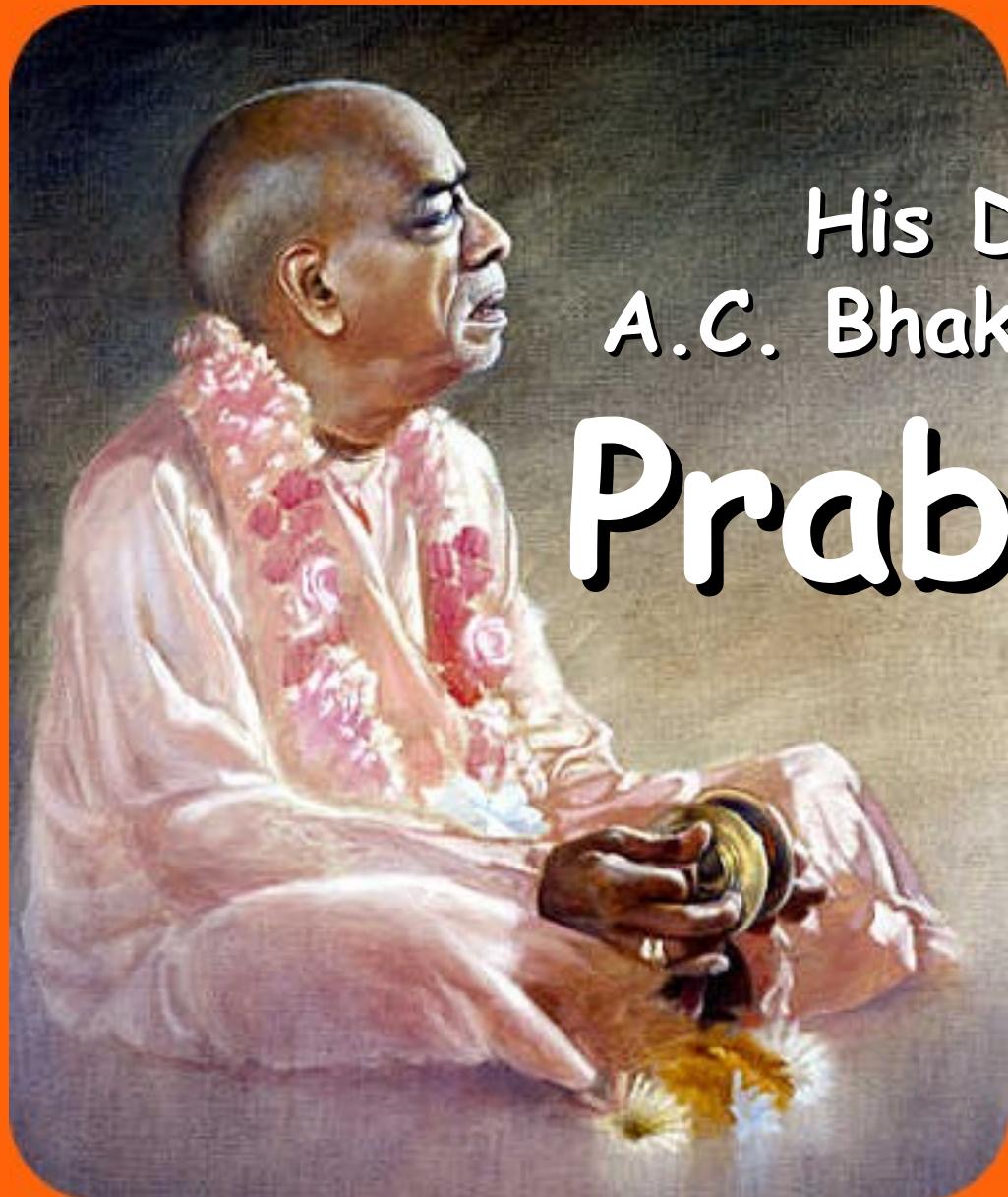


A life in service to God and humanity

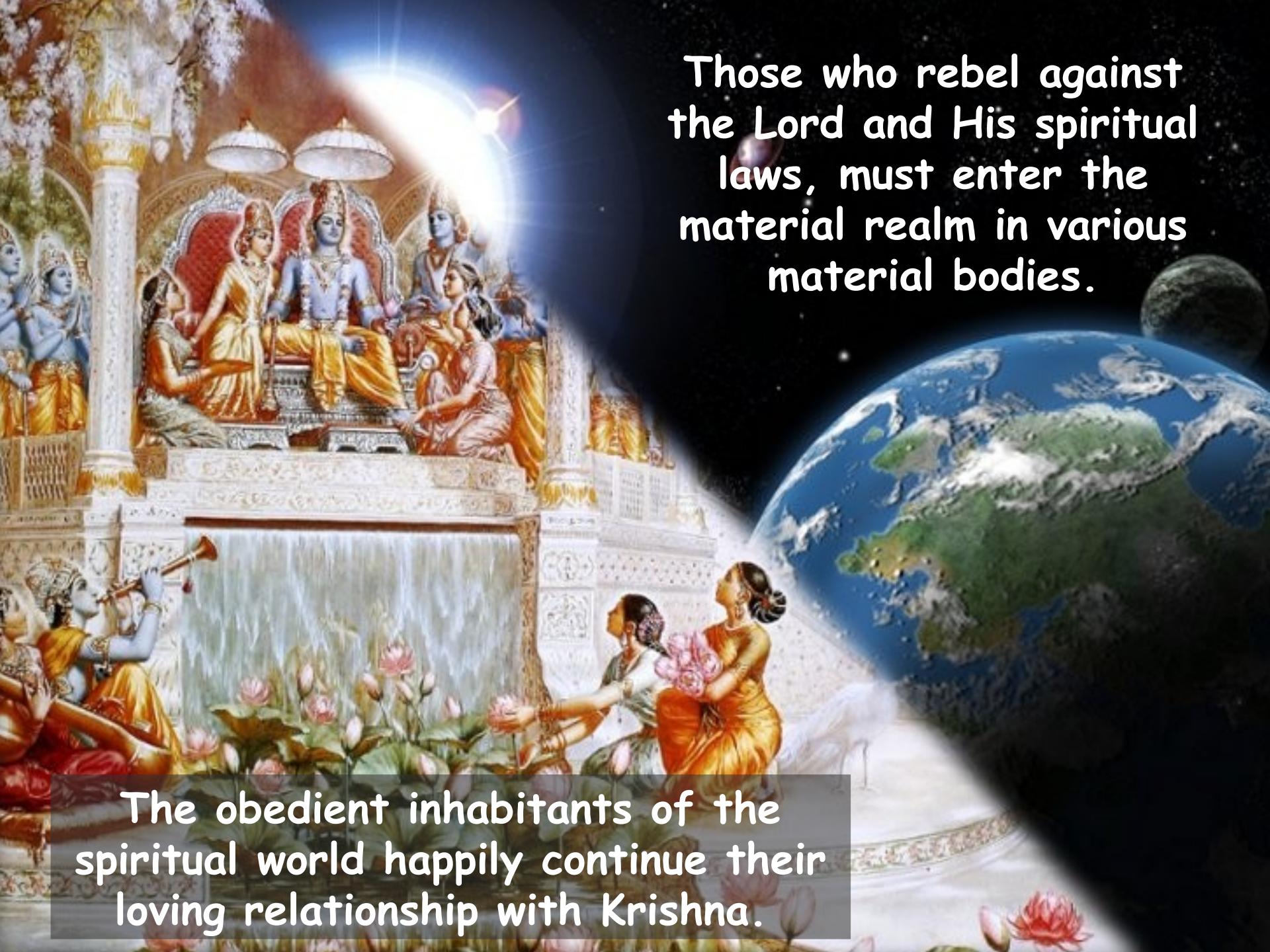


His Divine Grace  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

**Prabhupada**



Long, long ago, at the dawn of time, the Lord created the material universes with all the planets and living beings.



Those who rebel against the Lord and His spiritual laws, must enter the material realm in various material bodies.

The obedient inhabitants of the spiritual world happily continue their loving relationship with Krishna.



# The Vedas - the words of God

द्विनिः॥ नैतेषु नांता विनिः॥ पेरि स्त्रैव ज्ञेद द्वैः सुरन्त्रिंतरः॥ एत्तदो  
 व्यः सुरन्त्रारं इहारत्तेरारशः हात्तुवाप्ते द्वैः सुरन्त्रिंतरः॥ सुतेत्वि  
 वाच्चुमद्वा नांते धस्मा॥ श्री लांतांगान्त्रिके त्वरं हात्ता श्रावज्य इरहै  
 पेष॥ नर्जहातधमयद्॥ यत्प्राप्तांताण्डित्वे तरिस्त्रैरूपतांत्सामाय  
 उत्तेनारेष्व होरूपक्विः दध्वांश्चयानत्यन्त्रा चुवरितोरूपरौ सुष्ठाव  
 स्मा॥ सेमारिदौरूपइन्नोइः॥ ३॥ नैनं पुनांता ज्ञविनिः॥ पेररिइस्त्रैरूप  
 द्वैः अप्तेद द्वैः सुर-नरित्यितोरूपरौः अवारत्ता सुतेत्विवाच्चुमद्वा नै  
 न्त्रा रेध्वैरूपस्मा॥ श्री लांतांगान्त्रिकृहौरूपरौ सर्वाग्निरेष्पेष॥  
 ५॥ यत्वाहात्ता पेरत्वेत्वित्वे त्वरं सुतेत्वान्त्रिकृहौरूपहैत्विः दध्वांग्नेष

नत्यांज्ञेषु वैतेरा द्विवेत्सा प्रसन्नद्वित्रः ॥३॥ वारश्च नृनेषु तां निरावित्रिः ॥ पे  
 रिस्त्रेव अद्वेषः सुरत्रिं तरैः ॥ हा सुत्रेत्वं वैष्णवेषु मदौ मांज्रं धर्मसा श्रीरोत्तमा  
 लोत्रिं रुत्रं चात्मेज्ञावेषश्च रेत्वा वयेत्वैरेत्प्रपे ॥ हा दीर्घीमसाक्षीः सुरेषु  
 वात्साद्वेष इद्वेज्ञो इद्वेज्ञो इः ॥ दिज्ञो इः नृनां पुनोत्तां अवित्रिः परि लेवासु  
 द्वा लेवां ज्ञादो द्वा ॥ सुरत्रिः त्रेता रहेरातेरो तेरो ॥ ॥५॥ एकज्ञातिमां ज्ञात्साक्षी  
 इत्सामांज्र रुषां वृषां हेरो इहे इरै ॥ हेरो इः रोज्ञां वोदस्मां अन्तिं ज्ञान  
 चित्रेदात्रै ॥ नृनां ज्ञावारं सप्तव्यष्वा व्याग्रं व्यो योम् व्येयो ॥ रणाइ नौ ता  
 त्यानिं ब्रह्मवंतम्भासे द्वासे द्वाता सद्वातपि ज्ञान्याः पितां महिषसरथपालि  
 नौ ज्ञानोः ॥ एतो नौ नौ परिष्ठेवो जिरुद्धयेष्वाइ देष्वो इहेष्वाइ

The humans and other intelligent beings received spiritual wisdom in form of the Vedic literatures.

Spoken by Krishna Himself, the Vedic wisdom had been passed by aural reception from generation to generation of topmost saints and great ascetics...



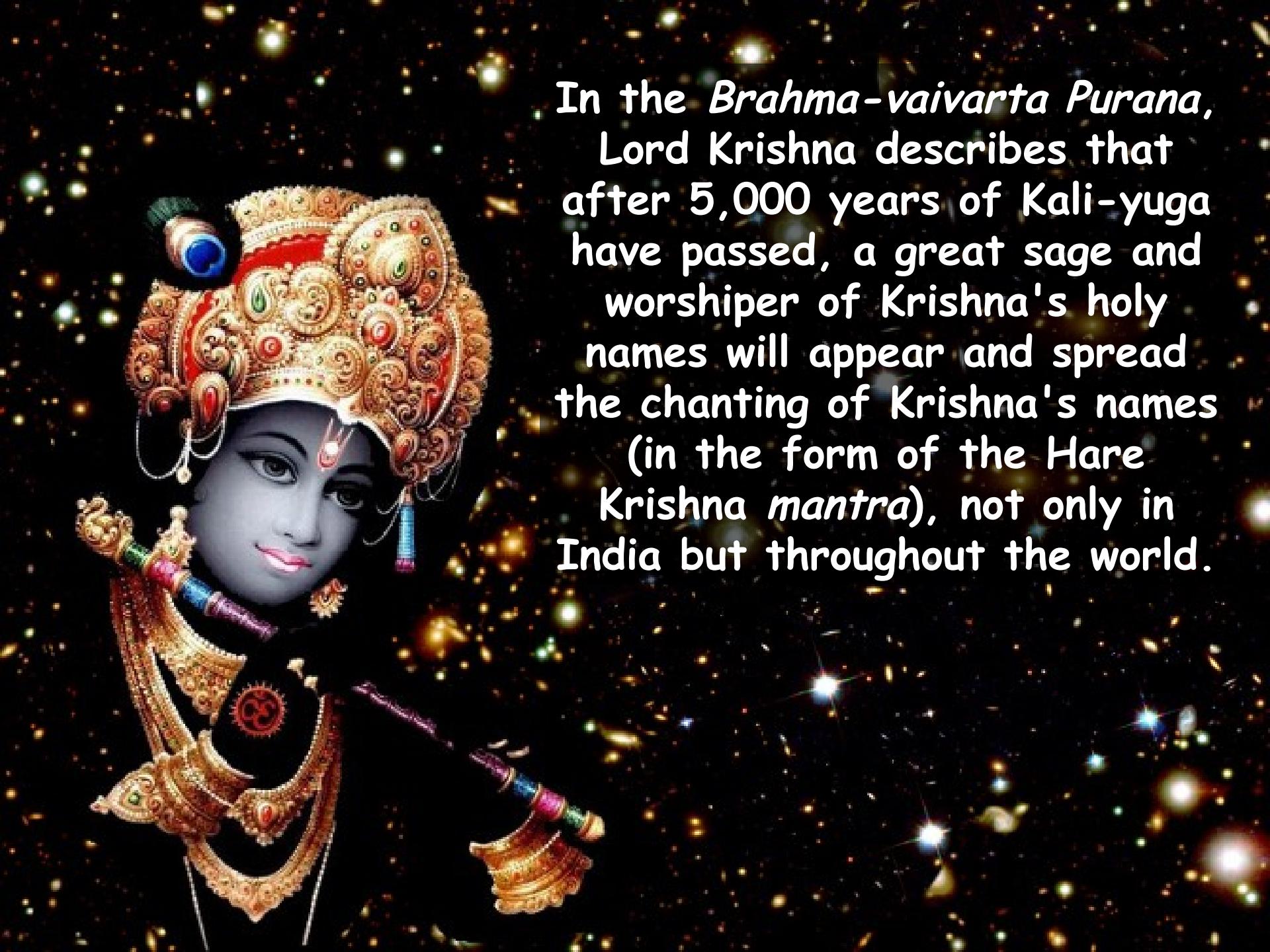
...until it was written down by Srila Vyasa Deva, who was empowered by Krishna, more than 5,000 years ago.



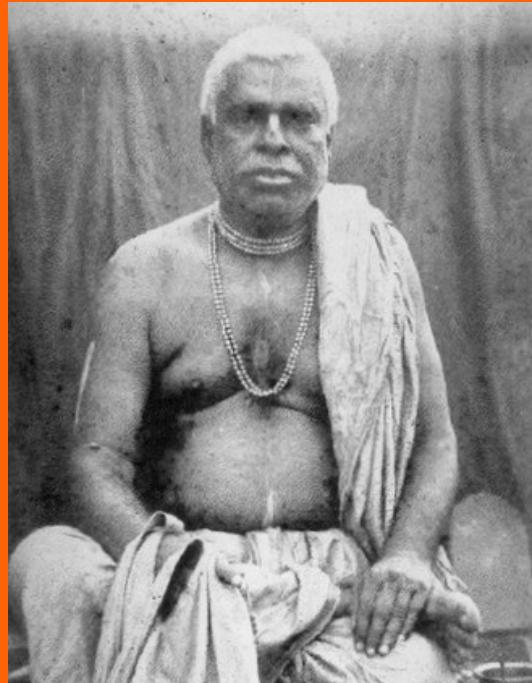
In order to preserve the timeless Vedic wisdom for eternity, Lord Krishna created a chain of spiritual masters who have passed it to our hands.

Out of them, one outstanding for his spiritual acumen, compassion, knowledge and determination was predicted thousands of years ago.

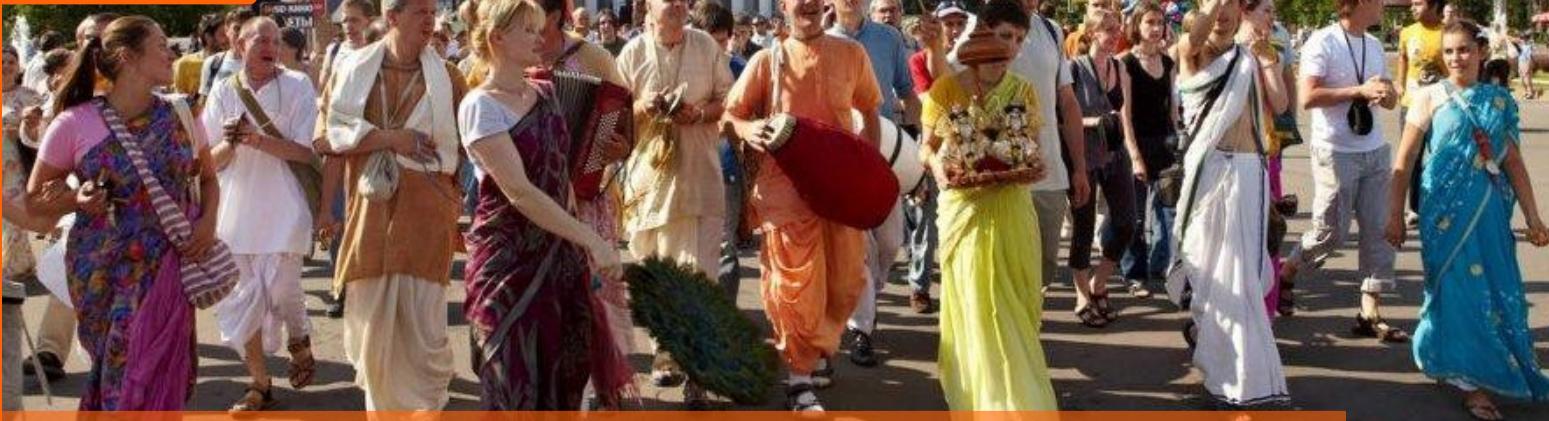




In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purana*,  
Lord Krishna describes that  
after 5,000 years of Kali-yuga  
have passed, a great sage and  
worshiper of Krishna's holy  
names will appear and spread  
the chanting of Krishna's names  
(in the form of the Hare  
Krishna mantra), not only in  
India but throughout the world.



Later, in the 1800's,  
Bhaktivinoda Thakura, a great  
devotee, predicted in his  
magazine *Sajjana-toshani*:



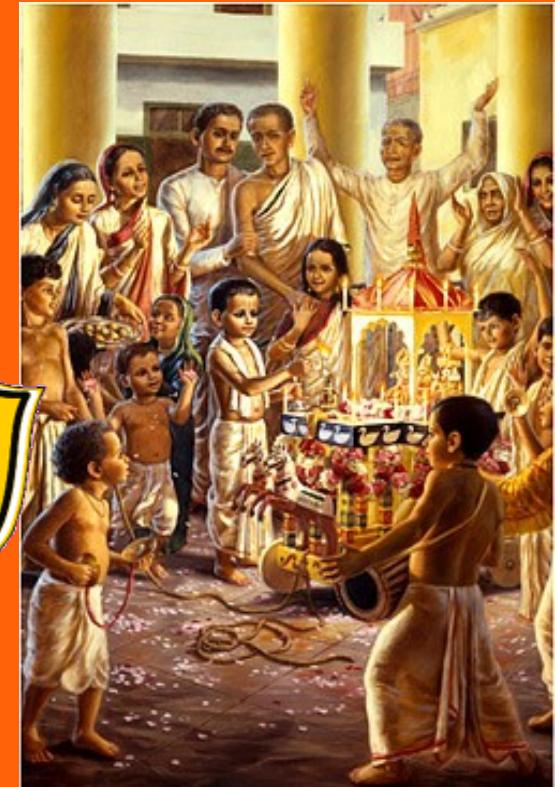
*"Soon there will be a time when chanting of  
Krishna's name will be heard in England, France,  
Russia, Germany and America."*

In answer to these prayers and predictions, in the year of 1896, there appeared Abhay Charan De, later known as His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.



