

Bagwan cult at center of peace movement's merger with the 'spiritual unity' gurus

by Martha Quinde and Ira Liebowitz

With help from the United Nations, the "world spirituality" Aquarian Age cults are in the process of merging with the international disarmament movement. How this has occurred was indicated at a "Universal Peace Conference" held a year ago at Mount Abu in India.

Under the sponsorship of the Brahma Kumaris World Spirituality University, the conference pledged to "enter the age of love"—based on consolidating ties between the peace movement, terrorist front groups, and religious cults programmed to support disarmament from a "world spirituality" standpoint.

Among the speakers at the February 1983 conference were Willis Harman of the Stanford Research Institute, an advocate of obliterating technological progress, heterosexuality, and Western civilization overall; and Robert Muller, assistant secretary-general of the United Nations and a prominent figure in the cult-spawning Lucis Trust—formerly called Lucifer Trust—based at the United Nations. Muller specifically called for linking the so-called peace movement with the emerging U.N. involvement in "world spirituality."

After the conference, the group embarked on a U.S. tour to consolidate the merger. During this tour the terrorist-connected West German Green Party emerged as one of the plan's key components.

The mother cult

The Brahma Kumaris World Spirituality University, based at Mount Abu, is a non-governmental organization (NGO) of the United Nations. Brahma Kumaris is a Sufi-connected cult originally established by Freemasons and Theosophists in Karachi, Pakistan in 1937. It now appears that Brahma Kumaris's job is to act as a control center for a large number of Indian-spawned intelligence cults deployed into the United States and Europe under the sponsorship of the Esalen Institute, Lucis Trust, and Stanford Research Institute.

According to one member, Brahma Kumaris is a 125,000-woman cult, feminist and "anti-caste." It is a celibate (in this case, signifying lesbian) order which believes that periodic mass genocide is a normal cycle of history designed to decrease the number of bodies into which the fixed 5.5 billion souls in the world must reincarnate. Another death cycle is soon to occur, they maintain, as world population is already

exceeding 4 billion people.

Robert Muller, in addition to his U.N. and Lucis posts, is also an official of the Brahma Kumaris University and a close associate of former Carter administration drug-policy counselor Peter Bourne, the official exposed as peddling illicit prescriptions who was recently involved in the aborted communist takeover of the island of Grenada. Muller describes Brahma Kumaris as a "spirituality project" set up by his Buddhist mentor U Thant—the longtime U.N. secretary-general—through the United Nations. Another project of Muller's, born at the Mt. Abu conference, is a "World University for Peace" in Costa Rica. Under the auspices of Brahma Kumaris, former Costa Rican president Rodrigo Carazo was recently in West Germany meeting with various "peace" institutes to develop a curriculum for the university.

In September 1983, Muller, the Lucis Trust, and Brahma Kumaris set up events in the United States, including a conference in New York City on "peace through communications," which mapped out mass media propaganda formats for the major TV networks in attendance.

The West Coast tour included at least three events where a variety of Aquarian mystic cults, including the Bagwan Rajneesh cult, "seanced" with leading members of the West German Green Party and the U.S. peace movement.

One such event, co-sponsored by the San Francisco Sufi Order, had in attendance Green Party leaders Petra Kelly, Gen. Gerd Bastian, and Rudolf Bahro (an East German emigré reported to maintain connections with East Berlin's secret intelligence service), as well as David Bower of the Sierra Club, Willis Harman, Daniel Ellsberg, and Princeton University's Richard Falk, an architect of the Khomeini takeover of Iran, among others. Outright cult representatives included Ananda Marga, an assassin cult based in India, various Sikh groups, and the American Indian Movement, as well as the Bagwans.

In early December the tour arrived at the Stanford Research Institute.

The Green links

Rudolf Bahro joined the Brahma Kumaris tour after spending a month last summer at the Bagwan Rajneesh city "Rajneeshpura," in Antelope, Oregon.

Although not a member, Bahro said of the Bagwan city, "This is the most important place in the world. . . . I saw Bagwan's vision as a synthesis of Eastern and Western ideas, which were identical with my own ideas of a new peaceful culture. I experienced the commune—I mean their foundations—as the realization of my archetypes. . . . Such a plan, realized in praxis is worth more and will teach more than thousands of paper concepts."

The plan Bahro mentioned is one which he articulated in his platform for the West German Green Party, in which he called for depopulating cities as ". . . the only real alternative which at the same time would reconcile us with the people of the Third World."

