conformed to recognizable types. Or, to be more precise, types *she* could recognize. A Fleet Street journalist. Someone who would be perfectly at home in a Marin County hot tub. A refugee or drop out from the humanistic psychology movement.

And she never got within shouting distance of what I think is the heart of the matter. Not just being sick to death of living in the mirror - the whirlpool of reflections of what others think about you, you about them, and thinking about thinking itself - waking up from the nightmare called history,¹³⁴³ personal and social, and being part of building a newer, more compassionate and authentic world. Not even the love the sannyasins felt for their master and each other. And their zigzag, good days and bad days, drunken lurch toward the light.

So perhaps the best description of her mishmash of styles and mismatch of intentions is "impressionistic". That is, impressions based on what she saw - and didn't see - felt and didn't feel, thought and didn't think, knew and thought she knew. Nothing wrong with that. In varying degrees, we're all doing that, and almost all the time. The scamming begins and continues when those impressions posture and parade as a push and shove account of what really happened and why.¹³⁴⁴

And here is where Fitzgerald shows her true colors and how with breathtaking speed and laser sharp killer instinct she does what she does. After Rajneesh's departure and almost everyone had cleared out she returned to the ranch to talk to people she knew. Their

¹³⁴⁰ Rajneeshpuram didn't fit the format for two reasons. One - whimsical and probably not worth mentioning - it was in a valley, not on a hill. The second crucial and something someone should have set Fitzgerald straight about from square one. For the phrase "city upon a hill" comes from "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630), a sermon by John Winthrop, first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. (*Wikipedia*) Winthrop and the rest of his unflinchingly self righteous Puritan band were trying to establish a model community, a beacon for the world to either copy - if the community was, indeed, righteous - or reject. They had very long lists of do's and don'ts, and paining and shaming punishments for backsliders. Rajneesh's approach was completely different. His whole accent was on the here and now and what is. As we have already seen - for example, in our discussion of the superman in Chapter 4 - ideals and perfection were abhorrent to him. They were the source of, on one hand, much mental torment and disease, and, on the other, hypocrisy. See, for example, *Unio Mystica*, Vol. 1, Chapter 8, November 8, 1978.

¹³⁴¹ *The Golden Guru* (see Chapter 11).

¹³⁴² She gets other people to do the dirty work for her (see below and Chapter 6). She also lets her sometimes vivid and purple prose tell readers exactly what she wants them to think.

¹³⁴³ "History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." (James Joyce, *Ulysses*, p. 34)

¹³⁴⁴ I've already touched on the issue of "objectivity" in Chapter 6.

whole world had just got run over by a constant convoy of 18 wheelers fully loaded, and she wanted to know how it felt. Hey, that's what some grown ups do for a living.

One of those still hanging on in that long winter of their discontent was Swami Anand Subhuti, the former Fleet Streeter and husband of Ma Amrita Pritam, aka Shannon Ryan.¹³⁴⁵

Then, later, when he [Subhuti] was talking about the way they had seen how power corrupts, he said how amazing it was to watch Oregon politicians ganging up against the commune, passing laws against it any way they could. When I reminded him that this had happened after the commune's attempt to rig the Wasco County election, the salmonella outbreak, and so on, he laughed in surprise. "I guess they had some reason to think we were dangerous," he said. "And you're right, the means they used were perfectly legal - unlike ours."¹³⁴⁶

I don't know how she got him to say that. But as the in house newsman who had been closely following events as they had unfolded, he had to know it wasn't true. For he was in full possession of many, but not all of the facts I have presented here. Thus it must have been in a moment of weakness and forgetfulness. And Fitzgerald took full advantage of that.

A few paragraphs further on she quoted Ava Avalos, one of the 30 or so sannyasins severely compromised by close association with Sheela and their own criminal behavior,¹³⁴⁷ and shoved in the guilt up to the hilt.

I forgot the tape Sheela had of a conversation with Bhagwan which showed that he was involved, well, in things he said he wasn't¹³⁴⁸ I remembered them because I went to Portland to testify again, and I talked with K.D. and Sagun for the first time since we left the ranch, and they reminded me.¹³⁴⁹

With a single below the belt Fitzgerald got the whole government off the hook as far as conspiracies were concerned and made the sannyasins responsible for everything. With another grassy knoll sniper shot she dumped all blame in Rajneesh's lap. Her father, Desmond Fitzgerald of the CIA's Clandestine Service who botched all his plots to kill Castro,¹³⁵⁰ would have been proud of his little girl and her I didn't say it, they did conclusions.¹³⁵¹

¹³⁴⁵ See Chapter 8.

¹³⁴⁶ *Cities on A Hill*, p. 380

¹³⁴⁷ See Chapters 7 and 8.

¹³⁴⁸ For more on this tape and conversation, see Chapter 13.

¹³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 380f

¹³⁵⁰ See Chapter 6 (note 530).

¹³⁵¹ One of Fitzgerald's colleagues at *The New Yorker*, Janet Malcolm, had this to say about herself - thus not specifically about Fitzgerald - and the magazine. "You're right that 'dispassionate observer' doesn't properly describe the character I assume in my nonfiction writing - especially in the writing of recent years. When I first started doing long fact pieces, as they were called at *The New Yorker*, I modeled my 'I' on the

In her impressionistic "fact piece", Fitzgerald characteristically employs metaphors and phrases revolving around one of those all purpose meganouns I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter: "reality". Like "rational" and "irrational" and "good" and "evil" (in that oft cited, and made up, Edmund Burke quote), those falling back and relying heavily on it assume point blank that they can distinguish it from its opposite - in this case, "unreality" - and have even cornered the market.

Thus she describes various people as being "detached" from reality. As if, by contrast, she and her "us" in crowd aren't. If so, they are more fortunate - or delusional - than the best and brightest artists, philosophers, scientists and comedians, who for a few centuries at least, and probably from the beginning, haven't known what really is and isn't and have been straightforward enough to not pretend otherwise. According to them - and me - what we at any given time call "truth" and "fact" can't in the very scheme of things be anything more than whistle stop could be's, bound to be surpassed and replaced by the next, hopefully better guess. In other words, the flickering reflections of reality we push and pull on are nothing more highfalutin than illusion management.

Like Turner, Weaver, Frohnmayer and everyone else begging all the critical questions about evidence of, let alone definitive, "beyond a reasonable doubt" proof for Rajneesh's involvement in and orchestration of criminal activities at Rajneeshpuram, Fitzgerald begs the questions about reality. And reality is the whole *megillah* - the jackpot investigation Rajneesh provoked, and is still provoking from beyond this mortal coil.

What is the reality of this man? Was he a hustler on a hill, a black hole for the highly susceptible to get sucked into? Or a once in a lifetime opportunity for those with eyes to see, ears to hear and guts to go?

In February 1986 one journalist asked Rajneesh to portray himself. "Who are you? People say you are a crook. Are you a crook?" Rajneesh said some saw god in him, others a crook. What they saw depended on them, not him. "I am just a mirror. When a crook looks at me, he sees a crook in me. It all depends on you. As far as I am concerned, it is impossible to portray me."¹³⁵² In other words, what you see is what you are.

One thing I can say with absolute certainty. Rajneesh was not guilty of any of the crimes he was being accused of and charged with. Or, more precisely, the governments didn't have a hope in hell of establishing their trumped- and blown-up cases against him. And despite what was said and insinuated in public, all those involved in those conspiracies knew it.

stock, civilized, and humane figure that was *The New Yorker* 'I,' but as I went along, I began to tinker with her and make changes in her personality. Yes, I gave her flaws and vanities and, perhaps most significantly, strong opinions. I had her take sides. I was influenced by this thing that was in the air called deconstruction. The idea I took from it was precisely the idea that there is no such thing as a dispassionate observer, that every narrative is inflected by the narrator's bias." (Katie Roiphe, "Janet Malcolm, The Art of Nonfiction", *Paris Review*, Spring 2011). Later in the same interview, Malcolm said, "At that time, the magazine [*The New Yorker*] was still wrapped in a fluffy cocoon of moral superiority that really got up the noses of people who worked at other publications."

¹³⁵² Rajneesh, *Socrates Poisoned Again After 25 Centuries*, Chapter 6, February 22, 1986 (morning session)

That should be a *causa finita* if we are willing to pay more than just lip service to one of the basic tenets of our post Enlightenment social contract. Namely, all individuals - me, you and Mr. Magoo - are innocent until proven guilty. Aurelius Augustine and other fervent believers in eternal sin and suffering and there but for the grace of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, eat your hearts out.

But for most people that isn't enough and never will be. Not by a long shot. There's no end of loaded questions they feel entitled - and qualified - to ask about Rajneesh and all his sannyasins. Questions they would never dream of asking of themselves. But they all boil down to "was he a bad or good guy, sinner or saint?".

That isn't one question, or two or ten. It's a sky high pile of them: like the nature of reality, or nature itself. As with so many other burning tangles, you could sit beside and pick through this one for lifetimes without getting any closer to what you want and need to know. Meanwhile, whole armadas of more missed boats are disappearing over the horizon.

At first glance Rajneesh's words often seem bright, shining and clear. But when actually approached, touched, tasted and chased lead into rabbit warrens of paradoxes, contradictions and you ain't never seen anything like this bewilderment. That might be their pig headed, catch me if you can intent. Or attributable to what happens when don't talk of love¹³⁵³ life - sensual without necessarily making sense - is frog marched into lined up language and brittle, either/or logic. When mystery - which used to be as common and right as rain¹³⁵⁴ - is told to spread its legs and explain itself.

Some call Rajneesh a crook, and will gladly do so after everyone else has left the building. Why? Because they're heavily invested, and either he's a crook or they are. Others call him a "god", "saint", or "holy man". Why? Maybe for similar reasons. Because they generically hate all rules and regulations and clamor for yet another victim of government persecution. But this morality infused, against and for yakety yak conceals more than it reveals and doesn't take us anywhere we haven't already been.

Only the more than curious will wade into the he said-she said, on Monday this, on Tuesday that. Yet when struck for the umpteenth time by the impossibility of connecting the dots of Rajneesh's "teaching" and coming up with an account that is both readable and reliable they might feel twinges of sympathy for Turner, Weaver and the other crooks in high places who had to not only pin him down, but nail him as well.

But even the most persevering investigator might screech to a halt on the rim of the kicker. By this point in the tale you should know what that is. It's been with us all along,

¹³⁵³ "Don't talk of stars/burning above./If you're in love, show me!" "Show Me", from *My Fair Lady*, 1964, lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, music Frederick Loewe.

¹³⁵⁴ "the processes of modern scholarship are such that those competent to handle and translate these ancient texts are not always those who have a natural affinity with, or even sympathy for, their contents. The modern wise man and his ancient counterpart live in very different worlds. Ancient and modern ideas of knowledge do not coincide, and the ancient processes of perception have little in common with our own." (Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament*, p. 10)

lurking in the dark, and light. Sometimes put out and off, sometimes flaring up and burning bright. Sannyasins who didn't stay on for the power trips and more chicks than they knew what to do with don't recommend it for faint hearted bottom liners. Because, they say, it means first getting more lost than you've ever been and then figuring out where you're at and what to do next.

Asking yourself the same sorts of questions you've always happily and rapidly fired off at everyone else. That can quickly escalate into a "total questioning of what has previously been unquestioned"¹³⁵⁵ and a no holds barred battle between you and your neighbors, wife, kids, parents, goldfish, God, and yourself. And then all the crucifixes, prayer beads, yin yang symbols, *malas*, mantras, psycho-spiritual how to cook books, pictures of the master, locks of hair, strips from the one true foreskin, and all the king's horses and all the king's men won't get you back together again.

Since you might not be intellectually, physically and/or fiscally up to all or any of that, it might be more prudent to stay put, huddling and muddling in the I'm okay, you're okay, it's them that's weird. Better that than asking the kicker - *Meh khan hai?* Who am I?¹³⁵⁶ - and reaching into your own reality. Because sooner rather than later, all but the most gotta have it will give it up as a fool's quest.

And I now believe that includes many - if not the vast majority - of the old time sannyasins themselves. Somewhere along the road to enlightenment the music stopped and they realized that the best things in life cost money. As they had been told all along - by their parents, kids, the butcher, baker and candlestick maker.

Much more important than the kicker were "Does she love me or not?", "Do I love her?", "What should we name our daughter?", and "How will you be paying for that - cash or credit?". For like all religious movements - and most other human activities - people come and go.¹³⁵⁷ They promise, pledge, vow and swear love and fealty forever. And then change their minds. Or let their minds change them.

Back to the kicker. According to Rajneesh and others, it - *Meh khan hai?* - and not submission to or immersion in an alleged creator, is the crux of the spiritual matter. All else is commentary. Seekers have been asking it for thousands of years. Maybe longer. In caves, temples and underneath the Bodhi and mango tree.

Something like it seemed to have been rattling round Leonard Cohen, a Jewish Canadian poet, pop star, lady's man, alcoholic, drug addict and Zen adept, when he wrote:

¹³⁵⁵ See Arthur Miller in the Preface.

¹³⁵⁶ See Chapter 2.

¹³⁵⁷ According to John Hall, in so-called cults "the voluntary defection rate runs as high as 78 percent" (*Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History*, p. 137). While I haven't a clue how he or anyone else came up with that statistic, I'll accept it here for the sake of argument. I do, however, have a problem with the value judgment implied by "defection". All by itself, leaving any particular organization - whether it be the Catholic Church, CIA or Communist Party - doesn't say anything conclusive, positive or negative, about the leaver or left. If you're interested in that sort of thing - which I'm not - that has to be decided on a case by case basis.

And Jesus was a sailor
When he walked upon the water
And he spent a long time watching
From his lonely wooden tower
And when he knew for certain
Only drowning men could see him
He said "All men will be sailors then
Until the sea shall free them".¹³⁵⁸

I suppose that's close to Walt Whitman's whereabouts when the War Between the States ran out of gas and his "Captain",¹³⁵⁹ Abraham Lincoln, was shot by one more actor who thought changing the course of history was better than waking up from it. While there might not be any natural law making terminal *Weltschmerz* a necessary precondition for asking the kicker, that is the customary point of departure. At least in Western culture.

It happens when some are struck by the sickness unto death. Sick of the talk - their own and everyone else's - and walk. The trillions of ways, twisting and turning, but always winding up at the exact same impasses and dead ends. When in spite of no stopping momentum, amassed over decades of hurrying to catch up and get ahead, they suddenly find themselves stranded in the don't have a clue lane and looking like losers.

It's a time when even confirmed land lubbers and coast huggers are forced to hoist anchor, shake out every sail, and plunge into open seas, the previously unknown and unacceptable. From this question, "Who am I?", begins a you're on your own journey, through dark nights and deep water, often without maps, compasses, ships, relationships, or promise of arrival. One individual asking it with I won't let you go lest you bless me insistence is rebellion. Others doing the same - and not stopping this side of an answer they can not only live with, but in - is a quantum leap and paradigm shift. From here begins a passage to another New World, a very different America.

¹³⁵⁸ "Suzanne" (1967)

¹³⁵⁹ "O Captain! My Captain!" (from *Leaves of Grass*, 1865)

CHAPTER 13: THE FULL TRUTH ABOUT RAJNEESH PURAM (More or Less)

"Art is seduction, not rape."¹³⁶⁰

"The prejudices one has about them, even when they are unjust, are scarcely worth correcting."¹³⁶¹

On Friday, February 18, 2011, Austrian sannyasin Ma Anand Bhagawati got an email from Les Zaitz, "senior investigative reporter" of *The Oregonian*. He had been soliciting postage stamp sized stories from "former sannyasins" for an alleged 25 year retrospective about Rajneeshpuram, and she had alerted her international network of friends and acquaintances about him.

In essence, she warned, he had repeatedly demonstrated his true colors in his scurrilous stake out journalistic attacks against them, their home, and, more importantly, the life and work of their beloved master. And unless he owned up to and apologized for all that he wasn't to be trusted now.

The Oregonian reporter got wind of her "Zaitz alert" and was mightily injured and offended. "I received a copy of your message distributing my request for memories from former sannyasins", he began. "Former sannyasins"? As if Bhagawati and her rich collection of friends had inadvertently slipped into the past tense.

Most, if not all of them, are still sannyasins - some for 30 years or more - and have an abiding sense of love, gratitude and responsibility toward the *buddham*, *sangam* and *dhammam*.¹³⁶² That is, Rajneesh, his commune (not necessarily something physical and limited in space and time), and the eternal law ("*tao*" in Chinese, "*logos*" or "*nomos*" in ancient Greek, the "beyond" or "source" in seat of the pants modern parlance). They have subtle, *je ne sais quoi* qualities to share and stories to tell that are radically different from the short sighted and lopsided slander Zaitz has been hell bent on hawking as holy writ.

Zaitz then went into a lot of self serving arm waving about having done his utmost in real time to get the story straight, but had been thwarted by sannyasins at every well intentioned step. In short, he was, then and now, only interested in getting at the truth. After all, that's what reporting - especially the hard hitting investigative kind - is about. Right?

In principle and our most cherished romantic dreams reporting is a noble search for what used to be known as "objective truth". And sometimes it actually comes close to living up to those sky high standards. But not always. As has been more than amply demonstrated

¹³⁶⁰ Susan Sontag, "On Style" (1965) in *Against Interpretation*, p. 22

¹³⁶¹ Henry James, Sr., the father of William, Henry and Alice, cited in Francis Matthiessen, *The James' Family: a Group Biography*, p. 286. The reference is to the English and came in the context of his reading Ralph Waldo Emerson's *English Traits*. To give the old man his due, he was Irish-American and his people had suffered a lot - and continued to suffer - at the hands of the imperialistic British and, as we shall see directly below, other Americans.

¹³⁶² See Chapter 2.

in the not always admirable annals of the very mixed bag of whatever has appeared in newspapers, magazines and pamphlets and subsequently been deemed "journalism". For example:

Anti-Irish Catholic tirades regularly appeared in a variety of forums: newspapers in cities such as New York (*Daily News*, Horace Greeley's¹³⁶³ *Tribune*, the *Evening Express*, and the *Herald*), in speeches by those like popular orator Edmond A. Freeman (who once claimed that the best remedy for whatever is amiss in America would be if every Irishman should kill a negro and be hanged for it ...), and in pamphlets and publications by authors such as the telegraph's inventor, Samuel F. B. Morse. In an essay printed in 1835, Morse concluded that Catholicism was a foreign conspiracy by the Vatican to take over the Republic, and he advocated forcible relocation of Catholics to restricted areas on the frontier.¹³⁶⁴

In more recent times some may recall Janet Cooke of *The Washington Post*, Stephen Glass of *The New Republic*, Jonathan Lehrer of *The New Yorker*, and other bright young thugs who were making it up as they went along. Sucking it out of their thumbs, as the Dutch say so picturesquely. Others swallow - or at least print - without checking, cross-checking and -referencing and analyzing in terms of probability and provability the fibs, rumors, insinuations and outright lies gift wrapped and spoon fed to them by unreliable and anything but disinterested sources.

Indeed, they seek out and build up exclusive, me first relationships with exactly those kinds of sources. Like Pulitzer Prize winning Judith "WMD" Miller, formerly of *The New York Times*, and so many other less than meticulous and scrupulous practitioners of the craft.¹³⁶⁵

Before anyone can approach the truth about anything - let alone "the full truth" - they must first wade through minefields of thorny questions surrounding the seemingly simple subject of truth itself. Such as what's included and what's left out, and who decides what it does and doesn't contain? Edward Herman, a media analyst and professor of finance at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, provides a succinct introduction to some of the issues.

What type of diversity in news and news interpretation is "meaningful"? The tenets of democratic theory suggest that it has to do with definitions of "truth" and the range of information and news necessary for an informed citizenry.

¹³⁶³ As we have seen (Chapter 3, note 192), Greeley had comparable "exterminate the brutes" ideas about Native Americans.

¹³⁶⁴ Anson Shupe, "Vicissitudes of Public Legitimacy for Religious Groups: A Comparison of the Unification and Roman Catholic Churches", *Review of Religious Research*, December 1997, p. 178

¹³⁶⁵ For more on Miller, who currently works for that bastion of unbiased reporting, Fox News, see Chapter 12, note 1299.

First the issues selected for attention by the news media should encompass all issues that are of substantial interest to the population at large. Second, when there is a range of plausible facts and frameworks of interpretation that bear on an issue, all of these facts and frameworks should be available for public inspection. In other words, the "whole truth" is a corollary to "nothing but the truth." So if only a subset of issues or facts is made available to the general population, diversity is not fulfilled. Or, if issues, facts, and views that deviate from an established view are confined to the fringes of the media and do not reach the bulk of the population, the result is what might be called meaningless or "marginalized" diversity.¹³⁶⁶

In this context, Les Zaitz's interchange with Ma Anand Bhagawati could - and should - have been included in his Rajneeshpuram Retrospective to show that a sizable number of people who were witnesses to the events he was so relentlessly passing judgment on had a radically different take on what had - and hadn't - happened. And they were explicitly challenging his previous reporting on the subject and willingness and ability to ever get it right. But there wasn't a peep about it in what finally appeared in print. And for his readers it was more than pushed toward the margins. It was as if it had never happened.

Other explosions waiting to happen on the often long, obscure and untraveled dirt tracks leading to truth are what's admissible and inadmissible evidence and where's the border between the two? When weighing up complicated and often contradictory evidence and coming to conclusions how much emphasis is to be placed on this as opposed to that? What grounds are used to make those sorts of decisions and for what reasons? In other words, what underlying philosophical, intellectual, financial, social, psychological and political assumptions, theories and agendas are being supported and reinforced? What's being shut up and out?

When I began my investigations about Rajneeshpuram in 1988 I had a few working hypotheses. In my opinion, all focused research - especially on controversial topics like this - have to start with something similar. Otherwise, the field's too wide and researchers will quickly get mucked and mired in the storms of facts and opinions - their own and everyone else's - they're bound to bang into along the way. Anyone who has done this sort of work will immediately know what I'm talking about. If you spend too much time trying to connect the dots, you're in grave danger of going dotty

One of my hypotheses was pretty standard and off the shelf. A social experiment and spiritual movement gone astray. Why spiritual? Because Rajneesh was first and foremost a spiritual leader. A fact that is easily lost sight of in the work of *The Oregonian* in general and senior investigative reporter Les Zaitz in particular. But "lost sight of" is something of a misnomer, because it implies that they and he had it in their sights to begin with.

¹³⁶⁶ Edward Herman, "Diversity of News: 'Marginalizing' the Opposition", *Journal of Communication*, Summer 1985, p. 135.

The proof of Rajneesh being a spiritual leader is in his hundreds of books explicating and commenting on other spiritual leaders, such as Buddha, Sufi mystics, Zen masters and Lao Tzu. Books, which when spread out on dedicated tables in book stores and lined up on their shelves have made many an aspiring writer - myself included - livid with envy. How had he managed to write so many? But when they get over their initial aversion, sometimes verging on burning hatred, and start reading what's under the covers many find them to be impressive, refreshing, amusing and, well, enlightening.

There's an aphorism currently making the rounds on the Internet. "The truth will set you free. But first it's going to piss you off."¹³⁶⁷

In my opinion - and it's not necessarily the opinion of all good and rational sentient beings, or "the truth" - Rajneesh had managed to crack the code. That is, translate the often weird and maddening metaphors, symbols and paradoxes of the ancient esoteric literature I had long struggled with into terms that modern skeptics like me could relate to and just begin to fathom. He had something original and powerful to say on well recognized spiritual subjects. Love, life, meditation, death, and the quest for something beyond the merely mortal.