Calcutta 1896

Srila Prabhupada's father once bought him a small cart to pull the Deity of Lord Jagannatha (Krishna).



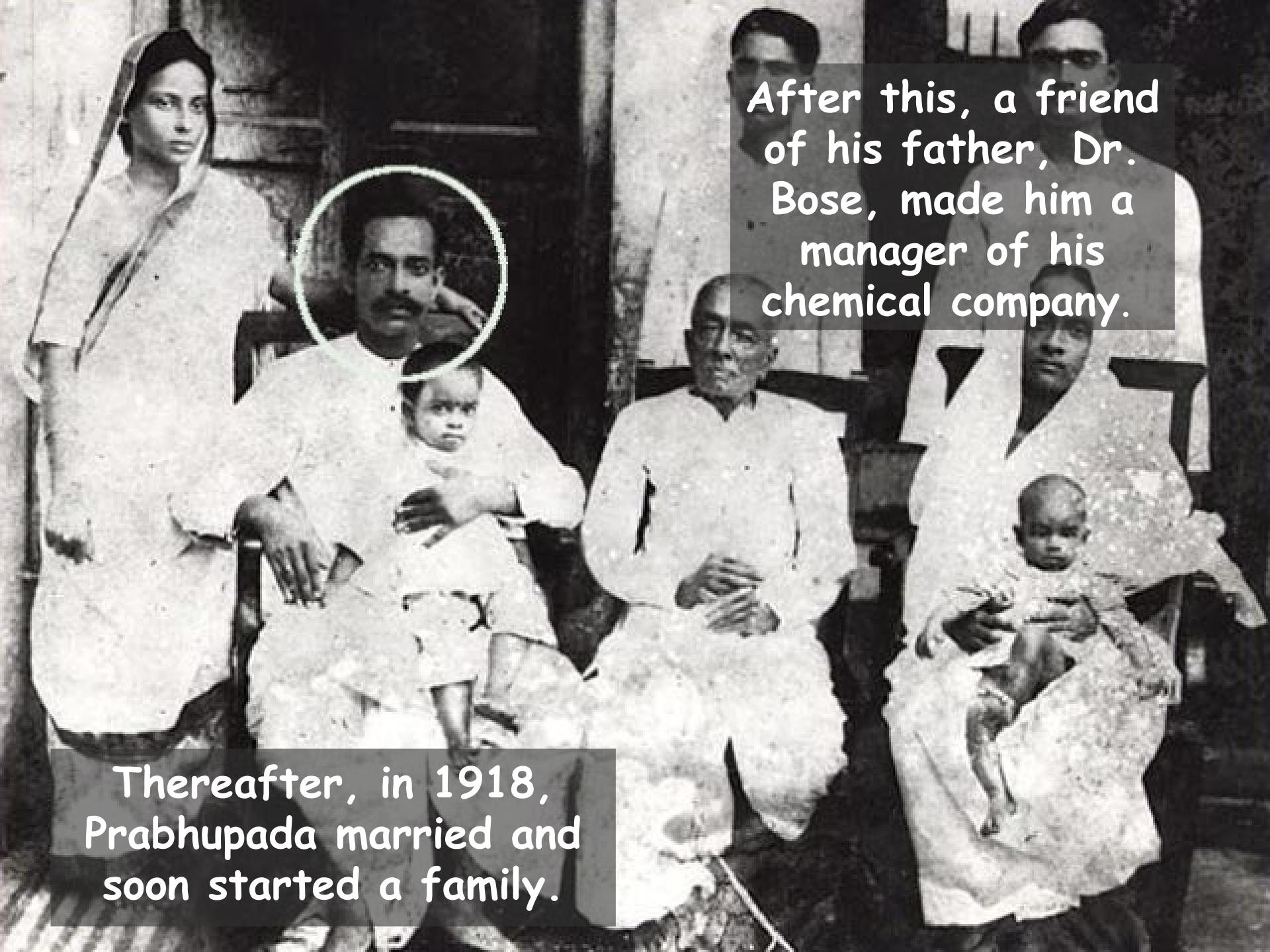
So, Prabhupada would organize little festivals in his neighborhood. Even then, among his playmates, Srila Prabhupada was always considered the leader.



Later, he refused to accept his diploma from that college as a protest against British oppression, although he had actually completed all the requirements for the degree.

Prabhupada later attended Scottish Church College in Calcutta, which was administered by the British.

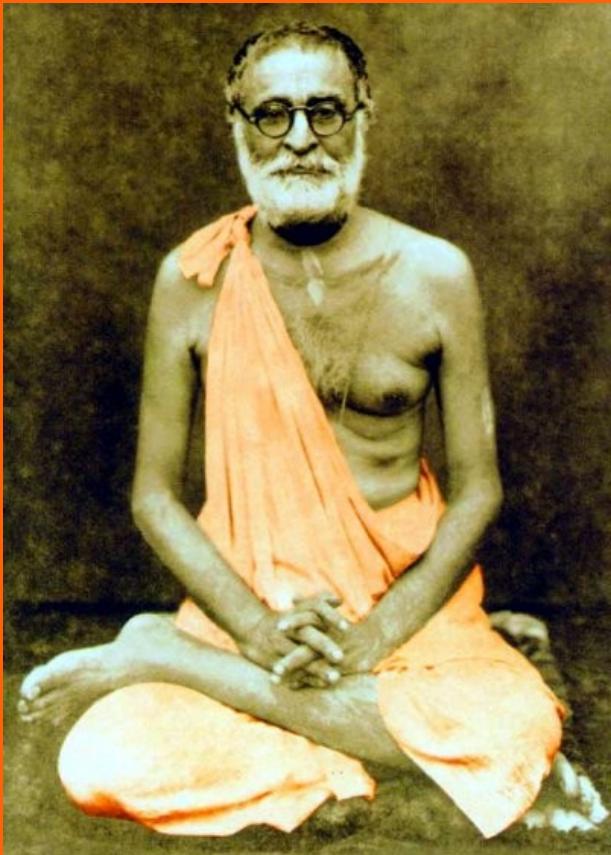




Thereafter, in 1918,  
Prabhupada married and  
soon started a family.

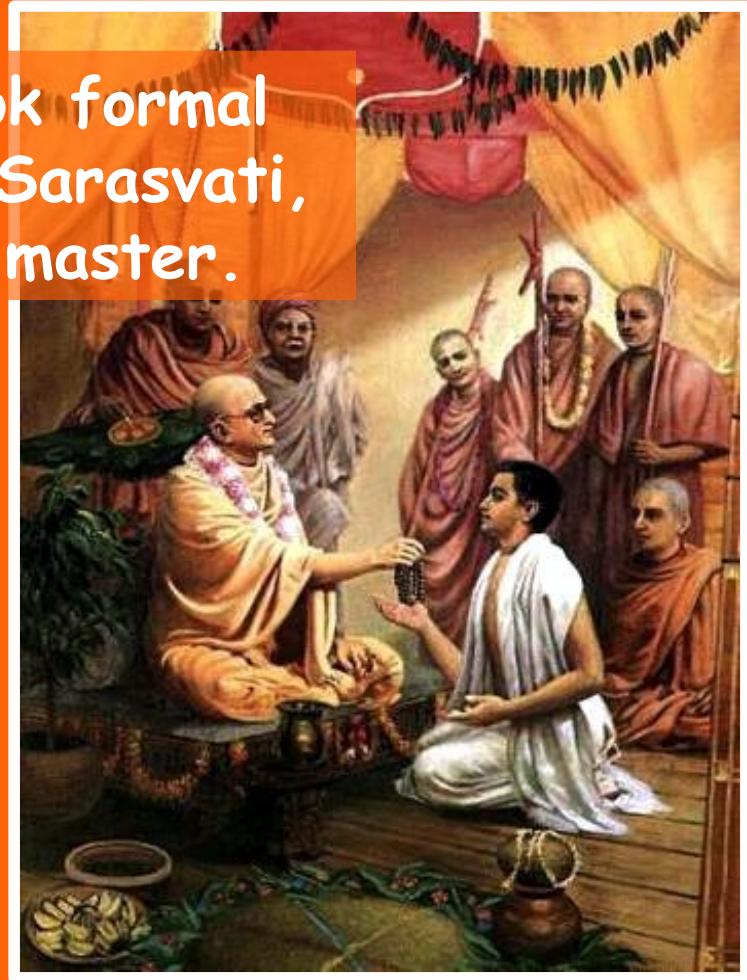
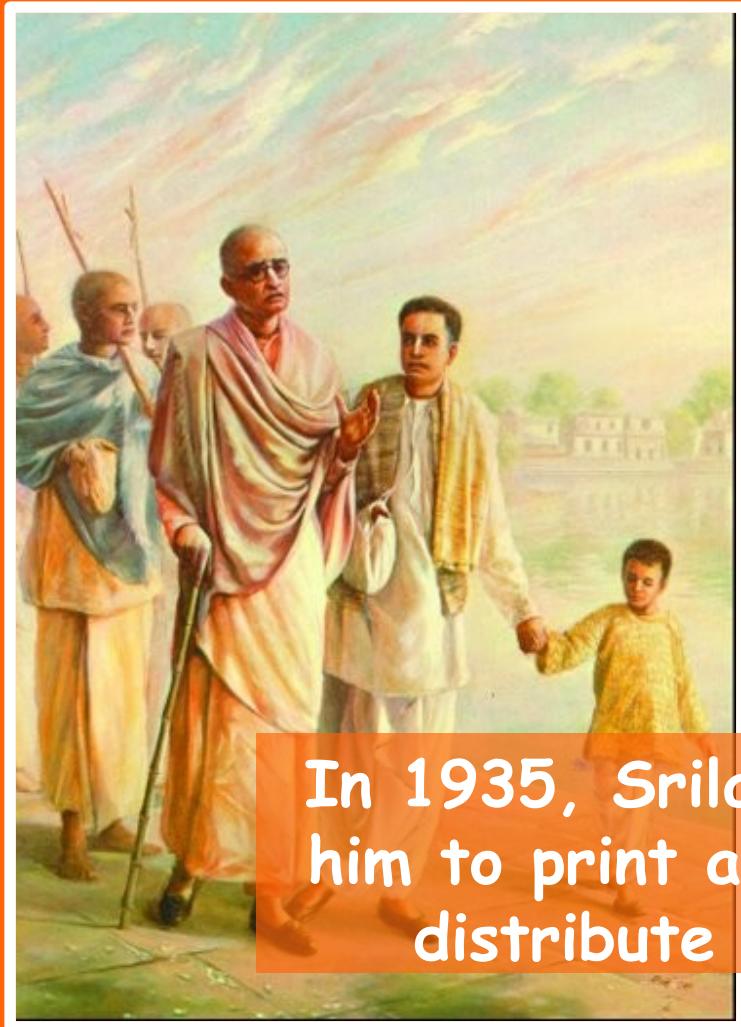
After this, a friend  
of his father, Dr.  
Bose, made him a  
manager of his  
chemical company.

It was in 1922 when Srila Prabhupada met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, for the first time.



Bhaktisiddhanta told Srila Prabhupada: "You are a nice young man, and you know English; therefore, you should preach this mission of Lord specifically to the English-speaking countries in the Western world."

In 1933, Srila Prabhupada took formal initiation from Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, accepting him as his spiritual master.

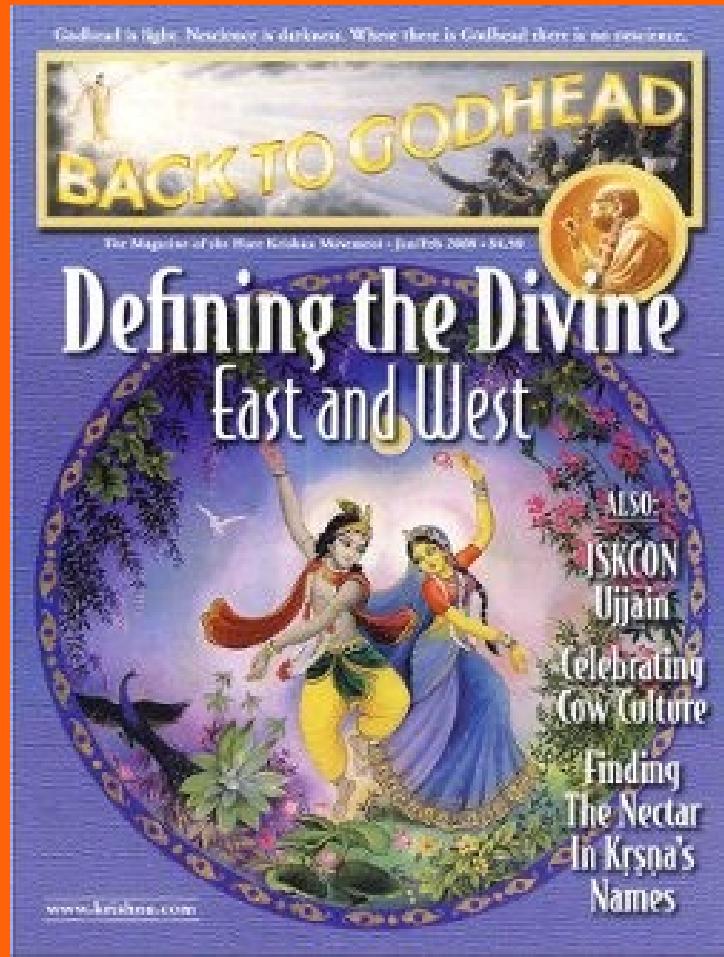


In 1935, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati told him to print as many books as possible and to distribute them throughout the world.

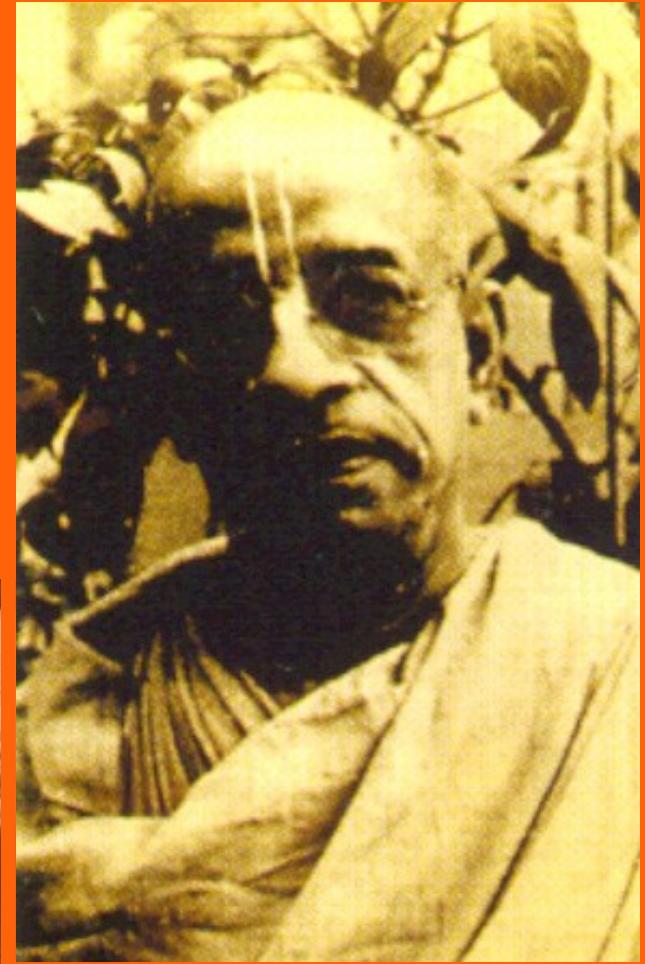
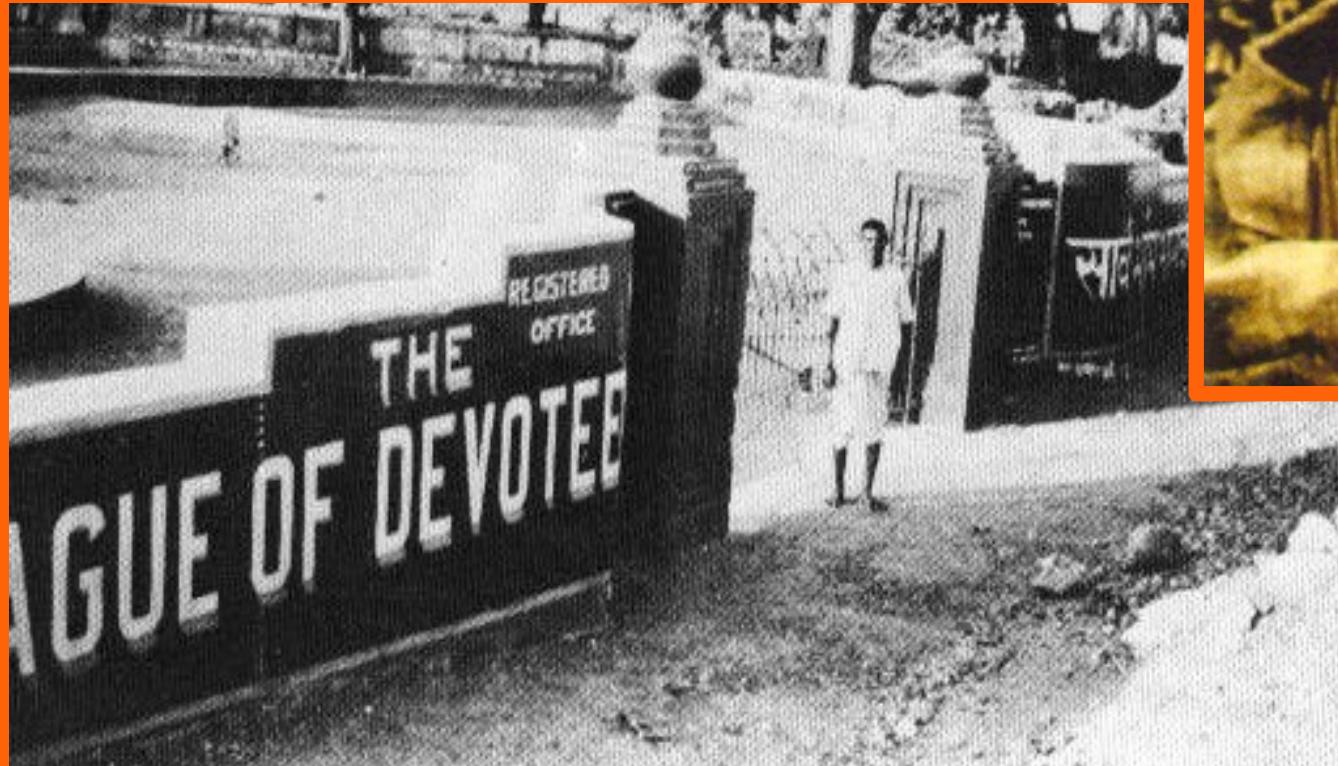
Following the desire of his spiritual master, Prabhupada began publishing his *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1944. He wrote them himself, had them printed, and even rode into town on the bus to distribute these one-page sheets. But he never stopped.

