

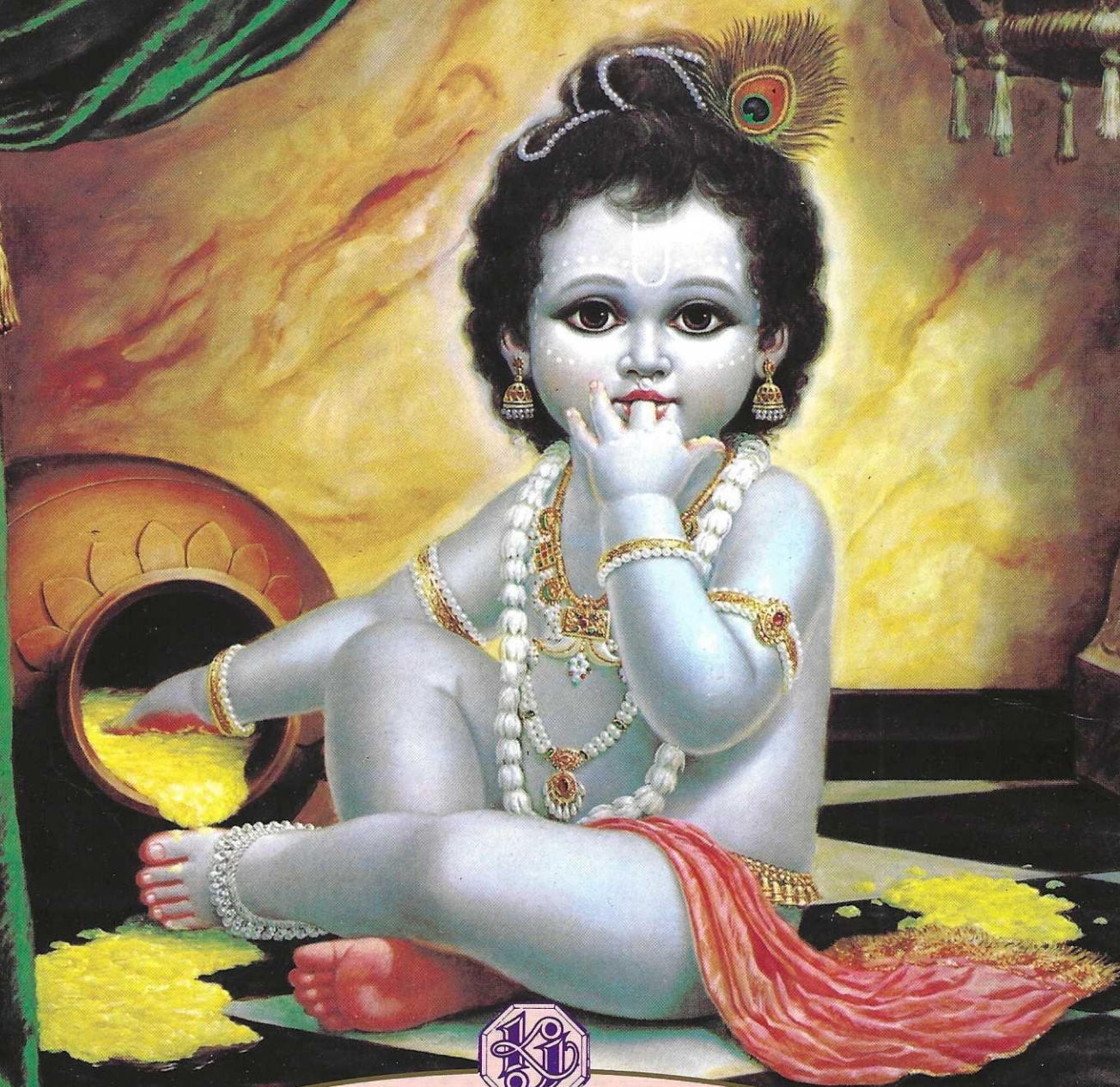
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS  
FOUNDER - ACARYA HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPADA

