

83.04.02.B

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: ...sentiment of the theistic public.

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: When Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura was accompanied in Vṛndāvana by some associates who were dressed in western attire, what was his idea?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: His idea was that the outward dress is not disqualification for inner spiritual realisation. We may accept the outer fashion of the westerners in order to infuse real spiritual understanding into them. We shall take such risk. And the spiritual standard should not be thought less efficient that they cannot conquer the western scientific sections, nations. They should try to convert those that are with this dress.

When Vana Mahārāja went to England with *daṇḍam* but came back without *daṇḍam*, he left it there. But that was not welcomed here. He has gone there to establish the position of *daṇḍam* and the Śrī Vighraha. But they can't understand. They think that the difference between idolatry and Śrī Mūrti worshipping, that should be preached there. To make them understand the difference between Arcā Mūrti and the idol. The ordinary bombastic and the *daṇḍam* we are to preach, we are to create field for the respect of Them and not to give away and to accept the...

Especially in the jungle propaganda. In special high case it may be tolerated that without *daṇḍa* you may work. But for the beginners then it will be ridiculous to accept *daṇḍa* and to belittle *daṇḍa* in this way.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja: Only *paramahansa* Vaiṣṇava can.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Only in the stage of *paramahansa* he may keep the *daṇḍam* in a particular place and he can move freely. After serving *daṇḍam* for some time he may take leave, put the *daṇḍam* in a particular respectful place and then he can move without *daṇḍam*. At least after some twelve years or some years of time, he will carry with respect and then he may put it somewhere. And especially in the case of emergencies, when he's very sick, or any other position temporary he may give up *daṇḍam*. Otherwise he'll keep with him *daṇḍam* and he'll try to push into the country the respect of *daṇḍam*. And thereby many things will come into question. "Why should we respect this bombastic? Why should we respect the Mūrti, this earthen or this mineral doll?" These hard questions will come into the field and they must be solved. Otherwise this will be, patch-up, patch-up work, patchwork.

We must go thorough, our progress must be thorough. We're going to attack the enemies' country and we shall conquer and take possession thoroughly. Otherwise in any place I'll be in danger of being murdered, if the conquest is no thorough. Enemies' land, the land of *māyā* is enemies' land. We must move here very carefully. We may be attacked from every possible way. We should be careful about that and move.

"That my spiritual conviction I shall spread, and I won't allow anything to enter into that and molest that thought."

The enemy camp should not be allowed to enter into our plane. We must remain intact in our plane. Standing there we shall attack them and devastation we shall create in the enemy camp.

So many oppositions will come, we're to face, we're to create opposition.

"This is this. What you think, this is not right."

The elephant may be more powerful, but that does not mean that I shall give salute to the elephant.

What you say is not practicable, but you must enter the enemies' country like so many in disguise. And then wherever we shall find favourable to us we shall begin fighting. You want that policy? To enter into the country of the enemy in disguise, suitably? And we shall try to create our position anywhere. That is guerilla war. You prefer guerilla war?

Bhakti Sudhira Goswami: Sometimes it is necessary.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ha, ha. And the specially trained persons can accept that rarely.

Bhakti Kanan Giri Mahārāja: Śrīla Prabhupāda he said to go in like a needle and come out like a plough.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And that also, not at the cost of the respect of the Deity and the *daṇḍam* etc. Some degree, there should be some degree.

Bhakti Sudhira Goswami: I went to preach in Russia, so when I would enter the country...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The special batch, guerilla, they will have another dress, they should have another dress. Why the *daṇḍam* will be necessary? Why the Vighraha should be taken there in the beginning? Special batch may be selected for such fight. Then when some ground is gained you can take there *daṇḍam* and you can take there Śrī Mūrti. Otherwise only to dishonour Them, the emblem of the Divinity, we shall push Them first, why? Gain some ground, and then we can put our Śrī Mūrti, and the holy emblems.

In the beginning the flag will be taken to be dishonoured, no. You go and create some position, then you can take your flag. Not to be dishonoured very soon, very easily. Why the flag will be taken first?