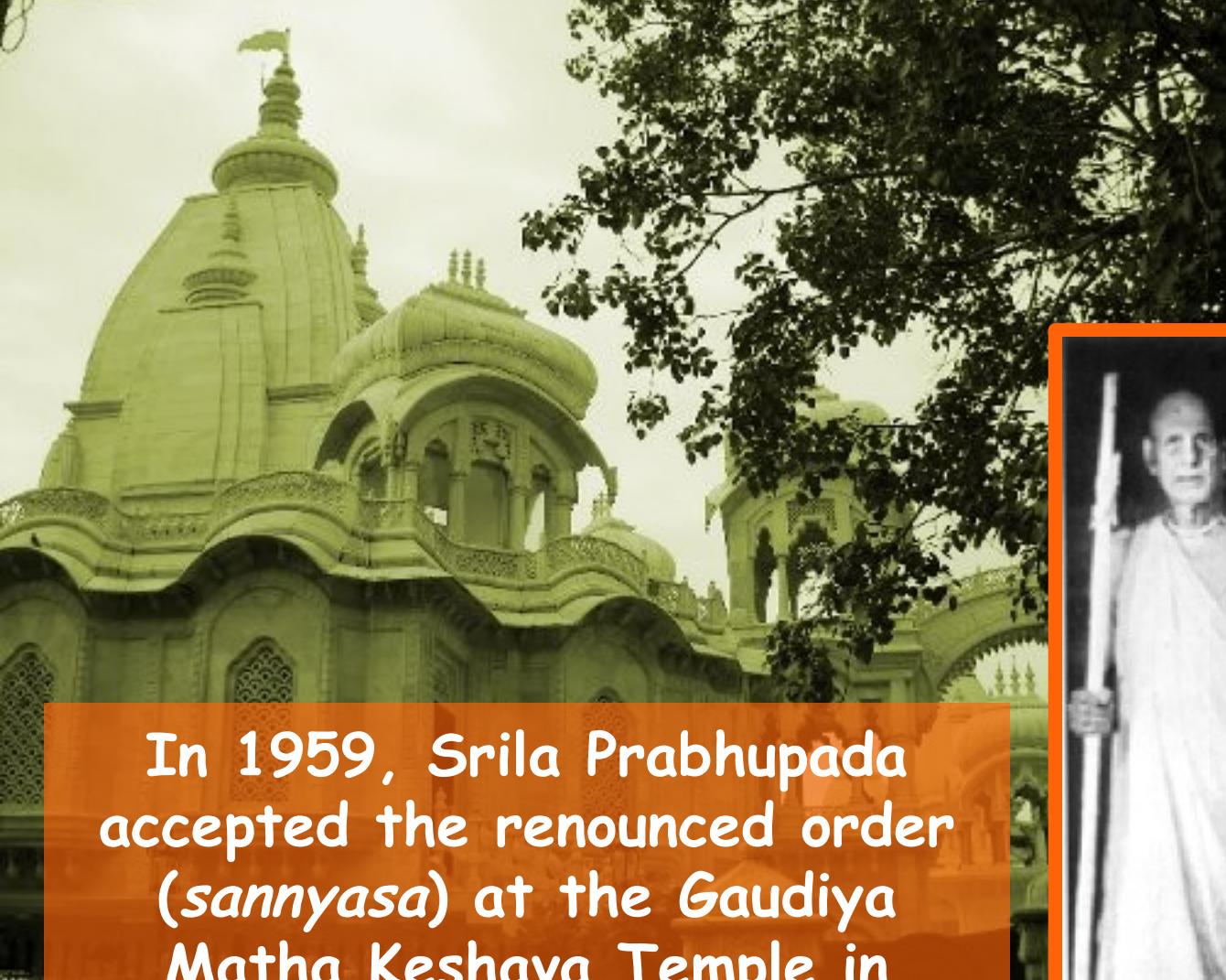


To this day, the *Back to Godhead* magazine has been published monthly by his faithful followers and distributed in many languages.

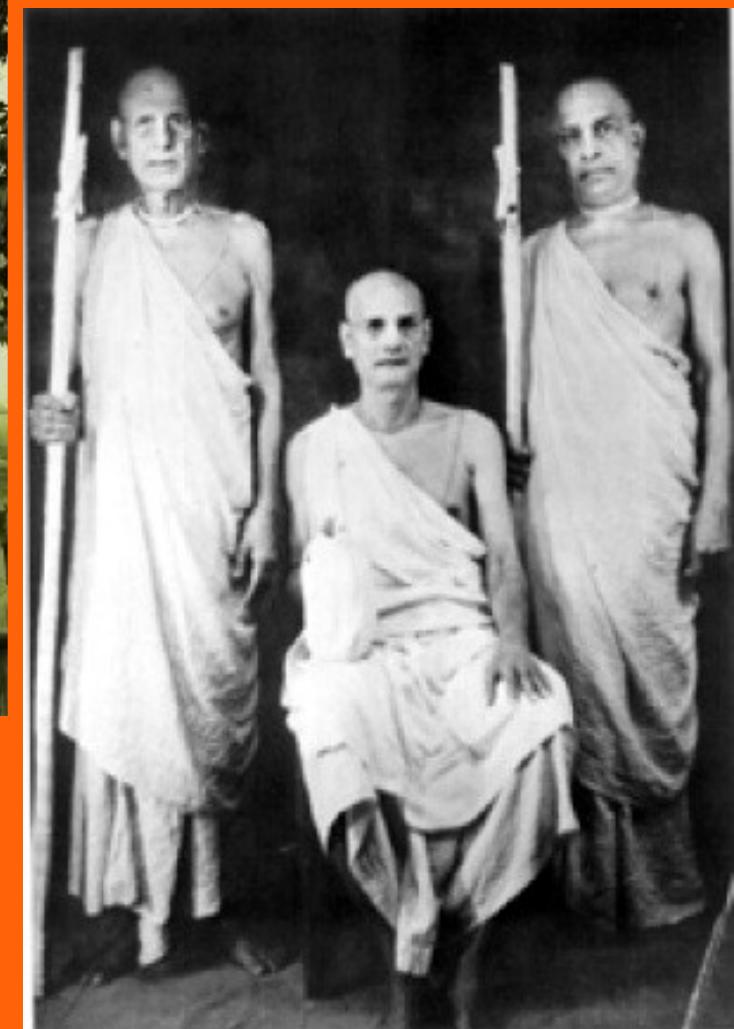


In 1953, he had started his *League of Devotees*, a small organization of Krishna-conscious people. This was a forerunner of what was to be *The International Society for Krishna Consciousness*.



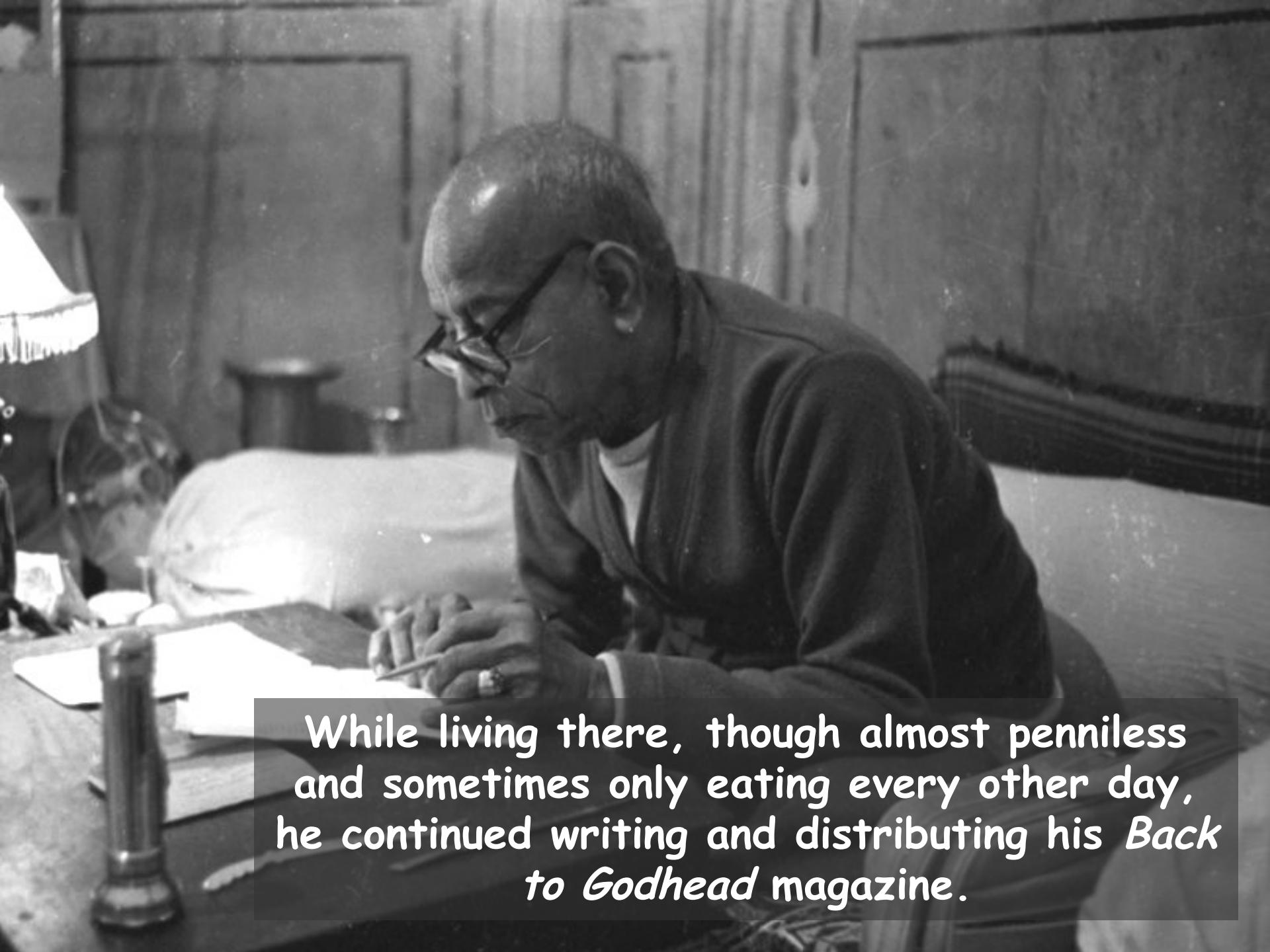


In 1959, Srila Prabhupada accepted the renounced order (*sannyasa*) at the Gaudiya Matha Keshava Temple in Mathura to execute the order of his spiritual master by preaching and writing in the English language.



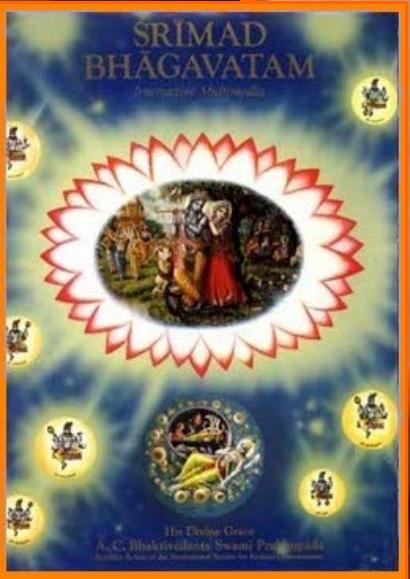
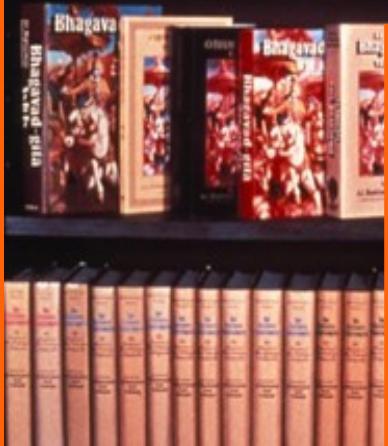
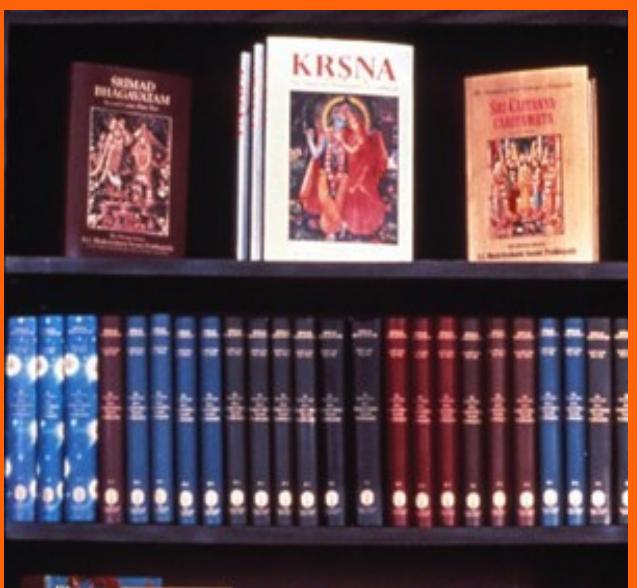


Thereafter, he took up residence in Vrindavana, the land of Krishna's birth. After some years, he occupied a room in the Radha-Damodara temple.

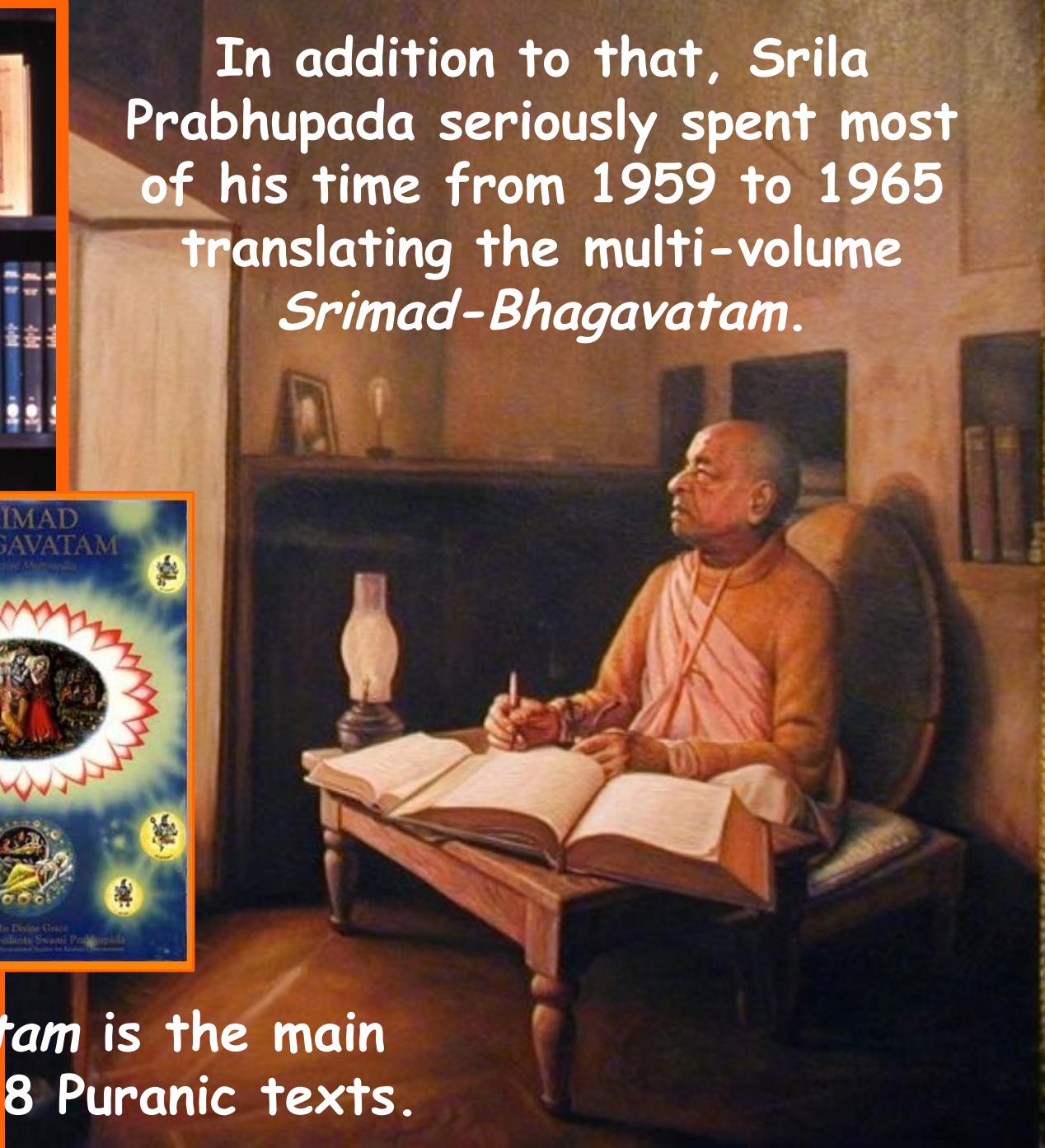


While living there, though almost penniless and sometimes only eating every other day, he continued writing and distributing his *Back to Godhead* magazine.

In addition to that, Srila Prabhupada seriously spent most of his time from 1959 to 1965 translating the multi-volume *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.



*Srimad-Bhagavatam* is the main scripture of the 18 Puranic texts.

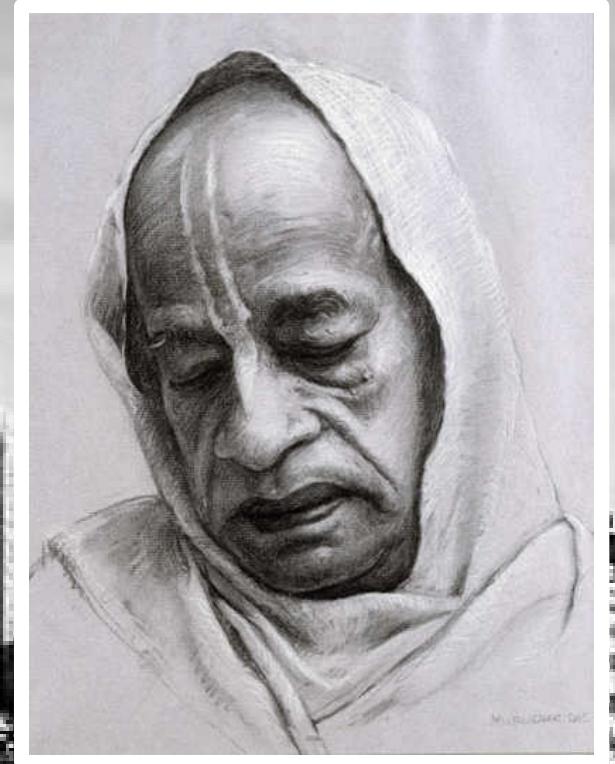


By 1965 he had raised funds to publish the first three volumes of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.



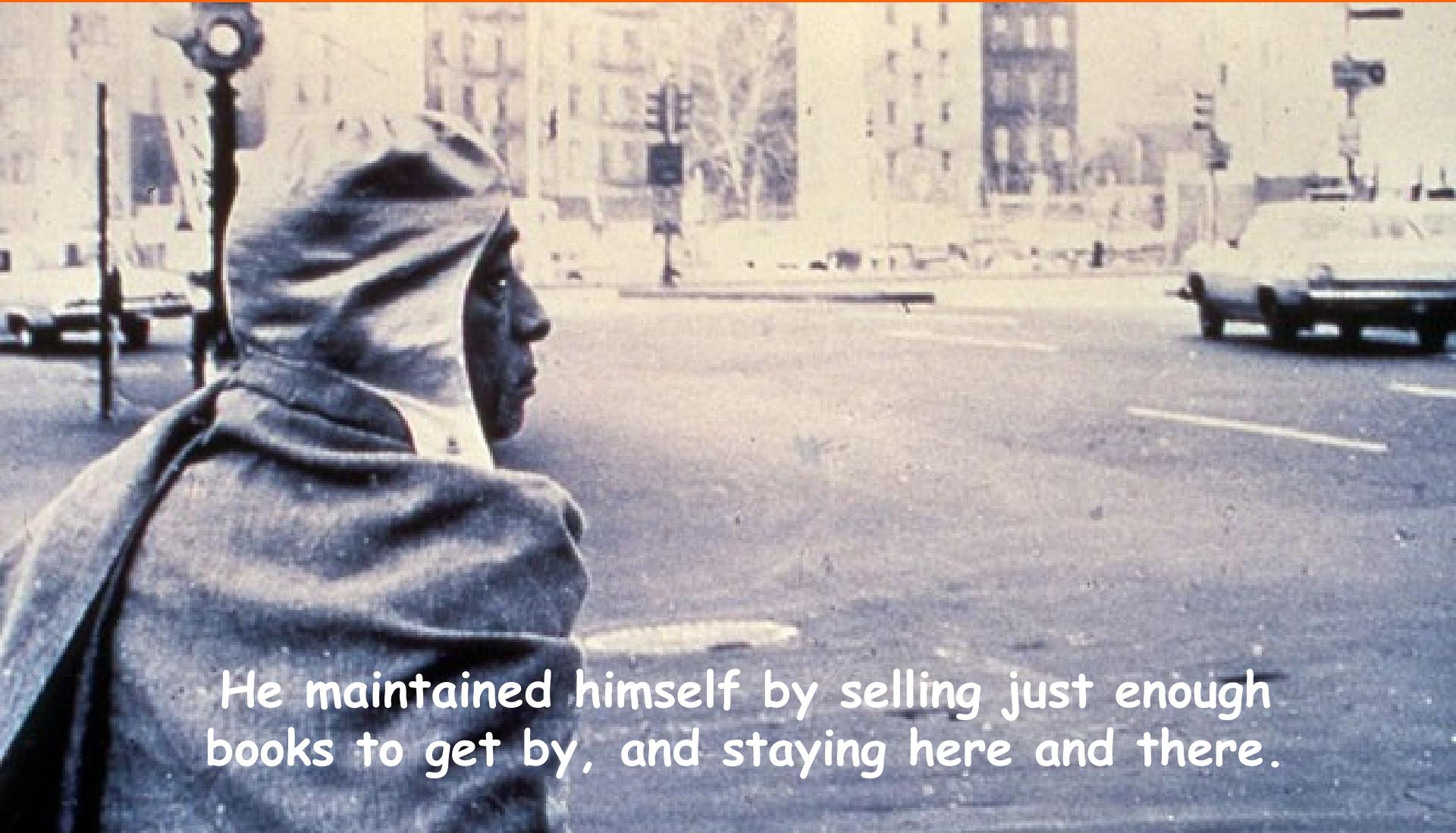
Armed with this, Prabhupada felt ready to finally carry out the instructions his spiritual master had given him nearly 40 years earlier. Then he decided to travel to America.

