

CHANNEL SEVEN SIX O'CLOCK NEWS SEPT 17, 1985
WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

Anchor man: ...members from all over the world are gathered at New Vrindaban, Marshall county, this week for what is being called a religious summit. But a former resident at New Vrindaban claims that there is much more going on. Karen reports:

Karen Maxwell (KM): Steve Bryant was a former member at New Vrindaban, the hare Krishna community in Marshall county. He is still a follower of the Krishna principles, but says that since the death of Prabhupada, in 1977, the Spiritual leader, a scramble for power took place, and Bryant claims eleven secretaries under Prabhupada took over.

Sulocana das: Since 1977 these new self appointed gurus have made 3-4-5 hundred disciples each, so right now they hold the power of the movement in their hands. They hold the money; they hold the properties; but they don't hold the morality. The general assembly of devotees are trying to kick them out and that's what this meeting is all about.

Richard Gravely (ISKCON's PR man): One has to understand who is a guru. The guru is one who can teach the science of Krsna and he can control his own senses. There's no talk of anything like that. I think if you asked any devotee here, they would say that the gurus we have in our movement now, who are actively spreading Krsna Consciousness, are in very good standing. But it's just like in any religion. We have examples even in Catholicism of a Pope deviating from the spiritual path--many Popes--not just one, and in other religions as well. We are trying to follow very strict principles and for some people it is difficult sometimes.

KM: Bryant says it's common knowledge that two of the self-appointed gurus fell from grace by engaging in sexual relations with disciples and drug use--something he says no one will deny.

RG: We have two instances in our movement--as we investigated them--and found that there were moral improprieties in two individuals. This happened several years ago, and they were asked to resign from their position, and their disciples--persons who had come to them for spiritual instruction--were directed to other qualified spiritual masters or teachers.

KM: But Bryant says it doesn't end there. He says that there is further disintegration in the Governing body--that one guru was found to be engaging in homosexual relations.

RG: This is just simply an issue that is under investigation--of an individual--and that's where it stands right now.

KM: Bryant remains in protective custody under sheriff Don Borderkirchner... (last sentence cut)