"Rajneeshpuram" (formerly known as Antelope, Oregon, where residents were driven out when cult members moved in and voted themselves control of the city government) is a thousand-person city that is said to have been designed to survive World War III. Part of the Bagwan belief structure is that nuclear holocaust is inevitable, and that their cult will survive.

Bagwan profile

The Bagwan Rajneesh cult, or Sannyasins, was founded in 1974 in Poona, India. In 1980, its head, who goes by the same name, was forced to leave India under suspicion that the cult was involved in espionage against the Indian Air Force headquartered in that city. The cult has approximately 250,000 members worldwide, with its international center now in Oregon. U.S. membership is estimated at 12,000-15,000, but European membership is much larger, with over 30,000 in West Germany alone. Currently it is estimated that there are at least 57 Bagwan Ashrams (communities) in West Germany, 26 in Britain, 18 in Italy, and 25 in the Netherlands.

The recruiting format of the cult is through the use of psychosexual therapy centers which use sexual encounter, Sufi ecstasy dancing, primal scream, and group encounter brainwashing techniques. Bagwan literature says: "Our therapist training programme trainees include doctors, social workers, physiotherapists, psychologists, and teachers." They are trained in "Eastern and Western methods including: rolfing, structural balancing, shiatsu, Yoga, acupuncture and rebirthing. . . . We do not discriminate symptomatically . . . we accept addicts, suicidal depressives, alcoholics, and people under stress. Our programme is particularly successful with people suffering from depression." The goal of the program "is to enable people to work with love and awareness." Bagwan therapists are also trained at the Esalen Institute in California.

The Esalen connection underscores the fact that these cults recruit and control their members on the basis of classical behavior modification techniques of the variety spelled out by the London Tavistock Institute's Dr. William Sargeant in his 1960s study, *Battle for the Mind*. Sargeant's work focussed on the use of mystical religious beliefs and rituals

as an alternative to psychedelic drugs in hard brainwashing. Despite the nominal "pacifist" profile of the Bagwan and other cults, the brainwashed cult members are prime candidates for terrorist actions, including kamikaze attacks. The Esalen Institute in particular is notorious for brainwashing such violent cults as the Charles Manson family and the Rev. Jim Jones's Peoples Temple.

The Bagwan, like Bahro's Green Party, also recruits on the basis of defending homosexuality. Bagwan law forbids discrimination against a person's sexual preference. "It is not the role of a government, organization or person to judge the sexual practice of other adults, or to restrict it," Bagwan law says. Ma Sheela Silverman, Bagwan Rajneesh's personal secretary, said of Rajneeshpuram, "Here you can be proud of being a homosexual."

Ostensibly the Bagwans are not political, but the link with the Green Party and their association through the Brahma Kumaris operation to the U.S. peace movement indicates otherwise.

In Europe the Bagwans are building up an economic infrastructure and recruiting at a rate which would make them most useful as a money-laundering and terrorist recruiting ground for the Soviet-dominated peace movement. Reliable German sources report the Bagwans are actively recruiting from the Green Party membership as well as from the KBW and KPDML, two violence-prone radical Maoist political groups. As well, there have been at least two cases of prostitution and one of drug smuggling involving members of the Bagwan cult in the past.

The Bagwan Business Development Manager for Europe, one Swami Deva Larry, is on a major expansion drive for the cult which centers on discotheques. In West Germany, six discos have been opened. Other business ventures include restaurants and car repair shops, variety stores, and even an airline and travel agency called "Air Rajneesh." Bagwan members work for these businesses in what Deva Larry calls "work worship." It is reported that most Bagwan members work long hours to pay for their therapy programs, which they receive at a 10 percent discount.

Nazi occultists

Like the Brahma Kumaris, the Bagwan cult comes from the same theosophical roots as the Nazis. Bagwan Rajneesh considers himself, like Hitler, to be the instrument of the "Nine of Ashoka," the nine spirits which guide the world's great leaders, a theosophist legend otherwise called the Great White Brotherhood promoted in the last century by Madame Helene Blavatsky. "A man who has charisma can become a great leader or a great politician. Adolf Hitler had this charisma, millions of people were drawn to him," Rajneesh has said. Hitler was successful despite all odds because, "another voice than his own gave the orders until the day that he started again to give orders in his own voice. That is how his defeat began."