

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

SHREE KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI

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Prasangi

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PRASANGI VILLAGE

Prasangi



**BHAKTIVEDANTA
MANOR**

**ONE STEP
FROM
VICTORY**

CAMPAIGN TO SAVE OUR TEMPLE

At the time of going
to press we may be just

ONE STEP FROM VICTORY.

We await the result of our appeal for
permission for worship and festivals on the basis of
the new access driveway.

The decision is expected from the
Department of Environment before the end of 1995.

**LET'S KEEP THE PRESSURE ON FOR
JUSTICE FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND
PUT AN END TO THIS ORDEAL.**

WHAT IS THE PRESENT POSITION?

Since 1986, ISKCON has been fighting Hertsmere Council's attempt to close Bhaktivedanta Manor to the public. The original Enforcement Notice banning public worship and festivals has been contested in all the courts of the land, but in March 1994, it finally came into effect.

The way the Enforcement Notice is worded, it allows Hertsmere Council to interpret its meaning as they like in terms of what is public worship. Hertsmere could therefore try to prosecute the temple every time any devotee visited the temple for darshan or arati - what to speak of any form of festival observance.

So far the Council has chosen not to go that far. But this may be a temporary phase while the Public Inquiry is going on. What is clear is that it feels it has the right and the duty to prosecute the temple for any and every breach of the ban.

Hertsmere has issued summons against the temple and its president for holding the festival of Janmashtami last year. And the Council has made it plain they will prosecute again.

So, the present situation is that Hertsmere considers all the devotees attending the temple for worship to be breaching the law. However, it claims it is tolerating activities on Sundays at the moment. It has also not prosecuted the temple for allowing the devotees to visit for darshan on the festival days of Diwali, Holi and Ramnavami.

But, the Council did force the temple to cancel all outside activities such as the Diwali fireworks, the Holi bonfire and any other observance or programme. Although glad to take darshan on those days, so many devotees were deeply aggrieved at not being able to practise their religion properly.

The temple is under tremendous pressure to cancel all arrangements for Janmashtami this year and we feel we must comply. The danger of a second prosecution on this is too severe. We are sorry not to be able to provide the usual opportunities for your Janmashtami observance. We request that you engage in a day of prayer, fasting and meditation.

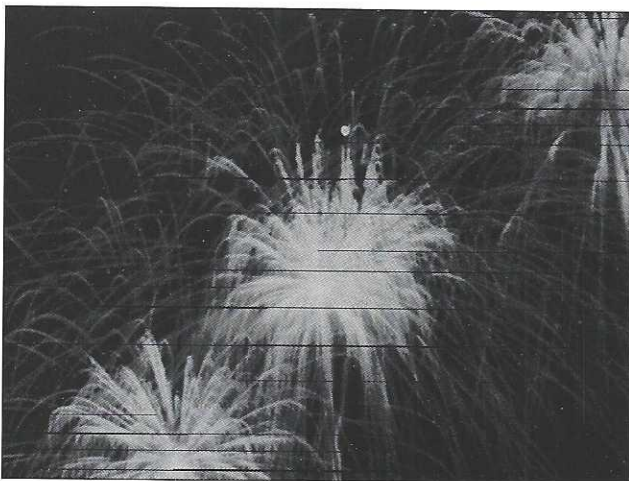
We are doing all in our power to secure the long-term future for worship at the temple, but the decision rests with the Government. Mr Gummer, the Environment Secretary will announce his decision later this year.

If he allows our appeal ...

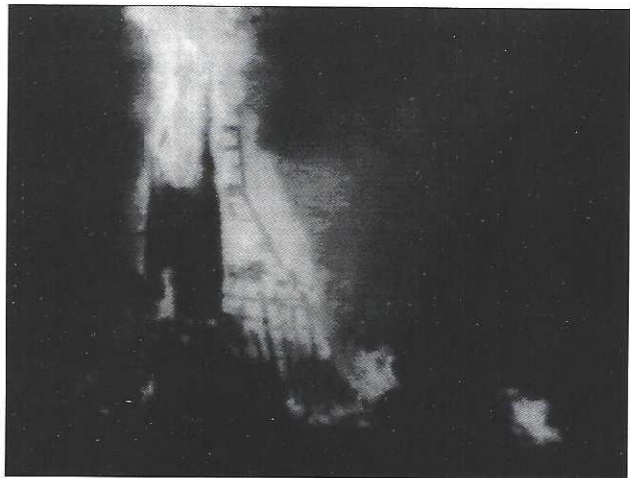
then we can build our new access driveway and keep the temple open as before.

If he refuses

then the campaign to save the temple must move into new ground and/or await for a change of Government.



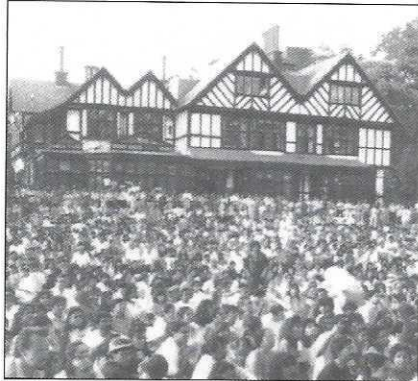
Diwali fireworks BANNED
ON November 6
(the weekend of Guy Fawkes celebration)



Holi Bonfire BANNED

**We are so close to victory.
Let's work together to secure it NOW!**

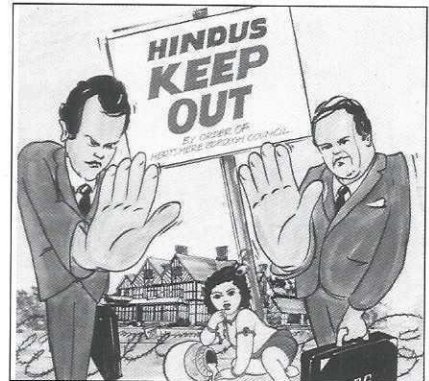
ONE STEP FROM VICTORY



It's been a long fight and here's how we are
ONE STEP FROM VICTORY:
1973 - 1981

Worshippers attracted by the high standards and educational facilities. Temple provides sacred atmosphere for observing festivals.