In 1965, Srila Prabhupada reached the shores of the USA on the steamship *Jaladuta*. He arrived with the equivalent of eight dollars in Indian rupees, a pair of hand cymbals, and a small trunk of his books.



During his voyage at sea, Srila Prabhupada suffered two severe heart attacks.

*Not knowing anyone, he thought, "I am an old man. I cannot do very much. But what I can do, let me do in New York City, which is the biggest of all cities in the world."*



He maintained himself by selling just enough books to get by, and staying here and there.



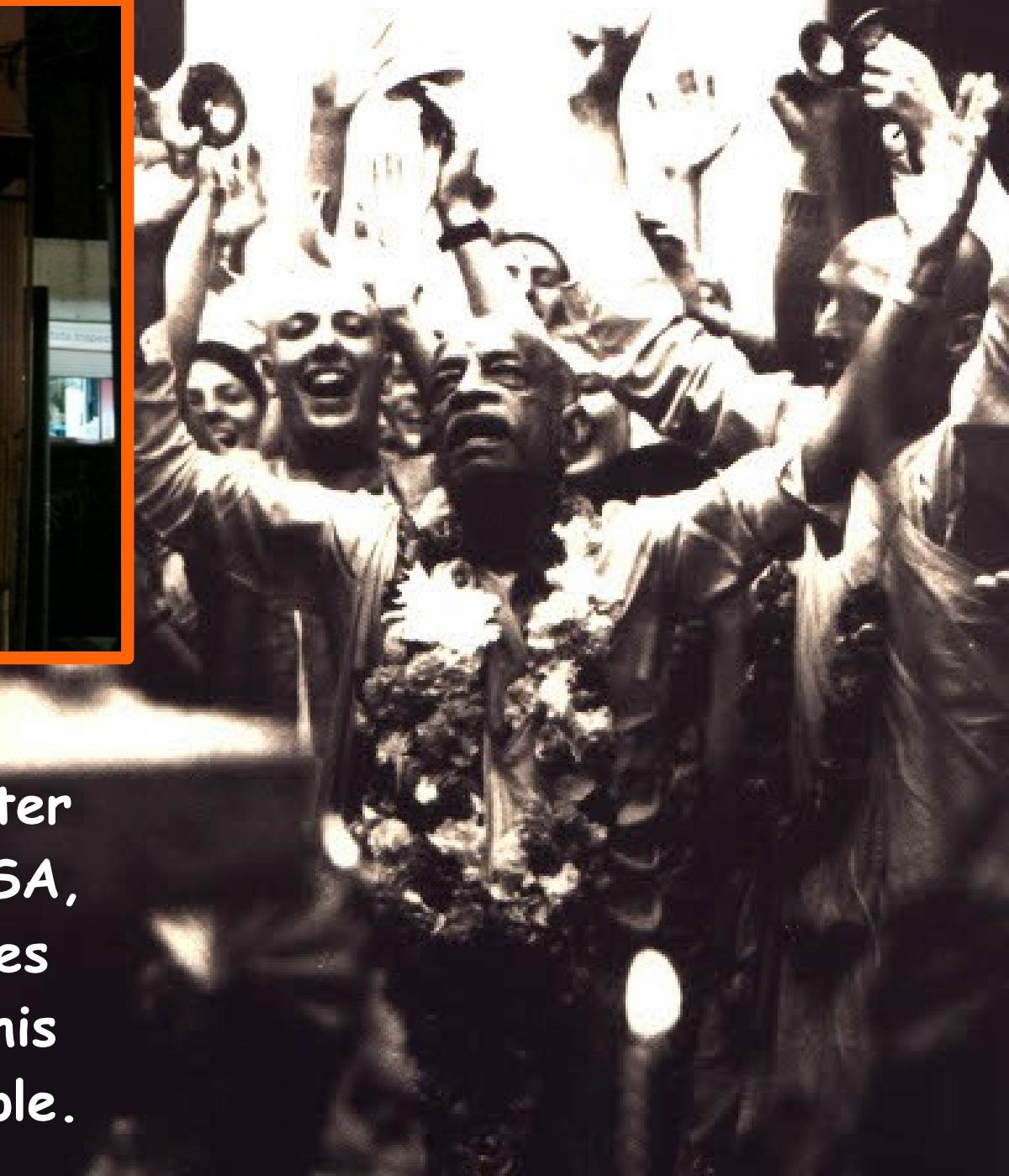
Humbly considering himself to be the most insignificant servant of his spiritual master, Prabhupada pushed on with great determination to try to accomplish many ambitious things before the time he would die.

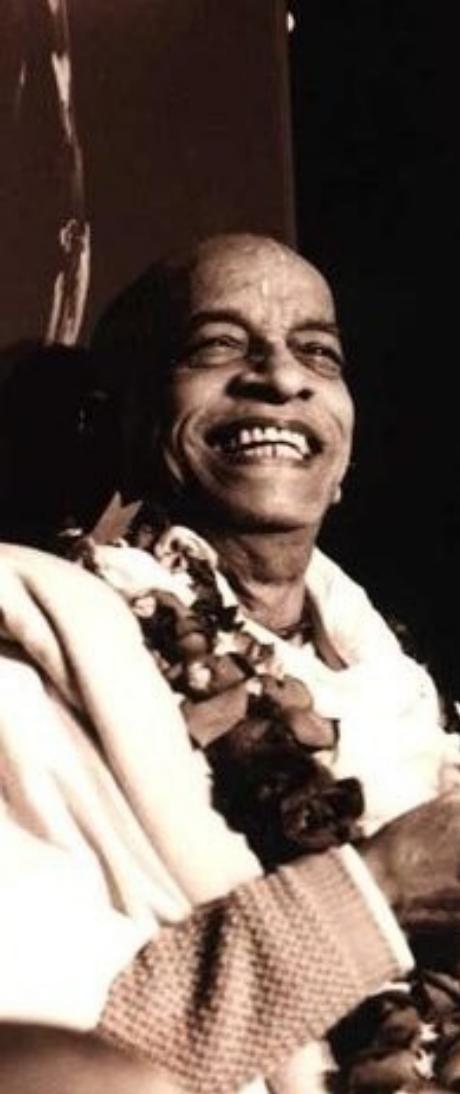


In July of 1966, Prabhupada secured a storefront (called "Matchless Gifts") with an adjoining apartment at 26 Second Avenue. He began holding *Bhagavad-gita* classes at 6 AM and 7 PM.

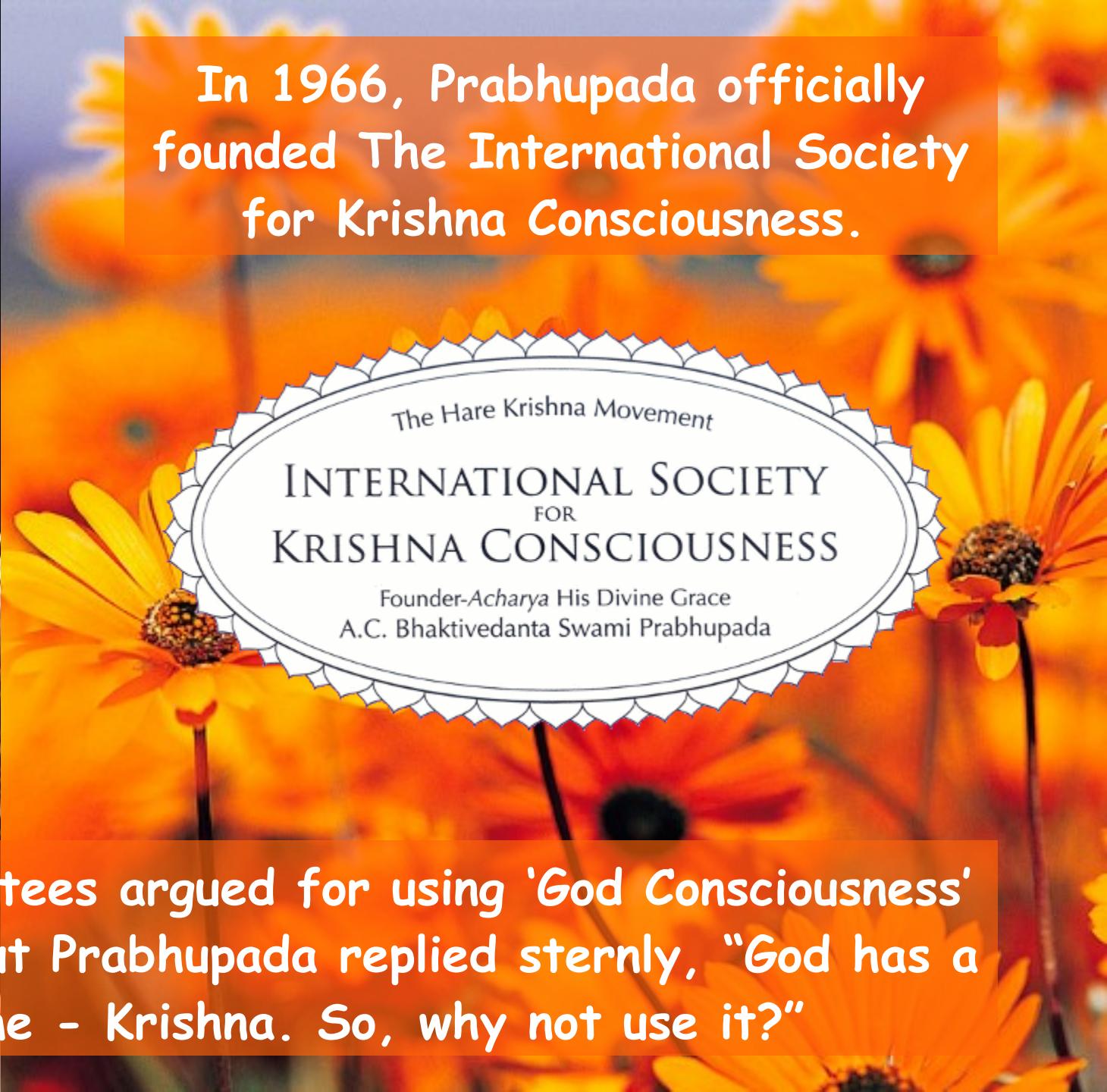


Only ten months after his arrival to the USA, prospective devotees started coming to his Matchless Gifts temple.





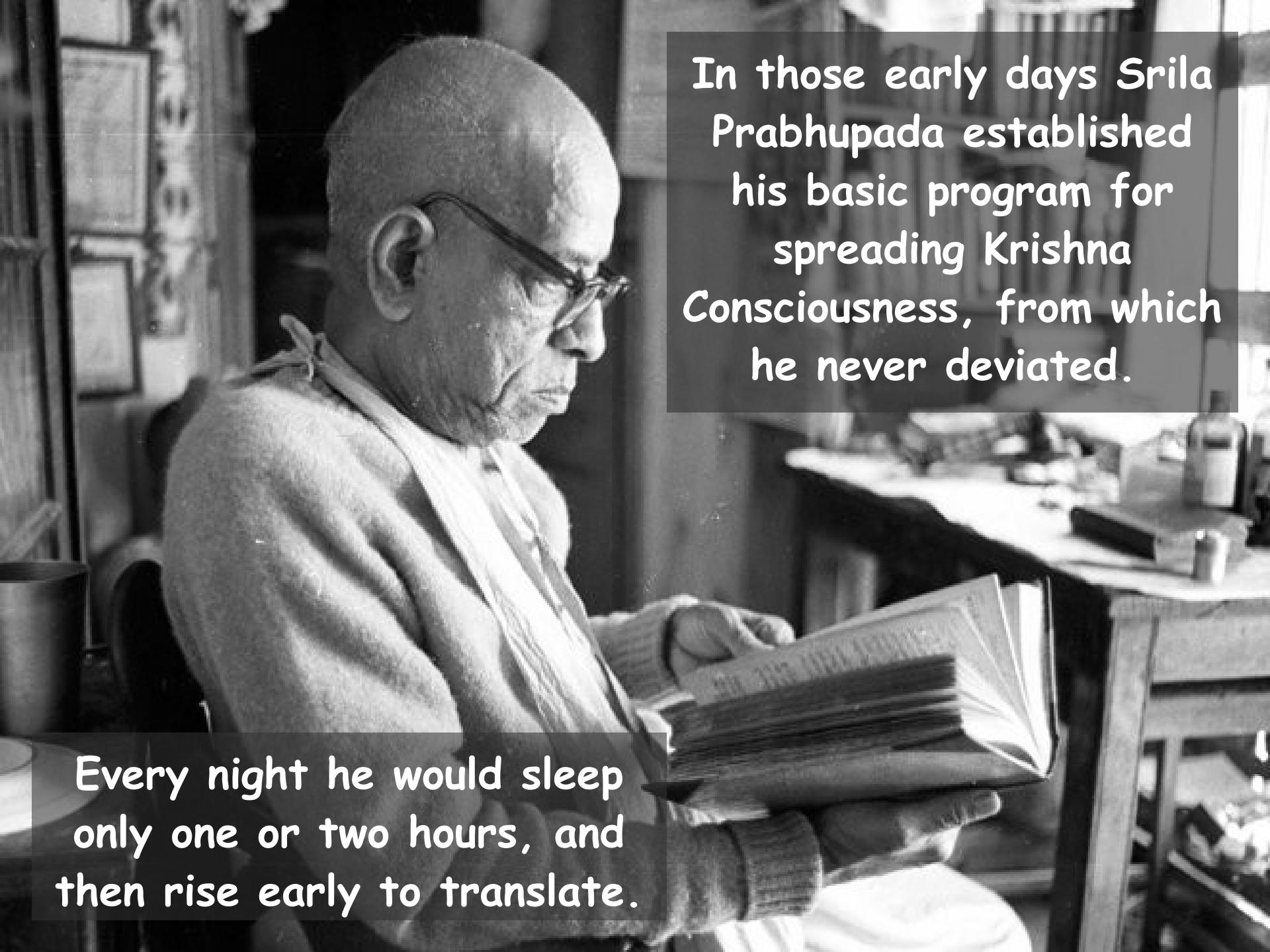
In 1966, Prabhupada officially founded The International Society for Krishna Consciousness.



The Hare Krishna Movement  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY  
FOR  
KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS

Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Some devotees argued for using 'God Consciousness' instead. But Prabhupada replied sternly, "God has a name - Krishna. So, why not use it?"



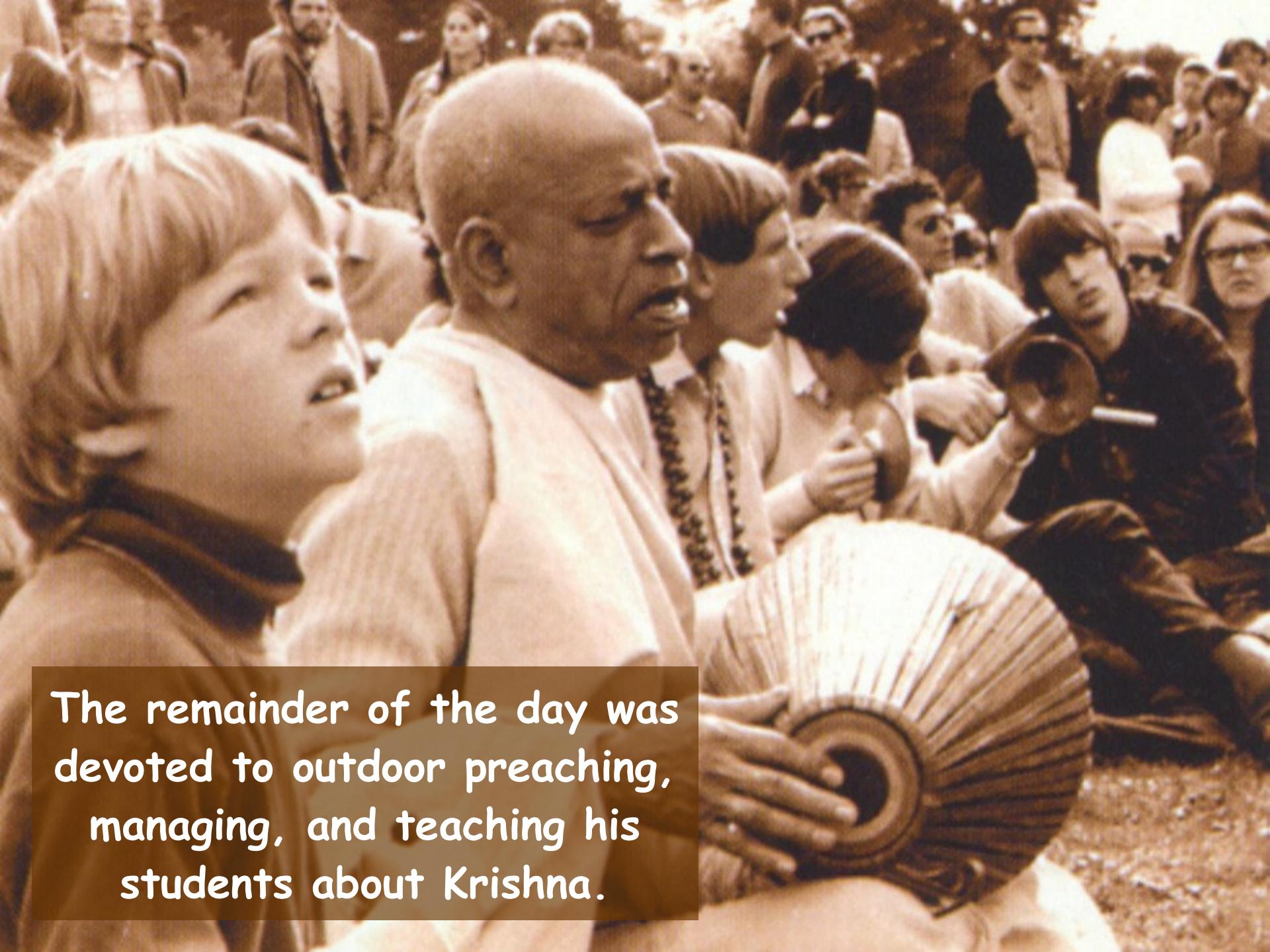
In those early days Srila  
Prabhupada established  
his basic program for  
spreading Krishna  
Consciousness, from which  
he never deviated.

Every night he would sleep  
only one or two hours, and  
then rise early to translate.

In the morning hours  
he would have the  
early morning worship  
and then give lecture.



The remainder of the day was devoted to outdoor preaching, managing, and teaching his students about Krishna.

