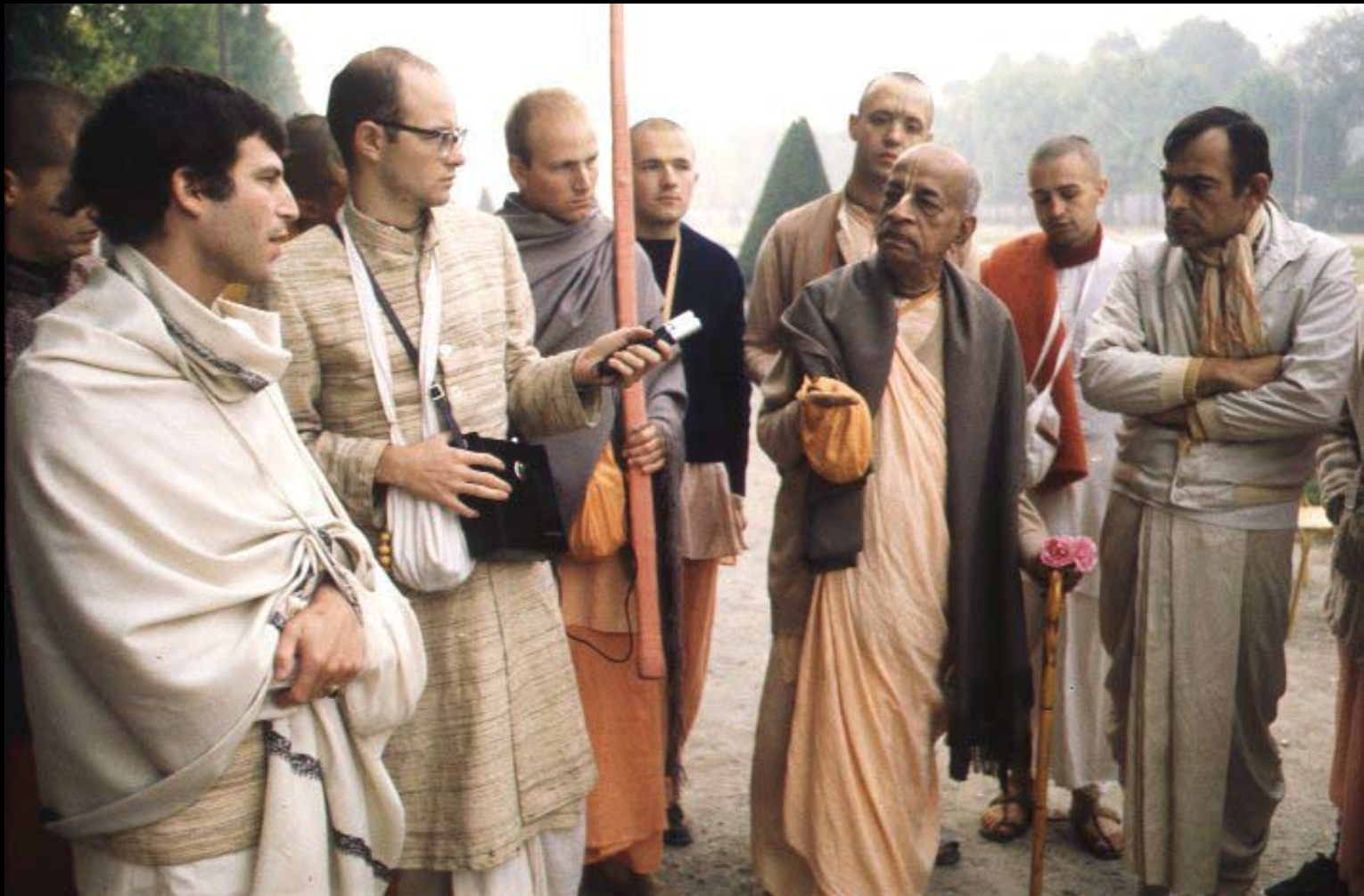


a response to: **"Basics First"**

Chakra Torpedoes

Main GBC Evidence!



Chakra Torpedoes Main GBC Evidence!



“It is best not to accept any disciples. One has to become purified at home by chanting the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra* and preaching the principles enunciated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thus one can become a spiritual master and be freed from the contamination of material life.”

