

HINDU MONK ASKS FOR WORLD PEACE

Indian Ascetic, 82, Arrives
Here—Favors Cessation
of Nuclear Testing

By MORRIS KAPLAN

A frail, 82-year-old, saffron-robed ascetic fingered his white conch necklace. The spiritual leader of millions of Hindus, he said that the seashells helped him to meditate on the perils facing humanity.

The visitor is Jagatguru Shankaracharya, head of a 1,000-year-old Indian monastic order at Puri. The Puri monastery in the eastern Province of Orissa is one of four established in the ninth century to expound Hindu philosophy.

The monk—the first of the Order of Shankara ever to visit the West—answered questions about nuclear weapons testing. He was interviewed at Cambridge House, 333 West Eighty-sixth Street. The nuclear tests make necessary an agreement by all powers, he said, “without the arbitrament of war.”

Although he found “good in all directions,” he said, this did not apply apparently to bomb testing. He saw a need now for people “gathering together and arranging for a world peace.”

“Otherwise,” he said, “the race itself, all cultures, civilizations and achievements stand in imminent danger of being wiped off the map of the world.”

Opposed to War

He said that the halting of bomb tests was “a matter of detail” to be discussed in an agreement, rather than to be determined by war. “I wish that kind of arbitrament to be stopped,” he said.

The propagation of world peace because of the “basic unity” of all religions was the desired goal, he said. He ignored questions on his own life and habits as touching “an area of prohibition.” He took holy orders in July, 1919. He declined to discuss anything relating to the time before.

A noteworthy mathematician, he lectured recently on mathematics at the California Institute of Technology. However, he declined to estimate the number of his followers in India. A follower explained that the matter of humility and self-praise was involved.

The Shankaracharya's program includes appearances at Fairleigh Dickinson University, Columbia University, Connecticut State Teachers College and the Community Church. He discussed peace and religion recently with Dr. Arnold Toynbee, historian, and on March 30 was welcomed at the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.

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