And I wasn't the only one thinking along those lines.¹³⁶⁸ Spiritual because people came to him from the four corners of the earth - and are still coming more than 20 years after his death¹³⁶⁹ - not only because of *what* he had to say on matters closest to their hearts, but *how* he said it. Who he was, what he embodied (not represented) and how he glowed for them in a world that was all too often dark and without hope.

A second working hypothesis was, and is, that everyone is innocent until proven guilty. And that includes CEO's, presidents, and whole groups, institutions and organizations. Call me a cock-eyed optimist or plain fuddy duddy old fashioned, but it's still one of the basic tenets most post-Enlightenment moderns pay lip service to.¹³⁷⁰

Starting from those premises, my work was to be a basically historical-factual-journalistic investigation - with generous helpings of what some call "religion" and others "spirituality" - into how it all went south. My basic questions were: What had happened, when and why? Who, if any, specifiable people were responsible and even legally culpable? And no one was to be left out of the equations and given a free ride.

¹³⁶⁷ Attributed to Gloria Steinem. But you never know.

¹³⁶⁸ For similar views, see Chapter 4 and note 338.

¹³⁶⁹ For more recent descriptions of the Osho International Meditation Resort (OIMR), see Anthony D'Andrea, "Osho International Meditation Resort (Pune, 2000s): An Anthropological Analysis of Sannyasin Therapies and The Rajneesh Legacy", *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, January 2007, pp. 91-116.

¹³⁷⁰ That notion runs counter to a much older and possibly still more emotionally loaded and intellectually deep rooted belief that all humans are basically flawed and can only achieve the not too terrible (redemption) through their own relentless repentance, true contrition and the intervention (grace) of God and his only begotten son, Jesus Christ. For more on original sin, see Chapter 3.

But at the same time I wasn't going to be attack dog aggressive and intrusive. Not hide under the beds, sniff the spreadsheets, comb through the trash, and rely on the testimony of ex's with axes to grind and dubious and even criminal activities to defend and legitimate. Because people are human beings - a value loaded hypothesis often lost sight of in contemporary public life - and are not only entitled to be considered innocent until proven guilty, but also have the right to have secrets and remain silent.

How did *The Oregonian* frame the Rajneesh story? What were its working hypotheses and *points de départ* in its nearly 90,000 word, 20 part series, "For Love and Money"? While the basic message was relentlessly humped home in practically every oxygen sucking sentence and syllable, it wasn't explicitly spelled out until nearly a year later in an article called "Dissecting a Sect".

Written by fellow Oregonian Ron Lovell, "Vivisectioning a Sect" would have been a more appropriate header. Because at the time of the 13 month research (beginning in the spring of 1984) and publication - between June 30 and July 19, 1985 - the city-commune and sannyasins were still very much alive and kicking.

"The first goal was to follow the money trail, which was 'what any prosecutor would do,' says [Dick] Thomas", who at the time was an assistant managing editor.¹³⁷¹ Prosecutor? Okay, so this was not to be "the biggest *investigation* [emphasis mine] ever undertaken by the newspaper", as advertised in the article, but, rather, the biggest *prosecution*. In other words, not a fair and balanced pursuit of what's going to set you free after first pissing you off.

What's the difference between a prosecution and investigation? Something like this. Zaitz said "we heard from the start that they were involved in drug traffic, that some of their income came from it. We spent a lot of time on this aspect but could find no evidence in the United States of any link to illegal drug traffic."¹³⁷² In an investigation you say what you looked for and what you did - and didn't - find.

For example, I looked for a direct link between the Vatican - specifically, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, then head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith - and the conspiracies against Rajneesh in the US.¹³⁷³ And while I discovered a lot of circumstantial evidence indicating that there *might have been* a link between one and the other, I didn't come up with anything I or anyone else should think of as proof.¹³⁷⁴

In a prosecution, like *The Oregonian* articles, then and since, you only mention what reflects badly on the prosecuted. Thus there was no mention of the reporters finding no

¹³⁷¹ Ron Lovell, "Dissecting a Sect", *The Quill*, May 1986, p. 9

¹³⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 16

¹³⁷³ See Chapter 5.

¹³⁷⁴ See also my cautious use of "testimony" in Chapter 10, note 951.

evidence of drug trafficking. It remained, as Aristotle used to say, *exo tou dramatos* - literally, out of the drama, or out of the question.

There were other slants and "oversights" too numerous and complicated to mention. Like what happened in the wake of Rajneesh's night flight to Charlotte. Government sources were keen to project the fleeing-justice and -the country scenario. The ultimate destination, according to them, was Bermuda. And *The Oregonian*, specifically Zaitz and his partner in slime, James Long, were aiding and abetting that publicity campaign.

Long interviewed one of the Oregon pilots for pungent details of what happened.¹³⁷⁵ But he either neglected to ask anything about the alleged Bermuda leg of the trip or print the answer. Fortunately for us and a more correct version of history, Swami Satyam Anando, a sannyasin who came to work for *The Rajneesh Times* the day after his master's arrest, was less remiss.

He drove out to Hillsboro, just outside Portland, to interview Premier Jets pilots Gary Nicholson and Andy Andrews. "When asked if they were intercepted by military aircraft, as was reported in some of the early press accounts of the flight, Gary [Nicholson] responded with a flat 'Negative!'"¹³⁷⁶

When asked whether there was ever any plan to fly onwards to Bermuda or somewhere else out of the country, Nicholson said there was no way he could fly to Bermuda, and no way he would.

It's not that Bermuda is beyond the 1500-mile flight range of the Lear [24]. Flying over the Atlantic, Gary said, requires high frequency navigation communications capability, and that's not installed in his company's plane. Plus, in order to leave the country, it is first necessary to clear U.S. Customs.

The more recent difference of vision with Ma Anand Bhagawati and her friends also never appeared on *The Oregonian's* radar screen. And perhaps most importantly, there was no mention of what didn't happen. Namely, that despite all the warnings that Rajneeshpuram was a powder keg - another Jonestown type disaster in the making - the sannyasins eventually evacuated central Oregon without spilling a single drop of blood - theirs or anyone else's. No mass suicides and murders that so many self-anointed "cult experts" had been solemnly predicting, and possibly secretly hoping for, for nearly a decade.¹³⁷⁷

In *The Quill* article Dick Thomas noted that the series had the full support of top management from the start. That included a separate Radio Shack TRS 80 with a 15 megabyte hard disk drive (another 15 megabytes was added later on) and an escalating

¹³⁷⁵ James Long, "U.S. agents observe jets taking off, track flight to Charlotte", *The Oregonian*, October 29, 1985

¹³⁷⁶ Swami Satyam Anando, "Just an ordinary flight", *The Rajneesh Times*, November 1, 1985

¹³⁷⁷ See in particular Chapter 2, but throughout.

budget eventually weighing in at \$250,000.¹³⁷⁸ By the summer of 1985 "the team had collected 25,000 pages of documents and compiled information on 4,400 people. By spring 1986, it had collected 40,000 pages of documents."¹³⁷⁹

Sociologists Barry van Driel and Jacob van Belzen, who usually make their living teasing out the subtle assumptions and hidden agendas in texts - what the French call the *sous-entendu* - were rather amazed by the candidness of *The Oregonian* reporters in *The Quill* article.¹³⁸⁰ They wrote:

Although this paper focuses on the media role in opinion formation, the media have also been a more active party in some controversies surrounding the new religions. For example, the May 1986 issue of *The Quill*, a monthly magazine for professional journalists, discussed *The Oregonian's* influence in the Rajneeshpuram incidents. This issue of *The Quill* carried the caption "Bagging the Bhagwan," which reflected *The Oregonian's* success, through a \$250,000 investigation, in discrediting the movement's commune in Oregon and helping bring about its downfall. It is interesting to note that journalists of *The Oregonian* and editors of *The Quill* stated explicitly their own perceptions of the Rajneesh movement, something that can otherwise be measured only with difficulty by content-analyzing newspaper articles. Indeed, in this article it became obvious that editors and journalists shared the stereotypes and suspicions of the general public, and that these suspicions guided them when selecting or gathering relevant information. For example, *The Quill's* editor evidenced a clear anticultist stance with remarks like "Human beings are ever willing to exchange the uncertainties of a free-will existence for the certainties involved in blindly following a charismatic leader".¹³⁸¹

So, finally, according to *The Oregonian* management and authors Les Zaitz and Jim Long (with Scotta Callister as editor), what was the whole truth about Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram? It's in the title. One expert on the subject pretty much summed it up.

"Money is definitely the underlying reason for the entire organization, I would say," said Steven James Sobel, 39, who worked as a security guard on the ranch in 1982 and even

¹³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11

¹³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12. When I brought up the series with Bob Oliver, former chief legal aide for Governor Vic Atiyeh, he said that most people who had read it at the time were disappointed, because "they didn't really say anything that wasn't pretty well known by well informed people anyway." When I wondered why *The Oregonian* reporters hadn't turned the series and their other writings into a book and made a bundle, Oliver was skeptical. "Mm mm. I don't know. Maybe he might not have made a bundle if it'd been ... [if it] hadn't been better than his articles."

¹³⁸⁰ *The Oregonian* journalists had earlier refused to discuss the matter with the *Columbia Journalism Review (CJR)*. "Last summer *The Oregonian* in Portland ran a twenty-part series on Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his followers, the Rajneeshes. On their attorney's advice, the three reporters who wrote the series declined to discuss it with *CJR*. For at least a year, or until the statute of limitations expires, the reporters have been advised to remain silent out of regard for the Rajneeshes' reputation for litigiousness." (Leslie Brown, "The Cult Beat", *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December, 1985, p. 46f)

¹³⁸¹ Barry van Driel and Jacob van Belzen, "The Downfall of Rajneeshpuram in the Print Media: A Cross-National Study", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, March 1990, p.77

became a sannyasin for about four months. 'I would say Bhagwan is concerned with, possibly, humanity, but I would say Sheela and Jayananda and all the rest of those people are concerned with millions of dollars.'¹³⁸²

And since *The Oregonian* had saddled itself with the crowd pleasing chore of following the money, its readers were dragged into a sounds like an annual report ride. Paragraph after paragraph and page after page of lists of organizations, when they were set up and where, and income and outlay down to the penny. And a dreary litany of the same recurring names - Ma or Swami So and So, aka ..., from such and such. Her father was a banker. He used to play ice hockey. I wonder if they would have been quite so nit picking had they been writing about Father Joe, Sister Mary, Pope John Paul II or Mother Teresa (aka Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu with Albanian origins and Indian citizenship).

And testimony from this bank manager, insurance agent, used car salesman (some of which were Rolls Royces), ex-employees, critics who had been sued for rabble rousing vilifications and, of course, the all pervasive "former sannyasins". That's why Zaitz had reflexively written "former sannyasins" in that email to Ma Anand Bhagawati. Because over the years he had chewed the fat with so many of them. In fact, for the most part, they were the only kind of sannyasins willing to have anything to do with him.

Some of those former sannyasin tales are both touching and credible - at least as far their perceptions of reality are concerned. And readers can well understand why seeing things as they did, they would feel betrayed and hold a lasting grudge against the top management at Rajneeshpuram - notably Ma Anand Sheela, Rajneesh's secretary - and by extension Rajneesh himself.

For example, the German sannyasin who thought the whole organization had a lot of explaining to do. "First they had to explain why Bhagwan moved and left all his people back in India," [Ulrich] Muller said. "Because he had promised them, 'You can live here for all your life and you will become enlightened if you do what I say.'¹³⁸³

Anyone who thought those premises were written into the small print of the sannyasin contract was pretty much missing all the books, chapters and verses. Because as far as I can see - and I'm certainly no take my word for it expert on the matter - the only promise Rajneesh made to his people on the path was something akin to the mystic notion of *kenosis* - emptying. The utter dismantling and demolition of their egos, those socially constructed and maintained layers of conditioning and personalities that prevented them from seeing and being in what Christians call God and Rajneesh reality.

Yes, I am a killer, in a way. I have to kill you because that is the only way for you to be reborn. I have to cut you completely from your past, I have to destroy your biography. Then only, the new can arise.¹³⁸⁴

¹³⁸² "For Love and Money", Part 15, July 14, 1985. All future references to these articles will be by part number and date.

¹³⁸³ Part 16, July 15, 1985

¹³⁸⁴ Rajneesh, *The Beloved*, Vol. 2, Chapter 4, July 4, 1976

A lot of the other so-called inside track talk is pure self aggrandizing hooley. Such as the tales stemming from "Michael Barnett, 55, also known as Anand Somendra, a therapy group leader who had earned a special place in Rajneesh's heart during the Poona years".¹³⁸⁵ That "special place in Rajneesh's heart" might have been how Barnett recalled and related his relationship with the master to the ever fact checking reporters, but anyone delving into the historical record will arrive at a more nuanced and accurate portrait.

For Barnett was - and for all I know still is - a world class egomaniac. In the Poona ashram years he was competing with other group leaders to be the best, and with Rajneesh to be the guru. At one point it had leapt so far out of hand that he wrote, "Beloved Master, If you were here right now, I think I would hit you. If you don't recognize me soon and start saying yes to me instead of no, I am going to have to kill you." Rajneesh responded: "Somendra ... thank you, Somendra. I also will need a Judas; otherwise the story will remain incomplete."¹³⁸⁶

So money was obviously an important theme in the Rajneesh story. At least as far as *The Oregonian* team read - and wrote - the script. The underlying motive for that dogged and dogmatic approach is not immediately obvious, even for those who, like me, have long studied and pondered over these things. Fortunately, sociologist James Beckford has lent us a helping hand and the proper pair of glasses.

Consequently [,] the case against some cults hangs on the decision whether or not they fall within the class of 'religion'. Opponents of cults therefore try to show that cults do not display the defining characteristics of a religion, but are better classified as economic or political enterprises with only a veneer of religious identity.¹³⁸⁷

What about the second prong - the first, actually - of their pulling out all the stops prosecution? What were their helpful and transforming insights on that whole spectrum of emotions we call love - from *eros* to *agape*, sex to superconsciousness?¹³⁸⁸ Not much, really, except to imply that what sannyasins experienced wasn't what *The Oregonian* team and its across the board normal readers would recognize and accept as true mature love. It was instead the "Love-struck"¹³⁸⁹ infatuation of cult followers.¹³⁹⁰ Brainwashed losers who had succumbed to the wiles and guiles of a body snatching, soul stealing guru from the East.

¹³⁸⁵ Part 11, July 10, 1985, but also *passim*. The reporters are particularly enthralled with Barnett's use of the term "Dowager Duchesses" to describe Sheela and other members of Rajneeshpuram's top management.

¹³⁸⁶ Rajneesh, *The Dhammapada*, Vol. 9, Chapter 10, February 20, 1980

¹³⁸⁷ James Beckford, "Politics and the Anti-Cult Movement", *The Annual Review of the Social Sciences of Religion*, 1979, p. 176

¹³⁸⁸ See Chapter 2.

¹³⁸⁹ Part 6, July 5, 1985

¹³⁹⁰ Part 18, July 17, 1985

In *The Oregonian's* hands, the whole Rajneesh story boiled down - or was boiled down - to two key character types: scammers and dupes. The first group had their feet very much on the ground and hands in everyone else's pockets. The second their heads in the clouds and eyes filled with stars. And it was now the avowed mission of the biggest newspaper in the Northwest to expose the one and liberate the other.

What about the spirituality factor that had got me going? *The Oregonian* reporters didn't show the least interest in and feel for that subject. Every reference to Rajneesh and his vast *oeuvre* of discourses is merely another opportunity to leer, sneer and smear.¹³⁹¹ And yet they had the temerity to pounce and pronounce on a spiritual leader and what went on around him. It was as if the terminally tone deaf were impersonating state of the art music critics, and no one was calling their bluff.¹³⁹²

For those sannyasins who could stomach reading even snips and bits of "For Love and Money" it was like watching some of their most memorable and meaningful moments ripped out of context and pasted into a porno flick. And it left them with a lasting loathing for the likes of Les Zaitz.

How dare they? Hadn't they taken his best meant efforts a bit too personally back then, Zaitz queried in his February 18, 2011 email to Ma Anand Bhagawati. And weren't they being a tad too touchy and "paranoid" now?

So, for those who still harbor their misgivings, I find that unfortunate. They must still fear the truth, and that's all I've ever been interested in. I truly thought my effort to reach out globally to solicit memories would be welcomed. I have had some wonderful responses - honest, candid and sharing. This remains a chance for many of those not responsible for the criminal conduct to share with the greater world THEIR perspective on these matters. That responding to such a request somehow might not be a good idea implies somehow that being honest is not a good idea.

¹³⁹¹ In his latest series Zaitz wrote, "In India, he [Rajneesh] worked as a small-town philosophy professor until he found enlightenment paid better." ("Rajneeshes in Oregon - The Untold Story", Part 1, April 14, 2011)

¹³⁹² Leslie Brown (see note 1380 above) didn't say what he thought about *The Oregonian* series and whether or not its reporters had complied with some of the standard tips for journalists dealing with "cults". Such as, "But there are ways around that wall of silence, reporters say. One is to talk to defectors - people whom Michael D'Antonio, religion writer for Long Island's *Newsday*, likens to government officials willing to leak a story. Defectors, just like others who leak stories, have to be regarded warily, D'Antonio and others point out. They have their axes to grind; they are sometimes psychologically damaged from their experiences in the sect." ("The Cult Beat", *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December, 1985, p. 46) And "At the same time, D'Antonio argues, that religious tolerance and a genuine curiosity about what a sect believes are essential. 'I think reporters fail to understand how important religion is in people's daily lives,' he says.... 'I think being curious is important. Understanding something about religion is important.'" (p. 46)

Apparently, Zaitz is a true believer in the old adage that the best defense is a good offense. And giving offense is something he's very good at. But even if the sanniyasins had been absolutely correct about his unbalanced and biased reporting in the old days, they might be totally wrong about him now. Right? After all, a lot of water had gone down both the Columbia and Ganges since then, and some leopards do change their spots.

Any delusions about that being even a remote possibility was put to rest in the first two paragraphs of the new, improved five part series (six if you include his "personal" story and the non-interview with Ma Anand Sheela he flew all the way to Switzerland to get.¹³⁹³

In a nearly unbelievable chapter of Oregon history, a guru from India gathered 2,000 followers to live on a remote eastern Oregon ranch. The dream collapsed 25 years ago amid attempted murders, criminal charges and deportations. But the whole story was never made public. With first-ever access to government files, and some participants willing to talk for the first time, it's clear things were far worse than we realized.

What follows is an inside look - based on witness statements, grand jury transcripts, police reports, court records and fresh interviews - at how Rajneesh leaders tried to skirt land-use and immigration laws only to have their schemes collapse to the point they decided killing Oregonians was the only way to save their religious utopia.¹³⁹⁴

By now it shouldn't be rocket science to recognize the same old spots firing on all 12 cylinders. But it will take more background than the average - or even educated - reader has to notice and remark on the false advertizing, lack of professionalism and unrepentant prejudices running rampant throughout those 124 words and the nearly 10,000 waiting in the wings. So much so that a plain vanilla journalism professor could use it as a textbook example of how *not* to write a story purporting to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

First, the sense of breathless revelation. This is new stuff, folks, and you're hearing it for the first time and from yours truly. In fact, what Zaitz was slopping out in heavily larded and lurid detail was old wine in even older bottles. Crimes, such as the salmonella poisoning of more than 700 people in The Dalles and the attempted murder of Swami Devaraj, Rajneesh's personal physician. And plots like the conspiracy to kill the US Attorney in Oregon Charles Turner and Les Zaitz himself.

All these old hats were first made public in September and October 1985 after Sheela, Rajneesh's secretary who had increasingly seen her "boss" as a dispensable eyesore in *her*

¹³⁹³ "I'd traveled halfway around the world to interview her about her days in Oregon 25 years earlier as Ma Anand Sheela" is how he described it. ("*The Oregonian's* Les Zaitz on investigating the Rajneeshees (personal essay)", Part 6, April 2011)

¹³⁹⁴ Les Zaitz, "25 years after Rajneeshee commune collapsed, truth spills out", Part 1, April 14, 2011

global vision, had flown the coop. A few former co-conspirators remaining at Rajneeshpuram then came out of the shadows and disclosed a goggle of "Huh? What?" activities top management had been up to and thinking about.

Some of those witnesses were, to say the least, in very compromising positions. Others were insiders *pur sang* and up to their hairlines in complicity and guilt. The first thing Rajneesh did was blow the whistle on "Sheela and her fascist gang" and urge all sannyasins who knew anything about what had been secretly going on to fully cooperate with a whole gamut of state, county and federal officials. There was no standard damage control, coverup and containment, and thus nothing for intrepid Tintin reporters to expose or reveal.¹³⁹⁵

If anyone knew all that, it was *The Oregonian* reporter who had been living, breathing, eating and sleeping with this story for as long as he could remember. But then and since he has righteously refused to accept that the scandals were the work of a limited number of individuals and the buck stopped at Sheela. For as far as he and a lot of others are concerned - indeed the overwhelming majority of his eternally outraged and personally offended target audience¹³⁹⁶ - Rajneesh's claim about not knowing anything about the criminal acts was a lot of smoke and mirrors.

Zaitz and they believe in their hearts, minds and guts that Rajneesh was Top Dog out there, and not only knew about everything going on in the "buddhafield", but had also actively masterminded it. That no two ways about it message was repeatedly drilled in and droned out in a special 10 page wrap up about Rajneeshpuram on December 30, 1985 and again in the latest contribution to the annals of propaganda posing as investigative journalism.

- ❖ "Government authorities in India, weary of the Rajneesh's growing notoriety, cracked down on his group's unseemly and illegal behavior, including smuggling and tax fraud. The guru ran, ending up half a globe away at the Big Muddy Ranch, 100 square miles of rangeland an hour's drive north of Madras."
- ❖ "In India, trickery and bribery got results. Why would Oregon be any different?"

¹³⁹⁵ Howard Kurz, then of *The Washington Post*, recommended the following strategy for media outlets caught with their pants down. "If there's bad news, break it yourself. There's nothing worse than watching helplessly while rival media outlets slice you into little pieces. By getting out front, you get to dictate the spin on the story and ensure that your explanations are included in everyone's follow-up piece. "If you admit to a negative, you get credit for a positive. Eating a healthy serving of crow helps shift the spotlight from the original blunder to your valiant efforts to deal with it. A full confession also removes any taint of a coverup." (Howard Kurz, "Why the Press is Always Right", *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 1993, p. 35) But that tactic only works if people are willing to give the offending organization a bit of slack. Which was not at all the case with the Rajneeshees - then or since - in Oregon.

¹³⁹⁶ Media critic Edward Herman has written, "And if the story has been portrayed with authority and indignation as true, it becomes difficult to imagine an alternative view as credible. This helps to close down critical investigation into the issues and to justify exclusion of dissenting opinion." (Herman, *op. cit.* (see note 1366 above), p. 138)

- ❖ "Coached by the Bhagwan, Sheela became adept at using the press to her advantage."¹³⁹⁷
- ❖ "KD¹³⁹⁸ complained in a letter to the guru that the insults were impairing efforts to build the commune. The guru's response was blunt: You're a coward. KD swallowed the insult and kept his place at the inner circle of the ranch. Later, he used his insider knowledge to get a lenient plea deal for himself - and to help send Sheela to prison."¹³⁹⁹
- ❖ "Yet the guru they worshiped, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, pushed for even more extreme acts."¹⁴⁰⁰

That's another difference between an investigation and prosecution. In an investigation you are innocent until proven guilty. In a prosecution it's the other way around.

