

[Film Slanders Hindu Religion](#)

Category : [April 1985](#)

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The time: January 5, 1985. The place: Manhattan, Cable Television Network The event: A two-hour program entitled, "The World's Best Kept Secret," filmed in India, extolling the virtues of Christianity and depicting Hinduism as a religion that has "perpetrated extreme prejudice and bigotry" among Indians. In this program, sponsored by Dayspring International, a Virginia-based Christian evangelical organization, India is described as a land of "division, despair and death," in dire need of the message of Jesus Christ, the "only Savior of mankind."

In a day when intelligence is replacing ignorance, the documentary raised more than a few eyebrows, and outrage Swami Jyotirmayananda of Fort Trivandrum, South India, who responded with a scathing open letter telling of the grave threat of missionaries in India. India newspapers printed all or parts of his lengthy dissertation which countered with a startling depiction of Christianity own foibles.

The catalyst for the TV show was a film entitled "Daya Sagar" (Ocean of Mercy, a story about Christ.), which Dayspring also helped produce. That film has allegedly been seen in India by 17 million people in the cities and two million in the villages, having a very strong effect on many lives. Dayspring openly states that it "plans to reach all of India in 10 years, while duplication the strategy in other Third World countries." Each airing is accompanied by an appeal for donations.

The documentary is only one among many. The January 18th, 1985 Evangelical Newsletter, published in the U.S. reported that there are about "70 film libraries in this country distribution more than 3,000 Christian movies, both feature-length and shorts." Of course only a certain percentage confront Hinduism directly, but the figures show the staggering zeal of the Christian proselytising movement.

"The Hindu is too mild; he smiles and passes on and says, 'Let the fools talk.' That

is the attitude," said Swami Vivekananda. That attitude is receiving at least occasional jolts from such individuals as Swami Jyotirmayananda and organizations as "Hindu Alliance, a watchdog group formed on the U.S.'s East Coast in 1984 to fight media bias. The group was formed- largely from the ranks of ISKCON-to protest a 3-part CBS TV series entitled "cult Connection" which focused on ISKCON, the Church of Scientology and the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon. Hindu Alliance was irate over the segment dealing with ISKCON's Potomac, Maryland, temple, which they deemed as highly biased and "a slap in the face of [the Hindu] religious tradition, subjecting the Indo-Americans community to the possibility of public ridicule," (India west. July 6)

Sleeping Watchdog? The Alliance was not alert to "The World's Best Kept Secret," though Mr. Vibhakas Mody, speaking for the group, told the NSW after the fact that they would be looking into the matter.