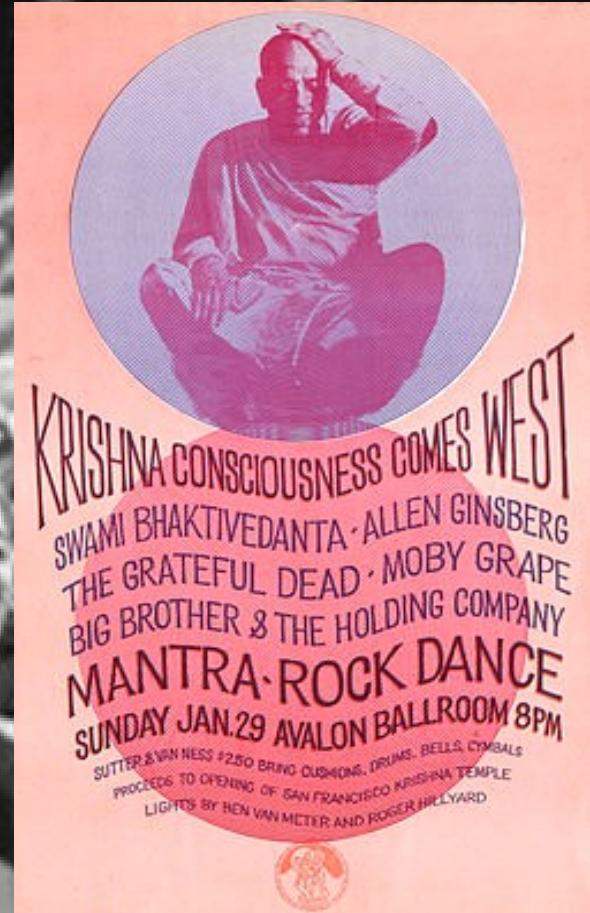




Guided by Srila Prabhupada, two couples among his disciples opened a Hare Krishna temple in San Francisco.

After Matchless Gifts in New York,  
that was the second ISKCON temple.

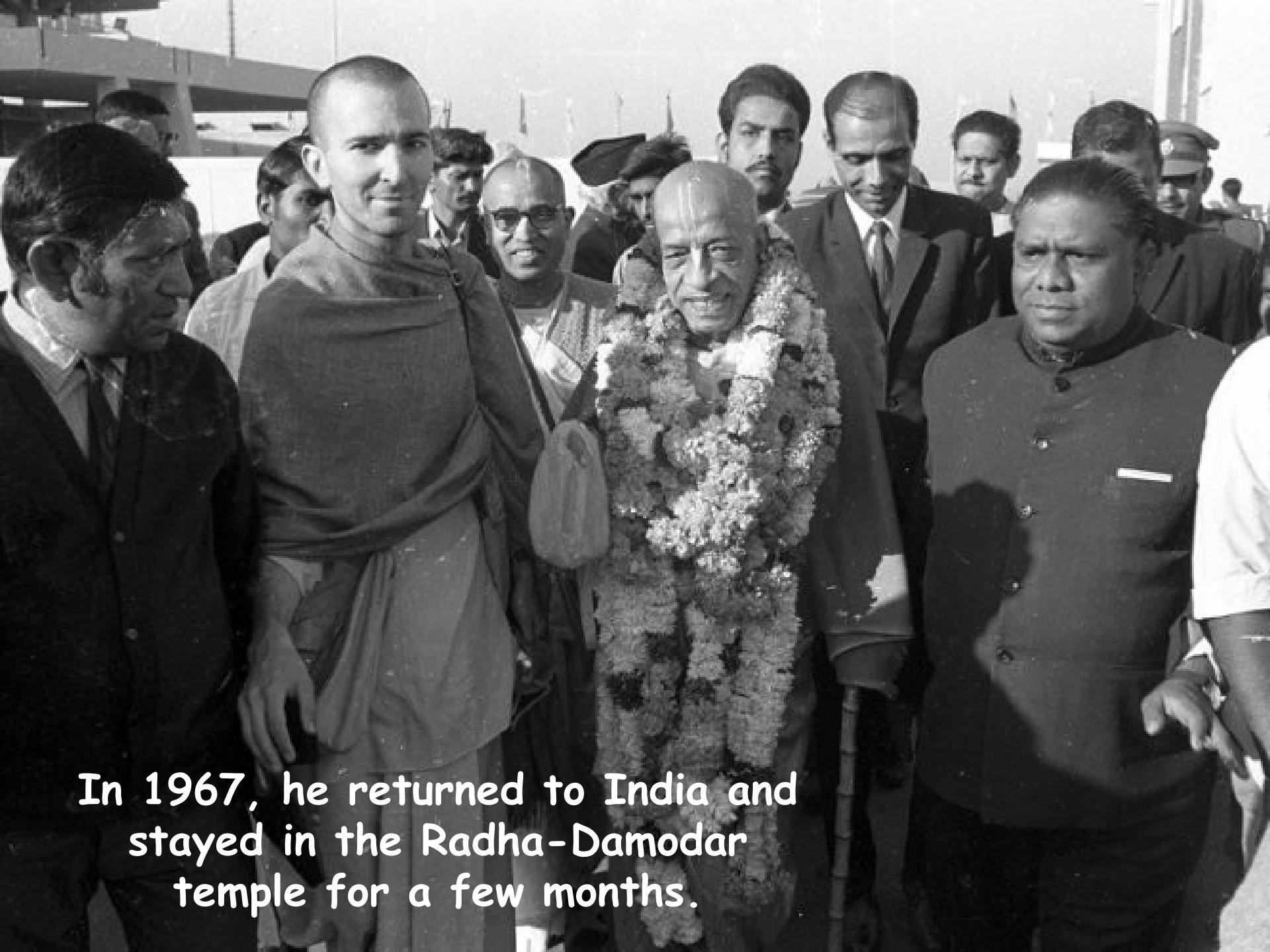
January 29, 1967: all the cutting-edge San Francisco bands (*The Grateful Dead, Moby Grape, Janis Joplin, Big Brother & the Holding Company, Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service*) ...



... had agreed to appear with Srila Prabhupada at the Avalon Ballroom's Mantra-Rock Dance, proceeds from which went to the newly opened local Hare Krishna temple. Thousands of jubilant hippies packed the hall.



His disciples were going out and opening new branches.  
After NY and SF, new temples were opened in Montreal,  
Los Angeles, Detroit, Boston, Philadelphia, Columbus...



In 1967, he returned to India and stayed in the Radha-Damodar temple for a few months.

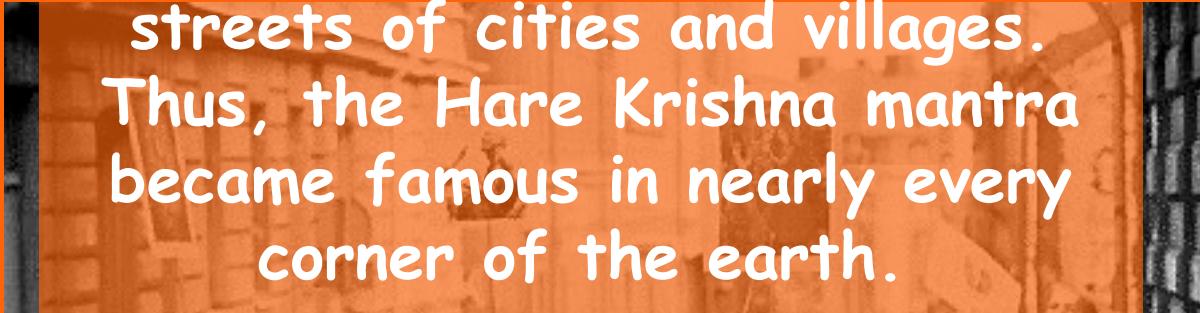
In 1971 he visited Vrindavan with forty western disciples. They traveled across India, setting up public programs for thousands of people. Many Indian people joined his spiritual family.





**Some of Srila Prabhupada's  
unparalleled achievements**

He sent his followers, chanting  
the names of God, into the  
streets of cities and villages.  
Thus, the Hare Krishna mantra  
became famous in nearly every  
corner of the earth.

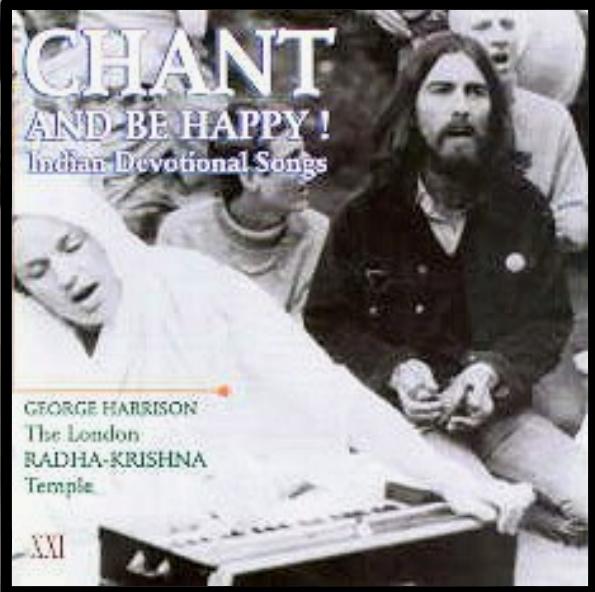




He organised traveling bus parties in the USA and Australia to spread Krishna's teachings, spoken in the days of yore and written 5,000 years ago in the timeless Vedic literatures.



He sent his disciples to London, where they recorded the single, "Hare Krsna Mantra", with George Harrison, in 1969.



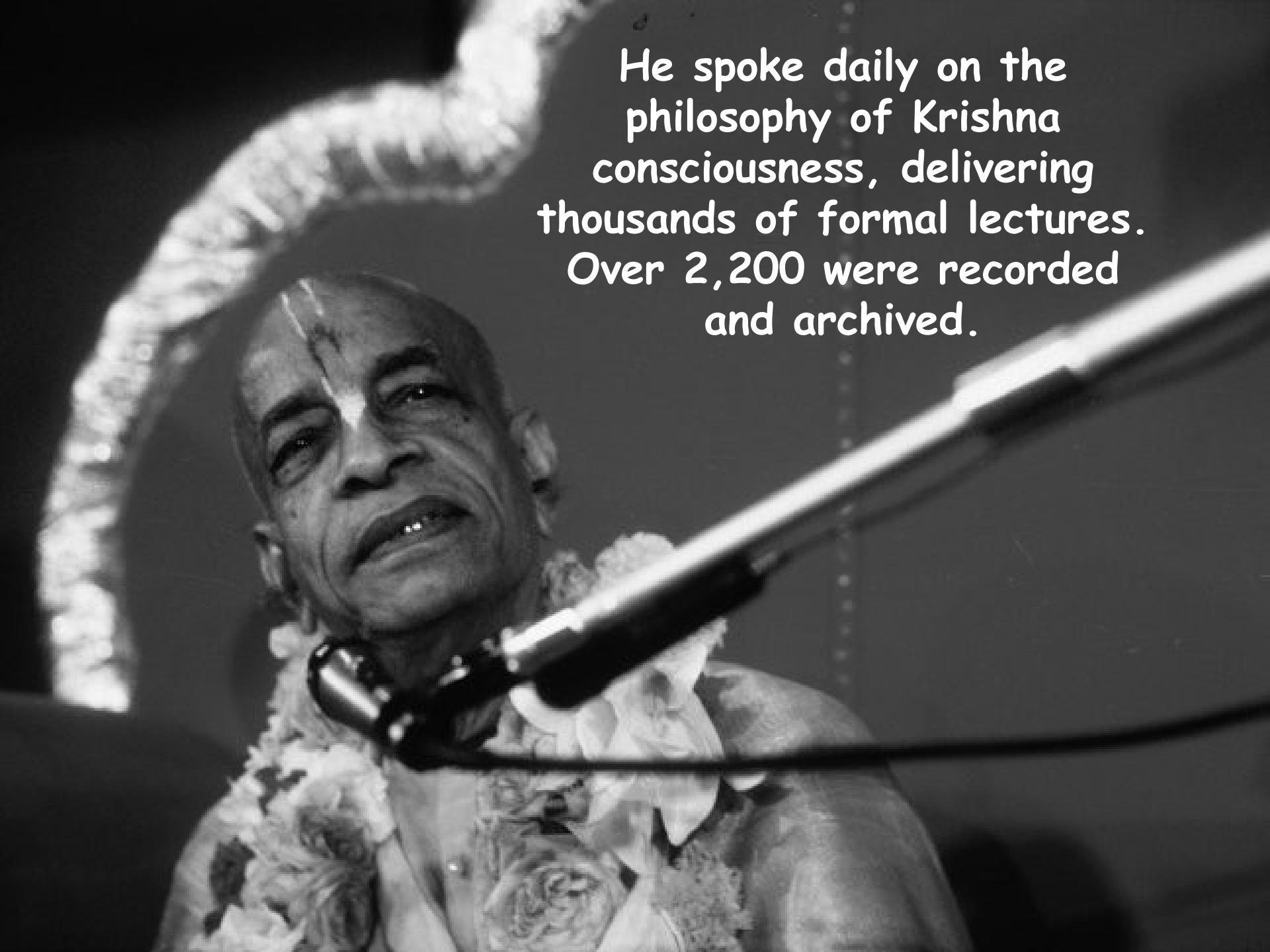
It became the fastest selling of all the Apple Corporation's releases, including those of the Beatles.

Srila Prabhupada came to London the same year and for the first time addressed the English public in October 1969 in Conway Hall.

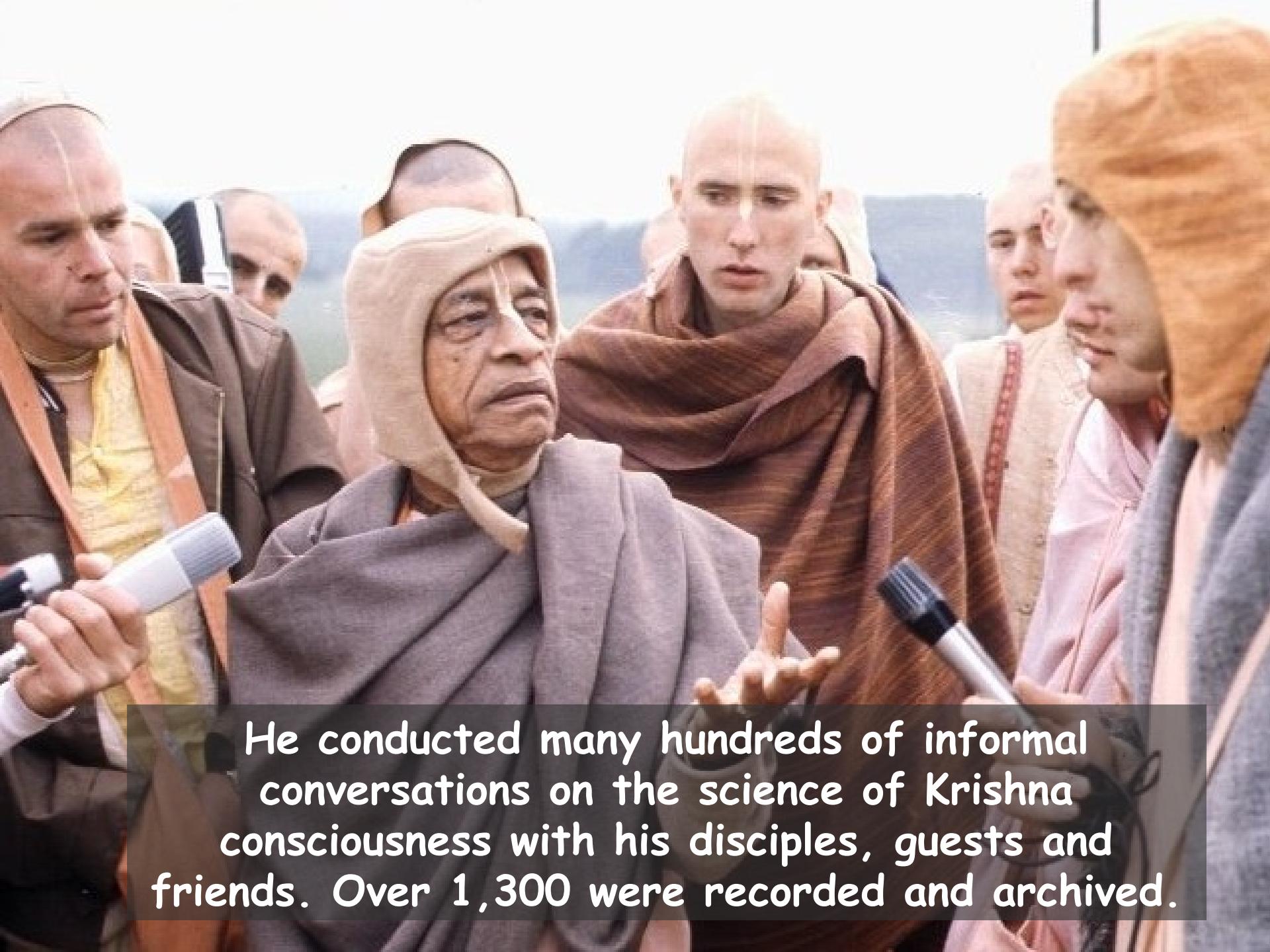




He formally initiated approximately five thousand disciples. These initiates represented a sweeping diversity of nationalities, races, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds.

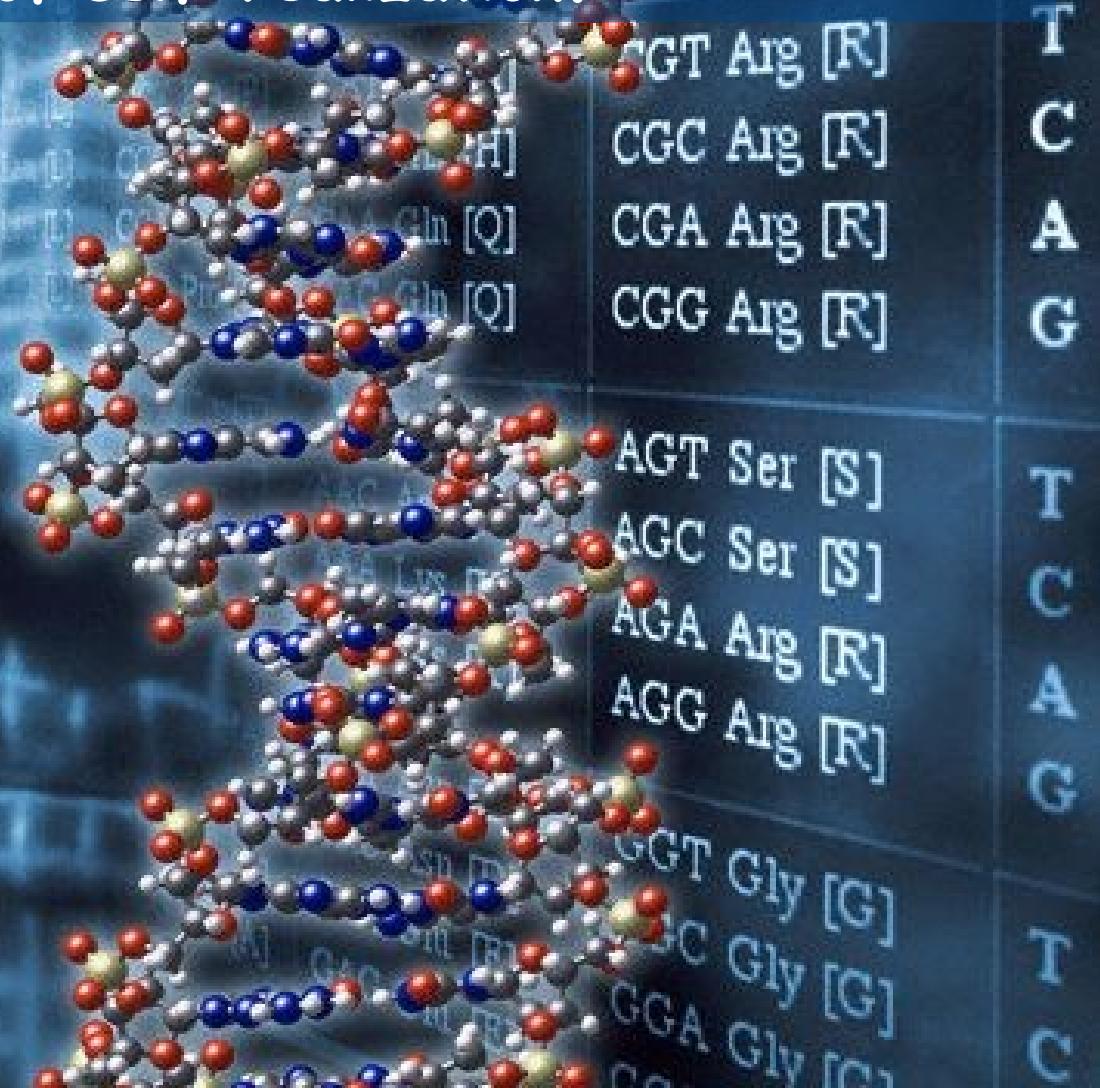
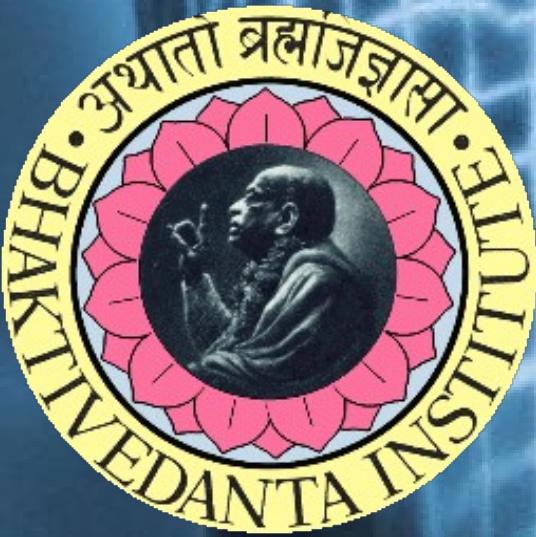


He spoke daily on the  
philosophy of Krishna  
consciousness, delivering  
thousands of formal lectures.  
Over 2,200 were recorded  
and archived.



