

B U D D H I S T P E A C E F E L L O W S H I P

NEWSLETTER OF THE BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP VOLUME ELEVEN,
NUMBER ONE, SPRING 1989



• **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder:
Veterans, Molested Children, and the Buddha.**

• **BPF Interviews with Mayumi Oda and Ram Dass.**

Also: War Tax Resistance, Monks Death Sentence Commuted, and a Tibet Report

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LETTERS

Dear BPF Newsletter,

I want to thank you again for a wonderful newsletter. I read every word and appreciate so much that you are working to keep us informed of vital issues of human rights, ecological developments and all that is happening on the forefront of the development of engaged Buddhism. I read every word.

Want to let you know that I have created two petitions, one to the head of Burma on ceasing the abuse of human rights, and one to the Chinese ambassador promoting the Dalai Lama's 5-point peace plan and have collected several hundred signatures for each here at Green Gulch and have sent a draft petition to Insight Meditation West to use there. Thanks for the details of how to do it. Don't let anything stop you from continuing the production of the newsletter.

In the dharma,
Kathy Cook
Marin BPF

November 29, 1988

Dear Arnie

I was somewhat distressed to read the review of *Turning the Wheel: American Women Creating the New Buddhism* in the Fall, 1988 issue of the BPF Newsletter. It would seem that a vigorous Buddhist practice, when confronting feminism (as a polar extreme), would seek to go beyond it, not ride the pendulum to a new antipodes.

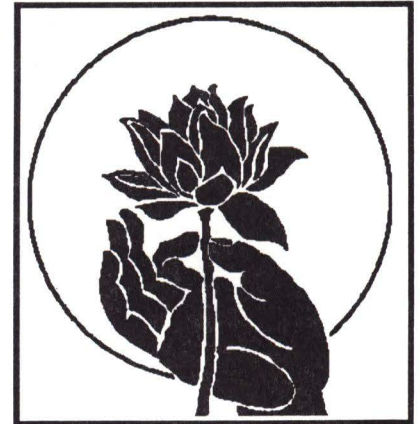
The author's idea that the pendulum "has swung so far to the male side that there is a need to swing it all the way back and for a time allow only women to be teachers," is, I hope, seen as a bit extreme by most of your readers. Buddhism, as a Middle Path, is rendered ineffective as a spiritual tool when bound to a polar position.

I, too, feel that our society is in need of healing from years of patriarchal orientation; but I don't think that healing will come from a feminist tyranny replacing it. Somewhere it is written that two wrongs don't make a right.

This is "an historical moment" where we can put the excesses of the past behind us. Let's work together, sisters and brothers, to establish a just society where all are free to follow the dictates of their nature.

Sincerely,
Marcus McClary

Cover painting "Dakini the Sky Goer" by Mayumi Oda,
Photographed by Maureen Murdock



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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 \$3.00 post-paid from the BPF National office, address above. © 1989 BPF

From the Editor:

Yesterday two large bookstores here in Berkeley—Cody's and Waldenbooks—were bombed presumably for carrying *Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie. A page or two past the newspaper story about the bombing was another chilling account—this one about the 'Aryan Woodstock.' I read how the White Aryan Resistance (WAR) was planning a concert in Napa, California featuring 'skinhead' bands, as part of a membership recruitment drive for their white supremacist group. Intolerance has always been with us, but these manifestations drive the problem home a new way.

Most of us holding this paper right now do so in relative comfort; I imagine we also feel fairly secure from persecution for our beliefs. Death threats, censorship and bombings are things we read about; they happen 'over there.' But now the bombings have come to Berkeley and New York and they bring with them a host of emotions: terror, admittedly, for if these threats against liberty are effective (even as a scare tactic) we are all in much more precarious positions; indignation, that a man can be given a planetary death sentence for making light of a religious figure; sympathy, for the victims (Mr. Rushdie, especially) for the governments in their efforts to maintain delicate relations while handing emotional dynamite back and forth to each other - sympathy even for the Ayatollah, who must feel trapped, and backed into a political and cultural corner to spew such venom; and shame, sadness, that the most aggressive, violent, and confused elements in human nature can still so easily wreak havoc on so many.

At the same time, I feel we've been given an insight into the conditions under which a great deal of 'the rest of the world' must live. Stories like Steve Denney's — about the trials of Vietnamese monks, or Pat Aiello's account of the continuing tragedy in Tibet—hit a lot closer to the bone than before. "Interbeing" becomes direct and obvious.

As Buddhists, we turn to our sanghas for support, but on this front as well disarray is rampant. Even our own BPF is experiencing growing pains and leadership issues (a detailed report will appear in the next issue.)

What we can celebrate, though, is that there are a number of excellent Buddhist teachers alive today who have suffered unspeakable tribulations of their own, and have forged their practices and teachings in the heat of those conditions. I am thinking now of Thich Nhat Hanh, whose wisdom runs through this publication like life blood. I am thinking of Mahaghosananda and his work in Cambodia. I am also thinking of the compassionate but implacable Dalai Lama, supreme example of the Tibetan spirit . As the threats come closer, the courage and wisdom of these teachers shines even more brilliantly.



You will notice that this issue looks different from previous designs. We are fortunate to be working with Larry Watson, Art Director at the Yoga Journal. While Larry has given generously from his vast store of visual and technical knowledge, we do not consider this a 'finished product.' Let us know what you think of the look.



The Newsletter and its readers owe a debt of immeasurable gratitude to Arnold Kotler. His dedication and unflagging energy are inspirational. He opened the back door to this job and good-

naturally kicked me in. I aspire to maintain his standards, but the challenge is really on us all. The Newsletter depends upon the contributions of its readers. Send us your ideas for stories, your full-blown stories, your photos, poems, letters, opinions, and (ahem) your Chapter Reports. As the thin filament that connects all the chapters and all the members, the Newsletter depends upon you.

Letters Continued

A year ago I saw the following statement and signed it without a moment's hesitation: "As a Conscientious Military Tax Objector, I am resolved to prepare myself to refuse military taxes by the time I am officially notified by the Conscience & Military Tax Campaign (CMTC) that there are 100,000 signed resolutions on file." Although I had considered not paying war taxes for years, I had put the thought aside for all the reasons that we all put this thought aside, even though we are dedicated to the cause of peace. However, the knowledge that I would be doing this with another 99,999 people overcame all fear and doubt.

I recently wrote to the CMTC asking how far they had come on signatures and was informed that in the nine years since its beginning, they had amassed about 4,700 names. I began to wonder why this seemingly simple, invaluable idea had not caught on, and thought that if there were a campaign directed to the 4,700 signators asking each of them to get ten signatures and the ask that total to get three to five more, we would have more than 100,000 by tax day 1989 or 1990. Surely there are that many people working for peace in this country. In my initial attempts to get ten signatures, I found the following information helpful to my friends:

No one really knows how many tax resisters there are, but the number is surely in the thousands. Surveys conducted by war tax resistance groups show that only 36% of the total income tax refused over an 18 year period has ever been collected by the IRS. When it is collected, interest and penalties are usually collected with it. However groups exist whose supporters pay into a fund which helps to pay the interest and penalties. One such fund is the Tax Resistance Penalty Fund sponsored by the North Manchester FOR (PO Box 25, N. Manchester, IN 46962.)

These efforts often cost the IRS more than the penalties that are imposed. The IRS employs a finite number of people and only so much effort can be put into collecting these taxes. If they manage to collect from you, it means that someone else is spared, and they are usually not interested in anything under \$2,500 owed.

I have decided to amend my W-4 form to claim ten deductions. I feel a little embarrassed about making this a public statement, but I am saying it to tell you that I understand the difficulty. I am 57 years old. I am not particularly courageous. I have never been to Nicaragua or to any war zone. I have never committed civil disobedience and have never been in jail, but I can no longer live with the knowledge of what the government does with my money. And so I ask you to join me. I ask 99,999 of you to join me. I have a vision of a rally on the steps of Capitol on tax day, and the passage of the Peace Tax Fund bill. And we will sing Ed McCurdy's song - "Last night I had the strangest dream I ever dreamed before. I dreamed the world had all agreed to put an end to war..." —Fran Levin

For pertinent addresses, see *War Tax Resistance*, this issue

READINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Five Awarenesses

In early November, in Sarnath (The Deer Park where the Buddha delivered his first sermon) Thich Nhat Hanh performed a wedding ceremony for BPF members Allan Badiner and Marion Hunt. The vows he gave the couple were the Five Awarenesses:

1. We are aware that all generations of our ancestors and all future generations are present in us.
2. We are aware of the expectations that our ancestors and our children and their children have of us.
3. We are aware of the fact that our peace, joy, freedom and harmony is the peace, joy, freedom and harmony of our ancestors and of our children and their children.
4. We are aware that understanding is the very foundation of love.
5. We are aware that blaming and arguing never help us and only create a wider gap between us....that only understanding, trust and love can help us change and grow.

Women & Buddhism & The 12-Step Meeting

Now there is a generic 12-Step meeting for women in both Buddhist practice and 12-Step recovery. This meeting grew out of discussion groups at last summer's Celebration of Women in Buddhist Practice. Several of us in the East Bay expressed a burning desire to explore the intersection of Buddhist practice and 12-Step recovery on a regular basis.

Since October, we've held an open weekly meeting. We share our experience, strength, and hope as we explore the common themes of Buddhist practice and 12-Step recovery (some of which become apparent when the precepts and 12 steps are read side by side). We began by focusing on the 12 Steps, tools common to all the recovery programs, feeling that this gave us a focus for action and that we could make adaptations as we went along. And we have!

We have now touched on several topics, including pain and suffering, death, Steps 1-4 and surrender, Step 10 and the Tiep Hien precepts. Our sharing has become very exciting and personally rewarding. This meeting gives us a spiritual serenity that is unrealized in many 12-Step meetings, which tend to emphasize western Judeo/Christian spirituality.

Women in all 12-Step programs are welcome. Currently we have women from AA, ACA, Al-Anon, DA, NA, and OA. We also come from various Buddhist disciplines, including Zen, Vipassana, and Tibetan. This is not an introduction to Buddhist practice, nor is it a beginner's recovery meeting. It is an addition to, not a replacement for regular 12-Step meetings. Beginners are welcome, but we ask them to continue working the 12-Step programs that focus on their particular compulsions.

Our meeting format is that of a traditional 12-Step meeting. However, instead of the usual "moment of silence", we have a 20 minute meditation. Meetings can include speakers, discussion, and readings from various 12-Step program literature and Buddhist works.

We meet weekly in Oakland at Mandana House (541 Mandana, between Lakeshore and Grand Avenue) on Thursday evenings, 7:30-9 p.m.) Since October, our number has grown from a handful of organizers to over a score of women.

One important aspect of 12-Step recovery is personal anonymity. Our dedication to anonymity helps us to maintain the 12th tradition in AA—of keeping principles above personalities. This tradition makes us leaderless, keeps us detached, and grounds us in our moment-to-moment reality. Without anonymity we could easily become ego-centered and self-important as this new 12-Step approach gains strength, momentum, and community. However, needless to say, we're still very excited. We hope that women in other localities will begin similar meetings.

Open Letter From Michael Phillips

A tiny bird of peace just cracked out of its shell, but the mother won't be able to nurture it. I started two projects, one that I'm not able to pursue. My current involvement in 'Social Thought' the weekly half-hour FM radio show, requires my full attention and I can not work on the other project that is very important to me. Do you know anyone interested?

The project is organizing the 50th Commemoration of the Japanese-American internment. 1992 is the year, which leaves three years of organizing. No one else is working on this yet. It needs to be done.

110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were put in concentration camps. It is a shameful act that few Americans know or care about; one that is significant in understanding our Constitution and the nature of war hysteria. It has a bearing on the remaining decades of our lives as our nation fans the fires of hatred and war against Japan.

This commemoration needs to be done by non-Japanese, just as non-Jewish Germans needed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Kristalnacht. The opportunity to play a positive role in history does not come often. This pivotal role requires an understanding of our distinctive anti-Asian history; Japanese settlers were never allowed to be citizens before 1954, nor to own property. The future looks even more grim. Three books document our present road to war: *Beyond National Borders* by Kenichi Ohmae, *Trading Places* by Clyde Prestowitz Jr. and *The New U.S. Japanese Relationship* by Ellen L. Frost.

To connect our history with our current militant behavior may be possible in this historic moment. The Smithsonian has an excellent exhibit on the internment which will last through 1992. Plenty of good books have been published recently on the subject, and Congress voted reparations last year. The time is ripe, the bird—if nurtured—will ultimately be a blessing.

Call or write if you can help.

Michael Phillips 62 Stanton St. San Francisco, CA. 94114
1-415-929-7417

READINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Dalai Lama: Love A Universal Religion Hindustan Times Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Dec. 3— The qualities of love and compassion are universal qualities which various religions try to develop among their adherents, but religion is not a prerequisite for developing these qualities which may be said to constitute a universal religion in themselves, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said here this morning. He was delivering the ninth Bhimsen Sachar Memorial Lecture on “spiritual values in the modern world” organized by the Servants of the People Society at Lajpat Bhawan.

His Holiness, said “you don’t need a complicated philosophy, you don’t need a temple to develop these qualities.” He said that while suffering and tragedy is very bad, it is also the best opportunity to learn patience and tolerance which for him is not a sign of weakness but a sign of strength. The Dalai Lama said that one’s mental attitude determined one’s happiness as one could be surrounded with one’s best friends and still be unhappy; with the right attitude, however, very little could disturb one’s mental peace. In a more personal vein, he said he had gained useful experience in the last 40 years of his life.

His Holiness said that as mind or consciousness is the prime mover, spiritualism is related to the mind. For him, spiritual is having a good heart and being kind. “Even someone not religious minded can develop these good qualities of the human mind,” he said. The Dalai Lama said these qualities have an eternal relevance, particularly in modern times when materialism is so advanced and the destructive power has increased so much. Even scientists who are non-believers are now concerned about the future of humanity, he pointed out.

Nuclear destruction is not the only danger facing mankind, the Dalai Lama warned. More threatening is the slow, unnoticed destruction of the environment. “Mother Earth is telling us to behave, there are signs of limitation,” he warned. This is a global crisis involving all humanity and national boundaries are secondary, he said.

Returning to the theme of love and compassion, the 53-year old Tibetan leader that scientists claim that scientists claim that the mental health of a mother affects the growth of her foetus and that the development of the brain in the first few months is crucially dependent upon the affection the mother gives. Love and compassion are thus key factors in the development of a healthy child. This is true for adults as well, he said. Genuine love and concern can change that attitude of others while a selfish, narrow-minded way of thinking has a negative result.

Individuals need good friends for good health and these are won by sincerity rather than power or money. Just as the economy know no national boundary and each nation is dependent upon the other and cannot develop without genuine cooperation, so people too are inter-dependent, the Dalai Lama said.

Warning that mental unrest can be harmful to health as well, the Dalai Lama said “inner peace is really precious.” The strongest external enemy cannot destroy one’s inner peace

and happiness, but one’s own anger and hatred can destroy both one’s own happiness and that of others’ as well. This is because it creates a negative atmosphere and destroys the harmony in the family, community and nation. Inner peace and strength however, builds determination and hope, His Holiness said.

Reprinted from the Hindustan Times.