But in a bizarre stories within stories, where you couldn't keep track of all the players and plots with the most up to date scorecard, there was for once some *prima facie* logic in the assumption of Rajneesh's direct involvement. So in February and March 1989 I, the out of state boy, interviewed most of the up to speed local players in the investigations. US Attorney Charles Turner, Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver, Governor Vic Atiyeh, Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith, and Robert Hamilton, the attorney general in charge of the organized crime section of the department. In short, just about everyone who would talk to me.

I asked them if there was any credible evidence for Rajneesh's participation, active or otherwise, in any of the plots and crimes exposed. And if so, I'd like to see it. Their responses differed in degrees of frustration and varieties of "you'd have to guess" and "KD has a theory about". KD, as we know, was Krishna Deva, later David Knapp, the former mayor of Rajneeshpuram who was no escape clauses active - not merely "participating" - in all the heavy criminal activity.

But by then he had seen the light at the end of a going to jail forever tunnel, made an extenuating circumstances deal with Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmyer, and

¹³⁹⁷ The source of this scoop is Sheela, as reported in one of Zaitz's own earlier stories ("Guru a master of publicity stunt", *The Oregonian*, October 29, 1985). "I think that even if one would spend a fortune to study professional publicity, one couldn't learn as much as I have with bhagwan," Sheela said in a recent interview published in the German magazine Stern. "And he never ran out of ideas. He had an acute sense of timing when journalists started to get bored with his insults on Mother Teresa. That's why we had to come up with something new."

¹³⁹⁸ Swami Krishna Deva, aka David Berry Knapp.

¹³⁹⁹ All four quotes from Les Zaitz, "25 years after Rajneesh's commune collapsed, truth spills out", Part 1, April 14, 2011. For this KD letter and "response", see the scoop from Ma Ava Avalos below and my comments on them. As for his testimony sending Sheela to prison, the by now well informed reader should ask, "What specific testimony is Zaitz talking about?" and "Sent her to prison for what and how long?"

¹⁴⁰⁰ Les Zaitz, "Rajneesh's leaders take revenge on The Dalles' with poison, homeless", Part 3. While the date on *The Oregonian's* official website is listed as April 14, 2011, I assume that it was actually printed on April 16, 2011. Thus, as with the previous series, "For Love and Money", one part a day. But I could be wrong.

Hey, Presto!, was suddenly on the side of the angels. And from that moment on everything he said that was in strict lock step and lip sync with what various prosecutors' wanted to hear - that is, their versions of the truth - was miraculously made not only credible, but also true.¹⁴⁰¹

But even with his "tell all" testimony - trotted out repeatedly over the years and at perpetual gunpoint - the bottom line was that there was no credible evidence linking Rajneesh to any of the crimes, much less all of them. Nothing that would stand up in court and under the intense scrutiny of well paid, highly trained and no holds barred defense attorneys¹⁴⁰² and a judge, jury and public demanding to know the full truth, not one sucked out of a whole range of conspiracy theorists' thumbs and photoshopped.

Game over? In an investigation, yes. In a prosecution, no. In a prosecution the game's never over until you finally find what you've been looking for all along. Even if it's not there.

As far as I know, which is pretty far, local boy Les Zaitz never asked these for him easy to reach officials anything so straight from the hip. Or if he did, he never printed it. Why not? Because the bottom line answers didn't slot neatly into his hard fought for and supposed to be page turning - and possibly Pulitzer prize winning - narrative. In fact, they contradict and even undermine it. And such a non-story is not only inadmissible evidence, it is also a personal affront to everything the senior investigative reporter has up to now stood for and on.

In his February 18, 2011 email to Ma Anand Bhagawati Les Zaitz wrote, "I'd also note that Sheela & Co. tagged me for assassination, her elite squad tried to burglarize [sic] my office and destroy my work station, and my private conversations at the ranch were illegally recorded. I guess that was all in good fun, and nothing negative about it. Tell that to my then-wife and our two young boys who were terrorized by the prospect of assassination."

That phrase, "Sheela & Co.", is one I have used throughout this book, and it shows that in some of his goal oriented private correspondence at least Zaitz is well aware that a very limited group of people were responsible for a lot of mayhem and thinking about murder, and there were major differences and firewalls of distinction between them and just about

¹⁴⁰¹ "Prosecutors frequently wield the big stick of indictment over the heads of potential witnesses if they refuse to 'cooperate' in the prosecution of another individual. 'Cooperation' appears to be a euphemism for supporting the government's theory of a case and assisting in the prosecution of its target.... witnesses who insist on presenting a different view of the facts may face prosecution for obstruction of justice, criminal contempt, or some totally unrelated offense that the prosecutor otherwise never would have brought." (Angela Davis, "The American Prosecutor: Independence, Power, and the Threat of Tyranny", *Iowa Law Review*, January 2001, p. 15)

¹⁴⁰² We should remember here the words of Assistant US Attorney Robert Weaver. "My view was that he was going to retain the most competent, aggressive defense lawyers he could and, for once, the government would be outspent and outnumbered." See Chapter 8.

everyone else. But in his printed work there's not much of that spot on, nothing to complain about exactness.

For there he never tires of the stigmatizing tactic of "Rajneeshee crimes" this and "Rajneeshee plots" that. Which is equivalent to branding something a "Catholic stickup" just because that cheeky bugger with a pistol in your pus happens to believe in the Eucharist. That tarring everyone with the same brush bad habit runs like a torrent of purple prose through Zaitz's most recent attempts.

For example: "Along the way, they made plenty of enemies, often deliberately. Rajneeshee leaders were less than gracious in demanding government and community favors. Usually tolerant Oregonians pushed back, sometimes in threatening ways."¹⁴⁰³

Here it is, folks. The Rajneeshee "they" were and remain the perfect counterpoint to the categorical Oregonian "we". As in the previously cited, "it's clear things were far worse than *we* realized" (emphasis mine). Those Rajneeshee varmints stormed in with both guns blazing and tried to take over the place. And we the homogeneously good and easy going people of this great state put up with their offensive and often infantile shenanigans for as long as was humanly possible. But at a certain point enough was enough.

This is another key element - and possibly the heart of the matter - in the ongoing saga of Rajneeshpuram as seen through the cracked lenses of *The Oregonian* and most Oregonians. And what's to be gained by residents and resident journalists by doubting, let alone rigorously questioning and even challenging that gospel? Which reminds me of a bumper sticker that was popular nearly 20 years ago. "If it matters to Oregonians, it's in *The Washington Post*".¹⁴⁰⁴

The reference for that dig was what some still consider the "lowest point in the paper's [*The Oregonian*] modern history".¹⁴⁰⁵ Namely, its failure to go after and investigate repeated rumors about the sexually harassing habits of US Senator Robert Packwood. That story was eventually broken by Florence Graves, an out of state journalist, and published in *The Washington Post* on November 22, 1992.

After a dispute with *Vanity Fair* over her contract, Graves spent the summer researching the story independently. She says she was somewhat surprised *the Oregonian* didn't beat her to it. "Something seems amiss when a person living in Needham, Massachusetts, working on her own, financing it herself, could develop a story to the point where she had identified enough women to make it credible. I considered at one point contacting *the Oregonian*, but several sources said, "If you take it there, they will figure out a way not to publish it."

¹⁴⁰³ Les Zaitz, "25 years after Rajneeshee commune collapsed, truth spills out", Part 1, April 14, 2011

¹⁴⁰⁴ The phrase is attributed to Rick Seifert, a Portland Community College journalism professor (Jill Rosen, "The Story Behind the Story", *American Journalism Review (AJR)*, August/September 2004).

¹⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

There was a serious lack of trust that the paper will take on the state's power brokers.¹⁴⁰⁶

The major thrust about *The Oregonian's* failure to pursue Packwood - and, 12 years later, former Portland Mayor and Governor Neil Goldschmidt for his ongoing liaison with a 14 year old girl - seemed to be about sex. But for our current purposes two other issues are much more important. One, the newspaper's cavalier attitude towards what is and isn't news.¹⁴⁰⁷ Two, an out of state journalist with a severely restricted cash flow managing to scoop the biggest boys and girls on the block.

Opining on one, there is Richard Aguirre, state editor of Salem's *Statesman Journal*. "Sometimes I think of *the Oregonian* as a big lumbering beast. Their position is: [']It's news when we report it[']".¹⁴⁰⁸ On the second, Mark Zusman, editor of one of the newspaper's competitors, the *Willamette Week*. "In terms of challenging the power structure in a fearless and independent way, I can't say *the Oregonian* acquits itself well."¹⁴⁰⁹

In *The Oregonian's* defense, Sandra "Sandy" Rowe, the newspaper's editor in chief at the time, shot back, "We're the big institution in town, the largest daily in the Northwest - it's natural others are going to take shots at us. [But] Just because people are criticizing doesn't make it factual."¹⁴¹⁰ I couldn't agree more. Just because people are criticizing, accusing and attacking doesn't make it true. And that goes for *The Oregonian* and all the people and organizations it and other journalists report on.¹⁴¹¹

What's more, we have already seen at least one occasion in which *The Oregonian* reared up and spoke truth to power. Specifically in October and November 1983, when State Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer filed his church-state opinion against Rajneeshpuram, and then acted like it was a knockout punch, a *fait accompli*. The paper severely criticized him and went to bat in no uncertain terms for fair play and compromise.¹⁴¹²

But what's true of the organization - at least in that instance - is definitely not true of Zaitz & Co. At least not in connection with Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram. For there it's an all out example of what I call "gee whizz journalism". That is, a whole range of Tom,

¹⁴⁰⁶ Cheryl Reid, "A Newspaper Confesses: We Missed the Story", *American Journalism Review*, January/February 1993

¹⁴⁰⁷ See Edward Herman's remarks above.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Rosen, *op. cit.*

¹⁴⁰⁹ Mark Lisher, "Riding High", *American Journalism Review*, March 2000

¹⁴¹⁰ Rosen, *op. cit.*

¹⁴¹¹ For example, the underage girl Neil Goldschmidt was said to have "raped", Elizabeth Lynn Dunham, went on to both brag about her affair with him - it made her special - and be abhorred by it - it made her dirty. And despite Goldschmidt's ongoing attempts to both help her out (financially) and keep her quiet, her life turned into a downward spiral of drug abuse and emotional instability. She eventually died just short of her 50th birthday on January 16, 2011. Many assumed that her wasted life was the direct result of what Goldschmidt had done to her. See, for example, Nigel Jaquiss, "Elizabeth Lynn Dunham: May 12, 1961-Jan. 16, 2011: More Than a Victim", *Willamette Week*, February 2, 2011. I, for one, am not convinced.

¹⁴¹² See Chapter 5.

Dick and Harry "government officials" and "authorities" saying this and that, and them deferentially jotting down the answers without once questioning, let alone challenging, the necessity and legality of *their* actions and validity of their accusations.

In other words, Zaitz & Co. constantly gave the establishment and ordinary Oregonians a ticket to ride and hide. With them the status quo was in safe hands.

My approach was more even and consistent. Less passive on the one hand and aggressive on the other. It was an examination of the whole story - or at least as close to that elusive ideal as I was capable of - and "no one was to be left out of the equations and given a glance over. That "no one" included not only Rajneesh, but also government officials and "ordinary Oregonians" - whatever, whoever and wherever they might be.

And since I was asking different questions with a different attitude about the answers, I came up with a completely different story. A book that is practically a line by line, step by step, blow by blow account and analysis of the pushing and shoving happening in Oregon and farther afield in the 1980's.¹⁴¹³ It demonstrates, and in my opinion no way out proves, that there were numerous governmental conspiracies against the Rajneeshees - federal, state and local - running simultaneously and often at cross purposes.

In other words, the Rajneeshees were not operating in a vacuum or a dualistic universe where the borders between the forces of darkness and light, evil and good are constant and clear. Part of the pushing from the federal government's side was the baseless refusal of the INS to recognize Rajneesh as a religious leader and grant foreign sannyasins religious worker status as a matter of course and right.

That was the source of many of the sham marriages. Individual sannyasins, acting for the most part on their own, basically figured, "If you won't let us through the front door slammed shut in our faces, we'll come through the back". Where there's a will there's a way.

Another was the bogus argument of Rajneeshpuram and the whole commune experiment violating state land use laws.¹⁴¹⁴ According to some, creating an oasis in the pristine desert was bad for the environment. While Zaitz & Co. didn't find anything particularly absurd about that I discovered that conflicts over that issue with allegedly apolitical and impartial environmental groups and their leaders led pretty much one-two-three to the "takeover" of Antelope. Which in turn led to lots of bad blood between the Rajneeshees and their neighbors and all the bad press money could buy.

¹⁴¹³ For a short attention span generation, this book must look and feel like *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* put together. Even those who know how to read in the classical sense of the word might find it too long and detailed. But when you're going up against and trying to break through a wall of received wisdom, you have to be unusually thorough. And even then - as subsequent history up to now has proved - those who don't know don't want to.

¹⁴¹⁴ See the comments of former State Senator Ted Hallock, one of the co-authors of SB 100, in Chapter 5.

If you ask Les Zaitz and *The Oregonian*, the Rajneeshees alone were to blame. If you ask me and any independent observer of the facts and sequences, there was enough responsibility to go around. But conflicts are part and parcel of everyday life, in individuals, families and society at large. And quite often compromises are made, and those conflicts are either successfully resolved or back burned, and life goes on. Where there's a will there's a way.

But in Oregon there was less and less will to compromise. Lines were drawn and the stakes raised. Existing laws were reinterpreted and new special anti-Rajneeshee legislation passed. And meanwhile, back at the ranch, a bunker mentality developed among the top management.

For they weren't just imagining enemies all around. There were very real enemies and clear and impinging threats. And they weren't going to let up until their objectives had been achieved. That is, ridding the state of Rajneesh and Rajneeshees. That was the source of the often harebrained¹⁴¹⁵ and totally off the wall plots - the crimes committed and schemed by Sheela & Co.

At one time during the fall of 1985 Bob Hamilton, the attorney general in charge of the organized crime section of the department, counted 17 state and federal agencies coordinating their efforts against Rajneesh and his people. I cautiously introduced the last question of our taped interview, all too aware that I was now coming dangerously close to stepping on his toes.

Brecher: I'm going to ask you one more loaded question, and then I'm going to give you something for your records. This is a knuckleball. And I can understand if you don't want to answer it. What's the difference between 17 agencies coordinating against the Bhagwan and his people and a conspiracy against the Bhagwan and his people? What's the difference?

Hamilton's voice suddenly became cold and angry. "Well, I don't I don't accept either one of those [alternatives]. There was no conspiracy."

Brecher: I'm asking you. What's the difference?

Hamilton: Well, I'm not going to answer that then. What I'm gonna answer is ...

Brecher: ... If you want, I'll turn off the tape.

¹⁴¹⁵ In the testimony of Ma Dhyani Yogini (Alma Peralta) at "the Turner Conspiracy Trial" (see below), we hear: "What happened was that Samadhi had volunteered to shoot Mr. Charles Turner. Samadhi had gone to Sheela and asked it that was possible. And then when Ava picked me up at the airport, Ava was very disturbed. She said to me, 'Yogini, that is not going to be possible [,] because Samadhi can only see out of one eye. She has to wear a contact lens. The other eye is practically useless. She cannot drive and she can't shoot guns. She was never a part of learning to shoot guns.'" (Yogini/Peralta testimony, p. 1651) This story is also included in Ava Avalos' testimony (p. 724f). Another idiocy was going out to Turner's house an untold number of times (p. 723) to case the joint. This from people who were reading books like *Without a Trace*. See Wasco County District Attorney Bernie Smith's remarks in Chapter 9.

Hamilton: No, I don't care. I've got nothing [to hide] What I'm saying is, there was no law enforcement conspiracy that I participated in against Rajneesh or his people.

Despite Hamilton's protests to the contrary, there were conspiracies galore against the Rajneeshees. And they eventually led to the destruction of the city-commune and the ongoing blackwashing of Rajneesh's name, work and legacy in the state. However, and for what it's worth, I don't think Hamilton himself was on the inside track of those conspiracies. He was just a tool in the hands of those running the shows and ultimately responsible.

The mildly curious reader might now well ask why attack dog journalist Les Zaitz, who had accumulated more than 40,000 pages of documents and dossiers on thousands of people, hasn't stumbled across a single one of those conspiracies. The less charitable might say he was too myopic, even cyclopic. Couldn't see the forest through all those trees, leaves and seeds of might have been dumped along his money trails. That he wasn't the brightest bulb in the class.

But I have three better hypotheses. One, he wasn't looking for those conspiracies. Or he knew of them, but called them something else. Namely, "getting the job done" and "achieving our objectives". Two, even if someone had shoved the conspiracies up both his nostrils - as I have done in this book - he didn't want to know.

In his latest series my painstakingly researched work, done on a shoestring budget and paid for out of my own not very deep pockets, was listed as a distant also ran (under "A selection of other books") with the faintly dismissive description, "Often cited by Rajneeshees as an authoritative book proving the American government conspired against the guru". But he hasn't shown the least interest in actually reading it and contacting the author to discuss and debate the contents.¹⁴¹⁶

As far as I know, he also hasn't approached the next author in his can't be bothered bibliography, Washington State Professor Lewis Carter, or paused to take on board his sage advice on the subject of researching New Religious Movements (NRM's) - not "cults" or "sects". "What observers learn will depend on their own background and orientation as well as how they are viewed by the group to be studied."¹⁴¹⁷

As a sociologist, Carter was naturally more interested in Rajneeshpuram for the social experimental aspects than the spiritual. And that included how its residents got on with the neighbors and they with them. His depictions of those "Usually tolerant Oregonians"

¹⁴¹⁶ In her February 22, 2011 response to Zaitz Ma Anand Bhagawati wrote, "If you are really looking for the truth you could start by exposing the whole strategy of the Reagan Administration against Osho and the sannyasins but that would be politically a too touchy subject for *The Oregonian*." In his reply a few hours later he wrote, "If you have direct knowledge or evidence of the Reagan plot, please send it along. I'd be happy to look it over."

¹⁴¹⁷ Lewis Carter, "The 'New Renunciates' of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh: Observations and Identification of Problems on Interpreting New Religious Movements", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1987, p. 150

couldn't be made to squeeze into Zaitz's carefully crafted slots. In fact, if taken seriously, they would completely obliterate them.

For while he didn't talk of conspiracies, he did highlight the fierce, concerted and organized local you ain't welcome committees. "I acquired first-hand knowledge of the opposition who pressured the Rajneesh to the point where they would display their intemperance and trigger legal reactions."¹⁴¹⁸ In other words, according to Carter's reading of the historical sequence, Oregonians were throwing the first punches, not the other way around.

Opponents included ranchers, loggers, lawyers, public officials, professionals, liberals, conservatives, fundamentalists, aquarians, cowboys, academics, ministers. Like the Rajneesh, the prior residents of Eastern Oregon employed several organizational structures and identities. "The 1000 Friends of Oregon," "Concerned Oregonians." It was at first puzzling that these many groups [,] consisting of Oregonians who usually war (or at least contend) with each other (e.g.[,] environmentalists and ranchers) [,] could develop coalitions of such strength and focus.¹⁴¹⁹

And Zaitz also hasn't dipped into the longer than your arm work of James Richardson, professor of sociology and judicial studies at the University of Nevada, J. Gordon Melton, professor of New Age Religions at the University of California (Santa Barbara), and a whole host of other academics who have written extensively about an intense and nearly universal hostility of the media and general public toward NRM's.¹⁴²⁰

Thus at a certain point any reader willing and able to confront - and correct - his own prejudices and those of others is forced to challenge Zaitz's qualifications for a task he has so enthusiastically embraced. Ask themselves and him whether he was in over both his head and heart, and the only chance of catching up and pretending condescending superiority - getting ahead of the curve - was by reducing every-one and -thing to way below the level of his very poor powers to add and subtract.

If you can't expand and adjust to fit the story, make the story fit you. The best defense is a good offense.

The third reason Zaitz didn't spot the clear as day conspiracies all around was because he was a full fledged, card carrying member of them. Still is. Although he would definitely describe his efforts more positively - something like "crusading journalism". I wanted to talk to him about that and many other details too numerous and micro-micro specific to rehash and go into here.

¹⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169

¹⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 169. Already cited in Chapter 3.

¹⁴²⁰ "A great deal of effort has been expended within the social-scientific tradition to unravel the complexities of marginal religious organizations. Unfortunately [,] it seems that the message is somehow totally lost to the majority of those employed by the print media." (Barend van Driel and James Richardson, "Categorization of New Religious Movements in American Print Media", *Sociological Analysis*, Spring 1988, p. 182)

That was in March 1989. He had left *The Oregonian* - I don't know why - and was running his own newspaper in Keizer. But he was one of the few top players in the state who refused my requests for an interview. Another *refusenik* was Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer.

Apparently, Les Zaitz would rather ask questions than answer them. That might merely be an expression of his Constitutional - indeed, God given - right to have secrets and remain silent. And I have no problems with respecting and endorsing that. For an open environment is one thing, but a staked out, wire tapped and strip searched society is not something most are prepared to confront and endure.

Because coming too close to others and ourselves in our what you see is what you are nakedness could prove fatal to everything we've always thought, felt, believed and known. And there's no telling where, or even if, that might end.

But I think the smart money should be on a much simpler solution for why Zaitz wants to remain mum. Namely, that in his case he's got a lot to hide, and in his own words, "being honest is not a good idea".

Summing up, there's nothing essentially new in the hepped- and heaped-up main body of Zaitz' Rajneesh Retrospective. In the words of Bob Oliver, former chief legal aide for Governor Vic Atiyeh, he "didn't really say anything that wasn't pretty well known by well informed people anyway".¹⁴²¹ It recaps and reinforces all his and those of his target audience's chiseled in marble angles, assumptions and foregone conclusions, with a bit of Christian charity chipped in to show that he really is interested in the whole truth and isn't such a mean minded and bigoted son of a bitch after all.

Ma Prem Sambodhi, who lived in Portland, Oregon until her death in June 2011, said this about him in a February 24, 2011 email to Ma Anand Bhagawati.

He [Zaitz] is so patronizing and has been for so long that I don't believe he even realizes he's doing it.... He twists things to his own purpose. In the back and forth messages you forwarded to me, I noticed that he misspelled your name. Maybe it's the teacher in me, but there's no excuse (in my mind) for that kind of negligence, especially from someone who is supposedly a writer. To me it reflects a lack of respect for the other person, and an ego so big that he believes he can say and do anything with complete confidence he is right. He has no ability to see another person as a person unless that person agrees with him.

I recently spoke with my friend ... who now lives on the Oregon coast. She decided not to send him any pictures or memories even though they would have presented a positive image of the ranch. Even if they're positive, it's him

¹⁴²¹ See note 1379 above.

giving us a chance (a patronizing gesture) to show a side of the ranch that he didn't see.... Now he wants to provide us with an opportunity to present another perspective to his own (which will be negative, I'm sure), and show himself to be a good guy, fair and unbiased. Yuk!¹⁴²²

A spot on analysis and prediction, except for one important omission. By cooperating with Zaitz, the sannyasins would appear to be agreeing with his overall storyline, Saying in effect, "Yes, but".

That doesn't, however, mean that reading through Zaitz's efforts and the ramifying sub-sections has been a complete waste of time. For he does supply some fascinating documents I hadn't seen before. One, the testimony of three key prosecution witnesses in what I call "the Turner Conspiracy Trial". A month long show trial played out in the summer of 1995.¹⁴²³

Yet another hot pursuit, and not the last, of a few "& Co." sannyasins - this time in the form of two British women - Ma Prem Savita (Sally Anne Croft) and Ma Anand Su (Susan Hagan) - who some said had conspired to kill Turner. Those so claiming were plea bargained "co-conspirators". One, Ma Ava (Avalos), had been on the sharp, operational end of the plan.