# SHREE KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI

1973

SPECIAL ISSUE FOR THE  
*20th Anniversary of Bhaktivedanta Manor*

1993

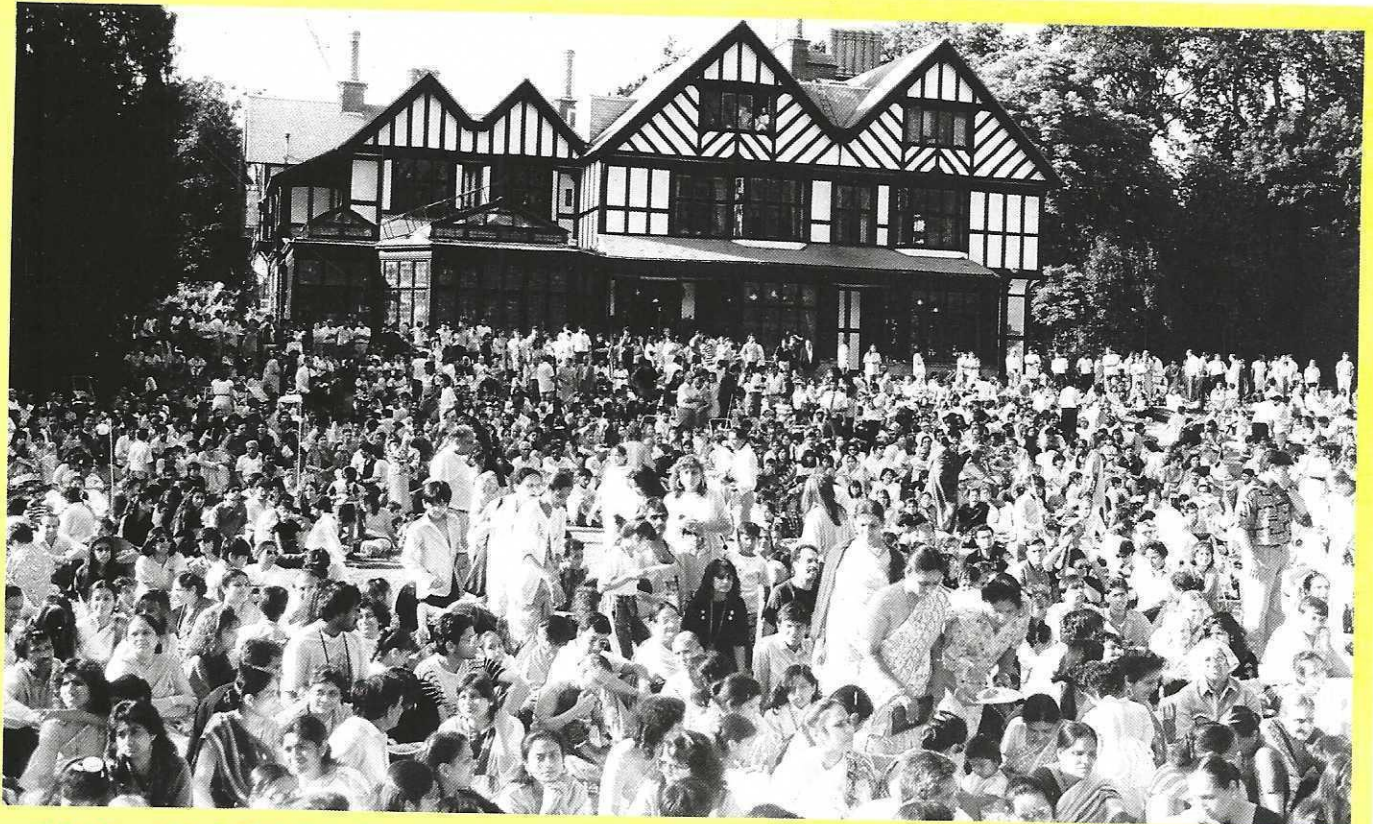


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# BANNED 1994



## THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE BHAKTIVEDANTA MANOR FROM CLOSURE TO THE PUBLIC

### LATEST NEWS

## CURRENT DEADLINE 16th MARCH 1994

At this moment, unless there is some major change in the circumstances, Bhaktivedanta Manor will not be available for devotees coming for worship and festivals from 16th March 1994.

