



BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9, NO. 2-3, FALL 1987

Buddhism in Asia

What's Happening? What Can We Do?

The Rape of Tibet by John F. Avedon

On February 18, 1987, two Tibetans were executed in Lhasa for "serious economic sabotage." Three more have been sentenced to die and 30 given terms at hard labor. Similar crimes, last mentioned in the spiritual pollution campaign of 1983, were the pretext for executing dozens of Tibetan dissidents and imprisoning thousands more. It is now more than 28 years since H.H. the Dalai Lama and 100,000 compatriates fled Tibet and arrived a refugee in India. Their time, like that of all Tibetans may be running out.

Under the cloak of liberalization, Beijing has adopted a final solution for Tibet: the rapid Sinocization of the country via wide-scale immigration. The fact that there are now at least 1 million more Chinese in Tibet than Tibetans has produced massive unemployment, a 300% inflation rate, and a two-class society, sharply divided along racial lines.

The average Tibetan earns \$110 a year. He is among China's and the world's poorest citizens. He lives in a dilapidated house often lacking running water, heat, or electricity. His life expectancy is 40 years; one in six of his children dies in infancy. Of the five survivors, only one completes primary school; the rest must labor in the fields.

In contrast, the recently arrived Chinese settler lives in a modern "new town," earns triple a Tibetan's salary, receives sufficient medical care and diet to render his life expectancy 25 years longer, and has a guaranteed place for his children in Tibet's schools, up to 2/3 of which are reserved for Chinese only.

But the new Chinese society is not merely displacing Tibet's ancient culture. It is actively destroying it. The harsh face of Chinese rule includes thousands of forced abortions and sterilizations of Tibetan women each year. The common method for both procedures, recounted from all across the country, is by injection. In Chamdo, Tibet's third-largest city, there have been numerous reports of fetuses thrown out in

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Persecution of Buddhists in Vietnam An Update, by Stephen Denney

In the Australian documentary, *The Awakening Bell*, Thich Nhat Hanh talks about the development of engaged Buddhism in Vietnam. People may be used to distinguishing between contemplation and action, he said, but in Buddhism the two cannot be separated. To meditate is to be aware of what is going on, not only in your body, your feelings, your perceptions, but in the world, because the world is the object of your mind. And if you know what is going on, how can you avoid acting in order to change the situation, to make it better?

"For instance, if I sit, meditating in my temple, and if people around me cry and suffer because of the bombing, which was the situation in Vietnam 12 years ago, then I have to understand the suffering, and leave the temple in order to come to the people who are suffering and help them. We have been doing

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Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter

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The Buddhist Peace Fellowship was founded in 1978, as a network of individuals and local chapters, to bring a Buddhist perspective to the peace movement, and to bring the peace movement to the Buddhist community. Membership and subscription information are on the back cover. Single copies are \$3 postpaid from BPF National Office, address above. Chapter Addresses: See Page 32.

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From the Editor

We're sorry this *BPF Newsletter* is late. I spent most of the Spring traveling with Thich Nhat Hanh and Cao Ngoc Phuong as they led BPF retreats throughout North America, and most of the past year helping launch Parallax Press and its first book, *Being Peace*. So we are making this a double issue, and will be back on schedule beginning next issue. Many thanks to all of you who sent in your BPF dues during the past two months thinking that lapsed membership must have been the reason you hadn't received your newsletter. (By the way, could the rest of you whose memberships are overdue or coming due please renew soon? The date on your address label is the last time you paid. For example, 8604 means April 1986.)

In the BPF Statement of Purpose (on the back cover), the 6th Affirmation is "To provide a focus for concerns over the persecution of Buddhists, as a particular expression of our intent to protect all beings." Buddhism began in Asia, and has thrived there for 2 1/2 millenia, yet today in at least 7 countries, it is threatened with extinction by government repression. In this issue, Stephen Denney offers an extensive report on the situation in Vietnam, John Avedon on the situation in Tibet, and Samu Sunim on the overall situation of Buddhism in Asia. In addition, there are essays, reviews, stories, and articles on women's practice, right livelihood, stress reduction, smiling, and a host of chapter and local projects and actions that make this a most complete *BPF Newsletter*. I hope you enjoy it.

—Arnold Kotler

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Buddhists in Vietnam

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that in Vietnam, trying to live in awareness, meditating while we act in order to help our own people while they are suffering. That kind of Buddhism, called engaged Buddhism, was very real during the war. Since the people continue to suffer, it continues to be real in our day."

It was in this spirit that the School of Youth for Social Service was begun by Nhat Hanh and others in South Vietnam in 1963, composed of young Vietnamese who went to war-torn villages to help the people there and share in their suffering. This movement represented Vietnamese who did not take sides in a war which used their country as a battlefield in the worldwide conflict between two western ideologies, communism and capitalism. Because they refused to take sides, they were vulnerable from both sides. Some were killed, some imprisoned, some burned themselves to death to protest the war.

As you are reading this, please be aware that there are still people in remote areas of Vietnam or detained in "re-education" camps who lack the basic necessities of food, shelter, clothing, and medicine. Also at this moment, there are fishing boats stranded in the South China Sea, filled with Vietnamese refugees dying of thirst and starvation. More than 200,000 Vietnamese are believed to have died at sea during the last 12 years, and 2,000 people a month continue to flee the country in small boats.

In cooperation with Thich Nhat Hanh and Sister Cao Ngoc Phuong, BPF recently began two efforts to help alleviate the suffering of the Vietnamese people. One is to provide aid to refugees and hungry people in Vietnam (See page 31), and the other is a petition and letter-writing campaign on behalf of some prominent Buddhists and writers who are in prison. Major leadership changes recently took place in Vietnam, and the government, under the leadership of the Communist Party Secretary-General Nguyen Van Linh, is initiating some reforms. There is hope that these reforms may extend to increased tolerance of dissent, as seems to be the case in the Soviet Union. The Buddhist Peace Fellowship may be in a unique position to help these prisoners, and this may be a critical time to appeal to the Vietnamese leaders on their behalf.

History of the Unified Buddhist Church

The Unified Buddhist Church (UBC) of Vietnam was established in 1964, shortly after the overthrow of South Vietnamese president Ngo Dinh Diem. In this country where approximately 85% of the people are Buddhist, mostly followers of the Mahayana tradition, the UBC brought together various sects belonging to both Mahayana and Theravada lineages. From its headquarters at the An Quang Pagoda in Saigon, the UBC became a strong voice for peace and the restoration of freedom in both parts of the country. Many of its most prominent leaders were arrested for speaking out, such as Venerable Thich Thien Minh arrested in February 1969 and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor. However, because of the international outcry, his sentence

was first reduced to three years, and then, in November 1969, he was released. Many younger monks were imprisoned because they refused to participate in the war. Organizations such as Clergy and Laity Concerned publicized their cases and appealed for their freedom.

Following the signing of the Paris Agreement to end the war in 1973, the UBC joined with other religious and "third force" groups to demand the implementation of Article 11 of the treaty, which ensured the people of South Vietnam various civil liberties and prohibited all acts of reprisal or discrimination against those who collaborated with one side or the other during the war. In August 1974, the UBC launched a "Do Not Shoot Your Brother" campaign, calling on all Vietnamese to stop killing each other.

With the fall of Saigon in April 1975 and the unification of Vietnam under Communist rule, Buddhism entered a new stage of history in Vietnam. In the new society, religions represent the only institutions remaining whose values and beliefs have developed outside the ideological framework of the government. While not openly outlawing religion, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) has moved to restrict the influence of religion on society, and at the same time has pressured the clergy to mobilize their followers in support of government policies. The SRV has also transferred all the social welfare institutions of the different religions to the government and banned organizations such as the School of Youth for Social Service.

The UBC leaders sought early to reconcile themselves to the new regime, but they would not allow themselves to become propagandists for the regime's policies, which at times sharply contradicted traditional Buddhist values. They were unable to sit by silently while local authorities carried out various acts of repression against their temples, priests, and followers. On March 17, 1977, Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, the UBC Deputy Chairman, wrote a letter to Prime Minister Pham Van Dong detailing 85 incidents of religious repression over the prior two years, including destruction and confiscation of Buddhist institutions, desecration of Buddhist temples and statues, arrests of Buddhist monks, forced dissolution of local Buddhist organizations, restrictions on allowed religious practices, and requirements that all forms of religious activity receive prior government approval. As a result of these and other protests by Buddhist leaders, several leading monks of the UBC were arrested on April 6, 1977, including Thich Huyen Quang, Thich Quang Do, Thich Tuyen An, Thich Thong Buu, Thich Thong Hue and Thich Thanh Tue. In April 1978, another prominent monk, Thich Thien Minh, was arrested. There was no international outcry this time, and Thich Thien Minh died in prison seven months later. The other Buddhist leaders were held without charge until December 1978, when they were brought to a pro-forma trial and then released.

Even as they were being released, the SRV was moving to eliminate their authority by creating its own Buddhist organization, the Vietnam Buddhist Church (VBC), which stated, in its founding charter on November 6, 1981, that the VBC was "the only Buddhist organization representing Vietnamese Buddhism in all relations in the country and with other countries." The

VBC has no independence from the regime, but rather is under the direct control of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, an umbrella organization of the government charged with mobilizing various social, ethnic, and religious groups in support of its policies. Some Buddhist leaders cooperated with this new organization, but other leaders strongly protested.

Based on information received from Sister Phuong, Amnesty International, and other sources, we describe below the cases of prominent Buddhists who have been arrested in recent years. We also describe the cases of some writers for whom we are appealing. Their cases were described in a recent report published jointly by the Asia Watch Committee and The Committee to Protect Journalists.

Buddhist Monks and Nuns Imprisoned in Vietnam: Selected Cases

Thich Huyền Quang and Thich Quang Dô, leaders of the Unified Buddhist Church, were arrested in February 1982 and forcibly exiled from Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) for protesting the forced incorporation of the UBC into the Vietnam Buddhist Church. Huyền Quang was the UBC Deputy Director and Quang Dô was the UBC Secretary General at the time. They had both been arrested in 1963 by the Diêm government, and again in 1977. During that 18-month imprisonment, they were both nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Both monks remain in internal exile and cannot return to Ho Chi Minh City. Thich Huyền Quang is confined to Quang Ngai, in central Vietnam, and Thich Quang Dô to Vu Doai hamlet in Thai Binh province, 125 miles east of Hanoi. Huyền Quang has diabetes. Quang Dô, who like all Vietnamese monks is a vegetarian, is being forced to raise pigs. His elderly mother was forced into exile with him and she died one year later.

In his poem, "Letter to Dr. Andrei Sakharov," Thich Quang Dô wrote, "We're in the same boat... You're deprived of human rights, I'm treated like a beast. You refuse to bend your neck, struggling instead for democracy and human rights, I don't want to live in shame and submission, fighting instead for freedom of religion.... You stay in Gorki, USSR, serenely looking at the world through a veil of dawn snow, I live in Vu Doai, Vietnam, reflectively catching a glimpse of the universe through a screen of morning dew. Dear Andrei, ...I send you my prayers for peace and happiness."

Thich Duc Nhuận, the First Secretary of the Buddhist Council of Elders, was arrested on August 6, 1985, and imprisoned in Phan Dang Luu jail in Ho Chi Minh City. He had a stomach ulcer when he entered prison, and vomited blood during interrogation. Before 1975, he was the editor of the UBC *Van Hanh* magazine, author of many books on Buddhism, and a professor at the Buddhist Van Hanh University in Saigon.

Thich Thông Bâu, of Quan Am Pagoda, disciple of the famous monk Thich Quang Duc who immolated himself in 1963, has been exiled to Đông Xuân, Phu Khanh province. The



Thich Huyền Quang



Thich Quang Dô

reason given was "illegal public gathering," because he was teaching Sutras every Sunday to increasingly large audiences.

Thich Tri Thu was a prominent UBC leader who accepted the position of President of the government-sponsored VBC in the hope that cooperation with the authorities would insure the survival of Buddhism in Vietnam. On April 2, 1984, he was summoned to police headquarters for interrogation, and he died the same day. This account was denied by the government, which honored Thich Tri Thu with a state funeral. Yet in late March 1984, police raided two temples in Ho Chi Minh City and arrested several prominent monks and nuns associated with him. No reason has been given for their arrests, and all have been adopted by Amnesty International as prisoners of conscience. A number of them are reported to have been brought to trial in July and sentenced to long prison terms:

Thich Tri Siêu, aka Le Manh That, is 43 years old, and a former professor of history at Van Hanh University. He is a highly respected Buddhist scholar and historian, and was a close associate of Thich Tri Thu. He was sentenced to 20 years.

Thich Nu Tri Hai, aka Công Tông Nô Phung Khanh, is a 49-year-old nun. She was chief librarian at Van Hanh University, and was one of the country's foremost Buddhist scholars. Thich Nu Tri Hai graduated from the University of Indiana with a degree in English literature, and she wrote and translated many books on Buddhist and Western philosophy. She is said to have been subjected to lengthy interrogation and solitary confinement, and was recently sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Thich Tuê Sy, aka Pham Van Thuong, 44 years old, taught philosophy at Van Hanh University. He is a renowned scholar, specializing in Nagarjuna, and was an aide to Thich Tri Thu. He has been subjected to lengthy interrogation and solitary confinement, and is reported to have been sentenced to 21 years in prison. He is said to be seriously ill.

Thich Nguyen Giac, age 39, was a lecturer at Gia Lam Buddhist Seminary.



Buddhist monks lead day of vigil at Los Angeles City Hall, July 7, 1984, protesting human rights violations in Vietnam

Imprisoned Writers and Artists

"Every writer in the literature of Vietnam is unique, you cannot replace him. So if I cannot help 60 million Vietnamese people directly, I have to help these rare flowers of the country, the heritage of Vietnam."
—Cao Ngoc Phuong

According to the international writers' organization, PEN, Vietnam has more writers imprisoned (61 known) than any other country in the world. We saw in *The Awakening Bell* the daughter of jailed writer **Doan Quoc Sy** holding a prayer-vigil for him in front of the Vietnamese embassy in Australia. He was first detained in a re-education camp from 1976 to 1980 and was among 20 writers arrested in Ho Chi Minh City on May 2, 1984, just a few days before he was to join his family in Australia under the government's Orderly Departure Program. Doan Quoc Sy is a highly regarded writer in Vietnam, author of more than 30 novels, short stories, essays and children's stories. He is presently detained in Phan Dang Luu jail in Ho Chi Minh City and reported to be in poor health.

Other writers arrested at that time include **Duong Hung Cuong** (aka De Huc Can), novelist; **Nguyen Thi Phuoc** (aka Ly Thuy Y), authoress; **Hoang Hai Thuy**, novelist and journalist; **Pham Thien Thu**, poet; and **Khuat Duy Trac**, a lawyer, publisher and popular singer. In 1986, the SRV authorities indicated that these writers and Doan Quoc Sy would face trial, reportedly on charges that they worked for foreign powers, but the trial did not take place.

What We Can Do:

Petitions, Letters, December 10th Demonstration

During the retreats and lectures of Thich Nhat Hanh this spring, BPF circulated petitions addressed to the Secretary General of the Communist Party, appealing for the release of these prisoners, and we gathered more than 2,500 signatures. We are continuing to circulate the petition (A copy is in this newsletter). If you have not already done so, please consider signing the petition, circulating it among friends, and sending it to

Hanoi (with a copy to the BPF office), or sending it to BPF to mail. We also encourage writing letters to the Vietnamese authorities, using the petition as a model: Prime Minister Pham Hung, Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam ("Your Excellency"); or Mr. Mai Chi Tho, Minister of Interior, 16 Tran Vinh Trong, Hanoi. Please send copies to the BPF office. Congressman Ron Dellums of Berkeley, well known for his opposition to the Vietnam War, wrote a very strong letter on behalf of these prisoners, as did Jim Forest, Executive Secretary of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Ed Lazar, Associate Director of Humanitas; and Joan Baez has given us permission to use her name for these appeals.

On August 4, BPF President Ruth Klein, Father Daniel Berrigan, Tom Brinson (a Vietnam veteran) and Sister Sharon Bernstein (a Theravada nun who works with Cambodian refugees) met with Mr. Nguyen Dang Quang, First Secretary of the Vietnamese Mission to the U.N. in New York, to discuss the situation of Buddhism in Vietnam. The meeting was very cordial, and Mr. Quang seemed quite genial and receptive—until the group mentioned their concerns for the imprisoned monks, nuns and writers. He was totally unwilling to acknowledge these individuals as prisoners of conscience. Nevertheless, the meeting went as well as we could have hoped, and Father Berrigan's presence was especially valuable.

On Thursday, **December 10**, International Human Rights Day, BPF, in cooperation with Vietnamese Buddhists in the U.S. and abroad, will organize demonstrations, vigils, and religious ceremonies for these prisoners, to be held in New York, Los Angeles, Houston, San Francisco, and other locations around the world. At this writing, we do not know the exact details. If you would like to participate or help in any way, please contact the BPF national office, (415) 525-0101.

As we go to press (September 21), Hanoi has just announced the release of 6,685 prisoners. Because it will take at least a month to get precise news, until we hear otherwise, we assume that these monks, nuns, and writers are not among them.

Stephen Denney works at the Indochina Archive, University of California at Berkeley, and is a BPF member.

An Open Letter from the U.S. Tibet Committee

Dear Friends,

With your help, the bill on Tibet passed in the House! On June 18, the House unanimously adopted the main body of H.R. 2476, condemning human rights abuses in Tibet by the People's Republic of China. We have been informed by Congressional staff that the large number of letters to Representatives in support of the bill was one of the major elements in its successful passage.

We sincerely thank all of you who took the time to write, call, telegraph, and contact friends for petitions and additional messages to your Representatives. We will be writing separately, as soon as possible, to thank those of you who kindly sent us copies of your letters, and the many welcome contributions.

Now, we ask for your help once again. Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Senator Jesse Helms are very sympathetic to the plight of the Tibetans and, with your help, legislation could be forthcoming. The People's Republic of China is strenuously opposing such legislation, and your letters to senators are urgently needed *now!*

We urge you to get as many letters and telephone calls, telegrams and petitions as possible to both senators from your state, especially if they are members of the Foreign Relations Committee. Please ask your senators to support legislation on Human Rights Abuses in Tibet. Address: The Hon. (name of senator), United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510.

With our thanks and very best wishes,

Sincerely,
Frances Thargay
Director, U.S. Tibet Committee
107 E. 31st Street, New York, NY 10016

TIBET (Continued from Page 1)

storm drains and garbage bins of the People's Hospital. In Lhasa, many Tibetan women have heard their newborns cry, only to be told later that the infants died at birth. In Tibet's case, unlike China, the population is thin. These acts clearly have a political motive.

They come, however, within a well-worn context. As a direct result of the Chinese invasion, 1.2 million Tibetans—one-seventh of the population—have died, 6,254 monasteries have been destroyed, and an estimated \$80 billion in precious metals, religious art and statuary extracted. To secure its dominion, China still keeps roughly 20,000 Tibetans in the region's 84 prisons. Given current conditions, an argument could be made for considering all of them political prisoners. Those arrested for "anti-state activity," though, number 3,000 to 4,000. Of these, Amnesty International has publicly adopted three, including Tibet's most famous dissident, the Buddhist monk Geshe Lobsang Wangchuk. Perhaps a simple comparison best describes Tibet today. Inside Tibetan prisons there is one guard to every four prisoners. Outside, in the country at large, there is one Chinese soldier for every 10 Tibetans. Is Tibet itself one great prison?

China's population transfer has been adopted in large measure to relieve the People's Liberation Army of its police

duties in Tibet. But the problem has arisen: How will the new Chinese community support itself on the barren plateau? The answer is: us.

In 1986, almost 30,000 tourists visited Tibet, well on the way to China's projected 100,000 tourists a year. They exulted in the most rarified air on earth, marveled at the Potala, seat of the exiled Dalai Lama, and enjoyed Tibetans' native kindness beside their nervous Chinese overlords. What most people failed to recognize is that the money they paid to see the 160 rebuilt monasteries did not go to Tibetans. Instead, it directly subsidized the purveyors of Tibet's destruction, 32,000 of whom are already working in Lhasa's service sector.

One irony is a communist regime's selling the supposedly antique society that its creed has pledged it to erase. Another is Beijing's use of Tibetans to sponsor, through the tourist trade, their own demise. But perhaps the greatest question is this: Given the three wishes of our China policy—a less than optimal counter to the Soviets, checkered democratization, and an ambivalent opening of its marketplace—why do we remain so soft on human rights in the People's Republic of China? Is it something in China or ourselves that we still refuse to see?

John F. Avedon has written extensively on Tibet. He is the author of In Exile from the Land of Snows. This article is reprinted with permission from the Washington Post.

India's Buddhist Revival

English Buddhists Working with Ex-Untouchables

By Nagabodhi

On the morning of October 14, 1956, at a mass rally in the Indian town of Nagpur, 400,000 men and women turned their backs on a millenium of degradation and misery. Renouncing the Hindu caste system, they adopted Buddhism, in search of dignity, hope, and self-improvement. The man solely responsible for this historic revival was Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, a lawyer, politician, and educator, first Law Minister of India, chief architect of her constitution, and champion of the downtrodden. Ambedkar himself was born an "Untouchable" in village India, an outcast of Indian Hindu society, yet he rose to become the first Law Minister of independent India. But even more significantly, he put into action a vision to improve not just his own life but the lives of the millions of his fellow Untouchables.

After trying to reform the ancient Hindu caste system from within, Ambedkar finally realized that the Hindus were not going to mend their ways. In 1935 he sent shock waves through India by declaring that, although he had been born a Hindu, he did not intend to die one. Twenty-one years later, after deep reflection and study, Ambedkar made his choice of a new religion, and converted to Buddhism. In the months that followed, millions of Untouchables joined him in this step, setting up a movement of mass conversion. Even if Hindu society persisted in seeing them as Untouchable, these people at least began to think of themselves as Ex-untouchable.

Without doubt many of the people who converted to Buddhism did so solely because they trusted Dr. Ambedkar. And Ambedkar did not choose Buddhism lightly, or indeed, uncritically. He chose it because it offered practical teachings and a vision of human potential which could give the Untouchables dignity and hope. He recognized that through practicing the Buddhist virtues of generosity, lovingkindness, and compassion, and eradicating their opposites, people might live together harmoniously and work to uplift their communities.

Just six weeks after his conversion, Ambedkar died, leaving his followers at a loss how to proceed. For the next 20 years, they received little instruction in their new religion, and it is only recently that students of Sangharakshita (the founder of the Western Buddhist Order in England) went to India and began the Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha Sahayak Gana to teach these ex-Untouchables about Buddhism and to help them overcome their extreme poverty and social degradation with health care, education, material assistance, and self-help programs including skills training. Funds for these social projects are raised in England by "Aid for India," a non-profit organization formed for this purpose. Now seven years old, Aid For India has raised over \$2 million to help the ex-Untouchables with basic social and medical needs.