But in 1981, due to local residents complaining about pilgrims visiting the Manor - HBC issues first Enforcement Notice.

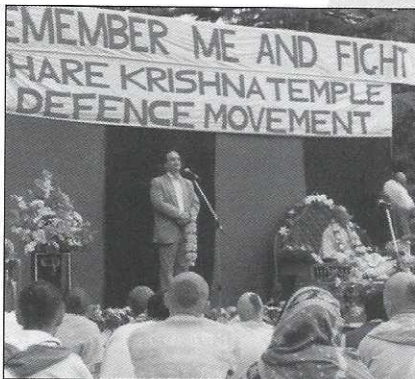
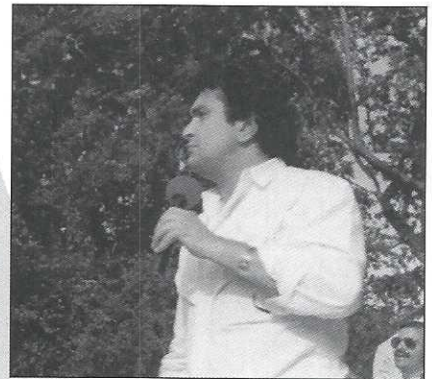


1988

A delegation sent to India with a special plea to the Indian Government.

1989

Sunil Gavaskar and Rishi Kapoor led a sponsored walk of 7,000 people from Wembley to the Manor - walking for justice.



1990

Community leaders launch the Hare Krishna Temple Defence Movement - the save the temple committee.

1991

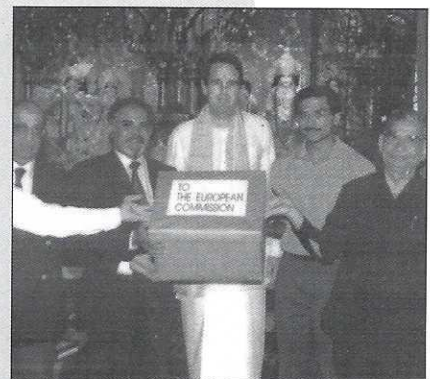
Walking for Dharma - another sponsored walk.



1992

HKTDM present petition to the Prime Minister at Downing Street.

Application lodged to the European Court of Human Rights.



WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THIS FIGHT

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

1981 - Council issue first Enforcement Notice to ban 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 negotiate a solution.

1988 - On Hertsmere's suggestion, ISKCON applies to build a new temple near Elstree. Then Hertsmere refuses planning permission for it. ISKCON appeal again.

1988/89 - Two appeals heard by DoE.

1990 - DoE announce decision. No new temple. Also 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 refuses to hear the case.

July 1992 - Full application lodged for European Court of Human Rights.

August 1993 - "Saviours of the Temple" raise funds for buying the land for the new driveway.

Nov/Dec 1993 - Agreement reached on purchase of driveway land. Planning application submitted to Council for use of Manor for worship and festivals on the basis of the new access.

16th March 1994 - Enforcement Notice takes effect! 36,000 devotees march in London. Hertsmere hold off prosecution while considering new access application.

April 1994 - European Commission of Human Rights claims it can't accept our case for hearing because of technicalities concerning planning laws in the UK.

12th July 1994 - Council defer decision on new access. Temple remains open for worship until then.

August 1994 - ISKCON appeals to DoE that Hertsmere has failed to determine the new access application.

October 1994 - Council rejects new access proposal and decides to prosecute temple for holding Janmashtami festival.

January 1995 - Public Inquiry starts to hear temple's appeal to Department of Environment. Adjourned after 4 weeks.

June 1995 - Public Inquiry concludes. Now we wait for decision from Environment Secretary, Mr John Gummer.

ONE STEP FROM VICTORY



February 1994
Fasting for Justice - fasting to save their temple.

16th March 1994
Enforcement Notice takes effect - but 36,000 devotees march in London - the most memorable day in our campaign.



26th May 1994
Mass lobby of Parliament. Devotees displayed civil disobedience as a plea to the government "Keep our temple open."



July 1994
Devotees fast outside Liberal Democrat office for one week. Others gather on decision day outside Hertsmere's office. Decision was deferred.

October 1994
HBC reject the planning application - we appeal to the DoE.



January 1995
Public Inquiry begins.

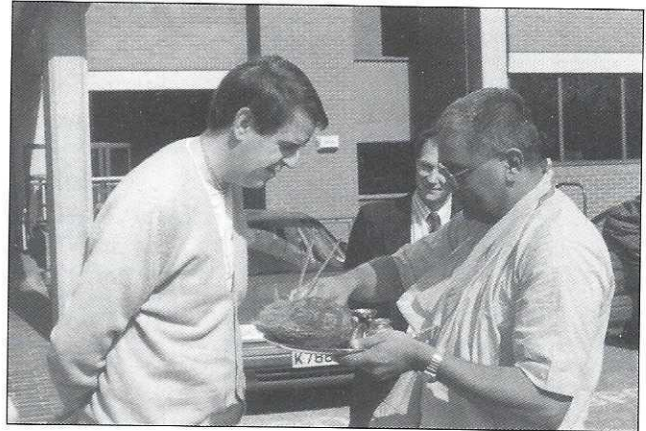
1st April 1995
Students show their concern - 1,500 march in London to demand recognition as British Hindus.