Two, "Addendum C: Photocopies of Evidence Obtained by FBI From Germany". I didn't have a copy of this 25 year old document, consisting of 3 pages and 47 items, because FBI Special Agents Paul Hudson and Hadley McCann, who had shared so much splendid nonsense with *The Oregonian's* James Long in 1985,¹⁴²⁴ refused my request for an interview in 1989. They claimed that anything to do with Rajneesh and Rajneeshees, even if it was only about the FBI's trip to Germany in October 1985, was part of an "ongoing investigation".

And while these documents were intended to strengthen and cement Zaitz's case - to, once again, very publicly indict Rajneesh and prove by hook and crook that he was the mastermind behind everything that happened around him - they actually first nibble and then bite away at its foundations and further support my contentions about prevailing guilty until proven innocent prejudices and never say die governmental (and media) conspiracies.

Which demonstrates that "eyewitness testimony" - like "truth" - is by no means as straightforward as it may seem. For it is only as solid and robust, or frail and flimsy, as

¹⁴²² "Arrogant" is the top of the pops word in comments about Zaitz. Including from former colleagues at *The Oregonian* who wish to remain anonymous. One who never trusted him wrote that he's "still paranoid, still arrogant".

¹⁴²³ June 27-July 28, 1995

¹⁴²⁴ Which Long either swallowed hook, line and sinker or helped them to make up. See, James Long, "Oregon team travels paper maze to gain Sheela's arrest", December 30, 1985, and Chapter 10, note 951.

those providing it. And both must be handled with extreme care and caution, because they can easily vanish like morning mist or turn around and blow up in your face.¹⁴²⁵ Initial contact with the direct testimony is confusing and slightly disorienting.¹⁴²⁶ Like popping into a Russian novel - at, say, page 407 - without knowing the plot, where you are in it, what the characters have been doing, and whether or not you like them and should believe all or anything they're saying. Did events really unfurl like that? After so many years are the memories they're dredging up out of the murky and very traumatized depths trustworthy? What are their motives for saying and emphasizing this as opposed to that? What are they trying to reveal and conceal?

One legal expert provides some helpful hints about how much salt jurists, jurors, judges and journalists should use when handling direct testimony in criminal trials.

Many of the causes of this discrepancy [between what actually happened and what is witnessed, remembered and testified to] are already well known [,] e.g. [,] the adverse effect on [the] accuracy of testimony of poor lighting, long distance, short duration of exposure Less well-known factors influencing perception include emotion, interest [or lack thereof], bias, prejudice, or expectancy, on the part of the perceiver.... It is a well-documented fact that we frequently perceive what we expect [or want or need] to perceive.¹⁴²⁷

The testimony as presented in *The Oregonian's* document section lacks anchors, overview, perspective, scale and reliable signs telling readers which way is up. As such it is raw data, which all by itself doesn't reveal anything conclusive about the facts of the case. Thus in order to use it to approach fractions of the truth, we will have to pick portions of it apart (analyze) and then reassemble them (synthesize). Like it or not, that's how all top notch knowledge is constructed.

Fortunately, patience and perseverance reward those who dare and care to carry on and follow through. Gradually, the confusion lifts and we find ourselves in the midst of an all too human drama. Something like a morality play or Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*. For these witnesses have undergone a sometimes rapid series of crises and conversions - life-enriching and -wrenching experiences.

But they boil down to the basic two. One, when diverting from their so-called normal life trajectories and becoming sannyasins. Two, when dropping out of that and winding up in

¹⁴²⁵ That's probably one of the reasons Charles Turner told me, "But in my business I frequently think the circumstantial evidence is far more persuasive. I am more persuaded by that in many cases than I am by direct evidence." See Chapter 7.

¹⁴²⁶ Krishna Deva's contribution runs from page 172-319, Ava Avalos' from 656-782, and Dhyani Yogini's (Alma Peralta) 1599-1683 (337 pages in total). The last, as presented by *The Oregonian*, is particularly confusing, because it begins on page 1637, runs to 1683, and then we're back at page 1599. There are 7 pages missing (between 630 and 636). What's more, there are an incredible number of grammatical mistakes, probably attributable to errors from speakers and stenographer.

¹⁴²⁷ D. Greer, "Anything but the Truth? The Reliability of Testimony in Criminal Trials", in *Criminal Justice: Selected Readings*, p.171. The additions within brackets are mine. And while I have every reason to believe that Greer would have no objections, I can't swear to it.

the "unexpected, unpredictable"¹⁴²⁸ position of in the dock crooks and, later, redeemed and steam cleaned witnesses for the prosecution. Love and betrayal. We're all in this together pursued and eventually supplanted by *sauve qui peut* partings of the ways.¹⁴²⁹

And these go with us on this witnesses are in the thick of yet another crisis here. For these former sannyasins are now informers, being forced at legal gunpoint to testify against fellow travelers, friends to the end, and in one instance (Swami Anugiten)¹⁴³⁰ a previously most cherished lover (Ma Prem Savita). At one point Scott Glick, a federal prosecutor examining his "friendly" witness, Ava Avalos, said, "The witnesses are under enormous pressure."¹⁴³¹ He ought to have known. He was among those applying that pressure.

Glick: Did Mr. [Tommy] Hawk [a Portland attorney hired for her at commune expense] negotiate a plea agreement or immunity agreement, if you will, with the United States?

Avalos:¹⁴³² Yes, he did.

Glick: Are you familiar with that?

Avalos: Yes, I am.

Glick: And what is your understanding as to what you have promised to do as part of that agreement?

Avalos: Part of the agreement [,] I promise to tell everything that I knew about everything that had happened as accurately as I could.

Glick: And what did you understand that the promise of the United States was as part of that agreement?

Avalos: That as long as I - if I didn't lie about anything or misrepresent any information [-] that I wouldn't be prosecuted for the crimes that I committed. But if I was found to lie or tell - not tell the truth in any way [-] I would be prosecuted completely for my crimes and for everything that I said. Everything that I said would be used against me [and] all at once.¹⁴³³

Thus these pots calling kettles black are cooking. They have been made offers they couldn't refuse, and their cooperation is a highly motivated deal with the devil. Basically, "Either you help us to convince this jury and convict these defendants or you'll be sitting where they are. There but for the grace of us go you." Which considering what they had already admitted to, that amounted to getting the whole legal library thrown at them and being locked up for the duration.

And that duress bubbles up during the direct examination of Ma Dhyani Yogini (Alma Peralta) by lead Justice Department prosecutor Timothy Reardon III. She's talking very

¹⁴²⁸ See Krishna Deva's sannyas taking in Chapter 11.

¹⁴²⁹ Directly after Ava Avalos' testimony to the FBI became known to the remaining members of the "& Co." group - in a suburb of Athens, Greece in the winter of 1985-6 - it was generally agreed "that we were not to talk to each other anymore. Especially about the Turner thing, but also about any other possible activities." (Yogini/Peralta testimony, p. 1675)

¹⁴³⁰ Anugiten's (Richard Langford) testimony is not included in *The Oregonian's* document section.

¹⁴³¹ Avalos testimony, p. 736

¹⁴³² Sometimes I will use "Avalos", sometimes "Ava". For our purposes, they are the same person.

¹⁴³³ Avalos testimony, p. 733f

fast, and despite the usual backstage rehearsals they've obviously run through before this very public appearance,¹⁴³⁴ she's flustered and sometimes practically incoherent. Reardon has to keep asking her to slow down.

Reardon: Are you nervous?

Yogini: Yes.

Reardon: Take a deep breath and slow down so you can tell the ladies and gentlemen. All right?

Yogini: I don't know that the breath is going to take all of the nervousness away.¹⁴³⁵

At another point US District Judge Malcolm Marsh is almost scolding her.

The Court: Now, take your time with these questions. Listen carefully to them and just respond to the questions.

Reardon: Okay. Ms. Peralta, if you have a problem, please ask me about the question. I'll read it back to you or have it read to you.

Peralta: I understand. It's just that in my head everything is very mixed.

The Court: You need to be very careful. We have certain procedures we have to follow.¹⁴³⁶

On the surface of things Ava Avalos appeared to be a much cooler, almost cold blooded customer.¹⁴³⁷ But she too had known troubles and tough times. "I was brown [sic, "born"] and raised in San Diego. Middle - lower middle [-] class Mexican American household. We were a pretty typical family. We suffered the kind of same typical things that, you know, assimilations, parents were both kind of abusive alcoholics and - but they loved me and my sister very much [-] and they sent us to Catholic school for 12 years."¹⁴³⁸

Abusive alcoholic parents is not what most would call "a pretty typical family". And/but they loved me and my sister very much is not exactly an unequivocal description of where she came from and what it was like in her still small shoes. But no one's perfect, especially when under do or be done to pressure.

When 15½, Ava continued, she "decided to become a vegetarian and start yoga. And I had some friends that were doing yoga. It happened [that] they were doing it at a place called the Utsava Meditation Center in Laguna Beach, California."¹⁴³⁹ For those not

¹⁴³⁴ "The time factor is also relevant with regard to the rule restricting counsel from asking his own witness leading questions during the trial. This is intended presumably to prevent counsel from 'leading' a witness to give evidence favourable to his side. But that witness will probably have been questioned before the trial either by that counsel or his solicitor, and during this interview leading questions may well have been used which suggest to the witness details of evidence which he later gives in reply to proper questions on direct examination. In other words, coaching of a witness may take place unconsciously" (Greer, *op. cit.* (note 1427), p. 174)

¹⁴³⁵ Yogini/Peralta testimony, p. 1603

¹⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1627f

¹⁴³⁷ See her comments to Yogini about Turner's murder in note 1415.

¹⁴³⁸ Ava Avalos' testimony, p. 656

¹⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 656f

conversant with California geography, Laguna Beach is between San Diego and Los Angeles.

Ava: I didn't know about Bhagwan or Rajneesh before I got there [Utsava]. And I went [,] and unbeknownst to my parents [,] and started doing yoga and found out about Bhagwan, began to read some of his books.

Glick: Now, how old were you when you first came in contact with the teaching of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh?

Ava: I was 15.

Glick: And what role, if any, had religion played in your life up to that point?

Ava: Well, I had gone to Catholic school since second grade. We went to church every Sunday. I was curious about spirituality from the very beginning. So when I - actually [,] I did yoga for about six months before I asked who this man was on the wall. I kind of had this anti-Christ fear thing.¹⁴⁴⁰

Six months of avoiding Rajneesh's pictures and those compelling - some say "hypnotic" and "hypnotizing" - eyes, especially when they're displayed larger than life on the white walls of Rajneesh centers around the world. And "anti-Christ"? Pretty heavy stuff for a born and bred Catholic girl.

Where did this encounter happen? And when? According to her tried and tested testimony, at "Utsava Meditation Center in Laguna Beach, California" when she was 15. The exact year depends on when she was born. When was that? A no brainer for all those with birth certificates and not suffering terminal memory loss. Unfortunately for both her and the federal prosecutor steering her through the story - in terms of consistency and the quality of both her memory and the case they are making together - the answer, or, rather, answers, aren't up to snuff.

Glick: How old were you when you decided to leave the United States and travel to see the Bhagwan for yourself?

Avalos: It was 1979. I was 19.¹⁴⁴¹

Glick: How old were you when this occurred? I mean, summer, fall of 1983?

Avalos: 20.

Glick: Sorry?

Avalos: 20.¹⁴⁴²

To my ears, that "Sorry" sounds like Glick giving his prime and primed witness a chance to get it together and autocorrect herself in real time. Thus she should say, "I mean 23". But she misses her cue. It could happen to anybody.

¹⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 657

¹⁴⁴¹ Avalos testimony, p. 658

¹⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 680. The incident Glick is referring to is the bombing of the Portland Hotel (see Chapter 5 and below). Avalos was the manager, and according to all accounts stayed amazingly calm and collected under very trying, some might say "hysterical" circumstances.

From another account, which we will turn to in a moment, it seems like 19 in 1979 is the right answer. That means she was born in 1960, which dates her Christ-anti-Christ clash to about 1975-76. And here's where we run into yet another glitch about the where. For at that time there was no Utsava Rajneesh Meditation Center (RMC) in Laguna Beach. That center dated from the 1980's, *after* Ava Avalos returned to the US as Ma Ava. And she herself acknowledges as much in her later testimony. "And from that [sic, "there"] I was contacted from a Rajneesh Meditation Center in Laguna Beach that had just opened."¹⁴⁴³

So, once again, where did the first contact with Rajneesh happen, and when? According to an ex-boyfriend,¹⁴⁴⁴ the more likely place and date coordinates appear to be the San Francisco Bay Area, more than 400 miles north of Laguna Beach, and 1978/79, when Ava was a first year scholarship student at the University of California in Berkeley.

Think about the Bay Area *Zeitgeist* at this time. It was one of the most radical and anti-establishment spots in the US, and had been since at least the 1960's.¹⁴⁴⁵ Passing through for a week in the fall of 1973, I could feel the anarchic ferment in the air just walking down Telegraph Avenue. Mao Tse-tung's *Little Red Book* filled with revolutionary rhetoric. "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."¹⁴⁴⁶

And then came the kidnapping of Patty Hearst, aka Tania (1974) - was she "brainwashed" or a free and committed participant? - the fever of the Symbionese Liberation Army (1974-5), gay activism, and in the fall of 1978, the double whammy of the Peoples Temple in Jonestown¹⁴⁴⁷ and, less than 10 days later, the assassinations of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and City Supervisor Harvey Milk.

Now think about a 10th grade Mexican-American *quinceañera*¹⁴⁴⁸ going to a Catholic high school in San Diego and living at home with two abusive alcoholic parents. Quite a difference as far as context is concerned. Thus two out of two wrong - the where and when - and we're just getting started. It's not looking good for Ava's memory and credibility, especially in a trial where who said what where and when is everything.

¹⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 662. The reference is to Paras RMC in San Francisco, which she misspells as "Parr".

¹⁴⁴⁴ Swami Prem Sahajo, "Fillet of Soul", *Viha Connection*, January/February 1996, pp. 26-28. *Viha Connection* is a sannyas magazine published out of Marin County, just north of San Francisco. I owe this source - and the almost instantaneous faxing of it to me - to Swami Dhyana Arjuna. Ava refers to Charlie/Sahajo in her testimony. "I was actually in a relationship, actually in love, that I was in a relationship with him for the entire [sic, "entire"] time I was at the Saba [sic, "Utsava"]." (Avalos testimony, p. 687)

¹⁴⁴⁵ We have already come across the Free Speech Movement (FSM) in Chapter 3.

¹⁴⁴⁶ *Quotations From Chairman Mao*, Chapter 5.

¹⁴⁴⁷ See Chapter 2. It should be remembered that Reverend Jim Jones was active in the Bay Area and many of his people came from there.

¹⁴⁴⁸ "*Quinceañera* (lit. meaning One (f.) who is fifteen), sometimes called "*Fiesta de quince años*", "*Fiesta de Quinceañera*", "*Quince años*" or simply "*quince*", is the celebration of a girl's fifteenth birthday in parts of Latin America and elsewhere [including Mexico and Mexican-Americans] in communities of people from Latin America. This birthday is celebrated differently from any other birthday, as it marks the transition from childhood to young womanhood." (*Wikipedia*)

Defense attorney Leslie Weatherhead put it like this. "Your honor, I object. The quality of this witness' memory is crucial to us."¹⁴⁴⁹ At another point he said, "I apologize for continuing to interrupt, Your Honor. Once again we don't have a question framed in terms of specific place, [and] time, which is obviously the whole case, Your Honor, as to who was where when."¹⁴⁵⁰

What about the spiritual struggle? Was it merely between Christ and the anti-Christ, Jesus and Rajneesh? Or was it a bit more nuanced, complicated and radical?

In the fall of 1978 the ex-boyfriend, Charlie, was 22 and had been an active and godless Communist since 14. He was giving a talk on "the revolutionary alternative to capitalism to a small group of students", and Ava was in the audience. That very night they began a long and tempestuous love affair. In 1995, more than a decade after they had broken up and despite the fresh wave of her notoriety in both the sannyasin community and greater world, he didn't have one bad word to say about her. In fact, he seemed to be still very much in love with either her or his memories of their time together.¹⁴⁵¹

"During our time together, sharing my passion for 'the Revolution,' we took up the battle against apartheid and in defense of abortion rights." What was a good Catholic girl doing in a sexually- and ideologically-charged pre-marital relationship with "a good Jewish boy from New York"¹⁴⁵² fighting for abortion rights? That "unbeknownst to my parents" sounds like it would slot in very nicely here.

Little did I know [then Charlie/later Swami Prem Sahajo wrote,] she [Ava] was having a secret love affair with another man, one she had never met. Someone who had appeared to her during a life-threatening illness. Some smiley-faced, balding, grampa-esque kind of guy gleamed down from the underside of her bunk bed. I didn't take too much notice at first. When I met Ava's friend [,] Ma Prem Sono [,] and had my first debates around materialism and politics with a sannyasin, I knew I was in a battle for Ava's soul. When she announced that she was going to India with her friend Sono I knew there was going to be trouble.¹⁴⁵³

True, this is Ava's story as seen in the cracked mirror of an ex. And we all know how melodramatic and unreliable - for better and worse - they can be. There are, however, a few recognizable, if somewhat refracted, elements. The fascination with Rajneesh's picture, this time not on the neutral wall of Utsava, but in a couldn't be more intimate space: her own bed. She was sleeping with the enemy.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Avalos testimony, p. 734. He was objecting to something else. Another time when she revealed her unreliability about place was when she said "that was filled out after we burned down Dan Durow's office in San Francisco" (*Ibid.*, p. 752). Durow's office was in The Dalles in Wasco County, Oregon.

¹⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 701f

¹⁴⁵¹ Picking her up at the airport on her return from India, he describes her as, "Radiant goddess in purple darshan dress, glowing cheeks, blasting His [Rajneesh's] energy right into my heart. I knew she was okay and I was able to relax, letting go for the first time in months." (Sahajo, *op. cit.*, p. 27)

¹⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 27

¹⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 26

The best friend, Sono - from childhood in San Diego or college in Berkeley? - plays an important and catalyzing role in both accounts. And the confrontation. Not between Christ and anti-Christ, but Marx and The Cause - in all its infinitely extending and extenuating circumstances - and religion, "the opium of the people".¹⁴⁵⁴ Between Charlie and Sono.

And something else to jump start the question machine and keep it humming. "Someone who had appeared to her during a life-threatening illness." Appeared to her? What does "appeared to her" mean? Something like Jesus to his disciples after the crucifixion and resurrection, or Saul (Paul) on the road to Damascus? During a life threatening illness? What life threatening illness?

By the time they left I had persuaded Ava to stay away from Pune [Poona]. Surely [,] I had convinced her of the counterrevolutionary nature of this religious cult.¹⁴⁵⁵

Thus contrary to what was said in the Portland court, Ava didn't go to India specifically to see Rajneesh. In fact, she had even vowed to steer clear of that den of reactionary iniquity. And as things turned out, it was the last stop on their tour, which according to Charlie was triggered by a chance encounter with - would you believe it? - yet another Ma Prem Sono and a miraculous tarot card reading in Kathmandu.¹⁴⁵⁶

Having once arrived at the ashram - either with Sono, according to Ava, or alone, according to Charlie - what did Ava make of it? "The ashram was kind of a hippy paradise, I guess, in some way. Everyone wore these long, flowing orange robes and long hair and meditation that went on all day and people sang and danced. It was like a paradise to me. I had never seen a group of people living like this before. It seemed like everyone loved each other. And everybody's intention was to become, you know, better people. And so it was a really wonderful place."¹⁴⁵⁷

Not bad for a 19 year old California girl who had been born too late for "the summer of love". But by now we should be clued into the fact that these are only the impressions of a still wet behind the ears outsider whose perceptions were dazed and dazzled by what she expected, wanted, and perhaps needed to see. One troubling aspect, however, is her tendency to overgeneralize. "Everyone wore these long, flowing orange robes",¹⁴⁵⁸ "everyone loved" and "everybody's intention".

¹⁴⁵⁴ "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." (Karl Marx in the introduction to *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie (Contribution to A Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right)*, 1843. For more on the history of this very interesting quote, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opium_of_the_people.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Sahajo, *op. cit.*, p, 26

¹⁴⁵⁶ Ava's fascination with tarot cards continued, and that in combination with her ability to make "the best margarita I [Sheela] ever had" brought her closer to Sheela (Avalos testimony, p. 674f). In the transcript tarot is misspelled as "role cards".

¹⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 658f

¹⁴⁵⁸ As it turns out, in December 1979, orange was no longer the prevailing color in ashram chic. By then there were many shades of red, maroon and purple. And while many wore robes, there were also many

If I have learned anything during these investigations, it was that there was no "everyone" and "everybody", one size fits all sannyasin "profile". Professional profilers of the world, take note. You have nothing to lose but your reductive, don't fit the data paradigms.

People came to Rajneesh from different backgrounds, cultures, phases of their lives and for sometimes radically different reasons, conscious and unconscious. Some directly and running, others roundabout and dragging their heels. And while a few die hard moralists might have been there to "become better people", the most common denominators I heard were to slip the strait jackets of habits and counter productive conditioning and increase consciousness and contact with existence.

Rajneesh's non-serious approach toward life was another important factor. There's nowhere to go, no one to become. The journey is the goal, the means the end. Oh, and there was the freedom, jokes and joyous, no strings attached attitudes about love and its subset sex.¹⁴⁵⁹

What next for Ava? "And I asked right away to become a sannyasin, to become a disciple. And they said that was okay."

I went and met Bhagwan personally. The night when we were invited by him to take sinnyasin [sic, "sannyas"], so you would come in - a small group of people would come to him and he would put the [necklace¹⁴⁶⁰] around your neck and touch your head and talk to you about your name. So he did that. That was the first time I met him.¹⁴⁶¹

Without being too much of a sticky picky and sadistic schoolmarm breathing over the poor girl's shoulder, two things should be flagged here. One, "I went and met Bhagwan personally" makes it sound like a normal get together between equals in a somewhat casual setting. According to sannyasins not fitting into the "former" category, a rather lackluster depiction of what for them remains one of the critical turning points of their

bare-chested male workers (handymen) in Indian trousers. And they were sawing, hammering and painting, not singing and dancing.

¹⁴⁵⁹ "While those who have not read sociological accounts of the new religions might still be at a loss to understand why anyone joins the movements, those who have read some of the sociological literature could well be at a loss to understand why *all* young adults are not members, so all-encompassing are some of the explanations. Take, for example, the report of research by a sociologist-psychotherapist team [Doress & Porter] which, we are told, explains how young adults join cults (a) to find a family, (b) as a spiritual search (c) for security, (d) to differentiate themselves from their parents (e) as adolescent rebellion, (f) seeking adventure, (g) for attention, (h) because of their idealism, (i) because of underemployment and dead-end jobs." (Eileen Barker, "Religious Movements: Cult and Anticult Since Jonestown", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1986, p. 338)

¹⁴⁶⁰ "Necklace" is inserted by the stenographer. Even as a former sannyasin, she would and should have said *mala*, the 108 bead necklace with Rajneesh's picture on both sides of a locket at the bottom. A queer omission and hardly worth noticing, let alone mentioning. Except for the same quirk appearing two pages later (p. 661). "Well, at that point I was wearing red clothes and the [necklace]." It's as if she can't bring herself to say "*mala*".

¹⁴⁶¹ Avalos testimony, p. 659

lives. Odd too, because the more person there is in the disciple, the less is the possibility of ever meeting the master.