However, facilities for the teaching and practice of Buddhism



Padmasuri, a member of the Western Buddhist Order living in India, giving a public lecture in a slum area of Bombay.

are sorely needed, to provide them a spiritual foundation so that their progress can continue. During the Fall of this year, three members of the Western Buddhist Order will tour the U.S. to show slides and discuss their work in India and to try to raise funds for Dharma activities there. The following is their proposed itinerary, and you are most welcome to attend any of the scheduled presentations. In addition, if you would like to host a presentation, or would like more information about the work of the FWBO, please contact Marilyn Coakley at Aryaloka Community, Heartwood Circle, Newmarket, New Hampshire 03857. Telephone (603) 659-5456.

Itinerary

Sept. 30	New Hampshire	Marilyn Coakley	(603) 659-5456
October 3	Providence	Phil Edmonds	(401) 331-7838
October 5	New York City	Randy Sunday	(212) 874-2929
October 8	Washington, DC	David Whitehorn	(202) 362-5279
October 9	Philadelphia	Adrian Sopher	(215) 546-3337
October 17	Toronto	Richard Hayes	(416) 429-5071
October 18	Chicago	Sunthorn Plamintr	(312) 960-5359
October 23	Boulder	Peter Volz	(303) 444-0210
October 25	Vancouver	Frank Ryan	(604) 266-3267
October 28	Seattle	Aryadaka	(206) 325-3196
November 4	San Francisco	Ananda Dalenberg	(415) 752-5400
November 8	Los Angeles	Karuna Dharma	(213) 384-0850

Nagabodhi (Terry Pilchick) is an ordained member of the Western Buddhist Order in England and is Editor of Windhorse Publications and Golden Drum, A Magazine for Western Buddhists.

Amnesty for 20,000 Thai Prisoners

Sulak Sivaraksa is a Buddhist activist in Thailand. Chairman of the Asian Cultural Forum on Development and an International Advisor to BPF, Sulak was in Berkeley in August to attend the Buddhist-Christian Dialogue. In the next Newsletter we will print an excellent interview with him. While here, Sulak met with BPF members in Berkeley and San Francisco, and he asked if we would tell BPF members about the following Urgent Action Appeal from Amnesty International:

The Royal Thai Government is considering the release of as many as 20,000 prisoners and reduction in the penalties of as many as 50,000 others as part of a general royal pardon to be granted by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej on the occasion of his 60th birthday on December 5, 1987. A government working committee has been established to conduct preliminary screening of prisoners for eligibility for the pardon.

It is expected that the working committee will recommend commutation of a significant number of the more than 300

sentences reportedly pending against Thai and foreign prisoners, no matter what their offense. It urges that the committee recommend the release of the four prisoners of conscience. It further hopes that access to basic legal safeguards such as the right to fair trial and appeal of all political prisoners in Thailand will be taken into consideration in the context of the royal pardon such that no political prisoners are held without charge and that all political prisoners enjoy prompt and fair trials, including the right of appeal.

Amnesty International recommends writing telegrams, special delivery letters, or air mail letters politely urging that the royal Thai government commute all death sentences without exception and release the four prisoners of conscience (Police Major Anan Seenaakhan, Phromneet Baanthip, Prasit Bua-suwan, and Sanan Wongsuthii), and that the royal pardon take into consideration the human rights of political prisoners denied the right of appeal, held without charge, or not being promptly tried.



*Drawing by Vo Dinh,
from The Cry of Vietnam*

death sentences pending. There have been reports that some officials want to exclude prisoners sentenced for drug trafficking and perhaps certain other offenses. There have also been indications that some prisoners convicted of "national security" offenses may not be allowed to benefit from the pardon, including four prisoners of conscience convicted of "lese majeste" on account of the expression of nonviolent political opinions on matters relating to the royal family, and including political prisoners held as a result of trials in military courts that denied them the right of appeal, and political prisoners who are being held without charge or who are not being promptly tried.

Amnesty International urges that the working committee recommend the commutation of all the more than 300 death

Please write to:

Mr. Phisaan Muulasaatsaathorn
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Interior
Atsadaang Road
Bangkok 10200, Thailand
[Dear Sir:]

Mr. Sanit Rujinarong
Director General
Department of Corrections
Atsadaang Road
Bangkok 10200, Thailand
[Dear Sir:]

Major General Chaatchai Chunhavan
Deputy Prime Minister
Government House
Nakhorn Phanom Road
Bangkok 10300, Thailand
[Dear General:]

Copies to:
Ambassador Arsa Sarasin
Embassy of Thailand
2300 Kalorama Road NW
Washington, DC 20008

Questions about the Lumbini Project

by Norman Feldman

Norman Feldman is a Canadian Buddhist practitioner who lives in the Sharpham Vipassana Community, England. During the past 15 years, he has made many trips to India, including two last year. Following his February 1986 visit to Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, he wrote this article for the British BPF magazine, Down By the Riverside, to stimulate discussion about the plan to develop the site there. The following excerpt from that article is followed by letters from Joe Gorin and Joanna Macy to the U.S. Lumbini Committee.

In 623 B.C., Queen Mayadevi of Kapilavastu stopped with her retinue to rest in the beautiful Lumbini Garden, which is now in southwestern Nepal. Among flowering trees and serenely flowing waters, within sight of the high Himalayas, she gave birth to the Buddha. Lumbini is now regarded as one of the four major places of pilgrimage for Buddhists.

The focus of a pilgrimage to Lumbini is the Ashoka Column, erected by the Buddhist Emperor Ashoka in 249 BC, and the Mayadevi Temple, marking the spot determined to be the birthplace of Shakyamuni Buddha. Archeological excavation, which is ongoing, has exposed a bathing tank and several monasteries and stupas built between the 3rd century BC and 5th century AD around the column. Adjacent to this archeological site is a Theravada monastery, a Tibetan monastery, a small rest house for pilgrims, and a wooded garden with a small outdoor tea shop. The site is one of very deep peace and stillness, particularly in the early morning as the heavy mist rises and the chanting from the Tibetan monastery vibrates through the air.

The Development Plan

In 1967, the Secretary General of the United Nations, U Thant of Burma, conceived the idea of developing Lumbini as an international center for world peace and cooperation, with accommodations and other facilities for pilgrims and tourists. In 1970, a 13 nation Lumbini Development Committee was formed. The UN appointed Professor Kenzo Tange, a Japanese architect, to work with the Committee to prepare a Master Plan, and in 1979, the final plan was approved by the UN and the government of Nepal. The plan includes developing an area of three square miles, divided into three zones of one square mile each, as well as developing the surrounding 25 square miles.

Zone I is the Sacred Garden, with the Ashoka Column near its center. This area is to be an archeological area and garden, with no new structures. All existing structures, including the monasteries, are to be removed. Considerable work in this Zone, including archeological work, tree planting, and canals and dams for flood control, has already been completed.

Zone II is adjacent to and directly north of Zone I. It is designated as the Monastic Enclave, and consists of sites for 41 monasteries and a Cultural Center, which includes a museum, a li-



brary, an auditorium, and a research institute. At present, work is being done in this Zone to strengthen the sub-soil with gravel and stone columns to support the Cultural Center. No work has begun on the monasteries.

Zone III, adjacent to the north end of Zone II, is designated New Lumbini Village. It will have a tourist office, post office, police station, school, hospital, luxury hotel, restaurants, shops, pilgrim accommodation, campground, and accommodations for the staff. In this Zone, the foundation has been laid for the pilgrim accommodation, and some staff quarters have been built. The three Zones will be linked by a central corridor 60 yards wide, a one mile long canal, with boating facilities, and footpaths.

Some Questions

During a recent one-week stay in Lumbini, I met with the Abbots of both monasteries, the site archeologists, the site engineer, the Principal of the local grade school, and several local people with no official position. To my regret, the Project Manager was unable to meet with me. There is no doubt that some development at Lumbini is necessary. More pilgrim accommodations, a more reliable water supply for the monasteries, and better public sanitary facilities are essential. The planting of trees makes the area much more inviting and peaceful. The Master Plan, as it appears on paper, is inspiring, and no doubt will result in a very beautiful area. However, when considering the present condition in Lumbini, the local villagers, and the needs of Buddhist pilgrims and practitioners, questions arise.

Who Will Control the Project?

Recently, the Lumbini Committee was disbanded, and the Lumbini Development Trust, headed by the Crown Prince of Nepal and consisting largely of members of his government, has been formed to oversee the project. Will the international Buddhist community be represented in the ongoing development and management of Lumbini? Or will it be controlled by the Nepal government? Nepal is officially a Hindu country, and

has a history of discrimination against the Buddhist minority, so it is important that we know to what extent the project will be controlled and managed by the Nepal government and how much input will be allowed and considered from the international Buddhist community. This will be particularly important in the future when there may be differences in the needs of pilgrims and tourists. To what extent, if any, will the UN continue to participate in the development and management of Lumbini?

The Impact on the Local People

At present there is a small hospital near the site, but no government doctor, so the local villagers must pay for a private doctor at great expense. Are project or government funds available to provide the local people with adequate health care? The Master Plan calls for the hospital to be in Zone III, along with luxury hotels, restaurants, and shops. Will this impair the ability or willingness of poor, local people to use the hospital? Have the local people been consulted about this?

So far, six or seven entire villages, including Old Lumbini, have been moved to clear land for the project. Was this necessary? These villages had been intact for a long time, and I wonder what was the impact on the people involved? One village I visited had been moved from a well established area of planted fields and shady groves to a flat, barren plain without a single tree in sight, and housing which appears woefully inadequate.

Pilgrims' Accommodations

At present there is a small pilgrims' rest house adjacent to the archeological site, which serves as an ideal base for anyone wanting to spend time exploring the site and meditating at this sacred place. The Master Plan calls for its removal, and construction has already begun on a new pilgrims' accommodation two miles away, in Zone III, slightly farther than the proposed luxury hotel. I wonder how much consideration is being given to the needs of poor pilgrims, who presently comprise the majority of visitors to Lumbini, as compared with tourists and more wealthy pilgrims? It seems to me pilgrims could be accommodated closer to the birth site of the Buddha. Within a half mile of the Ashoka Column there is ample land to build a simple structure for pilgrims to stay, and still have quite a lot of room for gardens, excavation, and monasteries.

Important as these questions are, there are two other issues of even greater magnitude which merit discussion and input from the international Buddhist community:

Why Move the Monasteries?

The Theravada monastery was built by the King of Nepal 30 years ago and presently houses three monks. The Tibetan monastery was built 18 years ago and has 40 monks in residence, including a dozen young novices who are undertaking schooling and religious training in the traditional monastic system. The Abbots of both monasteries do not want to move and are quite concerned about the prospect of relocating statues, art

work, and other religious objects which have helped establish a history and a powerful Dharma energy at their present sites.

The presence of these monasteries and the sincere practice of the monks maintains Lumbini as a living center of Dharma pilgrimage and practice, and not just a beautiful garden with archeological remains. If the aim of the garden is "to create an atmosphere of tranquility, universality and clarity, consistent with the idea of the birth of the Buddha," then surely we must agree that sincere, uninterrupted Dharma practice is an important, even essential element for achieving this aim. Historically, there has been a square of monasteries around the Ashoka Column. Is there any reason this tradition and the energy of peace and harmony it has generated needs to be discontinued?

What is the Purpose of the U Thant Peace Center?

The final issue I would like to address is the plan of the U.S. National Committee for Lumbini to raise \$5 million for the construction of an U Thant Peace Center at Lumbini. What is the purpose of this center? Who will use it? With so many Peace Centers and conference centers and UN centers throughout the world already, will one more, in a remote part of Nepal, contribute sufficiently to peace to warrant such an expenditure? Will the presence of politicians, diplomats, and negotiators, if these are who it is proposed will use the facilities, contribute to the "tranquility, universality and clarity" of Lumbini? Perhaps, rather than meeting in a luxurious hall, peacemakers should meet in the garden, under the shade of a Bodhi tree. Would this not be a setting at least as conducive to peace as another convention/conference center? If \$5 million is to be raised and spent for peace, are there not a host of alternative uses to which it might be as effectively put?

Conclusion

Large sums of money have already been spent in Lumbini, even larger sums are to be raised. This money is coming from governments, corporations, and individuals. Directly or indirectly, all of us are involved. I hope we can raise the level of debate and question whether all aspects of the Master Plan are necessary, or even beneficial. The Buddha advised us to investigate, question, and test, and not to accept even his own words simply out of faith or respect. I urge all Buddhists to investigate and question the Lumbini Project and not simply accept the Master Plan. There may be time to make changes. What do we want at this important place of Buddhist pilgrimage? To find out more or to express opinions, please contact:

Committee for the Development of Lumbini
c/o Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Nepal to the UN
820 Second Avenue, #1200
New York, NY 10017

U.S. Lumbini Committee
1345 Spruce Street
Boulder, CO 80302

BPF Letters to U.S. Lumbini Committee

March 9, 1987

Dear Lumbini Project Board of Directors:

I am writing on behalf of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in order to address some of the issues raised in the article, "Questions About the Lumbini Project," a copy of which I have enclosed for your consideration. As you are probably aware, BPF has endorsed the project, made our mailing list available for fundraising purposes, and a member of our Board of Directors is on the Lumbini Advisory Council. For these and other reasons, BPF has an interest in the project and would like to see it carried out as closely as possible in accord with the teachings of the Buddha.

We have these concerns which we hope you will address:

—What provisions are there for input from the international Buddhist community and the local Lumbini residents in the decision-making process?

—The plan calls for the construction of luxury hotels, restaurants and shops. This will naturally attract tourists and pilgrims with financial resources. Will this affect the cost of a visit to Lumbini in such a way as to make it an excessive hardship for pilgrims of more humble economic means? Will inexpensive food and lodging be available under the present plan?

—Will the proposed staff housing meet the needs of lower, as well as higher level staff?

—We strongly agree with the point made in Feldman's article that there needs to be the utmost respect paid to the wishes and needs of those presently living in the monasteries (who are slated to be moved according to the master plan). We would like to urge that the master plan be revised to allow the residents to remain where they are.

—Who will operate and direct the proposed peace center? If it is to be a government, no matter how well-intentioned that government might be, the potential of political manipulation of the peace center would be high. Specifically, there is the danger that the pursuit of peace would become identified with the government's nationalistic concerns.

—In addition, there are concerns about the \$5 million cost of the center. The Buddhist teachings seem to point towards a non-opulent, simplified manner of living. Having a center which might represent a reverence for material wealth may not be the expression most consistent with our understanding of dharma practice. We would urge the construction of a more modest center. Perhaps some of the funds could be used to promote development projects in areas neighboring Lumbini, such as sanitation or agricultural projects.

These issues are raised in a spirit of respect for the work and dedication of those most intimately involved in the project. Questions and suggestions are offered with an attitude of support and the desire that the final project be one from which Buddhists and non-Buddhists can draw inspiration and renewal.

In the Sangha,
Joe Gorin, Secretary, BPF

June 5, 1987

Karl Springer, Executive Director,
and the Board of Directors of the Lumbini Project
1345 Spruce Street
Boulder, CO 80302

Dear Karl and Board Members:

I write in reference to the letter to you of March 9, 1987, from Joe Gorin on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF). This letter respectfully raised a number of significant and troubling questions about the direction being taken in the development of the Lumbini Project.

As an active member of BPF on its International Advisory Board *and* as a member of the Lumbini Advisory Council, I am particularly eager to know your response to this letter. I share the concerns it raised.

I don't see provisions for the international Buddhist community to have a voice in decisions about Lumbini. I am concerned about the role of the Nepalese (or any) government in its operation. I object to a high cost project moving in on a venerable site of pilgrimage, to construct luxury accommodations and to displace monasteries and poor pilgrims presently there. I do not see in these aspects of the plans a reflection of the Buddha's teachings on simplicity, compassion and social justice.

As an Advisor to the Lumbini Project, I recommend that members of your Board hold a meeting with representatives of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and others who have raised these questions about the Project, such as Rev. Samu Sunim, editor of *Spring Wind*, and Norman Feldman. This meeting would, among other things, clarify the extent to which the Lumbini Board is ready to address the issues we have raised.

That is something I will need to know in order to continue on the Lumbini Advisory Council. I look forward to hearing from you.

Let me assure you that I share the respect, expressed in the letter from Joe Gorin, for the hard work of those most closely linked to the Lumbini project. It is my sincere hope that ways can be found to integrate into this work and its goals the needs and counsel of the wider Buddhist community.

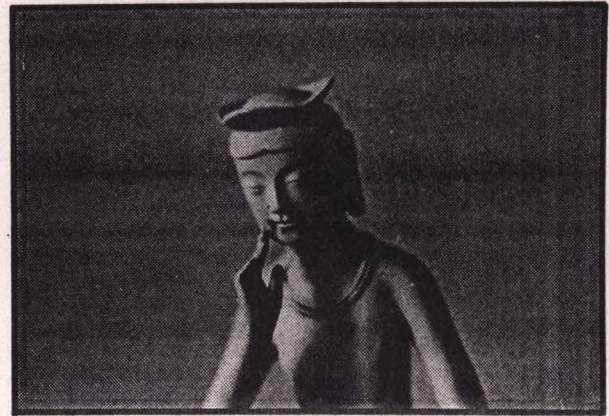
Sincerely yours, in the Dharma,
Joanna R. Macy, Ph.D.

Ed. Note: As we go to press (in mid-September), no response to either letter has been received. I spoke with Karl Springer, the Executive Director of the U.S. Lumbini Committee, and he apologized, but because of the passing of the Ven. Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, his teacher, he has been exceptionally busy. He agreed to write a response for the next issue of BPF Newsletter.

On the Situation of Buddhism in Asia

By Samu Sunim

Ven. Samu Sunim is the founder and Abbot of the Zen Lotus Society, in Toronto and Ann Arbor. In December 1986, he founded Buddhists Concerned for Social Justice and World Peace. In July, he and his colleagues in BCSJWP prepared a resolution on Asian Buddhism for the Conference on World Buddhism in North America, held in Ann Arbor. The following is excerpted from that resolution. To obtain a copy of the full resolution, or for more information about Buddhists Concerned for Social Justice and World Peace, contact Zen Lotus Society, 1214 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.



For decades now the Buddhist and Buddhist-influenced countries in Asia have been undergoing political turmoil and social upheaval. There have been wars, invasions, massacres, wanton destruction, and violent repression. These incidents have profoundly affected the Buddhist Sangha there and have had devastating effects on the people. In several countries, including North Korea, China, Tibet, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, Buddhism was proscribed by the state, and monks and nuns were forced to return to lay life or go to labor camps. Some countries were invaded and occupied by foreign forces or fell to violent revolutionary forces, and many had to flee their homelands. Many of these refugee monks have settled in the West and now comprise the new wave of the Buddhist movement in North America.

Buddhism in Asia has suffered much from war and violence, and there is no sign of significant improvement. It hurts us all to see Buddhism in Asia in decline, for it is from Asian Buddhism that we have been drawn to Buddhism. Yet we have done very little to help out as Buddhism has collapsed in Asian countries, monks have fled, and refugees have suffered in the camps. We very much regret that the state of affairs has deteriorated to this degree. Therefore it is with profound sadness and a strong sense of urgency that we propose the following resolutions in order to express our deep concern for the situation in Asia and make a public demand for justice and freedom for all citizens of the countries involved. It is our utmost wish that the governments and parties in question heed our concern and take proper measures to restore basic human rights and religious freedom:

China and Tibet

1. We ask the Chinese government and its ruling Communist Party to cease immediately from all human rights violations and discrimination and persecution against the Buddhist religion, and to restore full religious freedom and social justice to the peoples of Tibet.

2. We ask the Chinese government to release all members of the Buddhist clergy and political prisoners now in detention and to restore full freedom of religious practice to their citizens.

Vietnam and Kampuchea

1. In Vietnam and Kampuchea, no new temple construction is being approved, owing to the diversion of funds to the military. Those temples that do exist are limited to five monks who must be 45 or older. The government also reportedly demands a portion of all temple donations and restricts Buddhist education. We ask the governments of Vietnam and Kampuchea and their ruling Communist Parties to release all members of the Buddhist clergy and all political prisoners in confinement.

2. We ask the governments of Vietnam and Phnom Penh to lift their restrictions on the practice of Buddhism and to restore full religious freedoms to their citizens.

North Korea and South Korea

1. We ask the North Korean government and its Communist Party to end its age-old anti-religious propaganda and activities, to return the existing temples to the Buddhist clergy, and to restore basic human rights and religious freedom to her citizens.

2. We ask the S. Korean government to cease from all forms of discrimination against the Buddhist religion and immediately release all the imprisoned monks and political prisoners.

Bangladesh

1. We are deeply concerned with the unlawful arrests, torture, and killings of members of the tribal population of Chittagong Hill Tracts, the majority of whom are Buddhists. These abuses have been carried out by law enforcement personnel such as the army, paramilitary forces and armed police under successive governments. We condemn these wanton acts of violence committed against the people of minority groups and ask the Bangladesh government to cease immediately from further acts of violence and to protect minority rights.

Laos

1. We ask the Laotian government and its Communist Party to grant basic human rights and religious freedom to its citizens. We are particularly concerned with the destruction of the hill tribes who are mostly animist and Christian. We urge the Laotian government and its communist party to stop all acts of violence against the hill tribes and respect their rights.

Sri Lanka

1. We are deeply saddened and hurt at the racial violence in Sri Lanka, a country which has suffered so much at the hands of European colonial powers and which has contributed so much to the world-wide dissemination of Buddhism. We condemn all acts of violence and urge the parties concerned to find a solution through negotiation. We also urge the government of India not to interfere but to exercise its influence to help them find a settlement. Above all, we appeal to the Sri Lankan Buddhists to urge their government not to resort to violent reprisals or military action against terrorist attacks but to seek a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

To All Governments Concerned:

1. There have been governments which have suppressed Buddhism or virtually destroyed the religion at home while pretending that the religion is alive and well, putting on a mock show for foreign visitors or sending delegations abroad to influence innocent Buddhists from different countries. These are deceptive and shameful acts. All Buddhists should expose and condemn such sham coming under the name of Buddhism and refuse to have anything to do with it. We condemn all governments that use Buddhism for political purposes.

Thailand and Japan

1. Thailand has been bearing the major responsibility as the first country of asylum for hundreds of thousands of Cambodian refugees, particularly since 1979-80, during which period large numbers of Cambodians fled their country because of the Vietnamese invasion. In January this year, however, the Thai government closed Khao I Dang, the most famous Indochinese refugee camp, which had served as a symbol of hope for Cambodians escaping a decade of death, torture, and dislocation. In May the Thai government began to move the refugees to the refugee settlements near the Cambodian border, eventually to be returned to Cambodia. Thai officials complained about the diminishing hope of resettling the refugees abroad and blamed the West for not having done more to help. While we sympathize with the situation of the Thai government, we nevertheless appeal to that government for continued generous support for the Cambodian refugees. In particular, we appeal to the Thai Buddhist leaders and Buddhist communities there to influence the government for the cause of the Cambodian refugees and to organize public support for their Cambodian Buddhist brothers

and sisters. We call upon international Buddhist communities for immediate action for the Cambodian refugee situation.