PUBLIC INQUIRY

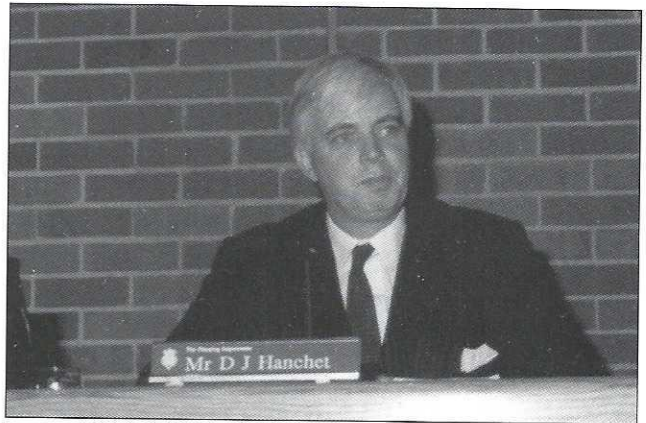
THE ISSUE

ISKCON believes that the proposal to allow the use of Bhaktivedanta Manor for worship and festivals on the basis of new access is a highly sensible compromise proposal. When it was clear that Hertsmere would reject it on party political voting, ISKCON appealed to the Government.



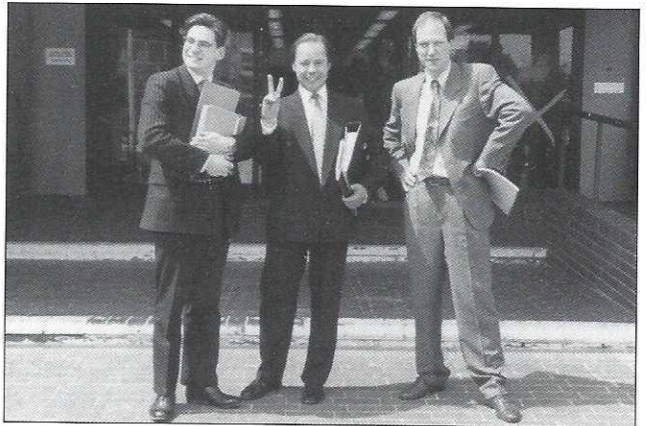
THE DECISION-MAKER

Because it is such an important issue the Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr John Gummer, announced he would be taking the decision himself. He appointed a single Inspector, Mr David Hanchet, to hear the case and report to him. Mr Hanchet is considered a senior, highly experienced and competent Inspector.



THE CONTENDERS

ISKCON is obviously there at the Inquiry putting forward its case. On the other side is Hertsmere arguing every point. Hertsmere have tried to get Hertfordshire County Council and the Department of Transport to support them on highway issues. But, the Department of Transport to support has refused and there is confusion over the status of one of the County Council's officers present at the Inquiry.

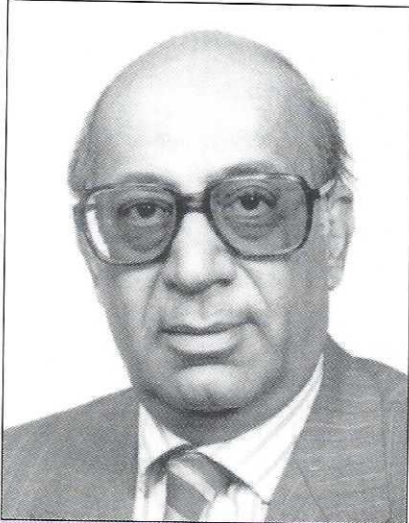


No other body is legally represented, but the local villages have raised objections. The Letchmore Heath Village Trust has made a poor turnout, but the newly-formed Patchetts Green, Round Bush and Aldenham Conservation Society has been highly active.



THE ISKCON TEAM

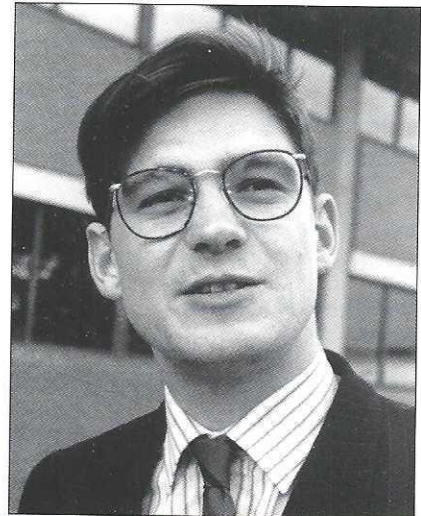
Our own team has been formed to present our case as expertly as possible within the financial constraints.



Sh. Shantoo Ruparell of Singh & Ruparell are the instructing solicitors.
(He is assisted by Ms Minal Popat.)



Mr David Altaras is ISKCON's senior barrister.
He has been with the case since 1986.



He is assisted by Mr Robert White.



Mr Douglas Raine of Ottaways is assisting Singh and Ruparell in the legal work.



Mr Peter Trevelyan of ABT is ISKCON's Planning and Traffic Consultant



Mrs Moira Hankinson of Glen Kemp Hankinson has presented the landscaping issues of the proposal.

THE BATTLE

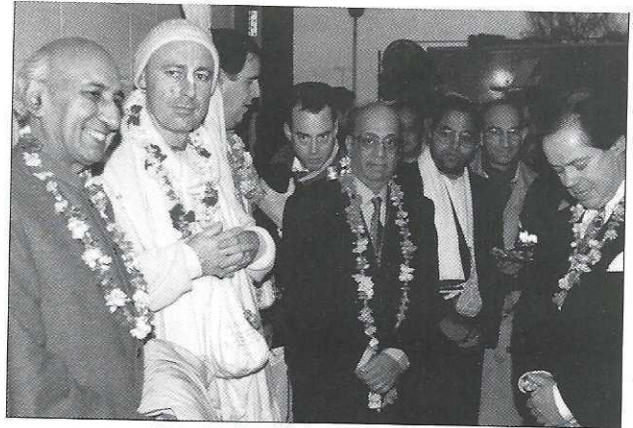
WEEK 1 17TH - 20TH JANUARY

The inspector opened the appeal and invited ISKCON's legal counsel to summarise the case. Akhandadhi das, the Temple President, then presented the main evidence on behalf of the temple stressing the spiritual practices and needs of the community. He was extensively cross-examined by Hertsme's QC.