From a letter dated June 28, 1988 by Dr. Abelardo Brenes to Dr. Geraldo Budowsky, regarding an upcoming Conference in Costa Rica

We have been inspired for the vision of this conference by Pope John Paul’s peace message given on January 1st, 1986, in which he said that north/south, east/west, there should be one single vision of peace on earth; also by the interfaith gathering at Assisi, in November of 1986; and by the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival. The basic rationale of this proposal is based on the assumption that:

1. the Assisi and other gatherings have provided general guidelines and inspirations for showing that it is possible and necessary to link spiritual and political processes for the resolution of our planet’s problems;
2. the problem that remains now is how to achieve this through concrete policies for the effective utilization of our human, institutional and technological resources;
3. in this respect, education for peace—in all of its dimensions, from a base concept of peace as a state of consciousness—will necessarily play a key role;
4. the University for Peace has been created for the purpose of promoting education for peace on a global scale and humanity now has the potential of global communications to achieve this in an effective way if there were to be political will;
5. Costa Rica as a nation can be seen as a living laboratory for the creation of a potential civilization based on spiritual principles, since it is already demilitarized, has an advanced system of government based on the principles of promotion of general welfare for its population and is actively attempting to create a policy for future development based on principles of sustainability and conservation;
6. however, Costa Rica is also facing, as is every other nation on the planet, tremendous threats due to the influence of models of development based on materialism, over-consumption and disregard for the ecological base. In this respect, we see Costa Rica as a kind of eye in a geopolitical hurricane: the main north/south and east/west polarities that all of humanity is trying to resolve are particularly alive here, given its open nature with respect to the rest of the planet. At the same time, there is tremendous freedom for dialogue.
7. Given these assumptions, we believe that the only way of resolving the above-mentioned polarities is through spiritual inspiration and development of human beings and that the way to achieve this is through peace education, understood in its most ample sense.

READINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

At present we have been able to achieve the following, in relation to our planning process:

1. A general acceptance for the Government of President Oscar Arias to participate in the Conference planning activities. So far what we have determined as key elements are an opening and welcoming speech from President Arias, and a formal presentation of Costa Rica's National Strategy for Sustainability Development, based on the World conservation Strategy, developed by IUCN. We have also requested that President Arias explore the possibility of obtaining support from the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica for this Conference.

2. An acceptance by His Holiness The Dalai Lama of Tibet to assist in this conference as a keynote speaker. He has offered to give a public address on "The True Meaning of Peace" and to participate in two interdisciplinary round-table discussions.

3. Archbishop Monsenor Roman Arrieta has offered to host the Dalai Lama in the Seminario Mayor (Theological Seminary) where his Holiness John Paul II stayed on the occasion of his visit to Costa Rica.

We have been particularly interested in Buddhist teachings which link a perception of nature based on compassion for all living beings with a model of human development based on a life devoted to meeting true bodily needs, elimination of cravings, inner peace, illumination and freedom. Of course, we are also very interested in exploring the ethical and conservationist principles that are common in all religious and secular traditions, which are possibly in consonance with the Buddhist view.

We are currently in urgent need of international support to make this project viable. We have approached the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, and the Global Cooperation for a Better World project, which is being coordinated in many countries by the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.

Once again I wish to thank you for this opportunity to be able to give you my opinions... and my gratitude for the support you are giving to the Conference "Seeking The True Meaning Of Peace."

Conference Coordinator Dr. Abelardo Brenes

To register in the Conference, contact:
Dr. Brenes, Conference Director
University for Peace, P.O. Box 199-1250
Escazu, Costa Rica
Tel: 506-57-06-97
Fax: 506-49-19-29

Conference costs are listed as follows:
registration forms postmarked by March 25—\$250,
by May 25—\$300, and \$350 thereafter.

World Peace Project

Another program in nascent stages which hopes to use a single country's issues to turn the whole world toward

peace is called the World Peace Project. Carol Peach hopes that by focusing world attention on pacifying the turmoil in Tibet (see *Tibet: A Tragedy in Progress*, by Pat Aiello) the whole struggle toward world peace can be raised to a higher level of spirituality. Her program begins by endorsing the Dalai Lama's Five Point Peace Plan, and goes on from there. For more information, contact:

Carol Peach/ World Peace Project
30360 Mulholland Hwy.
Agoura, CA 91301
1-818-707-3755

Drepung—Loseling Monks Tour the U.S. by Ruth Klein

Tantric Buddhist ritual songs, dances, and instrumental musical pieces are being performed by eight Tibetan lamas and monks from the Drepung Loseling monastery during a tour of 108 U. S. cities.

Drepung Loseling, established near Lhasa in 1416 AD, housed at its zenith more than 10,000 monks. The monastery has now relocated in South India.

Adorned in rich colorful brocades and traditional head dress, the monks play Tibetan horns, trumpets, cymbals, bells and drums. The Tibetans believe that witnessing performances of sacred music and dance brings blessings, peace and harmony to the spectator.

The non-profit tour, sponsored nationally by the Tibet House, has three purposes: to foster world peace through sacred music; to bring peace particularly to Central Asia by giving exposure to this ancient and endangered culture; and to help preserve the Drepung Loseling monastery.

The tour continues as follows:

Louisiana & Texas, March 28—April 7;
call 1-504-888-9118

Tennessee, April 8; call 1-901-743-5199

During May the monks will be in the Northeast, including Boston and New York. For more information, a message can be left for tour coordinator, Glenn Mullin, 1-212-874-5337. Anyone wishing to help or contact the monastery, please write: Drepung Loseling Educational Trust Secretary PO Tibetan Colony, Mundgod, District N. Kanara Karnataka State 581411 India

JUST A MOMENT

*I'm planning
To get around
To living in the moment
Just as soon
As I clear up
A few really urgent things
And get some of my plans
A little more together.*

Joe Maizlish

Thich Nhat Hanh's Schedule in North America, Spring 1989

Date	Time	City	Public Lecture Location	For info, Call
Wed., March 22	7:00 pm	Houston, TX	First Unitarian Church 5210 Fannin, Houston	(713) 773-8708
Saturday, April 1	7:00 pm	Los Angeles	First Christian Church of Santa Monica 609 Arizona (@ 6th St.), Santa Monica	(213) 396-5054
Saturday, April 8	10:00 am	Ojai, CA	Ojai Foundation Ojai-Santa Paula Rd. (Hwy. 150)	(805) 646-8343
Sunday, April 23	1:00 pm	Stanford, CA	Stanford Univ. Main Quadrangle Stanford	(415) 723-1762
Tuesday, April 25	8:00 pm	Berkeley, CA	First Congregational Church 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley	(415) 548-6466
Sunday, April 30	7:30 pm	Santa Cruz, CA	First Congregational Church 900 High Street, Santa Cruz	(408) 423-1626
Monday, May 15	7:30 pm	Boulder, CO	Naropa Institute 2130 Arapahoe, Boulder	(303) 733-9914
Sunday, May 21	10:00 am	Chicago, IL	Buddhadharma Meditation Center 8910 Kingery Road, Hinsdale, Illinois	(312) 475-0080
Saturday, June 3	7:30 pm	Washington, D.C.	Friends Meeting House 2111 Florida Avenue N.W., Wash. DC	(703) 525-3459
Sunday, June 4	11:00 am	New York City	Cathedral of St. John the Divine Amsterdam & 110th Ave., NYC	(212) 316-7400
Monday, June 12	7:30 pm	Boston, MA	New England Life Hall 225 Clarendon St., Boston	(617) 924-1100

Dates	Retreat/Location	Contact
March 27 - 31	Retreat for Children & Families Santa Barbara, California	Marin County BPF (415) 389-9729
March 31 - April 9	Retreat for Artists Ojai, California	Ojai Foundation (805) 646-8343
April 9 - 14	Retreat for Veterans Santa Barbara, California	Casa de Maria (805) 969-5031
April 17 - 22	Cultivating Mindfulness Watsonville, California	East Bay BPF (415) 548-6466
April 26 - 30	Retreat for Peaceworkers (already filled up)	
May 2 - 5	Seattle Area (already filled up)	
May 8 - 13	Retreat for Psychotherapists Winter Park, Colorado	Boulder/Denver BPF (303) 733-9914
May 17 - 20	Chicago Area (already filled up)	
May 23 - 26	Washington DC Area Clifton, Virginia	Washington D.C. BPF (703) 892-4174
June 5 - 10	Omega Institute Rhinebeck, NY	Omega Institute (914) 338-6030

A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION AND WAR TAX RESISTANCE

by Bruce Byers

An ancient and central precept of Buddhism is not to kill, or stated positively, to act with compassion toward all beings. Although I attempt to live by this precept in a direct way, I realized that I am indirectly involved in killing my fellow humans every day.

The Precept of Not Killing

'Not Killing' is the first of the five ancient Buddhist precepts that guide 'Right Action', which is one part of the Noble Eightfold Path. Thich Nhat Hanh has modified and modernized these precepts into the fourteen precepts of the Tiep Hien Order, or Order of Interbeing. The Twelfth Tiep Hien Precept states: "Do not kill. Do not let others kill. Find whatever means possible to protect life to to prevent war." As Thich Nhat Hanh explains, because we 'inter-are' with all other beings, when we do violence to others we ultimately do violence to ourselves. Killing someone immediately kills the spirit of Buddhism in us.

The Eleventh Tiep Hien Precept is closely related to the Twelfth. It states, "Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature. Do not invest in companies that deprive others of their chance to live. Select a vocation which helps realize your ideal of compassion." This precept relates to 'Right Livelihood', another part of the Noble Eightfold Path. Each of us must decide how far we can follow this precept. In the world of interbeing, complicity is the ultimate fact of life; this fact gives rise to the bodhisattva ideal of Mahayana Buddhism. There are some choices to be made, however. For example, a sincere attempt to follow this precept would seem to exclude certain vocations. Could an Air Force officer assigned to a nuclear missile silo, whose job involves training to carry out a nuclear holocaust, live out the vow of a bodhisattva? For early Buddhists (as for early Christians) the occupation of a soldier was not considered compatible with right livelihood and right action.

Most of us aren't in the military. But in this age of nuclear weapons and high technology delivery systems there is less reliance on soldiers to fight wars and more reliance on weapons themselves. Because a nuclear war would probably be over in a matter of hours or days, the protracted industrial effort that went into past wars like World War II will not be possible. In a sense a nuclear war has to be fought in advance, by stockpiling all of the weapons to be used in a huge 'wargasmic' holocaust. We are 'fighting' a future nuclear war now, and each U.S. and Soviet taxpayer is a soldier in that war; we are not fighting with our bodies, but with the tax dollars we pay for stockpiling the weapons. Each taxpayer is therefore in

a similar moral position as a missile silo officer.

The average U.S. taxpayer works for about one-fourth of each year just to pay taxes. Last year about 55% of federal taxes went directly or indirectly to the military. Thus for about one-eighth of a year each of us works at a vocation that violates the Buddhist precept not to kill.

Complicity runs deep; most of us seldom stop to think just how deep. Do we have any choices open to us? Later I will argue that we do.

Robert Aitken-roshi, another contemporary Buddhist teacher, has also adapted the ancient precepts for today's conditions. The first of the Ten Grave Precepts discussed by Aitken-roshi in *The Mind of Clover* is "Not Killing." Expressing the perspective of interbeing, the perspective of bodhisattvas, he writes, "It is the perversion of self-realization into self-aggrandizement that directs the course of our lives to violence. the fundamental fact is that I cannot survive unless you do. My self-realization is your self-realization."

He continues, "We have reached the place in international affairs, and in local affairs too, where it is altogether absurd to insist, as some of my Buddhist friends still do, that the religious person does not get involved in politics...The time when politics meant taking a position of allegiance to one government faction or another has long passed. Politics in our day of nuclear overkill is a matter of ignoring the First Precept or acting on it."

Political Engagement East and West

One of the roots of the engaged and politically critical Buddhism now being embraced by many Western Buddhists leads back to Henry David Thoreau, one of our American Dharma-ancestors. Thoreau's vision was so eclectic and personal that most of us don't recognize his Buddhist leanings. For example, in 1844 he translated a fragment of *The Lotus Sutra* from a newly-published French translation and published it in *The Dial*, a Transcendentalist journal of which he was the assistant editor. This was the first publication of this classic Mahayana sutra in English.

Thoreau was fascinated by the small amount of Buddhist teaching available at the time, and he practiced a kind of contemplation with many similarities to Buddhist meditation. He also came out of a rather non-conformist religious and political tradition. Many of his Concord neighbors were Quakers and Unitarians, and his neighborhood was the scene of the beginning of the American Revolution just 41 years before his birth in 1817. Thoreau's most famous work besides *Walden* is his essay *On Civil Disobedience* which was first published in 1849. This essay was written to explain why he refused to pay the Massachusetts poll tax, a head tax imposed on every male

in the state. The Mexican-American War was underway, and Thoreau saw it as a war to extend the territory in which slavery was permitted. He considered the poll tax to be a 'war tax' used to support this unjust way, and he began refusing to pay the tax in the early 1840's. He spent a night in jail for tax resistance in 1846.

In *On Civil Disobedience*, Thoreau argued that many of his neighbors who prided themselves in stating they would refuse to serve in an unjust war were hypocrites, because they nevertheless sustained the war with their taxes. They refused to be soldiers themselves, but did not refuse to hire a substitute. Thoreau argued that this was morally inconsistent. In a famous passage on individual moral responsibility, he wrote, "If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood."

Thoreau argued that there was a higher law than the law of the State, and that we should obey that law, and disobey the law of the State if the two are in conflict. "It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right."

The Practice of Not Killing

In order to live by the precept not to kill, it seems that Buddhists should be conscientious objectors, refusing to serve in the military. During times of military draft, the Selective Service Act makes provisions for conscientious objectors who can demonstrate a religiously-based moral belief against killing to refuse military service and to do alternative nonmilitary service instead. During the Vietnam War several cases that tested the definition of conscientious objection were brought before the U.S. Supreme Court, and it is clear from these cases that Buddhists could qualify as conscientious objectors under the law.

If we understand that there are many indirect ways to kill our fellow humans, such as by paying military taxes, by living a lifestyle that exploits them or destroys the life-support systems of the planet, or by buying from or investing in companies that make weapons, then our practice of compassion must involve some changes of lifestyle, and perhaps even some civil disobedience. Many of these indirect ways of killing involve our economic practices.

Paying the military portion of our federal taxes is one major aspect of our economic complicity with war and killing, as has already been mentioned. About 55% of the federal funds budget goes directly or indirectly to the military, which means that during the past year the average U.S. taxpayer paid about \$3000 for past, present and future wars. This money was paid in income taxes and also federal excise taxes on alcohol, tobacco, and telephone service.

One way to avoid paying this tax is to live below a taxable income level. Doing so requires living simply and consuming less, which also reduces one's participation in other kinds of economic violence. Other options are now limited to illegal forms of war tax refusal. These include: refusing to pay the

federal telephone excise tax each month; refusing to pay a symbolic amount of federal income tax, such as the \$1.90 each year that the average taxpayer contributes to the nuclear weapons testing program, the \$8 a year for nuclear weapons research and development or the \$450 a year that goes for nuclear weapons and their delivery systems; refusing to pay the entire military portion (55%) of your federal income tax; refusing to pay any federal tax; or not filing a return.

There is now no legal recourse to paying military taxes that is comparable to the alternative service provision of the Selective Service Act.

Since 1972, legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Congress that would create a conscientious objector status for taxpayers and allow them to earmark all of their federal taxes for

non-military programs. Called the Peace Tax Fund Bill (H.R. 2041, S.1018,) this legislation has been very slowly gaining support in Congress.