This means, that after that date you would not be allowed access to the shrine.

**No darshan    No aratis    No Festivals**

**However...One hope remains  
And that is in the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg**

All the legal remedies available in the U.K. have been tried and have failed us.  
Why? Because none of them gave any credit to the issue of freedom of religion and rights of worship.

That's why we have applied to have our case heard at Strasbourg and why we believe we have the best chance of success there.

# THREAT TO THE TEMPLE

## What is the History?

**1973-1982** - At various times, some local residents complained to Hertsmere Council about Hindus coming to temple.

**1981** - Council issue first Enforcement Notice to festivals.

**1983** - Temple signs Agreement with Council not to organise events likely to attract more than 1,000 devotees, except on six festival days. Enforcement Notice withdrawn.

**1985** - Two devotees purchase properties in Letchmore Heath. New wave of complaints to Council.

**1986** - High Court refuses Hertsmere's request for an injunction to enforce Agreement.

**1987** - Council issues new Enforcement Notice to stop all worshippers attending the temple. ISKCON appeals to DoE. Appeal hearing adjourned to allow time to work out solution.

**1988** - On Hertsmere's suggestion, ISKCON applies to build a new temple near Elstree. Then Hertsmere refuses it. ISKCON again appeals.

**1988/9** - Two appeals heard by DoE.

**1990** - DoE announce decision. No new temple. Worship and festivals at Bhaktivedanta Manor to stop within two years. ISKCON further appeals decision to High Court.

**1991** - High Court turned down appeal.

**March 1992** - Court of Appeal refused to hear the case.

**April 1992** - Application lodged for European Court of Human Rights.

**July 1992** - Full application submitted to Strasbourg.

**April 1993** - Pass first stage of European Court hearing. Strasbourg sends case to UK government with three questions.

**August 1993** - Awaiting government reply and European decision on whether to accept our case or not for full hearing. If they refuse - this is our last Janmasthan at Bhaktivedanta Manor.

**16th March 1994** - Temple closes to public!

But if the European Court accepts the case, Hertsmere may hold off the Enforcement Notice to see how the European Court deals with the case.

# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

THEY SAY	WE SAY
The temple should just be a residential college.	As a Vaisnava college it must have a shrine, which should be and always has been accessible to the public.
So many people coming causes problems of car parking.	All devotees park within our own grounds. It is the pub's visitors which block up Letchmore Heath.
Festivals are noisy.	Not according to the Council's own sound experts.
There's too much traffic.	Only at the Janmasthan festival once a year is traffic significant and on those days it is well directed to cause minimal inconvenience. Other days, it is not a problem.
The visitors are a disturbance.	The visitors are religious families coming for prayer and worship.
The worshippers don't come from Hertfordshire.	Some do, but Hertfordshire isn't private property. Anyone has a right to go there, if that is their chosen place of pilgrimage and religion.
Why don't you have your temple in a Hindu area?	We like the temple where it is. Your suggestion sounds like apartheid.
Couldn't it be in Milton Keynes or in the Midlands?	Those areas might also benefit from a Hare Krishna temple, but Bhaktivedanta Manor serves an existing congregation mainly in North London.

## THE REAL ISSUES

The temple authorities believe the various arguments against the temple propounded by some local residents do not touch the real issues. We have been told by several villagers that their greatest concern about the presence of the temple is its effect on property values.