Dr Kim Knott of Leeds University provided the Inquiry with important evidence on Hindu theology and demography to back up the temple's case.

There were three more witnesses for ISKCON as representatives of our case. Srutidharma das spoke as a senior resident priest of the ashram and college. Mrs Asmita Haria outlined the needs of a family in following Krishna Consciousness and the importance of the temple.

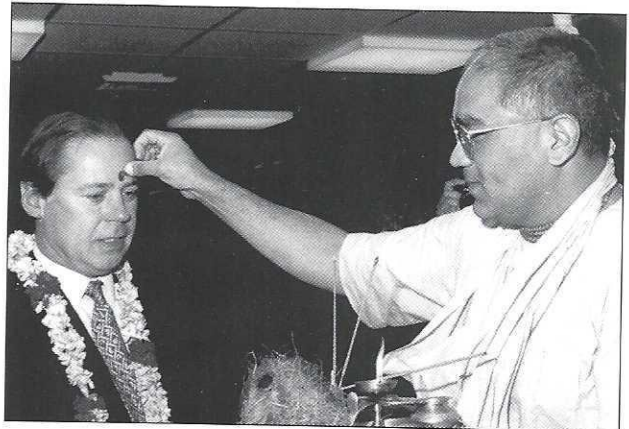
Mr John Maizels lives next to the temple and he spoke as one of 24 residents who signed a petition for peace with the temple. He supports the use of the temple with or without the new access.



WEEK 2 24TH - 27TH JANUARY

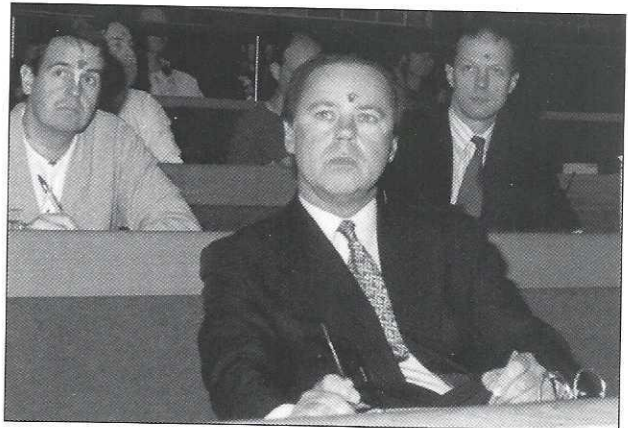
Moria Hankinson of G. K. H. established the landscape benefits of the proposals, despite long-winded cross-examination by the other side.

Then, Peter Trevelyan presented the traffic issues on behalf of the temple. He showed a variety of benefits with the scheme and rebutted the various objections.



WEEK 3 31ST JANUARY - 3RD FEBRUARY

The week began continuing the cross-examination of Mr Trevelyan. Then, Mr Kinsman who is an officer of the County Council presented his objections to the access driveway. However, by the end of cross-examination by ISKCON's barrister, Mr Kinsman conceded that if certain off-site works were done and certain provisions for controlling traffic on Janmashtami were in place he would give up his objections.



WEEK 4 7TH - 10TH FEBRUARY

The first day of the week was set aside for other supporters of the temple. A fuller description of their statement is provided overleaf. What was important was the range of support from inside and outside the community, particularly from other religions and from villagers of Letchmore Heath speaking in favour of the temple.

The next day was the opportunity for the opposing locals. Not many came from Letchmore Heath, but there was an array of protesters from other villages which, in reality, are better off with the proposal.

A few Conservative councillors came to voice their opposition. So did Mr James Clappison, the Hertsme MP, despite the fact that his predecessor, Lord Cecil Parkinson was highly supportive of the new access idea when it was first raised.



THE BATTLE

Cllr. Frank Ward, the Labour councillor with Hertsmere who has been at the forefront of the campaign since 1986 spoke strongly about the hypocrisy and double-standards within Hertsmere. He highlighted a number of comments by Hertsmere councillors to illustrate the type of prejudice behind the council's actions. Mr Keith Vaz was the only MP to speak at the Inquiry in support of the temple. He stated that he brought the support of over 100 other MP's.

Sir Rhodes Boyson MP also attended the Inquiry to encourage the temple supporters.

WEEK 5 15TH - 19TH MAY

The Inquiry resumed after three month's break with more of ISKCON's case. Mr Dick Rainbird, probably one of the top experts in the country on road safety, presented convincing evidence to show that Hertsmere's traffic evidence related to Sandy Lane Junction was inaccurate and inappropriate. He proved that the recent improvements to the junction would reduce accidents considerably in the future. He said that there was further opportunity to improve the junction at minimal cost which would more than offset many extra risks from the increase of traffic because of the Manor's visitors.

The next day, Akhandadhi was back on the stand to present evidence regarding undertakings and conditions that would be acceptable for the temple should planning permission be granted. These addressed concerns expressed earlier in the Inquiry about the fear of an ever-increasing number of festival days, how traffic will be managed on Janmashtami and noise control.

Mr Peter Trevelyan then presented planning evidence for the Society to show that the proposal was appropriate for the Green Belt and that, in any event, there were very special circumstances to allow the proposal as it would have minimal impact on the area.