2. Japan is predominantly Buddhist and perhaps the only country in Asia that enjoys both political stability and economic prosperity. There have been a few Japanese Buddhist groups and individuals who have been active in helping Indochinese refugees and in the support of relief organizations working in Africa, but we feel that the Japanese Buddhists could do more. We call upon Japanese Buddhist leaders to extend their help in the spirit of peace and happiness for all beings.

Buddhism and Christianity in Asia

1. In recent years some evangelical Christian missionaries in South Korea have been engaged in organized attacks against Korean Buddhism, ranging from crude public accusations and denunciations to desecration of statues and visiting temples and monasteries in an attempt to convert the monks and nuns. Some innocent Buddhists in the countryside have been harassed by frequent aggressive evangelical campaigns and activities designed to win converts. These have been remarkably successful to the extent that in a few years Korean Christians are expected to surpass Buddhists, and South Korea is expected to be the first Buddhist country in Asia to turn Christian. We are deeply concerned. Clearly unprovoked attacks, defamation, and stirring up the fear of innocent people of a different religion go against the avowed ideals of the world religions that seek peace, love, and truth. This is most regrettable, particularly in an age of dialogue and spiritual exchange among different world religions.

We have also observed Christian missionary activities in the Indochinese refugee camps. Salvation Army volunteers have been active in the Vietnamese refugee camps in Hong Kong. They give preferential treatment to refugees who are Christian or who are willing to convert to Christianity. Volunteers from the Salvation Army meet refugees daily and teach English classes in which the primary reading material is the Bible and Christian hymnals, and refugees are told that their chances of resettlement will improve significantly if they convert. Although 50% of the refugees are Buddhist, they are reportedly not allowed to have shrines or to receive guidance from Buddhist monks. We appeal to the international Christian community for spiritual guidance and remedy of the deteriorating religious situation in South Korea and in the refugee camps.

Resolution

We call upon all Buddhists around the world to take note of the Buddhist situation in Asia and to raise their voice and engage in social action on behalf of their fellow Buddhists in trouble. We also urge them to support international non-governmental agencies such as Amnesty International, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Red Cross, and Oxfam for their noble works. We appeal to the Buddhist groups and organizations worldwide to put into action the Buddhist compassion towards all and actively participate in social work and service in order to promote happiness of all and peace in the world.

Work / Community

A Special Section

Right Livelihood

by Allan Badiner

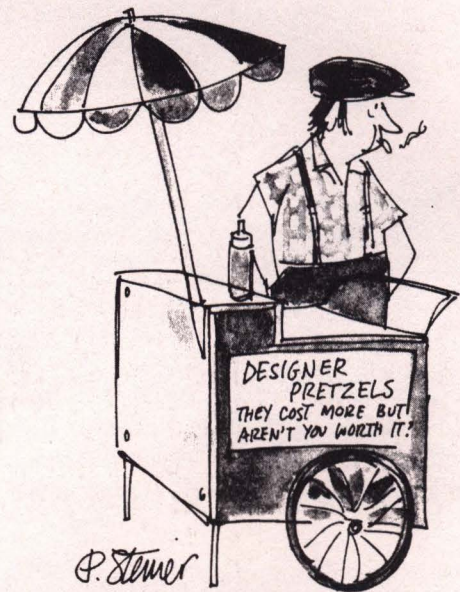
You pass by a butcher shop and notice through the window several dour faced customers waiting for an indifferent figure in white. He is busily slicing raw flesh behind a stainless steel counter grimly adorned with animal corpses.

In such a case it is easy to recognize "wrong livelihood." Other obvious examples could include dealing harmful drugs or tending to an assembly line of thermonuclear weapons. The Buddha specifically referred to these kinds of occupations as among those to be totally avoided. But how does this path relate to less obvious, more subtle categories of occupations or vocations? Is a biologist employed by a cosmetics firm that engages in animal testing "trafficking in living beings?" Does owning a little stock in companies that have subsidiaries with lucrative defense contracts constitute "dealing in any way with weapons of war?"

The criteria are made quite clear in the Pali Canon, but these are only a guide. Difficult cases like the ones above can only be resolved within the mind of an individual. After referring to specially discouraged professions, including palmistry, fortune telling, astrology, divination (could this include channelling?), and even certain kinds of acting, the Suttas describe appropriate careers in several ways: They are of wholesome value to both oneself and all other life. It is suggested that unless an activity is flagrantly "wrong," all occupations can be an opportunity for "right livelihood" by making appropriate effort and being mindful. It is important, however, that one's activities do not involve undue emotional strain or mental stress.

The advice is to live simply and maintain an environment in one's life conducive to meditation while continuously cutting at the cords of attachment. This is particularly important when one considers that in the time of the Buddha, people could drop out and attend strictly to their spiritual being with more ease. The rainy seasons were often used as a time of retreat, and there were always the vast forests and endless mountains of the interior to escape to. In modern life there is almost no place where the bills do not need to be paid, where the phone doesn't ring.

Some professions coexist with practice better than others. Will a stockbroker go easily to a zendo from an active day of trading on Wall Street? Do theatrical agents sit vipassana after closing "killer" deals? A career that focuses on the accumulation of wealth while millions go hungry is likely to be an obstacle to progress on the Buddhist path of self-development. If our efforts are associated with the promotion of useless or luxury oriented products, are we not contributing to the sense-driven delusions of many unknown people, helping to entangle them further in a net of maya?



There is another important aspect of this noble path that distinguishes it from the other seven. "Right livelihood" also stands for the transformation of our whole collective existence. By understanding the deep interrelatedness of all beings and behaviors, it is clear that not only one's personal life, but the social, communal, and political life are all involved in the creation of an ideal society, a society in which it is progressively easier to follow the path. The Buddha recognized that societal change is effected in the minds of individuals, and that everyone has to earn a living.

It is conceivable that the Buddha preceded Marx in the understanding of history as being led by economics and that it has been and remains a more basic aspect of our collective existence than political or social issues.

Often underestimated is the impact that an occupation has on one's life. When you are doing something for seven or eight hours a day, five days a week, fifty weeks a year, for fifty years of your life, can you really claim that its "just a job, a way to get by?" A philosophy that reminds us "there is no doer, only deeds to be found" is not easily compatible with engaging in meaningless unimaginative tedium regardless of the hourly rate. If you are in a job, be in that job; if you aren't into it, get out of it. Avoid half measures. As writer Fred Eppsteiner aptly put it, "the manner in which we spend our time, energy and resources are as much a moral problem as a practical one." Should not our work choices also challenge the culturally induced arrogance that encourages competition to the point of obliterating the discussion of ethics? Instead of striving to be in a position where we can proclaim ourselves as important,

highly paid, and/or privileged, we must find esteem and even delight in joining with the unrecognized workers; those underpaid people on whose very backs our proclaimed importance, high pay, and privilege rest. The chasm that divides humanity into the privileged and the unprivileged was a chasm dug at the expense of everyone's integrity. Until we individually assess our value systems in the light of a healthy future world and change accordingly, there can be no real collective change.

When wisdom blossoms and the beauty of all creation is revealed, one's mind can easily turn to visions of opportunities for service, for being of assistance in ending suffering in the world. With the vision that flowers from developed compassion, the needs of a more perfect social order can be understood and one can more easily find a livelihood in the filling of those needs. Examples might be opening an organic/coop restaurant or developing a series of videozines on socially relevant topics. Buddhism, a philosophy that emphasizes mental development and greater awareness generally, could well become a growth industry itself in the Information Age. There are many possibilities unfolding for combining practice with non-exploitative products or services.

It has also become vitally important to filter our career choices through the questions of environmental impact. As the realization that the ecosystem itself is alive becomes more widespread, it is increasingly clear that employment in industries that compromise the environment are putting all living beings in mortal danger. We need to be aware as consumers that our personal choices of products have an impact on the environment. Are the household products we are using biodegradable? Are we buying produce originating from factory farms heavily dependent on pesticides?

Among the precepts of Thich Nhat Hanh's Order of Interbeing is the advice to "select a vocation which helps to realize your ideal of compassion." In view of the masses of unconscious and uninformed consumers and producers, it is tempting to reason that the world will never notice the change-inspiring choices made by one individual. However, it is a key teaching in Buddhism that nothing on this earth goes unnoticed!

Those who create a life of conscious choice and peaceful demeanor will find that the knowledge of those choices will shine through the eyes and the heart. The joy that comes from right choices is highly contagious, reinforcing and harmonizing with the eternal unity that pervades all being. Some elements often present in a Right Livelihood would include:

1. Provision of sufficient income for food and shelter and to meet other necessary obligations to oneself and others.
2. A responsiveness to the overwhelming need for healing, integration and peace in human society. A part of the Greater Mandala, e.g. as supporting Dharma work.
3. Kalyana mitrata (loving kindness) between those who are working together. A more cooperative than competitive dynamic.
4. The trade or profession is ethical and does not depend on

any unethical activities or the harming of any living beings.

5. Activities that stimulate mindfulness and encourage wholesome or useful habits.

Supporting a family is difficult and good jobs are scarce, but where there is the will there is a way. As the Buddha's life came to a close, his now famous last words advised us to seek our salvation with diligence. At the very least, we shouldn't let our means of livelihood get in the way.

Allan Badiner is a free lance writer and practicing Buddhist in Los Angeles. He is a regular contributor to LA Weekly and The Middle Way, and was the founding editor of Dharma Voice.



Drawing by Mayumi Oda

Mindfulness in the Workplace

21 Ways to Reduce Stress During the Workday

By Saki F. Santorelli

Ed. Note: I recently met Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli, the directors of the Stress Reduction and Relaxation Program at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, and I was so impressed with their work that I asked if they would share it with BPF Newsletter readers. Saki Santorelli sent this article.

I have had the good fortune of working with and training several hundred patients/participants per year in the use of mindfulness meditation. In the context of preventive and behavioral medicine, mindfulness practice is a vehicle for stress reduction that assists people in learning to replenish their internal resources and increase psychosocial hardiness. In addition, many participants report positive changes in their sense of self, including a deepened sense of self-esteem, an increased ability to care for themselves and understand their fellow human beings, and for some, a finer appreciation for the preciousness of everyday life.

In addition to the ongoing clinical work, I act as a consultant and staff development trainer. These programs are tailored to individual, corporate, and institutional needs with an underlying emphasis on the cultivation and implementation of mindfulness and mastery in the workplace. Out of one such program evolved "21 Ways to Reduce Stress During the Workday."

During a training program for secretarial staff, I was struck by their struggle to ground and integrate the stability and connectedness they sometimes felt during the sitting meditation practice into their "non-sitting" time. In response to their need, "21 Ways" came into print. I proceeded by simply asking myself "How do I attempt to handle ongoing stress while at work?" - actually from the time I awaken in the morning until I return home at the end of the workday. In what ways do I attempt to infuse mindfulness into the fabric of my everyday life? What helps me to awaken when I become intoxicated by the sheer momentum and urgency of living?

In all honesty, the awareness cultivated through meditation training has been my saving grace. Mindfulness harnesses our capacity to be aware of what is going on in our bodies, minds and hearts in the world—and the workplace. One thing we discover as we pay closer attention to what is going on in and around us is that stressors, the continual and constantly changing flow of events, are ever-present and tend to draw us away from the awareness of our true self. Meditation is the practice of returning to our true self; what the secretaries were struggling with is the gap between that awareness (sometimes) realized while sitting, and the dissonance experienced in their workday environment and their 'workday mind.' What they wanted was a vehicle for integrating 'formal practice' into everyday life.

Although this need for integration is familiar to all of us, notions about how to do this remain largely conceptual unless we find concrete ways of practicing that transform theory into liv-

ing reality. This is exactly what the participants wanted. They got enthusiastic about this as it provided them something solid to work with while attempting to be mindful in everyday situations—particularly while on the job.

Since then, I've shared these with many workshop participants and continue to receive phone calls and letters from people who have either added to the list or posted them, as convenient reminders, in strategic locations such as office doorways, restroom mirrors, dashboards or lunchrooms. I've been glad to hear from them and am happy that, by its very nature, the list is incomplete and therefore full of possibility.

Each of the "21 Ways" can be seen as preventive—a kind of pre-stress immunity factor, or as recuperative—a means of recovering balance following a difficult experience. In addition, they are tools for modifying our reactions in the midst of adversity. As you begin to work with the list you'll notice that it includes pre, during and post work suggestions. Incorporating this awareness into your life will necessitate a skillful effort that includes commitment, patience and consistency. It may be helpful to think of yourself as entering a training program, a training that is primarily self-educative and necessitates a willingness to view yourself as a learner, a beginner. Please allow yourself the room to experiment without self-criticism. Treat yourself kindly and enjoy the journey.

At the heart of workday practice is the intention to be aware of and connected with whatever is happening inside and around us (mindfulness) as well as the determination to initiate change when appropriate (mastery). A wonderful example of this process is revealed in the following story told to me some years ago by a physician friend. I'd like to share it with you in the form of a story entitled "Little Green Dots."

My friend told me that as his practice grew busier and more demanding, he began to have minor, transient symptoms that included increased neck and shoulder tension, fatigue, and irritability. Initially, the symptoms were benign, disappearing after a good night's rest or a relaxing weekend. But as his medical practice continued to grow, the symptoms became persistent and much to his own chagrin, he noticed he was becoming "a chronic clock-watcher."

One day, while attending to his normal clinical duties, he had a revelation. He walked over to his secretary's supply cabinet and pulled out a package of "little green dots" used for color coding the files. He placed one on his watch and decided that, since he couldn't stop watching the clock, he'd use the dot as a visual cue that served as a reminder to center himself by taking one conscious breath and dropping his shoulders.

The next day he placed a dot on the wall clock, for he realized, "If I'm not looking at the one on my wrist, I'm looking at the one on the wall." He continued this practice and by the end of the week had placed a green dot on each exam room door. A few weeks after initiating this workday practice, he said that, much to his own surprise, he had stopped, breathed, and relaxed 100 times in a single day. This simple, persistent decision to be mindful had been transformative. He felt much better, and most importantly, his patients told him that he was "much more like himself." For him, that was icing on the cake.

The story is simple and direct. Using what is constantly around us as a reminder of our innate capacity to be calm and centered is essential if we wish to thrive in the midst of our cultural busyness. Years ago, while working with harried receptionists, I suggested that they use the first ring of the telephone as a reminder to breathe and relax. For many, this became a powerful agent of change. People they had spoken

with on the phone for years didn't recognize their voices; they spoke more slowly and their voices settled into the lower ranges. The telephone no longer elicited a Pavlovian reaction. They had learned to respond rather than react.

The following "21 Ways" are simply a road map. I wish you peace and well-being as you explore the territory and discover your own "ways."

21 Ways to Reduce Stress During the Workday

1. Take a few minutes in the morning to be quiet and meditate—sit or lie down and be with yourself...gaze out the window, listen to the sounds of nature or take a slow, quiet walk.
2. While your car is warming up, take a minute to quietly pay attention to your breathing.
3. While driving, become aware of body tension, e.g. hands wrapped tightly around the steering wheel, shoulders raised, stomach tight, etc. Consciously work at releasing, dissolving that tension. Does being tense help you to drive better? What does it feel like to relax and drive?
4. Decide not to play the radio and be with yourself.
5. Stay in the right lane and go 55 miles per hour.
6. Pay attention to your breathing or to the sky, trees, etc., when stopped at a red light or a toll plaza.
7. After parking your car at your workplace, take a moment to orient yourself to your workday.
8. While sitting at your desk, keyboard, etc., monitor bodily sensations and tension levels, and consciously attempt to relax and let go of excess tension.
9. Use your breaks to truly relax rather than simply "pause." For example, instead of having coffee and a cigarette, take a 2-5 minute walk, or sit at your desk and recoup.
10. At lunch, changing your environment can be helpful.
11. Or try closing the door (if you have one) and take some time to consciously relax.
12. Decide to "stop" for 1-3 minutes every hour during the workday. Become aware of your breathing and bodily sensations. Use it as a time to regroup and recoup.
13. Use the everyday cues in your environment as reminders to "center" yourself, e.g. the telephone ringing, turning on the computer, etc. Remember the "Little Green Dots."
14. Take some time at lunch or break to share with close associates. Choose topics not necessarily work-related.
15. Choose to eat one or two lunches per week in silence. Use it as a time to eat slowly and be with yourself.
16. At the end of the workday, retrace your activities of the day, acknowledging and congratulating yourself for what you've accomplished and make a list *for tomorrow*.
17. Pay attention to the short walk to your car, breathing the crisp air. The feeling of the cold or warmth of your body, try to accept it rather than resist it. Listen to the sounds outside the office. Can you walk without feeling rushed?
18. While your car is warming up, sit quietly, and consciously make the transition from work to home. Take a moment to simply be; enjoy it for a moment. Like most of us, you're heading into your next full-time job: home!
19. While driving, notice if you are rushing. What does this feel like? What could you do about it? Remember, you've got more control than you can imagine.
20. When you pull into the driveway or park on the street, take a minute to come back to the present. Orient yourself to being with your family or household members.
21. Change out of work clothes when you get home; it helps you to make a smoother transition into your next "role." You can spare the five minutes to do this. Say hello to each of the family members; center yourself at home. If possible, make the time to take 5-10 minutes to be quiet and still.

A True Story by Fran Peavey

I want to tell you a real story just the way it actually happened to me when I was 44 years old. I decided to go on a vacation by myself because I needed to be alone. I needed to think some deep thoughts by myself. There were new fears coming up in my life, and I needed to make friends with them.

So I drove up the beautiful California coast to Oregon, and east along the mighty Columbia River on into northern Idaho. I was tired from driving all day in the heat and thought it might be a good idea to pull into a campground to sleep. Lolo Pass goes across the continental divide in a primitive part of northern Idaho where there are very few people and not even electricity. This is where I decided to sleep.

I found a campground where there were only two campsites being used. I pulled into a site away from everyone else, put my sleeping bag out on the ground, and quickly fell asleep under the stars.

Sometime in the middle of the night, as I slept on my stomach with my hands by my head, I felt something on my left hand and I woke up with a jolt. A chipmunk had been walking

beings. But this one seems helpless enough. I don't see any gun."

Then, after what seemed to be a long time, the bear walked over to me and put its paw right next to my arm. That bear was so big that if I had raised my arm up I could not have touched the top of its shoulder.

Then it licked the side of my face. Its gooey, wet tongue licked my face seven or eight times. I think it liked the salt from my sweat from the day before. I thought, "This is how a salt lick feels." It felt like the bear was kissing me trying to make friends. The deer watched and so did the chipmunk, who was still perched on the sleeping bag on my stomach. I kept thinking the deer and the chipmunk were there to signal me not to be afraid. And so I wasn't.

After the licking, the three of them walked into the forest. I said, "Good bye. Thank you," softly to them. I'm not sure why I said that, but it felt like they had offered their friendship to me in a very lovely way.

Afterwards, I felt very afraid and climbed into the car for



Drawing by Wendy Johnson

on my hand. I jerked my hand as I awoke and the chipmunk backed away.

Then I looked over my shoulder and there I saw a deer... and a bear standing about five feet away from me watching me sleep.

I remembered my mother telling me *always* to be afraid of bears and stay away from them. This is usually good advice, but what could I do? And besides, I thought, the deer and chipmunk were there. If the bear were hungry, I thought, wouldn't he eat them? Slowly I turned over onto my back to see better, and to have my hands free.

The chipmunk climbed on top of my sleeping bag and sat on my stomach. The chipmunk, the deer, and the bear looked at me and I looked at them. They didn't seem afraid of me and I didn't feel afraid of them—even though I knew I should be afraid. After all, hadn't my mother said so? I wondered if they were thinking, "My mother told me to be afraid of human

awhile, wondering if maybe the bear had liked the taste and would be back for some of the meat. But I didn't see the bear or its friends again.

As I went back to sleep, I thought later, "How do I know this isn't a dream?" I decided to sleep on the left side of my head, since where the bear had licked was all wet and sticky. If the right side of my hair was all stuck to my ear in the morning, I would know it was not a dream.

When morning came, my hair on the right side was all stuck to my head, and I knew somewhere out in the forest there were a chipmunk, a deer, and a bear who wanted to be friends with humans.

Frances Peavey, traveller for peace and Atomic Comic, is the author of Heart Politics (New Society Publishers). This story will be issued as a hand made, children's book from Crabgrass Publishers, 84 Andover Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Reviews

A Gift of Peace: Selections from A Course in Miracles



Edited by Frances Vaughan and Roger Walsh
With Photographs by Jane English
Published by J.P. Tarcher, 1986.
\$10.95 hard cover. 107 pages.
Reviewed by Kim Kaiser

You will yet learn that peace is part of you and requires only that you be there to embrace any situation in which you are. And finally you will learn that there is no limit to where you are, so that your peace is everywhere, as you are.

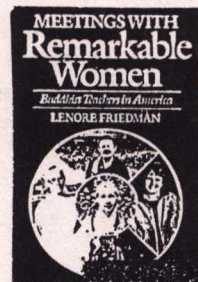
—A Course in Miracles, page 65

As a long-time student of Buddhism, it was difficult for me at first to appreciate the teaching of *A Course in Miracles*. Clothed in the language and imagery of Christianity, it seemed to have little relationship to Buddhist practice and understanding. However, a comment Suzuki-roshi made in one of his lectures allowed me to begin to use the *Course* as a teaching tool. He said that one day you may look across the room and see someone who is really practicing and exemplifying Buddhism well. At this point you may make a mistake, he said, you might think that the good practice exists over there in that other person and not in you who sees it. I remembered this teaching when reading in the *Course* that you will see the effects of this course in others first before you notice any change in yourself. This understanding of the oneness of self and others is repeated again and again in the *Course* and is the basis of its instruction to "Teach peace to learn it."

A Gift of Peace is a collection of quotations on the theme of peace from *A Course in Miracles*. The *Course* itself is a three-volume set of teachings and guided meditations aimed at "...the attainment and the keeping of the state of peace." As the editors state in their Introduction, "...peace is not something that we must create but rather something that already exists within us as part of our true identity." These quotations from the *Course* point directly to this peace within, showing where it is, who has it, and how it is experienced continuously. If, in reading these selections, the remembrance of peace is awakened (as it has been for many through working with *ACIM*), then this book will have served its purpose well. For the *Course* teaches that the recognition of peace is also a sharing of it with the world. To quote the editors again, "...offering peace to others is a way to have it ourselves, and a natural result of having it is to share it."

3 New Books on Women in Buddhism

**Meetings with Remarkable Women:
Buddhist Teachers in America**
By Lenore Friedman
Published by Shambhala, 1987
\$12.95 paperback. 288 pages



**Not Mixing Up Buddhism:
Essays on Women And Buddhist Practice**
Edited by Deborah Hopkinson,
Michele Hill and Eileen Kiera
Published by White Pine Press, 1987
\$10 paperback. 117 pages.



**A Gathering of Spirit:
Women Teaching in American Buddhism**
Edited by Ellen Sidor
Published by Primary Point Press, 1987
\$6.95 paperback. 77 pages.