(Madhya, 7:130)



by Krishnakant



Chakra Torpedoes Main GBC Evidence!

a reply to “Basics First”

Another anti-*ritvik* paper appeared recently on CHAKRA called “*Basics First*”, in which the author -Akhilesvara das - directly contradicts the GBC over the credibility of their principal evidence, the famous May 28th tape. He states:

“because of its ambiguity, that very exchange cannot be referred to as a document for proof.”

The GBC, of course, consider this ‘exchange’ such excellent ‘proof’ that they have rested their entire position upon it for over twenty years, (only to currently find it rendered inadmissible by their own investigation). According to Akhilesvara prabhu, even if the May 28th exchange was authentic, it could not be used as any type of proof.

Thus we have yet another act of sabotage (see ‘*GBC Hit by Friendly Fire*’) by someone ostensibly claiming to support the GBC, placed on a web site whose stated editorial policy is to only print material which is accurate and philosophically correct. The GBC should be very concerned when their only direct evidence for stopping the *ritvik* system is dismissed out of hand by a so-called supporter on a website that is supposed to support their position.

Aside from inadvertently contradicting the GBC, Akhilesvara prabhu, in common with all previous anti-*ritvik* authors;

1. makes no attempt to address the arguments contained within ‘*The Final Order*’, the definitive *ritvik* position paper, nor offers any evidence in support of ‘**Modifications A & B**’ as set out on page 2 of that paper;
2. does not quote **ONCE** from that definitive position paper;
3. indulges in large amounts of irrelevancy and ‘*ad hominem*’ attacks that make no attempt to deal with the actual philosophy and evidence of the *ritvik* position;
4. When he does make some attempt to deal with the philosophy he simply offers ‘*Straw Man*’ arguments, i.e., he attacks points which we never made in ‘*The Final Order*’;
5. and contradicts himself.

To be fair the author does admit that his intention is not to deal with substantial issues, but rather the way in which such issues are being presented:

“The bone of contention is no longer on philosophical differences, because an objective exchange is now impossible, but in the way the issue is pushed.” (Page 3)

Just because a devotee may present something poorly, does not in itself mean he is wrong. Over the years the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness has been ‘*pushed*’ in all sorts of strange ways, but that does not make it wrong.

“This is an intuitive conclusion from my years of being acquainted with Prabhupada’s teachings; I don’t have a database, neither the will for such researches.” (Page 6)

- Here Akhilesvara prabhu almost makes a virtue out of laziness. If he cannot trouble himself to check Srila Prabhupada’s teachings in a scientific systematic manner, how can he properly judge the *ritvik* conclusion?

All the extracts from Akhilesvara prabhu’s article shall be numbered, our comments following.

1) One piece of evidence the *ritviks* are using for their arguments is the July letter. Taken literally and placed in context, we don’t find anything other than a functional order to the GBC to initiate the huge growing number of disciples, in his name, of course, since Srila Prabhupada was still with us but did not want to do anything any more personally; his health was seriously deteriorating. That’s all. (Page 1)

The author claims his understanding of the July 9th letter is based on taking it “literally” and placing it in “context”. From a literal perspective there is nothing in the letter stating that initiations were **ONLY** to be carried out “since Srila Prabhupada was still with us”, or that the *ritvik* system was set up only because “his health was seriously deteriorating”. There is also no ‘literal’ instruction that the system was only to operate in his presence. We can only conclude that the author is offering his own speculative assumptions rather than any ‘literal’ instruction which was ever given by Srila Prabhupada. If the author has evidence in support of the above we suggest he urgently passes it on to the GBC. Thus immediately the author, in common with all other papers on this issues, merely assumes that which needs to be proven, offering not one tiny drop of supporting evidence.

2) At that time, if Srila Prabhupada had desired to fix a particular system of initiation for after his departure, what could have been more simple than using words like “Krishna is calling me back” or “during my physical absence” or “for the next thousand years” and the like. Not a single indication is there. (Page 1)

Firstly the system was not fixed **ONLY** for after Srila Prabhupada’s departure. It was fixed from that moment onwards, and was thus also to operate whilst Srila Prabhupada was still on the planet. Rather than speculate about what Srila Prabhupada **SHOULD** have said, the author would be better off following what Srila Prabhupada **DID** say, viz. that the managing officers for ISKCON should implement the *ritvik* system as the system for ISKCON from that moment onwards.