Two, "when we were invited by him" to take sannyas implies that he was the active party. But, as she has already stated, she had asked for it. And he had accepted her, as he had so many thousands before and after, sight unseen and with no typically testing questions asked. Such as, "What is your intention, Ava? Have you adequately prepared yourself for this tremendous journey? What have you done in your past lives to deserve it? In this one? What are you going to do with this golden opportunity?"

Come, come, whoever you are.
Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving.
It doesn't matter.
Ours is not a caravan of despair.
Even if you have broken your vows a hundred times,
Come, come, yet again come.¹⁴⁶²

Glick did ask something that could have been a probing and fascinating question in a different context and with a different attitude. For as location is said to be everything in real estate, so are those factors when asking and answering questions. "What did it mean to become a disciple of Bhagwan?"

She answered, "I meant [sic, "It meant"] that I was taking - I was taking a step to completely devote my life to my spiritual awaking [awakening], and that I was acknowledging Bhagwan as my spiritual master, therefore saying that - acknowledging that he knew what I needed spiritually to achieve those goals, even though maybe I wasn't totally clear at the time what those were. We would say it was enlightenment. And I don't - we didn't really question what that was. It was something all of us were trying to do."¹⁴⁶³

Excellent. More mature and focused. Especially with the floundering and confusion. It was her choice. She was doing it for herself, not her parents, sister, Sono, other sannyasins, Charlie or him. Taking a step. Just beginning to tiptoe into the Into ...? Yes, that and there.

And here the "we" is marginally more appropriate. For while many sannyasins did wonder about the precise nature of what the hell they were doing there, often and occasionally to the point of madness, none of them could give even themselves a working definition of enlightenment. If they could have done that, there wouldn't have been any need of a master.

However, that constantly kicking in "we" - something like a restless leg syndrome - is fundamentally inaccurate. Especially when Rajneesh stressed that his brand of spirituality was a detaching from all "we's". Accidentally born into families, religions, nations,

¹⁴⁶² An often cited (in slightly different forms) poetic fragment by Sufi mystic Jalaluddin Rumi.

¹⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 660

knowledge (shared "we" ideas and assumptions), and even the "we" relationships - acquired and invented, established and maintained - with the countless and contradictory images and preconceptions about the "who am I?".

According to him, the spiritual path is a solitary voyage requiring nearly heroic quantities of longing, love, effort and courage. Because it is a clinging to nothing "flight of the alone to the Alone",¹⁴⁶⁴ and leads from the known to the unknown and unknowable.

So what did Ava need to wake up spiritually? What did Rajneesh say to her during this "personal" meeting about the meaning of her name and the major aspects she would have to pay special attention to on her strictly individual path to enlightenment? A gaping big blank. She either can't remember or doesn't think it worth mentioning. At least as far as this testimony is concerned.

On her second and, as far as I can tell, only other "personal" meeting with him - almost three years later in Oregon (the summer of 1982) - it's more of the same "I guess". "I guess he gave us some sort of blessing and asked us, maybe five or six of us if we had any affection for him. At this time he wasn't speaking publicly, so it was quite an honor to be there with him and have access to him and ask him any questions that we wanted to."¹⁴⁶⁵

What questions did she or anyone else present ask, and what answers were given? Your guess is as good as mine. Because as far as her testimony and this history is concerned, it's more empty space. In one ear - if that - and out the other.

Glick asked Ava, "What did you consider Bhagwan to be?". She answered, "An enlightened master. I guess we felt like he was Jesus in some way, [in order to] try to make it clear [to you, that] he was all knowing, had achieved the highest human potential that a person could achieve. He was clairvoyant, all-knowing. Understood everything there was to understand about life and being on the planet, I guess."¹⁴⁶⁶

Two bad twitches joined at the hip. "I guess", which gives something with one hand and immediately takes it away with the other.¹⁴⁶⁷ Like the "and/but" about her abusive alcoholic parents. And "we", projecting her perceptions and telling how it actually was for her and "everyone" and "everybody" as well.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Rajneesh borrowed this last image from Plotinus, a third century Egyptian mystic.

¹⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 669

¹⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 661

¹⁴⁶⁷ Much later in the testimony Ava answered a question about a photo of Savita at a particular meeting. "Well, my guess is it was in the summer [,] because Savita had had her hair permed. And Savita permed her hair that summer." Defense attorney Leslie Weatherhead objected with some humor. "Excuse me. I guess I have to object because it was a guess." (*Ibid.*, p. 775) It was sustained. But a few lines later she's at it again. "Well, it was that summer [1985] she permed her hair.... It seemed like I remember I was at it [the meeting in question], but I'm not completely sure why. I have a feeling it was when Bhagwan decided to talk again. I don't know for sure." (*Ibid.*, p. 775). Rajneesh began to speak again in the fall of 1984, not the summer of 1985.

Perfectly normal behavior. We all do it more than we would care to recognize and admit. I just did it right there. And under ordinary circumstances, it's nothing to tear your hair out over, beat your chest about and cry "*Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!*". But these are not ordinary circumstances. Lives are at stake, as well as reputations and history as recorded, repeated and remembered.

In less than a year Rajneesh had been upgraded in Ava's eyes from anti-Christ to Christ, with a hope chest full of supernatural qualities often attributed to the only begotten son of god. Is that an improvement? According to her, most definitely. But not according to Rajneesh and some of his older and more experienced sannyasins.

For him - and them - Christ and anti-Christ, saints and sinners, good guys and bad, are part and parcel of the ancient and antiquated he said/she said, action/reaction some call history and others *samsara*. The never ending wheels, whirlpools, dust storms and tempests in teapots - private and public - he wanted his disciples to wake up from.

Why all this seemingly over fussy rambling and rummaging through the dirty laundry and half baked ideas of "poor" Ava Avalos in what was meant to be a 10-15 page appendix exposing the motives and professionalism of Les Zaitz and *The Oregonian* and has become the fattest chapter in the book? Because, as I said earlier, you have to follow the story you're trying to tell - not necessarily the money - and adapt to its size and dimensions, often against your will, budget and alleged better judgment.

For example, if someone had told me in 1988 that I would still be thinking and working on this theme 24 years later, I would have said that either they were crazy or I was. But things don't always turn out as planned, which isn't always a bad thing. And if old forms and frameworks are no longer good and great enough to accommodate what needs to be said, then it's time to find more spacious ones that will.

Is Ava Avalos then so significant in the rotten journalism argument and the bigger picture I've been sketching throughout this book? Yes and no. Yes, because she is not only a witness for the federal prosecutors in the Portland court - and those far from completely teased out people pushing them forward - but also the senior investigative reporter in the local paper of record: Oregon's answer to *The New York Times*. And Zaitz is using, and depending on, her to do his dirty work. As he has done with many other highly compromised and suspect sources numerous times before. Same old leopard, same old spots.

And by slowly, but surely undermining and impugning their eyewitness as eyewitnesses - not people - I am seducing, not raping, readers toward conclusions the more alert can already sniff and almost taste. Namely, that Ma Ava/Ava Avalos is extremely challenged as far as her memories, perceptions and interpretations of events are concerned, and, consequently, the overwhelming bulk of her testimony should be thrown out of court. And with the bathwater should go the baby. This Turner Conspiracy Trial and all those

using it to stick more pins into and further discredit a defunct commune/city and dead guru.

No, because in the bigger picture of *buddham*, *sangam* and *dhammam*, Ava Avalos was a nobody. As were all true sannyasins and the *buddham* himself. For according to Rajneesh - and many other masters, past and present - becoming a nobody is what spirituality is all about. Relaxing into ordinary nobodiness - egolessness, *anatta*. That and enlightenment are one and the same.

Unfortunately for Ava, however, she never seemed to have glimpsed that essential message. She was still young and wanted in the worst way to fit in and belong, "and/but", at the same time, be "honored", "privileged" and "special". And that's why she wound up in the hot seat in that Portland court and the pages of this book, as both accuser and accused.

But I did say "almost taste" those conclusions. And while they're already foregone and inexorable to me - because I know what's coming up - they have yet to be argued for and established. In order to get everyone on the same page we need to flash forward from Ava *circa* 1979/80 to the fall of 1982. That's when she came to live and work at the commune city. What job was she given?

Ava: I went to [Ma Prem] Geeta and she said I was going to be assigned a really special job. And Saba [sic, "At Utsava I"] had worked at the legal team, I thought I was going to be doing legal typing. She said actually you are going to be answering Bhagwan's letters that disciples have written to him. And there are only a few people that do this. You feel like you are really sensitive and you know this is kind of a privileged job. You have to be special to be able to do this. And this is the job that we are going to give you.

Glick: What do you mean, you are the one that answers Bhagwan's ...?

Ava: Bhagwan received letters from around the world from his disciples asking for spiritual advice. Instead of Bhagwan answering the letters personally the typists in the typing pool would answer them. We would read them - and this had been going on for a long time. There were books that had quotes about love or relationships and death or whatever, any number of subjects. So we would read the person's letter and write a few lines of advice and then Sheela would sign for Bhagwan.

Glick: When you said you would go to a book with quotes, whose quotes were [sic, "were"] they?

Ava: They were Bhagwan's quotes.

Glick: You would place them in a letter?

Ava: Yes.¹⁴⁶⁸

If Ava had had a smidgen of spiritual sense and understood half a teaspoonful of what Rajneesh had been saying for all those years before he went into silence, she would have leaped up then and there and hollered "Fucking hell!", "Bloody Murder!" and "Help!".

¹⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 668f

For as early as the autumn of '82, she was being asked to participate in an, according to her, ongoing deception and conspiracy.

Not against the people of Oregon and the rest of the human race, but those trusting sannyasins around the world who thought they were addressing their most intimate and immediate issues to their master, but were actually getting by the numbers answers from an intermediary as clueless as them.¹⁴⁶⁹ And from what she's just "what's the problem?" admitted in open court, obviously even more so. The irrevocably blind leading those with a chance of recovering their eyesight. One of the worst crimes in Rajneesh's universe, if not the worst.

But she accepted her assignment without qualms or questions. Such as, "What if I was writing to Bhagwan and someone like me was intercepting my letters and throwing in her two pesos? How would I feel about that? Am I doing the right thing? Should I discuss this with someone I know, love and trust?" Did she know - I mean really know - love and trust anyone in the commune? And if not, why not? What did that say about her?

Ava seized this "golden opportunity" with both hands and jumped with joy. Why? Because she was flattered that highly visible somebodies at the tippy top of this "movement" and "organization" - those with power and prestige - had noticed the daughter of lower middle class, abusive alcoholic immigrants and appreciated her especially sensitive qualities.

After writing the above it was uncanny to discover Ava herself confirming my reading of her motivations. Almost word for word.

Well, I felt later in trying to make sense of everything that happened to me, understood how desperate I was to belong to a group, how desperate I was to have a family, you know, coming from some of the things that I came from. And there was nothing more important to me than my family, than my home, which is the way I said [probably, "saw"] it then, you know. I was willing to jeopardize my life, give up my life to protect the community, to protect Bhagwan.¹⁴⁷⁰

But not quite. For there's that disconcerting confusion of intransitive and transitive verbs, passive and active modes, which we've already noticed in her description of the sannyas

¹⁴⁶⁹ Rajneesh had many things to say about how he approached questions. Here's an example. "When I read your question, I am less concerned about your question than I am concerned with the questioner. I am more concerned with the questioner.

That's why I insist that you should always write your name under the question, you should always sign it - because a question in itself means nothing. It becomes meaningful only when I know who the questioner is. My answer is not for the question, but for the questioner. One may ask a question and I may answer it in one way, another asks exactly the same question, with the same words, but I will not answer in the same way - because it is not the question that is important, it is the questioner." (*The Discipline of Transcendence*, Vol. 4, Chapter 7, November 6, 1976) He went on to say that what was helpful for one person could be harmful for another.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Avalos testimony, p. 715

initiation ceremony. Blurring the boundary between "everything that happened to me" and "everything I did". Because these are her ass saving perceptions and copping a plea explanations, and even justifications, to herself, the court and God, about what she had done and why.

To protect the commune and Rajneesh, her family and home is how she put it. Later in her testimony she described her state of mind when Sheela & Co, of which she was a gun toting member, were packing up and heading out. "I was really, really upset. I was really confused, because everything that I had done to that point had been for Bhagwan and the commune."¹⁴⁷¹

Really? How was dishing out cut and paste, chapter and verse answers to sannyasins around the world - who were also part of the *sangam* - supposed to sync with her master's intentions, make her a better person and help herself and those she was "advising" achieve their spiritual "goals"?

Maybe in her wired and clutching at straws mind, that's how she wrote, rewrote and glossed over her road to ruin, and what she told herself, then and ever since. But she would, wouldn't she? How else could she blunt the impact of her excessive violence, unconsciousness and stupidity and make the best out of a situation just too terrible to be true? And if we put ourselves in her shoes for half a second, as I will attempt to do below, we can easily feel the tight fit and understand why. For comedy and self righteous, got 'em melodrama is what happens to our enemies, the eternal other. Tragedy is what happens to us.

From Geeta's point of view - and those who had brought the two together - Ava was suddenly worth watching. She was fresh, young and pliable. Someone who could fit in and get with the program, no matter what the program was. That was their rather sordid and cynical interpretation of one of Rajneesh's key words: "surrender".

And if Ava had agreed to fake being Rajneesh without a blink or peep - pretend she was enlightened, "clairvoyant, all-knowing. Understood everything there was to understand about life and being on the planet" - and deceive him and her fellow truth seekers, she might, when the time came, just as easily sign up to do something even more drastic. In for a penny, in for a pound.

And if Zaitz was any kind of reporter and actually knew how to read the 40,000 plus pages of documents he was so keen on amassing, this confession should have hit him smack between his short sighted- and badly skewed-eyes and make him shiver and shake. "OH MY GOD," he should have said to himself, his bosses and readers. "Is it possible that Rajneesh really didn't know everything Sheela and *her followers* were up to?"

For here was unequivocal proof. A smoking tongue. Pretty early on in the game - in the fall of 1982, before any of the this world crimes had been perpetrated and serious external and internal damage done - the channels of communication between Rajneesh and *his*

¹⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 727f

sannyasins were not free, fast flowing and clear. The question then becomes how clogged up were they? How much - and what - was not getting through from both sides? How much was being sucked out of grubby, power grabbing thumbs and spun?

And if Zaitz was any good at connecting the dots, he would have noticed, as I did, that this fact might challenge some of his foregone conclusions about who was really in charge at Rajneeshpuram and further afield. It would, at the very least, have given a twist - nasty or nice, depending on who was looking and for what - to his report about Sangam, a fun Rajneesh center in the Provence Alps that was threatening to divert funds and people from Rajneeshpuram.

Sangam was one stop on the movement's fund-raising circuit, a route traveled most frequently by Sushila. Her pitch was that Rajneesh wanted money for the ranch.... Another Sangam veteran in London, Stephanie J. Gilbert, 40, who used the sannyasin name Magyan Bhakti, said the commune was just beginning to thrive when Sushila swept through in 1982 and announced that Rajneesh wanted to dissolve it.... Called to the ranch for the First Annual World Celebration, [Norman] Cohn [Anand Prageet, the center leader] had a darshan, or audience, with Rajneesh. The guru told him he was unaware of Sushila's edict about Sangam.¹⁴⁷²

He might even have been less dogmatic about KD's letter to Rajneesh, mentioned earlier, and the answer he got. Again, "KD complained in a letter to the guru that the [Sheela's] insults were impairing efforts to build the commune. The guru's response was blunt: You're a coward. KD swallowed the insult and kept his place at the inner circle of the ranch."¹⁴⁷³

KD, an educated, basically congenial native American with a flair for politics and getting on with his countrymen, knew there was more than one way to skin a cat. To get to, through, or around difficult and intransigent opponents. And Sheela's fire and vinegar style wasn't high on that list. And, of course, he was right.

But both he and Zaitz should have at least remembered that both question and answer had to pass through Sheela's thick, dirty and often drugged mind. That is, assuming there was any kind of back and forth to begin with. The possibility of many a slip between disciples' cups and master's lips is nudged further into the probability zone when linked to another dot in the trial testimony. Namely, that of Ma Dhyan Yogini.

What Sheela said to us [at one of the many meetings after a severe setback in May 1985] was, "I'm sick and tired of things going wrong and things not getting done. I'm sick and tired of your incompetency." And then she said, "Are you cowards or are you sannyasins of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh?"¹⁴⁷⁴

¹⁴⁷² "For Love and Money", Part 16, July 15, 1985

¹⁴⁷³ See above.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Yogini/Peralta testimony, p. 1628

"Coward" was one of Sheela's favorite words, used often and to great effect to threaten and cajole those closest to her when they couldn't or wouldn't do what they were told. Very eager and ambitious beavers who wanted to be where the action was, no matter what the cost. People like the prosecution's red faced witnesses: Ava, Yogini and KD. People Sheela had first rustled and hustled and then built up, broke down and owned.

So why I remember this so clearly is because I felt very burdened by that. Because many things had not gone as Sheela wanted them to go. So [,] therefore, I thought she was going to scream at me personally. And I thought I would be asked to step away from the inner circle of people, which I very much wanted to be part of, or that I was going to be completely stepped on.

So she was incredibly well known for - sometimes for her vicious handling of people. Not all the time. She was very well known for that. And I was very scared. So when she was saying these things, I was taking it to mean that I had personally failed in these things that she had asked not only myself but others to do.... She did say, "I'm sick and tired of you guys being incompetent fools and not doing what I asked you to do."¹⁴⁷⁵

Was any of this admissible evidence in the Rajneshpuram story? Quirky discrepancies that might add to or subtract from the chockablock, good guys versus bad guys scenario? Facts that just might provide a couple of interesting twists and even flip everything upside down and inside out?

No, not on your life. Why not? Because Les Zaitz deemed it so. And who knew more about these matters than the man who had assembled, skim read and cherry picked through all those thousands of pages of documents and dossiers?

Back to Ava Avalos. It's now the summer of 1983, and she's either 20 or 23, depending on which math she's using. She's also the manager of the Portland Hotel. One bomb explodes, and while many around her are confused and possibly panicking, she's the picture of grace under fire. Impressive, no doubt. But when we place this young Ava next to the rather passive puppy being led one way by Charlie and another by Sono and Geeta, we have to wonder where this sudden steel is coming from.

Her stock skyrocketed after her stellar performance, and she was relocated to the center of the power grid. What does that mean?

Shortly after the bombing [,] the police chief, her name was Ma Deva Barkha [,] came to me in Portland while I was on rotation and said Sheela asked me [that is, her, Barkha] to give you [that is, Avalos] a message. She wanted to go in the room and stuff, kind of top secret. And she said Sheela had a meeting

¹⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1628f

on the ranch with 24 people that she feels are the strongest people on the ranch and are ready to protect Bhagwan with their lives if they need to.

And she showed me the list. She said, "You have been put on the list." And I was kind of shocked. Just because at that point everyone on the list were the main people that were running the ranch. And so I thought, wow, you know, Sheela must think a lot of me to put me on this list.¹⁴⁷⁶

Two things are worth mentioning here. One, "strongest" - as in "survival of the strongest" - was the opposite of anything to do with the "cowardly" and "weak" sannyasins Sheela saw all around. In her eyes, wishy washy hippy flakes who bitched and moaned about having to work 37 hours a day, 400 days a year. Spoiled and lazy Poona scum who would rather make love, meditate and play than sacrifice their bodies and souls to "The Cause".

And two, within less than a year of her appearance on the scene in Oregon Ava had stormed ahead of 99.99% of the other sannyasins at the ranch and around the world. Many of them were old timers, often rather full of themselves and their histories together, who hadn't noticed anything special in this plain Jane late comer. They might not have even given her a second glance. But that and they were behind her now. For she was a member of "the 24", a club so exclusive and secret that those 99.9% still haven't heard of it.

Over the next two years Ava and many of the other "24" were as busy as bees on the brink of nervous breakdowns. At peak periods they "slept maybe, four, five hours a night. Four is probably closer to what it was. So our schedules were completely insane."¹⁴⁷⁷ Here's some of the stuff those schedules consisted of.

I was involved - I participated in [-] [the] poisoning of Devaraj numerous times, who was Bhagwan's physician. I participated in poisoning attempts on Vivek, who was Bhagwan's assistant, a number of times.¹⁴⁷⁸

Up to now, we have heard of one only murder attempt on Dr. Devaraj, not numerous, and none on Vivek, who some have described not as Rajneesh's "assistant", but his "girlfriend", in this life and the one before. And one struggles to grasp how even in a runamuck mind poisoning his doctor and girlfriend could be seen as protecting him with her life if need be, becoming a better person and achieving her spiritual goals.

I participated in [the] poisoning of Judge Hull [sic, Bill Hulse, a Wasco County Commissioner]. I participated in salmonella poisoning of the dams [sic, "reservoirs"].

I participated in falsifying medical records in relation to the Share-A-Home project, and knew about Haldol being given to the people involved there

¹⁴⁷⁶ Avalos testimony, p. 679f

¹⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 728

¹⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 747f

without their knowledge. I participated in, I guess you would call it kidnapping and drugging of the participants during the Share-A-Home project, [specifically one?] named Felton Walker.

I participated in the arson of the City Planner's Office and Attorney's Office. I participated in attempted murder, [an] attempt on Savita's life.¹⁴⁷⁹ I knew about the attempt on - to kill Devaraj at the celebration [in July 1985]

I knew about the election fraud attempt in the Wasco County election. I'm not sure what all the technical names are. I participated in the plot to kill Charles Turner. I participated in the plot to kill Helen Byron I participated in the illegal wiretapping that occurred on the ranch....

I represented myself to be Lorna Buckles after stealing her wallet in Portland. I represented myself also twice as people that I wasn't, two times. Once, Donna [sic, "Stella"] Larson and another time Tina something [Rivera]. I don't remember the last name. First name Tina.¹⁴⁸⁰

And I also participated in the surveillance of [the] Wasco County Courthouse with the intention of bombing the courthouse. I participated in the surveillance of a man named - I think it's - I don't remember his first name. His last name was Khomeni [ph], [sic, James Comini, a Wasco County Commissioner] liquor store, and the intention of possibly bombing his liquor store. Also he was in the hospital, when he was in the hospital, with the intention of possibly harming him there.

I also knew about the way that money was brought illegally, I suppose illegally, into the United States. Large cash money was brought in.¹⁴⁸¹

The list is so long and varied - from petty theft to the grand scale diabolical - that I have to wonder again about who Ava Avalos really was. And I'm not just talking about quick changes of names, addresses, cars, clothes and identities - Lorna Buckles, Stella Larson and Tina Rivera - but, rather, something more than skin deep. Were these inclinations toward larceny and skullduggery and the skill sets needed to put them into practice

¹⁴⁷⁹ This is the first I've heard of an attempt to murder Savita. And since such a possibility boggles my brain, I must assume that this is yet another slip between lip and page. Leslie Weatherhead, Savita's attorney, concurs. He said that he and the rest of the defense teams would have definitely noted such an assertion, which "would obviously have been of enormous significance to us". They didn't. Therefore

¹⁴⁸⁰ She used the name Stella Larson when registering the 1974 "green" (Avalos testimony, p. 712) Ford Maverick used in the surveillance of Turner's house (p. 754). At another point in her testimony, she's out and about in a "white Toyota".

Ava: 16 Q is a picture from inside the little white Toyota that we were in when we went to find Charles Turner's home. Vidya was with us....

Glick: This is the Toyota or Maverick? Which day did you use the Maverick?

Ava: We used the Toyota the first day or the second day. (p. 766) ... We used the Maverick the first day. (p. 767) Once again, Glick is obviously trying to keep her on course as far as details and consistency are concerned.