A Gathering of Spirit
Women Teaching in American Buddhism



Reviewed by Carole Melkonian

Women's involvement in Buddhism is nothing new in America, where the number of women and men practitioners are roughly equal. Historically, however, Buddhist values and institutions have denigrated women and have excluded them from positions of authority. The earlier societies in which Buddhism flourished were patriarchal and did not provide women easy access to practice. In recent years there has been a growing concern among American Buddhists with the inferior role women have historically played in Buddhism, and with the dominant masculine principles and values which characterize many of the forms of Buddhism.

This concern has gained momentum during the past several years, and I would attribute that particularly to *Kahawai: A Journal of Women and Zen*, which began in 1979. *Kahawai* was the first publication devoted to exploring women's issues in relation to Buddhist practice. It validated our concerns and made them worthy of exploration. Since 1979 there have been workshops, conferences, and small groups devoted to the issues raised concerning the roles of women in Buddhism. In March of this year, a major celebration was held in Berkeley, where 150 women came together from a variety of Buddhist traditions (See page 23).

Individually, there have been women who have taken radical and painstaking steps in their own relationship with Buddhism, some breaking with the teachers and traditions that they devoted years of their lives to, some searching for a language

within the context of the current forms that allows the voice of the feminine to be heard along with the masculine.

It is fortunate that at this time and through this inquiry and effort three new books have appeared that represent a fruition of this process. They are *Meetings With Remarkable Women*, *Not Mixing Up Buddhism*, and *A Gathering of Spirit*. These books explore topics ranging from the first women who appear in early Buddhist literature to women practicing Buddhism today—some involved in more traditional practices, some exploring issues such as relationships, parenting, and planetary concerns.

Remarkable Women

Meetings with Remarkable Women, by Lenore Friedman, a Berkeley psychotherapist and BPF member who has practiced Buddhism for many years, presents accounts of 17 contemporary women teachers. The women, including Maurine Stuart, Ane Pema Chodron, Ruth Denison, Bobby Rhodes, Jiyu Kennett, Joanna Macy, Karuna Dharma, Yvonne Rand, and Sharon Salzberg, speak candidly of their histories, spiritual endeavors, forms of practice, and current approaches to teaching. Lenore Friedman's introduction provides a comprehensive view of the societal context in which the first Buddhist nuns (bhikkunis) practiced, and the historical development and near disappearance of the female order.

What I found most remarkable about the book was the variety of women portrayed, the practices they've followed, and uncharted territory they are moving through. We hear from Toni Packer, Charlotte Joko Beck, Jacqueline Mandell, and Gesshin Midwer, each of whom were recognized as teachers before leaving the particular Buddhist tradition which they devoted themselves to.

Joko Beck, for example, studied extensively with Maezumi Roshi at the Zen Center of Los Angeles. In 1978 she became Roshi's third Dharma heir. "As time went by, however, Joko found herself questioning more and more the traditional methods of teaching. She was curious, interested in reading about and exploring the ways of other Buddhist teachers as well as other traditions and disciplines, including psychology and psychiatry. She was beginning to see how they interpenetrated and complemented each other. At the same time, the 'giant confusion' of many students disturbed her. She began to suspect that classic Zen training—pure concentrative use of the mind—was not of much benefit to many of them. For some, it even seemed harmful. It enabled them to circumvent issues in their lives that needed addressing."

Joko left ZCLA in the fall of 1983 to take charge of the Zen Center of San Diego. In February 1984 she initiated a series of meetings called "What Should Zen Practice Look Like in America?"

As Joko says so plainly, "I question everything. At the moment, I don't intend to do anything about it, but I question accepting any fixed format for sesshin as sacrosanct. I'm willing to look at everything. What I do is think and feel and let

it turn over. . . Our last sesshin here, we ended up doing the final kinhin along the ocean. We rode in cars to the beach and then walked in silence along the water for an hour, came back to the zendo to chant the Heart Sutra, and it was wonderful. You can imagine, at the end of a long sesshin, to hear the roar of the ocean for an hour! So who said you had to do it any particular way? I'm coming to think you don't have to do *anything* any particular way."

There are other women who have remained committed to the tradition in which they were taught—women like Ane Pema Chodron, Maurine Stuart, Bobby Rhodes, and Sharon Salzberg.

Bhikshuni Pema Chodron has studied in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition with His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa, Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, and Lama Chime in London. When speaking about hierarchy she states, "We've rejected these things so harshly because we equate them with empty form. There is a natural hierarchy in the world.... It has to do with your heart being able to soften, being able to let go of holding onto yourself and being able to open up to respect the world.... It's like a seed that's being nurtured so that it can grow. I have been trained so genuinely, and my experience of hierarchy has always led me to understand why I was doing what I was doing. As a result I was able to surrender when it rubbed me the wrong way. Once you have trust in the teacher, and respect, then there is willingness to go along with what you're told, because sometimes that's the only way to get through when your habitual resistance starts coming up."

These women are teaching traditionally, but the fact that they are women changes the Buddhism that they are teaching. For example a student of Maurine Stuart, Roshi's spoke about her in this way, "Maurine's unique qualities of traditional Rinzai 'strong action' combined with feminine, maternal caring produced what is now the daily experience at Sparks Street: a powerful, coherent atmosphere for practice."

Not Mixing Up

Not Mixing Up Buddhism is an anthology of essays, all of which first appeared in *Kahawai*, including stories, poems and koans in which our female ancestors are depicted, and explorations of current issues such as abortion, sexual abuse, relationships, parenting, and planetary concerns. It also includes a Zen story for children.

The book begins with Susan Murcott's essay on the original Buddhist women, which shows the tenacity and sincerity that our ancestors had in their determination to undertake this spiritual path. This is best illustrated by the story of Mahapajapati Gotami, the Buddha's aunt who raised him after the death of his mother. She was the first woman to approach the Buddha and request admission into the sangha. The Buddha refused this request. It was Ananda who intervened, after he saw the commitment Pajapati and other women had in undertaking this spiritual path. He pleaded for the women's right to have entry into the sangha, and finally, after the third attempt, the Buddha agreed. However, women were admitted only with the understanding that they accept certain special rules, which assigned

them to an inferior status in the sangha.

The Buddha was living in India at a time when women were greatly discriminated against. Therefore, it is uncertain what his view actually was on women's ability to realize themselves as compared to men's. Did he actually consider women inferior students or was he merely responding to the current social conditions? In America, we are living in a so-called egalitarian society. Not only is this approach unacceptable today, it contradicts two of the basic tenets of Buddhism itself—selflessness and emptiness.

What is more worthy about the male? Emptiness is emptiness and the five skandhas are the five skandhas. This is the same for male and female.

—Dogen, 13th Century

In Rita Gross' essay she points out the contributions that Buddhism and Feminism can make to each other: "[Buddhism's] presentation of egolessness is beyond anything feminism, or most other value systems, have yet envisioned. On the other hand, in its exploration of one of the fundamental habitual patterns of ego—the territoriality and sense of limitation and/or privilege that are part of sexual identity in conventional people—feminism has laid bare a dimension of ego that Buddhism seems not to have noticed. To me, this aspect of feminist thought is among its most applicable and relevant contributions. The acknowledgment and exploration of gender-based ego-patterns show how they arise from societal patterns and pressures, and how critically and massively they can affect one's psychology and one's sense of the environment.

"Buddhism rarely asks why its institutions make it easier for men to pursue the spiritual disciplines leading to egolessness. It has not dealt with the contradiction that sometimes masters advanced in their development went along with conventional stereotypes, fears, hostilities and restrictions concerning women. To be able to see at last these perversions of sexual identity as a dimension of ego, to see them as another trick of grasping and territoriality standing in the way of egolessness, would be an auspicious result of the meeting between feminism and Buddhism."

One of the major stumbling blocks for women who want to practice Buddhism has been childbirth. In an essay entitled "Parentbirth," Theresa Vast explores her experience of becoming a mother: "Even after months of anticipation, her arrival was like something out of a magic show. As I watched her emerge from my body, complete and separate, I had the strong sense of her coming into being from nothingness. And just as she came forth from nowhere, simultaneously I emerged from nowhere as a parent.

"During the past few months I have been asked countless times, 'How do you like being a mother?' Each time I have been stuck for an answer, because, though I am definitely 'mothering,' I had not identified myself with the label 'mother.' There is just nursing, changing this diaper, playing this game, laughing together. 'Being a mother' describes the context of my

activity, but does not touch the content of my experience. I am simply being myself with this child.

"Admittedly, it has been difficult to maintain my daily sitting practice since Angela's birth....but I appreciate all the more those moments of zazen that are available to me.... [I]n practice and in parenthood I find that I simply become more of who I already am. From a distance, being a parent seemed different from being myself. But with parentbirth, the experience was completely ordinary—was there ever a time without this child? Was I ever not a parent?"

Gathering Spirit

A Gathering of Spirit is a summary of three conferences held on "Women Teaching American Buddhism" from 1983 to 1985, at the Providence Zen Center. In 1983 a one-day conference was led by five first-generation American women Buddhists. The 1984 weekend conference wove together periods of practice (meditation, chanting, and movement), with talks, workshops, small group meetings, and panel discussions. In 1985, instead of the conference being dominated by planners in a hierarchical format, there was a "gathering" which evolved from the interplay between the teachers and the other participants.

Although the chapters are brief, the issues raised are met with a determined spirit of exploration and risk-taking. Some of the topics are: How do we as women practice in traditions that have largely been patriarchal? How do we with careers, homes, and families, develop a spiritual practice? How do we as students take care of our longing for empowerment, often projecting this desire onto our teachers? How do we, living in a time when we are destroying our life support system, engage in life? This book provides a survey of these issues that we, both as women and men, are confronting as we explore our Buddhist practice in contemporary America. These women have presented their experiences as their answers, and have helped clear the way for the rest of us to look within ourselves and find our own answers, and to continue the questioning.

Jacqueline Schwartz Mandell, a long time Zen and Theravadin student, spoke about the realization she had that as a teacher of Buddhism she was representing a patriarchal form which held negative images about women. "It was hard for me to come to terms with this because of what had been given to me by my teachers. They had given me guidance in a most open and generous way. I received the training openly along with my authorization to continue the delivery of these teachings. So my own step forward which included my resignation from the Theravada tradition, came out of a 'morality of responsibility.' I could no longer stand before women and say that I represent a tradition which does not recognize a woman as an equal being."

Gesshin Prabhava Dharma, Roshi, Director of several Zen monasteries in America, brought out the similarity between what we as women are confronted with in Buddhism today, and what the Buddha dealt with during his time: "The Buddha was faced with a religious and social structure that didn't sound right, didn't feel right to him. Also he had no role models.

Therefore he went and sat alone under a tree. He even left the religious community he had joined and went out by himself.... What is tradition? How do we get tradition? By breaking traditions, right? Why do we have Rinzi Zen? Because Rinzi was different from Unmon and Joshu and other masters.... Therefore we must look at ourselves and see what is most appropriate for us."

Joanna Macy, internationally known Buddhist scholar and a leader of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, spoke on the awareness that each of us has of the suffering of our fellow beings and of what is happening to our planet: "The currents of information that encircle our globe bring us dire warning signals.... All this is relevant to our encounter with the Dharma, and we want to take this into account. We don't want our practice to be an escape, but still as we prepare to sit, we sometimes hear an inner voice saying, 'Maybe this is a luxury, I should be out and doing.' So let's look at what the practice means for our being alive, now.

"Our culture will do almost anything to not experience the grief, anger, fear and sorrow that is right there below the surface of business-as-usual. The buying sprees and hedonism, the rise in suicide rates and drug abuse, the blaming, cultism, fundamentalism, name-calling, and hate-filled diatribes against the victims of your choice—blacks, Jews, homosexuals, women, you name it—all of that stems from not wanting to look at the hurt that's inside. Intrinsic to that denial is a semi-conscious fear that we might break or shatter if we allow ourselves to experience that pain.... I suggest to you who have chosen to be women in this incarnation and have been fortunate enough to encounter the Dharma, that we have a particularly rewarding mission. We can bring to our time—to our practice and our world—the heightened sense of interrelatedness. By our conditioning as well as our biology, we tune to relationships, can intuitively grasp the relational nature of the universe, the net of Indra.

"The courage of a Mohandas K. Gandhi or a Martin Luther King or a Dorothy Day didn't die with them. We live in a holographic universe, or as imaged by Buddhists, the jeweled net of Indra. No acts are lost. We can train ourselves to draw on the resources that are already there. We didn't come into this universe alone, we have all these brothers and sisters and we can take their gumption, ingenuity, faithfulness, endurance, and let it flow into and through us. Whew, what a relief! We don't need to dredge up from ourselves all the courage and love that is needed. The very deprivation and exhaustion that we may feel can be the opportunity to open to our interexistence with others."

These three books represent important steps in the continual and unending development of Buddhism in the West—a Buddhism that is alive, fluid, and responsive to our cultural needs. As Ellen Sidor points out in her introduction to *A Gathering of Spirit*, "Never before in the history of Buddhism, and probably not since the long ago days at the height of Goddess worship, have women played so prominent a role in directing their own spiritual lives."

Buddhism, World Peace, & Nuclear War

By Sangharakshita

Windhorse Publications (Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL England), 25 pg pamphlet, £1.50

Reviewed by Samuel P. Rose

Sangharakshita uses the story of the Buddha at Rohini as both the starting point and theme of his talk. Five years after his enlightenment, Buddha paid a visit to his home town (in present day Nepal). There he found two clans, both relatives, on the brink of war over the river Rohini that formed the boundary between the two villages. Both peoples used the river to irrigate their fields, but in that year there was not enough water for both clans. A very bitter dispute arose over the use of the water, leading to each clan to field an army. It was on the morning of the impending battle that the Buddha came to the place where the two armies were poised.

"He asked, 'How much is water worth?' 'Very little, Reverend Sir.' 'How much are warriors worth?' 'Warriors are beyond price, Reverend Sir.' Then said the Buddha, 'It is not fitting that because of a little water you should destroy warriors who are beyond price,' and they were silent."

From the Rohini incident, Sangharakshita reflects on the many ties between Buddhist practice and understanding, and the threat facing the world today. He says: "In bringing pressure to bear on governments and on our fellow world citizens we should not, of course, forget to bring pressure to bear on our own selves. . . . It is one of the fundamental postulates of Buddhism that the individual is responsible for his own mental and emotional states. This means that he can change those states—provided that he really wants to do so and provided that he knows the right ways to go about it. . . . [Consider the practice of] the Metta Bhavana, or 'development of (universal) friendliness,' a traditional Buddhist method of developing an increasingly positive attitude toward all other living beings including those persons with whom ordinarily we do not get on very well . . . Those of us who are Buddhists should, perhaps, give serious consideration to the possibility of our teaching the *Metta Bhavana* on a nationwide scale."

In another section Sangharakshita reflects on the opportunities presented by the shrinking of the world due to technological advance. There are possibilities for peace and understanding as well as for war and destruction. Both sets of possibilities are equally unparalleled in the history of the world. He ends by quoting from the Dhammapada,

"Victory begets hatred, [for] the defeated experiences suffering. The tranquil one experiences happiness, giving up [both] victory and defeat."

"If we can chant these verses from the very depths of our hearts, then we shall be living in accordance with the teachings of Buddhism, and working together for what we most ardently desire: the achievement of world peace and the avoidance of nuclear war."

Four Conferences

On the Way to the New Buddhism: A Celebration of Women in Buddhist Practice By Sandy Boucher

High in the Berkeley hills, above the city stretching out to the blue expanse of bay, a "Celebration of Women in Buddhist Practice" was held this spring. This first-of-its-kind on the West Coast drew women from the three major forms of Buddhism, and some unaffiliated women, crossing the boundaries between Vipassana, Zen, and Tibetan Buddhism to bring together women on a spiritual quest, in a format new to them.

Women who do a Buddhist practice have mostly found themselves in hierarchical situations, with a teacher (usually male) leading the proceedings. And all of our experience with conferences (even New Age gatherings) has included a run-down of speakers and panels and experts' wisdom being provided for us. But the 165 women who arrived at the stately chapel of the Pacific Lutheran Seminary to share our experience of Buddhist practice found a different sort of conference prepared for us. In this gathering we would listen to *each other* in a structure designed to evoke our own wisdom.

Thus began a uniquely satisfying and challenging experience. We meditated in the chapel, we heard a few of the organizers tell very briefly of their own spiritual journeys. And then we went to our "Home Groups" where ten chairs in a circle awaited us. Here we each shared our own experience of the search for that authentic self as the object of spiritual practice. Women listened intently to each other, and learned, and sometimes wept, as they heard experiences similar to their own. As the weekend progressed, we returned to our home groups, and the communication deepened as we talked about our experience of the conference itself: what we had been encountering in ourselves and learning from it.

The "Issue-Oriented Groups" at the conference covered many topics crucial to women practicing Buddhism today. The issues of Authority and Power, which had been broken down into the aspects of "Teacher-Student Relationship," "Acknowledging Inner Authority," and "Expressions of Feminine Power," drew large groups of women. Intimate Relationships/Sexuality, Forms of Practice, Right Livelihood, Our Relationship to the Natural World, Addictive Behavior, Social Service and Political Activism, Money, Movement and Sounding, and other topics were discussed in groups. Here again, each woman was given her voice and listened to attentively, the facilitator operating only to begin the discussion and offer some slight direction when needed. As one woman remarked, "Usually in a group discussion, one person makes a statement, the next person disagrees, and then they spend the rest of the hour arguing, while no one else gets to talk. But in these groups each person spoke and was listened to, *all* the viewpoints got expressed.



What a richness it was." It is an indication of the depth of meditation practice these women have engaged in, that this level of acceptance was the norm at the conference.

Mothers met to discuss the integration of Buddhist practice with family life and children. Therapists investigated the application of spiritual insight to their work with clients. Lesbians gathered together to share their particular life experience as it relates to their spiritual practice. And older women or "crones" met to talk about what it feels like to be old in this culture, and how they experience their own spiritual journeys. These latter two groups made plans to continue to meet.

In the group of Social Service and Political Activism, the participants examined the issues involved in our attempts to manifest our spiritual values and insight in the world. One, who works with the Daily Bread Project which gathers food from businesses and distributes it to the needy, characterized her project as a means by which people can exercise compassion, promote cross-class communication and a changing consciousness. A woman who assists at births and trains women to help each other give birth, spoke of the evolution of successful projects, which begin as grass-roots, fully shared endeavors, but which often become institutionalized and professionalized as they develop, and lose their initial clear motivation. Another woman who had been lobbying and protesting policies repressive to women and lesbians echoed this concern, asking how not to be attached to a group's initial makeup and intent, how to let it evolve. Two artists talked of their struggle to make progressive art and to find support for that; in one case, to take from the system itself what is needed to change it. A lawyer spoke of her growing conviction that her work was not "right livelihood," and the members of the group encouraged her to investigate other uses of the law. No answers were arrived at in this group, but important questions were raised and investigated. Perhaps the answer lay in our sense of shared commit-

ment to the living-out of our spiritual practice in the crucible of social and political action.

A similar process occurred in the other groups, where each woman presented her concerns, and where the cumulative experience and insight of the group emerged, often surprising the participants with the vitality and incisiveness of their expression.

Among the participants were a number of meditation teachers with students of their own. These women took part in the conference as equal participants with the other women, and if they forgot themselves in any particular group and attempted to take control, the other group members made it clear to them that this was not appropriate. I was in a home group with one of these teachers, who on the second day spoke with great appreciation and emotion of how she saw the Buddhist teachings manifested by all of us there at the conference, and how grateful she was to have had this experience.

My own experience was that anything a speaker or teacher might have said to us in a conventional top-down situation was said by one of the participants as the discussion moved from topic to topic and deepened. It was a demonstration of the essential capacity and wisdom of each one of us, if only we are allowed to reach to that and express it. Respect was given to everyone, as each person was asked to create the conference on the spot for herself and others.

There were hilarious times too. On Sunday noon everyone gathered outside for a "Ladies Lunch and Buddhist Fashion Show." Zen priest robes, Vipassana blankets, Tibetan Buddhist knee pads for prostrations: all these were paraded up and down the long lawn as participants laughed heartily at ourselves. And then a Zen woman sang Buddhist lyrics to country Western tunes as she strummed her guitar.

The conference was organized by twelve women: some Zen women, some Vipassana, several Tibetan Buddhist practitioners, and one "unaffiliated" Buddhist meditator. Because it was held not in a particular Buddhist center but in a neutral space, it could accommodate fully the contribution of the three major forms of Buddhism practiced in the Bay Area. It was organized with the understanding that women practicing Buddhism want and need to talk with each other, to share their experience of spiritual practice, of relationship with their groups and teachers. It drew upon the consciousness developed in the women's movement in the last 17 or 18 years, the ways of women being together, working together, and trusting each other, that were developed in that movement.

There was a strength in the conference, and a vision. The strength of deep practice and of the allowing of each woman's experience, a vision of a new Buddhism which will be fully inclusive of women's realities and in which women will assume institutional and spiritual leadership.

Sandy Boucher is a BPF member who lives in the Bay Area. She is the author of the forthcoming Turning the Wheel: American Women Creating the New Buddhism, due out in March 1988 from Harper & Row. This article is reprinted with permission from Bay Area Women's News, July/August 1987.

The Dream Is The Truth *An International Conference on Buddhist Nuns* *By Canyon Sam*

Bodh Gaya, holy city of Lord Buddha's enlightenment, was the site in February of the International Conference on Buddhist Nuns. Drawing 125 Buddhist nuns and lay people from 24 countries, the conference was an historical and exciting event—the first time in history that Buddhist nuns of different traditions met together. One Tibetan nun remarked that normally at her nunnery in India, they do not even meet with the monastery "down the road," let alone with nuns from all over the world—Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, Nepal, Hong Kong, and Tibet, U.S., Australia, Poland, South Africa, and Switzerland.

The purpose of the conference was to bring together Buddhist nuns and their friends (the gathering was intentionally entitled *A Conference On Buddhist Nuns* rather than *Of Buddhist Nuns*)—Dharma practitioners, feminists, and educators—to meet each other and begin to network on a global basis around shared conditions and aspirations of female Sangha members.

The opening day was graced with the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as keynote speaker, and drew about 750 people. His Holiness addressed the role women have played historically both in the religion and the culture, and cited various highly-realized nuns and laywomen who have been noted mystics, teachers, and healers. He pointed out that in the practice of loving kindness, the model used is "repaying the kindness of the mother." The patience, generosity, and love given a child by its mother, as the highest form of loving kindness between people, is used as an ideal.

After this first almost unbearably nervous, but exciting day the conference coasted into a daily format of morning and afternoon panel discussions on a range of topics of central importance to Buddhist nuns. On the first day, the panels introduced the various traditions, giving some of the background and current conditions of Tibetan, Korean, Thai, Taiwanese, and other nuns. During the following days subjects of discussion included Education, Livelihood, Spiritual Development, Working in the Community, and the Establishment of a Bhikshuni Lineage.

