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VHP and its Activities

- *To:* editor@rbhatnagar.ececs.uc.edu
 - *Subject:* VHP and its Activities
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Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America-----What is it?

- 1) The VHP of America Inc is a independent Registered Organization in America for over 20 years.
- 2) It has its own constitution here in the United States.
- 3) It has been working with corporate America for over 15 years. American companies have been advertising in VHP of America programs for alomst the same time.
- 4) It is a huge Organization with over 30 to 40 different chapters with membership running in to thousands.
- 5) Its last program was attended by well over 10,000 Hindus in Washington DC in 1993 after the Dec. 6th 1992 Ayodhya event. (I was there)
- 6) Its activities range from social service to youth camps to lectures on Hinduism and yoga workshops.
- 7) It has social service projects that it supports in india which include sponsor a child, illiteracy projects, rural development, disaster relief.
- 8) It sent over \$ 300,000 for earthquake relief last year to Maharashtra (Killari earthquake)
- 9) The VHP of America has a project "Hindu University of America" which has made a humble beginning last year.
- 10) Over 5000 youth born and raised in America have participated in VHP organized camps in America.

Vishwa Hindu Parisha-India-----What is it?

Everybody knows about the VHP's leading role in creating one of the worlds largest mass movements. But what has gone unnoticed and unmentined is the huge amount of social service and social reform work that the VHP in India is performing in the background. Here is a list that I obtained from a friend in Bombay.

- 1) The VHP today runs over 5000 different social service projects run by full time volunteers, sadhus, temple trusts, etc. These projects include educational and vocational training centers for widows, women whose husbands have left them and women who have left abusive husbands. Adult literacy projects, educational and cultural Kendras (centers) in tribal areas and in slums in cities, etc etc.
- 2) Training programs for priests to improve their service quality to devotees. This includes courtesy, cleanliness, meaning of rituals, etc.
- 3) Schools to make priests. Interesting fact is that 50 % of these would be priests are from lower castes. (two thumbs up for VHP).
- 4) Programs to convey the message of unity of all different sects of Hinduism.
- 5) Involvement of the Sadhus and Sants in the gigantic task of social reform. This includes the caste system, dowry related problems and other

such issues.

Example - In gujarat the VHP had a program called Kesh, kangan and kumkum. In which the widows were urged and educated to have kesh (no mundan), kangan and kumkum. This novelprogram by the VHP without any yelling and shouting unlike our progressive comrades was met with great success.

6) Repair of old temples and collect finances to maintain regular temple services like pooja and aarti etc.

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"The debt which this world owes to the Hindu Nation is immense. Taking country with country, there is not one race on this earth to which the world owes so much as to the patient Hindu, the mild Hindu."

Swami Vivekananda

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