¹⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 748-50

without getting caught learned on the job? Or were they carryovers from an earlier period - "the sins of youth", as they say - something she'd still prefer to button her lips about.

And that brings me back to Berkeley in the late 1970's. Mao Tse-tung's *Little Red Book*. "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." "A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery. It cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another."¹⁴⁸² Lenin saying, "What nonsense! How can you carry out a revolution without shooting people?"¹⁴⁸³

Before advancing the following hypothesis, let me first stress that it is only my theory, and one I have absolutely no evidence, let alone proof, for. Nevertheless, it seems to be the best click fit and simplest explanation for the across the board "transformation" and "sea change" in Ava's character and work load.

My hypothesis is that the battles of Charlie and Ava for "The Revolution" - "against apartheid and in defense of abortion rights", "[for] the starving masses [and against] the death squads in El Salvador"¹⁴⁸⁴ - might have consisted of more than signing the odd petition and joining weekend protest marches. They might have included some of the ends justify the means calculations and putting your money where your mouth is activities usually associated with underground cells.

If I'm right - and, again, there's no assurances that I am - between 1983 and 1985 Ava learned under Sheela's¹⁴⁸⁵ tutelage that politics and religion didn't have to be at each other's throats. They could be natural allies and even the best of friends. But what Sheela neglected to teach - and never even partially understood herself - that it was exactly these kind of old style conspiracies that Rajneesh had railed against, long, hard and often.

And while he may have contradicted himself about everything else - consciously and with conviction - his standpoint on this topic was as constant as the north star. According to him, politicians and priests constituted a mafia of biblical proportions, and they had joined forces throughout history to exploit and cripple people and impede natural human growth. And in his *sangam* and religion at least there was no place for either.

I'm almost finished with the last nails in Ava's coffin. Not as a sentient being who's broken her vows a thousand times and still can't bring herself to admit that neither Christ nor the anti-Christ, God or The Devil, made her do it. These things didn't just "happen to" or come over her. But that's her problem and, as they say, let he who is without sin cast

¹⁴⁸² Mao Tse-tung, *Report on an investigation of the peasant movement in Hunan* (March 1927)

¹⁴⁸³ "Koba [Stalin] remembered that after the October coup Kamenev, trying to curry favor with the soldiers, had proposed that the new regime's first decree should abolish capital punishment in the army. Trotsky had agreed. But when Lenin arrived in the Smolny and heard about the proposed decree he was indignant: 'What nonsense! How can you carry out a revolution without shooting people?' The decree was buried. Another lesson [for Stalin] learned." (Edvard Radzinsky, *Stalin*, p. 136)

¹⁴⁸⁴ Sahajo, *op. cit.* (see note 1444), p. 26 and 28, respectively.

¹⁴⁸⁵ And probably Ma Anand Puja, her boss at the medical center, where she also worked.

the first stone. The coffin I'm concerned with is her as impartial, objective, or even worth listening to witness in this trial or anywhere else.

It's May-June 1985, and Sheela's hyperventilating brain has come up with yet another sure fire fix. Kill Turner.¹⁴⁸⁶ An indeterminate number of meetings are held in Sheela's bedroom with a fuzzy wuzzy number of people in attendance. The "24" has by now expanded to "38"¹⁴⁸⁷ due to the crazy hours and agendas. The trial lawyers spent a few pages trying to determine the exact location of that bedroom, but as far as I can see no one asked whether 38 or even 24 people could actually cram into it.

Did anyone object to the proposal? Yes, according to Ava. Not her, but quite a few others and with much soul searching and uproar. KD was among them.¹⁴⁸⁸ Nevertheless, about 20 pages later, he is asking her for a concealable camera so he can take a picture of Turner at a social function both would be attending.¹⁴⁸⁹ What did he want those secret snaps for? His scrapbook?

Prosecutor Glick asked Ava, "Did she [Sheela] at any time thereafter tell the Bhagwan about anything?". She replied, "Yeah. Again, within a few days of that first meeting she sent - Sheela would go and see Bhagwan every morning and every evening. In the evening she would talk with him and discuss ranch business and ask him what he would want done within the commune. And I guess because so many of the people that were close to her in that group objected to the idea of killing people, she went to him and asked him what he thought about the need to kill people."¹⁴⁹⁰

For those who want to dump the whole kit and caboodle on Rajneesh's doorstep, get ready to clap your hands, stomp your feet and crow "I told you so!". Or in the words of Dave Frohnmayer, "My God! This is a real enemy! We haven't been imagining this!"¹⁴⁹¹ For here comes what they call in the porn biz "the money shot". Or, rather, a faking an orgasm money shot. Because even a cursory perusal of it while, say, watching the playoffs and checking your latest mails, twitters and tweets will reveal holes within holes.

Glick: And what did Bhagwan say?

Ava: Well, Sheela came back from the meeting. She had taken a tape recorder so she could play us the message. She came back to the meeting and said - and began to play the tape. It was a little bit hard to hear what he was saying. But Param Bodhi, who was one of the people that kind of assisted her in Jesus Grove, assisted her, went and transcribed it. We listened to some of it and he transcribed some of it.

¹⁴⁸⁶ The plan was doubly dumb. For even if they had managed to take out Turner, that wouldn't have stopped the INS case before the Grand Jury, which was being handled by Turner's assistant, Robert Weaver. What's more, it would have accelerated all the other investigations, because the hit would have RAJNEESHEE! written all over it in dripping red letters.

¹⁴⁸⁷ Avalos testimony, p. 683

¹⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 707

¹⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 726

¹⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 707f

¹⁴⁹¹ See Chapter 8.

And the gist of Bhagwan's response, yes, it was going to be necessary to kill people to stay in Oregon. And that actually killing people wasn't such a bad thing. And actually Hitler was a great man, although he could not say that publicly because nobody would understand that. Hitler had great vision. And ...

Glick: ... Did the tapes get to be known by any name?

Ava: I guess - well, since everything has happened we referred to that as the Hitler tape.¹⁴⁹²

This should have made all three defense attorneys, Stephen Wax, Colleen Scissors and Leslie Weatherhead jump up all at once and holler the lawyerspeak equivalent of "Fucking hell!", "Bloody Murder!" and "Help!". In this case, "not even 'hearsay', but 'we didn't quite hear him say'". The numerous steps between what might have been asked and answered, recorded and transcribed. And that knee jerk I guess the gist of it was

And that's precisely what they would have done had they been defending Rajneesh. "Really, Your Honor, you can't be serious about allowing this as any kind of testimony about anything." But they were defending two renegade disciples, who had been branded as crooks and traitors by Rajneesh and who had renounced and denounced him in turn. And it wasn't in their immediate best interests to spill a protest on what he might or might not have said. That was his problem.

I don't know what was going through the mind of US District Judge Malcolm Marsh, who would later admonish Yogini about how to behave and testify in his court. "You need to be very careful. We have certain procedures we have to follow."¹⁴⁹³ But he also didn't find anything particularly egregious in this patch of no grade blather.

As for Sheela, whatever she said was always straight from the horse's mouth. Right? Okay, she might have indulged in the occasional fib, fable and white lie. Like the corker about her father, *Bapuji*, adopting Rajneesh as a boy. Stuffing words between her thoroughbred's teeth in her edited version of *Glimpses of a Golden Childhood*, and, consequently, making herself next in line for the throne.¹⁴⁹⁴ The mangling of "Number 20".¹⁴⁹⁵ And having people like Ava answer his correspondence and her signing "in his name". But it was all harmless schoolgirl pranks and done with the best of intentions. Right?

Now let's get to the tape recorder. Why bother lugging that excess baggage along when Rajneesh's chair was already bugged? As Sheela, Ava and most of those present were well aware. But let's assume there was a tape recorder. Where would it have been placed during the chat?

In plain view while Sheela outlined the current situation in its entirety? The ins, outs, pros, cons, benefits and costs. And then her sticking the microphone in Rajneesh's face

¹⁴⁹² Avalos testimony, p. 708

¹⁴⁹³ See above.

¹⁴⁹⁴ See Chapter 6.

¹⁴⁹⁵ See Chapter 8.

and asking him to send a spine-stiffening and -chilling message to the troops? Like he had allegedly done previously to a wavering KD? Call upon them to put aside not only conditioned and out of date morality, but also meditation, love, compassion and *ahimsa*¹⁴⁹⁶ - in short, everything he had ever said publicly - because desperate times called for desperate measures?

Or concealed within her clothes - like mine during my first *tête-à-tête* with Don Stewart¹⁴⁹⁷ - and trying to trick or trap him into allegorizing about this, which she could later tweak to sound like definite instructions about that?

As for Ava, what was her relationship with her own testimony? In other words, was it hers? Were these her memories? And even if they were, partially and to some extent, what she actually "remembered", how much validity can be attributed to and weight placed on them? For we have already seen more than once that her living memory is no better than anyone else's, and probably a lot worse.

What do I mean by "living memory"? Translating your direct empirical experiences - as opposed to what you have heard, read, been led to believe, or subsequently reconstructed - into a consistent, comprehensible and credible account of what actually happened. Roughly, first seeing the quick brown fox jump over the lazy dog and then saying "I saw the quick brown fox jump over the lazy dog" without adding "red" to fox and "brown" to dog.

The first crack in any residue of you can bet on it certainty appears in a two letter word, which at first glance seems pedantic to mention. "We". As in, "I guess - well, since everything has happened we referred to that as the Hitler tape". In other words, this is no longer a virgin memory. It has gone through the wham bam tens and maybe even hundreds of times with an indeterminate number of, and as yet unidentified, "usses" and "we's". Everyone's smudged and fudged foot-, finger- and mind-prints are all over it, and by now there's no telling what he, she or you said and which recollections are whose.

The second, and fatal, fracture appears in a tidbit confession that all readers have long since forgotten. Can any of you snap your fingers and bring it to our collective attention? Is it even on the tip of your tongues? I doubt it, even though it appeared in Chapter 12 and only 47 pages back. A mere drop in the bucket in comparison with the rivers of time, chronological and psychological, that have run anything but smooth between what happened then and what's being recounted now.

The demolisher is that before Ava had spoken with Frances "Frankie" Fitzgerald she had completely forgotten about this "Hitler tape". Your master, who you as vegetarian venerate and love more than your own life, is calling an exterminate the vermin monster a "great man" with "great vision"! Is that something you could easily or ever forget?

¹⁴⁹⁶ non violence, harmlessness

¹⁴⁹⁷ See Chapter 7.

I forgot the tape Sheela had of a conversation with Bhagwan which showed that he was involved, well, in things he said he wasn't.... I remembered them because I went to Portland to testify again, and I talked with K.D. and Sagun for the first time since we left the ranch, and they reminded me.¹⁴⁹⁸

This is particularly relevant when we consider that psychologists, novelists and even ordinary humans have long since noticed and acknowledged that people tend to fill in uncomfortable gaps in their autobiographies – which far outweigh linear links and causal connections – by making raids on others' memories, official and otherwise, true or false. This is especially so in cases of severe stress and outright, never get over it trauma. Such as wars and surviving concentration camps or paranoid, kill happy dictators.

As psychoanalysts have shown, people with traumatic memories tend to block out parts of their own past. Their memory becomes fragmentary, organized by a series of disjointed episodes (such as the arrest of a parent or the moment of eviction from their home) rather than by a linear chronology. When they try to reconstruct the story of their life, particularly when their powers of recall are weakened by old age, such people tend to make up for the gaps in their own memory by drawing on what they have read, or what they have heard from others with experiences similar to theirs.... To fill these gaps people borrowed from each other's memories.¹⁴⁹⁹

The deeply disturbed winter of 1985/86 tried the souls of sannyasins everywhere. And while few can remember what was first or second, cause and effect, all recall the heartbreak, devastation and end of the world - or at least a dream - traumas they were going through. Who could they trust? Where to go? What to do? Which clothes to wear and how did you introduce yourself to "civilians"?

Some haven't gotten over it yet. It's as if that long, slow and obscene collapse of everything they had held sacred has been drummed into their blood, bones and brains, and they, like the virtual corpses found at Pompeii, are frozen in time.¹⁵⁰⁰

All that must have been multiplied a thousand fold in Ava. In fact, if you had to locate the epicenter of that sannyasin apocalypse, she had to be close to it. For the other 99.9% could at least take refuge in ignorance, innocence, and distance from dastardly deeds done. And they still had each other, more or less.

But she had no one, not even herself. Because she was straddling at least three ceaselessly shifting tectonic plates. Her as (a) an ordinary sannyasin on the way to enlightenment; (b) a member of the exclusive "24" and "38" club; and (c) Mexican-

¹⁴⁹⁸ Frances Fitzgerald, *Cities on a Hill*, p. 380f. The "them" in the second sentence suggests more than one tape.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers*, p. 634. This intriguing work describes the lives of ordinary Russians under Stalin.

¹⁵⁰⁰ There weren't any real corpses, just holes in the volcanic ash where they had trapped alive. By pouring plaster into these molds images of the dead could be captured and brought back to life.

American and Catholic Ava Avalos, who wanted to completely forget about the other two. And as she shuttled between them she could find no safe and stable you are here haven she could call her. Thus it was no longer the basic spiritual question of "Who am I?", but the psychological/legal one of "Who am I going to be?". In her case, the what in the name was everything.

If you had asked Rajneesh about her situation, he might have said, "Goodt, very goodt".¹⁵⁰¹ Because if I have understood him correctly, such on the edge, no going back conditions are the only possible point of entry for true sannyas. Breakdown or breakthrough, madness or meditation, suicide or sannyas. Only then can real change and lasting transformation happen.

Yoga means that now there is no hope, now there is no future, now there are no desires. One is ready to know what is. One is not interested in what can be, what should be, what ought to be. One is not interested! One is interested only in that which is, because only the real can free you, only the reality can become liberation.

Total despair is needed. That despair is called *dukkha* by Buddha. And if you are really in misery, don't hope, because your hope will only prolong the misery. Your hope is a drug. It can help you to reach death only and nowhere else. All your hopes can lead you only to death. They are leading.

Become totally hopeless - no future, no hope. Difficult. Needs courage to face the real. But such a moment comes to everyone, some time or other. A moment comes to every human being when he feels total hopelessness. Absolute meaninglessness happens to him. When he becomes aware that whatsoever he is doing is useless, wheresoever he is going, he is going to nowhere, all life is meaningless - suddenly hopes drop, future drops, and for the first time you are in tune with the present, for the first time you are face to face with reality.¹⁵⁰²

But for those without such *sub specie aeternitatis*, *aes dhammo sanatano* vision, Ava's circumstances sound uncomfortably less like consciously clinging to nothing and more like having nothing left to cling to. In the vernacular, up shit creek without a paddle. And I for one am amazed that she didn't tilt and teeter more toward breakdown, madness and suicide than breakthrough, meditation and sannyas.

Maybe she did go stark babbling bonkers when there was no warm body to love and comfort her and no picture overhead lighting up the night. Or tear her hair, scratch her face, bite her fingers and moan *mea culpas* under the covers. For besides pissing you off, the truth can also drive you to madness and suicide. It depends on how deeply you're messed up in the lies, and what lies those are.

¹⁵⁰¹ The "goodt" is my perhaps lame attempt to recreate his Indian accent.

¹⁵⁰² *Yoga: The Alpha and the Omega*, Vol. 1, Chapter 1, December 25, 1973

And lo and behold, there was KD, tall, handsome, and Sagun, his pretty blonde girlfriend. Legally, psychologically and spiritually speaking, KD was in the same sinking ship as Ava. But he had found salvation of sorts. By making tit for tat deals with the government and his own conscience. And if he could do that, why not her?

Maybe it was a one shot sell. Or a slow bringing her around to remembering what he, and she, needed in order to retrieve some shreds of humanity and a right to live. We're the real victims here, more sinned against than sinning. Lied to, cheated and exploited by a self indulgent and corrupt charlatan. Remember the Hitler tape?

It was a question of desperate times calling for desperate memories. Shifting as much hot potato blame and burden of proof as possible from them to Rajneesh. For as he became more guilty, they, his duped ex-disciples, became less so. Unfortunately for their back scratching makeover of events, Yogini, who lived in Germany, wasn't clued and glued into the most recently agreed to version of how it was.¹⁵⁰³ Either that or she forgot.

Yogini: The discussion [at the second meeting about killing Turner] went – the discussion, how come I remember it has to do with what Bhagwan told Sheela [,] which Sheela related to us ...

Reardon: ... What was that?¹⁵⁰⁴

Yogini: ... at the first meeting, which was – which I have already talked about [,] Sheela went and then spoke with Bhagwan.

Bhagwan allegedly told Sheela if one person – if just one person had killed Hitler, then six million people would be alive now. So again that's like throwing fuel on the fire. It was for me. So at that time that made sense for me, you know.¹⁵⁰⁵

Thus while Yogini did remember Rajneesh "allegedly" saying something about Hitler, it was not to praise, but to bury him. Turner was symbolically Hitler, so he had to be nipped in the bud. By contrast, Ava's cut to the bone summary of what she almost heard him say suggested that Rajneesh was giving the go ahead to not only kill Turner, but also and if need be tens or even hundreds of millions of other unenlightened throwbacks.

And in this *Übermensch/Untermenschen* dichotomy, which has explicitly or implicitly, reared its ugly head more than once in politics, religions and millennial movements down the ages,¹⁵⁰⁶ I can detect the traces - indeed, the big fat foot-, finger- and mind-prints - not of KD, but his latest, greatest mentor: Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer.

¹⁵⁰³ According to defense attorney Leslie Weatherhead, she was brought in rather late in the day, as either a Perry Mason surprise witness or an oops, we need something more substantial and convincing afterthought (in an April 27, 2012 email). See below for more on the "in cahoots" nature of the prosecution witnesses' testimony.

¹⁵⁰⁴ Here Reardon is jumping the gun in this rehearsed testimony.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Yogini testimony, p. 1638

¹⁵⁰⁶ "And for Christians as for Jews the messiah was to be an avenger, annihilating the wicked, casting down the mighty, exalting the faithful. The one point of difference was that while Jews were awaiting the coming of such a deliverer the Christians were awaiting his return. "Millenarism remained powerful in the Christian Church so long as Christians were an unpopular minority threatened with persecution. When in the fourth century Christianity attained a position of supremacy in the

I felt I had read Rajneesh's book. Much of what seemed bizarre to most people was explainable in terms of the superman ethos, of rabid, romantic individualism run wild. I knew at least some of the psychological gimmicks that really seemed to floor other people. I'm not sure there was much theology in Rajneesh's teachings. But to the extent that you can call it a theological mechanism, it was a way of reconciling irreconcilables or simply teaching people to cope. I genuinely think it was a sort of Master Race philosophy.¹⁵⁰⁷

Yogini's account also differed from Ava's in another crucial detail. According to her, it's merely Sheela telling the group what Rajneesh "allegedly" said. There's no mention of that awkward combination of tape and transcript. Which finally brings us to the second of the two items rescuing Les Zaitz's Rajneesh Retrospective from being a complete waste of time. One is the witness testimony, which we have just dealt with in some detail and depth. Two is "Addendum C: Photocopies of Evidence Obtained by FBI From Germany".

That 3-page list consists of 47 things seized when Sheela and 2 of the Co. were arrested in Häusern.¹⁵⁰⁸ More than half (26) were promissory notes written out to various people in amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$1,500,000. A grand total of \$2,220,299.50. All were signed by embezzling ex officers in the name of Rajneesh organizations they no longer controlled.

Unfortunately, there's no dates for any of them. Were they negotiated before or after the mass exodus? If before, when exactly? There's no mention of the interest rates and when repayment was due. No explanation for why they were with the borrowers instead of the lenders, or how they could possibly be conceived of as evidence in any crimes Sheela and the others were then being charged with.

But for our purposes what's not on the list is manifestly more important than what is. Namely, there's not even an on the horizon hint about tapes or transcripts. No "Hitler"- or any other "missing"-tapes Sheela swore she had, which proved beyond a shadow of any reasonable doubt that Rajneesh was not only in on her loop de loops, but also the motor making them go round.¹⁵⁰⁹

Mediterranean world and became the official religion of the Roman empire, the Church set out to eradicate millenarian beliefs. Little is heard of them for many centuries. Then suddenly they reappear, held now in more or less explicit opposition to the teaching of the Church." (Norman Cohn, "Medieval Millenarism: Its Bearing on the Comparative Study of Millenarian Movements", in *Millennial Dreams in Action*, p. 33). See ideas about what to do about and with the Indians, Irish, Catholics and blacks above, and Jonathan Smith's comments about religion not being nice in Chapter 2.

¹⁵⁰⁷ From his July 8, 1987 interview with Professors Carl Latkin and Norm Sundberg. Already quoted in Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁰⁸ See Chapter 10.

¹⁵⁰⁹ In her review of Lewis Carter's *Charisma and Control in Rajneeshpuram*, Susan Palmer wrote, "Rajneesh watchers familiar with the publishing furor in the wake of the 'Sheela scandal' might be disappointed that Carter did not participate in the ongoing game of trying to solve some of the dark mysteries in the group's history. After perusing the hunches, the exposés of [James] Gordon and [Frances] Fitzgerald, [Hugh] Milne et al. concerning such enigmas as the 'missing tapes' implicating Rajneesh in 'Sheela's crimes' ... and rumors of Ronald Reagan's role in Rajneesh's death by thalium poisoning, the

Faint bells of recognition began to ring about halfway through my February 2012 reading of the 337 pages of the Turner Conspiracy Trial testimony put online by *The Oregonian* a year before. Did this have anything to do with that troubled telephone call I got in the god knows when? Or that fax from Portland in April 1995?

I went back to my archives on this project - long since boxed up and gathering thick layers of obscurity only a scholar could love - and discovered that it did. Su Hagan had contacted me from the UK in, I think, the summer of 1994. I don't know how she got my number.

According to some of the UK press clippings I've read since, she and Savita (Sally Anne Croft) had been engaged in a valiant but vain effort against extradition to the US. It was very much a tale of good local girls versus bad foreign guys, with the Brits in the roles of innocent victims and the Yanks as it's our world, you just live here bullies.

Over the years the case had been heard in various courts and the House of Lords, and appeals were made to one Home Secretary after another. Kenneth Clarke in 1992, Michael Howard in 1994. Tony Blair, then Shadow Home Secretary, joined the chorus of 21 MP's - Ministers of Parliament - weighing in on behalf of Sally and Su.¹⁵¹⁰

One article, which contained the usual misinformation about some things, was particularly informative about many others.¹⁵¹¹ It merits an ample quote.

German courts have rejected a similar request for an extradition order for another member of the alleged conspiracy.¹⁵¹² The court had doubts over the American plea bargaining system and believed witnesses had made contradictory and inconsistent statements under pressure.

Andrew McCooey, Croft's and Hagan's British solicitor, said he was appalled that the English High Court had not done the same. 'The reason this is happening is that the British authorities are frightened of upsetting the US Government in case the Americans in turn refuse to extradite IRA suspects to England,' he said. The case against his clients 'reeked of prejudice, forced confessions and bad faith on the part of the US Government'.

Mr McCooey said the original statements the four witnesses made to FBI investigators contained no allegations that Hagan and Croft were involved in a

reader might hope for a denouement, or at least fresh detective work." (*Sociological Analysis*, Fall 1991, p. 306f)

¹⁵¹⁰ *Herald Express* (Torquay), July 29, 1994

¹⁵¹¹ Nick Cohen, "On a hippy mission to murder?", *The Independent*, December 20, 1992. We'll deal with one crucial piece of misinformation below.

¹⁵¹² This was Ma Shanti Bhadra (Jane Stork), who according to Ava Avalos, was the one picked to pull the trigger.

conspiracy. The bureau has refused access to other files, which, he said, could clear the women.