In stark contrast to the West, in some Third World countries cultural attitudes towards women are still quite constricted. Women rarely receive education, religious training in the nunneries, or due respect and support from the lay community. As one middle-aged male neuro-researcher from California said, when asked his interest in attending the conference, that it is vital that women have equal access to the Dharma, and that non-discrimination is essential to the successful spread of the Dharma to the West.

On the issue of livelihood, how nuns can support themselves was a gnawing question. Some nuns are associated with Dharma centers and are able to live there. One ani received parental support. But most nuns have no central monastic base, because there are not enough established nunneries for them to

live. Many live on their own, from small towns in the Arkansas Ozarks to remote mountain villages in Nepal. Some Western nuns seem to fare better because they worked as lay people before ordination and have these skills and experience to fall back on. Also, visa problems force many Western nuns in the Tibetan tradition to travel between India and Nepal every few months.

A nun's situation depends in part on whether the society she lives in is supportive and conducive to Buddha Dharma. Whether it is a Buddhist culture, such as Japan, or a non-Buddhist one such as the Judeo-Christian U.S. or Hindu India helps determine whether there are centers of established Sangha and assistance from the general society. Because of the diversity of places the Dharma has spread—there are Buddhist nuns in West Germany, Australia, and North America, for instance—and these changing times, provision from the lay community for a nun's basic needs is often not forthcoming, as it was in former times when a Buddhist nun was nurtured by a flourishing Buddhist culture. This puts women who entered the Sangha out of pure devotion to the study and practice of the Dharma, renouncing many worldly concerns and attachments, in a difficult position of lacking the means to support themselves. Thus the majority of nuns, regardless of which tradition they belong to, face a constant struggle both in finding a Dharma base in which to live and practice, and in staying afloat financially. The first and only nunnery for Western nuns in the Tibetan tradition, Dorje Palmo in Lavaur, France, just 3 years old, is already in critical danger of having to close because of financial circumstances.

Education was an issue of special relevance to Tibetan nuns, since it has never been a tradition in Tibetan Buddhism for nuns to receive an education. In a few special cases a woman might have received private tutoring if she was a high incarnation or from a wealthy or well-connected family, but education on a standard, formal basis was not routinely offered nuns (as it was to monks). Very recently, a major precedent has been set at Geden Choeling nunnery in Dharamsala, India, where logic and philosophy classes, fundamental for Buddhist training, have begun. It became clear at the conference that basic education for Tibetan nuns was imperative. The possibility of a standard curriculum and how to go about developing and implementing such a program are areas in need of attention.

In general, the nuns community is in a time of great transformation. Out of the sheer necessities of living in present day society, codes that were laid down 2,500 years ago may need be updated. Buddhist nuns must walk a fine line between upholding tradition and preserving the original intention of their vows of conduct, and on a practical level developing themselves as Dharma practitioners. For instance, rules about not working outside the nunnery, and not handling money are impractical if your nunnery has no other sources of income. In former times, and in strong Buddhist cultures—pre-1959 Tibet for instance—the lay society completely supported the religious community and in return could look to the monasteries and nunneries to faithfully uphold the spiritual tradition. The Tibetan communi-



"Faces of Tibet," Courtesy of Snow Lion Cards

ties that exist in exile are scattered in pockets over the huge nation of India and are generally poor themselves, as all are refugees struggling in a new country.

Because their vows prohibit them from working outside, the nuns' only source of income is performing puja ceremonies, for which they receive contributions. In a small nunnery, such as the one in Sarnath described to me by a resident there, this severely cuts into their educations—something they have fought hard for and are just now beginning to receive. In order to perform the puja, which may require hundreds of thousands of mantras, the nuns may be forced to discontinue classes for seven or eight weeks, interrupting the continuity of their studies. In monasteries, on the other hand, monks tapped for scholastic potential are left to pursue their educations, and other monks perform puja as the occasion arises.

In addition, religious members are not outside prevailing cultural attitudes towards women, and in some traditions women are not included in the reverence and respect paid to the sangha. Financial sponsorship and fund raising efforts in support of monasteries may not necessarily include the nunneries. So in the worst situations, nuns operate without educations, livelihood skills, or support from the community. Theirs is truly a life of humility and devotion.

Most Tibetan nunneries in India and Nepal are overcrowded, and the situation will not be alleviated until more can be built. In almost all of them, large numbers of members have to live outside the nunnery base, and most communities have long waiting lists of women waiting to join.

One of the unique opportunities of this conference was of course, that nuns from different traditions and various countries were able to meet each other, and learn of each others' lives. Especially for Tibetan nuns, who are living in austere conditions in India, the conference was a consciousness-raising experience. This was one of the most gratifying and exhilarating aspects of this experience. For the first time, they met dozens of nuns who had bhikshuni ordination, because in their

own tradition this lineage has never existed. They saw women who worked in the community—sometimes in the previous occupation that they held before becoming a nun. For instance, there was an American in the Taiwan tradition who worked as a pharmacist, and an Australian nun in the Tibetan tradition who worked as a massage therapist. For many Tibetan nuns the concept of working “outside” was quite radical. They met women who not only had educations—nuns from developed nations usually had received public educations prior to their becoming nuns as adults—but they met women who aspired to attain even higher religious educations, and even geshe degrees!

After each panel, the conference participants engaged in small group discussions for half an hour or so and then a representative from each group reported back to the conference at large. The attention of the Tibetan nuns—more than 30 attended—was always rapt and intent during the panel presentations. Their discussion groups afterwards were lively and deeply engrossed; the burgundy-robed nuns focused keenly on each subject with enthusiastic interest. As one English-speaking Tibetan nun, who served as translator for the conference, said to me the morning of the fifth day, the Tibetan nuns were having a “mind-blowing” experience. By meeting Buddhist nuns from other walks of life, and other cultures and societies, they were exposed to, for the first time, the range of possibilities that existed for themselves. After the presentation on the establishment of a bhikshuni lineage, they expressed an interest in all becoming bhikshunis. After the education workshop, they declared that they thought all Tibetan nuns should have the opportunity of an education. After the work-in-the-community panel, their small group representative shared that the Tibetan nuns were all eager to work in service to the community: as teachers, health care providers, etc.

As for us Westerners, it was the first time we learned of the condition of Tibetan Buddhist nuns, as this conference was the first place where information about their lives became widely known. Many Westerners expressed a desire to help the Tibetan nuns, and we continually urged those of them we knew to reach out to each other and make use of this unique opportunity to organize amongst themselves, not only so they could help each other, but also in order to set up a situation that would allow other people to help them. Initially they were so shy that they found it incredibly difficult to approach a nun from another nunnery, even if they knew the woman’s name and what center she was from. It was therefore tremendously pleasing to see that despite their initial reticence, as the conference rolled on day by day, and panel by panel, they came together naturally around these issues. They “found” each other, and by the fourth day were forming a central organization consisting of a representative from each nunnery to begin to work together on common concerns. For me a new sapling of a Buddhist, but a long-time feminist, to see their joy at discovering each other, and at seeing the horizons of their entire lives and futures open up before their eyes in a matter of days was an indescribably moving experience. This aspect of the conference made this grassroots effort in a dusty, holy town in central India one of the most rewarding conferences I’d attended in 13 years involvement in

the womens’ movement in the West. I felt privileged to have been part of it.

Another outcome of the conference was the formation of an international Buddhist womens’ organization, dubbed Sakyadhita, (“Daughters of Buddha”). This ambitious association has many goals, all of which are to cultivate and promote women’s participation in the Dharma. Among their aims: to encourage and educate women as teachers of Buddhadharma; to create an international network of communications among Buddhist women, lay and ordained; and to provide guidance and assistance for Buddhist nuns and aspiring nuns. “Sakyadhita, the International Association of Buddhist Women,” welcomes new members regardless of creed, nationality, or gender. Their address is 928 S. New Hampshire Avenue, Los Angeles 90006.

This conference was organized by Karma Lekshe Tsomo, an American from southern California, and a bhikshuni in the Tibetan tradition studying at the Buddhist School of Dialectics in Dharamsala. Her co-organizers were Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, professor at Thammasat University in Bangkok, publisher of the Newsletter of International Buddhist Womens’ Activities, and daughter of a Bhikshuni; and Sister Ayya Khema, a German nun in the Theravada tradition, founder and resident teacher of Parappuduwa Nuns Island in Sri Lanka. With limited resources, the organizers had a gigantic job on their hands when they took on creating this conference. As it gathered energy, gestures of good will, words of encouragement, and donations of services, supplies, and money flowed in, contributing to the effort. Housing, meals, programming, publicity, documentation, site management, and more needed to be coordinated by people who had no previous experience at managing these tasks. To the great credit of the three women, and with the help of dozens of seen and unseen assistants, their early vision, and long efforts proved fruitful and beneficial beyond anyone’s expectation.

How We Can Help

The Tibetan Buddhist Nuns Project was started and is being coordinated by Ani Karma Lekshe Tsomo. For many centuries Tibetan nuns’ monastic residences, situated throughout the country, were significant in the religious fabric of Tibetan society. Since the Chinese invasion in 1959, almost all have been destroyed. New communities in exile are being established throughout India and Nepal, and there are waiting lists of applicants. We can help by contributing towards their subsistence, education, health and sanitation. For more information or to make a tax-deductible contribution, contact The Tibet Fund, 107 E. 31st St., New York, NY 10016. Specify Tibetan Nuns Project.

Canyon Sam is an Asian American writer from San Francisco who has been involved in the womens’ community there for ten years. While traveling in Asia, and discovering Buddhism, she had the opportunity to help with the Nuns Conference as a writer, speech coach, and sound technician.

World Buddhism in North America

by Arnold Kotler

In July, I was most fortunate to attend the week-long Conference on World Buddhism in North America, hosted by the Zen Lotus Society in Ann Arbor. An ambitious undertaking, the days began at 7:30 a.m. and continued through to dinner, with dozens and dozens of papers and very lively discussions.

I believe every ethnic Buddhist tradition was represented. Bishop Seigen Yamaoka, the Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, reported in great detail about the history of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in North America, a history which goes back to the late 19th century, making Jodo Shin the largest and most established Buddhist group in this country. Dr. Maunt Tin-Wa and Ven. U Silananda spoke about Burmese Buddhism in the U.S., Ven. Maha Ghosananda and Sister Sharon Bernstein spoke about Cambodian Buddhism here, Ven. Shih I-Han about Chinese Buddhism, Ven. Samu Sunim, the dynamic and thoughtful host of the conference, about Korean Buddhism, Ven. Walpola Piyananda about Sri Lankan Buddhism, Ven. Vivekananda Nagasiri about Thai Buddhism, Donald Lopez and Karl Springer about Tibetan Buddhism (unfortunately of all the ethnic traditions, only Tibetan-born Buddhists were unable to attend), and Vens. Thich Giac Duc and Thich Quang-Chon about Vietnamese Buddhism in North America. In addition, Professors Luis Gomez, Ann Klein, Donald Lopez, Joanna Macy, Carl Bielefeldt, Alan Sponberg, Marie Lyman, George Bond, Rina Sircar, Karen Gray, Karl Davies, and Richard Hayes presented papers and participated in panel discussions on such topics as The Role of Tradition, Robes, Lay Buddhism and Monasticism, Sectarianism, Women, and Ecology. Robert Aitken, Roshi, Rev. Karuna Dharma, Ananda Dalenberg, Nagabodhi, Manjuvajra, Koshin Ogui, Mary Farkas, and many others presented papers and prompted discussions on more topics yet. I daresay I had never received so much valuable information in one place in one week.

To try to sum up a few themes and recurring topics: Ethnic Buddhists expressed many common concerns, including surviving in a new society, and finding the balance between traditional ways and assimilation, particularly with the children. Correct use of language came up again and again. Ven. Havanpola Ratanasara, one of the Chairpersons, on several occasions pointed out that terms such as monk, layperson, and Sangha, have specific scriptural definitions, and there is no need to debate their meaning. Others, including Aitken Roshi and Ananda Dalenberg did experiment and drift from the strict definitions, and some difficulties arose. What one panelist called the "H" word, hinayana, was used several times, and also caused problems. Another common foundation was that social action is absolutely a part of Buddhism. It was never questioned, and many examples of how we might work in this way were offered. I believe I speak for the other participants and the conference organizers in hoping that the momentum begun here will continue and grow during the coming years.

Arnold Kotler is editor of the BPF Newsletter.

On the Buddhist-Christian Dialogue

by Sonda Beal

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship demonstrates that Buddhists, in spite of diverse doctrines and practices, share a common core of values that makes it possible to work together. The Buddhist-Christian Dialogue, held in Berkeley August 10-14, was an attempt to see whether such a common core of values might exist not only within major religious groups, but also between them.

The conference consisted of morning and evening lectures, with the rest of each day designated for dialogue and paper sessions on a variety of topics. The majority of those presenting papers seemed to be academics, and the majority of both presenters and audience seemed to be Buddhist. In fact, one Japanese Buddhist commented that for him the significance of the conference was not so much Buddhists talking with Christians, but Buddhists from all over the world having a chance to talk with each other.

I experienced this conference as another example of ideologically differing groups and individuals trying to reach reconciliation. USSR-US reconciliation, husband-wife reconciliation, etc. all have a common motivation: to understand why others do not see the world as we do. For if others see the world differently, we have to doubt the absolute validity of our own world view, and this causes us pain. While some people project this pain onto the outside world in physical and verbal battles, those of us in the peace movement consider ourselves conscious enough to work for reconciliation and understanding in a more enlightened way.

I doubt it. I think what is really going on is that we can't bear to see our pain, even when it is projected, so rather than battle things out as some others might, we try to dialogue away our pain. But dialogue cannot provide the ultimate solution, because the true source of the pain is the inability to see the relative nature of our own thought—of *all* thought. Some of the participants in the conference repeatedly suggested that religious dialogue was "risky" because people might lose their faith if they discover that their own doctrine is only relative—that there are other "equally true" religions. Good—let us lose our faith! The key, it seems to me, is to experience directly—without the intermediary of ideas or doctrines—the perfection of our own being, just as it is, including our own tradition, practices, blindnesses, prejudices—everything. At that moment, we can see the perfection of the other; then there is no longer the need to resolve differences on an intellectual level, because we have experienced the oneness we were seeking.

The question of whether it is possible to reconcile different religions is the same as the question of whether it is possible to reconcile the different attitudes of men and women, or any differences that are the result of conditioning. The content of the differences is less important than being with the "other" in the present moment. Then a true dialogue is possible.

Sonda Beal is an English instructor at a San Francisco Bay Area community college, and a member of BPF.

Minutes of BPF Board Meeting

May 27-28, 1987, at Insight Meditation Society, Barre, Mass.
Attended by: Jamie Baraz, Andy Cooper, Therese Fitzgerald,
Joe Gorin, Ruth Klein, Barbara Meier

Office Director's Report: Membership is above 1,000. Office space in Therese's home is cramped and there is a definite need for the BPF to have its own office and computer. We will explore the possibility of sharing office space with other groups. (Update: In September, BPF found a small office at 1918 Bonita Street in Berkeley. If anyone has an extra file cabinet, desk, or Macintosh, please contact Therese Fitzgerald, 415/525-0101.)

Treasurer's Report: In 1986 we took in \$6600 in members' dues. So far in 1987 it's \$4200. Other contributions in 1986 were \$5000. In 1987 they are \$700 to date. In 1986 our projected income was \$13,500 and our actual income was \$13,355. Our projected expenses were \$10,250 and actual expenses were \$15,000. In 1987 our projected income is \$18,500. Actual income to date is \$10,700. Projected expenses are \$13,500.

Fund Raising Report: Joe and Barbara have sent brochures to a number of Buddhist centers. We will mail a general letter to all Buddhist centers in No. America to encourage membership.

Chapters: Barbara got only one response from chapters on her request for feedback on the packet she has put together. She has met with several people from L.A. and there is a possibility of one or two chapters emerging there. There is also interest in Marin and in Boise. Barbara suggests that the office director do most of the chapter liaison work. New chapters are: Sonoma, San Francisco and South Africa. Pending are: Seattle, Madison, Los Angeles, Montreal, Minneapolis, and Providence.

Reorganization: This was the principal issue dealt with in the board meeting. Much of the direction of the discussion was based on a consultation that Paul Rosenblum provided to Andy, Jamie, and Arnie Kotler. Paul made four basic suggestions: 1) That we consider goals and possible goals of the BPF, 2) That we develop specific objectives, 3) That we develop strategies to accomplish our objectives, 4) That we develop a plan for implementing the strategy, including a time line. Paul said that he could be helpful around numbers 3 and 4. To make a very long story short, we decided that it was necessary to change the role and function of the board. Presently the board is very involved in the day-to-day functioning of BPF and board members are reporting that this is becoming excessively burdensome as the organization grows. By increasing Therese's workload from 10 hours per week to 20, this would relieve the board sig-

nificantly. The role of the board would be supervisory, policy-setting, and visioning. About four regional coordinators, one from each part of the country would be selected to handle some tasks, such as chapter work. Therese felt that this would be a good situation, but that it would become necessary for her to have an office and a computer for it to work properly. Such a setup requires a more stable financial base than we presently have. One of Therese's jobs would be doing a more vigorous outreach to various Sanghas, in order to make BPF more widely known. Therese's new title will be "Executive Director." There was a sense that she could start doing 15 hours per week in the summer and then increase to 20 hours in the fall.

Board Membership: Ruth's term is up in December. Joe will be in Guatemala. This means that we will need two new board members. Numerous potential nominees were suggested.

Proposed conference: Barbara is considering organizing a conference for June 1988, inspired by a conversation she had with Thich Nhat Hanh. The conference would address many issues common to North American Buddhists, and it is hoped that people from many different communities could attend. Among the issues to consider are what works and what has not worked in the importation of Asian Buddhism here. Also, how to adapt Buddhism to peace and justice work, and such "Western" issues as: alcoholism, child abuse and how Buddhism can join forces with many of the healing forces already present in the West, such as feminism, Native American spirituality, psychotherapy, and the 12-Step program.

Thich Nhat Hanh's Trip: The trip has been a success in many ways. Retreatants seemed happy, we covered all our costs and were able to offer Thây an honorarium. We look forward to Thây and Sister Phuong's next visit to the U.S. in 1989.

Endorsement Policy: Any two board members can agree to endorse an activity or group. If a board member knows an entity seeking endorsement and would like to speak on their behalf, unless there is opposition, this shall be considered sufficient for endorsing. If there is some question, it should be brought before the full board.

We agreed to endorse A Walk for All Life, and the People's Peace Treaty. We did not endorse, for lack of information, the Congress of Americans for Peace and Justice.

International Advisory Board: We are happy to welcome Rev. Mamoru Kato, the head Monk of the Nipponzan Myohoji Peace Pagoda in Leverett, Massachusetts, to the IAB.

In the Sangha,
Joe Gorin, Secretary

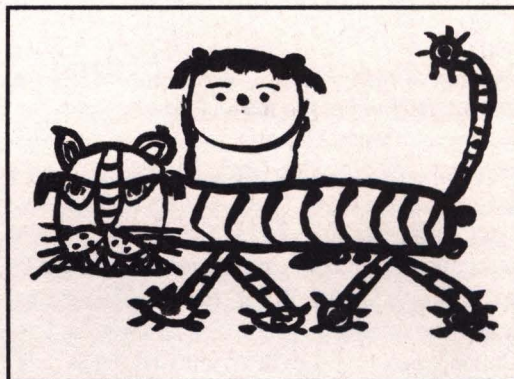
President's Column

"How can I respond with compassion to a minister in my neighborhood recently accused of sexually abusing several very young children?" The question is asked, is offered as a challenge, during a recent retreat. I hear anger and confusion: is it possible, is it even desirable, to have compassion?

Repeating the question to a friend recently, she quickly responded, "Of course one can have compassion for the minister! Isn't that exactly the situation Thich Nhat Hanh addresses in his poem, 'Please Call Me By My True Names'?" She refers to the line, "I am a 12 year old girl, refugee on a small boat, who throws herself into the ocean after being raped by a sea pirate, and I am the pirate, my heart not yet capable of seeing and loving." Yes, the situation is the same. Still, it's one thing for the mind to understand compassion for the abuser and quite another for the heart to understand, for compassion to be truly experienced and expressed in action. Reading the poem, I've been moved to tears. Reading the newspaper, I've been moved to anger, fear. When I feel verbally assaulted, I'm likely to respond habitually, defensively. Since mid-May the assaults by a suspected three serial rapist in my New York neighborhood have gotten a lot of media attention, and it has taken over three months for me to even entertain the *thought* of compassion. And as for the next step... I can fly the distance from New York to California much faster than compassion travels from thought to response.

A participant in a class on Sensory Awareness asks a different question, "How can I live my life without division?" Is it possible to maintain sensory awareness as I write? Stop for a moment and allow awareness of breathing. I've been writing of sexual abuse and, cognizant of the statistics, suspect this issue touches many, perhaps all of us, in a deeply personal way. I don't recall being abused as a child. Breathing. Awareness of tightness of shoulders. Well... maybe not direct physical abuse, but there was teasing about sex, and I recall feeling uncomfortable and embarrassed. Inhale and exhale. No physical abuse. Perhaps not touching isn't quite the same as no physical abuse. The teasing was verbal, the sensations of embarrassment and tension were experienced physically. Aware now of tightly clenched jaws. My closest friend was abused by her music teacher. We were 10 years old. I had the same teacher.

How to live without division, how to respond with compassion. How to heal inner wounds, that our own pain no longer needs to be projected in hurtful ways onto the world around us. For myself, a big step has come from engaging in deep emotional work and witnessing other people do the same. Participating in several workshops offered by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, I was one of many people touching, often for the first time, the deep hurts which fuel anger, rage, and violence. Repeatedly the scenario is played out: the abused child becomes the abusing adult. The war vet who killed so many writhes in pain, sobs, as memories of his own childhood abuse unfold. The woman who physically abused her children trembles with rage recalling the daily beatings, the incestuous assaults, of her own young life.



Riding the Tiger, by Jung Kwang
Courtesy of Shaman Drum Bookstore, Ann Arbor

For myself, there are memories stored in my bones of being screamed at when a glass broke, when a two inch pencil stub was found thrown in the trash. When I now rage at myself for not doing enough, for not being enough, I am only repeating the pattern: the abused abuses. That pain from which we alienate ourselves fuels our violence, whether it is at one end of the continuum in self-judgment, or at the other end, in direct physical violence. Am I breathing?

"How can I respond with compassion to a minister in my neighborhood recently accused of sexually abusing several very young children?" It takes something other than mental understanding; it demands that we look and feel within and heal our own divisions, our own wounds. As we learn to forgive ourselves, perhaps we can learn to respond with an open heart rather than a judging mind. As we develop compassion for ourselves, perhaps there is the spark of a chance that we might experience compassion for others.