A large number of Christian denominations endorse the Peace Tax Fund campaign, including the historic peace churches - The Brethren, Quakers and Mennonites - and other Protestant denominations such as the United Church of Christ. A large number of Christian and Jewish peace groups also endorse the legislation, such as the Jewish Peace Fellowship, Lutheran Peace Fellowship, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, Pax Christi USA and the Division of World Peace and Justice, US Catholic Conference. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, which played a major role in bringing the work of Thich Nhat Hanh to the attention of the West by sponsoring his U.S. tour in 1966, endorses this legislation. The Buddhist Peace Fellowship should take an active interest in passing such legislation because it would aid Buddhist conscientious objectors in their practice of right livelihood and nonviolence.

For information on Military Taxes and War Tax Resistance, contact:

War Tax Resisters League

339 Lafayette St.
New York, NY 10012
1-212-228-0450

Conscience & Military Tax Campaign
4534-1/2 University Way NE #204
Seattle, WA 98105
1-206-547-0952

National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee
P.O. Box 85810
Seattle, WA 98145
1-206-522-4377

For information about the Peace Tax Fund Bill:
National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund
2121 Decatur Place NW
Washington, DC 20008
1-202-483-3751

*We are 'fighting' a future nuclear war now,
and each U.S. and Soviet taxpayer is a soldier in that war;
we are not fighting with our bodies, but with the tax dollars
we pay for stockpiling the weapons.*

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER: VETERANS, MOLESTED CHILDREN, AND THE BUDDHA

by Katy Butler

One morning in the summer of 1956, a black car pulled up beside me on a busy road in Oxford England. A strange man leaned out the window and offered me a ride. I was seven years old, walking home from my riding lesson, wearing corduroy trousers, a navy blue raincoat two sizes too big, and my Wellington boots.

I got in—I had spent my bus money on candy—and a block from home, the stranger said, “We’re going to go around the block first.” I felt a lifting in the space where my heart should have been. I said nothing—I had been brought up never to contradict or disobey adults. The man turned off the main road, away from publicly acknowledged truths, off the main road, the common life and into a landscape of unacknowledged truth.

I remember only being parked at the side of the road, and turning my head to see he had pulled out his long purple-hooded thing. He got me rub it and rub it until white stuff came out the end. Oh, his eyes, how they closed, how his face jumped! So near to my house and my family, worlds were splitting open. I felt this man’s vulnerability and openness and my own panic and numbness. I was only a child, and yet I experienced becoming the thousand eyes and hands of Avalokiteshvara, Bodhisattva of compassion, hearing the cries of the world. But I was too frightened and too young to turn those eyes and hands inward, to hear my own cries as well.

We both pretended that it was perfectly normal for a stranger to pick up a little girl and have her masturbate him all over her hands. Smiling, he gave me a sack to use to wipe off. He dropped me at the corner; I politely promised him I’d tell nobody. After dinner, I told my mother and she called the police.

Some weeks later, I sat alone in a carved wooden witness box in an ornate hall, high above unfamiliar grownups in dark suits and funny white wigs that did not cover their hair. A man approached me with a Bible and told me how terrible it was to lie. Far below me I saw the stranger sitting at a table, his eyes shut in what I suddenly realized was shame. I put my hand on the Bible, took the oath and lied. I said I had never touched the stranger.

So I split off—from the stranger I felt I had betrayed, from the God in the bible I swore on, from the family and society I lied to, and from my own compassion for myself and for anyone else. I could share my experience fully with no one. The molestation and its aftermath became something to get over, not something to enter. The man was convicted of indecent exposure and ordered to get counselling. I went back to learning long division and acquiesced to the tacit pressure to forget it had ever happened. I learned that whether or not it is taboo to molest children (it happens to more than 15 percent of all children usually within families) it is certainly taboo to talk about it.

That moment of my life—shared only with a stranger—contained within it both the seeds of much future pain, and the seeds of my own spiritual life. When I cut myself off from it, I cut myself off from my own root. I thought that healing meant making myself over into someone to whom this had never happened. In my shame, I thought it was my job to clean up this dark and messy back room of my psyche, as though it were an aberration, different from all ‘normal’ human experience. Only then would I have the right to join the human race, and have a spiritual life.

This spiritual and emotional shame followed me through my teens, when I hitchhiked compulsively and denied it had anything to do with having been molested; through my twenties, when I tried to work on my problems in Co-counselling (non-professional peer counselling); into my thirties, when I entered therapy and also began to sit zazen.

At first I experienced my psychological and spiritual work as different. My first therapist was hostile to meditation—he said it “ungrounded” me—and my meditation community was not particularly interested in psychotherapy. Perhaps because Zen Buddhism has Japanese cultural roots that are elite, primarily male, and sometimes militaristic, I did not feel encouraged to bring emotional confusion into interviews with my teacher. One long-time monk told me that Zen presumed that psychological issues had already been dealt with before meditation practice began. I hoped meditation might help me leave behind my painful past, to put on robes and become somebody new. Much to my disappointment, this didn’t happen. Instead, I sat with half a heart leaving much of myself at the zendo door. In the images of the Buddha in the zendo, radiating peace, I did not see my own face reflected. As far as I could tell, Buddha had it made. He was male, and a medieval Asian nobleman. His spiritual journey began on the day he slipped out of the palace walls and *saw* physical suffering: old age, sickness, and death. I was a middle-class 20th-century American woman, steeped in the language of psychology and the suffering I experienced was primarily psychological.

But as I worked out a more Americanized form of Buddhism, and worked with a therapist more sympathetic to the spiritual dimension of my life, I have found a way to integrate these two paths, and to make the Buddha’s story work for me.

The keys to this integration came last year, when I began editing a book written by Winnie Smith, a nurse who worked for a year in an army intensive care unit in Vietnam in 1967. In one day, she saw more death and maiming than I hope or expect to see in a lifetime. The myths with which she went to Vietnam—that American foreign policy was well-intentioned and competent, that she was helping save a little people from Communist enslavement—were not adequate to what she saw. She held a Vietnamese child dying of napalm burns, and was sur-

prised to discover that we, not the communists, had dropped the napalm. She treated soldiers whose bodies were burning with white phosphorous and learned they were victims of accidental "friendly fire" from their own side. Outside the hospital, the Vietnamese she met did not seem grateful for her sacrifices; instead, rickshaw drivers cheated her and a shoeshine boy smeared her dress with polish.

To survive, she numbed her sense of compassion and suppressed her questions. When she came home, nobody wanted to hear about what she had experienced and she became one of many "closet Vets." In the early 1980's, after she read a book by another Vietnam nurse, she began to cry the tears she could not cry before, and memories emerged insistently, in flashbacks. The sound of a car's tire slapping the road became the whap of helicopter blades; summer fireworks sounded like fire-fights. She joined a veterans' rap group, suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

It was in the course of learning more about about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder that I found the key to uniting what had happened to Winnie and to me with what happened to the Buddha more than two thousand years ago. I interviewed a psychiatrist named Mardi Horowitz of Langley-Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute in San Francisco, the man who literally wrote the book on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. He told me that symptoms of PTSD—an oscillation between numb denial and being repeatedly flooded by memories of the trauma—might be evolutionarily useful.

The brain, he said, is attempting to develop a new "inner mental map" that integrates the shocking experience. "We seem to have a mechanism that repeats the memories of stressful events, to keep that process (of integration) in motion rather than putting it out of mind to avoid unpleasant feelings," he said. "Speculatively, this might be an evolutionary mechanism to allow us to get ready for such serious events in the future, and that gives us better survival ability. Mother Nature provides you with a mechanism to recollect traumas: you can't avoid it. You've got to pay attention."

Now I could bring together Buddha's life with that of myself and other human beings whose early experience was not of nobility, but of victimization. Post-traumatic stress, I realized, is one part of the mind knocking at the door of another part. Your mind will not let you rest until you enlarge your inner mental map and change your myths to include new data. That process—enlarging one's inner map until one can accept experience—seemed to be one of the goals of spiritual life.

I began to see Buddha's story as a metaphor for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and discovered my own way to tell it. Buddha was born in the Himalayan foothills, where his father was a chief of the Shakya clan. According to one version of the legend, brahmins prophesied that Buddha would become either a great king or a great sage. To prevent him from becoming an ascetic, Buddha's father raised him within the walled garden of the palace, surrounded by dancing and luxury, shielded from all troubling experience. As a result, Dr. Mardi Horowitz might say, Buddha developed an "insufficient inner mental map" to deal

with the nature of reality.

One day, when he was a young married man with an infant son, Buddha slipped from the walled garden. In the streets, he encountered a sick man, an old man, and a corpse being carried to the burning grounds. His charioteer told him that all beings are subject to old age, sickness, and death. Nothing in Buddha's previous life—nothing in the myths of palace culture—had prepared him for this experience. He was so shocked that he experienced Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. He suffered flashbacks, recurrences, and obsessive thoughts about what he had seen. The memories would not leave him alone until he sufficiently enlarged his own 'inner mental map' to include human suffering.

Buddha quickly realized that his palace culture would give him no help in integrating these truths: to use a modern phrase, those inside the walled garden were 'in denial.' So he left and began wandering, searching for a way to integrate his traumatic vision into his life, to enlarge his inner mental map.

In the same way, the child in a culture that will not publicly acknowledge child sexual abuse (or teach children

how to protect themselves against it) and the young soldier who has received his orders for Vietnam are also living in a walled garden, whose myths—whose views of reality—are not adequate to the experiences they are about to suffer.

For vets and survivors of childhood sexual abuse, the job of enlarging the inner mental map is made harder by the larger society's attempt to keep its original, insufficient myths intact. During the early stages of the Vietnam War, Americans desperately wanted to continue to believe in their good intentions. The survivor of incest or molestation faces a society that desperately wants to believe that children are protected, and that families are safe and nurturing places. So to break denial, to help each other face the truth of what we have experienced and to heal, we come together -- in vets rap groups, in 12-step meetings for survivors of childhood sexual abuse, in group therapy and individual therapy, in sanghas or religious communities. Here, we can say, yes, there is suffering, yes, I have seen old age, sickness, and death, and together we can enlarge our inner mental maps to encompass all experience. In this way, the healing of my childhood suffering becomes both a spiritual and a psychological journey.

Sometimes I put it to myself this way: what if Buddha had had a sister with as much spiritual curiosity and stamina as he had, born equally miraculously, also rising from the womb saying, "Here am I, the World Honored One!"

Raised in the walled garden of the palace, she, too, slips away one day to see what lies beyond. But on her journey out, she is molested or raped, and it is with this shocking experience that she returns to the palace, picks up a few things and quietly leaves, vowing not to cease her investigation until she finds the answer to the problem of suffering. In this way, Buddha's path and my own are the same.

This essay was commissioned by Yoga Journal, which will print it in the Spring. Katy wants to thank Steve Bodian for allowing it to be reprinted here. (c) 1989 Katy Butler

In my shame, I thought it was my job to clean up this dark and messy back room of my psyche, as though it were an aberration, different from all 'normal' human experience. Only then would I have the right to join the human race, and have a spiritual life.

THE VERY SHORT SUTRA ON THE MEETING OF THE BUDDHA AND THE GODDESS

Thus have I made up:

Once the Buddha was walking
along the forest path in the Oak Grove at Ojai,
walking without arriving anywhere or having any
thought of arriving or not arriving.

And lotuses, shining with the morning dew
miraculously appeared under every step
Soft as silk beneath the toes of the Buddha.

When suddenly, out of the turquoise sky,
dancing in front of his half-shut inward-looking
eyes, shimmering like a rainbow
or a spider's web
transparent as the dew on a lotus flower
—the Goddess appeared quivering
like a hummingbird in the air before him.

She, for she was surely a she
as the Buddha could clearly see
with his eye of discriminating awareness wisdom,
was mostly red in color
though when the light shifted
she flashed like a rainbow.

She was naked except
for the usual flower ornaments
goddesses wear.

Her long hair
was deep blue, her eyes fathomless pits
of space, and her third eye a bloodshot
song of fire.

The Buddha folded his hands together
and greeted the Goddess thus:

“O goddess, why are you blocking my path?
Before I saw you I was happily going nowhere.
Now I'm not so sure where I go.”

“You can go around me,”
said the Goddess, twirling on her heel like a bird
darting away,
but just a little way away,
“or you can come after me
but you can't pretend I'm not here,
This is my forest, too.”

With that the Buddha sat
supple as a snake
solid as a rock
beneath a Bo tree
that sprang full-leaved
to shade him.

“Perhaps we should have a chat,”
he said.

“After years of arduous practice
at the time of the morning star
I penetrated reality and...”

“Not so fast, Buddha,” the Goddess said,
“I am reality.”

The earth stood still,

the oceans paused,
the wind itself listened
—a thousand arhats, bodhisattvas and dakinis
magically appeared to hear
what would happen in the conversation.

“I know I take my life in my hands,”
said the Buddha,
“But I am known as the Fearless One
—so here goes.”

And he and the Goddess
without further words
exchanged glances.

Light rays like sun beams
shot forth
so brightly that even
Sariputra, the All-Seeing One,
had to turn away.

And then they exchanged thoughts
And the illumination was as bright as a diamond candle
And then they exchanged minds
And there was a great silence as vast as the universe that
contains everything

And then they exchanged bodies
And then clothes

And the Buddha arose
as the Goddess
and the Goddess arose as the Buddha.

And so on back and forth
for a hundred thousand hundred thousand kalpas.

If you meet the Buddha
you meet the Goddess.
If you meet the Goddess,
you meet the Buddha.

Not only that. This:
The Buddha is emptiness,
The Goddess is bliss.
The Goddess is emptiness,
The Buddha is bliss.
And that is what
And what-not you are
It's true.

So here comes the mantra of the Goddess and the Buddha,
the unsurpassed non-dual mantra. Just to say this mantra,
just to hear this mantra once, just to hear one word of this
mantra once makes everything the way it truly is: OK.

So here it is:
Earth-walker/sky-walker
Hey silent one, Hey great talker
Not two/not one
Not separate/not apart
This is the heart
Bliss is emptiness
Emptiness is bliss
Be your breath, Ah
Smile, Hey, And relax, Ho
Remember: You can't miss.

This sutra was written by Rick Fields at Engaging American Buddhism, a retreat and experiment for artists with Thich Nhat Hanh, May 1-12, 1987 at the Ojai Foundation. He welcomes your response; you may contact him at 1085 14th St. #1113, Boulder, CO 80302.

MAKING LIFE MORE POWERFUL

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAYUMI ODA

by David Schneider, January 11, 1989

Buddhist Peace Fellowship: In the Buddhist Peace Fellowship we usually are talking about "Engaged Buddhism"; but another thing we are interested in is the idea of "being peace." You seem to be a really good example of that, so I wondered if you could just talk a bit about how one of your days goes—what's your schedule?

Mayumi Oda: Typical day? We get up at 6:30—now I have a practitioner friend living here— Mu-shin, she's going to have a baby. She was a nun in Korea, so she brought her practice here, and we do 108 bows in the morning, first thing. Then we sit two 30 minute periods, and we chant the Heart Sutra, and Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo. Usually, on the weekends, whoever is staying here joins.

Then mornings, since my kids are gone, I usually work in my studio. At the very least, I stay here, in the studio. Doesn't mean I'm always working on..(points to art work), but at least I stay here.

In the afternoons I do gardening, or do my correspondence lots of things. But morning is very important.

BPF: And evenings?

MO: I try not to have too many engagements in the evenings. Because I like to get up fresh the next morning.

BPF: Do you view your art as a practice?

