



STATE OF OREGON

INTEROFFICE MEMO

*file
9/11/83*

TO: Gerry Thompson

DATE: September 20, 1983

FROM: Bob Oliver *BO*

SUBJECT: Rajneesh Rumors

This office receives an average of 20 or so letters each week from citizens expressing concern about the Rajneesh, and calling on the Governor to do something about them.

In anticipation of your subsequent meeting with an activist group, you might be interested in knowing some of the rumors which apparently have been circulating, and which the writers of these letters pose to the Governor.

The Governor and his staff are kept busy dealing with letters from the Rajneesh asking favors, presenting their point of view, etc. (The opposite is true.)

The Governor has visited (or shortly will visit) Rajneeshpuram. He is busy cutting ribbons for the Rajneesh as they finish new projects. (No way!)

The Bhagwan has "bought out" the Governor and state officials with money and expensive gifts. (I haven't seen any.)

There is a locked gate across the county road running through Rajneeshpuram. (Nobody has been able to say where the gate is. The State Police and local public officials deny knowledge of the existence of such a gate.)

The Governor has instructed the State Police to have their troopers bow before the Bhagwan whenever he drives by. (The State Police have been instructed to deal with the Bhagwan and his followers exactly as they would deal with anyone else.)

The Rajneesh take down license numbers of cars traveling along roads in the vicinity of Rajneeshpuram, and radio this information ahead somewhere else. (Possibly true, but not illegal.)

The Rajneesh perform indecent acts in public. (There is a lack of specificity about the times, places or nature of the indecencies.)

The Rajneesh are dirty and smelly. (Quite likely true.)

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The Rajneesh have legal rights, but they are too "pushy." (Deja vu! When I was a boy growing up in the South, my elders used to concede that Blacks had rights, but wondered why they had to be so "pushy" about asserting them.)

The Rajneesh do not keep their word. (You have to very carefully listen to exactly what they say, and not to assume anything.)

The Rajneesh are about to buy _____ thousands of acres of land in _____ County. (Such rumors come in from all over the state. Some may well be true -- but the Governor cannot instruct an owner of real property to disclose the name of a prospective buyer.)

Great amounts of money are being paid to people in Rajneeshpuram who are on welfare. (As of two weeks ago, AFS had yet to pay its first dime to a resident of Rajneeshpuram. It has information that people who looked like they were Rajneesh have applied elsewhere in the state for food stamps and other benefits -- but benefits may not be denied on grounds of religion.)

The Rajneesh are stockpiling weapons at Rajneeshpuram. (This can be verified only if there are some specific leads to check out -- who saw them, what they were, and when.)

The Rajneesh plan to take over Oregon. (They probably would like to!)

Since the group with whom you met a month or so ago is prone to bring forward new questions from time to time, it is possible they may raise some of these rumors when you meet with them next. Incredible as some sound, there are those who believe them.