We're to keep honour of the Divinity. Not to be looted, exploited by others. That will bring a reaction within me and weaken us.

When there is danger of Śrī Mūrti being attacked then they put It underground. They may put into the forest and fly away, keeping in some safe position. Naca vai seva moi galapo laiya _____ [?]

Fled away, because he's coming, the Muslims will come and break It, dishonour. So by concealing the Vighraha somewhere they fled. And here also when there was some attack, the apprehension of some attack over this Śrī Mūrti of Mahāprabhu they put underground, unknown place.

"That Mahāprabhu is not God, he's worshipping of His Deity that can't be allowed here."

The Navadvīpa tantric scholars they raised some objection to the worshipping of the Mūrti of Mahāprabhu. At that time It was concealed underground so that It may not be dishonoured.

So in the beginning we won't take things of respect to the enemy camp. We shall go, take the risk. Iconoclast, the Muslims are iconoclast. Icon worshipper and iconoclast. Idol breaker. We shall

go, we shall take the philosophy, and the process of understanding step by step, have to preach the thought. Cultural fight is the fine fight, and conclusive fight. Valuable fight is cultural fight.

Once, the Sikhs when they entered America they shaved their hairs and beards, then they grow. When they entered there they began to grow again. And they come back with their beard and hair. But when they want to take admission, suppose perhaps there is some law, or something, that without shaving they cannot enter, something like that I heard.

Rabindranatha Tagore was once opposed from entering America, though he got Nobel Prize before that. 1910 or 1911 he got Nobel Prize. After that he was going to America. For his long beard perhaps, he was not being allowed. Then some advised him to take special permission, informing that he's, that Rabindranatha, has got Nobel Prize. But he did not do, he waited in the ship and wanted to come back from there without landing. Then anyhow the information went to the authority and they allowed him to get down there, we're told. That world known man, world famous.

We should try to sacrifice us, and not to sacrifice Guru, Vaiṣṇava, Deity, and other respectable things representing Divinity. We may risk our own self for the service and to create some position favourable. And then we shall invite others to inspect my conduct. The propaganda must be real and solid. Only outwardly to show the success, that hollow success, what meaning is there? Substantial progress should be made, a cultural conquest, a bona fide progress. And to dishonour Them who we honour, that is something suicidal. Then more or less from the background we think that They're material.

Suppose if you found to take Swāmī Mahārāja to one particular province very risky, that his life may be at stake, will you allow him to go there? Then about Śrī Mūrti, Vighraha? We venture? Then we have got less faith in Śrī Mūrti as it should have been. *Daṇḍam* also, theoretically you think that there is connection of the Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī, Puruṣa-Avatāra, all these things. But not so much from the core of our heart. Molestation of the *daṇḍam*, how can you tolerate? We must search our own heart. With how much sincere respect and devotion we treat all these. This transformation must be wholesale, not lip deep, shallow, transformation of the inner self. We must be sincere to the cause. Cent per cent we shall try.

There was an exhibition in Kurukṣetra. That Kṛṣṇa has come from Dwārakā, and from Vṛndāvana also the Nanda Mahārāja, Yaśodā, and the *gopīs*, they have also gone there in Kurukṣetra on the occasion of the holy bath at the time of solar eclipse. At that time Prabhupāda, our Guru Mahārāja, ordered arrangement of an exhibition in dolls to show that incident. That from Dwārakā Kṛṣṇa has come with His party. And *gopīs* from Vṛndāvana they have come. So many gods they have also come at that meeting place.

Here, Vana Mahārāja, he was given responsibility to arrange for that exhibition. And Vana Mahārāja was dressing the Mūrtis. The Mūrtis were made of, earthen Mūrtis, *gopīs*, and Vana Mahārāja was dressing them. And he was dressing the Mūrtis with cloth and necessary garments, and to fix them he was using some pins, fixing pins. Here the cloth he put, and put a pin to fix the cloth.

Then it pained my heart. We're to show, see with respect these Mūrtis, though they're earthen Mūrtis of the *gopīs*. But still we're to see with some reverence and respect. But their body is being

pierced with pins to fix the dress. I had some pain I felt, though I was a newcomer. Then I put it to the higher authority.