MO: I work hard on myself through art. I don't work hard on art. Art is an expression of myself, right? So whatever comes is myself. So for me it's more important to take care of myself than to take care of my art. So I don't see art as a place that I practice so much - do you understand?

BPF: You don't work on your art the way you work on your mind, say, in meditation?

MO: I don't. I mean, I do, but, I'm not sure how to say it...There was an artist in Japan - Tessai, very great calligrapher and artist. And he said that art is a path of purification too. So unless you get pure, your art will not get pure.

It's like what Thich Nhat Hanh says. People have told him that he should not garden so much, he should be writing a poem. And I understand that he said "If I did not garden, then I would not write the poem the way I do." That's sort of the way I feel. So I have to prepare the night before, you know, good sleep and all that. It's nothing extraordinary, have a good sleep, clean house, daily things...

BPF: You are a woman practicing Buddhism in America. And a lot of women these days are expressing the difficulties they find in being a woman and practicing. I wondered if you felt it was harder to practice as a woman.

MO: Well, I come from an absolutely different kind of background, being Japanese. There is almost no place for me to practice in Japan. So I feel very grateful that I can practice, as a woman, in this country.

For instance, If we practice Zen, Zen is a patriarchal tradition. A lot of things in it maybe don't come from Zen itself, but from the Samurai tradition. I think that's what women feel very up against. But I like the form. It helps me see myself, and if I feel something—you know, agitated or bothered—then I like to see what it is. So I don't find the form to be very difficult. Zen definitely made me realize my male side. But I understand how some other people feel.

But, you know, if I sit just with women, it feels...so nice, so

soft, and mellow. It's easier. I sometimes think it's a great idea to have a nunnery. Sex and sexual issues are very difficult to deal with, and very difficult to integrate in practice. It's probably one of the hardest, right? And unless you become SO deep in practice, I don't think you can go beyond that. People say "I'm practicing tantra." Balony,.. it's not that simple. So I feel very comfortable just practicing with women.

BPF: So in Japan, women have a much harder time practicing...

MO: In general, for lay people, there aren't that many places available.

BPF: So if you were a nun..

MO: Well, I don't know how much you practice as a nun. As a monk, probably you can more. I'm not so sure about Japan, but Mushin was telling me about Korea. Mostly the practice of the nuns is not to do meditation. Mostly they take care of the temple. It's a hard-working practice; they do sewing, and cleaning, but really, people don't believe that women will get enlightened.



Artist Mayumi Oda

PHOTO BY MAUREN MURDOC

*I work hard on myself through art.
I don't work hard on art.*

BPF: Really? That idea is still around? In Japan too?

MO: *Roshis* tell you "Oh, you're a woman. You don't have to practice. You don't have to do it." So really there aren't that many places available.

BPF: Are there social activism issues that you think about?

MO: Yes, I think ecology is very important. But you know, it's just part of taking care of ourselves and our future. I think about the cutting of the rain forest, about that being devastated, and that really hurts me. Chemical waste... Ourselves, going through all these papers everyday—how much we waste! It frightens me. I try to be conscious about paper and..

BPF: Do you recycle things?

MO: Yes, I try to. Newspaper, glass, things like that. Then also the nuclear issue is very important to me, because I know how scary that is.

BPF: From your personal experience.

MO: Right, as a Japanese child. I know how people died. I've seen it. The reality of war is just really so frightening to me. So peace is very important to me.

BPF: In addition to living as you do, which looks pretty much ideal, do you participate in any formal way in any groups working against these problems?

MO: Not so much as a group. If I can do it through my art, I think it's more effective. I've been involved with Informed Democracy's project, called "Sadako Project" to bring out the beauty of this girl, Sadako, who died of leukemia after the bomb at Hiroshima. She folded paper cranes in hopes of getting well—it's called "Sadako and 1000 Cranes." So Informed Democracy wants to make a video and a lot of people got involved: Liv Ullman is doing the narration, George Winston is doing the piano, so I did some art work; to raise money. What's the point of me going to meetings? To talk about this and that? I'd rather contribute to projects like the Sadako one.

I'm thinking of doing a children's book called "The Man Who Planted a Tree and Grew Happiness." It's from a story by Jean Giono. I hope I can make it into a book for young children. In my "Happy Veggies" book I tried to get children to see how they are living, growing.

BPF: It sounds like children are an important issue.

MO: It's the future, right? If you don't take care of them, you don't have a future.

BPF: "Happy Veggies" is also kind of an ecology book too, right? It's a sneaky ecology book.

MO: Well, it may not be obvious, but it does have a life, and a life force. There's something big there.

BPF: I think children recognize that.

MO: I hope so. You know, kids are very smart, very wise if we don't ruin them.

BPF: A friend told me that you are concerned with the issue of prostitution in Japan—that it is a big problem there.

MO: It's mostly in Korea, isn't it? Lots of women are imported from Korea, or from the Philippines. Amerasian. Prostitution is a big issue in Korea; the country is poor. Actually people from Japan go there because of the prostitutes. They have tours—they go and do it in Korea, and then come back.

BPF: I heard about a particular piece of your work—the Black Dakini painting. Someone told me that you felt it was a particularly important image for our time.

MO: The whole idea is that to really go beyond dualism you have to meet your death. Otherwise the dualism is so strong that you can't break through. It's like a teeth-grinding kind of effort to do it. We are in such a state on the global

level—the garbage, the pollution, not having enough oxygen because of trees being cut in forests, nuclear issues—we are absolutely, definitely in a very dangerous place now. Unless we see our own threat. Like a nuclear holocaust. All this to me is like a Black Dakini, and the more you see it, it's so close to you and it devastates you so much....then you come up with some solution to go beyond.

Unfortunately, as life goes, how many people think that their death is right there, next to you? We don't. Unless you have a diagnosis from a doctor that you have cancer or AIDS. Then maybe you can go beyond. This moment becomes important.

When I did this Black Dakini, I was thinking that it was my own death, yet I also felt it as global—sort of pan-society conscious level—that we are facing something very scary. This was to say, "Just see it. See what it is." If you hear Helen Caldicott talking about nuclear disaster and how close we are, it makes you really scared, and you start to engage with it.

Also Thay's teaching is like that. He seems such a gentle teacher, but what he faced was so devastating...His peace comes from what he faced in war. It gets you in the stomach.

[When I did this piece] friends were dying of cancer, you know, and I questioned "Can I die today? If I were to die today, what would I do?" And that became part of my morning meditation. I'd just think "Can I die today?" It makes my life more powerful.



PHOTO BY MAUREN MURDOC

...that became part of my morning meditation. I'd just think "Can I die today?"
It makes my life more powerful.

TIBET - A TRAGEDY IN PROGRESS

by Pat Aiello

In 1950, Tibet has quietly become a colony of China. In the process, one of the world's greatest living Buddhist civilizations was devastated. And it's still going on. The Chinese continue to chip away at what is left of thousands of years of art, literature, religion and sciences.

In an age when most countries are withdrawing from colonized territories, China is desperately clinging to hers - Tibet. China aggressively and rightly denounces other countries for colonialism and imperialism. But China is blind to a classic example of colonialism in its own backyard. No country seems to be immune to the criticism stemming from this political stance - except for China! The Soviet Union, under much criticism from other governments, finally withdrew its troops from Afghanistan. Will China ever be held accountable for its military occupation of Tibet?

In 1950 the United Nations condemned Chinese aggression in Tibet, but since then countries have politely turned away from Tibet, concerned with their relationship with China. Consequently, China acquired a land mass one-half the size of its own territory; a land rich in minerals, forests and space. Of course, Tibet's strategic geographic position between the Soviet Union, India and China, was a major factor in China's lust for the "Land of the Snows."

Many people throughout the world are concerned with the Chinese occupation of Tibet, and these concerns have coalesced into specific areas of interest and activity:

Human Rights

Because the Tibetans are primarily waging a peaceful struggle, the press is reluctant to cover it. The Dalai Lama, exiled leader of the Tibetan people and Buddhist monk, has consistently advocated a non-violent stand toward the Chinese. Not all Tibetans agree, but nearly all Tibetans comply. Due to the non-violent stance of the Tibetans and the lack of press coverage, the Chinese are not made accountable by world opinion or by retaliation by the Tibetan people. And when there was violence that received media attention, the Chinese promptly kicked the press out. As a result, the Chinese have a free hand in Tibet.

The little that is known about conditions in Tibet is mostly passed on to visitors by brave Tibetans who, in some cases, have risked their lives to tell their story. Tourists who are in Tibet during a newsworthy event are also sources of information. For example, on December 10, 1988, the Chinese opened fire into a crowd of monks, nuns, and lay people who were marching in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Eighteen people were killed and many wounded, including a Dutch woman, Christina Meindersma. This demonstration was highly publicized because a Euro-

pean woman was wounded.

The Press must be allowed access to Tibet. It is the only way to make the Chinese accountable for their actions in Tibet.

The Chinese have transferred 7.5 million Han Chinese into Tibet, so that the Tibetans, numbering 6 million, are now outnumbered in their own country, making them an anthropological curiosity in their own country.

Besides this population transfer, the Chinese are perpetrating other inhumane acts upon the Tibetan people that demand world attention.

- The Chinese are forcibly sterilizing Tibetan women without their knowledge or consent.
- The Chinese are imprisoning Tibetans on trumped-up charges and sentencing them without due process. To make matters worse, first-hand accounts of torture in the prisons are vivid and horrifying.
- The Chinese have arranged with the Nepalese government to repatriate Tibetans who are fleeing from Tibet to India via Nepal. This is a reversal of a long-standing policy in Nepal to allow Tibetans transit through their country to get to the refugee settlements in India. Many of those repatriated are young monks trying to get to Southern India to join monasteries there. Those caught like this in Nepal are returned to certain imprisonment.

The Chinese must be made accountable for their human rights abuses of the Tibetan people. They must allow human rights monitor groups into Tibet to witness the situation there. Human rights abuses are not an "internal affair" as the Chinese allege, but an international affair.

What you can do: One way to help bring these issues into awareness is to join international organizations such as Amnesty International or The International Red Cross and bring Tibet onto their agenda. Also, writing letters to the editors of local newspapers and commenting on these issues is a good way to raise public awareness of the situation in Tibet.

The Environment

Tibet, the Roof of the World, is being ravaged. Valuable natural resources, minerals and lumber, are being indiscriminately taken out of Tibet. The once forest-laden mountainsides are now bare and desolate. This sort of deforestation has dire consequences for Asia and the entire planet. Recent flooding in Bangladesh is a case in point. Many animal species are on the verge of extinction in Tibet as a result of deforestation and misuse of the environment. Many environmentalists are concerned enough to have travelled to Tibet in order to document this.

Alarming nuclear buildup on the Tibetan plateau is an issue that affects the planet as a whole. Allegations of nuclear dumping in Tibet have been made and are very serious. Given that all the major rivers in Asia flow out of Tibet, any contamination would have widespread effects.

What you can do: Provide information about Tibet to the many international environmental organizations, such as Greenpeace and the Sierra Club. Join in their letter-writing campaigns and stay informed of their activities.

Legislation

The West steadfastly refuses to make the Chinese accountable for their actions in Tibet and it is time this changed. Some governments around the world are beginning to speak out to protect the Tibetans. The United States Congress has brought up the issue of human rights abuses in Tibet, but the Reagan administration refused to let human rights complicate relations with our

"friendly" communist ally. The Bush administration has the chance to change this course— to insure that US-Chinese relations are not conducted at the expense of the Tibetan people. Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Dante Fascell and Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Claiborne Pell have written letters to the President expressing their desire that Tibet be on the agenda for the discussions in Beijing, as have members of The Congressional Human Rights Caucus.

It is hoped that Congress will continue to champion the Tibetan cause by reintroducing the HR 4570 bill into the House during this 101st session of Congress. HR4570 had linked failure to improve human rights in Tibet with economic sanctions against the PRC. Senator Jesse Helms has asked Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to hold hearings on human rights violations occurring in Tibet.

What you can do:

Much can be done to aid this process in Washington. Many groups have sprung up throughout the country that focus on organized letter-writing as a means to let our representatives in Washington know that Tibet is an issue that their constituents care about. The International Campaign for Tibet in Washington and local chapters of the U.S. Tibet Committee are excellent organizations to contact for more information.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

The ceaseless efforts of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize this year, have made the plight of his Tibetan people an international issue. Many major governments have welcomed His Holiness as an honored guest, even if they have not backed the Tibetan issue politically.

In September 1987, the Dalai Lama presented a Five Point Peace Plan to the U.S. Congress. This plan was received with enthusiasm by the Congress and has been the basis for a number of conferences around the world.

The Five Points are as follows:

1. Establish the whole of Tibet as a peace zone.
2. The end of population transfer of Chinese into Tibet.
3. Respect for Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic reform.
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste.
5. The commencement of earnest negotiations of the future status of Tibet.

His Holiness further modified this plan in an address made to the European Parliament in Strausborg, France by advocating less than complete independence, allowing China to handle foreign relations.

Since these proposals, the Chinese made an offer to His Holiness for formal negotiations with the time, venue, and negotiating team chosen by him. He chose Geneva, in January, with a team of negotiators from the Tibetan government-in-exile. After a long silence, the Chinese responded by refusing to meet with the Tibetans in Geneva, stating that they would meet with His Holiness in Beijing. This was unacceptable to the Tibetans, and it remains to be seen if any formal negotiations will take place between the Tibetans and the Chinese.

Who to Contact

The movement to help Tibet is a grass roots movement that is gaining momentum everyday— it needs your help. Local, national and international organizations must be urged to address Tibetan issues. Contact organizations that you belong to, provide them with information, get them involved.

International Campaign for Tibet

1511 K Street NW, Suite 739
Washington, DC 20005
201-628-4123 Tenzin Tethong, Michelle Bohana, John Ackerly
415-945-1522 Pat Aiello

The U.S. Tibet Committee

107 East 31st St.
New York, NY 10016
212-213-5010 Rinchen Dharlo, Tinley Nyandak
415-776-1979 Doc O'Connor

Bay Area Friends of Tibet

103 Castle Rock Rd.
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
415-945-1522
Gabriel Aiello

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship

P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94707
415-548-3735

Humanitas International

P.O. Box 818
Menlo Park, CA 94026
415-324-9077
Ed Lazar

Amnesty International of the USA

322 8th Ave.
New York, NY 10001
212-807-8400
415-848-5867
Hironaka

Asia Watch

739 Eighth St. SE
Washington, DC 20003
202-546-9336

Congressional Human Rights Foundation

3518 T St. NW
Washington, DC 20007
202-225-3531 David Phillips
415-848-4994 Michael Sautman

VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST MONKS DEATH SENTENCE COMMUTED FOLLOWING WORLD PROTEST

On charges of opposing the government. Two of the monks, Thich Tue Sy (secular name Pham Van Thuong) and Thich Tri Sieu (secular name Le Manh That) were sentenced to death. Other sentences ranged from four years to life imprisonment. However, we are happy to report that the death sentences of the two monks has been commuted to 20 years imprisonment, a decision which news reports attribute to international pressure.

BPF members may be familiar with the names of Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu, because for the last two years we have circulated petitions appealing for their release, as well as the release of a number of the other monks and nuns brought to trial September 30. Most of them had been detained for over four years without charge. When we learned of the death sentences last fall, we sent out "Urgent!" postcards to all BPF members urging that telegrams be sent to Nguyen Van Linh, Secretary-General of the Vietnamese Communist Party, appealing for the release of the two monks. We are very grateful for the overwhelming response of BPF members (the telegram company we recommended was also overwhelmed.) Your efforts were instrumental in saving the lives of these monks.