This is a blatant act of injustice and prejudice. For the first time in history, a religious establishment will have its doors closed to its worshippers. This violates the basic human right of freedom of worship - an issue completely ignored by the British government. Thus we await the European Court of Human Rights' decision on this issue, for no human rights court exists in the UK. Simply on points of law, a handful of villagers will deny the Hindu community access to the largest and most important shrine in the UK.

# NEWS FROM EUROPE

## European Commission Raises Questions to UK Government

Having failed to secure justice through the UK legal system, last August the temple made an application to the European Court of Human Rights against the UK government.

### The main points of our complaint: \_

- a) closing the temple for public worship and festivals is a denial of freedom of religion, and
- b) there is no court in Britain where the temple could present a case based on human rights issues.

It is a long and complex process to win a case at the European Court of Human Rights, but the European Commission recently informed us that it has sent our case to the UK government and raised three serious questions, which, if not properly answered, could result in our case being accepted for full hearing.

This is extremely encouraging and although we have a long way to go, we have passed the first stage in which many applications to the Court fail.

By the late summer/autumn, there will be a short hearing for the court to decide if it will admit the case for full hearing. If so, then the deadline of 16 March 1994 might be postponed.

But the temple is still committed to achieving a compromise settlement and hopes that with this extra pressure from the European Commission, the British government will work with us to find a solution to this dispute.

## What is the Solution?

### 1. Leave things as they are!

We don't accept that visitors to the temple cause a significant effect on life in the village. The temple has been there for nearly twenty years. The government could end the whole dispute by allowing the public to continue coming to the temple. Perhaps, it might wish to impose certain practical restrictions, but not ban the public altogether.

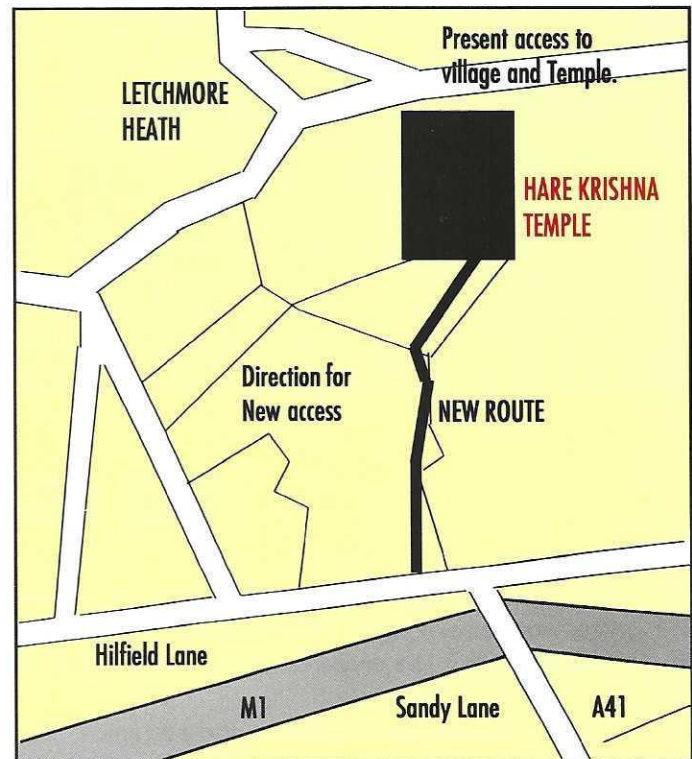
If the government really does not want to accommodate the needs of the temple and the Hindu community at the risk of upsetting the local residents of Letchmore Heath, it still has an important option available to it.

### 2. New access road to temple.

In 1987 ISKCON proposed to construct a new access drive from the back of the temple almost directly onto the A41. This driveway would avoid all cars coming through the village of Letchmore Heath to get to the temple. Indeed, the temple could completely close itself off from the village.

This idea originally gained a lot of support from politicians and half of the village residents.