I asked Vana Mahārāja, “Why do you enter the pin within the body, for which we should have some respect and devotion?”

He answered me, “Oh, do you think that the *gopīs* are in this mundane figure?” In this way.

But I’m not satisfied with that answer. I put it to the higher authority. They supported me, that it should not have been done. That body was, the pin was fixed, rather the, some gum should have been used to fix the dress on the body, or something. That should have been used and the cloth may be attached there, a little bit fixed, and not by entering the pin, nail. Vana Mahārāja was nailing the cloth with the body, some iron pin.

We shall try to maintain our position always in the plane of devotion giving respect to anything and everything, and not to tolerate disrespect of that sentiment, to that sort of conception. We shall go away from your, unable to fight and demolish them, we shall be off. But we cannot be a careless onlooker where molestation will go. If it is possible for me to stop, I shall try hard to stop molestation. If not I shall go away. And not standing I shall look at all those blasphemers.

*[baisnaba caritra, sarvada pavitra, jei ninde himsa kori’]
bhakatibinoda, na' sambhase ta're, thake sada mauna dhorī'*

[Bhaktivinoda always keeps a vow to abstain from speaking any type of envious blasphemy unto such a pure devotee, whose life and characteristics are in all ways pure.]

[Prarthana Lalasamayi, Prayer of Eager Longing, 7.6]

No power, what can I do? But for the king, if he’s a devotee, if any disturbance then he must cut his head. It is recommended in the *śāstra*. [*Gauḍīya Kaṅṭhahāra*, 17.84] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.74.40]

Hare Kṛṣṇa. What do you think, Akṣayānanda Mahārāja? When a *sannyāsī* is taking *daṇḍam* in the plane and whether anything hidden here in the *daṇḍam*, the custom officers come and pierce and molest the *daṇḍam* in various ways, and then give it up. Then are we to tolerate this dishonour to *daṇḍam* silently?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: No.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: What should we do? Should we not carry *daṇḍam*, or should we keep several *daṇḍam* in any and every province? One *daṇḍam* in one zone, then we won’t have to carry? The *kāyavyūha*, or no *daṇḍam* we shall carry when preaching in the international way? What should we do? And the Vighraha also, we’re taking from here and custom officers will come and pierce through to see, examine what gold and other valuable articles are hidden under it. And we’ll have to tolerate all these things helplessly? What to do? Will we allow? Otherwise what can we do?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: We shall have to tolerate to a certain degree. Aranya Mahārāja did not take his *daṇḍa* to London for that reason.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So it is better to have them prepared in that province independently. You may learn things how to construct, and then going there collect materials and prepare Śrī Mūrti there to avoid this molestation. And if we have cast shadow in our own temperament, our own heart, then that will be a poison to the affair. The insult of the Vaiṣṇava and Mūrti and *daṇḍa* whom we worship, and I'm to tolerate from my faith the molestation, insult of those things. How can we be sincere to our own self, true to our own self, own faith?

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: If the preacher, if he's revolving between, if he's preaching in two major places, say he's preaching in India and preaching in London, then perhaps he can keep one *daṇḍa* in India, one *daṇḍa* in London.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That is to be considered, that is rather tolerable than this molestation.

When we were in Madras there was *tridaṇḍi*, though *tridaṇḍi* of ancient type, they do not travel by the train or bus, because of that *daṇḍa*. One of the *tridaṇḍi* of Rāmānuja *sampradāya* came to ask me, "Why do you carry this *tridaṇḍa* in the train and the bus?"

I answered, "Why? Is there any provision?"

He was eager to follow us, but the society did not allow that. But I told him, he came to know, "Is there any *śāstric* quotation which can help me to take *daṇḍa* in the bus or train?"

I told him, *tat paratvena nirmalam*.

*[sarvopādhi-vinirmuktam, tat paratvena nirmalam
hr̥ṣīkena hr̥ṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate]*

["Pure devotion is engaging all the senses in service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the Master of the senses. In such service, one is totally free from all relative conceptions of material self interest (*upādhis*), with senses purely engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa."] [*Nārada Pañcarātra*]

The purity of our purpose, we hold that. And we try our best to keep the respect of the *daṇḍa*, it may not be molested in any way. Then, "What is your custom?"