- When and where did Srila Prabhupada issue any other instruction to the society’s managing officers that could possibly displace this system (i.e.- ‘**Modifications A & B**’ as given in ‘*The Final Order*’)?

Until such evidence is produced the system remains in place. We cannot stop following an order given by Srila Prabhupada simply because we do not deem it ‘clear’ enough for our taste. We must simply execute the order of the spiritual master.

3) To give weight to their speculation, an innocent word- henceforward - has to be interpreted meaning “after my departure.” (Page 1)

This is a gross misrepresentation of our position. We have never stated the above, and challenge the author to show where we ever said such a thing. We do not ‘interpret’ this word. We simply accept the meaning ascribed to it by any English dictionary, and indeed by Srila Prabhupada’s previous usages of the word i.e., - ‘from now onwards’. As we have also said in ‘*The Final Order*’ (page 3), one could take this word **OUT** of the letter and nothing would change. It is a curious phenomenon that every paper purporting to tackle the *ritvik* issue merely invents non-existent propositions to attack, rather than deal with what we actually say.

- Could it be that these devotees are actually unable to defeat the *ritvik* position through legitimate means, and hence feel compelled to try and cheat their readers?

It is a sorry state of affairs if that is so since truthfulness is the last remaining pillar of religiosity in *Kali yuga*.

4) The truth is that for illumination, I must read certain transcripts of a tape, which I did a few times. One thing is sure about them: because of its ambiguity, that very exchange cannot be referred to as a document for proof. (Page 1)

In making this statement the author must be referring to the so-called ‘*Appt Tape*’, since this is the main tape transcript related to this issue. Unfortunately, as we pointed out at the beginning, in stating that this transcript has ‘ambiguity’ and thus cannot be used as ‘proof’, the author has directly contradicted the GBC who use it as their **ONLY** document of proof. In making this statement the author has also contradicted himself quite severely, since he also says that the very ‘conclusion’ of his entire thesis is that we must accept the GBC.

“Conclusion. If I say no and you say yes, who will decide? The modern judge is the GBC or an authorised board of brahmanas. We had better go with it.” (Page 7)

- Why then has the author decided right at the outset of his article to say ‘no’ to the GBC and not ‘go with it’, and instead give his own diametrically opposed opinion!?

5) That is why I said previously, that to have a personal stand on the issue, we must be inclined toward a specific type of study, which only intellectuals dwell on. Ironically, they cannot even agree with this simple deduction. (Page 1)

We would love to know where Srila Prabhupada ever stated this. Surely our stand on any ‘issue’ should simply be what Srila Prabhupada taught us. Until the author proves that Srila Prabhupada actually instead wanted us ‘to be inclined toward a specific type of study which only intellectuals dwell on’, we shall certainly **NOT** be agreeing with the above.

6) Why would he have made a critical change, in a mysterious language, in a “last order,” with no absolute clear mention of its specific and crucial intention? (Page 2)

- a) What is it a change to? It can only be a ‘change’ if Srila Prabhupada had taught that after his departure he would cease to be the *diksa* guru for ISKCON. Unfortunately neither the author nor the GBC have ever produced this evidence.
- b) Can the author also please enlighten us as to why the July 9th letter is neither ‘absolute’, ‘clear’ nor ‘specific’

7) If the *ritvik* system was what Prabhupada wanted, why did he not write it in detail in his books? A great quality in Prabhupada is that he created, from scratch, we may say, a wonderful international organisation that he wanted to go on almost forever. He was an excellent administrator. Only *varnashram-dharma* was lacking, so he informed us: Only 50% is accomplished. (Page 2)