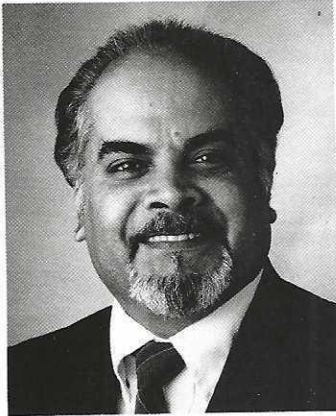
Engineers were consulted, designs drawn up and an option was secured to purchase the main piece of land required. We then submitted a planning application which Hertsmere refused. We could have taken the matter to appeal but the big stumbling block was that the second landowner, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, after being initially positive about the idea, then flatly refused to sell.



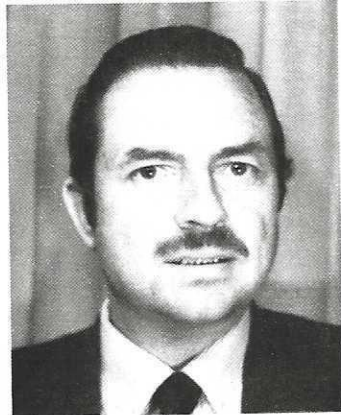
In 1993, the hospital is faced with closure and there may be the possibility of St. Bartholomew's selling this land. We have re-drafted our planning application and await their decision to sell or not. If they do, it will enable the driveway to be built and the whole issue could be resolved very happily.

# CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

## Fighting to Save Our Temple



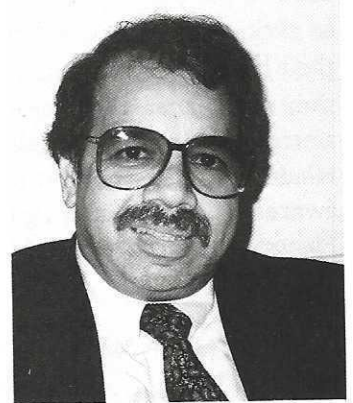
**Naresh Chadha:**  
Chairman of the Hare Krishna Temple Defence Committee (HKTDM) for the past 4 years. Naresh, a businessman, recently went to India as part of a delegation to win support from the Indian government to help save Bhaktivedanta Manor from closure.



**Councillor Frank Ward:**  
Labour Councillor in Hertsmeere Borough Council. As vice-chairman of the HKTDM, Frank has been involved in the campaign since 1986. In 1988 he went to India as part of a delegation, and addressed the World Council of Hindus in Nepal. Frank is an outspoken advocate of the right to freedom of worship, and was given the spiritual name Arjuna dasa by the devotees at the Manor, in recognition for the services he has rendered to the temple.



**Shantoo Ruparell:**  
Shantoo is a prominent solicitor and is representing ISKCON in its legal battles to save the temple. Needless to say, he is providing his services free of charge. Shantoo is also a voluntary community and social worker.



**Venilal Vaghela:**  
Vice-chairman, Hindu Council of Brent. Venilal is helping the Campaign to save Bhaktivedanta Manor.

## Other Members of the Campaign Committee:



**Vipin Aery**  
Secretary



**Davendra Tah**  
- Treasurer



**Rajni Chande**



**Subash Mehta**



**Chandrakant Raniga**



**Nainesh Desai**  
Chairman of HYSOT



**Dhananjay Gadgil**



**Dr. Ashvin Shah**



**Mahendra Parmar**



**Nitesh Thakrar**  
- Youth Representative

## HYSOT - Hindu Youths Saving Our Temple

The Hindu youth have also taken it upon themselves to fight to save the temple from closure and to keep our culture alive. You can read more about their activities on page 80.