Besides the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, the protests and appeals on behalf of Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu ranged across the spectrum, including Vietnamese refugee groups, peace and human rights organizations (particularly Amnesty International, the Aurora Foundation, Indochina Project and International Fellowship of Reconciliation) and a number of governments, including Sweden, Australia, Britain, France, Holland and the United States. Within the U.S. government, the Congressional Human Rights Monitors, a bipartisan group representing over 100 congressmen, protested the death sentences, as did then Vice-President, now President George Bush. The most significant appeal, however, probably came from the Swedish Foreign Minister Stenn Andersson, who visited Vietnam October 21-24. Andersson, who had received appeals from Vietnamese refugees, raised the issue while meeting with Party leader Nguyen Van Linh. In response, Linh said he would contact the Municipal Court in Ho Chi Minh City to ask the court to abrogate the death sentences. The decision to commute the sentences was not announced, however, until November 15, when an appeal for 12 of the accused was heard before the Supreme People's Court of Vietnam.

According to an article in the October 10 issue of the Vietnamese government newspaper *Saigon Giai Phong* ("Liberated Saigon") Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu, "reactionaries under the cloak of Buddhism," had created an organization called the Front for Human Rights in Vietnam in an effort to "sow doubt and division among the people" and to overthrow the government. The newspaper said the two monks, along with the

elderly monk Thich Duc Nhuan, "obstinately refused to confess their crimes." It is highly unlikely that the monks could have been involved in a plot against the government. During two of the five years that Thich Tue Sy was allegedly a "ringleader" of this group, from 1979-81, he was actually in jail for staying at a pagoda where he was not registered (in Vietnam all clergy are subjected to strict household and travel restrictions.)

It is our belief that the monks were originally arrested along with other monks and nuns in April 1984 because the government feared their influence with intellectuals in the north. Both are former professors from the Buddhist Van Hanh University in Saigon and are well known for their scholastic achievements. Thich Tue Sy is a highly respected scholar known for his expertise in the works of the Buddhist saint Nagarjuna. Thich Tri Sieu is an authority on ancient Vietnam, whose research has been used by government-sponsored scholars in the writing of official histories of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Both are in their mid-forties, and represent the best of a younger generation of monks in Vietnam. Both were compiling an encyclopedia on Vietnamese Buddhism at the time of their arrest.

The human rights organization Amnesty International issued an "Urgent Action" notice December 9, describing the two monks as "prisoners of conscience" who "have been detained for the peaceful expression of their beliefs," and appealed for their immediate and unconditional release. Sister Cao Ngoc Phuong, representing the overseas branch of the Unified Buddhist Church (of Vietnam) in France, said Thich Tue Sy, Thich Tri Sieu and Thich Duc Nhuan "... are well known in Vietnam for their integrity, their learning and their dignified behavior. Their hearts as well as their abilities lie in the field of literary studies and in scholarly research into philosophy of Buddhism and NOT in the field of arms, certainly not in the field of armed conspiracy." The well known north Vietnamese scholar Dao Duy Anh met with Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu in 1976 and 1977, and praised them as precious jewels not only of the Buddhist religion but also of Vietnam.

What has happened with regard to Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu, as well as the other monks and nuns in prison since 1984, may reflect a tension in the Vietnamese Communist leadership between a hard line conservative faction and a more moderate reformist faction, the latter led by Party Secretary-General Nguyen Van Linh. Under Linh (who has been compared to Gorbachev), there has been much talk of 'renovation' and 'openness' in society, which implies religions might have more freedom to practice and develop. However, there has also been considerable resistance to Linh's approach from others in the Party and government, and the institutional basis for religious and cultural repression remains. Unfortunately, according

to recent reports, Nguyen Van Linh is now in poor health and may soon retire.

If Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu had been executed, it would have been a drastic step in the direction of a more explicitly repressive religious policy. In the entire history of Vietnam, no Buddhist monk has ever been executed by the government. But a number of prominent monks have died in prison. The most prominent monk in this respect was Thich Thien Minh, who during the war led the Buddhist youth movement and was regarded as the second most prominent monk in South Vietnam, behind Thich Tri Quang. Thich Thien Minh was arrested in 1969, accused of being "pro-communist" and sentenced to 15 years hard labor. However, he was released later that year because of strong protests abroad. Unfortunately the protests following his arrest in 1978 were not strong enough nor widespread enough to save him from dying in prison. We are concerned that the same fate may befall Thich Tue Sy, Thich Tri Sieu, Thich Duc Nhuan and other monks and nuns who remain behind bars.

Last summer Buddhist Peace Fellowship sponsored a conference-retreat in California on creating an American form of Buddhism. The conference was valuable, yet in attending it, it seemed to me that more attention could have been paid to the rich traditions of Asian-American Buddhists; as well as new contributions made from within Asia to the development of Buddhism, contributions often made under very difficult and trying conditions. Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu are among those who have made such contributions. Along with the other monks and nuns imprisoned, they also represent an "engaged Buddhism" developed in Vietnam and exemplified in Thich Nhat Hanh. It is a movement based on the practice of universal compassion, a movement which places people over ideology and during the war called on both sides to end the violence. By refusing to take sides, proponents of engaged Buddhism became vulnerable to attack from both sides. One side accused them of undermining the struggle against American imperialism and spreading U.S. psychological warfare. The other side said they were undermining the struggle against Communism and acting as secret Communist agents. Thus the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam suffered persecution during the war and afterwards, and this persecution appears to have intensified since the government created its own Buddhist church in 1981 as the "only legitimate representative" of Vietnamese Buddhism within the country and abroad.

We therefore request all BPF members to continue appeals for the release of the Buddhist monks, nuns and writers who remain in prison. We are especially concerned over the health of Thich Tue Sy and Thich Duc Nhuan (secretary general of the Council of Elders of the Unified Buddhist Church). Thich Tue Sy has been reported to be very frail and Thich Duc Nhuan has been seriously ill with stomach ulcers and asthma. We would encourage readers to write a simple note expressing gratitude that Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu have not been executed and appealing for their immediate and unconditional release, as well as the release of the others sentenced at the September 30 trial.

Their sentences following the November 15th appeal hearing: 20 years (reduced from death sentences): Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu; 18 years (reduced from life imprisonment): Phan Van Ty; 16 years (reduced from life imprisonment): Ton That Ky; 15 years imprisonment: Thich Nguyen Giac; 12 years: Le Dang Pha; 10 years: Thich Chon Nguyen; 9 years: Thich

Duc Nhuan; 8 years: Ngo Van Bach; 7 years: Hoang Van Cuong, Nguyen Thi Nghia, Huynh Van Phuong, and Thai Ngoc Loi; 6 years: Do Huu Can. 5 years: Huynh Thi Loan and Le Dinh Nghiem.

The nun Thich Nu Tri Hai was sentenced to 4 1/2 years but released following the trial because the sentence was applied retroactively to the time of her arrest in April 1984. The same would apparently hold true for Thich Nhu Minh, Ngo Van Bich and Pham Thi No. Tran Quang My, originally sentenced to seven years, had his sentence reduced to three years at the appeals hearing, so presumably he is now free.

From Sister Phuong we have received the disturbing news that the situation of the two most prominent monks in Vietnam, Thich Quang Do (UBC General Secretary) and Thich Huyen Quang (UBC Executive Director) has significantly worsened over the last year. Both were arrested in 1981 and exiled from Ho Chi Minh City in 1982 for protesting the government's religious policy. Now they both remain under house arrest under increasingly restrictive conditions.

Readers are also encouraged to appeal for the immediate release of the prominent writer Doan Quoc Sy, who was arrested at the same time as the monks and nuns in 1984 and sentenced to eight years imprisonment at a trial last May. Please request that Sy be allowed to join his children and grandchildren in Australia. Another writer who has been the subject of our appeals is Hoang Hai Thuy who was sentenced to six years imprisonment this year.

In light of Nguyen Van Linh's poor health, it would probably be best to address letters or telegrams to Mai Chi Tho, Minister of the Interior, Republic of Vietnam (Hanoi, Vietnam), although he is regarded as a 'hardliner' in the Communist Party. He should be addressed as "Your Excellency." Readers might also contact congressional representatives and President George Bush, or write to the Vietnamese Mission to the United Nations, 20 Waterside Plaza, #29E, New York, N.Y. 10010.

With this issue we are enclosing a letter calling for the release of the imprisoned monks and nuns in Vietnam. If it is at all possible, please photocopy this letter, (or re-type it) circulate it among your friends, and either send the signed letters directly to Vietnam, or send to me and I will send them to Minister Mai Chi Tho along with a cover letter.

My address: Stephen Denney, P.O. Box 1163, Burlingame, CA 94011-1163 phone: 415-548-2692. I am preparing a packet of information for those who would like to persuade government officials and others to intervene on behalf of these prisoners. Telegrams and letters should be sent directly to Vietnam. Copies of correspondence and inquiries about these cases can be sent to me.

We have suggested many forms of action in this article, but whatever you can do would be greatly appreciated. Thank you again to all those who have helped in this campaign.

Steve Denney is the coordinator for the Vietnam Prison Project of the BPF. He works at the Indochina archive, U.C. Berkeley.

BUDDHISTS AND AIDS: AN UPDATE

BPF Newsletter Volume 10, No.1-2, Spring 1988 featured Buddhists and AIDS. We would like to keep this issue before the readership: to that end we present reports from the LA Buddhist AIDS Project, MAITRI and the S.F. Zen Center Hospice.

Buddhist AIDS Project (BAP)

The five Principal goals of the BAP are to provide:

1. Meditation training for those affected by AIDS
2. A contemplative support community
3. Accurate information about AIDS for Buddhists
4. Hospice Training
5. Spiritual resource for AIDS agencies

Steve Peskind reports that they have been refining their Hospice Training Program to provide, in addition to the usual program, a specifically Buddhist perspective. The program, typically run over the course of a weekend, is tightly scheduled and focuses on three broad areas: 1. content—the basic facts from medical & psychological perspectives; 2. experience—how to take care of a person with AIDS (PWA) how to open to a dying person, how to cultivate vulnerability; 3. meditation—developing the skills of contemplation and 'deep listening.' Meditation practice, group discussions, video presentations, panels, and role-playing are among the techniques BAP uses to convey information. Intense as it sounds, BAP stresses that they are only providing the very beginning steps. In actual practice they also urge each volunteer to trust their own wisdom and simply be themselves.

This March 4 & 5, Ken MacLeod and Steve Peskind conducted BAP's first volunteer training for 16 members of the Asian Pacific Gay & Lesbian Association of Los Angeles. This group (APGL) works to provide information to the rapidly expanding Asian communities in Los Angeles. Having completed the volunteer training, APGL will work for a variety of existing AIDS service projects including BAP itself.

MAITRI/Hartford St. Zen Center

Issan Dorsey and the Hartford St. Zen Center are realizing their plans to provide hospice care to PWAs. In October, 1988, Mr. Robert Breckenridge purchased 61 Hartford St. (the building adjacent to the HSZC) and agreed to lease it to HSZC. The new building now houses five PWAs, two staff members and 3 regular zen students; a total of 14 people live in the two Hartford St. properties. The kitchen of the new building has been remodeled and now serves as the principle kitchen for both houses. Issan estimates they feed 15-20 people each evening and considerably more nights when classes or lectures are held. He himself is devoting more of his time to the MAITRI program, while new resident Zenshin Philip Whalen has assumed more responsibilities for the zendo side

of things.

The PWAs pay \$500 a month; this includes room, board, tuition, and all services. There is currently a waiting list for admission to the program, but Issan says that for the present, 5 PWAs is all MAITRI can accommodate.

A total of about 30 volunteers provide 24-hr care for the PWAs. Doctors and nurses also visit regularly, to perform specialized services and to monitor the program. Volunteers are drawn from a number of sources: professional attendant care programs, hospice training programs, and from the sangha at large. Issan's theory of training people to work with the dying is pithy: "Put them in the room. The patients train the attendants."

Zen Center Hospice Volunteer Program

Zen Center Hospice trains and manages volunteers who provide supportive services to individuals facing terminal illness throughout San Francisco. The program has grown dramatically since its inception in September, 1987 in response to rapidly increasing requests for services and trainings.

The ZCHVP was invited to participate in the creation of a hospice program at Laguna Honda Hospital, and readily agreed. Director Frank Ostaseski: "The hospice unit at Laguna Honda offers us an opportunity to encourage the compassionate heart within an institutional setting." Teams of volunteers there currently serve two 4-hour shifts, attending patients from 1 to 9 pm each day. In an average month volunteers will provide over 450 hours of service.

ZCHVP also serves as the volunteer component at San Francisco General's Hospice. Since this hospital refers 70% of its clients to Laguna Honda, hospice patients will frequently be admitted with a volunteer in place, providing a continuity of care.

Beyond these programs, ZCHVP provides volunteers to the MAITRI program at Hartford St., and on a case by case basis to medically indigent, terminally ill adults, in the Zen Center Guest House. Also in place at Green Gulch Farm is the 'respite program', which offers short rest periods (1-3 days) for families and caregivers of the terminally ill. Room and board are available on a sliding scale.

For information on these programs, contact:

Buddhist AIDS Project
14252 Culver Drive, A-431,
Irvine, CA 92714
1-213-859-5536 or 1-714-957-0406

MAITRI
57 Hartford St
San Francisco, CA 94114
1-415-863-2507 or 1-415-861-6779

Frank Ostaseski, Director
Zen Center Hospice Volunteer Program
300 Page Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
1-415-863-2910

Excerpts from "In the Footsteps of Gandhi"

Selections from an Interview with Ram Dass, June 17, 1988

By Catherine Ingram

Catherine Ingram: Although for years you have been involved in social activism and service through SEVA Foundation, lately you've become more politically active. You recently sat at the Nevada Test Site with Dan Ellsberg, and you spoke on the steps of Congress about U.S. policy in Central America. What has prompted this new interest in political activism?

Ram Dass: At some point way back, maybe ten years ago, I saw that to become free meant not pushing away the world, but becoming free through one's incarnation rather than in spite of it. That this incarnation wasn't an error. I had to honor it and that meant honoring my role as a member of a family, of a nation state, of a religious background, and so on. But I didn't know exactly what it meant to honor something. It didn't mean to just do it blindly. For instance, taking care of my father is honoring my family relationship, and that's been very rich for me.

So I kept listening so that I wouldn't go into politics head first. I'd go in heart first. My first experience with this was when Allen Ginsberg asked me to go Rocky Flats in his place to meditate with some Buddhists during a demonstration. While we meditated, Helen Caldicott was speaking on the stage. But I felt that Helen was using urgency and fear to motivate people, and it seemed to me that we were too conscious to play that game anymore, that we had to do it a different way. I knew then there was an avenue of entry for me in terms of political action. Dan Ellsberg kept telling me to go get arrested, but I felt that just to go get arrested wasn't going to be right. I had to really feel it.

CI: Have you now been able to "really feel it?"

RD: Well, what has now mobilized me was being in Guatemala. That did it. We [SEVA] were providing goats, seed, and yarn for weaving and selling the crafts and tool bags to these villagers who had been decimated. But the cause of the decimation was United States policy in Guatemala. Here we were building an organization in this Guatemalan community, and I felt concerned that the military would see us as a threat and then hurt these people. And then a fellow who worked for one of the Guatemalan aid projects told me, "We just help the people learn how to pick themselves up so next time it will be easier." It was such a humble aspiration.