He said, "No, we can't take it in bus or in train."

Then, "That was because train and bus was not created at that time. But can you take it by boat when crossing the river?"

He said, "Yes, we can do that."

And the boat was created first in your time so that was allowed and these buses and trains that is new creation. So the ordinary people are putting objection to it." In this way I replied to him. *Tat paratvena nirmalam*, the object is pure, so we get, and we see perhaps it may not be dishonoured, *tridaṇḍa*, we try to keep up the respect.

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: Mahārāja, you know the *paras* on a *daṇḍa*? What does that represent?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: It represents that by that *paras* it is, a part of a circle, an arc form. That is meant to be used for cutting the *anārtha*, of to whom we preach. The emblem of cutting, *paras* means for *cedana*, for cutting, meant for cutting the reparation of the *anārtha* he sees in the soul, emblem of that.

Devotee: Like Paraśurāma?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. Paraśurāma.

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: And there's *jīva daṇḍa*, when was this added?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: I'm here to serve You. The Lord who is here in the relativity of the mundane world in small and bigger group.

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: But this *jīva daṇḍa* was added by Rāmānuja sect or Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Perhaps by Rāmānuja, I don't know fully, but I think it was there.

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Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: ...must have created quite a stir when Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura began...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Introduced it here in Bengal, yes.

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: Yes. In Vṛndāvana also.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. The red cloth also. Though Mahāprabhu and His colleagues had red cloth. Still Sanātana Goswāmī in the presence of Mahāprabhu he took the white dress of *niṣkiñcana*, that's the Guru of the *sannyāsīs*, something like that. Dictator of the preachers, by giving instructions in the form of *śāstra*. First the code and then the code keeper. So they were engaged in preparing the code, spiritual. And in white cloth, not necessary to advertise them as preachers. They're only engaged for their own benefit, not so much, only by the showing their ideal to the public as much help they can give. But wandering here and there and preaching, that is generally the function of the *sannyāsīs*.

So Prabhupāda created another batch under them, they have given the directions in the *śāstra* and to carry out them to translate them into action. The next lower batch *sannyāsīs*. They're beyond *varṇāśrama*, and within *varṇāśrama* the highest section is *sannyāsī*, they're expected to travel through the length and breadth of the country and to preach the previous doctrines to the people. And that was created by Prabhupāda under the direction of those *śāstra* makers, Goswāmīs. For whom this religious uniform was not necessary, this red uniform, the preachers uniform. They're *niṣkiñcana*, they did not want anything. But they only prepared the religious code.

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: So by the example of Your Divine Grace you're also showing that you're wearing this dress to the very end of your life.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. Our Guru Mahārāja also did. Almost everyone whom he gave red dress, they up till their last breath keep up that.

Only, Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī, he was a *brahmacārī*, he took that, last days, did not mean himself as a preacher, so he took that, after the departure of Guru Mahārāja.

And Vana Mahārāja, whimsical, he took for some time, again rejected that, again took the red robe.

And Vasudeva Prabhu he wanted to introduce that white cloth. And some of the members of the Bagh Bazaar they take that white cloth, including the last Ācārya, Auḍalomī Mahārāja. I'm told he used white cloth.

They preferred, crossing Prabhupāda, they preferred to accept the idea of this cloth. They thought Prabhupāda's idea was a temporary one for the time being. And what Rūpa and Sanātana, in the presence of Mahāprabhu accepted this, that should be the real dress of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava.

But Mahāprabhu also maintained to the last time that red cloth. And also this Paramānanda Purī, Īśvara Purī, all the Godbrothers of the Guru of Mahāprabhu, here in healthy connection with Mahāprabhu, they used to wear red cloth, *sannyāsīs*.

And the Western preachers of the Christian school, they generally use gown, is it not? Clergy?

Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī: Yes. Black gown.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Black gown. What is their name, Christian preachers? Bishops?

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