'We need to ask why did the FBI take no action against my clients until one day before the time limit on bringing a prosecution ran out? Why have the US authorities refused to agree to have a trial heard outside Oregon away from the prejudiced local community?'

The High Court, however, ruled that the incriminating statements from Hagan's and Croft's former friends in the commune did amount to a case for extradition. It was up to a US jury, which would be vetted to ensure a fair hearing, to decide whom to believe.

The court was confident that an impartial jury could be found. But Oregon academics, in an affidavit to the court, said they were not so sure. They said that Harry Lonsdale, a Democrat who ran in Oregon this year [1992] for the Senate, destroyed his chances in the election by having once described the Bhagwan as 'gentle'.¹⁵¹³

Hagan had read the first edition of this book and she wanted to talk. I don't remember much about what. Perhaps she just needed a sympathetic ear. If that was her motive, she was definitely barking up the wrong gum tree. Because I had every reason to suspect - and none not to - that the two women were in party one way or another to lots of unsavory stuff. And not being a natural forgive and forget type, their plight didn't automatically move me to tears.

But my opinion is one thing, and being able to establish that on a legal battlefield among hard nose professionals taking off the kid gloves and jostling, jousting and slugging it out with well connected evidence and arguments leading to beyond a reasonable doubt proofs was something completely different. All cases against "Rajneeshees" up to then had reeked of quick shuffles, *force majeure* bluffs and extorted confessions. Prosecutor power grows out of the barrel of an indictment and subsequent plea bargain.

All had been dodgy walkovers and ended with more whimper than bang. So for her sake - and factual history - I urged her to stand her ground and make the other side show its cards. "I don't see how you can lose!"¹⁵¹⁴

¹⁵¹³ I was, of course, quite enthusiastic about pursuing some of these issues with McCooey. Unfortunately, a bad back had forced him into early retirement, and I didn't think it proper to stalk him in his diminished condition with "ancient history". I did, however, contact the other barrister on the case, Edward Fitzgerald. But he never responded to my email request for an interview.

¹⁵¹⁴ I still had faith in the fairness of Oregonian judges, "vetted" jurors and justice. In the event I was proven disastrously wrong. My conscience is assuaged by the knowledge that my advice didn't help set their legal course, but, perhaps, merely strengthened their original resolve. "But we're not going to plead guilty or do deals [,] said Sally Anne Croft. [']The one thing we know is that we're innocent.'" (*The Independent, op. cit.*)

About a year later - on April 5, 1995, to be exact - I got a fax from William Teesdale, an investigator for the Federal Public Defender for the District of Oregon. His boss, Stephen Wax, would be defending Hagan in the upcoming Turner Conspiracy Trial. They had read my book and also wanted to talk. I responded the next day with a fax that could be characterized as cocky, brash and even arrogant. It too merits an ample quote, if for no other reason than to take the temperature of my *Geist* at that particular *Zeit*.

I am in receipt of your April 5th fax. If you have read *A Passage To America*, which you were kind enough to describe as "comprehensive", you will perhaps forgive me for smiling at the idea that the Federal Public Defender is representing Susan Hagan in a case against the federal government.

For one of the things I discovered while researching that book, and hopefully made clear in no uncertain terms when writing it, was the hand washing hand state of affairs in Oregon between state and federal officials, especially as far as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, "Rajneeshees" (current and former), and Rajneeshpuram were concerned. Even someone who has not had that indelible experience - which has become even more indelible in the years of silence since the book has been published - might suspect a conflict of interest.

With that opening salvo I am not trying to impugn your personal credibility and integrity, or the sincerity of your colleagues. I just find myself giddy and gasping at the thought that you would dare to expose the dirty little coziness that has existed there over these matters. How could you afford to go up against all the powerful figures who have built and sustained their careers on sucking sannyasin blood and bad mouthing "the enemy of the People"? ...

But for the sake of argument let's pretend I'm dead wrong. Let's pretend that you're going to do your best for truth, justice and the American way. In addition to pursuing the previous intense and high level political interest shown in the movement from the moment they stepped foot in Oregon, you could consider the current concern.

For why after all these years, and for such a threadbare case, and at such cost to the people of Oregon and the United States, are your clients being tried at all? Simple. To further discredit Rajneesh and everything he stood for. Never kick a man unless he's down, and then don't stop.¹⁵¹⁵

In my own defense, I had spent a lot of sweat and savings on researching and writing a book that I thought, and still do, was a genuine game changer, and was being ignored across the board by US and other first world publishers, the media, legal experts and academics, because the message contained therein didn't lip sync with their foregone conclusions.

¹⁵¹⁵ I've made a few vain stylistic changes - an older writer correcting a younger colleague - but nothing that alters the content in any way.

To Teesdale's credit, he let the flurry of my outrage and indignation wash over him and persisted with his original proposal. So as part of his European research tour he stopped off in Amsterdam, and I met him at his hotel three weeks later, on April 27, 1995.

The upshot of that meeting was he wanted me to appear for the defense as an "expert witness". My expertise was going to be strictly limited to the prejudice in Oregon against anything Rajneeshee, which could then be used to support a motion to move the proceedings to a more neutral venue. Or, in case of defeat on that point and the subsequent trial, the appeal.

That was shooting way too low. Because anyone and his mother in law could pick up that kind of state of the art by sticking their wet fingers out the window. You didn't, and don't, need a weatherman in Oregon to know which way the wind blows.

Besides, prejudice schmejudice. All individuals, states, nations and eras have them. There are no laws against it, and even if there were, who would enforce them, and how? And who's going to pay for that? But there are laws against government officials squandering scarce public funds to pursue those prejudices and abusing positions of power, authority and trust to selectively prosecute and vindictively conspire against individuals and groups they don't happen to like.

Thus the Hagan-Croft case was too rinky dink to get me out of bed. Because this far down the line I had bigger fish to fry. And the man they had allegedly conspired to kill, the recently retired US Attorney Charles Turner, was one of them.¹⁵¹⁶ In my mind at least, he was already on the hook and thrashing in the water. All I needed now was someone with a strong net and sense of more than poetic justice to help haul him into the boat and serve him up for a very public grilling.

All that had been blissfully forgotten until 17 years later as I was puzzling with some irritation through the fatally faulty testimony. This isn't legal hard ball, I thought. It's not even soft- or wiffle-ball. It's badminton. What were the three defense attorneys doing while the prosecution and its witnesses were skipping and slipping from one blunder to another? Rolling over and playing dead? Why weren't they hopping up more often to object to this, that, and this and that?¹⁵¹⁷ And how did they manage to lose both the case and appeal?

It didn't make any sense until it struck me that this picture was missing something unmissable. Namely, the defense attorneys' ruthless cross examining attacks on the plea

¹⁵¹⁶ That "retired" could be seen as both active or passive. In fact, it was passive. As is usual with the change of administrations - in this case from George Bush (*père*) to Bill Clinton - all serving US Attorneys were called upon to retire. Turner, who had been appointed by Ronald Reagan, was caught up in that sweep.

¹⁵¹⁷ After my email back and forths with Leslie Weatherhead I returned to the testimony and noticed that he was on his feet more often than I had originally given him credit for.

bargained witnesses to whittle away at and ultimately undermine their specific and overall memories, motives, consistency and credibility. Something I touched the iceberg's tip on above. For Les Zaitz and *The Oregonian* in their infinite wisdom had, once again, decided that one side of this story was more than enough for its readers. It was, after all, their story and their readers.

I, of course, thought otherwise. So I contacted all three defense lawyers and invited each to an individual dialogue about various aspects of the case, with the stipulation that I would steer clear of issues relating to confidentiality and attorney-client privilege. If I accidentally stepped over that line, I was sure they would pull me up short.

It should be noted that as far as my own "scientific"/"journalistic" methodology is concerned, at this point these were to be give and take discussions with both sides having strong formulations from the start. In other words, not "strictly neutral" interviews. But behind the scenes and under the skin what interviews actually are strictly neutral? And even if there were such anomalies, what value could they possibly have?

Stephen Wax responded within a few minutes of my first email feeler? Are you the attorney who represented? And then, despite pursuing the matter, including a follow up telephone call to his office and a chat with Sandra, his secretary, I never heard from him again. Perhaps my name had rung a belligerent bell, struck a clanging chord, and he thought "that son of a bitch wouldn't help me then, so why should I help him now". Fair's fair.

I got farther with Colleen Scissors in Colorado. In a colossal twist of *karma*, she had also worked with and "learned everything I know about the law" from Charles Garry, a Peoples Temple attorney who was in and around Jonestown while that disaster was going down.¹⁵¹⁸ But those rapid fire negotiations stranded within a week due to her concerns over her client's concurrence with the project and mine about what I saw as her still too emotional involvement with Hagan - not lesbian, she was quick to say - and determination to lead in what I saw as my dance, not hers.

I finally struck pay dirt with Leslie Weatherhead in Spokane, Washington. Erudite and eloquent, he responded to most of my questions with more patience and insight than I could realistically have hoped for at the start. A consummate gentleman, he repeatedly stressed that in his opinion the judge, jurors and his legal adversaries were all honorable men and women and the proceedings were fair and above board.

In other words, not one of his remarks should be construed as those of a sore loser casting even backhanded aspersions on their characters and conduct. He also said that there were no side or secret deals. "The prosecution fought as hard as it could to convict, and we fought as hard as we could for acquittal." With that in mind, we can now turn to how he responded to the issues I raised.

¹⁵¹⁸ Naturally, I wanted to use this opportunity to get an introduction and ask him some questions. Unfortunately for me, however, he had died in 1991.

According to Weatherhead, plea bargained testimony carries inherent risks. In every instance prosecutors are dealing with criminals seeking to reduce down time by serving up more important prey. In common parlance this is known as "selling up". "I have come to believe over the years that it is a flaw in our system that we don't have better safeguards against abuse. We learn over and over again, after the fact, of the high risk of unreliability of evidence given in such circumstances."¹⁵¹⁹

The only safeguards we have are the good conscience of prosecutors and the ability of defense lawyers to undercut such evidence by exposing the bargain via cross examination. Which, in my view, succeeds or fails depending on the witness' skill at testifying, the lawyer's ability and, most importantly, the jury's degree of skepticism.

We have already experienced, in both the main text and footnotes, something of the second safeguard. Namely, the skill of two witnesses: Yogini and Ava. One had a hard time controlling her breathing and getting her left and right brains to march to the same music. "It's just that in my head everything is very mixed."¹⁵²⁰ The other doesn't do much better in any of the crucial categories. Thus if this were an Olympic event, a panel of independent judges would undoubtedly have flipped up a ratatat row of disdainfully low scores.

What about the fourth and, according to Weatherhead, most important safeguard? The underlying degree of juror skepticism. That brings us back to what was going to be my strictly quarantined area of expertise: Oregonian prejudice against the "R" word.

We asked that the trial be moved out of Oregon, for fear that Oregonians could not be disinterested or dispassionate about former sannyasins. There had, after all, been a great deal of sustained news coverage about the latter over a period of years, and virtually none of it was flattering. I believed that prejudice was widespread in Oregon.

I am not impugning Oregonians as rednecks or otherwise bad people.¹⁵²¹ I lived there all my young life, and like and respect the people. But I believe there can be a kind of subconscious prejudice that influences even good hearted people to know, without thinking about it consciously, that certain things are true about a certain class of people.

¹⁵¹⁹ In an April 17, 2012 email to me. There is some compression of the text and a few minor modifications in wording, style and punctuation. But, again, nothing that alters his meaning and intent in any way.

¹⁵²⁰ See above.

¹⁵²¹ Lest anyone suspect that I have ever entertained any such opinions about Oregonians, let me at least try to stamp out that fire. In my mind, Oregon has always enjoyed a sterling, perhaps idealized reputation. The state came out and up for atomic scientist J. Robert Oppenheim, who had been unjustly tarred and feathered by reds in and under the beds McCarthyism. Just because he very publically expressed opinions they didn't want to hear. One of my college roommates, whose father was a physics professor at Reed College, was from there. And "rednecks", insofar as they are honest ranchers, farmers and working class people and not loud mouthed know nothings, are just as much fun as everyone else. Sometimes more so.

I recall quoting a headline in the local paper to the court as what I thought was an example of such subconscious prejudice. "Rajneeshee women face trial", or something like that. I was struck that the newspaper in question, *The Oregonian*, was generally very liberal and correct. It had a published policy against prejudicial language that was far more sensitive than any other paper in the country. For example, the paper would not refer to sports teams like the "Redskins" or the "Braves" by name, on the belief that these names were prejudicial and disrespectful of American Indians.

Yet this paper, which would never have published a headline saying "Jewish women on trial", apparently had no second thoughts about identifying our clients as "Rajneeshee women". I thought this bespoke a subconscious understanding that everyone in the community would know what that implied. Nothing good, to be sure.¹⁵²²

The trial judge was convinced that we had not shown the existence of such prejudice. I do not doubt the sincerity of his conclusion, but I will always wonder whether the case was perhaps a little more difficult for us than it might have been had it been tried in a place where "Rajneeshee women" might be a completely meaningless expression.

I have only a few rhetorical questions to add to Weatherhead's well chosen words. That is, would this case have had a snowball's hope in hell of coming to court "in a place where 'Rajneeshee women' might be a completely meaningless expression"? If so, how and why? What would have been the impetus driving it over the hurdles and through the hoops? Who would have cared a fiddler's fuck about a conspiracy planned by some of America's dumbest crooks against a man they had never heard of, and which never got off the ground? Didn't those Justice Department people have anything better to do with their time and our money?

What about Weatherhead's third safeguard? That is, the lawyers' ability to undercut and expose. One basic defense premise was that "the government's witnesses had manufactured their testimony" to save their own overextended necks. The strategy for demonstrating that was to "force as many details as possible" from them. This would create more room for the defense to maneuver in and obstacles for unwary witnesses to stumble over.¹⁵²³

¹⁵²² On my question list I asked if he had read my book and introduced it into the trial as evidence. He said he had read it "as part of the process of informing myself about the circumstances. But we could not have used it as evidence if we had wanted to, because of rules against the introduction of hearsay." There's something slightly awkward about this logic. Because if he could refer to that *Oregonian* clipping, he could also have at least mentioned this book and some of its major themes.

¹⁵²³ Frederick Ahl and Hanna Roisman had this to say about ancient attitudes toward truth. "Though philosophers may quarrel with us here, we maintain that, in rhetorical, poetic terms, 'truth' means little more than what a given person or group is prepared to believe or trust at a given time. The English language generally represents the world in more positive terms than does Greek. Where we talk of 'safety,' the ancient Greeks talked of *asphaleia* [security, without fault], 'that which does not trip one up.'" (*The Odyssey Re-Formed*, p. 94)

Weatherhead believed, correctly in my opinion, that if he pressed "for minute detail" he might be able to show that the stories did not match up, thus supporting his contention that they were fabricated. "This is an ancient strategy first employed by Daniel in the case of Susanna and the elders in the garden."¹⁵²⁴

As part of that tactic he asked the judge to stop prosecutors from schooling succeeding witnesses about what earlier ones had testified. He thought it was "a logical extension" of a federal rule "providing that on request of any lawyer all witnesses must be excluded from the courtroom". The reason for that is to prevent them from consciously or unconsciously tailoring their living memories to suit the already said.

He had thought that his request "would be granted almost as a matter of routine". But it was denied. "Here again, I am sure the trial judge made the ruling in accordance with his best and honest view of the law. And I should add that the court of appeals sustained this ruling, among others we challenged. But there is no question that it forced a radical and last minute change in my approach to cross examination."

I am obliged to object here, and vigorously, and say that this is carrying the Mr. Nice Guy approach too far. For while US District Judge Malcolm Marsh may very well have done his fairest and honest utmost, that is rather beside the point. For in this brass knuckles, winner take all arena the only thing that counts is whether he was right.

And with that we come to a whole other dimension of safeguards against all forms of judicial abuse that Weatherhead hinted at, but neglected to go into in any detail I could grab hold of and use. Namely, that first up in the batting order of protections: "the good conscience of prosecutors". Which is quickly followed by the competence of judges to correctly interpret hardly ever self evident laws, policies, precedents and rulings, and their ability to stand above the fray and not be unduly impressed, influenced and intimidated by prosecution or defense attorneys, politics, the press and public opinion. In other words, to run the show rather than being run by it.

Just behind that is a can of worms most professionals would prefer to wink away. And who can blame them? For it contains numerous never quiet contradictions, needs patching gaps in legal- and extra-legal practices, and structural faults in the system that could obliterate any remaining confidence in justice ever being done. Anywhere about anything. This is the stuff that many newspaper editorials, law review articles and Scott Turow novels are made of and on.

Thus while I don't claim any legal expertise, I disagree with both the judge who refused to comply with Weatherhead's eminently reasonable request and the three United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals judges - William Canby, Jr., Pamela Rymer and Andrew Kleinfeld - who upheld that choice. Because separating witnesses is by the book practice in all investigations.

¹⁵²⁴ *Book of Daniel*, Chapter 13. Some believe that the story is a later invention, inserted in this book because the lawyer using this technique happened to be named Daniel.

Detectives and interrogators do it all the time. So do INS examiners when trying to determine whether a marriage is real or sham. What side of the bed does your wife sleep on? How many uncles does she have? When was the last time she called her grandma? They do that because authentic witnessing isn't supposed to be a relay race, pajama party or circle jerk prompted and bolstered by cue cards and cheat sheets - the equivalent of mental doping. If it's any of that, or even threatens to come close to those conditions, it isn't witnessing. It's a conspiracy.¹⁵²⁵

With one side of a two legged strategy kicked out from under, Weatherhead was reduced to running on the other. That of attacking witness "evidence as the unreliable product of plea bargaining". And even then he came within spitting distance of not losing.

I thought we definitely raised doubts as to the truthfulness and accuracy of each witness. For example, David Knapp, or KD. He estimated that he had met 50 or 60 times with government lawyers and agents to go over his story. It was shown that in one FBI report he said that our client was "possibly" at a critical meeting.

Then, after further discussion with the FBI, he amended that to "probably". Then, five years later, he testified to the grand jury that she was definitely there. Then, five years after that, he testified at the trial that he was certain that she had been there. We argued that that process defies the usual assumptions about how human memory works.

If there had been only one or two witnesses, their evidence might have been insufficient to convince a jury. But I think in the end there were seven. At some point, the sheer number may begin to overcome doubts about the truthfulness of any one or two of them.

As for your question about whether piling on the bodies was an essential part of the government's strategy, I don't know what was in their minds. But it seemed pretty clear to me that they were stacking up the numbers of cooperating witnesses in hopes that that would work to minimize the force of our attacks on any one of them.

I also assume that the government lawyers know what is generally accepted among trial lawyers. That when you are defending a case by simple denial ("I wasn't there"), the more often you have to explain something away the weaker each new denial becomes in the eyes of the jury.

¹⁵²⁵ When I brought up this issue in a subsequent email, Weatherhead replied, "The court made its ruling. I thought it was wrong and tried to persuade the trial judge that it was wrong. I was not successful. After the conviction I argued the point to the Court of Appeals. Again, I did not persuade the three judges on that court. I think they were wrong. That is my right as a citizen. But four federal judges said I was wrong, and they have the right to decide." (In an April 27, 2012 email.)

I felt then - and feel now - deep disappointment at the verdict. I am at least comforted to know that I prepared well and used all my ability to work for a client I like and believe in. And as I recall the jury did not readily convict. Its deliberations took three or four days during which time it declared itself at an impasse at least once.¹⁵²⁶

In my Monday morning quarterbacking opinion, delivered nearly 900 weeks after the months long pressure, confusion and uncertainty, the defense didn't lose much by Judge Marsh's ruling over instructing witnesses. First, because they had trotted out their testimonies many times over the years, knew the drill and more or less had it down pat. This was a well rehearsed and rehashed play. So any additional in court coaching was just "Show Time!" touch ups. Icing on the cake.

Second, because even with all those dry and semi-wet runs they often demonstrated more will than skill. If Weatherhead and the other defense attorneys had stuck to their original game plan and been more heads up, they could have freeze framed and harped on more nudge nudges, missed cues and mangled lines than they could have shaken sticks at. As I have done above.

At a certain point it would have accumulated weight, momentum and pattern. Started sounding silly, pathetic, faintly suspicious and even scandalous. Why were these flubbing and fumbling witnesses - and the prosecutors leading both the charge and charges - so keen on convincing them of something that was, to put it mildly, palpably questionable? In other words, why had they been roused out of their routines and forced to devote a whole month of their lives to considering and passing judgment on this?

The defense loss also can't be attributed to Oregonian prejudice, conscious or unconscious. At least not in the sense Weatherhead meant and I was penciled in to answer essentially muzzling questions about. That is demonstrated by two things. One, the amount of time some jurors spent deliberating and doing their honest, good hearted and well intentioned best to reach a fair and equitable verdict.

Two, because even if there was prejudice - as there had to be - it would have been spread equally among accusers and accused. For all were avowed "Rajneeshees". Past or present, dead or alive didn't much matter. If anything, it would have been more damaging for the convicted squealers on the stand coolly rattling off page after page of crimes *they* had admitted committing than the well heeled and on their best behavior English ladies who were still a relatively closed and possibly innocuous book. It might even have been used to the defense's advantage.

The defense lost for so many reasons that their coming within a hair's breadth of a hung jury can be chalked up to the competence and commitment of the team, working long hours for a song, and the fundamental paucity of the prosecution's cadged together case.

¹⁵²⁶ This citation combines material from two emails, April 21 and April 27, 2012.

But in the end there was the out of perspective and proportion high spend overkill. Bigger is better, more is more, quantity trumping and thumping quality. Winning ugly.

The chorus of testifying bodies saying "yea" as opposed to isolated voices saying "nay". As Weatherhead himself has suggested. But, again, even this could have been turned to its advantage. Because at least in the summing up they could have wondered out loud about why the prosecution needed so many arm twisted and trained witnesses to accomplish its no big deal goals. Why so much for so little?

Another factor was the complexity and profusion of shock and bore testimony, much of which had little or nothing to do with the basically simple and straightforward issue of whether or not these two individuals, singly or together, had authorized and paid for the plot to kill Turner.

Exciting *Peyton Place* stuff about who was sleeping with A while officially married to B. How the sham marriages worked and who was responsible for them. Even the color of clothes Vidya, nicknamed "Vidsie", wore on a particular day, and what year Savita had her hair permed.¹⁵²⁷ Followed by yawn pages about flow charts, corporate- and governmental-structures, and chains of command. Who answered to whom.

The sheer obesity of the case, which weighed in at around 2,000 pages, tipped the scales in the government's favor. But what actually broke the back of any lingering resistance were two assumptions shared by 99% of the people inside and outside the court and anywhere you can name.

One, that everything these lumpsum people had done was for God and Country - here read "Rajneesh and Rajneeshpuram" - and because he or someone immediately under him had ordered it. That's how humanoids in cults operate, didn't you know? Two, that the prosecution was perfectly within its rights to be pursuing this case and these ladies to the fullest extent of the law.

The second premise brings us back to (a) government harassment and conspiracies, one of the main motifs of this book; (b) my sharply worded but, nevertheless, on the money difference of opinion with William Teesdale about the scope of the trial and underlying reasons for it; and (c) Leslie Weatherhead's first line of defense against plea bargaining abuses: "the good conscience of prosecutors". Which, he was quick to say, he had no doubts about.

I specifically asked him about the *mauvais foi* of the prosecutors. In fact, it was the first question on my list.