He conducted many hundreds of informal conversations on the science of Krishna consciousness with his disciples, guests and friends. Over 1,300 were recorded and archived.

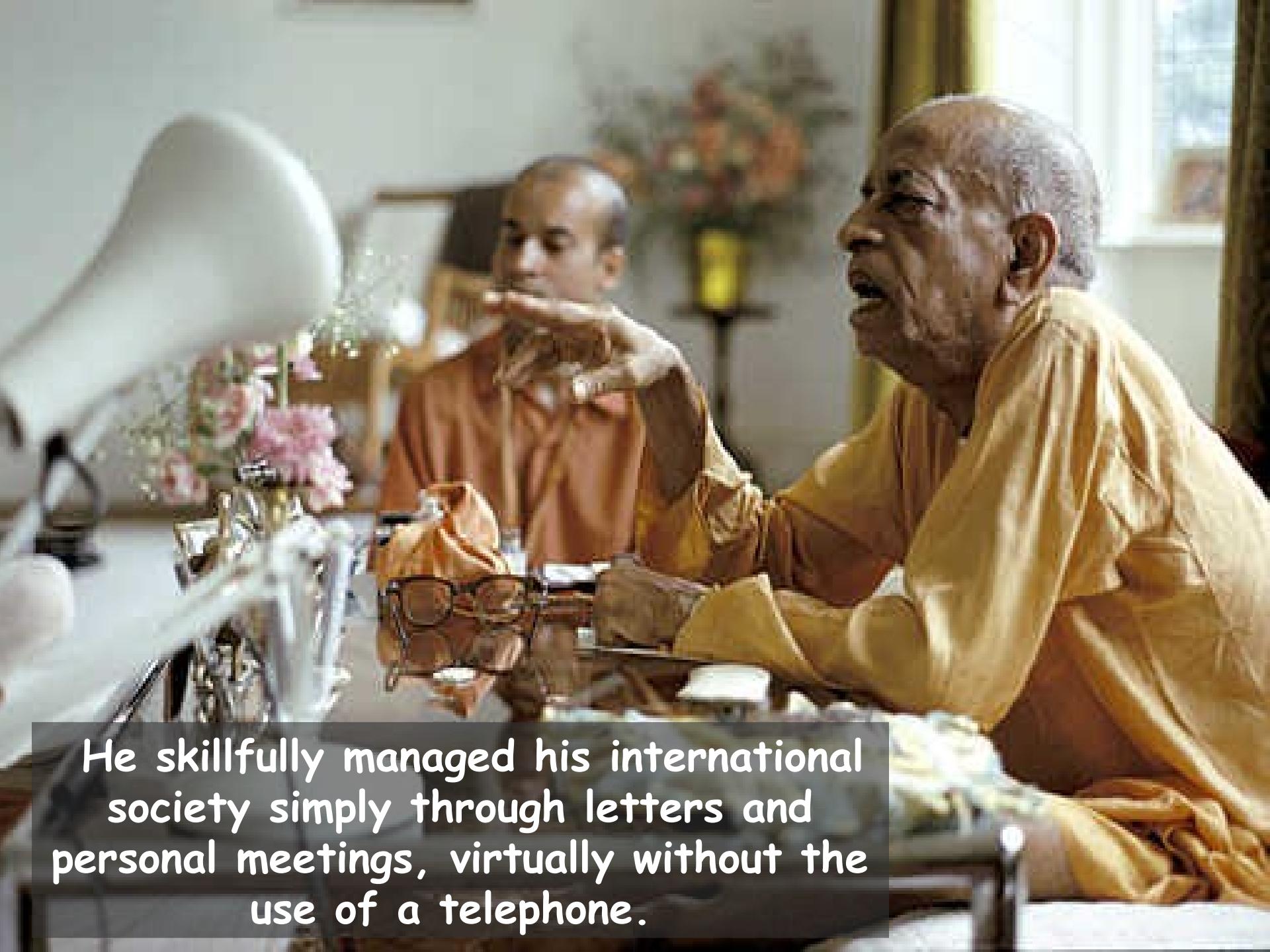
He founded the Bhaktivedanta Institute to advance Krishna consciousness within the scientific community, engaging serious academics in the consideration of the science of self-realization.



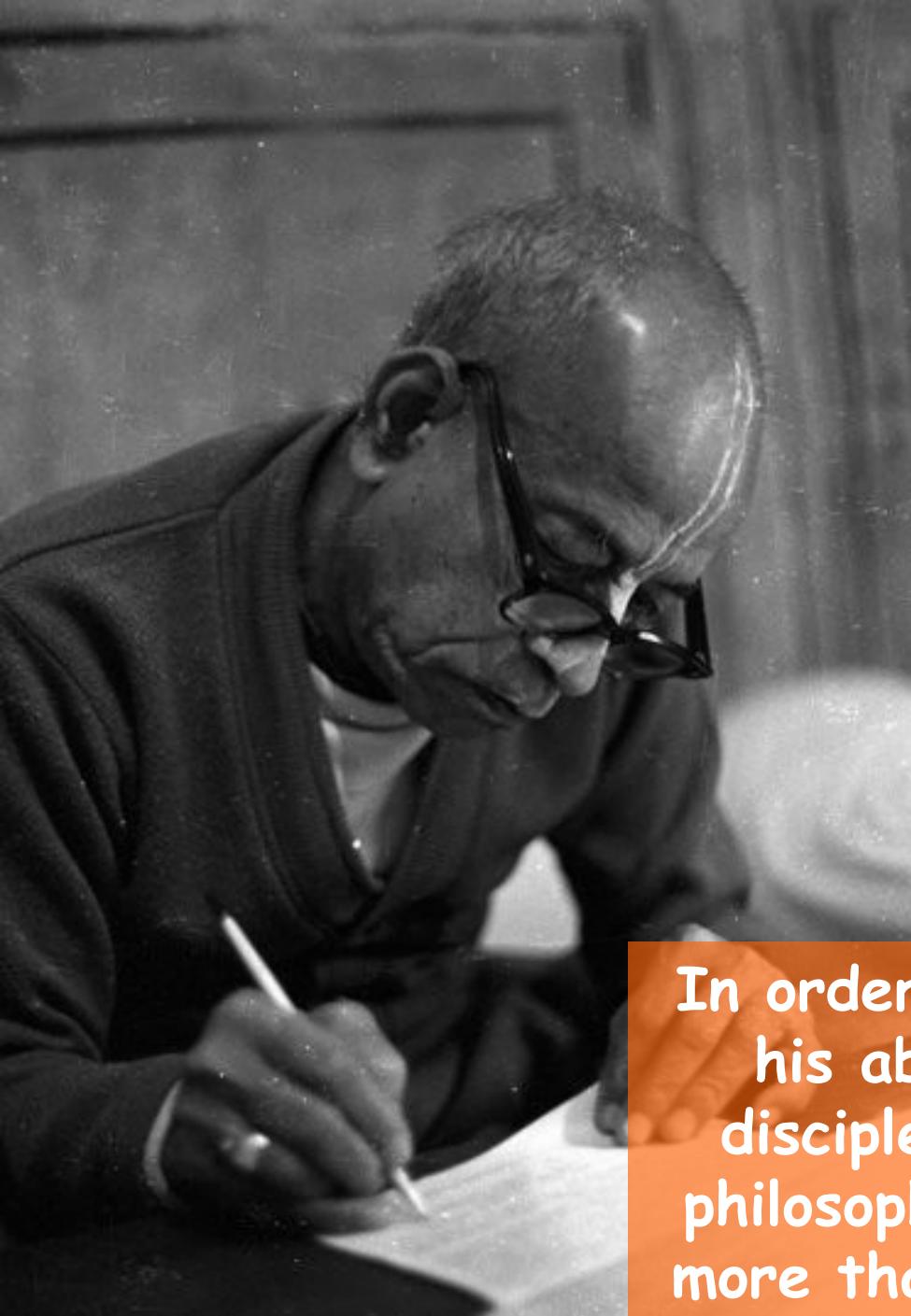


He had scores of interviews and philosophical discussions with news reporters, scientists, religious leaders and politicians, as well as meetings with world-renowned dignitaries and celebrities.

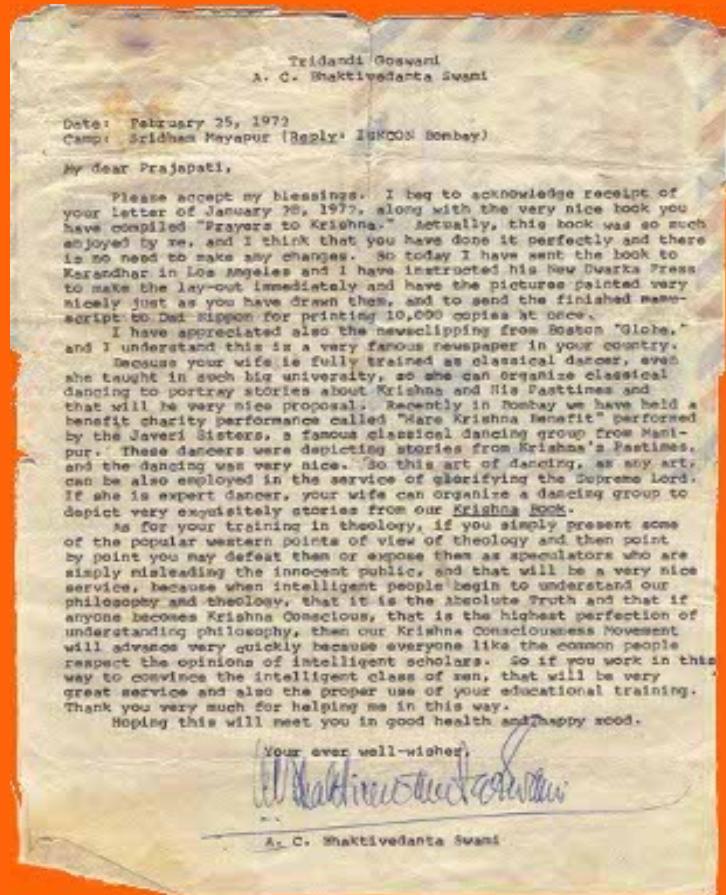




He skillfully managed his international society simply through letters and personal meetings, virtually without the use of a telephone.



In order to carry on the mission in his absence, He counseled his disciples on complex managerial, philosophical and personal issues in more than 6,000 archived letters.



He inaugurated the Rathayatra Festival of Lord Jagannatha (Krishna) in major cities around the globe - in effect, bringing the temple to the people.



In 1971, he planted the seed of Krishna consciousness in Moscow, thus repeating the same preaching strategy he previously used in the USA.



Srila Prabhupada looked so lonely and all by himself as he walked towards the Red Square in Moscow.

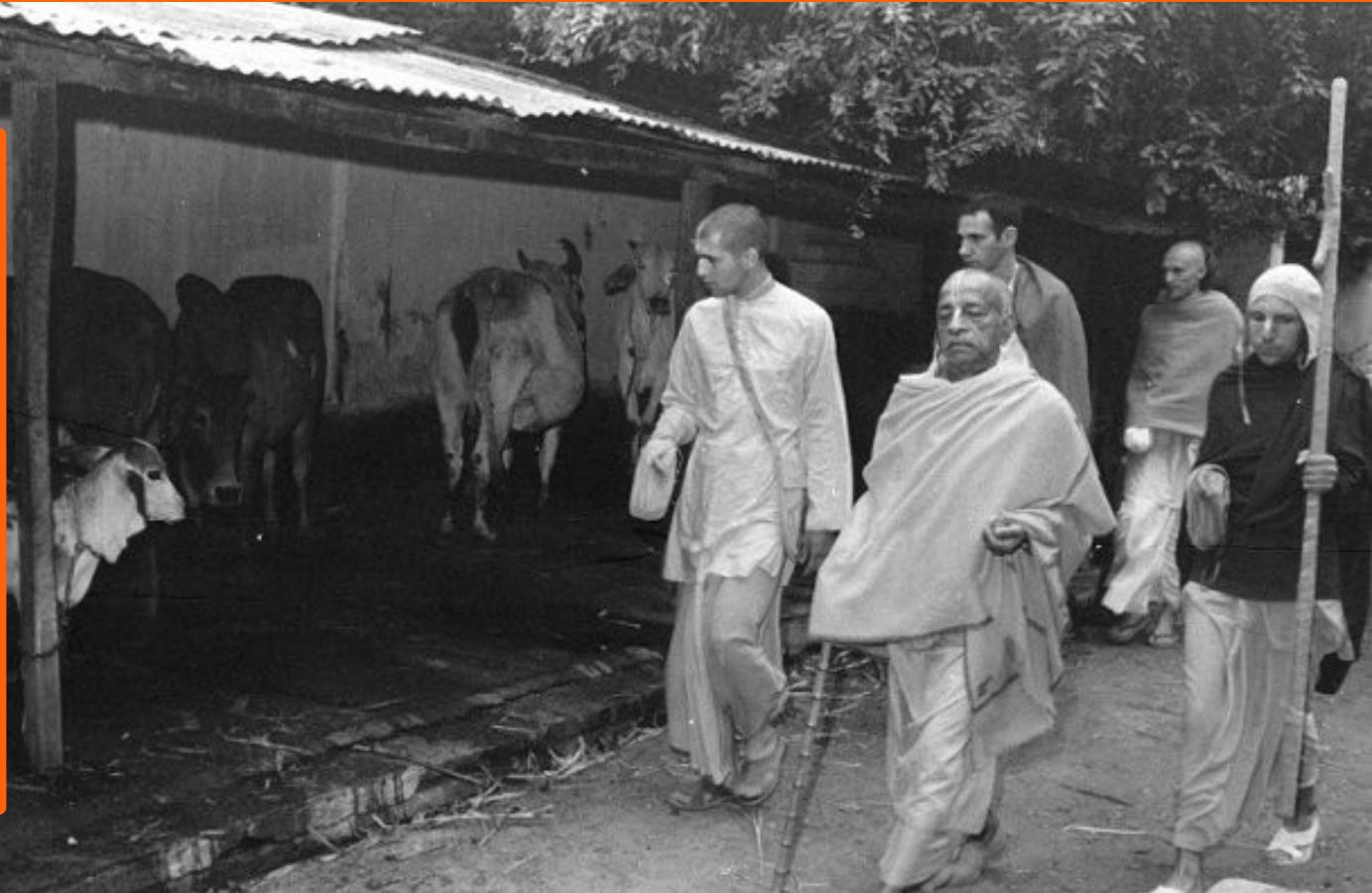


Srila Prabhupada created the world's first chain of vegetarian restaurants.





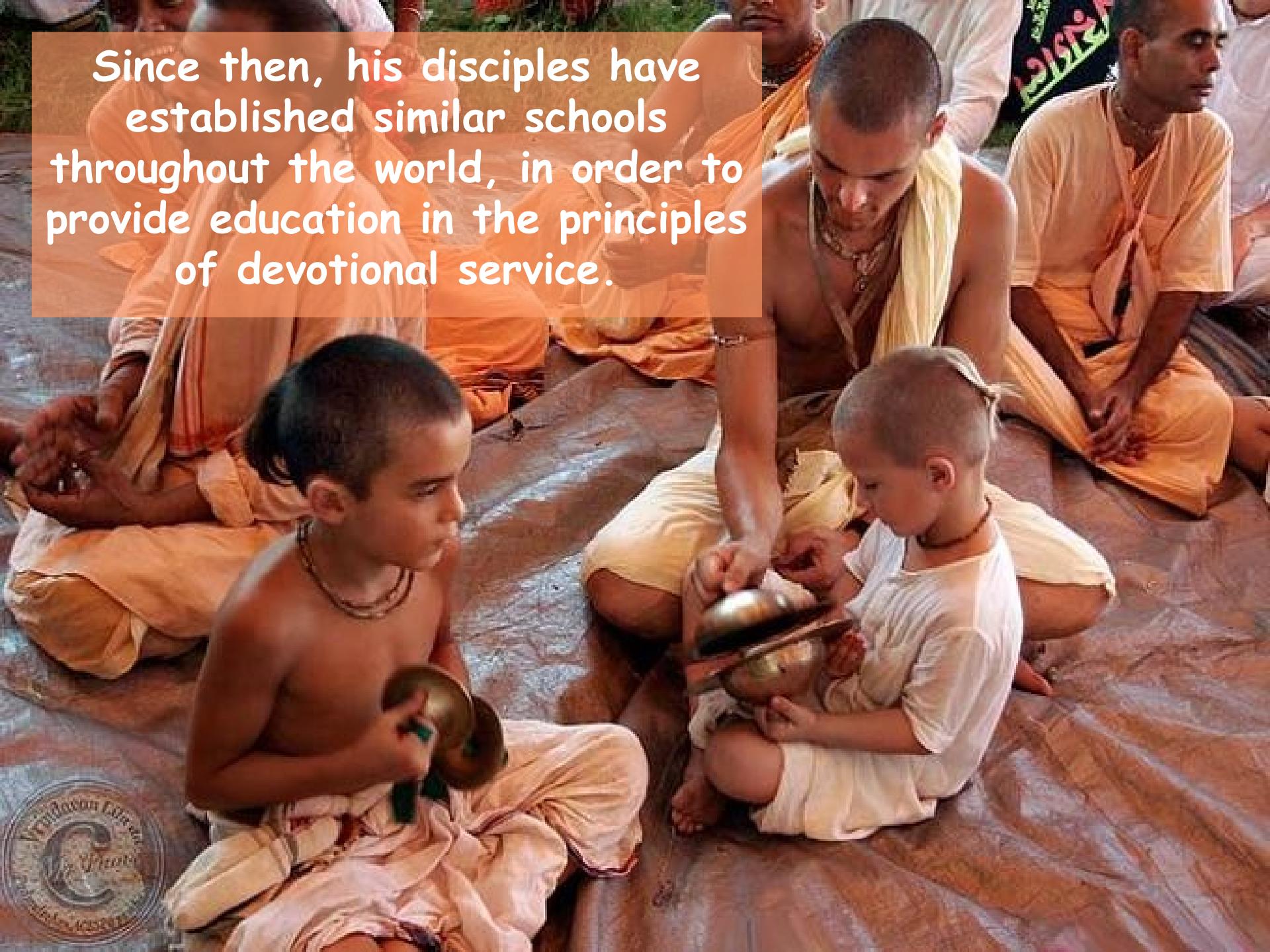
He introduced the "Sunday Love Feast" - *prasadam* (sanctified food) distribution, combined with spiritual music and lectures about Vedic wisdom.