To let go of its unconscious grip, the cycle of violence needs to be brought to awareness, to be witnessed. The witness may be self-awareness, experienced in our sitting, or it may be by another, one whose ability to listen and not judge enables us to do the same. In recent months Barbara Meier and I (as well as many others, both men and women) have found ourselves amazed at how many Sangha members are exploring the theme of how our own childhood pain gets played out in destructive ways, and sharing with each other our different paths to wholeness. We use varied tools to make that "longest journey" from head to heart: meditation, interviews, psychotherapy, the 12-Step Program (such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Overeaters Anonymous uses), Sensory Awareness, Re-evaluation Counseling, and relationships, to name a few. As we gather materials for a future issue of this *Newsletter* which will focus on this topic, we invite you to share your own explorations with us.

—Ruth Klein

Second Annual BPF Members Meeting By Therese Fitzgerald

On the morning of May 2, 1987, BPF members from across North America gathered in the unfinished temple of the Peace Pagoda in Leverett, Massachusetts, to hold our second annual national members meeting. Joe Gorin, Board secretary and a local peace activist, facilitated (in his characteristically enthusiastic and straightforward manner) while members made presentations about various projects underway. Paula Green described the 32-day "Peace Walk" from the Peace Pagoda via Plymouth and Providence to the Trident submarine base in Groton, Connecticut. Fran Levin announced the FOR's "Poor People's Campaign." Therese Fitzgerald outlined the "Sponsoring Hungry Families in Vietnam" project based in California. Barbara Meier gave a preview of the upcoming conference on the West Coast which will concentrate on the formation of American Buddhism, exploring issues for women, family issues, and issues of livelihood.

Each of the nine chapters present reported on their meetings and activities (summarized in the Chapter News section of this newsletter). It was apparent that all the chapters experience much waxing and waning of strength and enthusiasm, and the number of people participating regularly in the chapters is often small. Some feeling that "small (really) is beautiful," that, as Thich Nhat Hanh commented, America can benefit from Buddhist "corners" as well as centers, was expressed. But we also shared discouragement about the small and transient membership. This frustration brought to the surface bigger questions about the vision of BPF, which became the focus for the afternoon session.

The Nipponzan Myohoji community served a delicious buffet lunch complete with a watermelon filled with ripe summer fruits. Afterwards, we circumambulated the Pagoda.

Joan Halifax's question about the vision of BPF sparked a clarifying discussion in which Andy Cooper, a Board member and long-time BPF member, described how he "used to look at BPF in terms of the concrete things we'd done. More recently I realize that BPF is more a set of possibilities; that BPF national works to coordinate, assist, and empower people in the practice of engaging Buddhism in social concerns. BPF as an organization 'gives birth' to programs, without being the program itself. BPF is a framework or community where issues of peace and war, sexism, and ecological concerns can be talked about not as an addition to Buddhism but as the core of how we practice—not as peripheral, but central. National BPF, because of its openness of possibilities, is a 'place' for people to come together in a non-hierarchical way, have dialogues, and develop their own strategies and aspirations in a way not based on the authority of a single figure or a single tradition, with an openness to new questions, approaches, and perspectives." Margie Kolchin, coordinator of the Western Massachusetts chapter, described the encouragement from BPF to enter society and, e.g., protest an issue with a willingness to see both sides,

Some Impressions of the Meeting By Barbara Blouin, Nova Scotia Chapter

A hot pre-summer day in May, unfinished temple in a clearing in the woods—40 or so people in a big circle on the floor. A dog goes wandering in and out. Sweat is trickling down my back. Suddenly, a violent thunderstorm. Lightning even finds its way into the half-finished wiring: it crackles and sparks. Everyone huddles together away from the rain, which is now pouring through the roof. "This is an annual meeting." I keep telling myself. The phrase had an air of importance and seemed to suggest a level of formality—not this. Am I disappointed? No, just surprised—and delighted, too.

As someone who lives on the outer fringe of North America, becoming isolated is a danger. It's important to me to be here at a "national" (actually, international) meeting, to find out that other members have bodies and faces, not just names, and, most of all, to share briefly their struggles and their commitment. This is the first time for me that the Buddhist Peace Fellowship has felt *really real* (in blatant contradiction to the Madhyamika teachings, of course).

I'm impressed by the diversity, as members of groups all over the U.S. talk about their issues and their activities, and at the same time I can feel the unity, the common purpose, that lies behind the diversity. I am very grateful for the diversity, glad that this is not a monolithic organization.

and "yet not be called a revisionist." To practice non-duality and be open and receptive to different, conflicting viewpoints, was discussed as one of the major contributions BPF can make to the lives of social and political activists.

The discussion revealed the many talents, abilities, and the sincerity that people brought to the meeting, and to the expression of BPF. It was also apparent, nevertheless, that BPF has a long way to go to realize this broad vision. BPF is struggling to become less on the periphery of people's lives. There is a need for some concrete programs that will inspire and involve a broader membership. We have outgrown our small, down-home size and structure, and we need to develop resources of the organization to serve our growing membership, now more than 1,000.

Barbara Meier communicated some of the concerns and ideas discussed during the Board meeting prior to the National meeting which also addressed the need for a more developed structure to respond better to the many requests of its members and the society at large.

Our deepest thanks to the residents of the Peace Pagoda for hosting this wonderful day. It is clear from this Second Annual 1-Day Meeting that we need at least two days next year and in the future.

Therese Fitzgerald is the Executive Director of BPF

Regional and Chapter Activities



Western Mass BPF Chapter Coordinator Margie Kolchin and baby did walking meditation during most of the Annual Meeting.

Photo by Ruth Klein

East Bay BPF

Much has happened since the last issue of the *BPF Newsletter*. In April we co-sponsored Thich Nhat Hanh's visit to the Bay Area. The four-day retreat at Green Gulch with 150 people was huge and wonderful. It was quite amazing to see 100 people at one tea meditation and have it unfold so beautifully. We tried a larger format for Thây's retreat, wanting as many people as possible to enjoy him and his message. Although it lacked a little in intimacy and cohesiveness, we learned about "living community" and patience in a profound and immediate way, and walked away with a new understanding and sense of purpose (behind the scenes it was altogether crazier; ah what we do for such elegant sharing!). Many thanks to Green Gulch Farm, who graciously hosted the retreat in their beautiful alley.

The following night, April 20, Thich Nhat Hanh spoke in a Berkeley church, full to the brim with nearly 1,000 people. The Mayor of Berkeley proclaimed it "Thich Nhat Hanh Day" and the crowd of Buddhists, university students, and Berkeley politicians discerned a deeper awareness of what peace work is. It was very rewarding for us to share the ideals of engaged Buddhism with such large and varied groups.

We as a group were also inspired and brought together in a new way, and we began a number of projects from this. The "Sponsoring Hungry Families in Vietnam" collects contributions to buy goods to send to families in Vietnam, helping them survive. The Imprisoned Monks and Writers Project, led by Steve Denney who has done enormous work on it, has an international petition drive.

At our meetings since April, we have discussed and worked on these projects, shown the video *The Awakening Bell*, discussed political actions at the Concord Naval Weapons Station and the Nevada test site, and a recent incident at a local Buddhist center. A speaker from the East Bay Sanctuary Covenant presented what they are about and the process for becoming a Sanctuary church. We feel it is very important to have a Buddhist group involved in this movement, to endorse and support it, and as yet there is no Buddhist member. We are investigating the details of declaring sanctuary and will report back next issue. Any comments on this will be welcome.

Most recently we have decided to follow what seems to be happening organically and have the form of our meetings meet the spirit. We have evolved into a core group of active members who come to meetings and are involved in BPF work, and are trying a format that meets our needs better. We have begun meeting at different peoples' houses for a potluck and to share ideas, projects, and ourselves regularly, reinforcing the idea of community and intimacy that BPF is about. At the Days of Mindfulness, which we hold periodically, we will hold general informational meetings at lunchtime for those interested. We are very excited about these changes, which shows how ready we are for them. All are still welcome and can call Margaret Howe (415/845-2966) or Carole Melkonian (415/644-3038) for meeting times.

I was able to attend the National Meeting of BPF in Leverett, Massachusetts, this Spring. All these Buddhists from all over the country with similar concerns and struggles—we are not alone! It was a good meeting (albeit short) in which we articulated together what BPF is, our purpose and vision, and shared how each of us attests to this in our daily lives. One of the issues I'd like to see raised in the future is the feminist concern of distribution of power and authority and the effect this has on one's personal power. Thanks to all who made this meeting possible. I am really getting the sense that BPF is finding its way to becoming a very viable and powerful force in both Buddhism and politics.

—Margaret Howe

Sponsoring Hungry Families in Vietnam A Project of the East Bay BPF

Recently, several of us in the East Bay BPF have begun working on a project "Sponsoring Hungry Families in Vietnam," an effort which springs from many practical talks with Thich Nhat Hanh and Cao Ngoc Phuong about how we might respond to the needs of people in Vietnam, a country devastated by many years of foreign wars. In late June, several Westerners and Vietnamese met to select which families—among the many in need referred to us by Sister Phuong—we would be able to support. We purchased fabric and medicine, which are known to have a high resale value in Vietnam, and with the help of a few children, spent a peaceful day at the Kim Son monastery, near Watsonville, California, wrapping the parcels. When the families in Vietnam receive them, they will sell the materials, and use the money to buy food and other essential items.

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Presently we are able to support seven families, including a blind man recently released from a re-education camp, a widow in a "New Economic Zone" who takes care of her mentally ill son as well as his three children, a widow with two children who is so poor she can only afford to eat roots, a school teacher whose large family lives in a single room, an unemployed widow who begs for food to feed her family, the homeless mother of eleven children whose husband is in a re-education camp for speaking publicly against the government. Recently their landlord evicted them, and they are wandering, and a blind mother of four whose husband is unemployed.

So many families in Vietnam are living in situations that are this intolerable and worse, and they greatly need our help. If you would like to help by sponsoring a family, a \$50 quarterly donation (\$17 a month) is needed. If you are inclined to help but cannot afford this much, perhaps you could join with two or three friends to share in supporting a family. When the family you sponsor receives a parcel, they will send us a note back which we will translate and send to you. It is a wonderful opportunity and a great pleasure to work together in this way. For more information or to send a tax-deductible contribution, please contact: Buddhist Peace Fellowship, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704, telephone (415) 525-0101.

—Therese Fitzgerald & Carole Melkonian

Los Angeles BPF

The first two meetings of the newly revived LA BPF began with tea meditations in the form taught by Thich Nhat Hanh. Both meetings were well attended, with 15 and 19 people, respectively. We are continuing to meet on a monthly basis on the third Sunday of each month. Participants in the tea meditations found it quieting to take tea together as an expression of "being peace." It is from a place of internal peace that we wish our actions to flow.

We have undertaken a letter writing program which involves a member of the group drafting letters or petitions for the group to sign and also collect additional signatures. Time has been spent discussing areas of concern we wish to target for our letter writing campaign. We have also begun to practice tithing to help support Sister Phuong's work in raising aid for Vietnamese refugees. Collectively, \$200 a month has been pledged. The feeling of the group was that we wanted to make an ongoing commitment to support this excellent work. Tithing seemed to be the best way to ensure that our commitment will be sustained.

Besides these activities, we have discussed other areas which are of concern to the group. A sit-in at the Nevada nuclear test site, after the appropriate nonviolence training was among the list of possible endeavors. There will also be presentations and readings by members of the group. But most importantly to those of us who have attended these first meetings is the act of committing ourselves to work towards peace and to cultivating peace within ourselves. We want our work within the group to be a natural expression of our inner peace.

—Donna Lewin

Sonoma County BPF

Five of us participated in the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice march April 25 in San Francisco. We carried a banner reading Sonoma County Buddhist Peace Fellowship, which presented us with some interesting exchanges with several people. Much of the meaning of the day came in what happened with our little group, who had never done anything together but sit on Tuesday evenings. We talked of compassion and confrontation during our drive to the city. We chanted and sang and enjoyed each other. After parking the car, we took a bus which was empty except for us. The driver looked so tired and sober, we weren't sure how he would react to our singing "May Peace Prevail on Earth." When we were done, he smiled and said he had a son in the Peace Corps in South Africa. As we left the bus he told us to march for him and his son and smiled and said, "God Bless You." We collected a few stray Buddhists and a few Sonoma county residents with our banner. Our banner also brought questions like, "How come there are no Asians in your Buddhist group?" and "What is the Buddhist Peace Fellowship?"

Our July meeting marked the first anniversary of our chapter. We have met on a regular monthly basis throughout this first year and our membership has grown to 23. Average attendance is 6-10. We begin our meetings with a small dinner at 6:00 pm, and then a short break before sitting meditation and then the meeting. The main topic of our July meeting was Chapter 6 (Mysticism and Militancy) of *Buddhism and the Bombs*, by Ken Jones. Some highlights of the business portion of the meeting: We agreed to review material sent to us by BPF national office regarding Sister Phuong's work with the hungry in Vietnam. We reported on the plight of the Chittagong Hill Tract tribals in Bangladesh. A new participant described the Peace Garden project, which he is involved with. The *British BPF Newsletter* was circulated and discussed. We read a list of projects being considered by the Marin County BPF chapter, and decided it is time for us to adopt a specific project.

We have spent the past year becoming a group and getting to know one another, a valuable step before undertaking a project. Discussion and (hopefully) adoption of a project will be the primary focus of our next meeting. Beginning next meeting we will have a dana basket to encourage small contributions towards xeroxing, postage, tea, incense, etc.

—Mary Porter-Chase

NY Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship

An eclectic organization based in Manhattan, the NY-UU BF is offering this Fall a series of programs on specific aspects of Buddhism and their contemporary relevance to Unitarian Universalists, including Winifred Norman (Oct. 31), Daido Looi and Robert Senghas (November 6-8, at Mt Tremper), Sharon Bernstein (November 21), and a screening of *The Awakening Bell*, with Thich Nhat Hanh (December 12). For more information, contact Henry Wiemhoff at (212) 799-9432.

Some Chapter Notes from the Annual Meeting

Western Mass - Started 4 years ago. There are many Buddhist groups and a lot of peace activity in the area. 8-10 consistent members and others who show up once in a while. BPF as a place for people to check in re: their political activities.

Washington, DC - Two major projects: Chittagong Hill Tract tribes in Bangladesh and Working with Southeast Asian refugee families in the DC area. Still a small chapter.

Rochester - Joanna Macy gave a very successful workshop in March. The activities in general are often discouraging and occasionally encouraging.

Providence - Possibly a new chapter in formation.

New York City - 4-5 different Buddhist groups involved. 20 people of whom 6 are regulars. Average attendance at monthly meetings, 10. Studying history and philosophy of nonviolent social action. People are very busy and feeling stretched.

Cambridge - John Philibert observed how many BPF chapters are dealing with the same issues, including fluctuating attendance and level of interest. "Running out of gas," they reorganized in January. Now monthly meetings function as a discussion and support group, rather than trying to take on group projects. Individuals take on projects and receive moral support from the group. Meetings include a short meditation. They also publish a newsletter.

Boulder/Denver - The group has waxed and waned, mostly in response to events. It began in 1981, out of the awareness that not many people in Vajradhatu were addressing the nuclear threat. Early in 1984, the Boulder group connected with Buddhists in Denver and began to hold Days of Mindfulness. Since then there have been more events, including 2 retreats with Thich Nhat Hanh and an encirclement of Rocky Flats. The large group has spawned affinity groups, which are working on different levels. For example, the Denver group is working with the homeless. There are monthly Days of Mindfulness and support for the Vietnamese people.

Nova Scotia - A new chapter, with 5 members in Halifax and 3 others around the province. Difficulty getting members of the Vajradhatu sangha interested, and no other Buddhists that we can locate in Halifax. Given small numbers and newness, decided to join forces temporarily with other peace groups, including Project Plowshares and Veterans Against Nuclear Arms. At this point, there are more plans and hopes than achievements, but the feeling is optimistic.

Florida Trident II Action

On January 17, 4,500 people gathered at the main gate of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Florida's east coast to protest the first test launch of the Pentagon's newest and most destructive weapon, the Trident II D-5 missile. In attendance were groups and individuals of all kinds, including myself and "Sport" Lochridge, both BPF members, my wife Melinda, and also the Revs. Katsuzo Sawada and Konomu Utsumi of the Nipponzan Myohoji, along with their entourage.

Marching in the sun;
peace is the flapping sound
of the flag in the wind.

The pace for the march was set by these two esteemed Japanese monks and their group, who chanted *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo* to their constant drumming. Above their heads was a large purple banner with this prayer in Japanese, while Sport and I, also chanting and close by, alternately carried a very large international Buddhist flag.

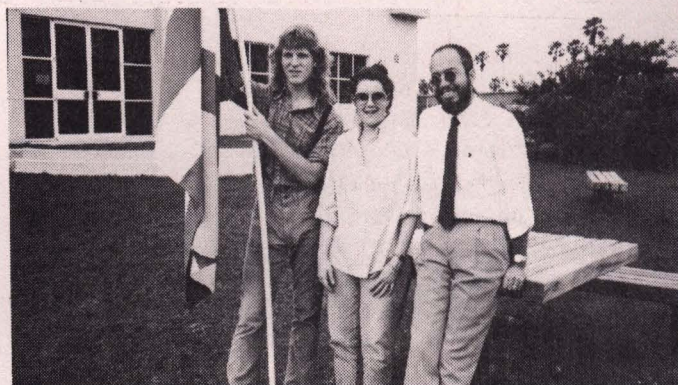
Almost everyone within hearing distance of this group was spellbound by this Buddhist presence, as many had never seen or heard anything like it before. It was very impressive, adding an intensely peaceful dynamic quality to the march, especially as we approached the gate where civil disobedience was going to take place, and where we met face-to-face with the riot-equipped police, and counter-demonstrators.

The sound of marchers
heading up to the gate
where guns are on display.

The scene was intense as I watched my wife, with Sport and another friend, all members of our affinity group, named "Failsafe," disappear into the massive crowd and proceed onto the base, where they realized their ambition to trespass, thus sacrificing their freedom for the sake of others. It was a three-and-a-half mile walk back to the original rally site, and the cool twilight supported a feeling of emptiness.

Walking away from the line
where the light of hope
has turned into blood.

The ensuing 24 hour period was filled with many trials, due to the fact that, as the "support" person for Failsafe, my role was to deal with lawyers, police, and loneliness. By loneliness I really mean the emotional state caused by my extreme concern for, in particular, my wife. The rumors coming out of the Titusville jail told of harsh conditions which had been inflicted upon the prisoners within its walls. As it turned out, the authorities had selectively deprived many prisoners of certain personal effects, such as taking glasses from those with poor vision, taking jackets from the old and infirm, etc. Prisoners had to



Sport Lochridge, Melinda and Chris West-Harazda

endure night temperatures in an outdoor basketball court in drizzling rain, sleeping (if they were lucky) on wet asphalt with one to three blankets apiece.

I knew inwardly that this was all just another temporary series of events which would eventually be only memories, but it was difficult to endure the sufferings of others in the jail complex. We all shared the frequent psychological terrorism of the police, as frightful rumors were spread to those of us on the outside, and lies concerning conditions on the inside were offered to the press.

As the next day, Sunday the 18th, wore on, I joined my new Japanese friends in chanting again. They had arrived on the jail scene with their group and were stationed between the jail and the courthouse, where preliminary arraignments had begun. This was, for me, the most powerful experience since the rally itself, as the sound permeated all quarters of the complex, including the interior of the jail. By that evening, prisoners began to trickle out to freedom, these having decided to supply I.D. and pay \$100 to the authorities. This is how my affinity group found their way out late that evening.

The experience was transformative for all involved. For many of us, this was our first action involving civil disobedience. In my own case, it was an adventure in dealing with the emotional aspects of legal tyranny, involving the incarceration of many evolved beings who should have been given medals instead of handcuffs and legchains.

For those in our group who had endured the jail itself and had bailed out, it involved later introspection and feelings of sadness, with some degree of guilt as to whether they had really said or done enough. We inaugurated group discussions in order to deal with these problems.

It has been said that there will be over 20 more tests of the Trident II D-5 missile at the Cape Canaveral site (launch pad no. 46), with the projected deployment of the Trident II's as early as 1989. There will quite certainly be many more acts of civil disobedience and many more protests scheduled at the Air Force Station and elsewhere in coming months and years. We can only hope that the Brevard County Sheriff's Department, which unfortunately displayed only actions of social irresponsibility, can learn to deal responsibly, and in an enlightened way, with the armies of peaceful, nonviolent protesters who are quite certain to enliven the area in the future.

It is certain that our little group will once again be out there on the line at future demonstrations. Since we live in Tampa, which is about 130 miles from the Cape complex and Titusville, we may not be able to protest as often as we would like. I would therefore like to encourage any other Buddhist groups or BPF members to consider sunny Florida, and the site of the Trident II missile tests, as a prime location for the spreading of Sakyamuni's peaceful Dharma. Florida has perhaps the leading number of defense contractors upon its soil, while the peace movement here remains quite weak, surrounded by a population that is largely unsympathetic. With continued diligence, it is likely that we can have a profound effect in terms of peacemaking, and thereby also spread the compassion and Wisdom of the Buddhadharma.

The march goes on;
on the eastern sea,
the hint of an approaching storm.

The author, Christopher West-Harazda, aka Karma Sherab Dorbu, is a BPF member and a Karma Kagyü Vajrayana practitioner in Tampa, Florida, where he teaches religion and history at a college preparatory school.

Southeast BPF Members Gathering

In August, a small gathering of BPF members living in the southeastern US met at the Southern Dharma Retreat Center in Hot Springs, North Carolina. For information about future meetings, contact John Everhart, 3693-B Shirl Jo Lane, Chattanooga, TN 37412.

Peace Weekend at IMS

Nearly 100 people attended the "Peace Weekend" led by Christopher Titmuss at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, in April. Over the course of the weekend, the individuality of meditation practice and issues of peace and social justice were explored and celebrated.

Christopher gave meditation instruction and several talks on the problem of separation and living in awareness. In addition to silent meditation, there were opportunities for people to discuss the weekend's themes in a supported way.

A number of people who are deeply committed to the issues of peace and who did not have previous meditation experience were very excited to have a chance to integrate this new dimension into their activism. Among the issues which came up during the discussion on "Thinking Globally and Acting Locally," were AIDS, children of war, oppression of women, Central America, Apartheid, and the nuclear situation. Considerable enthusiasm was apparent and there are plans for more retreats of this nature.

—Gavin Harrison

Opposition to Maui Star Wars Testing

Robert Aitken, Roshi, with encouragement from the BPF Board, wrote the following letter in July opposing the rezoning of three acres of agricultural land on the island of Maui to build a "Relay Mirror Experiment Scoring and Control Center." The facility would be used to fire lasers at satellites and score the hits, as an essential part of the S.D.I. program. Lt. Colonel Robert Van Allen was quoted by the Maui News as saying, "Without such experiments, the laser would never achieve weapons capability."

Planning Commission
County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, HI 96793

Dear Friends:

I write to you as past president of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and a member of its International Advisory Board. We are an organization of Buddhists who are concerned about peace, social justice, and the environment, founded on Maui in 1978, now with chapters throughout the United States including Hawaii, and in England, Japan, Australia, and elsewhere. I am authorized to speak for the organization.