CI: You mentioned that U.S. policy had caused much of this suffering. How do you see your role as a tax-paying citizen?

RD: I saw that as a United States citizen I had two roles. One was to directly help these human beings, and the other was to speak out. What happened was I was at the Palenque, which is the Mayan temple in Chiapas, Mexico, and I was overwhelmed with how beautiful the Mayan Indians were. I sat in the Sun temple and meditated. I called on the elders of the

Mayans and I said, "Your people have been so badly beat upon. What can I do to help?" And then I just sort of listened. The answer came: "Speak to your people." So I thought okay, I'll speak to my people.

CI: Have you been speaking to the people?

RD: Well, I came back not knowing how to do that at first. Now what has happened is that the minute I started to do that it opened like a huge avenue and I realized that I've gotta be more conscious, I've gotta be very careful in how I do this. Let me explain what I mean by that. In the early years, from the sixties into the mid-seventies, I was on the government lists of undesirables. I'd go to England, say, and they wouldn't let me into the country. They'd deport me to Amsterdam because of my drug history. Finally I got off the list around mid-seventies, and since then I've been an irrelevant weirdo. (laughing). And I realize that here in one little move I could put myself back into that arena of being somebody that the government is concerned about, which does make you have to start living your life much tighter.

CI: You get audited and...

RD: Everything. And I didn't really know that was the optimum way to play the game. Requests started coming to me to talk about my Guatemala experience, and I thought, Before I do this, let me just know what I'm doing. Maybe when you move from straight spiritual, somehow you can hear where to go, that place where you don't spend all your time fighting off the mosquitoes. And I don't want to jeopardize SEVA, so I'm listening to hear how to play. I'm very new at the game.

CI: And yet you are starting to speak out and to act.

RD: Yes, but I just want to move so that I don't make one move that's then gonna cost me years and years of reactivity. The action has to come out of such equanimity. I was so deeply ashamed in Guatemala for the United States role there, and I realized that since I was a United States citizen it was my role there, that I was reactive, and being reactive is not the mode from which to do social action, as Gandhi and others have said.

CI: Do you feel that there is a place for outrage, if you will, in witnessing some of these horrors, these unspeakable horrors that are going on. I know that the Christic Institute and others must struggle with this, a feeling of outrage. Yet it's perennial that people often feel motivated to act by their outrage.

RD: I think there is a place for outrage but it always has to be tempered with the equanimity that comes out of an appreciation of the way the universe is—why violence is done, and how it comes from fear and greed and holding on. So you're outraged as a human heart, and at the same time you're appreciative of just why it is the way it is and how it happened. You look for judo, for where you can enter the system

in some way to redirect or to help people control it more. I feel that being led by my outrage isn't the place for social action. It would just polarize more in the long run as the anti-Vietnam war movement did in the late sixties.

CI: You spoke a bit about the collusion of our life here, the responsibility that you feel as an American citizen. I struggle with this a lot, as I think all of us do who are becoming more and more aware that we are living in this incredibly rich society that is dependent on the labor and oppression of the world's poor.

RD: But it doesn't necessarily have to be that way. It's in that beautiful line of Gandhi's—that civilization is the art of voluntary renunciation. But we haven't yet understood the joy of letting go of a little of our largess, which, in fact, we would hardly miss. I mean, it's like the difference between a Mercedes and a Dodge. Our small renunciation would allow other people to live and have a better standard of life. It's so little that we would have to do. It wouldn't wipe out our affluence at all to feed and clothe and house everybody in the world. It would take such pressure off all of us, because the ugliness we have to live with, not just as the ugly American, but as part of all the affluent countries—Japan, Germany, France—the psychic cost of that is actually more than we can bear.

That's part of what our addictive patterns are about, part of what the neurosis in the culture is about. There is a lack of a feeling of well-being with all of our affluence. That's partly because we are looking away from suffering so much in order to try to find happiness. You cannot avert your gaze from suffering to find happiness. Again a line from Gandhi, "Think of the poorest person you've ever seen and ask whether your next act will be of any use to that person." Now, can you find happiness with that in mind? If you can't do that, you're schizophrenic. You have these little compartments of, 'Now I'll spend so many hours feeling sorry for the poor, writing checks; then I'll put that away and I'll go have fun.' The deeper thing is to keep your heart open in hell and find joy right in the midst of all of it.

CI: Let's talk about AIDS. What is the message of this disease? What do think this is saying to us historically?

RD: Well, one of the things it's saying is that the sexual freedom movement that started in the sixties when carried to its ultimate is lethal. But interpreting that as good and evil is a whole other issue, and I don't think that's really the message. It's mind-boggling that the people who have mostly been hit by it, thus far, are needle-users and gays, both of which are minority groups in a society which considers them expendable or a weakness of the culture. Therefore the dragging of the feet of the government is motivated by seeing these people as second rate citizens, so that from within the gay community, which is very familiar to me, the way in which the disease is heaped upon the prejudice is exponentially horrible. A fellow will get AIDS, and when he tells his parents, they're too ashamed to acknowledge it to their friends. They don't want to deal with him, so he's ostracized by his family because of the social pressure on the parents. That story is repeated again and again.

Another level of the message is the intimacy between self gratification and death. Sex and death have always been linked, but needle-using is another form of gratification and sharing the needle can be linked with intimacy and so on.

It is time to remember Gandhi's statement: There is

enough for everybody's need but not enough for everybody's greed. We've gotten very greedy in wanting more—more sex, more rushes from drugs, more, more more. And what more leads to is death. That's the message that's coming out now, interestingly. More power leads to more heart attacks and more violence. More rich food leads to cholesterol. More is risky.

So that's part of the message that's coming out of the AIDS scene. It's taken what was primarily a very superficial, manipulative, rather cruel subculture—the gay community—and brought out qualities of compassion in it that are so beautiful that none of them hardly know themselves at all.

CI: You say "cruel subculture."

RD: It was so based on physical and sexual attractiveness. Narcissism. And it was cruel in the exaggerated way it did that. It identified with the most bitchy components of the women's culture—looks and sq on—but it was worse.

CI: And has AIDS completely transformed the gay community in those ways?

RD: Oh, absolutely transformed it. It's deepened the human being so much because they're suddenly dealing with death. You know, I got a call from a fellow who had just gotten together with someone who had just buried his lover. Now this fellow he met has just gotten his first KS [Kaposi Sarcoma] lesion. He knew the fellow was HIV positive when they got together. And now the question is, Is he going to stay in this new relationship until death, and then watch his lover die.

Death from AIDS is one of the most terrible ways to die because opportunistic diseases are so unpredictable. It's not like cancer where there's a kind of linear progression. With AIDS you go and treat one problem and maybe you get better, and then something else comes along, so it keeps beating your will down. From a spiritual point of view, it's an incredible disease because it takes away your control. Those are windows of opportunity for spiritual awakening, if it's handled just right. For the most part, the evolution of these beings hasn't prepared them for that way of seeing it. Part of my work is to introduce that kind of perspective without seeming Polyanna-ish or callous.

CI: How can you counsel someone in any way other than to accept death in the face of having AIDS?

RD: There's no other way. But the denial is so heavy, often in the belief that some treatment is going to work. The thing is to counsel them to continue to make effort to heal themselves and yet to expect death. My constant saying is, "The probability is you're gonna die. Now let's start from there and talk. But I don't go to people without their asking. They've got to seek me out. I don't lay it on people because I don't have a moral right to do that. If somebody wants to live through denial till their death, it's up to them. From my year of working with the dying, that's too clear.

I recently went to visit the "Coming Home" hospice in the Castro to speak to the staff. I was supposed to speak for thirty minutes and then they were going to show me through the place. They said, "Oh, by the way, there are eight patients who have asked to see you." So I had three minutes with each patient. So I'd walk into a room and there would be somebody with one eye closed with KS, their face all swollen. He's gonna die within maybe two weeks. Or there would be an old black needle user. It was just one after another. And I had three minutes to get in, go through my own reactivity, get quiet, be there, make contact, be available to the person, get

up, disengage, go and do the next one. I went into a place in myself like the place you do dokusan from. It's the Vajra sword, and it's just right there. You set yourself aside.

CI: What do you say to somebody in three minutes who is lying there dying of AIDS?

RD: It has nothing to do with what you say. It's where you are in yourself. Gandhi's line fits perfectly: "My life is my message." You offer your presence, you offer the way you feel about death, the way you feel about their symptoms, and you do it all just in your presence. It's not the words, it's the quality of the way you say them. It's where you say them from. You can say something that keeps the game going, or you can speak in a way that leaves the door open so that they can come out of it if they would like to. You don't force them to come out of it.

CI: Do you see light prevailing? And if you don't, how do you muster the energy to keep going, and how would you recommend one to keep going? Or is it necessary to be fixed to any goal at all in order to do the work? What if it's all going into hopeless ruin? Maybe we should just go meditate somewhere.

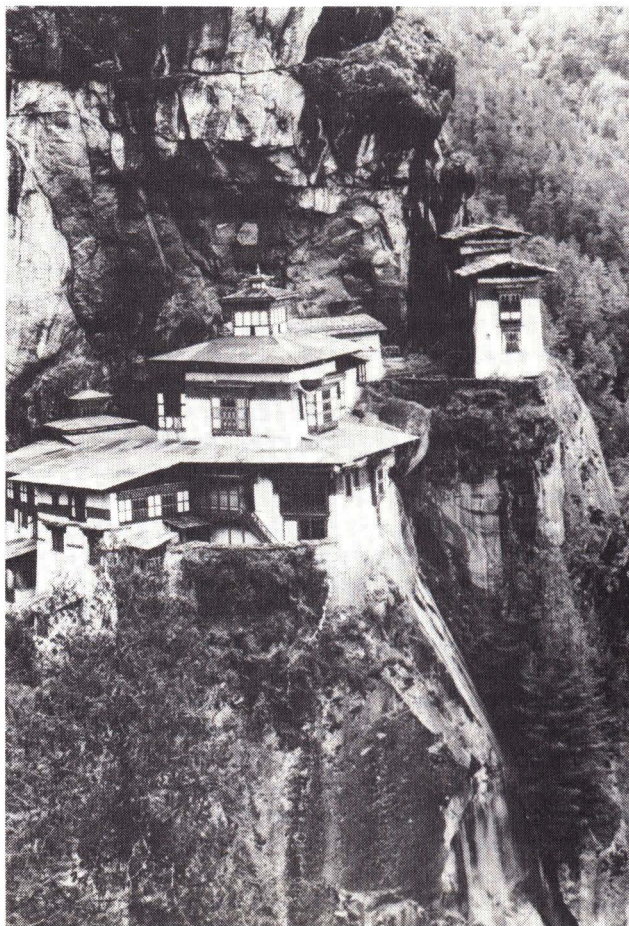
RD: I hear the question. The way I've answered that question in the past still feels pretty valid. People come up to me and say, "Are we facing Armageddon, or is this the Aquarian Age?" I decided that I should have an opinion, so I thought about it and came up with: If it's Armageddon, we're gonna die, it's gonna end, and the best way for me to prepare for that is my mind should be quiet and my heart should be open. That's the way to go into death. And if it's the New Age coming, the best way for me to prepare for that is my mind should be quiet and my heart should be open. So it didn't matter, because I still had to do still the same thing today—quiet my mind, open my heart, and relive the suffering that I could see around me.

So in a way that's been my plan. I don't time-bind in the sense that I'm not future-oriented about my life because I'm aware of how quickly circumstances can change. While certain things are not reversible—like what we're doing to the forests, and species which will disappear, there can be a critical mass of horror that shifts consciousness. What we're seeing is an exacerbation of the symptoms that provoke a response that can exacerbate the symptoms or not. It's not a clear prediction as to which way it will go.

If I'm to be an instrument of healing, my attachment to how it comes out has got to be zilch. Absolutely nil. And yet because I am a human incarnate, I've got to work full time to make it better. But the other part of me has got to keep its territory of equanimity.

As I read the Club of Rome reports, as I look at the ecological errors we're making, I feel my blood chill. As I see the intractable nature of the human personality and the way it does wars, it chills me. But then I watch how the economic pressures in the soviet Union force the change in philosophy so that a Gorbachev can exist, which forces a change in Reagan's seeing them as the Evil Empire, which forces a cutting out of medium range ballistic missiles, and suddenly everything that we in the anti-nuclear movement were fighting for is starting to happen. What I've said at a lot of the anti-nuclear rallies is that you folks don't realize that you won already. The game is over. You did what you set out to do. But the people in that movement are often busy feeling fragmented

and a lack of power because they didn't have the opponent at the knees. As Gandhi said, the English had to leave but he wanted them to leave as friends. If there is a winner, nobody wins.



Taktsang, the Tiger's Nest Monastery in Bhutan
Photograph by Edwin Bernbaum, Berkeley, CA

(Last Minute) Invitation

The International Network of Engaged Buddhists is organizing a semi-permanent international peace delegation to Sri Lanka. They are looking for an experienced peace worker from the West to come along for six months to a year. Housing and basic expenses in Sri Lanka will be taken care of, but at this time, airfare is up to the individual (although if you can raise money, it can be contributed through the Buddhist Peace Fellowship). For details contact: Norma Burton, at the Buddhist Peace Fellowship office, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704. Phone (415) 548-3735.

REVIEWS

Take Refuge In The Moment

By Rashani and Friends, 1988, Medecine Song Productions

Reviewed by Patricia Donegan

Beckoning

*This morning's dawn
and I am here:
a cup of steaming tea
a green lawn
your sudden image
from long ago Your hands
or the wind
beckoning
The shining of the tree's
new bud:
Flower leaf and pebble
all recite
the Sutra of the Lotus*

Thich Nhat Hanh *Zen Poems*

This tape, "Take Refuge in the Moment" is a new one in the series of new American buddhist music, following "In My Two Hands" by Betsy Rose last fall. There is much music that is indirectly Buddhist in America and it reflects the clarity of enlightened awareness which will always exist; however there seems to be a necessity for having a genre of new music speaking directly about life and practice from a buddhist point of view, music that reflects the emerging engaged American Buddhism. I think this is it. As Thich Nhat Hanh said, "If there is no singing in the family, that family is in trouble." For American Buddhists as well as all others, this should help point the way.

Thich Nhat Hanh, a master of Zen poetry, tells of the interrelation of all things, all beings. His poetry is like a sharp koan or haiku that is so raw it is soft, without being over-done. As in the Asian tradition of poetry, it has 'objective heart' and reflects things as they are, without explanation, yet keeps an emotional tone like a Japanese nature or love poem. The inter-relation of all things. The cup of tea, the refugee boat people, the persecuted Tibetan monks, the killer and the killed, the AIDS victims all mix into the shadow of my hand on this paper. The mingling of magical voices on this tape. The flute music (plus koto and Tibetan bowls) pin-points the rise and fall of form and shapes—it rides the haunting of one's mind, breaking at times into the sentimental, but resting on a poignant knife point. These poem/songs are saved from being overly sentimental by the fact that they are grounded in mindfulness practice; the description is simple, clear and well balanced by a vision of reality showing the pain as well as the joy. This tape of music is like breathing. It is what all good music/poetry does—it reverberates after the last note when I sit with my cup of tea.

