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TO: Parents of children at Guru Nanak Quincentenary School  
in Mussoorie, India, and to Other Concerned Individuals

FROM: Dr. Alan

RE: Our Investigation and Impressions on Recent Visit to  
School with Siri Singh Sahib--especially regarding  
Childrens' Diet.

DATA BASE: On January 16 and 17, 1982, Dr. Saram Singh Khalsa and I accompanied the Siri Singh Sahib to Mussoorie on his visit to the school. Private and group discussions and interviews were objectively and analytically held with the children, their guides, the school personnel. This also included a long private evening at the principal's house with Siri Singh Sahib, the American guide and some top school personnel.

Motivation for this Investigation - We had heard many disturbing reports of severe deficiencies in the childrens' diet and unwillingness of school personnel to remedy this.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

1. A nutritionally satisfactory to excellent diet is served to the children at the school.
2. By their own choice most children are not eating a satisfactory diet and some are eating a very inadequate diet. Reasons for this include - personal taste, ignorance about nutrition, peer pressure, group (and adult) negativity.
3. The school personnel and especially the principal are agreeable to almost any request we have regarding the childrens' diet - and indeed their care in general.

ELABORATION:

1. The main complaint of adults in the past has been that inadequate protein is available for the children. We interviewed the guides & children & found that although they proclaimed inadequate protein availability, the diet was filled with protein, mostly in the form of highly nutritious raw milk and milk products. A minimum of 23-30 protein servings per week were available per child. (Very protein conscious United States' recommended daily allowances are 21 servings per week minimum). Vitamins and minerals were generally available in the richly organic vegetables available there. Calcium, needed for bone growth, is only obtainable adequately from dairy products - for vegetarians, and iron for menstruating females, which is necessary for blood-building is only available for vegetarians from green leafy vegetables - both of which our children may not like to eat but which are adequately available.



2. The children do not drink much milk. They notice its animal-like aroma (which anyone who has lived on a farm recognizes as normal fresh raw milk smell) and they call it 'yak milk'. There is some peer pressure not to drink it as it is made fun of. The children also eat much 'junk food' including white sugar products which they can obtain. (Usually easily obtainable in India, and at the school, where Indians regard them as part of a normal diet. Parenthetically, it does not seem likely that we can change the Indians' own eating habits but we can surely educate our children.)
3. We have heard many complaints about the school not responding to our children and about their breaking their agreements to improve the diet. Some of our Americans were especially vociferous in their accusations that the school principal and others had promised panir daily but had not carried through on their promises. On further investigation it was learned that the school had indeed tried to provide panir daily but it was often impossible to obtain it in the winter-time markets of India in that area. Sadly, the same adults who were denouncing the school as liars acknowledged that they knew it was impossible to obtain the panir and that the school had indeed tried. This shook us considerably and we wondered how much other useless, even less justified, slander of the school was reaching your ears in America.

Surprisingly, through all discussions, even in the face of personal insult, the principal remained calm and graceful, always willing to listen to us and bend over backward if need be to cooperate with us. He seemed most patient and was obviously concerned only with the children's welfare, and not with our impressions of him or the school. (Siri Singh Sahib repeatedly highly praised the principal, in public and private and throughout our visit, stating frequently that the most precious thing on earth is children and that he had first entrusted his own children to the principal and had been so pleased with the results that we are now entrusting Khalsa children to him.)

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Education and guidance - both for children and adults - is of the utmost. If these situations existed in America, under our own noses, we'd have the children eating right immediately. Somehow communications and guidance 12,000 miles away has not worked out that well. While we were there Dr. Saram Singh and I spoke with many children individually and as a group. We explained the need for drinking the milk to grow strong healthy bodies. We showed them muscle testing to show them how sugar and tea blow them out. They were most receptive to this information. You can help reinforce this in your letters. A most important medical recommendation is to take at least 3 protein servings daily (1 glass of milk, 1 portion panir, or 1 portion beans would be the equivalent of 1 serving of protein each.) These three protein servings per day must be taken even if it means drinking 3 glasses of milk per day. This should always include at least 1 glass milk per day to provide calcium for growing bones. Menstrual age girls should also be encouraged to eat leafy greens, their main source of iron. (It is ironic that our children are shunning the same 'raw organic health foods' type diet that most of us once strived so hard to obtain in America.)
2. Some catering to the children's own American egos. Consideration is being given to our cooking our own food (which the school would actually prefer) to try and Americanize the food slightly (with occasional pizza, etc.)
3. More dignified talk and actions ourselves. When the children see our disrespectful and demeaning attitude toward the school and the food, how can they react? (It was quite sickening to see our adults and children reinforcing each others' negativity). Guide them to be great and encourage them to help each other. (The Siri Singh Sahib asked for each young child to have a 'buddy' and for the Americans to organize a missal system.)

SUMMARY

The school seemed great, the diet seemed satisfactory to excellent, the Americans seemed quite negative, but this should change. Complete surprise at these findings (almost the exact opposite of what was expected) prompted this letter being spontaneously written.

Sincerely and humbly yours,

Dr. Alan Singh Weiss

ASW:bb/dt