Hertsmere then began its case by calling its traffic expert, Mr Fred Noble. He tried to present figures to show there would be large increases in accidents on the A41.

WEEK 6 22ND - 26TH MAY

In cross examination of Mr Noble, the council were obliged to withdraw its earlier claims that there would be 75% increase in the number of accidents. The actual figure turned out to be less than 1%. In answering a question from the Inspector, Mr Noble dismayed Hertsmere by saying there would not actually be any demonstrable harm from the proposal.

He was followed by Mr Tyler, the Conservation Officer for the Council. Many of Mr Tyler's claims were dismissed in the cross-examination. At one point, Mr Tyler argued that cars parked for the pub caused no problem to the character of the village, but cars parked in relation to the temple would. Even the Inspector was shocked by this, and asked him how it could possibly make any difference.

Mrs Gowing then presented the Planning evidence for Hertsmere. She claimed that the proposal was not appropriate for the Green Belt and should not be allowed. This was difficult for her since her report to the Council Members last July recommended the construction of the driveway. Many positive

conclusions of that report were put to her. It was very clear that she was being forced to present a different case at the Inquiry because of some antagonistic councillors and Hertsmere's legal team.

The Inspector viewed the BBC Everyman programme broadcast last October, which portrayed the whole circumstances of the Manor's case. He also heard an evidence from Councillor Bryan Stanley, the leader of the Labour group in Hertsmere which has now become the largest party having 19 councillors (compared to 14 Conservative and 5 Liberal Democrat. There is also one Independent.) He claimed that next year his party would come in full control of the council and, at that time, he would see that there was proper justice for the temple. If it was up to his group he said the proposal would have been approved.

WEEK 7

The two parties having completed their main case, Wednesday 7th June was reserved for a discussion of the conditions that should be attached to any grant of permission. This is a usual procedure, even though, of course, the Council don't want permission to be granted in any circumstance. For the most part, these were agreed.

They obviously have the effect of limiting the activities at Bhaktivedanta Manor in the event of a Planning permission, but were drafted to be in accord with how worship and education is carried out at the temple at present. Most of them were designed to curb unrestricted growth which has been the constant fear of the Council and which even the Secretary of State might be concerned with.

The final day of the hearing was for tidying up any outstanding bits of information and documents and then the two parties gave their final submissions and legal arguments. Ms Appleby QC for Hertsmere gave a lacklustre performance in both content and delivery.

The counsel for ISKCON, by comparison, expertly presented the temple's case stressing all the clear points which had been established in the evidence heard throughout the weeks. In summation, he said that this was a wholesome proposal. It was good for the temple, it is good for the Hindu community, it was good for the local people and it was also good for Hertsmere council since in all the years they had not been able to find a solution to balance the important needs of the Hindu community to attend such a unique temple as Bhaktivedanta Manor and in a way that not only preserves the amenity of Letchmore Heath, but enhances the character of the area.

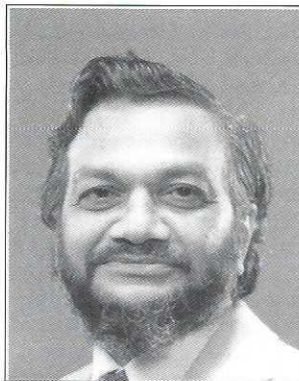
On Sunday, 11th June, the Inspector accompanied by representatives from Hertsmere, the temple and local residents walked the route of the driveway and visited other areas in the locality before having a tour of the temple building, including darshan of the Deities.

He seemed impressed with many aspects of activities in the temple, the appearance of the grounds and the cleanliness of the building (particularly the tidiness of the brahmachari rooms). The Inspector has strong interest in "Green" issues and particularly commented on the working oxen display at the Goshalla and our use of energy-efficient light bulbs.

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS AT THE INQUIRY



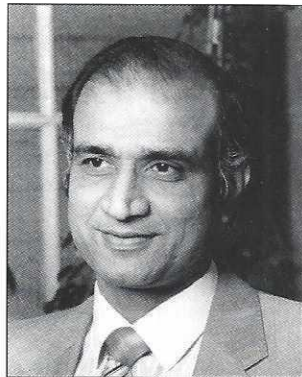
Keith Vaz, MP



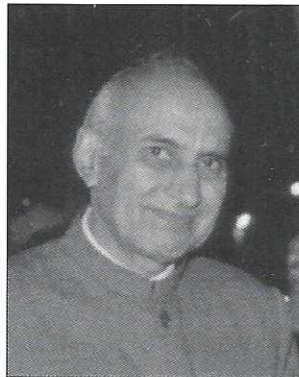
Prof. Bhikhu Parekh

Keith Vaz, MP, the Shadow Local Planning Minister, commented on the allegation of a possible increase in the numbers visiting Bhaktivedanta Manor. He said that the access drive will not increase the numbers. He felt that numbers will actually decrease as local authorities around the country begin to recognise the needs for the local Hindu communities and help them find places of worship.

Prof. Bhikhu Parekh of Hull University said, "It unites Hindus in a way that no other place does. Its form of worship is broadbased and of interest to most Hindus. The temple had done splendid work during its short life and British Hindus would be the poorer for its absence."



C.B. Patel



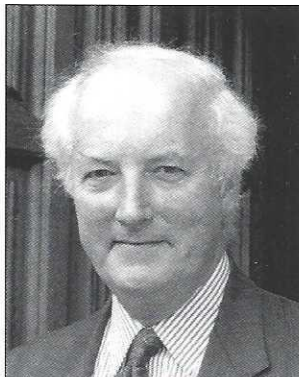
Mr O.P. Sharma

C. B. Patel, the Editor of Gujarat Samachar, said, rather than try to ban worshippers from visiting Bhaktivedanta Manor, it would perhaps prove more acceptable to tread the age-old way of British compromise - for which we are appreciated world-wide - to stop this controversy from worsening and rise above the petty hostilities."