**Nainesh Desai** - Chairman  
**Sujal Popat** - Secretary  
**Bhaven Ondhia** - Treasurer  
**Mitesh Kantaria**  
**Hiten Thakrar**  
**Romila Vaish**  
**Reena Ranpura**  
**Geeta Kataria**  
**Bhavesht Kataria**  
**Raju Suratwalla**  
**Nisha Kapoor**  
**Krishnakant Desai**  
**Priiti Thankaria**  
**Nitesh Thakrar**  
**Alka Patel**  
**Divya Dhasmana**

# PADAYATRA '93

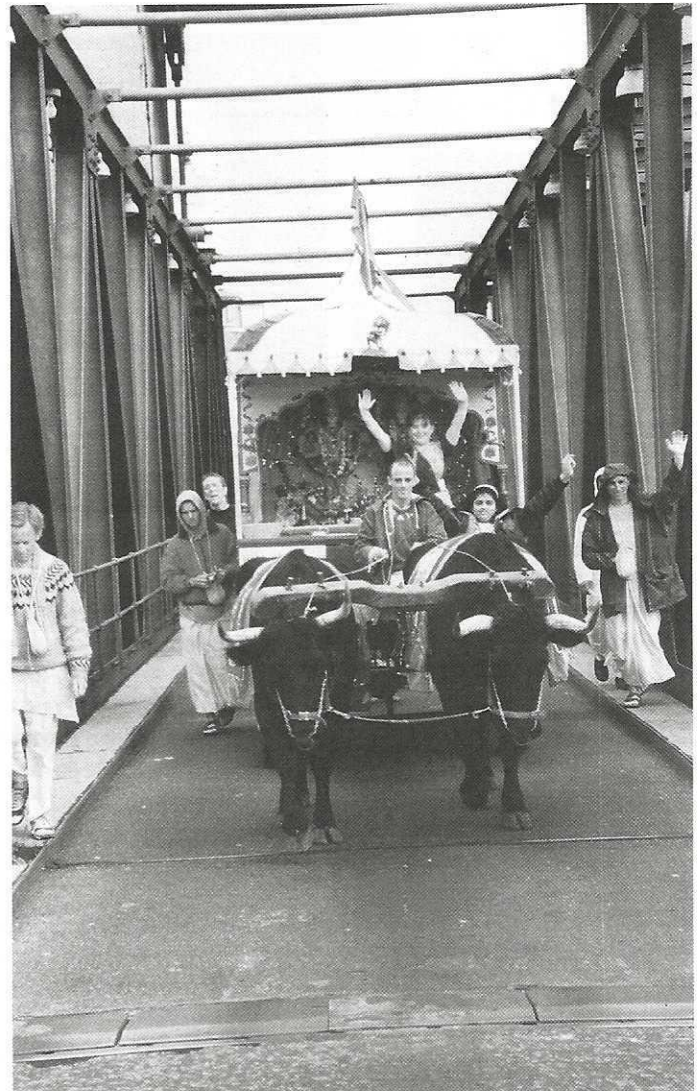
On 28th April, the Padayatra oxen, Jaya and Dharma took to the road again, causing heads to turn, cameras to click, and raising the curiosity of onlookers. With their boss Parasurama das, and a group of devotees, they set off on a pilgrimage around London, travelling almost 100 miles in 3 weeks and stopping at 17 major Hindu temples. Their purpose was to increase the awareness of the Campaign to Save Bhaktivedanta Manor, and to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the temple.

Padayatra means 'walking festival' and is a traditional means of focusing and communicating religious concern to a wider public. Whilst on pilgrimage, they held festivals at each of the temples - including drama, puppet shows, *bharat natyam* dancing, *bhajans* and *prasadam* distribution. In this way, it was a great opportunity to demonstrate how rich this Vedic culture actually is.

The bulls have special significance according to the Vedas. They represent dharma, or religious principles. At a time when concern for moral standards is high on the political and social agenda, it is tragic that a religious community should come under attack by local and national government. We are thus leading our campaign with our bulls, not only to save the temple, but to maintain religious principles in the midst of this great act of injustice upon the Hindu community.

The pilgrimage created a lot of public interest. The devotees distributed *prasadam*, books and chanted the holy name through each town. Many people would come to take darshan of Gaura-Nitai, who stood on the cart being pulled through the streets of London.