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship joins Peacemoves in opposition to the rezoning of land at Kihei for use as an S.D.I. facility. We are told that this project will provide improvements near the site, construction work for County residents, and some 15 jobs after the facility is in place. We regard this as a poor tradeoff for the danger such a facility brings to Maui and its people as a target in the event of war.

We also oppose the project as part of S.D.I.—a wasteful scheme of vast proportions which distinguished scientists in significant numbers assure us will not work as a defensive shield against nuclear attack, and can only be effective as an element of a pre-emptive strike by the United States.

Please look beyond the tiny, short-term advantages of rezoning in this case, and consider the broader issues involved. If the government money being spent on S.D.I. were devoted to reconciliation between the Russian and the United States governments and their peoples, there would surely be no need for the development of such dangerous schemes.

We urge you to stand fast and deny the petition to rezone.

Respectfully yours,
Robert Aitken

For more information, or to help financially with the legal efforts to prevent this rezoning, contact: Peacemoves (an organization concerned about peace and the environment on Maui), P.O. Box 429, Makawao, HI 96768.

Marin County BPF

More than 30 people gathered at the home of Mayumi Oda in May in response to an invitation sent to Marin County "alumni" of San Francisco and Green Gulch Zen Centers and announcements made through Jack Kornfield's vipassana meditation meetings to consider the formation of a Marin County BPF chapter. The meeting began with 5 minutes of silence, an introduction to the bell of mindfulness as used by Thich Nhat Hanh, and then everyone present introduced him/herself and presented their concerns and interests related to the BPF framework. A variety of ideas were presented, and we have been meeting monthly since then continuing to consider various issues and projects. In our August meeting, after sharing silence and tea, we began a discussion about sponsoring peace-related events, possibly at Green Gulch Farm. We agreed to arrange a program on the Tibetan nuns who are struggling to support themselves and keep their monasteries going in Tibet and India. We briefly considered some other possibilities: Fran Peavey and the Atomic Comics, Jenny Groat and her peace calligraphy, and The Awakening Bell, the videotape of Thich Nhat Hanh in Australia. These events could raise money, both for the sponsored group and our group. We will continue the discussion about what sorts of events are appropriate for us. In addition, some of us have begun meeting to recite the precepts of the Order of Interbeing.

—Kathy Cook and Stephanie Kaza

An Open Letter

One active BPF member recently suggested we start a Hints from Heloise kind of column to discuss issues and problems common to many of us. This first submission is an open letter.

Our chapter faces a problem that I have not seen in other peace groups. All groups involve part work and part play. Some groups I have been in routinely hold six-hour meetings, during which only two hours of work gets done. (These were not professional people in the daylight hours). Other groups hold businesslike meetings, in which about two and a half hours of work gets accomplished in three hours. (These are professional people who value their time). But in our BPF chapter, people seem to resent any work during a meeting.

- People do work hard at their daytime jobs, and most people seem to sensitive to having to go anywhere for pleasure where the same task-over-people focus might predominate.

- People seem sensitive to anything that might appear to be a top-down approach to deciding what the group should be doing. Even if the group meets with Thich Nhat Hanh and agrees to do things such as work on the closed refugee camps, as soon as TNH is gone, mention of work needed to be done for the closed refugee camps meets with resistance.

- People seem to look to Buddhist Peace Fellowship to be different from other groups: more feeling oriented, more

socializing, less task focus. With that expectation, the socializing in our group goes on for a long time and the "agenda" items are not welcomed.

- Along with a feeling approach to items, people have very idiosyncratic approaches to problems, and often it seems the only way to resolve basic value and personality differences is to keep meetings to a minimum. On the other, perhaps having more frequent meetings would enable the group, however small in numbers, to move forward.

- Problems in leadership: no one wants to take it because it involves a lot of work, people resist those who take on any leadership role and yet appreciate the work that is done.

I think in terms of building a group, it is far better to let a group flounder and figure out on its own (perhaps over a few years) what it wants to do than for individual members to rush in and provide both focus and elbow grease. However, this kind of self-control is very hard, and the history has been one or a few people to take on projects in the name of the group, and then finding no group support.

Obviously, our group shows signs of the lack of attention to feeling issues, and the really close bonds between some people are somewhat lacking. However, diagnosis is easier than cure. I am a psychologist in training, and I am very puzzled by our group. The only thing in the last year that has worked is for people (different ones at different times) to take on single-handedly certain projects, devoting an enormous amount of time to them, and letting the others watch. When the person doing the work protests such a role, the group falls apart. I have been as guilty of sitting by and watching as the others. I alternate between doing what has to be done because no one else will do it, and withdrawing because I feel like I am being used.

Does this sound familiar to what goes on in other local chapters?

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The Fruits of Retreat: Thich Nhat Hanh's Spring Visit

April through June of this year, Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh and Sister Cao Ngoc Phuong, led 14 retreats sponsored by the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. For detailed schedule, see the Autumn 1986 issue of BPF Newsletter. The following articles are some of the fruits of a most fruitful visit. Thich and Sister Phuong will be returning to the U.S. again in the Spring of 1989. Details will be announced next year.

Graduating from Buddhism: An Interfaith Retreat with Thich Nhat Hanh By Christopher Reed

To practice Buddhism, or to practice anything, we must go back to our roots. There are many aspects of the Judaeo-Christian tradition which reflect non-dualistic understanding. If we come in touch with them, with the joy of our own traditions, standing firmly in our own roots, we can be vehicles for Buddha Dharma as it comes to the West.

We cannot do anything for peace without ourselves being peace. If you cannot smile, you cannot help other people smile. If you are not peaceful, then you cannot contribute to the peace movement. If one person is a real person, living happily, smiling, then all of us, all the world, will benefit from that person. A person doesn't have to do a lot to save the world. A person has to be a person. That is the basis of peace.

—Thich Nhat Hanh

Although the Interfaith Retreat sponsored by BPF in April was my first encounter with Thich Nhat Hanh, I have been aware of his teaching since the mid-1970's. I remember being very inspired by what seemed to be a real blending of the practical aspects of daily living with an utterly simple commitment to the practice of Dharma. Practice, as he described it, seemed to be completely "practical."

Recently I had been feeling stale in my own practice. For several months I had been feeling disconnected, both from my surroundings and from what I sensed had become just a habit of practice. My sadness about the unlikely survival of our society, our planet, left me helpless, angry, disgusted, hollow. I came to this retreat with a feeling that perhaps I needed to graduate from Buddhism," at least what I presently understood as Buddhism, to become a human being again. To return to some point of implicitness, to what is "practical."

Thich Nhat Hanh began by telling us that instead of having International Conferences on Religion and such things, it might be better to have an International Conference on Cooking, where participants could prepare and share food together, or an International Conference on Looking at Trees! In a conference on cooking, no one would discuss the "truth" of one cuisine or

another, they would just enjoy the food. He suggested that the sharing of our traditions in this Interfaith Retreat could be done in the same spirit, not observing the various menus from the outside, but participating in each in order to enjoy it. It was the nearest I've ever come to attending an International Conference on Looking at Trees.

The first thing I noticed was the complete absence of any hint of hierarchy or authority or forced structure or rigidity. Perhaps I had simply become tired of imposing those stereotypes on myself, or maybe it had something to do with being around Thich Nhat Hanh. It was something sensed by default rather than any tangible ingredient, and it made me realize how often I have approached practice as an obligation, a chore by which I might gain something. Looking back, retreats and sesshins have usually been arduous endeavors for me, a kind of quest. However much I may have consciously understood otherwise, I usually found myself struggling so hard to do, to become . . . to become mindful, to deepen my practice, instead of simply appreciating what I might already be. Thich Nhat Hanh spoke a lot about *apranahita*, aimlessness, walking without a destination. I found his teaching a complete joy. Perhaps I'd come with some intuition that now I might move into some new mode that could express itself without much of a struggle.



Illustration by Nanda Currant

Walking meditation under the enormous trees at La Casa de Maria, a very beautiful Catholic retreat center near Santa Barbara, was wonderful. To simply be under those trees, hearing the birds sing in the clear air—it was inescapable, interbeing, emptiness coming to mean that there is room for all of this inside me; that it is already there. Something about Thich Nhat Hanh's presence and words was an invitation for perceptions to shift and open, to simplify, to simply be, and in being, to be a part of this.

At first it wasn't clear what this retreat was going to be. An Interfaith Retreat? Each of us was invited to say something about the religion of our birth. I remembered how, when travelling as a westerner in India, strangers would come up and ask my name and country, and often there was a third question, "What religion are you?" By that they meant not your assumed religion but the religion of your parents. The understanding is that your roots are undeniable, like a tree's, immovable, the means through which all nourishment reaches you.

A large majority of the participants were practicing Buddhists—ex-Catholics, ex-Protestant, Jewish by birth rather than by faith. There were also a number of practicing Catholics and two Quakers. How were we going to make an Interfaith Retreat out of this group of mainly Buddhist converts?

But spontaneously the retreat began to take on a form of its own. On the second day we were invited to join in Quaker worship. Sitting in silence, mindfulness, sharing the spirit when it moved into words. Later we participated in a formal Quaker dialogue, answering in turn the question, "Give an example of how some nonviolent action has expressed itself in your life." The act of sharing some difficult memories became itself an act of peace, of opening to others. Questions led to other questions, revealing assumptions we make about peace and conflict and responsibility. The fear and determination by which we express our convictions about peace seem to be the very source of conflict. Buddhists are supposed to know all about this. It seems that Quakers do too.

On the evening of the third day, in the chapel, we celebrated the Eucharist, a service improvised by the one priest and several Catholics on the retreat. Eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ; our feet washed as Christ washed the feet of his disciples at the last supper. I remembered the words, "Be still, and know that I am God."

On the fourth day it was the Protestants' turn, myself among them. We turned out to be a mixed group of very ex-Protestants. Those Catholics always had been a hard act to follow! I wondered how I had got myself into volunteering to be part of a Protestant Service. How to express all the mixed feelings I had about my upbringing in the Anglican church? In secret, we painted 40 eggs and placed them along the path where we did walking meditation every day. The seed of new life, the seed of continuing life. I recalled how the cross Jesus was hung from is the same cross that in other traditions represents the completion of things, the mandala, the vertical ascent through the horizontal worlds and heavens; how the Christmas evergreen is also the emblem of continuing life; the May-pole, of fertility and regeneration. My roots extend way beyond the particulars and

beliefs of the schoolmaster ministers of my English childhood. How exquisite Handel's *Messiah* and the language of the *King James Bible*. Something that goes much deeper than the accident of being born into a particular religion, or the arbitrary selection of some chosen belief-system.

Later that morning we learned a Cherokee Dance of Power, or was it a Dance of Life, or Dance of Peace? The same dance repeated in the dawn of the following day. Then finally, on the last evening, the Passover dinner, wine and matzoh and all; and a wealth of readings and chants from the Hagadah to express the richness of Jewish spirit and understanding. "In this day and age," said Rabbi Moshe, "the greater devotion, greater than learning and praying, consists in accepting the world exactly as it happens to be."

Twice during the course of the retreat, under the guidance of Thây Nhat Hanh and Sister Phuong, we practiced a formal tea meditation, something like a Buddhist equivalent of Quaker worship, where words, poems, songs can be shared as the spirit moves. We made a picture, unrolling a scroll of paper like a river around the room as the brush passed from hand to hand, painting things along the bank. Like water in different rivers, we come together in an ocean that makes no distinctions. I somehow recall that my fantasy of California, during the 60's, before I even thought of coming here, was something along the lines of this retreat. Something more than eclecticism—a deep sharing. Moving through forms to something rich beyond.

I don't know why this retreat was so powerful for me. Perhaps it was just being around Thich Nhat Hanh and Sister Phuong. We sat in meditation just a little, talking was practiced as often as silence. It showed me how much I have hidden in the past behind silence and conventional forms of practice, intensity for no reason except the assumption that more was always better. As we were reminded, "It is the quality, not the quantity, of meditation that matters."

It was a chance to acknowledge my own roots, appreciating that it is truly our roots which either nourish us or poison us. Maybe they need trimming from time to time, maybe parts of them need to be cut right away. Sometimes we may establish new roots in some altogether different direction. Perhaps it shows that Buddhism in the West will have to be Jewish-Buddhism, Catholic-Buddhism, and Protestant-Buddhism. Perhaps it might help in making peace with ourselves if we first come to a reconciliation with roots that have been denied, and nourish them. Just as leaves fall to the ground and give nourishment to the tree that produced them, so where we come from might also be where we're going.

Christopher Reed is the head teacher at Ordinary Dharma, a Vipassana center in Venice, California, and the coordinator for the BPF Los Angeles chapter.

Letter to An Unborn Child

by Helen Stoltzfus

During the Retreat for Artists at the Ojai Foundation in California May 1-10, one of the retreatants, actress Helen Stoltzfus, was asked by Thich Nhat Hanh to write and perform a monologue spoken by an American woman and one by a Soviet woman, as an exercise in non-duality, becoming one with the object perceived, the "other." Helen introduced the following work by saying, "I think it is clear which woman is speaking."

I imagine you—ok—I imagine you. For some reason you are she. You are like my arm or my hand, you are not separate from me. I am so curious to see what we will come up with. Curly or straight hair? Will you be quiet? Wild? Will you grow up and become an accountant or run off with the circus?

Wait. You are an offering. I will offer you, and then I will let go. I will push you gently into the water. Swim, you can swim. I'll have to let you stumble and find your own way.

I feel incredibly fertile. My insides feel deep and soft, awaiting your life. I see children and I think, if that were mine, wouldn't I find those little rumps delicious, those curls precious, that neck scrumptious. I turn to liquid when I see children. My insides simply dissolve into liquid. I don't have to think about this, it is simply my womb recognizing itself. Sometimes when I am at work I stop and imagine you—for some reason you are a little girl with blond curls, sitting with me. I feel tears well up inside me. I don't cry, but I feel a wave gush and break inside me.

I feel my body preparing for you, quite apart from any decision or effort on my part.

I'll tell you a secret. When I am alone, eating a wonderful meal, I stop sometimes, and look out the window, and think: This time is special, I won't always have this freedom. I am happy for that moment, but I look forward to your arrival.

I've dreamed about you. Not much, but a few times. In one dream, you are lying on a shelf. And I have, somehow, forgotten to feed you. Weeks go by. I don't remember what happens in the dream. I only remember that I am overwhelmed by grief and remorse when I realize I have forgotten to feed you.

When I see a mother nursing, I feel my own nipples being sucked and pulled. Once I latched your cousin onto me, just to see what it felt like. Incredible! I felt like my insides were being sucked out right through my nipples.

Death does not figure into this. Annihilation, understand, does not figure into this. This urge is not something I have. It has me. I am easy prey, that's all. See, there is every reason not to have you. Having you flies in the face of reason. It's absurd to give birth to you. But the urge to give life is so strong, so powerful. It's the most powerful thing in the world. It is more powerful than anything. I'm not sure I believe what I just said. I want to believe it. I have to. My womb is stronger than your womb.

You mothers who raise boys who turn into men that drop bombs—who are you, what do you look like? I try to imagine

dinner at your house, or snapshots from your album. Would you look any different from me—or any mother? Are you eyes dead—or do they flit back and forth? You Chinese, American, Japanese, Russian, Israeli, Palestinian mothers, who are you? And where are your husbands, the fathers? What didn't your son learn when he first saw someone kill someone—either in reality or fiction? I hold you partly responsible, because my own burden of responsibility for my child already weighs on me.

Yet right now I actually don't feel afraid. And then I'm afraid that I'm not afraid. You should be afraid, I tell myself. Imagine your little girl screaming for you among charred ruins. The picture becomes a bad melodrama on TV, not a real picture. I've never seen a battle; I've never hit anybody in my life. How can I imagine nuclear war? So the mind imagines—and then closes down. The curtain drops. My fear and denial of a nuclear holocaust is so great, that I cannot imagine not having you, children, nor can I imagine IT happening.

See, one night in bed, my sister told me that every minute there are men flying with bombs to the other side of the world, and that at the last minute they are always called back. That night I moved out of childhood into something else.

Sweet and low,
Sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Blow, blow, breathe and blow,
Father will come to thee soon.
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the evening wind and blow,
Blow him again to me,

While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Who is this woman rocking her imaginary baby? Who is she? Does she wear babooshkas, eat fried rice, shop at Macy's, or live on a Reservation?

Who is this woman who imagines her pregnant profile before a mirror?

Who is she? Does she use chopsticks, or eat plum pudding, or wear rings around her neck?

Who is this woman who gets tears in her eyes when she sees someone hit a child on the street? Who is she? Does she sleep on straw mats, or wear green eyeshadow, or carry water from a village well?

Who is this woman who on a lazy afternoon sings a lullaby to a baby she imagines? Who is she? Does she kneel in a temple, a mosque, or sway in a Baptist church?

Who is this woman whose ignorance has turned into fear of impending doom, which has turned into denial which has fermented into forgetting? Who is she? Does she carry pots on her head, queue for hours for milk, or belly-dance?

Who is this woman in the middle of the night who wakes up in a start from a nightmare of losing a child? Who is she? Does she smoke a pipe, or cover her face with veils, or eat rice cakes?

Who is this woman rocking her imaginary baby? Who is she?

This is a performance piece. If you are interested in bringing it to your community, you may contact Helen through A Traveling Jewish Theatre, P.O. Box 421985, San Francisco, CA, 94142. Telephone: (415) 861-4880.

Retreat Poems

At the end of many of the retreats, Thich Nhat Hanh asked us to offer a verse which expressed our insight developed during the four days of retreat. During a closing tea meditation, after tea and a cookie were served to everyone and eaten mindfully, in silence, a basket was passed around the circle, from person to person. When the basket arrived, each person breathed three times "into the basket," read her or his poem and placed it into the basket as an offering, to Buddha, to the entire assembly, and now to all of us. I hope you enjoy these poems and I hope they communicate something of the flavor of the retreats and of Thich Nhat Hanh's gentle and penetrating teaching.

Riding the waves of mind
A boat
My breath
Carries me gently home
—Susan Brock

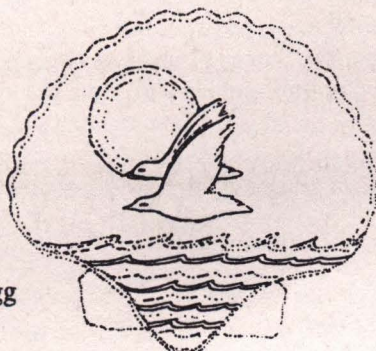
Nurturing needles
Earth mother
Me, we
Interbe
—Marjorie Kellogg

Sitting still for days—
Crushing bones
Subduing thoughts
Overcoming nerves—
This is not difficult practice.
Truly difficult practice
Is to always smile a half-smile.
—Robert Lytle

Breathing in, I calm my body,
Breathing out, I smile. Hum.
Breathing in, I grumble,
Breathing out, I refuse to smile.
Breathing in, I try to calm,
Breathing out, I do mouth yoga.
Breathing in, I feel ridiculous
Breathing out, I SMILE!
—Melanie Terbovic

I've lost my smile,
But not to worry.
The dandelions have it,
And the rain will bring it back to me.
—Marion Tripp

Morning walking meditation
A spider stretches a banner of dew between two branches.
Truly a festival!
—Carole Melkonian



A breath,
A sound,
A space between thoughts
Peace returns to my heart.
—Joseph Tieger

Dear Vietnamese friends I
never thought I would know,
of whom I have dreamt sleeplessly
in horror:
now, knowing you,
tears squeeze out of me gratefully
wrung as from a full sea sponge
breathing out . . .
breathing in, I thank you,
breathing out, I smile.
A healing.
—Nancy Buell

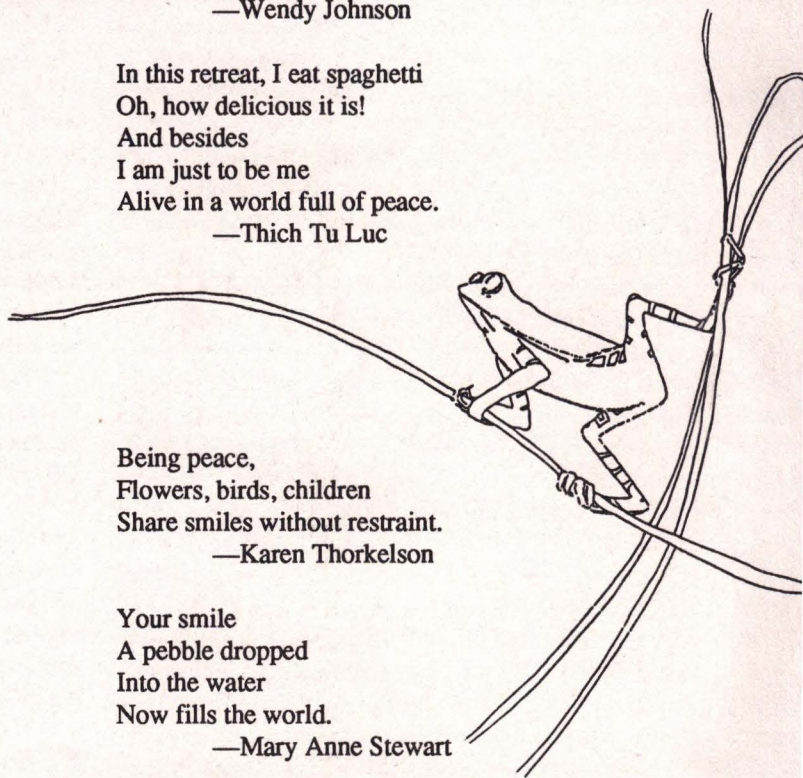
Marvel of Four Seasons, Romance,
Black Seeded Simpson, Red Sails . . .
A river of lettuce flows in our blood . . .
May we nourish Prostitutes and Preachers
Lifetime after lifetime, willing to exchange places
Unafraid
This is because that is.
—Wendy Johnson

In this retreat, I eat spaghetti
Oh, how delicious it is!
And besides
I am just to be me
Alive in a world full of peace.
—Thich Tu Luc

Being peace,
Flowers, birds, children
Share smiles without restraint.
—Karen Thorkelson

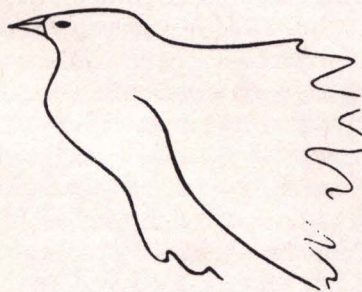
Your smile
A pebble dropped
Into the water
Now fills the world.
—Mary Anne Stewart

Smiling into the face of the Buddha
Is better than taking a nap
Hard work but you must give thonx
If you want to be a Buddha from the Bronx.
—Ed Geiger



When the retreat is over,
 Who will ring the bell of breathing and smiling for me that I
 love so much?
 Will I hear it in the alarm clock, in the traffic horns, in my
 singing?
 Will it be in the trees and wind
 Or in the Wells Fargo Bank?
 Yes.
 But I will have to listen closely.
 —Nirav

I am renewed.
 Watching two children sit quietly
 Through a Dharma talk,
 I am renewed.
 Sharing slow walk though dappled woods
 I am renewed.
 Listening to a Vietnamese lullaby,
 I am renewed.
 In a cold early morning shower,
 I am renewed.
 Learning to give and receive lotus blossoms,
 I am renewed.
 Breathing in I calm myself,
 Breathing out I smile,
 I am renewed.
 Remembering I am loved,
 I am renewed.
 Remembering to love,
 I am renewed.
 —Anne E. Knowler



Step by step
 Caressing the earth
 As if kissing a sleeping child,
 I find sweet stillness
 In the movement.
 —Kathy Murphy

My brother got a new job that pays a lot of dough
 He does something with submarines or weapons, I don't know.
 I haven't seen him for so long. It's really been a while.
 I'm going to go and walk with him
 So we can breathe and smile.
 —Janet Zajac

Offer a lotus
 To my two gentle lettuces
 Two future Buddhas.
 —Hoang Ho



While the sun sets
 Behind the evening star
 The unknown tree sits quietly
 Under a very good happiness.
 —Tai Eppsteiner, age 5



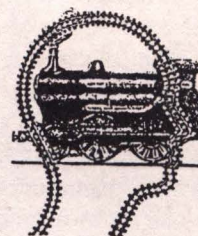
Photo by Ruth Klein

Subway Poems

*In the very special retreat at the New York Open Center, we did
 walking meditation daily in Central Park, and did "subway
 meditation" to get there:*

So grateful—
 The gift of my breath returned to me with a smile—
 On this island retreat of Manhattan.