Mr O. P. Sharma, President of National Council of Hindu Temples, said replying to the idea of having worshippers go to an alternative place of worship, "Our other temples CANNOT, I repeat CANNOT take additional devotees from the Manor. There are very few temples to cater for the size of our community."



Reverend Christopher Lamb



Brian Pearce

Reverend Christopher Lamb said, "When I meet Hindu people from other parts of the country they are all concerned for the future of the Manor. It is part of their extended community. Not only that, I have letters from other parts of the world, from India, South Africa, and Fiji, saying the same thing. It is no exaggeration to say that this situation is being watched in many parts of the world to see if Britain is in reality the tolerant country it claims to be".

Brian Pearce, Director of the Interfaith Network of UK, said that this case has "become in many ways a test case. The decision which is reached will be widely seen as a signal of how willing we are as a society, both locally and nationally, to give proper and sympathetic recognition to the religious concerns and needs of those communities which have settled in Britain in substantial number within the last few decades and share in our citizenship.



Reverend Kenneth Cracknell



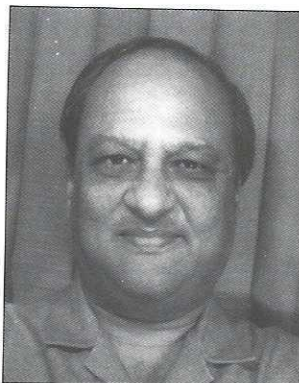
Martin Palmer

Reverend Kenneth Cracknell, President of the Theological Federation at Cambridge, mentioned Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "provides full right of every human to practice and promote their own religion."

Martin Palmer, Director of ICOREC (International Constancy on Religion, Education and Culture) said, "The Manor has become one of the most important pilgrimage centres of any faith in the UK, and its closure will rebound upon the relationships between the faiths and the state."

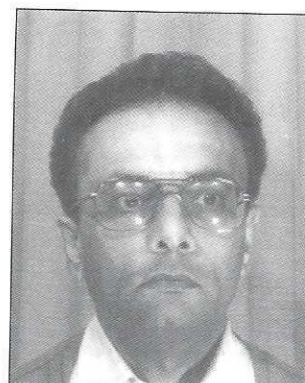
FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS AT THE INQUIRY

Mr Surendra Patel, Chairman of Programme Committee at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (The Institute of Indian Culture) said, "I have a special affinity for the Hare Krishna Temple in my heart. Whenever I visit this temple, and sit with folded hands and close my eyes in front of the Deities I find total peace of mind. My heart is filled with joy, love, harmony and humbleness.



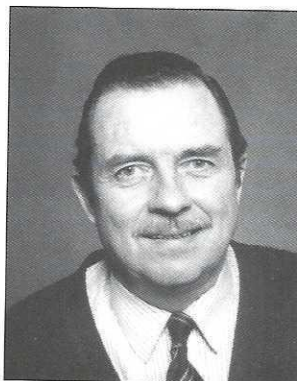
Mr Surendra Patel

Kishore Ruperelia mentioned, "Over the years, Bhaktivedanta Manor has imparted teaching and guidance based totally on Vedic principles and directives. This is proven by the fact that there are now hundreds of Hindu youths in UK who have taken to clean and pious life as a result of teaching and guidance they received from Bhaktivedanta Manor. The families of these youths are eternally obliged to Bhaktivedanta Manor.

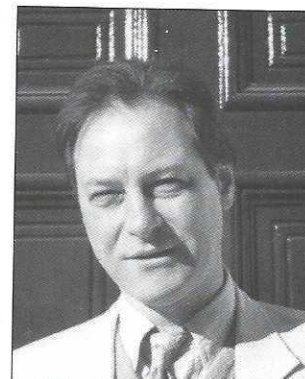


Kishore Ruperelia

Councillor Frank Ward stated, "In this epic struggle for religious equality the path to justice for the Hindu Community is littered with the debris of prejudice, corrupt abuse of authority, arrogance and covert rascism all of which has fallen victim to the determination of the British Hindus and their many supporters to expose the hypocrisy and double standards of the society in which we live. The Hindu Community must continue to defend the right of freedom of religious worship and practice in equality with other faiths and remain resolved to win this conflict."



Councillor Frank Ward



Ranchor Prime

Ranchor Prime, a free lance consultant for ICOREC, "Bhaktivedanta Manor, with rooms once occupied by Swami Bhaktivedanta, with its central shrine, its herd of sacred cows, its lake, and its woodland is sacred ground for Hindus everywhere. It is an important symbol of the links between our two cultures ... Whatever a planning committee decides, it does not have the power to make or unmake a sacred place."

Mrs Moyra Banerjee said, "I live opposite the Manor gates, and my observation of the Manor shows that on a daily basis there is no great intensity of traffic. Traffic through the village goes to Aldenham School, Haberdashers' Schools and we are also used as a by-pass by people avoiding the A41. The Manor traffic is not a large portion of this."



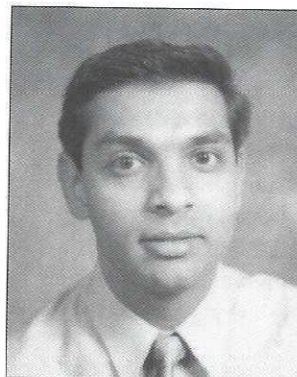
Mrs Moyra Banerjee



Kamlesh Bahl

Kamlesh Bahl, Chairwoman of the Equal Opportunity Commission, said "the right equality of 'opportunities' to practice a person's chosen religion is, of course, a fundamental right that must be available to all residence in United Kingdom. In deed, once the planning issues have been considered, this the major issue that underlies this application.