He set up farm communities to teach "simple living and high thinking", emphasizing cow protection and dependence on God and nature.

A close-up photograph of two young boys with dark hair. Both have a yellow tilak mark on their foreheads. The boy on the left is wearing a purple headband and has a slight smile. The boy on the right is wearing a blue headband and a gold hoop earring, and is smiling more broadly. They appear to be wearing traditional Indian clothing.

In 1972 Srila Prabhupada introduced the Vedic system of primary and secondary education in the West by founding the *gurukula* school in Dallas.

A photograph showing several young boys in orange robes sitting on a polished wooden floor, playing brass instruments. In the foreground, a boy is looking down at his instrument. Behind him, another boy is holding a large brass bowl-like instrument. Several older men in similar orange robes are seated behind them, some holding books or papers. The scene suggests a traditional music session or a religious gathering.

Since then, his disciples have established similar schools throughout the world, in order to provide education in the principles of devotional service.

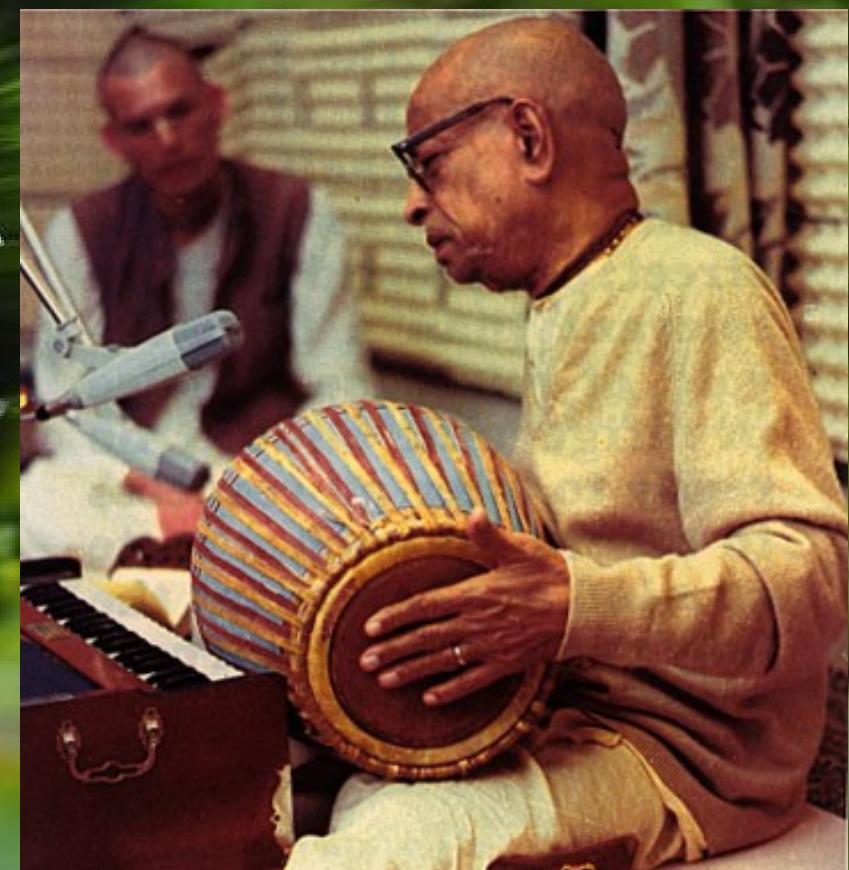
In 1974, shocked and saddened upon seeing a group of village children fighting with street dogs over scraps of food, Srila Prabhupada told his students to begin serving free meals to the poor and destitute.



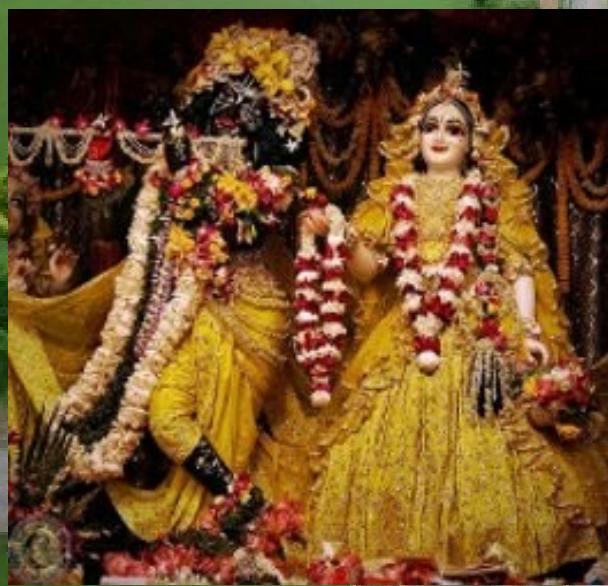
Prabhupada's followers were inspired to expand that original effort into a global network of free kitchens, vans and mobile services, establishing daily delivery to homeless and destitute people around the world.



He recorded more  
than twenty albums of  
devotional music.



*He established 108 Krishna temples on six continents, installed the deity of Krishna in each center and trained his disciples in the process of deity worship.*



Srila Prabhupada's most significant contribution, however, is his books.

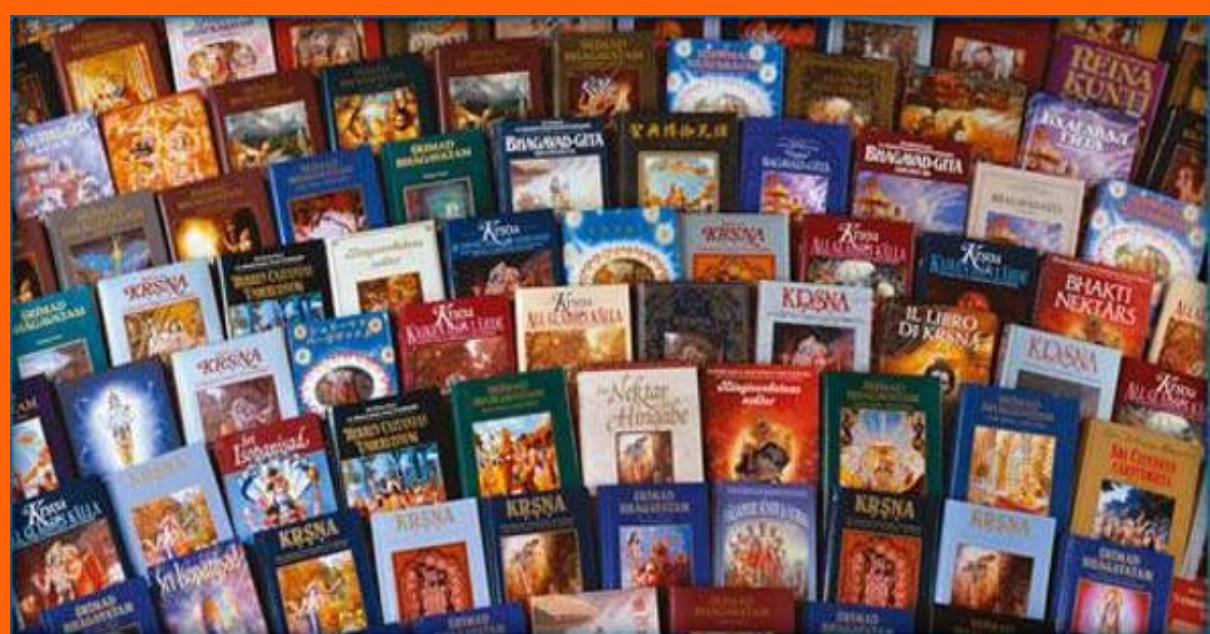


Highly respected by scholars for their authority, depth, and clarity, they are used in numerous colleges worldwide.

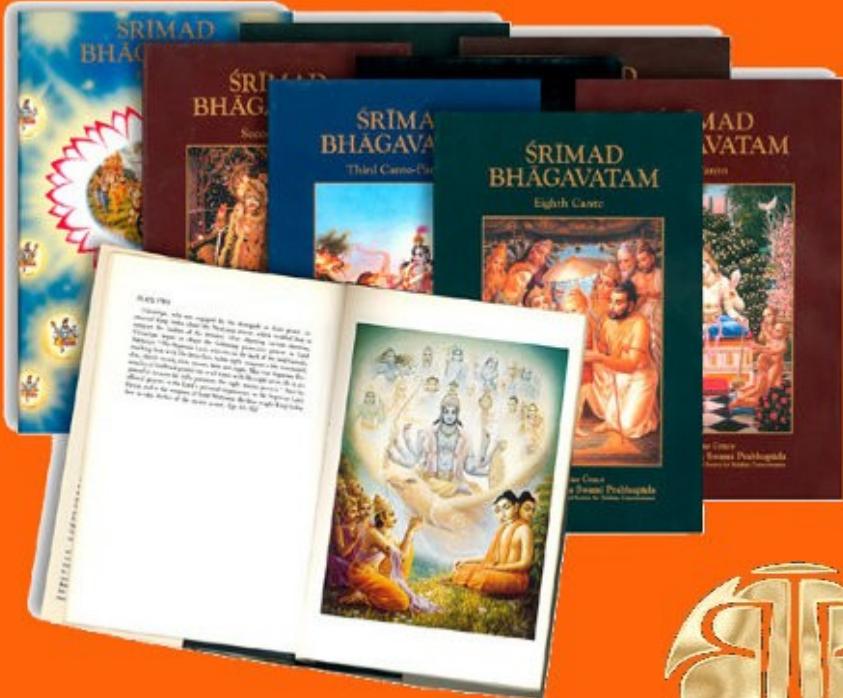


He wrote more than seventy books on the science of Krsna consciousness, sleeping only a few hours per day.

Dozens of prominent scholars and educators from leading universities praised his work.

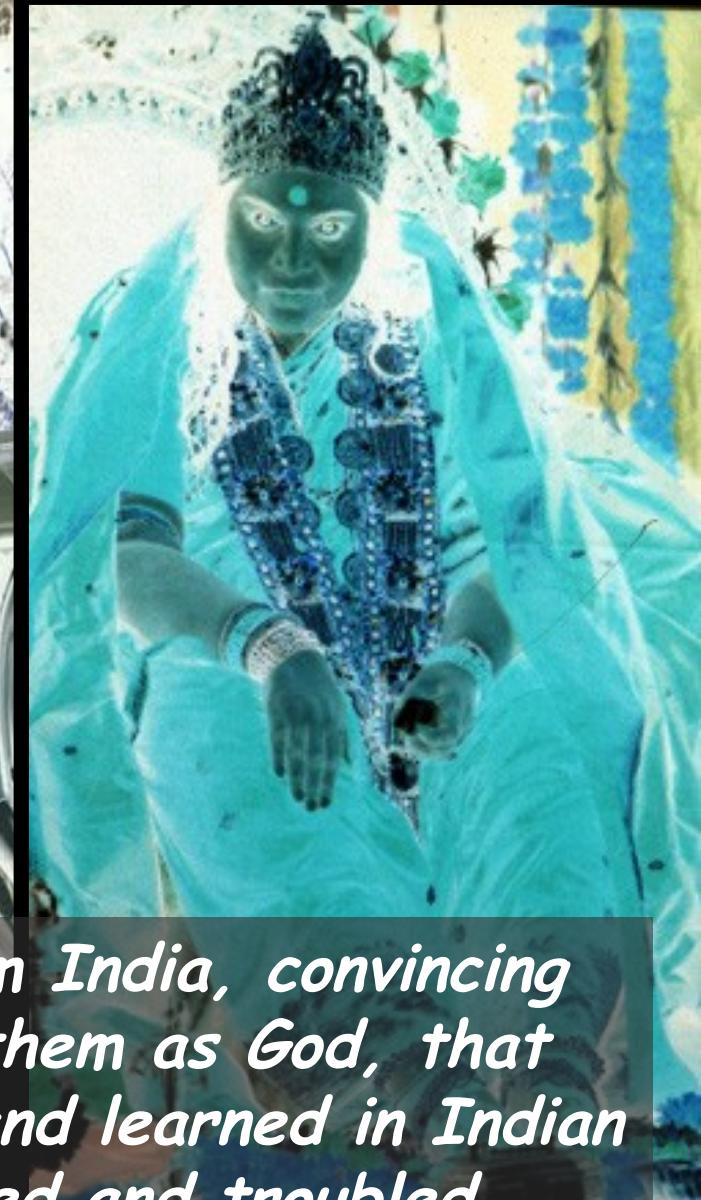


He founded the *Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT)* in 1972 to produce his books. By 1976, over 55,000,000 literatures had been published in twenty-five languages.

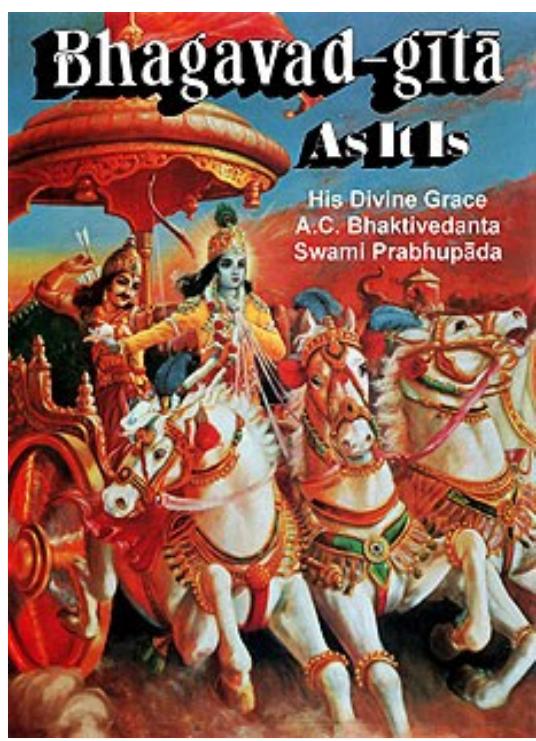


His books are being distributed in almost every country, making the BBT the world's largest publisher of spiritual and philosophical texts.





*"So many cheaters have come from India, convincing their foolish followers to accept them as God, that those who are actually well versed and learned in Indian culture have become very concerned and troubled..."*



*...For this reason I am very excited about the publication of Bhagavad-gita As It Is, by Sri A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.*

*Srila Prabhupada, from his very birth, was trained in the strict practice of bhakti-yoga, and he appears in a succession of gurus that traces back to the original speaking of Bhagavad-gita by Sri Krishna."*

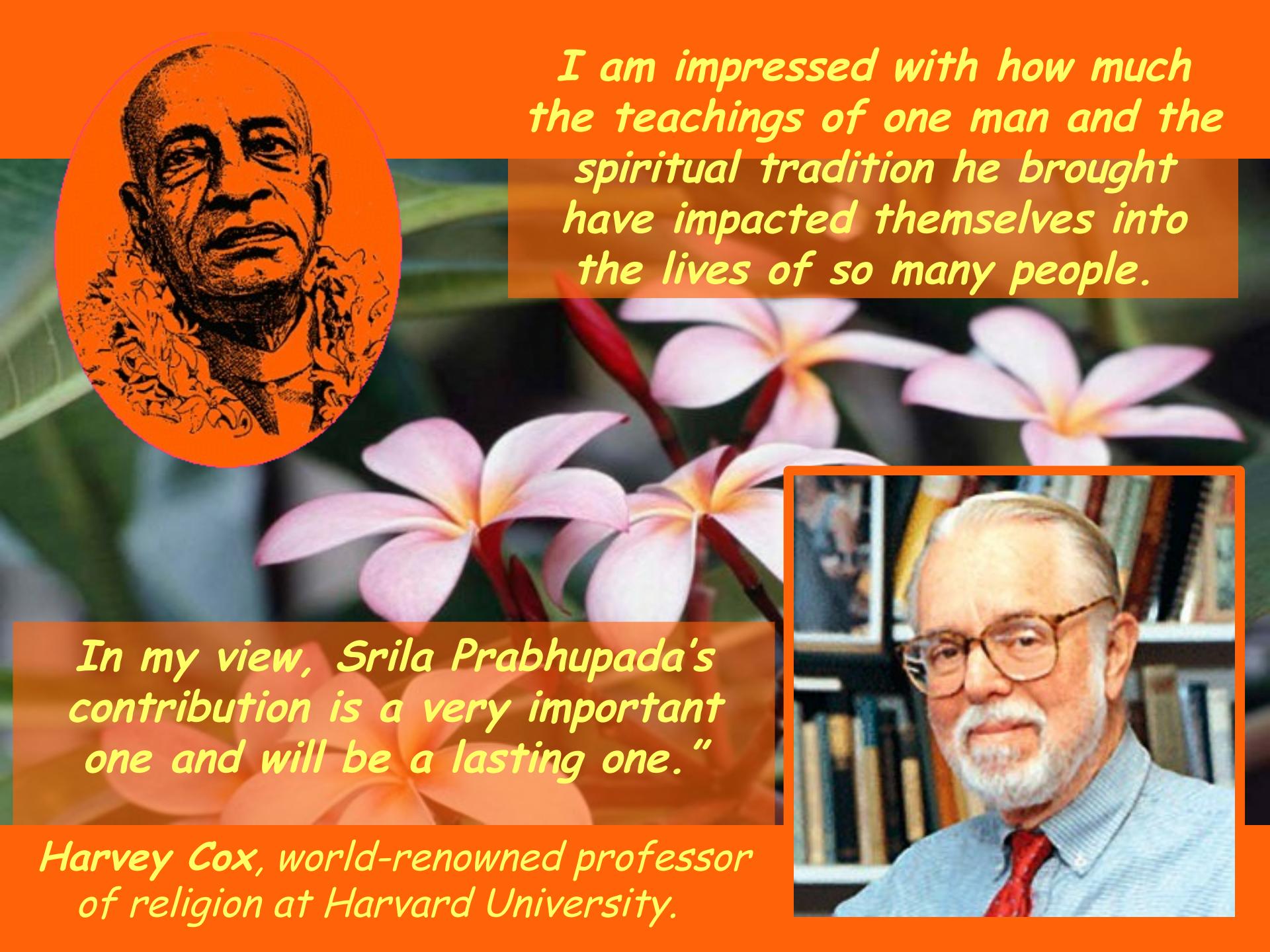
*Prof. Kailash Vajpeye (University of Mexico,  
Oriental studies), 1976.*

*"...As I came to know the movement, I came to find that there was a striking similarity in the essence of what they were teaching and in the original core of Christianity.*



*...That is, living simply, not trying to accumulate worldly goods, living with compassion toward all creatures, sharing, loving and living joyfully.*