- a) Firstly the author contradicts himself - having insisted that the *ritvik* system **MUST** be detailed in his books (he earlier stated everything is there in his books) - he then goes on to give us an example of Srila Prabhupada's instruction - that '*only 50% is accomplished*' that is to be found neither in his books nor any recorded format!
- b) In any case the system by which initiations are to be performed in ISKCON is mentioned in any detail only 3 times in all of Srila Prabhupada's books (C.C. Adi 17:265; Madhya 15:108; 24:330 - in a few other places Srila Prabhupada simply mentions that one should first follow the Four regulative principles). In each case it simply states the process that was in use in ISKCON at the time - the same system that we say should continue to be followed **NOW**. Srila Prabhupada speaks in the present tense with regards to how initiations are to operate, in books which were to be standard for ten thousand years. This completely supports our contention that the GBC had no authority to change the system Srila Prabhupada left in place. Certainly there is absolutely no mention in Srila Prabhupada's books of the multi-guru system currently favoured by the GBC. Nor is there any mention that the system which IS detailed in the books, the same system that was in place when Srila Prabhupada was on the planet, must be changed when Srila Prabhupada leaves the planet.

8) Srila Prabhupada was not going to let the same mistake happen that the Gaudiya Math made after the departure of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, upset as he was about it. (Page 2)

Unfortunately the same mistake **DID** happen, because we did **NOT** follow the July 9th letter and instead followed the system the author proposes:

"Conclusion. If I say no and you say yes, who will decide? The modern judge is the GBC or an authorised board of brahmanas. We had better go with it." (Page 7)

(We also support the idea that we must follow the GBC, but only if the GBC is following Srila Prabhupada.)

9) Why, to give solid ground to the revolutionary system of *ritviks*, did Srila Prabhupada not initiate all his disciples in the name of his own guru? Why not? By his mercy everything would have been possible, for Krishna's service. There would be no confusion today. Was Prabhupada attached to having his own disciples? Well, just forget it. (Page 2)

Srila Prabhupada did not act as a *ritvik* because he was ordered to initiate by his own Guru Maharaja.

The issue is not Guru or *Ritvik*, but to execute whatever instruction is given by one's guru.

10) Why did he not comment on this rather non-traditional system of initiation he supposedly wanted to implement as he did for his work: they are going to be the law books for the future 10 000 years, with "His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada" on the cover? [...] Never did Prabhupada say that his disciples would not initiate, that the traditional way would be abolished after his departure. (Page 2)

- a) As stated under quote 7, Srila Prabhupada did comment on this system in his books, and by sending out a letter to the whole movement. He also '*commented*' on this system through practical example, by making it the standard by which many devotees became initiated whilst he was on the planet.
- b) The author also proposes that the *ritvik* system is '*non-traditional*', yet the very body he claims should decide all matters, the GBC, states that the *ritvik* system adheres to traditional concepts!:

"the 'zonal acarya' system and the 'posthumous ritvik' system - rest on adherence to the traditional idea of leadership. [...] In the event, the Gaudiya Matha leaders disregarded this order, and instead they reverted to the traditional single-acarya rule to which they were, after all, culturally habituated."

("Allegiance to Guru, to ISKCON and to Prabhupada."(1998), Explanation of GBC resolution passed on 26/2/98, By His Grace Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu).

- c) There is no need for Srila Prabhupada to state that something will **NOT** happen, i.e. that his disciples should **NOT** initiate, since he has not stated that it **WILL** happen. We can only follow what Srila Prabhupada has specifically told us to do, not simply anything which Srila Prabhupada has not specifically forbade us to do. How we follow the guru must be based on instructions which he leaves for us to follow, not simply doing anything where specific instructions do not exist to stop us doing them. He only told us to continue with a system that kept him as the *diksa* guru for ISKCON. No other authority is given to the managing officers of ISKCON to either change this system or introduce another system.
- d) Srila Prabhupada does suggest that taking disciples is not a good idea in the C.c.: **"It is best not to accept any disciples"**. (Madhya, 7.130, purport). Perhaps we should try and do what is best.

11) Consider this instead: Prabhupada's books have the potency to create pure devotees, pure representatives of Krishna, even *uttama adhikaris*. Can anyone deny that? (Page 2)

We have never denied this. We simply say that if any such pure devotees wish to initiate they must first receive an order from Srila Prabhupada. They will then be free to take as many disciples as they wish providing they do it outside of ISKCON.

12) Although in many places he explained why he made changes when introducing the women's ashrams, when reducing the numbers of rounds, conducting marriage ceremonies, etc., he never alluded, practically, to a modification of the external process of initiation. (Page 3)

There is nothing to "modify" since he is carrying on with the **SAME** system he set up and practised. Any modifying has been done by the GBC, and apparently without any authority.