Bhasker Rughani, secretary of the youth group Pandava Sena, glorified Bhaktivedanta Manor as "the home of our religious heritage." He said, "I would like to ask you, is such a place which revives the vitality of young souls and which breeds such dynamic energy within society, not worthy of being granted full permission for worship so it may continue in this important work for the betterment of our British fabric?"



Bhasker Rughani



Kanti Nagda

Kanti Nagda, Chairman of the Confederation of Indian Organisations (UK), stated his concern for young people. He said, "for youth living in a society with decreasing value attached to moral standards, a religious place of worship gives them a more positive approach to live."

THE SOLUTION AND THE ARGUMENTS

What's been Hertsmere's excuse for banning worship?

Why did Hertsmere Council want to ban worship and festivals at the temple in the first place? How did they justify such an attack on a minority religious community?

The answer is that the temple is "too popular". Too many devotees coming for worship and that means too many cars through the village of Letchmore Heath. (How serious the situation is in the village is definitely a question but let's take it at face value for a moment.)

So, if cars through Letchmore Heath is the problem then a solution which takes all the temple traffic out of the village (and not just Sunday or festival devotees) must not only be a solution to the old problem but is also a positive gain for the village.

It sounds attractive but can it be done in practice?

Yes, the temple went through great trouble and expense to secure a strip of land (in two pieces) connecting the temple grounds to a road linking directly to the A41 trunk road avoiding all local residences (please see map.)

All the studies have been done to prove how practical the idea is. In fact, the landscaping proposals have been welcomed by conservation and wildlife groups as a benefit to the locality. Also, villagers in Letchmore Heath have been very supportive of the idea.

This sounds great. Why aren't Hertsmere behind it?

Why indeed! But I'm afraid it's down to local party politics. At the planning committee and later at the full council meeting, the voting took place along party lines. The Conservatives voted against the proposal. (Except for one lone Tory councillor bravely standing up for what he believed to be correct.) Surprisingly perhaps, the Liberal Democrats all opposed the idea - mainly, it seems, because of pressure from various constituents who vigorously oppose the temple. The Labour group fully supported the temple. Indeed, many of their members have been highly active in promoting a solution to the dispute. We are certainly very grateful for their help.

What are the official objections?

But now that the appeal is in front of an Inspector for the DoE, how can Hertsmere sustain an argument against this solution? Although Hertsmere invoke Green Belt issues they have certain problems in arguing against the proposal. First of all, the council planning officers recommended that the driveway should be constructed. Secondly, Hertsmere has just permitted the construction of the new Elstree by-pass through the Green Belt as well as many other Green Belt developments. But now it says the temple and the driveway shouldn't be allowed in the Green Belt. These issues of planning in Green Belt can be quite complex. But, our arguments are clear and simple. It is certainly appropriate to use an existing building like the Manor for an institutional purpose such as a place of worship and the driveway to serve that use is also appropriate.

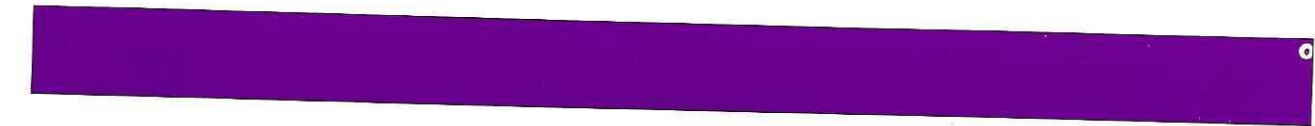
Even if the Environment Secretary disagrees with this, then he should approve the proposal because of the very special circumstances in this case:-

- i) the overwhelming need of the Hindu community to have proper places of worship**
- ii) the unique importance of Bhaktivedanta Manor**
- iii) the history of worship and education, there and**
- v) the extreme difficulty of finding or creating an alternative to the Manor.**

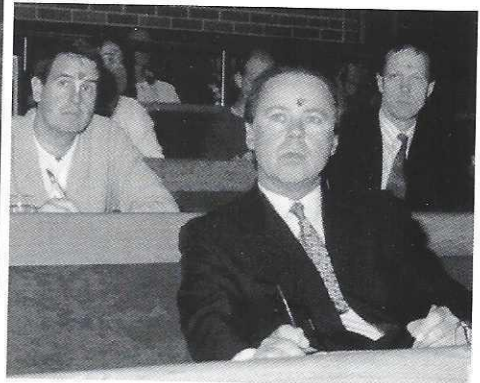
All these points are strengthened by the fact that the proposal brings with it very little harm and, indeed, many local benefits to the locality.

Any other arguments

Lots. Hertsmere's legal team seem to have been working overtime to think up a whole range of intriguing objections.



They say	We say
People will get lost and go through local villages.	Signing will help and besides, the route is direct and easy
The road junctions are not safe.	They are safe enough for everyone else to use. We have offered to improve them.
Tents at Janmashtami are a major intrusion into the Green Belt.	Marquees are a feature of rural life. They don't damage the Green Belt.
Devotees will park in Letchmore Heath and walk into the temple.	Why should they? It is easier to use the temple car parks. We will close the pedestrian gate if they want.
More and more people will come.	That goes against the statistics. In the 70's there was a growth of attendance as the Hindu community became established. But there has been steady attendance since then.
All the people will make a lot of noise.	Noise is not an issue now and we have offered to introduce strict controls for the future.



BHAKTIVEDANTA MANOR

It seems that every little point is a matter of grave concern for the Council. There is no attitude of facilitating the Hindu community to any degree. But Hertsmere have stooped to using Demographic Profiling (as was popular amongst the Nazis in the 1930s) to support their case. Here are two examples from their evidences:-

"Hindus are having babies. Therefore, there will be an increase in attendance in the future."

We ask - is it a Planning Issue or a FAMILY PLANNING ISSUE.