Subway
 rollercoaster
 surprises
 breathing vibrating with moving train
 Worlds of people breathing, smiling
 surprises
 Stepping, breathing
 dirty New York City air—Never my friend
 breathing smiling,
 stepping calmly
 up art of the subway
 breathing all through
 wonderful moment
 wonderful air.



Taking the K train
 Through the Six Realms
 Now I know
 There's a Buddha in Hell.

Subway roars beneath the earth
 filled with friends
 and
 people I'm not aware that I know.
 Just like my own psyche.

Thundering noise, metallic vibration
 Shakes the earth, the air, and us underground
 We breathe
 Bringing light into all the eyes around us
 They see and understand
 Peace exchanged in our smiles.

Letters

Chittagong Hill Tracts

Dear BPF,

I am most grateful to you for launching "a campaign to halt the killings in Bangladesh." (*BPF Newsletter*, Winter 1987) Your prestigious organization was one of the two human rights groups who came forward to help the Jumma people (the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts) first of all. Its contribution to the cause of justice for our people is so great that we owe you and your colleagues a debt of immense gratitude. The BPF representative, Mr. Michael Roche, visited the CHT and his invaluable report exposed the genocidal activities of the Bangladeshi regime to the western world. Mr. Nelson Foster's article, "Tribal Buddhists in Bangladesh: The Suffering Continues," highlighted the crisis in the CHT. I believe Mr. Johnson Thomas's recent article, "A Campaign to Halt the Killings in Bangladesh" will win the support of the international community for our just cause. Another great contribution of the BPF is that the extremely powerful American press is publicising the plight of the Jumma people at the request of Mr. Thomas, who is conducting a campaign on behalf of your great organization.

The great sympathy of the BPF for the Jumma people shows that the compassionate American people are determined to continue their noble efforts to liberate the most oppressed peoples from the inhuman tyrannies of the enemies of humanity. We are very much inspired by the humane intervention of the American conscience-keepers in the CHT. They have all powers to preserve the CHT as the traditional homeland of 12 ethnic groups. For instance, if American aid were to be suspended, then the cruel regime of Bangladesh would be unable to carry on its genocidal campaign in the CHT and to continue its Bengali resettlement programme in the region. The BPF is our protector and it has brought a flame of hope in the darkness that has descended on Bangladesh since 1947.

I am keeping Mr. Thomas informed of all developments in the CHT. He is sparing no efforts to save the Jumma people from extinction. I would like to thank you again for your great kindness and help. With my high regards.

Yours sincerely,
Ramendu Dewan
England

Editor's Note: From the beginning of BPF's efforts to help the Chittagong tribals, Professor Dewan has been of enormous, untiring help. He is one of the few Chakmas in the west. He is always in need of financial help, and BPF can receive tax-deductible contributions earmarked to support his work in saving his people from extinction. For more information, contact Johnson Thomas, c/o BPF national office.

Service in Latin America

Dear BPF,

After many years of Dharma study and numerous retreats, I feel drawn in the direction of service. I speak Spanish and have traveled extensively in Latin America. Maybe I can be of some use to the people. Can you put me in touch with the means to realize this special kind of practice, that is after all not so special?

Sincerely,
William Newman

Ed. Note: If you'd like to respond, please write to Mr. Newman, c/o BPF National Office.

Polish Buddhist Library

Dear Friends in Dharma,

I am of Buddhist, the member of the Polish Oriental Society. I am chief of the Buddhist Library in Poland. Thanks to many kindness of many organizations of Buddhists from many countries, this Library can exist. We have received as a gift the books from America, Asia, Australia, and many European countries. Our problem is that we are not be able to buy interesting literature., because the foreign bank doesn't honor the Polish money. So every books and journals we are receiving as a gift.

We would be very grateful if it will be possibilities to receive some literature and subscription your journal. Many persons as well Buddhist or studying Buddhism use from our Library. We are very grateful to everybody who helps us realize this venture and serve to propagate of the Buddhism. I will be very grateful for answer my letter.

With best wishes in Dharma,
Jacek Kozlowski
ul. Wandy 4/5
PL 03-949 Warszawa, Poland

Support from Monk on Retreat

Dear Friends,

I along with 9 other men are doing a 3-year retreat under the direction of our teacher, the Ven. Kalu Rinpoche. Although I am not actively engaged in the world at this time, I support your work in bringing the Buddha Dharma to bear on the issues and concerns of our time. It is my deepest wish that the training I am now undertaking will be of benefit to all that lives.

In Dharma,
Don Jorgensen, Sherats Tarshin

An Appeal for Social Action By Samu Sunim

I am writing to share with you my thoughts and feelings on social concern and commitment. Buddhism, despite its diversity of teaching styles and traditions, is ultimately concerned with the awakening of each and every being. All Buddhists are urged to be helpful and create an environment conducive to enlightenment.

It is compassion and love that motivate one to help all beings. It is the Buddhist view that we are all interrelated. Acting selflessly in service to all helps one see enlightenment inherent in all beings and the oneness of all life. Helping based in this spirit is no longer just helping but reverence and offering. You make an offering of yourself to all and become an instrument for Dharma. Helping and working for all beings are the beginning and end of Buddhism.

The environment for Buddhism in North America is radically different from that of Asia. Modern American society is highly industrialized. Buddhism is new in America and unaccustomed to the pace and brilliant achievements of American society. Buddhism in America does not enjoy the support of the establishment. Still there is much energy and vitality in the North American Buddhist movement today. Having no support other than their own strength, the different Buddhist groups display fresh energy and vitality in their attempt to establish themselves. For instance, there is much energy devoted to the physical work of building and remodeling their temples and erecting Buddha statues and stupas. This is the chief focus of the Buddhist movement in North America today. However, the main strength of the current Buddhist movement, that is the preoccupation with one's own organization, is also the major weakness of the movement: the lack of social awareness and concern. The traditionally withdrawn Buddhist practice sometimes reinforces this lack of social awareness and concern among Buddhist practitioners. At present, aside from the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and Buddhists Concerned for Animals, there is no consistent Buddhist voice for social issues in the ecumenical movement. This is unfortunate for two reasons. First, a lack of social consciousness would defeat the very purpose of the Buddhist aspiration to embrace all beings and to help them towards freedom and enlightenment. And second, a Buddhist practice that failed to find proper social expression would ultimately be unacceptable to American society.

Buddhism has made significant contributions to American society, due largely to the consciousness movement since the 1950's. Buddhism has contributed to the peace movement, to spiritual renewal, ecological awareness, and the reduction of habits of wasteful consumption, to tolerance and compassion

towards all combined with the art of reconciliation. Now it rests with North American Buddhists to carry out the traditional spiritual ideals of Buddhism. Those who meditate must channel their meditation to social action; those who chant and recite Mantras and Dharanis must dedicate themselves to helping all; and those who study scriptures must find social expression for their knowledge. Through social service and activity, we transcend our sectarian differences and go beyond our limits. Service is a particularly good Dharma practice for lay people who live and work in the midst of daily social activities. Their circumstances enable them to engage in selfless activity.

Many social issues require urgent action today. They are mostly human problems. We could all spare a moment in our lives to help reduce pain and suffering and bring about a more just society for all.

This statement was written for a brochure introducing Buddhists Concerned for Social Justice and World Peace. For further information about BCSJWP, write to Zen Lotus Society, 1214 Packard Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.



Samantabhadra, the bodhisattva of great action.

Drawing by Mayumi Oda

Announcements

American Buddhist Congress

November 10-12, 1987

Although Buddhism has been in North America for more than a century, and there are now millions of American Buddhists of a wide variety of traditions and national origins, there has never been a unification of Buddhists based on their common concerns, mutual understandings, and the essence of the faith they all share. On August 24, 1986, 11 Buddhist leaders from various organizations met in Boulder, Colorado, to consider the need for a unified organization of Buddhists in the U.S. At the end of the day, they issued a declaration calling for the founding of an American Buddhist Congress in order to foster greater understanding of all the various Buddhist traditions and to work together on matters of concern to all American Buddhists. They felt that there are many issues—religious, educational, political, social, and cultural, both among Buddhists and in our larger society—that can be addressed best through an ongoing and strong national organization open to all Buddhist groups and democratically structured. (See "Declaration of Buddhist Leaders," Autumn 1986 *BPF Newsletter*.)

The group which met last August asked Karl Springer, of Vajradhatu, and Dr. Havanapola Ratanasara, of the Buddhist Sangha Council of Southern California, to serve as co-chairmen of the interim executive committee. This committee has since expanded to include 25 leaders of Buddhist organizations from many different traditions and parts of the U.S., including BPF's President Ruth Klein. The American Buddhist Congress has been incorporated with application for nonprofit status pending.

On November 10-12, at the Kwan Um Sa Korean Temple in Los Angeles, the American Buddhist Congress will hold its first National Convocation, open to representatives of all U.S. Buddhist organizations. The work of the convocation will be primarily to agree upon a Constitution for the American Buddhist Congress, to elect officers, to create committees, and to adopt whatever resolutions seem appropriate.

Ryo Imamura, Jodo Shinshu minister in Alameda, California, and past President of BPF, will represent the Buddhist Peace Fellowship at this convocation. If you have any comments or suggestions, please address them to Ryo Imamura, c/o the BPF National Office. It is our hope that the exchange will be authentic, the meeting productive, and new avenues of communication within the North American Buddhist community opened, widened, and deepened.

Journey of Reconciliation to USSR & Poland

December 28, 1987 - January 13, 1988

For further information, write to Richard Deats, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960, by November 10.

Buddhism and Psychotherapy Conference

October 16 -18, 1987

To be held at International House, 500 Riverside Drive, NYC, co-hosted by Karma Kagyu Institute and New Age Journal. Keynotes: Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche and R.D. Laing. Panels: Daniel Goleman (NY Times), Judith Leif (Naropa), Ed Podvoll and Marvin Casper (Maitri), Daido Looi (Mt. Tremper), Tetsugen Glassman (ZCNY), Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche (KTD, Woodstock), Jack Engler (Harvard), Joseph Goldstein (IMS) and many others. Entertainment: Galen Blum, Allen Ginsberg, R.D. Laing, and Robert Thurman. \$200 per person (\$175 for subscribers to New Age Journal) For further information: Susan Pasternack, 352 Meads Mtn Road, Woodstock, NY 12498. (914) 679-8079.

British BPF Needs £

Debts incurred from past issues of *Down By the Riverside* have caused our British brethren to go seriously into debt. If you would like to make a loan or a contribution, please send to British BPF, c/o Charles Radcliffe, The Old George, The Square, Broadwindsor, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3QD, England. If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution, please send to BPF U.S. National Office, and earmark for British BPF. If you would like to subscribe to their excellent newsletter, please send £5 (surface mail) or £8 (airmail) for four issues to BPF Membership Secretary, Martin Pitt, 38 Amos Street, Totterdown, Bristol BS4 3BS, England.

Vietnamese Buddhists Buy Land in New England

The Buddhist Association of Connecticut (Hôi Phật-Giáo Connecticut), under the leadership of Ven. Thich Tinh Tu, and Buddhists in New England are buying 17 acres of land near Crystal Lake, on Route 30 North, in Ellington, Connecticut, to build a Buddhist Pagoda in the Vietnamese tradition. They are seeking donations. If you can help, please send checks to: Buddhist Association of Connecticut, 369 Simsbury Road, Bloomfield, CT 06002, phone 203-242-8002.

Please Send Postcards

from BPF member Eric Lehrman: An 8-year old is dying of leukemia. His one wish is to win the Guinness World Record for number of postcards received. Send cards, and tell friends, to: Little Buddy, P.O. Box 76, Paisley Renfrewshire, Scotland.

In December, a revised second edition of BPF's anthology of writings on engaged Buddhism will be co-published with Parallax Press, including articles by H.H. the Dalai Lama, Thích Nhất Hạnh, Robert Aitken, Roshi, Jack Kornfield, and new articles by Ken Kraft, Joanna Macy, and others. Send \$12.50 to BPF, Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.

BPF 1988 Trip to Nicaragua

Doug Wallace reports that the August 1987 trip to Nicaragua and Honduras, sponsored by BPF, FOR, and Witness for Peace was a resounding success! There were 6 BPF members in the group of 21, and they enjoyed a wonderful spirit of ecumenism in meditation and Biblical reflection with the Christians. "The journey opened our eyes and hearts to unimagined suffering, as well as extraordinary qualities of human spirit in the Central Americans."

Another trip is planned for Summer 1988, and will include Nicaragua and one other Central American country. If you are interested, please contact Douglas Wallace, 872 Massachusetts Avenue, #806, Cambridge, MA 02139. Phone: (617) 547-6955.

Buddhist Nunnery Opens in Colorado

A nunnery and retreat center with facilities for residential meditation courses recently opened outside of Denver by Revs. T.N. Chan-Nhu and Martha Dharmapali. Nuns and laywomen of all Buddhist traditions are welcome to visit and practice meditation. Women considering exploring the nun's life are particularly encouraged to visit. For more information, contact Chan-Nhu Buddhist Pagoda, 7201 W. Bayaud Place, Lakewood, CO 80226. (303) 238-5867

Buddhist Shelter for the Homeless

The American Buddhist Congregation, Metta-Vihara, has purchased a house in Richmond, California, which they will use to provide a transitional shelter for those in need, a home for homeless women with children, a center for runaway youths, and a mother infant care guest house. They are applying for state and Community funding, but for at least the first few months, they need to raise \$4,000. If you can assist them in their efforts, send tax deductible donations to Metta Vihara, 607 Key Blvd., Richmond, CA 94805. Telephone (415) 236-0908.

The following newspaper article dispatched to Australia from Cape Town, was reprinted in the *Australian BPF Newsletter*:

A yellow-robed Buddhist nun is beating a drum outside the South African Parliament. The noise is driving President Botha to distraction and he has asked the police to remove her, but gently. This has posed a considerable problem for the police, who have never had to deal with a yellow-robed Buddhist nun before. Last week they asked her to go away, but Ms Nara Greenway, recently returned from her religious studies in the Far East, told them she was fasting and praying for the release of children being held in South African prisons without trial. Smiling sweetly at the police, she said: "I can't possibly stop praying." The police said okay, but could she stop beating the drum. Ms Greenway replied that she certainly could not, it was an essential part of the prayer ceremony.

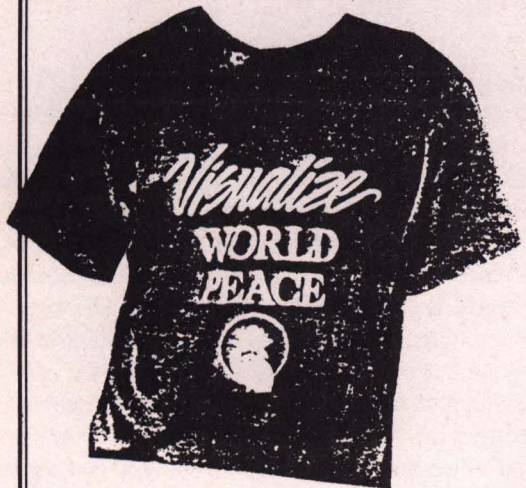
While the police circled her warily, onlookers watched to see what would happen. And Ms Greenway smiled at everyone from her kneeling position behind a little flower-adorned shrine and continued to drum. Had it been a student demonstration or a rally by the United Democratic Front, there would have been no problem for the police. They would have baton-charged it. But a yellow-robed nun kneeling behind a shrine was something else. They retreated.

That was on Thursday last week. On Friday, a lone police officer arrived with a letter from a magistrate, which he delivered to Ms Greenway. It said she could stay and beat her drum until noon on Sunday, after which she must cease and depart. Ms Greenway resumed beating the drum. Yesterday, 24 hours after the deadline, she was still at it. No action has been taken against her yet, but the situation is accumulating some tension.

Seven Minutes of World Peace

On United Nations Day (October 24), individuals, groups, and organizations around the world simultaneously will join in 7 minutes of silence to share the spirit of peace on earth. This observance, now in its fourth year, will be held from 1:00 to 1:07 pm Eastern Daylight Time. This observance is sponsored by Sri Chinmoy, The Peace Meditation at the UN in cooperation with UN Associations and other religious, educational, and peace organizations. For more information contact Lynn Scott, 317C Oceano Avenue, Santa Barbara, CA 93109.





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PAST ISSUES OF BPF NEWSLETTER: Summer 1985- HH Dalai Lama, Maha Ghosananda, Brother Chon Le, etc.

Fall 1985- Nhat Hanh on Tiep Hien Precepts
Winter 1985-86- Mass. Peace Pagoda, Jim Perkins' Civil Disobedience, Right Speech, travels with Thich Nhat Hanh

Spring 1986- Aitken Roshi & Kenneth Kraft, Rochester Conference on Nonviolence, Hittagong Hill Tracts, Big Mountain

Summer 1986- Joanna Macy on Sri Lanka, Andrew Cooper on Changing Buddhism, interview with Christopher Titmuss

Winter 1987- Nhat Hanh on Reconciliation, Christina Feldman, Nicaraguan Children, Bangladesh Campaign, Kalu Rinpoche

owned by the Riverside- British BPF Newsletter, packed with lively articles:

1984- Thinking Like a Mountain: Interview with Arne Naess (Deep Ecology), William deFleur on Enlightenment for Plants & Trees, Ken Jones on Buddhism and the Peace Movement, and much more.

1985- Women's Issue: Alia Johnson, Susan Griffin, Christina Feldman, and many others

1986- Lumbini Project, Robert Fuller, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indochina, Thailand, Tibet, Tiep Hien Precepts

Buddhism & the Bombs, by Ken Jones-26 pgs each, postpaid from

BPF, PO Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704

TAPES

HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE? 8-part TV series (60 min ea) featuring Ram Dass, Daniel Ellsberg, Stephen Levine, Helen Caldicott, on VHS (\$55 ea.) or audio (\$8). Orig Face Video, 6116 Merced Av #165, Oakland, CA 94611.

DHARMA SEED TAPE LIBRARY, lectures by IMS Teachers, including: Jack Kornfield, *Compassion and Social Responsibility*, Joseph Goldstein, *Practice and World Peace*; Susan Augenstein, *End of Violence*; Christopher Titmuss, *Peacemaking*; & tapes from recent Peace Weekend (see p. 35). DSTL, 1041 Federal Street, Belchertown, MA 01007.

THICH NHAT HANH tapes: *Looking Deeply*, and *Commentaries on the Heart Sutra*. Two 60-minute cassettes each, in handsome binder, \$15 each set, from Parallax Press, PO Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707.

THICH NHAT HANH video tapes: *Awakening Bell*, documentary about work with refugees (50 min., \$45); *Guide to Walking Meditation* (35 min., \$35), Parallax Press, PO Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707.

SOUND OF RIPPLING WATER: 2-hour tape of David Reynolds, on Morita (synthesis of Zen & psychotherapy) and Naikan (Jodoshinshu & psychotherapy). \$15 + 1.50 shipping from Music & Sound Production Services, 1908 S. Randolph, Arlington, VA 22204

AUDIO CASSETTE TAPES: On a variety of subjects including Buddhism and peace work. Send for catalog. Sounds True, 1825 Pearl St., Boulder, CO 80302 (303) 449-6229.

LIVELIHOOD / SERVICE

BPF BOARD MEMBER moving to Guatemala to work with relatives of the disappeared and other human rights groups for one year, under auspices of Peace Brigades International. Because there is no salary, funding assistance is requested. Please send contribution to: Joe Gorin, 106 Jackson Hill Rd., Leverett, MA 01054. Many thanks.

BPF MEMBER in disarmament walk from Leningrad to Moscow in July (half Americans & half Soviets) to demystify the "other side." Dana to help cover \$1000 in expenses would be greatly appreciated. Yeshua Moser, Rte 1, Box 95, Amesville, OH 45711.

WORK IN ASIA: American Buddhist with Business Degree, interested in working on peace projects in SE Asia or W Asia, as a volunteer or employee, to help the people there. Extensive experience in Asian travel. Resume available on request. Sheldon Sanders, 619 Harpeth Parkway East, Nashville, TN 37221.

DHARMA PATRONS NEEDED to help support my work with people who have AIDS and AIDS-related syndrome, and to assist me in a 3-month to 1-year Shamata Retreat with Alan Wallace and Ven. Gen Lamrimpa. Please contact Jim Edwards, 633-12th Ave E, #6, Seattle, WA 98102, (206) 323-1172.

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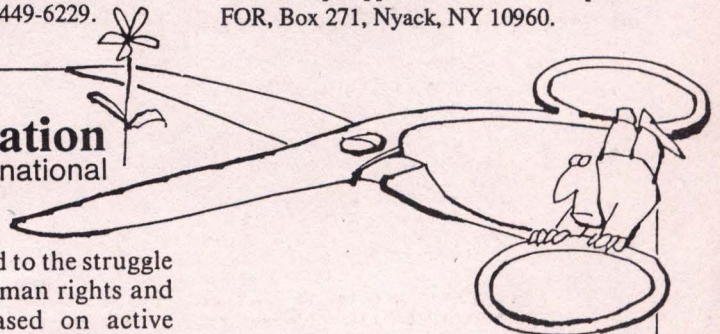
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- To encourage the delineation in English of the Buddhist way of nonviolence, building from the rich resources of traditional Buddhist teachings a foundation for new action;
- To offer avenues to realize the kinship among groups and members of the American and world Sangha;
- To serve as liaison to, and enlist support for, existing national and international Buddhist peace and ecology programs;
- To provide a focus for concerns over the persecution of Buddhists, as a particular expression of our intent to protect all beings; and
- To bring the Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace and ecology movements.

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