13) Rather, he over and over stressed the *parampara* system. What an objective reader would appreciate is a clear and unequivocal statement. Normally, such a statement must be formulated three times to be absolute. (Page 3)

- a) But where does Srila Prabhupada ever state that the *parampara* is restricted to spiritual masters that are on the same planet as their disciples. Srila Prabhupada merely states that the *parampara* is continued by the 'current link'. This current link everyone agrees was Srila Prabhupada until 1977. As far as we are concerned Srila Prabhupada remains the current link for ISKCON members until evidence can be produced proving why, when and how Srila Prabhupada stopped being the current link.
- b) What is interesting to note is that in the July 9th letter, it is formulated that those who would be initiated by the *ritvik* system must be disciples of Srila Prabhupada. Why the need for this 'clear and unequivocal' statement to be 'formulated three times' when the ownership of disciples can **ONLY** be an **ISSUE** if the system was to operate when Srila Prabhupada was to **NOT** be physically present.

The author then spends the next few pages attacking the *ritviks* in Montreal and the people who are behind the 'The Final Order' paper. Nowhere does he try and defeat the **ACTUAL** philosophy that is being propounded by these persons.

This is known as '*argumentum ad hominem*' whereby one simply attacks the persons who hold a viewpoint, and not the actual viewpoints held. We readily admit that we are not perfected devotees.

14) Who decided that it was *The Final Order*. (Page 4)

Since no other instruction to the whole society on the subject of initiations was sent after July 9th letter, it **WAS** an order that was **FINAL** on this subject.

- Can the author locate a more final one?

15) We must stress it: to be connected to him -particularly when we understand Srila Prabhupada better than others and imposing our antagonist views- we ought to be pure: not only following the four regulative principles, but completely... anyway, we must be *paka brahmanas*. (Page 4)

To present some instructions from Srila Prabhupada which can not be countered is neither '*antagonistic*' or '*imposing*' one's own views.

16) We must get down from the sentimental platform; the matter is just getting absurd. (Page 4)

The only thing which is '*sentimental*' and '*absurd*' is continuing to reject an order from Srila Prabhupada even though one has no authority to do so. The only thing that this article from the author has proven is that he also has no such authority or evidence with which to counter the July 9th order given by Srila Prabhupada.

- The author readily admits that he has not even bothered to properly research the issue, so how can he be sure his views are not merely uncorroborated sentiment?

17) If you recognise Srila Prabhupada's presence, then leave him the last word. A little humility, please. (Page 4)

We have left Srila Prabhupada the '*last*' word, since on the subject of initiations to be conducted in ISKCON the July 9th letter is his '*last*' word, indeed his final order.

18) Now. Who is your authority? (Page 4)

The July 9th letter was issued by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

- Whom, may we ask, authorised the M.A.S.S.?

19) If they don't want to co-operate within the framework of ISKCON, then "Bye bye." (Page 5)

We **DO** want to work within the framework of ISKCON. This is why '*The Final Order*' was requested by and presented to the GBC. Not a single copy of this document was released until the GBC had been given 6 months to answer the paper. We only then released this paper once the GBC had released their reply.

20) I mean to say, if they are concerned with preaching the message of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and desire to take advantage of the movement then they should join it, and by their sincere effort reform it. We need it! We will worship them for that, but ISKCON must be the authority. (Page 5)

In terms of working within ISKCON to reform it please see above. Also ISKCON can only have proper authority itself if it is strictly following all of Srila Prabhupada's instructions. In our own humble way we are trying to assist the society to this end .

21) Why can't you also settle the matter with our many devotees in ISKCON? Like, for example, Hari Sauri: he was with Srila Prabhupada for years. Haven't we authoritative impartial devotees with whom we can all agree? Haven't we hundreds of sages and pundits; haven't we friends and advisers, Srila Prabhupada's personal servants, secretaries, cooks, translators, and dedicated devotees, who can honestly testify? (Page 5)

Unfortunately this line of argument was also used to justify and support the 'zonal *acarya*' system of which Hari Sauri Prabhu, incidentally, was a willing and active participant. To avoid such mistakes happening again we prefer to follow **ONLY** instructions coming directly from Srila Prabhupada, and from those strictly following in that line.