Were you surprised (or anything else) that the US government had first spent so much time and effort extraditing these women and then bringing them to trial? Surely, there was enough evidence to show that a crime had been planned, but it was never committed. Meanwhile, other much more serious

¹⁵²⁷ See note 1467.

crimes, which had been committed by the government's star witnesses, were not prosecuted due to previous immunity agreements.

Not having a strong opinion about the essential legitimacy of the case, he referred me to the wide range of discretionary powers federal and state prosecutors have at their disposal. Which - in my words, not his - basically means, or can be jiggled to that effect, that they can prosecute whoever they like (i.e., dislike) and however hard they choose. But they can also swap walk for talk and let in house crooks get away with attempted murder. Basically, the *carte blanche* ball's in their court, to play or not to play as they see fit.

Discretion naturally raises the specter of its flip side: indiscretion, otherwise known as "prosecutorial misconduct". It's an especially sensitive topic for those who have suffered long and hard at the hands of over zealous and conviction crazy prosecutors. Decades of locked up, lost everything shame, sometimes transferring in and out of death row cells, before being finally released and exonerated by "freshly discovered" exculpatory evidence that was known, but withheld, from the start.

The use and abuse of discretion has also been a cause for concern and growing alarm among some of the best, brightest and most conscientious legal minds of the 20th and 21st centuries ever since a number of state crime commission studies of the 1920's and the legendary Wickersham Commission Report were shocked by how much power prosecutors actually have.¹⁵²⁸ But nine decades further on more has been said than done. Discretions have increased, and the political will and judicial wherewithal to pursue and punish indiscretions have remained the same.¹⁵²⁹

¹⁵²⁸ "The California Crime Commission (1929) called for more attention to the 'unsupervised area of plea-bargaining,' and suggested that the power of the prosecutor in this area be diluted. In 1934 a National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (NCLOE) was formed to study the status of criminal justice in the United States under the leadership of the legal scholar, George W. Wickersham. The Wickersham Commission included some of the most notable legal minds of the day, including Wickersham, Roscoe Pound of Harvard University, Newman Baker of Northwestern and Charles Bettman, the author of the Cleveland Crime Commission Study." (Joan Jacoby, "The American Prosecutor in Historical Context", 1980 or thereabouts, downloaded from the net, no details about where it was published)

"In the 1920s, a number of states formed crime commissions to examine both the status of the criminal justice system and its ability to manage the post-World War I rise in crime. Their findings about the role of the prosecutor and the extent of his power and discretion shocked most of these commissions. A report by the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (NCLOE) noted: 'In every way the Prosecutor has more power over the administration of justice than the judges, with much less public appreciation of his power. We have been jealous of the power of the trial judge, but careless of the continual growth of the power of the prosecuting attorney.' Commissions formed in California, Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, and Pennsylvania made similar observations about the power of the prosecutor." (Angela Davis, "The American Prosecutor: Independence, Power, and the Threat of Tyranny", *Iowa Law Review*, January 2001 (*op. cit.*, see note 1401), p. 22)

¹⁵²⁹ "Despite the findings and recommendations of the Wickersham Commission, other commissions, and legal scholars of the 1920s, there has been no significant reform of the prosecutorial process. In fact, today prosecutors retain even more power, independence, and discretion than they did in the early nineteenth century." (*Ibid.*, p. 22)

The subject is so huge an ocean that sailing into it with the express intent of doing it a modicum of justice would blow us hopelessly off course and threaten to swamp the ship. But I think we can snap it into good enough shape with an eloquent burst delivered before the Second Annual Conference of US Attorneys on Monday, April 1, 1940. The speaker was Robert Jackson, then US Attorney General under President Franklin Roosevelt. More than five years later he would be the chief US representative prosecuting Nazi war crimes at Nuremberg.

One of the greatest difficulties of the position of prosecutor is that he must pick his cases, because no prosecutor can even investigate all of the cases in which he receives complaints. If the Department of Justice were to make even a pretence of reaching every probable violation of federal law, ten times its present staff will be inadequate. We know that no local police force can strictly enforce the traffic laws, or it would arrest half the driving population on any given morning. What every prosecutor is practically required to do is to select the cases for prosecution and to select those in which the offense is the most flagrant, the public harm the greatest, and the proof the most certain.

If the prosecutor is obliged to choose his case, it follows that he can choose his defendants. Therein is the most dangerous power of the prosecutor: that he will pick people that he thinks he should get, rather than cases that need to be prosecuted. With the law books filled with a great assortment of crimes, a prosecutor stands a fair chance of finding at least a technical violation of some act on the part of almost anyone.

In such a case, it is not a question of discovering the commission of a crime and then looking for the man who has committed it, it is a question of picking the man and then searching the law books, or putting investigators to work, to pin some offense on him. It is in this realm - in which the prosecutor picks some person whom he dislikes or desires to embarrass, or selects some group of unpopular persons and then looks for an offense, that the greatest danger of abuse of prosecuting power lies.

It is here that law enforcement becomes personal, and the real crime becomes that of being unpopular with the predominant or governing group, being attached to the wrong political views, or being personally obnoxious to or in the way of the prosecutor himself.¹⁵³⁰

With that lurking in the background, we can examine whether there was provable prosecutorial overreaching and misconduct before, during and after the Croft-Hagan trial. Was the offense - the bungling first steps toward assassination - "the most flagrant, the public harm the greatest, and the proof the most certain"? There are no prizes for getting any part of that question wrong.

¹⁵³⁰ Robert Jackson, "The Federal Prosecutor", *Journal of the American Judicature Society*, June 1940, p. 19. I've slightly altered the paragraphing to make it more accessible for 21st century eyes.

What about picking-out and -on an unpopular person or group? By now that matter should have been answered a hundred times over. And if it remains an "I dunno" in the minds of some still unconvinced readers, it's because either I'm an idiot or they are. But to batten down that hatch even tighter we need merely recall what the "injured party" in this case, US Attorney Charles Turner, had to say.

We were trying to develop this case because we were using the criminal process to solve what was really a political problem. It's not a very satisfactory measure. Clearly, there was a very significant fraud, but Rajneesh should have been kicked out of the country in the very first place. And using the criminal justice system to correct a problem, even though it's criminal in nature, is not the best way to go about it in my estimation.

That was the court of last resort, when everybody else threw up their hands. "What are we going to do with these people? How are we going to get them out of here?" They're totally entrenched. They're a political entity. They have money. They have power. They have organization. They're sophisticated. They have people who are absolutely, completely, totally committed to what they are doing, zealous beyond anything that I've ever encountered before in my life.¹⁵³¹

In other words, he was no Little Red Riding Hood whistling through the woods on the way to grandma's house. He was the Big Bad Wolf conspiring to "legally" murder not only a single individual, but a whole city/commune, social experiment, spiritual movement, and unique way of looking at and being in the world.

"Not so fast", alert readers will, hopefully, object. The prosecutors in this case were two non Oregonians, Timothy Reardon III¹⁵³² and Scott Glick, not Charles Turner. On the face of things that is correct. But like Assistant US Attorney in Charlotte Debra Stuart¹⁵³³ and so many other government officials who have passed through these pages in review, they were just front men doing their jobs, and were more pushed than pushing.

¹⁵³¹ In a February 28, 1989 interview with me. See Chapter 6.

¹⁵³² Behind every name is a story. "The lead prosecutor is a veteran Justice Department litigator. His father, Timothy J. Reardon, Jr., was a very close friend of President John F. Kennedy and one of his closest aides in the White House. Decades ago [probably November 1960], father and son played football at Hyannis Port with the Kennedy clan.

"Senator Edward M. Kennedy delivered the eulogy for Reardon's father in 1993. He told of the time a young Timothy J. Reardon, III, intercepted a football thrown by the recently elected President Kennedy. His father made him return the ball to the President, because 'you must never intercept the pass of the President-Elect of the United States.'

"Today the boy who intercepted President Kennedy's pass is an experienced litigator with the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division and is responsible for prosecuting a former CIA agent who has been the mastermind of much of the terrorism unleashed against Cuba during the last fifty years - a terrorist campaign that originated in Washington. (José Pertierra, "El Paso Diary: Day 21 in the Trial of Posada Carriles", *CounterPunch*, February 28, 2011)

¹⁵³³ See Chapter 10.

The circumstantial evidence for Turner as the power behind the push comes in the over reliance on the sham marriage material. The prosecution claimed it had to beat those dead horses to establish motive for the conspiracy. But they were wrong, and so was the judge for allowing it and the defense for accepting the ruling. Because since no one was contesting the existence of a plot - merely that the two English defendants were involved - no motivation was necessary.

The sham marriage conspiracy plea bargain, which grew out of a whole army of gun barrels, was a massive chunk of unfinished business sticking in Turner's throat. And this trial was supposed to be part of his days of reckoning, release and self vindication. "See! I was right all along about the marriage conspiracy, and here's the irrefutable proof!"

And just as Frohnmayer's "Master Race" hypothesis is echoed in Ava Avalos' tale of the "Hitler tape", Turner's checkmate assessment of the quickest way to bring down Rajneeshpuram resounds in her characterization of the wits' end mood in May and June of 1985.

Here's Turner.

But I recognized early on that if we were going to get rid of these people, the thing to do was to deport the Rajneesh. Because he was the catalyst and the linchpin for this organization. If we could get rid of him, the whole thing would fall as a matter of course. And they ridiculed and laughed at me about that. But that was the fact of the matter. That's exactly what it turned out to be. And that's exactly what happened.

Here's Avalos.

All of us were very concerned about the INS investigation that was taking place [,] because we understood that a Grand Jury had convened and that if - if any of the couples that were being investigated were found to be fraudulent, then that would reflect badly on Bhagwan's immigration application also and he could be deported. And then everything that we had worked for on the ranch would cease to exist.

The ranch couldn't have existed without Bhagwan. Everyone had thrown all of their money and time and energy into creating this commune. So we had everything at stake.¹⁵³⁴

Misled by Sheela, Avalos definitely believed all that overgeneralizing "we" and non sequitor drivel. Thus for her killing Turner was a pre-emptive strike and acting in self defense. If a man breaks into your house with the sworn intent of doing grievous harm to you and your entire family, then you have the right - in fact, the responsibility - to do him in. Don't you?

¹⁵³⁴ Avalos testimony, p. 714f

But despite what the former US attorney categorically assures anyone who will hear him out, the marriage cases, singly and together, never came close to implicating Rajneesh. In other words, at the time of the plotting neither he nor the commune as a whole were in more than usual peril. The same, however, could not be said of Sheela, Ava, KD, Yogini and the rest of the unraveling "38".

The eyewitness evidence fingering Turner came from a man who should have known him better than anyone. It appeared to me in a tit flash, which I paused on and replayed in very slow time. This was a money shot as God intended.

It was in a document I downloaded from the net. The appeal had been lost, and the legal pundits were poking though the bones, teeth and grey mess to learnedly comment on the what and why. "Hagan argues that the district court erred in refusing to allow her to interview Turner regarding a letter he sent to one of the prosecutors in which he stated that he anticipated allegations would be made that he 'gin[ned] up the case [,] which, otherwise, would not have been prosecuted [,] citing, inter alia, FBI efforts to kill it.'"¹⁵³⁵

For those, like me, unfamiliar with the phrase "ginned up", it can be translated as whipped-, worked- and blown-up out of all proportion. Here we clearly have Turner as the point man initiating the complaint and giving it mouth to mouth while an unknown number of others - including the FBI - are working "to kill it".

As for the "ginning" itself, he sucked a drama queen doozy out of his thumb and dished it up for the blood curdling pleasure of the English courts and press at the tail end of 1992. At the time there was a new Democratic wind blowing in Washington, and he was just another lame duck US attorney waiting for the ax to fall. But still angling for a last hurrah, he obviously figured that as far as this case was concerned those limey foreigners wouldn't know whether they "were on foot or horseback".¹⁵³⁶

Police stumbled on the alleged plot in 1986, a year after the commune had broken up, when 'surveillance photographs' of Turner's home were found in abandoned files at the ranch.

'It was very sinister,' Mr Turner recalled last week. 'I live hundreds of miles away in a rural area that is very hard to find. My wife and I realised that something quite sophisticated had been going on. I slept with my gun by the bed for a long time after that and security guards checked my car for bombs every morning.'¹⁵³⁷

This plot had been exposed by Avalos, the FBI and others in the fall of 1985. Turner's assistant US attorney, Robert Weaver, used the INS' Joe Greene, that paragon of perjury, to introduce it into the Charlotte bail hearings as evidence of Rajneesh's danger to

¹⁵³⁵ <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-9th-circuit/1203146.html>.

¹⁵³⁶ A figure of speech he used during our interview.

¹⁵³⁷ Nick Cohen, "On a hippy mission to murder?", *The Independent*, December 20, 1992 (*op. cit.*, see note 1510)

society.¹⁵³⁸ Even *The Oregonian's* top pooper scoopers knew that. They ought to. They wrote the story.¹⁵³⁹

Thus that yammer about sleeping with his gun by the bed for months and live in security guards checking his car for bombs every morning in, say, the fall of 1986 was like slamming the barn doors after all the horses have fled. Retrospective overreacting to what might have happened in the late spring and early summer of 1985.

And that bit about his house being "hundreds of miles away in a rural area that is very hard to find" shows signs of incipient disorientation and deteriorating mathematical capacity. Because as any 10 second Google search will reveal, the distance from Sherwood¹⁵⁴⁰ to Portland is 17 miles, with an estimated driving time of 28 minutes.

That means that in December 1992 Turner was either in a deeply disturbed and diminished state - psychologically and intellectually - or once again his considerable and "very sinister" ginning habits were working overtime and way beyond the call of strict prosecutorial discretion and duty.

I asked Weatherhead to wake up the scuffling dogs under the scrap of carpet¹⁵⁴¹ beginning with "Hagan argues" and concluding with "Hagan has not shown, however, that 'there is a reasonable likelihood that the testimony could have affected the judgment of the trier of fact'".

Weatherhead didn't remember the quote or context. "I only recall that there was apparently strong personal dislike between the trial prosecutors and Mr. Turner. I don't know why. Mr. Turner is, I do not doubt, a good man who was understandably worried on behalf of his family when all this came to light. But since, as you have pointed out, no crime was ever actually committed against him, his evidence was not really critical to the trial. He had no knowledge as to the critical details."

What? Turner was having problems with his "friendly" front men as well? Did that suggest that they too were wavering and wondering about the wisdom of soldiering on? If so, could that curious by the way have been relevant to the big picture, and might it have more than marginally affected the judgments of the triers of facts - judge, jury, press and paying public?

¹⁵³⁸ See Chapter 10.

¹⁵³⁹ "Authorities said the alleged murder conspiracy was aimed at U. S. Attorney Charles H. Turner, Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer and a staff writer for *The Oregonian*, Leslie L. Zaitz.... In response to questions from Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert C. Weaver Jr. of Portland, Greene said his information about the alleged murder plots against Turner and Frohnmayer had come from an FBI report on conversations with someone who claimed direct involvement." (James Long, Scotta Callister and David Whitney, "Informant says Rajneeshees kept 'hit list'", *The Oregonian*, November 1, 1985)

¹⁵⁴⁰ The Sherwood location, along with pictures of the surrounding area, is mentioned in Avalos' testimony (p. 766).

¹⁵⁴¹ A reference to Winston Churchill's possibly apocryphal description of Russian politics as like watching dogs fighting under a rug.

And who and what should have been included in that "inter alia"? Exculpatory evidence, perhaps? Not in the sense of proving innocence - how does anyone do that? - but, rather, swept under the rug arguments challenging not only the what and how of the case, but also the why? Asking the basic Ciceronian mind focuser. *Cui bono*? Who besides Turner was getting anything out of this run around?

Trying to ascertain whether I had actually read him correctly, I asked Weatherhead to expand and elucidate about the cause of the prosecutorial clash. He wrote, "Yes, it was my clear impression that Mr. Turner did not get along with the trial prosecutors. He was visibly annoyed at them when he appeared at the court."

Turner's appearance in the court was another startle, and scared up a pigeon kit of questions. Who had called upon him to testify? The prosecutors who loved, and were loved by, him? The defense, perhaps? And why? What material facts could he contribute that would have the slightest impact on the triers of facts? None, according to Weatherhead.

So there must have been another reason. And here motive is important. What was it? The proof positive answer must be in the record of the dialogue between the warring prosecutors, which I haven't read. But it's just waiting for some enterprising investigative journalists to dig up, piece together and reveal. They have those types in Oregon, don't they?

In the meantime I'll stick out my neck with a stopgap guess. Turner probably said something similar to what he had told the British press. The gun beside the bed. The security guards daily check of his car for bombs. How much he and his whole family had suffered. Hopefully, however, he left out the bit about Sherwood being hundreds of miles from Portland.

And the rationale for it would have been the same. To gin up sympathy, respect and admiration for him, a humble and heroic public servant just doing his job, and give this possibly wobbling case an oomph in the right direction. To demonstrate that this had been a real threat and serious crime and, therefore, was well worth being pursued, prosecuted and punished.

Which brings us back to another function of courtroom drama that is almost as significant, and sometimes more, as trying facts and meting out justice. Namely, to arouse emotions - pity, indignation and outrage - and move judges and juries to acquit or avenge. And lo and behold, there was Turner making a personal appearance and performing in the triple role as "victim", not so silent or secret prosecutor, and "witness".

But no one among the concerned spectators and press in and around the Portland court and the legal eagles doing the autopsy later on seemed to have noticed what was hiding in plain sight. Here was a potential - indeed, an actual and provable - blurring of personal and professional boundaries and a clear case of conflict of interests.

This ever- and over-present evidence of many degrees of prosecutorial misconduct was the Achilles' heel hard wired into the DNA of the Turner Conspiracy Trial. And it was exactly there that defense attorneys in the UK and US should have concentrated their pre-trial efforts. If they had opted to go that route, our noses would have been basically pointing in the same direction, and they could have counted on my cooperation and advice throughout.

That approach could have led to a gradual turning of the tide in media attitudes and coverage. Abroad, in the US, and even Oregon. Because one of the few things that sells better than corrupt charismatic guru and criminal cult members is US government officials behaving badly. Especially when such stories have been meticulously well documented, point by point proved, and names are named.

That about face could have been achieved with a negligible adjustment of the facts and individuals eyes were focused on and attention and attacks aimed at. By shifting the indispensable baddie role and blame from one "not us" group to another the accusers would have become the accused. Like those dirty old men in the *Book of Daniel*, who were then put to death. It's not rocket science.

True, in a stacked deck and highly flawed judicial system - both in the open theater of courtrooms and behind the scenes - the result might have been the same. But it would have been a bloodied but unbowed loss on defense's feet, not a bludgeoned into submission defeat on their knees.

During our February 28, 1989 interview, when Charles Turner was very much in the saddle and riding high, he came at me with so many incompatible and often contradictory ideas, opinions, scenarios and personalities that it was often hard to tell which ones were his and him. Sometimes he was the victor, sometimes the victim. Sometimes spurrier, sometimes spurred and spurned.

But throughout all the slipping and sliding one thing remained unswerving and certain. His belief that he had acted judiciously and above board throughout the whole sordid affair, and Rajneesh and all the Rajneeshees were the problem, inter alia, not him. "And the longer they were permitted to operate here, the more brazen they became, and the more bizarre their conduct became."

Brecher: Are you talking about Sheela and ...?

Turner: No. The Rajneesh. Well, all of them. I mean, It's not I'm not under any illusion that, for instance, Rajneesh did not know what was going on. I mean, she served as his point man, if you want to use that term. But he clearly knew what was going on.

Brecher: What does that "clearly" mean?

Turner: Because she was his personal secretary and confidant, and so that what she did, she communicated to him.

Brecher: That's certain? You have evidence?

Turner: I'm absolutely confident of that, and, for instance, all of the different things that they did, like the decision to do the test poisoning, the wiretapping, and other matters of that nature she communicated those to him. Now, whether he personally ...

Brecher: ...Were you told that directly?

Turner: I learned that. I cannot tell you the source that I learned that from.

Like any par for the course investigative journalist, I pressed and probed for two things. One, the evidence for his absolute confidence that Sheela communicated everything to Rajneesh. Such as, for instance, her plots to murder his personal physician and bugging his room. (At the time I didn't know about the schemes against his dentist and "girlfriend" and the ongoing program of intercepting letters addressed to him and answering in his name.) Two, the spotless and uncoerced sources of such information. In other words, the exactly what, who says so, how do they know, and why and under what circumstances did they tell him anything.

But he would not be drawn out. Which to my mind and that of all discerning critics can mean only one thing. That his convictions were pure bluster, bluff and posturing based on prejudices, foregone conclusions, wishful thinking and need. Moral crusaders the world over are always absolutely confident and, in William Butler Yeats' words, "full of passionate intensity".¹⁵⁴² Otherwise they wouldn't go on doing what they do and couldn't live with the reverberations of what they have already done.

My original suspicions about the factual basis for his absolute confidence have only been braced by the passing decades and toughened to near bulletproof by the scraping the bottom of the sea quality of the rubbish and rumor spewed out during the Turner Conspiracy Trial. Is that the best you could come up with after all those years of searching with the same passionate intensity as heavily subsidized archaeologists fine tooth combing holy land sands to discover positive proof or iotas of evidence for bible stories and God's miracles?

Swami Prem Niren, Rajneesh's attorney, put it like this. "Sheela bugged Osho's room, including her conversations with him, for months. She took some tapes with her when she

¹⁵⁴² Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity. (William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming")

left. Thousands of tapes were later discovered by sannyasins and voluntarily turned over to the FBI."

Sheela and the government had strong motivation to prove Osho's involvement in her crimes. But they have never produced a speck of evidence to indicate, let alone substantiate, anything of the sort. This failure to offer evidence, where there is strong motive and opportunity, is proof of the absence of evidence.¹⁵⁴³

I have no illusions that Turner, Frohnmayer, Zaitz and others hopelessly tainted by their involvement in conspiracies against Rajneesh and Rajneeshees will ever read, let alone be swayed by, any of this. They will go to their graves being absolutely confident and dead certain about themselves as the good guys and him, them and now me as the bad. For they have nothing to gain from these truths and everything to lose.

What about those not so compromised, certain or dead? To address - not answer - that issue we need to ask each other and ourselves not who benefits, but what the benefits are. What is to be gained, personally and professionally, by continuing to swear by rosy, freedom loving and by the book normal people and government officials and at those they're all the same brainwashed cultists?

And, by contrast, what is there to lose by at least considering whether the overwhelming main theme out there on the range was a large scale social and spiritual experiment to provoke participants and God? One that could have succeeded long range and big time in a less acidic and more accepting macrocosm, and has already succeeded for a large number of those who worked and visited there. Who transformed the land and were, in turn, transformed by it.

One construction worker told me, "Most people forget how much fun it was. I wouldn't have missed it for the world!"

Even Yogini, who had every reason to rue her relationship with the place and see the whole thing as a pipe dream turned sour and gone south, recalled from the witness stand her first impressions of the place - in March 1982 - with what sounds like longing.

I saw it [as] an incredible expanse of desert land. And there wasn't a lot of people there at the time. There wasn't a lot of sannyasins. It was – you know, the people [who] were with Bhagwan. But the people that were there were working very, very hard to begin a settlement which would see many, many thousands of other people coming eventually. And it was a very busy time. It was a really exciting time. It was a very beautiful time.¹⁵⁴⁴

¹⁵⁴³ In an April 29, 2012 email

¹⁵⁴⁴ Yogini testimony, *op. cit.*, p. 1608

In short, what's to be lost and gained by challenging received wisdom and everyone knows that and at least wondering whether things at Rajneeshpuram were possibly far better "than we realized" or could ever have imagined, not worse?