Over half the poem/songs were written by Thich Nhat Hanh—the rest by Rashani, Betsy Rose, Bo Harris, Eveline Beumkes, and an anonymous Buddhist nun. Some songs are



read as poems, others sung by Rashani and friends, including one with Vietnamese children at Plum village, a retreat center founded by Thich Nhat Hanh in France. This tape was inspired by these refugee buddhists exiled after leaving their homeland, who are yet rejoicing together in songs like these. Learning to appreciate our lives as they are now, without complaint or looking back, is taking refuge in the moment. These poem/songs speak eloquently of the interconnectedness and sacredness of life too often forgotten, Herein lies their power—and the power of all songs in the net of the 10,000 things—calling us to be in and appreciate this very moment; even reading the ink prints on this very page and just simply feeling our breath going in and out.

Goddesses

by Mayumi Oda, Volcano 1988, 69 pages, softcover, \$14.95

Happy Veggies

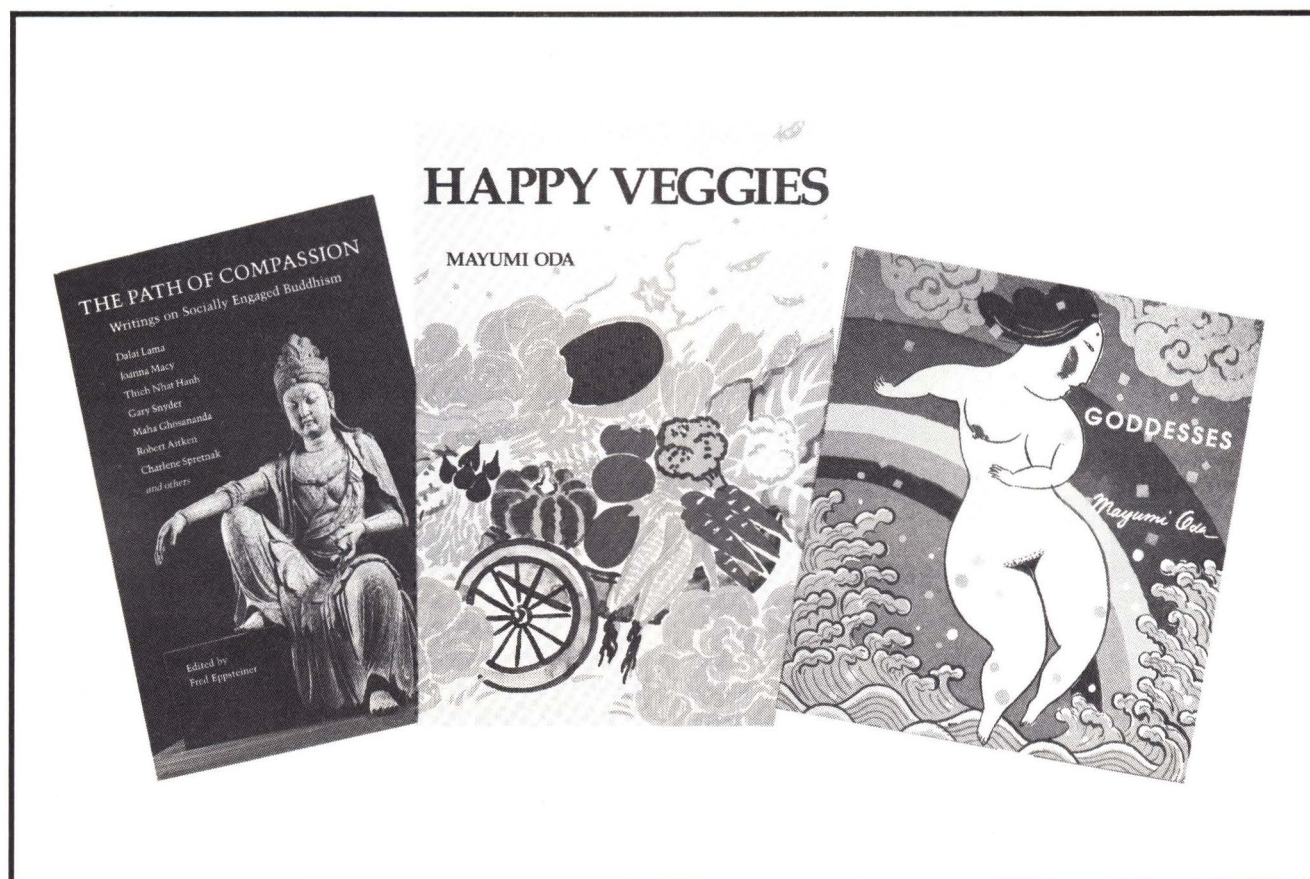
by Mayumi Oda, Parallax 1988, cloth, \$12.50

Mayumi Oda's work may be familiar to readers of the BPF News; her art has graced the pages of this newsletter many times. She has as well produced book cover after book cover for publishers of Buddhist and related texts.

These two books of her own works have been published. A new edition of *Goddesses*, issued by Volcano Press, presents the book for the first time in a paperback format. *Happy Veggies*, from Parallax Press delves into the original sources of Mayumi Oda's creative life.

In *Goddesses*, "Drawing her images from old Japanese woodblock prints, she transforms the traditional masculine Buddhist gods into their joyous female counterparts. They are metaphors for the universal powers of creation, yet do not follow the traditional imagery of Mother Goddesses and fertility deities." These prints, done (and faithfully reproduced) in

REVIEWS



lush color are at once whimsical, reverential, sensual and poignant. The text, greatly revised from the original edition, is an autobiography, a portrait of the artist as a young woman—Japanese, well-bred, exotic & rebellious. Paging through the book one's eye is torn—print or story? An embarrassment of riches.

Happy Veggies is a horse of a different color. As Mayumi herself writes of her environment, "Under the morning fog, kale, broccoli, and spinach reflect the turquoise blue of the sea. Dewdrops on their leaves look as if a crystal rosary had been scattered over them. Cauliflower looks like white coral. Lettuce and purple cabbage spread their leaves open like the mandala of the Buddha fields, revealing the mystery of creation. In the night field under the starry sky, I feel totally embraced by a huge invisible breast. I wrote this book to share my gratitude to our Mother Earth with children." What more can you say? I suppose if you could say anything more, it would be this, actually written by Brother David Steindl-Rast: "Mayumi Oda is a magician; her paintbrush is a wand. You open this book and you are under its spell. But it's not a spell that binds; it's a spell that sets free."

Mayumi Oda's books, notecards, goddess cloths and posters are available through Editions Gaea; 310 Star Route, Sausalito, CA 94965. Call for a new catalogue: 1-415-383-8434

Engaging With The World

**The Path of Compassion:
Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism**
Edited by Fred Eppsteiner
Published by Parallax
pp.219, Paperback price \$14
Reviewed by Virachitta

The *Path of Compassion* comprises twenty-three articles, varying in length from two to twenty-five pages, and written by authors from the Tibetan, Zen, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Theravada Traditions, as well as one or two Western scholars and yet others who don't fit neatly into any particular Buddhist tradition. The common thread which links these writers is their connection with the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, an umbrella organization acting to 'raise peace and ecology concerns among American Buddhists and to promote projects through which the Sangha may respond to these concerns.'

The sub-title of *Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism* makes the general emphasis of the book clear. 'Socially engaged Buddhism' is 'a Buddhism which is not just in meditation halls but which pervades all our everyday lives and concerns.' To explore this, the book is divided into two sections: firstly, "Thoughts on spiritual practice and social action" and, secondly, "Exemplars of engaged Buddhism."

The first group of articles deals with the theoretical implica-

tions of taking compassion into everyday life. Some writers (particularly the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Chagdud Tulku) approach this mainly in terms of inner transformation, in terms of the necessity to cultivate peace and kindness within, before (and while) taking it out to a wider world.

The other articles in this section seem to be largely concerned with justifying the acceptability, within the Buddhist tradition, of engaging in acts of compassion on a material and social level. They appear to be addressing themselves to refuting the opinion (never directly stated) that Buddhist practice consists in isolating oneself as far as possible from the 'world', and that compassion, in these terms, is a rather abstract concept devoid of any involvement with humanity at large. I was surprised that they felt it necessary to argue the case for taking compassion out into everyday life, and that one contributor even felt obliged to argue that social work could be a form of Right Livelihood. It should not take much examination of *sutras*, or contact with Buddhists, to realize that compassion must find expression before it can be truly considered to be compassion. However, the fact that so many contributors felt that the case must be clearly stated suggests that this particular wrong view is widespread. It will only be fully overcome as more and more people come into contact with Buddhists who are taking their Buddhism out into their everyday lives in a way which touches those around them.

The second group of articles makes stimulating reading for anyone interested in the expression of Buddhist insights in a wider context. For me, the high points were two contributions from Robert Thurman, a scholar who has already delighted us with his translation of the *Vimalakirti-Nirdesha*. His first article deals with the manner in which the Emperor Ashoka attempted to rule his kingdom after his conversion to the Dharma. Ashoka's projects included the encouragement of non-violence (including vegetarianism, which apparently proved no easy practice for the Emperor himself), a strong emphasis on education, building rest-houses and hospices for the poor and sick, importing doctors and medicines, investigating complaints of judicial harshness, decentralization of government to make the rulers more accessible to those ruled, and many others. It is salutary to reflect that many of these ideas are still only partially implemented 2,200 years later. A full length study of Ashoka and his reign is long overdue and would make fascinating reading.

The theme of government is continued by Thurman in his commentary on Nargarjuna's *Jewel Garland of Royal Counsels*, the original work being addressed to King Udayi. These two pieces bring to mind the Indian concept of the *Dharmaraja* or 'one who rules in accordance with Truth', a concept which we could very usefully import to the West.

Closer to present times there are articles on the work for peace by Buddhists in Vietnam during the war (including a moving story of self-sacrifice), on the *Sarvodaya* movement in Sri Lanka (a self-help movement inspired by Buddhist principles), on the danger of a nationalistic identification with Buddhism, and on such diverse topics as the advisability of becoming a Member of Parliament, and how to cope with rape.

As might be imagined, a book with over twenty contributors will display a plethora of styles and opinions, which can prove rather indigestible when taken in large doses. Personally, I found it much more satisfying just to dip into the book and read one or two articles at a sitting. If I have one general fault

to find, then it is in the lack of emphasis placed on the activity of spreading the Dharma as a means of expressing compassion; but perhaps that is adequately covered elsewhere. This book will be avidly read by all those who are interested in the social and political implications of their Buddhist practice.

Reprinted from Golden Drum, February 1989

This is not a poem it is a grocery list

Milk

Bread

I cannot help it that my life reads like fiction

And that the small chores

Laundry detergent

Orange juice

Fall like poems ripe and juicy at my feet

Into my lap, begging to be tasted.

I suffer for this beauty, this joy.

Do you?

Meat, fish

Catfood?

Garlic

If all rings intertwine and we shine

Through space and time linked shiny rings of

Love

Spirit

Fate

Timing (is timing everything?)

What can we do by try to shine more?

More purely

More truly

More lemonade.

Cereal

Breathe.

Jenny Davis

Board Report

BPF Board Report

by Stephanie Kaza

The Interim Board of Directors has been working hard over the last six months under the charge of the Elders and has come together as a united team to see BPF through this period. At the Elders meeting last June, it became clear that the organizational structure inadequately reflected the rapid growth and development of BPF. Three main areas were targeted for strategic planning: program development, fundraising and organizational re-structuring.

The interim board first convened fully by conference call in September. At this time, Norma Burton was filling in as Executive Director for Therese Fitzgerald, who was on six month leave of absence. This change in staff coming at the same time as the change in Board personnel created a number of transition issues; it took us some time to get oriented.

In mid-January of this year the Board gathered in Muir Beach for two days to discuss Board process and leadership, staff roles, program direction and committee tasks. Like many groups in transition, BPF was experiencing communication problems. We looked hard at what the organization needed, and what Norma and Therese each offered BPF. We found that Norma and Therese each brought distinct skills and abilities to BPF, so we presented a proposal to support them both as Co-Directors. However, both Norma and Therese expressed reservations about this arrangement, and the Board recognized the importance of these reservations.

In the course of our discussions, one of the key problem areas we uncovered was the inadequacy of our bookkeeping system. We hired an independent auditor to prepare a fiscal management report. We have accepted the auditor's recommendations for a new and more appropriate system of record keeping, and are now taking steps to implement this.

Therese has resigned from her position as Executive Director and will travel with Thich Nhat Hanh for three months. The Board has voted to transfer the Sponsoring Hungry Families program to the East Bay Chapter. Norma will continue with the pressing needs of the organization: fiscal accuracy, new office location, committee work, planning for the Elders meeting and development of good communication with Board, chapters and members. The Board is appointing several new members from the Bay Area to share the work load required in this transition period. We are grateful for Therese's sustained efforts of the past few years. Her devotion and hard work has helped bring BPF to its current stage of growth.

The interim Board will continue to meet monthly by phone, and again face to face in June, when we hope to present the results of our committee planning work. At the Elders meeting and at the national meeting last year, we reflected on where BPF has been, what we've done, and where we'd like to go. It's evident that there is tremendous inspiration and energy for our work. One of the tasks of the Board now is to create an organization that can serve the vision and carry it forward. We invite your participation in this process. Please feel free to contact any one of us with your ideas.

Chapter News

Boulder/Denver Chapter News—from Sam Rose

Jamie Baraz led a "Mindfulness and Social Action" retreat in May, 1988 where thirty of us spent a wonderful weekend in a beautiful wooded setting an hour and a half from Denver. There was meditation instruction and practice and group discussion on carrying mindfulness into our daily lives and peace activities. We had a potluck dinner just to get together and talk, at the end of August. David Silver and Barbara Meier continue to host monthly 'Days of Mindfulness.' In August we held the one at Rocky Flats, the local nuclear weapons production plant. Ten people spent the day outside the main gate sitting, walking, reading precepts, and holding tea ceremony. It was profoundly moving to hold the Day of Mindfulness in that setting. We went back to Rocky Flats for another Day of Mindfulness at the end of September. On October 8, we spent a day together in a cabin in the mountains meditating, talking, and eating.

Our Annual Holiday Dinner (and Annual Meeting) was held December 11, and was attended by 15 people. We ate a meal cooked under the direction of Chin-yu and Que Tran that inspired a suggestion for a name change to 'Buddhist Feast Fellowship.' We are filing for status as non-profit corporation in Colorado, which will save us a lot of money on retreats we sponsor. Other chapters might consider doing this: it is not difficult.

This Winter and Spring our major activity is to sponsor retreats. In January, Thubten Chodron, an American nun ordained in a Tibetan tradition, led a wonderful retreat attended by 20 people. In April Sharon Salzberg, a Vipassana teacher will lead a Loving-Kindness Meditation Retreat, and of course, in May, Thich Nhat Hanh is leading the 'Buddhism and Psychotherapy Retreat. Given limitations of space and a determined focus, the retreat is presently closed to non-therapists.

Marin County Chapter—from Stephanie Kaza

A steady group of 5—8 people has been meeting every month, sharing tea and support for each other's lives. Occasionally we do the Tiep Hien precepts ceremony together. Most of our energy has gone into planning one-day mindfulness retreats at Green Gulch Farm and Zen Center; we held a Family Day on October 22 from 9am—5pm. Fifty people attended, including 30 children. We followed up on this success with another day for the San Francisco ZC February 4th and then a Family—Environment day in preparation for Arbor Day at Green Gulch on February 10th. For both Green Gulch days, the children worked outdoors, harvesting potatoes in October, planting trees in February. We are encouraged by the good response and plan to offer more programs for families.

Seattle Chapter—from Barbara Courtney

The Seattle Chapter consist of a core of about a half-dozen of us who began meeting monthly over two years ago, to share information and identify concerns. 1988-89 is our most active year yet, as we move into the inter-faith community and reach out to the Mahasangha.