22) They are joining because of frustration, because of this and that, but not on philosophical or ideological grounds first. (Page 6)

This may or may not be true. But is what they are joining **CORRECT**. This is the key question, and one which the author has so far been unable to shed any light on.

23) When in 1985 the movement rose against the abuse perpetrated by the institutionalized gurus, it was under the banner of temple presidents and erudite. (Page 6)

The same persons who allowed a new system that re-instituted an active homosexual, who had been previously suspended due to gross fall-down, back into the '*parampara*'. The same persons who did very well out of this '*reform*', with many also becoming '*good as god*' gurus themselves.

24) First establish the rules and ethics based on Srila Prabhupada's teachings on this matter and make sure that everyone you are recruiting and implicating in this fight against ISKCON understands the pro and cons. (Page 6)

We are **NOT** fighting against ISKCON. We never have and we never will. We are simply trying to make sure that the institution that Srila Prabhupada left us, always adheres strictly to his instructions.

- Unless the society is following Srila Prabhupada in what sense can we call it ISKCON?

The author next offers speculations about Christianity, but since he himself admits that it is only:

"an intuitive conclusion from my years of being acquainted with Prabhupada's teachings; I don't have a database, neither the will for such researches." (Page 6)

We will not bother pointing out what the Srila Prabhupada database **DOES** say.

25) Take a sentence of Srila Prabhupada like "When you read the Bible that means you are following the spiritual master represented by some priest or some clergyman in the line of Lord Jesus Christ. When you read the Bible... means you are following...." and let's put it out of context, for its value. This is what you are doing with *The Final Order*. The fact is they are not following.

But the fact is that the **PRINCIPLE** of following Jesus and accepting him as the Spiritual Master **IS** endorsed by Srila Prabhupada. That's the actual point - **CAN** we still follow, and accept Jesus as the Spiritual Master. The fact that large numbers of people are **NOT** following does **NOT** invalidate the principle that one **SHOULD** and **CAN** still follow.

26) Only great souls can follow the scriptures without personal contact with masters, the majority have to rally to a mature devotee, who generally becomes the initiating guru. The master who transmits the knowledge is the most important. [...] If we agree with the principle that the books cannot be left entirely to our subjectivity but some spiritual guide has to be there, an authority, then we have made a step forward.

1. The reality in the case of Srila Prabhupada was the **OPPOSITE**. The majority of his disciples, whilst Srila Prabhupada was present, had little or **NO** personal contact, and none have had **ANY** contact for the last 20 years. Srila Prabhupada nowhere states this '*Vapuvadi*' philosophy. On the contrary he states the opposite - please see the Appendices to '*The Final*

Order'.

2. We are also left with the contradiction that we must seek out these '*mature devotees*' for '*personal contact*' from a group of devotees who themselves have had no '*personal contact*' for the last 20 years.
3. We also need to seek this '*spiritual guide*' to understand the books, from devotees who themselves do not currently have, and have not had for a long time (if ever), any such face-to-face spiritual guidance to understand the books.

Conclusion

We have demonstrated the following points with regards to "*Basics First*":

1. The paper makes no attempt to address the 'Final Order' the definitive position on the *ritvik* position, or answer '**Modifications A & B**' as set out in this paper.
2. Does not quote **ONCE** from this paper.
3. Engages in large amounts of irrelevancy and '*ad hominem*' attacks that make no attempt to deal with the actual philosophy or evidence of the *ritvik* position at all.
4. When it does make some attempt to deal with the philosophy it simply offers '*Straw Man*' arguments about the so-called *ritvik* position, and offers no **EVIDENCE**, or deal with the **ACTUAL** *ritvik* arguments as put forward in *The Final Order*.
5. The paper also contradicts itself and the GBC.
6. The paper seriously undermines the GBC's only direct evidence which supposedly supports their dismantling of the *ritvik* system, and subsequent erection of the M.A.S.S.

As we have said before, we still sincerely await any offering on this subject that is relevant, and actually deals with the issue in hand. We are still open to any evidence which justifies the removal of Srila Prabhupada as the *diksa* guru of ISKCON. Sadly this article, as with all the others before it, has failed to even approach these standards. Thus '*The Final Order Still Stands*'.

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