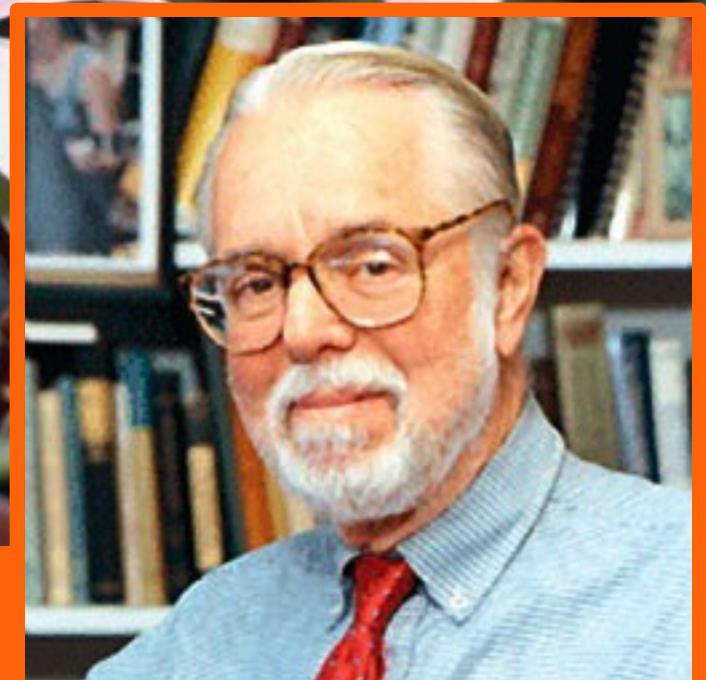


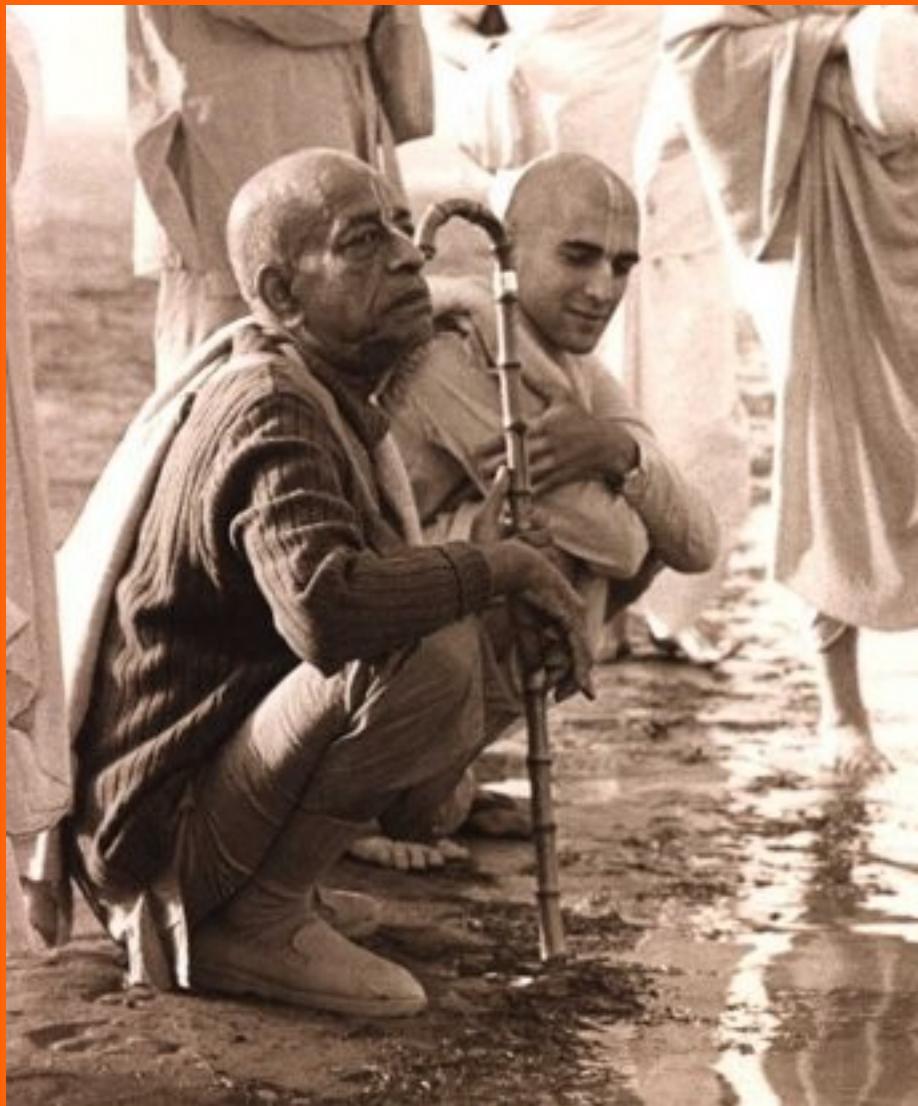


*I am impressed with how much the teachings of one man and the spiritual tradition he brought have impacted themselves into the lives of so many people.*

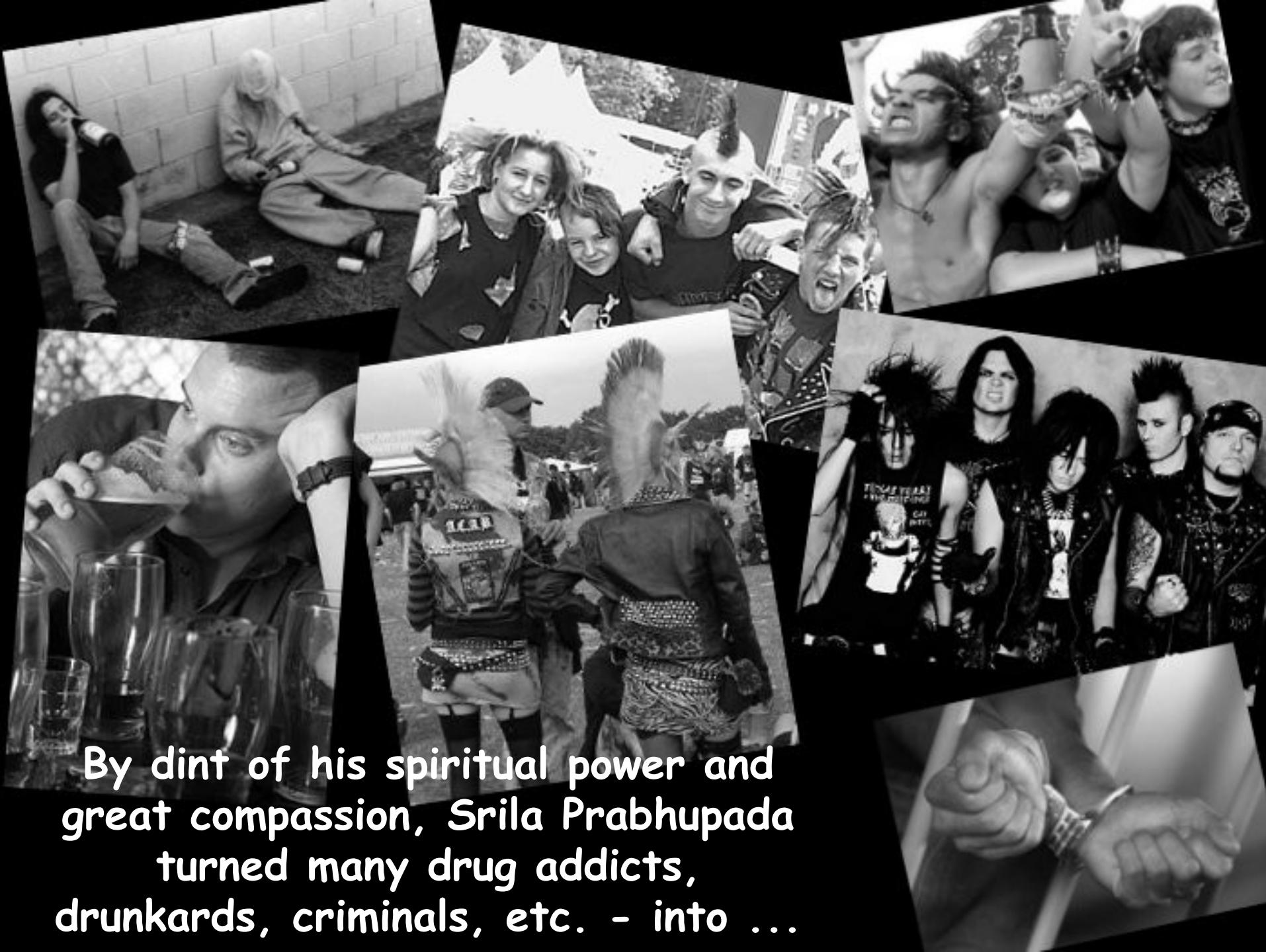
*In my view, Srila Prabhupada's contribution is a very important one and will be a lasting one."*

*Harvey Cox, world-renowned professor of religion at Harvard University.*





In spite of leading an international spiritual society, he preferred to keep a low profile, living modestly and riding mostly on the public transport.



By dint of his spiritual power and great compassion, Srila Prabhupada turned many drug addicts, drunkards, criminals, etc. - into ...

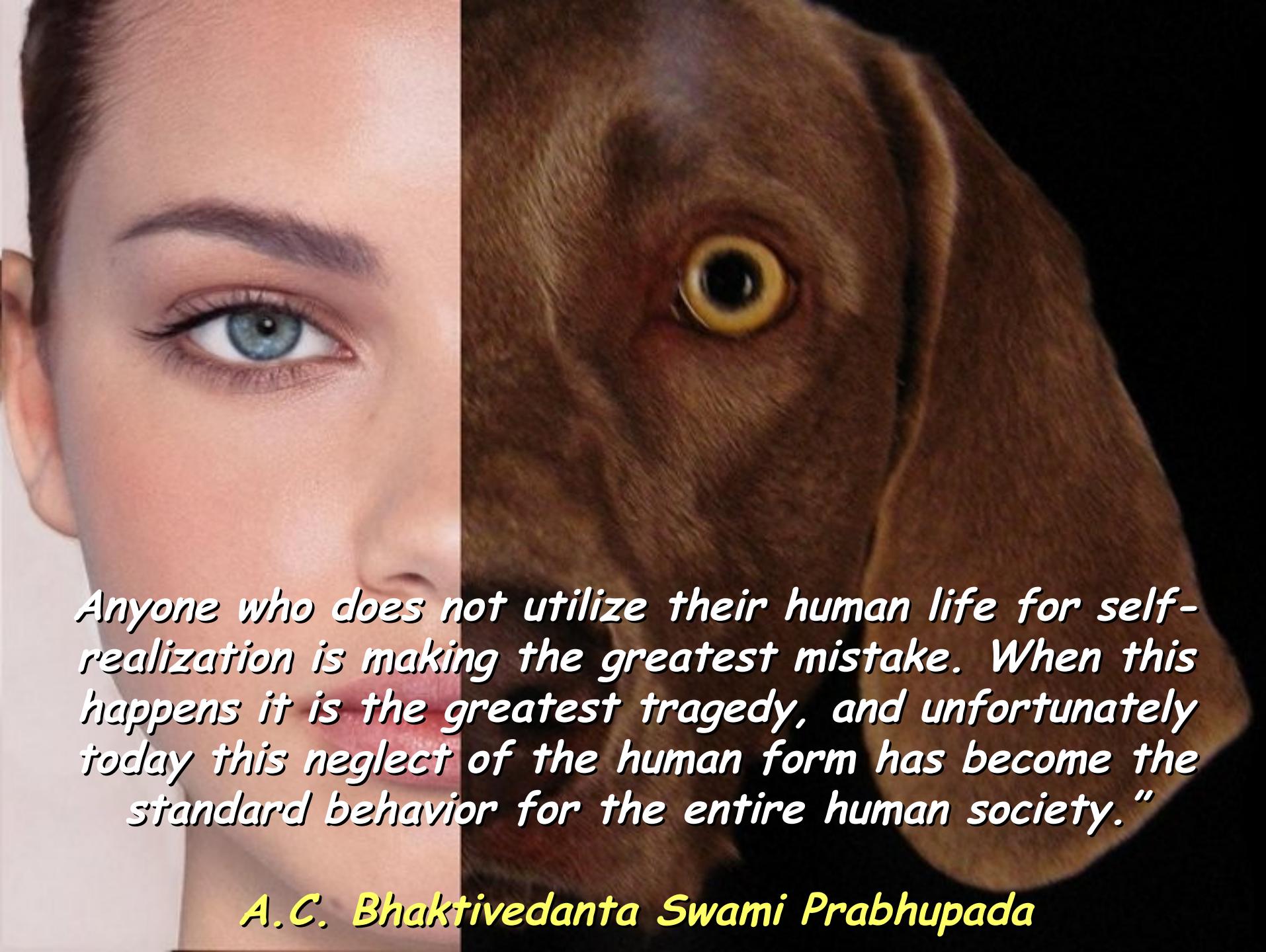


... virtuous and saintly people who have dedicated their lives to sharing spiritual happiness and wisdom with the whole world.

*"Take advantage of this rare opportunity of this human form of life. There are 8,400,000 different species of life through which we are rotating life after life.*



*So getting a human body is not an everyday affair. This most auspicious opportunity only comes after many millions of lifetimes in the lower species...*



*Anyone who does not utilize their human life for self-realization is making the greatest mistake. When this happens it is the greatest tragedy, and unfortunately today this neglect of the human form has become the standard behavior for the entire human society."*

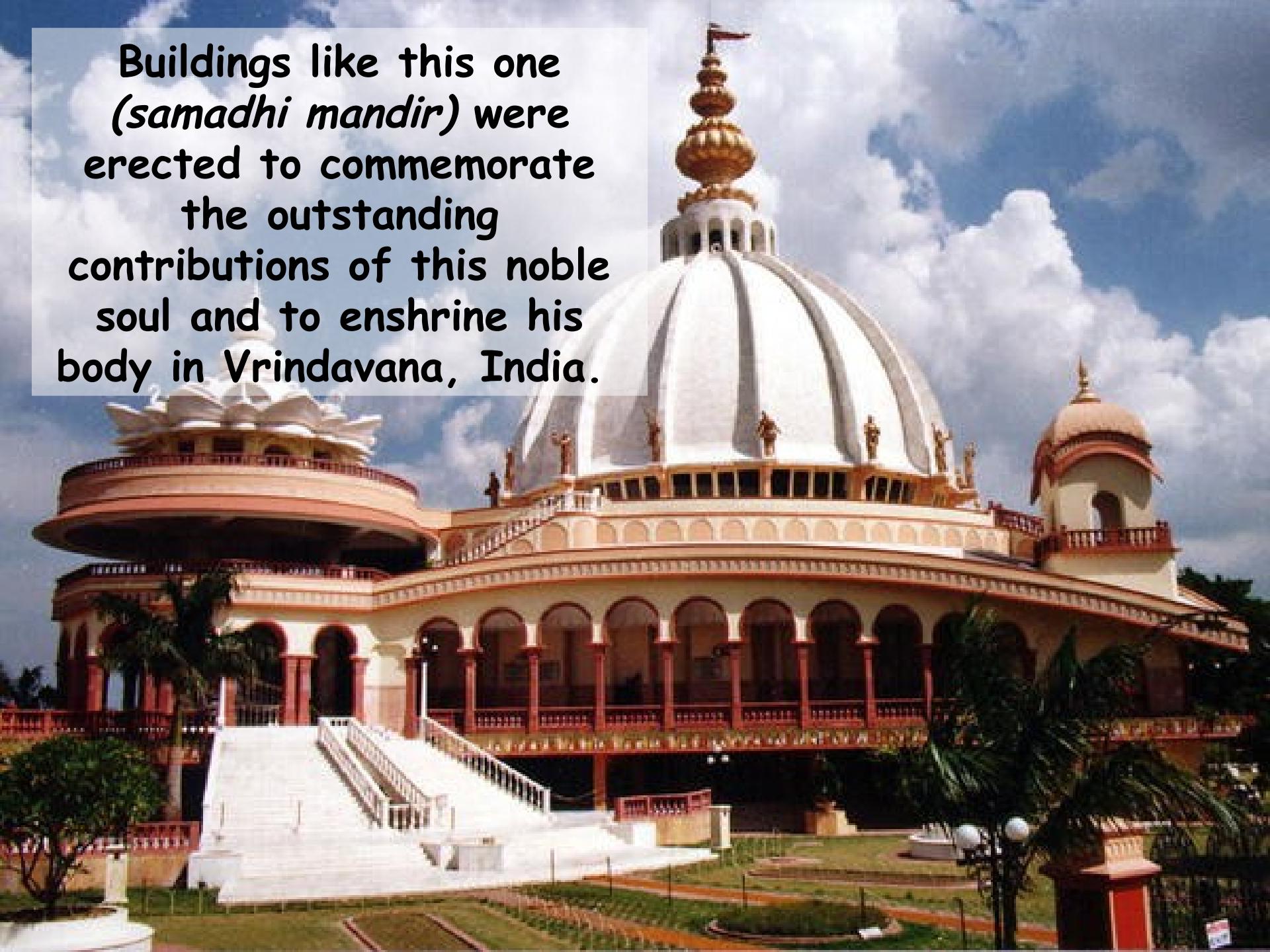
*A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

Srila Prabhupada's whole life was exemplary. In November 1977, he also taught his followers how a real lover of God should leave his body.

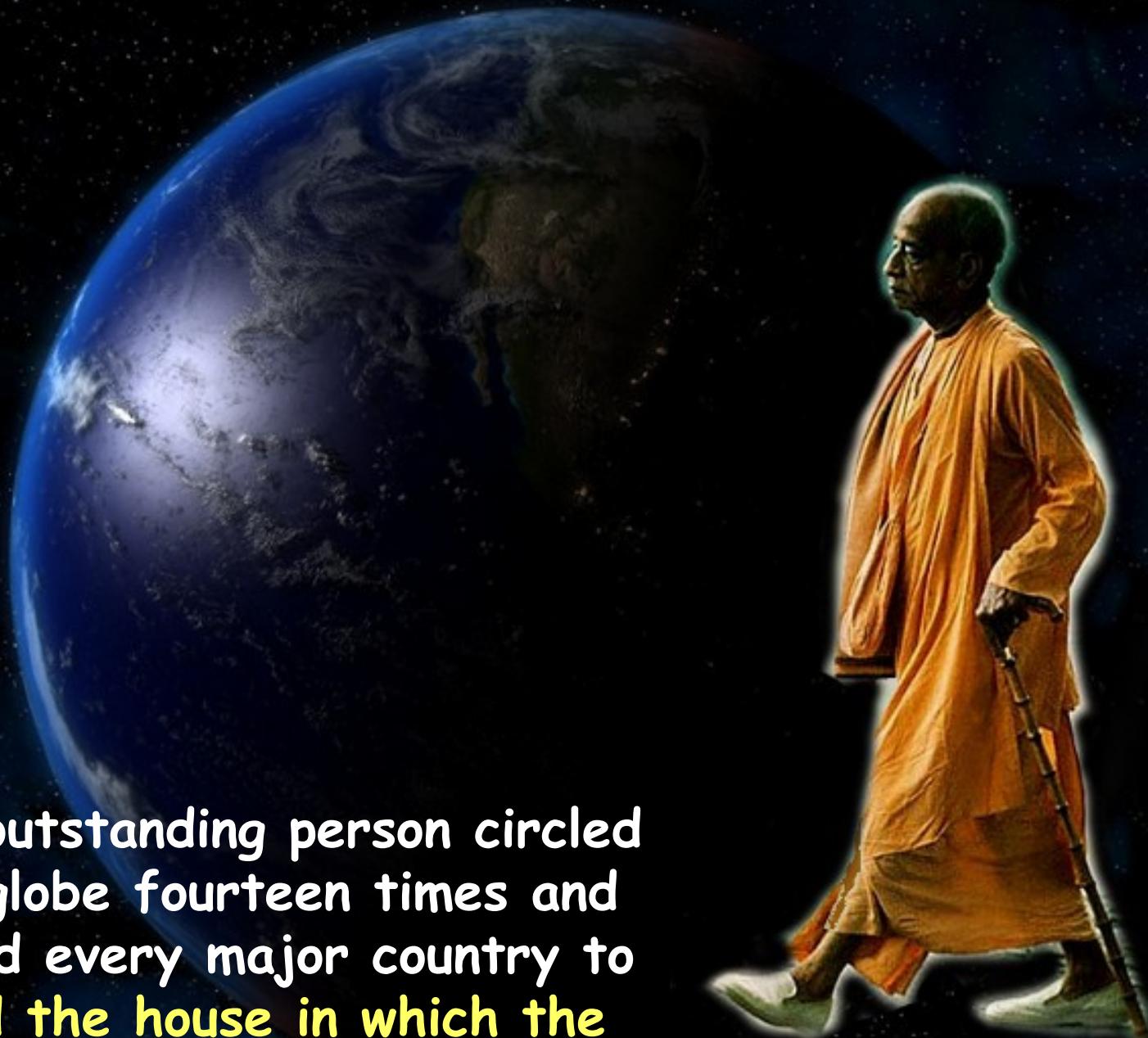


Though utterly incapacitated and fragile, he spent the last particles of his energy translating ancient *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, with a microphone held to his mouth.

Buildings like this one (*samadhi mandir*) were erected to commemorate the outstanding contributions of this noble soul and to enshrine his body in Vrindavana, India.



This outstanding person circled  
the globe fourteen times and  
visited every major country to  
build the house in which the  
whole world could live peacefully.



**Author: Vrsabha das (ISKCON Bosnia)**

**Text editing: Lyn Welker (Labangalatika d.d.)**

**Most of the text was taken from**

**[www.stephen-knapp.com](http://www.stephen-knapp.com)**

**by Stephen Knapp**