"Hindus have a low proportion of old people. When the present generation grows older there will be more old Hindus. When people are elderly they take to religion. Older Hindus want to go on pilgrimage and so they'll go to Bhaktivedanta Manor. This will increase the attendance."

Such arguments are highly questionable. It's hard to believe other religious groups could be attacked by such demeaning propaganda - or that they would tolerate it.

No, Hertsmere do not have a good case against us. But many people question whether the dispute will be decided on legal or planning grounds. There is a much deeper issue - will Britain accept that the Hindu community has equal rights to religious facilities not just in the inner-city townships but in the English countryside?

The issue of car parking

There has been one issue about which the inspector has shown large concern. The temple has adequate parking for all its activities on Sundays and festival days, EXCEPT

for the attendance on Janmashtami. This is hardly surprising considering the number of devotees who come on those days.

In previous years the temple has rented the neighbouring farmer's field for the extra space for parking. This has been an easy solution and ensures that there is no parking in the village and minimal queuing of cars entering the property.

However, the council has shown that this arrangement is not at all satisfactory, because the temple is depending on getting the use of land from someone else. What if it wasn't possible? They claim that the temple must not be allowed planning permission for public worship including festivals because of this problem.

The inspector raised the point many times throughout the inquiry. It was obvious that he was deeply concerned about the lack of definite and permanent parking for Janmashtami.

Because of this the temple felt it prudent to obtain the freehold of land which could solve this problem. Now we are pleased to announce that ISKCON has secured possession of nearly 40 acres adjacent to the driveway land (see map)

Now there can be no objection to the holding of Janmashtami or other festivals on the issue of car parking.

Our heartfelt thanks to all the patrons of the Bhaktivedanta Manor Foundation and the other devotees who helped make this possible.

JANMASHTAMI PROSECUTION



Bhasker Gharpode

In March, ISKCON and the temple president of Bhaktivedanta Manor, Akhandadhi das, appeared before the Watford Magistrates Court - with prosecution charges for breach of the Enforcement Notice on the holy day of Sri Krishna Janmashtami.

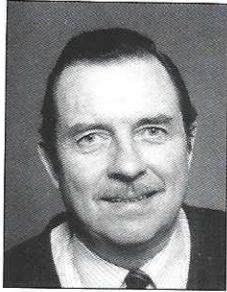
We pleaded not guilty and have elected to go for a Crown Court trial with judge and jury. Our barrister, Bhasker Ghorpade and solicitor, Shantoo Ruparell are both providing their services free of charge in a generous gesture of support for the Hindu community.

It is most insulting and hurtful that the summons name public "entertainment" as well as public worship as constituting a breach of the notice. Hertsmere persists in calling the religious events surrounding the Janmashtami celebrations "entertainment." The local pub - true entertainment for those who like it - has far more obstructive traffic through Letchmore Heath. However, it is ignored while the temple has had the enforcement notice slapped on it. The Hindu community is more than upset at this prosecution but hope that the Public Inquiry will bring about the long awaited result to this long and drawn out dispute.

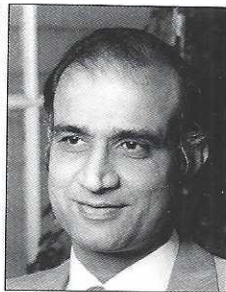
At the time of going to print we still await the Crown Court date for the next part of the hearing.

HARE KRISHNA TEMPLE DEFENCE MOVEMENT

SPOTLIGHT ON THOSE WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THE TEMPLE



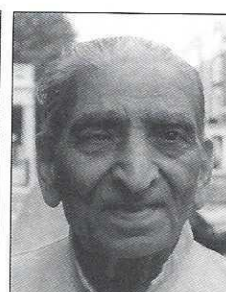
CLLR. FRANK WARD
Vice-chairman of
HKTDM



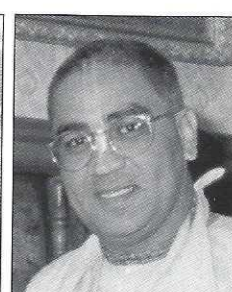
C.B. PATEL
Editor of Gujarat
Samachar



KISHORE RUPERALIA
Secretary of VHP (UK)



Bal Mukund Parekh



His Holiness
Atmanivedanam Swami

Dear friends,

It gives me once again great pleasure and opportunity to bring you brief news of our past years activities to keep the Bhaktivedanta Manor temple open. Our determination to fight for equality and proper justice has further united the Hindu community not only in the UK but all over the world.

Lord Krishna reminds us that we should fight for dharma and in the Bhagavad-gita it is written "mama anusmaram yudhya ca" which when translated means "remember Me and fight." With Lord Krishna's mercy, the temple remains open and I am very confident that it will never ever close for worshipping our sacred and beloved deities which reside in this temple.

As you may know that last year the adjoining lands were purchased to build an access drive and subsequently when a planning permission was submitted to Hertsmere Borough Council it was refused. Currently a Government inquiry has taken place into this matter and sometime in November we will hear the outcome of it from the Secretary of State.

Although the temple is being prosecuted for breaking the enforcement order last Janmashtami, the HKTDM are determined to fight and support future Janmashtami festivals. We wish to continue to celebrate Lord Krishna's birthday at Bhaktivedanta Manor as it has been done in the past 21 years.

In the beginning of this year I visited India and would like to thank Mr Salman Khurisdad (Minister of State for External Affairs), Mr Bal Thakray and Mr V H Dalmia and many other prominent leaders including Mr L K Advani, who have all pledged to support in our struggle. I would like to express my special appreciation to the Pandava Sena who have brought to life our campaign among the youth community. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge my sincere thanks to you all for supporting and giving us assistance and encouragement in our united fight to keep our temple open for ever.

Jai Sri Krishna.
Naresh Chadha