It is essential that every member of the Hindu community is made aware of the plight of the largest Hindu shrine in the UK. This is not the temple of a few, but of each and every member of the community. We therefore want each person to recognise their responsibility and step forward and join us in our campaign. Time is running out for us, and it is very much required that we join hands and hold back the threat to our culture.



Padayatra boards Woolwich Ferry and is filmed for local evening News.



The bulls lead the way down Ealing Road, Wembley.

# ON THE ROAD TO PROTECT OUR SHRINE



No overtaking please - This is as fast as we go!



Stopping off for a musical interlude.



Roadside entertainment...School children from Southall learn about Vedic culture.



# DON'T GIVE UP THE FIGHT FOR YOUR TEMPLE!

The fight to save Bhaktivedanta Manor is by no means over, and our application to Strasbourg may provide the opportunity we need to end the dispute.

## MESSAGE FROM HYSOT

Calling all Hindu youths...tell me, what would you do if on 16th March 1994 they slammed the door in your face?

1. Sit on your backside and let them walk all over you?
2. Ignore the issue and hope that someone else will fight it for you?
3. Pretend that everything will turn out OK in the end?
4. Stand up and fight for your rights and culture?

Well, if you have any self respect, any pride for *your* culture, *your* heritage, *your* religion, then you would choose the last option (no.4) and join the HYSOT.

### HYSOT? What's That?

HYSOT stands for "Hindu Youths Saving Our Temple".

## THE STORY SO FAR

**Who's the Problem?** Obviously, you are.

### WHY?

It seems you are an unacceptable element in the quality of life in an ideal English village.

This will be the first time in Britain this century that a religious establishment has been forced to close its doors on its followers. How can that be correct in a democratic society?

Outrageous, isn't it? Well, the government claims that you never should have been coming here in the first place. But since when have they ever stopped people visiting a church, a mosque or a synagogue?

## 6 YEARS OF COURT APPEALS, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF POUNDS SPENT...

And all because of 14 villagers (some of whom no longer live in the village) complaining mostly about Hindu devotees buying houses in the village. The government, of course, sympathises with us, but perhaps the need to preserve the 'Englishness' of the village unfortunately takes precedence over the needs of the Indian community.

## ENOUGH'S ENOUGH!

We will no longer tolerate this blatant prejudice. We have the basic human right to worship at the place of our choice (just as any other faith has the same right). But the government has taken our freedom from us. Is this so-called democracy?

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Activate your youth club - make them aware of the situation.  
Contact other youth groups and let them know what's going on

Prepare for our special WEEK OF ACTION. We're planning a series of events that will capture the attention of the nation.

Fill in the slip .

## THE HARE KRISHNA TEMPLE DEFENCE MOVEMENT PLEDGE

In 1990, when the government announced its decision to uphold the council's ban on visitors, the Hare Krishna Temple Defence Movement was created to fight for the rights of the community.

Despite the disappointments suffered in the British courts, the HKTDM has not lost heart. Rather, it considers - "What can you expect from the same system that is persecuting you?"

The members of the HKTDM pledge to continue the fight to defend the temple until justice is obtained and all the devotees can visit the shrine without further intimidation and persecution.

**It now rests with you.**

**Your help is needed. Support the HKTDM by:-**

1. Writing to the Prime Minister, Mr. John Major, and demanding the right to worship at your temple - this government could close it!
2. Taking part in all the rallies and events organised by the temple and its supporters - principally the Hare Krishna Temple Defence Movement which was set up to activate the Hindu community into a determined fight to defend the temple.
3. Offering a prayer every day to Lord Krishna that He protect His temple so that His devotees can worship Him without harassment.

I want to be part of the efforts to save our temple from closure.  
Please send me more details.

Name.....

Address.....

.....Tel.....

Send to: HKTDM/HYSOT, PO BOX 99, Woodford Green,  
Essex IG7 6HS:-

Please state whether you require information on  
HKTDM or HYSOT