As the area's only 'ecumenical' Buddhist group, we were asked to represent Buddhism at a Thanksgiving Day Interfaith Celebration. The impressive and colorful program included presentations by 11 non-Christian faiths—from Native Ameri-

can to Parsi, Islamic to Bahai. Chapter member Bill Downs read some biographical material about Thich Nhat Hanh, and other members read the Tien Hiep precepts.

As a means of enhancing communication with the Mahasangha, the Chapter also sponsored a Fall/Winter series of program meetings. Held monthly at the Sangha House of the Seattle Buddhist church, the meetings opened with meditation and a reading of precepts. The following members and guests then spoke and led discussion on the varied topics:

Mama Sein—Buddhism in Burma

Barbara Courtney—Leo Tolstoy, Bodhisattva

Dh. Aryadaka—Buddhist Revival in India

Rev. Don Castro—Deep Ecology and Pratityasamutpada

Lest we seem lost in mere activity, we offered a Day of Mindfulness on January 28, 1989.

San Antonio Triyana—from Mobi Ho

Though I lived as a volunteer worker, friend and student with Thich Nhat Hanh and sister Phuong's community in France for three years (1973-6) here in the United States I have never lived in an organized Buddhist center or community or even lived in visiting proximity to one. Having chosen a lay path of marriage and children, my primary sangha has been my own family. There have been moments over the years when I have entertained regrets about not having access to a more monastic and disciplined setting in which to root my practice, but I am growing increasingly more excited about the profound and creative role lay people and families have in creating the face of American Buddhism.

Three years ago—after a retreat for Thay that my husband, Hoang, and I helped to organize in the hill country of Texas—we began a small sitting group in San Antonio. Shortly afterwards I met a Vajrayana practitioner, Elisa Gonzales, also a mother, who had begun a similar group in San Antonio for sitting practice and dharma study. Our two groups decided to join as one. We are still small—rarely more than a dozen gather at our weekly Sunday sessions. From the beginning, our group felt a natural commitment to openness and flexibility. We wanted our practice to be nurtured by different styles and approaches, to represent a multi-cultured face of Buddhism. Our members represent a variety of backgrounds—Christian, Zen, Vipassana and Vajrayana. We named our group 'Triyana.'

It has also always been accepted that our children are part of the community. They sit with the group as long as they wish and when they wish to leave, they bow to the community and quietly entertain themselves in an adjoining room. (We meet in a small private school generous with its space on weekends.) The children take turns lighting the altar incense and their voices intermittently join ours in chanting the Heart Sutra. They especially delight in participating in our monthly tea meditations held after reading Thay Nhat Hanh's promises and refuges for children and the Tiep Hien precepts for adults. On special occasions I have become 'storyteller', sharing tales with the children from the life of the Buddha.

As a group we have also tried to hold regular sessions of dharma study. For example, we have jointly read Walpola Rahula's *What the Buddha Taught* and Thay Nhat Hanh's translation and commentary on *The Sutra on the Eight Realizations of the Great Beings*. Informal tea after zazen each Sunday and occasional potluck dinners often develop into lively discussions on Christian-Buddhist dialogue, the role of women and families in the creation of American Buddhism, and ques-

tions on such topic as right livelihood, social action and simple living. While we do not share a common teacher or have the presence of a teacher in San Antonio, when individual members attend retreats with their own teachers, they return to share their experiences with the group. When one member returned recently from a week of ten hours of zazen a day, her presence was a profound reminder of the beauty and healthiness of functional talk and right speech. Most of our member also belong to the buddhist Peace Fellowship. Some of us have joined together to sponsor a Vietnamese family through BPF's assistance to families program. My own family has also participated as Buddhists in several inter-religious peace activities in San Antonio.

Having written this much, I am struck by how simple and mundane all these details of San Antonio's Triyana appear. Actually, I think this is the particular strength of our little sangha—we are a very modest group committed to deepening our practice in all the small daily gestures of our lives. I am grateful for the warmth and spontaneity within our sangha. Indeed, visitors from distant places and centers have remarked upon this very quality. I believe the presence of the children has much to do with it.

A child's sudden slipping off a zafu with a thud somehow calls one back to mindfulness as well as any bell. And during one session of walking meditation, when a child inadvertently dropped some small plastic dinosaurs from his pocket onto our walking path, I was called back to my breath and gatha as surely as if I had suddenly seen a lotus rising from our footsteps. The children help us maintain humor and freshness adults are notorious for losing, and at the same time call us to a deeper respect for the mysterious, constantly changing web of life.

I am grateful for this sangha—it is a place one can truly "be happy" as Thay Nhat Hanh so often reminds us to be. I believe it is only from such happiness that we can find the courage and clarity to deepen our practice and our witness in a world marked as much by violence and the grotesque as by peace and beauty. If anyone has occasion to be in San Antonio, please contact us. We'd love to share our homes and sangha with you.

Mobi Ho

318 Eleanor Ave, San Antonio, TX 78209

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East Bay Chapter Report

In January we were reunited with three core members—Arnold Kotler, Therese Fitzgerald, and —who had been traveling in Europe, India and Southeast Asia. Their return came at a time when the National organization was going through a transition. Since our chapter is located in the same town as the National Office, and since the Executive Director is also a member of the East Bay Chapter, things became complicated and painful on both personal and group levels. We are slowly sorting out what the East Bay Chapter's role is in relation to the National BPF. In fact this questioning and redefining may culminate with the East Bay Chapter going on a weekend retreat later this year. We are all bound to learn something from this situation, particularly with regard to the practice of right speech.

Meanwhile, the projects do go on. We are blessed with the kind support of many people who donate what they can to support the *Sponsoring Hungry Families Project*. A group of Vietnamese friends and Westerners continue to translate let-

ters, buy medical supplies, wrap packages and send them off to families living in Vietnam in very desperate situations. Early in March we sent off seventy more packages.

Our chapter still offers the monthly vigil at Concord Naval Weapons Station, and we continue our involvement with the East Bay Sanctuary.

Currently we are discussing ways to open our group to the general public, possibly with monthly educational events. Also, we are considering holding bi-monthly "Days of Mindfulness" again. Please contact me at the East Bay address if you would like more information about any of the above mentioned projects.

Carol Melkonian

Council of Chapter Representatives

Arnie Kotler proposed the idea of a council of Chapter Representatives at the Annual Member's meeting in June 1988. Bill Anderson (Chair) and Sam Rose (Secretary) volunteered to set it up. We had our first nationwide conference telephone call on September 17, with the following people representing their chapters: Doug Codiga (Oahu, HI) George Lane (Marin County, CA) Norma Burton (Berkeley, CA) Christopher Reed (Venice, CA) Ingeborg (Los Angeles, CA) Susan Baldwin (Seattle, WA) Sam Rose (Denver, CO) Bill Anderson (Rochester, NY) Norma Saffron (New York, NY). The second conference call was on Saturday, January 7, 1989.

We spoke each time for over an hour, giving each other a little history about our chapters, trading experiences and talking about the current and future directions. People asked for advice about problems and gave suggestions. One trend common among chapters is a focus on personal relationships and mutual support, letting activities grow out of that friendship rather than trying to get strangers to participate in activities they haven't created. Another theme is supporting the integration of family life and meditation practice outside of a formal training center. Some chapters find themselves to be vehicles for the expression of the "Mahasangha" in their cities - the Sangha that crosses Buddhist denominational boundaries. People said they felt energized and supported by speaking to each other.

Sam Rose

From the Outgoing Director

Dear BPF Members and Friends,

I want you to know how much I have enjoyed my two years as Director of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. Contact with engaged Buddhists across the U.S. and around the world has deeply enriched my life, and provided me with a most helpful vehicle for realizing and expressing my commitment to the practice of compassion in the world. I am especially grateful to certain individuals for their guidance and inspiration, among them Joe Gorin, Joanna Macy, Aitken-roshi, Sulak Sivaraksa, Arnie Kotler, Barbara Meier, and James Baraz.

As some of you know, I took a six-month leave of absence beginning last June to participate in the summer retreat at Plum Village in France with Thich Nhat Hanh and Sister Phuong, and to join them and 30 others for a pilgrimage through northern India, "walking in the footsteps of the Buddha."

Since January, I have resumed work with the Sponsoring Hungry Families program. We are now able to send parcels of aid to more than 100 desperate families in Vietnam. This project is operating through the East Bay chapter of BPF. Please address all inquiries and donations to:

BPF-Sponsoring Hungry Families
P.O. Box 7355 Berkeley,
CA 94707

I will be traveling with Thich Nhat Hanh during his visit to the U.S., and I look forward to seeing many of you at retreats and lectures along the way. May we all fare well,

Therese Fitzgerald

Unclassifieds

The Flavor of Kindness: Cooking as an Expression of Love
by Scott Morrison, former Southern Dharma cook and co-owner of New Orleans' oldest and most popular vegetarian restaurant. \$12.50 post paid. Zafus, Dharma books, etc. Carolina Morning Designs, Rt.1 Box 31-B, Hot Springs, NC 28743 Phone 1-704-622-7329

A Trek In Far Eastern Nepal
From April 15 to May 15, 1989.

A group of 10 friends of Seva are invited to participate in a trek to the spectacular Kachenjunga Region of the Nepal Himalayas. For 5 days in Kathmandu and 25 days on the trail, trekkers will explore Nepal and learn about its people, their diverse tribes, cultures and religions. Special attention will be focused on learning what "service" means in the Himalayas and why Seva is there.

Fred Lane, a longtime friend who has lived in Nepal for 10 years, who has led 25 treks, and who speaks Nepali and Tibetan, will be the organizer and group leader. Along with Seva, Fred shares a great love for the people of Nepal. The 30 day journey will cost \$2,000 (airfare not included). All funds realized in excess of expenses for the trek will be donated to Seva for the Nepal Blindness Program. To sign up, or to receive further information, please contact:
Fred Lane, Box 175, Lagunitas, CA 94938.
Tel: (415) 488-0237.

Living Buddha: A Photographic Portrait of Buddhism in North America

Photographs are invited for inclusion in this historic exhibit with a book to be published by SHAMBHALA PUBLICATIONS. Images of work, play, practice, ceremonies, events, teachers and environment (black and white and color, slides or prints) are sought. They should be relatively recent (no earlier than 1970) and should be accompanied by photographer's name, address, and phone, and a caption with date of origin. For more information, please contact before April 30th:
Living Buddha Project c/o Gaetano Kazuo Maida
145 West 67th Street/NY 10023
(212) 769-1958/FAX:(212)874-3332



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(01) 586-7641

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Hot Springs, NC 28743
(704)-622-7329

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Advertising Rates

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter is now offering advertisement space; sizes and rates are shown below.

Technical Information

The Newsletter is a tabloid, printed in black on #50 or #60 stock. Please supply camera-ready art at the correct size. Halftones should be made with an 85 to 133 line screen. Xerox and laser-printed artwork are not recommended.

Classified (Unclassified):

20 cents per word. Count your words (phone numbers count as one word; city-state-zip also counts as one word) and send with payment.

Terms:

All advertising must be paid prior to publication. There will be a 10% discount if payment is made by camera-ready deadline. Artwork not provided at the right size will be corrected at advertiser's expense. Artwork will be returned only if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is provided; however, BPF cannot be held responsible for artwork. If you are not a subscriber to the Newsletter, you will be sent a tearsheet within two weeks of publication.

DEADLINES:

Publication	Space Reservation	Art Deadline
July 15	June 15	July 1
October 15	September 15	September 1
January 15	December 15	January 3

Full Page
41W X 56H Picas
 6 13/16 X 9 5/16
 \$210

Half Page
41W X 27.5H Picas
 6 13/16 X 4 9/16
 \$110

One Half Page Vertical
20X56 Picas
 3 5/16 X 9 5/16
 \$110

One Eighth Page
20W X 13.5H Picas
 3 5/16 X 2 1/4
 \$35

One Quarter Page
20W X 27.5H Picas
 3 5/16 X 4 9/16
 \$60

**To: Minister Of The Interior Mai Chi Tho
Council of Ministers
Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

Your Excellency,

I was gratified to learn that the Buddhist monks Thich Tue Sy (Pham Van Thuong) and Thich Tri Sieu (Le Manh That) had their death sentences commuted by the Supreme Court on Nov. 15 following an appeal. I am concerned, however, that along with other monks and nuns brought to trial in Ho Chi Minh City on Sept. 30, they continue to suffer in prison. I share the belief of the international human rights organization Amnesty International that Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu are prisoners of conscience who have been detained for the peaceful expression of their beliefs. Both are highly respected scholars, and former professors from Van Hanh University.

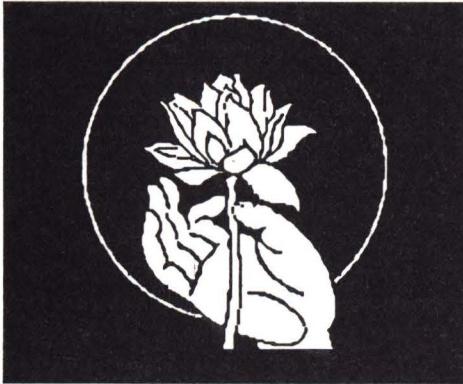
I therefore appeal on humanitarian grounds and in accordance with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights for the immediate and unconditional release of Thich Tue Sy and Thich Tri Sieu, as well as the other monks, nuns and lay Buddhists brought to trial on Sept. 30, 1988: Phan Van Ty, Ton That Ky, Thich Nguyen Giac, Le Dang Pha, Thich Duc Nhuan (Dong Van Kha), Thich Chon Nguyen, , Hoang Van Cuong, Ngo Van Bach, Nguyen Thi Ngia, Huynh Van Phuong, Thai Ngoc Loi, Tran Quang My, Do Huu Can, Huynh Thi Loan and Le Dinh Nhiem. I am especially concerned over the health of Thich Tue Sy, who is reported to be very frail, and the elderly monk Thich Duc Nhuan, a prominent Buddhist leader who suffers from stomach ulcers and asthma.

I am also concerned over the fate of Thich Huyen Quang and Thich Quang Do, leaders of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (An Quang Pagoda) who were exiled from Ho Chi Minh City in 1982 and have been under house arrest in subsequent years for protesting the government's religious policy. I appeal to you to release them from house arrest and to let them live normal lives and carry out their religious duties.

Finally, I appeal for the immediate and unconditional release of the distinguished writer Doan Quoc Sy, sentenced to nine years at a trial last May. Please allow him to emigrate to Australia to join his family there.

Sincerely,

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP



Statement of Purpose

- To make clear public witness to the Buddha Way as a way of peace and protection of all beings;
- To raise peace and ecology concerns among American Buddhists and to promote projects through which the Sangha may respond to these concerns;
- To encourage the delineation in English of the Buddhist way of nonviolence; building from the rich resources of the 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.

Membership Form

BPF membership requires only a commitment to the general spirit of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. Please see Statement of Purpose, above. BPF relies on members' support and suggests a minimum annual donation of \$15 for U.S. residents, \$20 overseas. Please make checks payable to "Buddhist Peace Fellowship." Contributions are tax deductible. Members receive a one year subscription to the *BPF Newsletter*. For contributions of \$50 or more, we will send you a copy of *The Path of Compassion*.

I am enclosing a contribution of \$
to support the work of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

Name

Phone

Street

City, State, Country, Zip

BPF encourage members to join the BPF chapter in their area, and to join the Fellowship of Reconciliation in their home country.

Buddhist Peace Fellowship

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