TURNING WHEEL

Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship *Summer 1992 $3.00*

- ***Native Americans Speak about the Columbus Quincentennial***
- ***From Caesar's Palace to the Nuclear Test Site — A Buddhist Pilgrimage to Nevada***
- ***"How I Killed Robert Alton Harris"***

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
P.O. BOX 3470
BERKELEY, CA 94703-9906

From the Editor

Since the last editorial I wrote in the Winter issue of *Turning Wheel,* I disappeared into the Middle of Nowhere, to be a monk for three months. As I left for Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery, having arranged for my mail to be taken care of, my car, my bills, my job, having rehearsed my friends and relatives on getting along without me, I felt like I was getting ready to die. And when I got to Tassajara ("tucked into the rough palm of the mountains' hand" — AJ Kutchins, page 25), I *did* feel kind of like I had died and gone to heaven. (Although 3:45 am is a little early to get up for heaven.) I thought: This can't be real. But gradually, over the course of the "practice period," my body became persuaded that the lamplight, the bright stars, the temple bells, my evening cup of Cafix, were real. When I thought of my chaotic life in Berkeley, *it* seemed like a dream: the ringing of telephones, the calendar full of appointments, the air full of exhaust fumes. My beloved-friends and relatives became shadowy figures. One of these places had to be a dream. The newspaper came in occasionally, but I didn't read it. When I emerged from Shangri-la in April, I hadn't even heard of Ross Perot.

While I was contemplating my navel beside a babbling brook, breathing clean air, feeling safe from harm, the suffering of the gritty world continued. And what was I doing about that? What did it mean that we vowed every day to save all sentient beings? I do believe that action and contemplation complement each other, in a day, in a year, in a life, in a society. As engaged buddhists we struggle to weave together these elements in our lives. But everything's woven together, without us making it so. The people who spend their whole lives in a monastic setting are meditating for the people who spend their whole lives working to save the environment in which the monks are meditating.

In buddhist practice, we try to see things as they are. When I came back to Berkeley, what I saw in front of me was painful. There seemed to be more homeless people on the streets than ever. Soon after my return, Robert Harris was executed at San Quentin (page 15, page 25) and the "not guilty " verdict was returned in the Rodney King case (page 28). Beginning work on this issue of *Turning Wheel.* I tried to learn more about Native Americans, to combat my woeful ignorance. I read, among other things, that "nearly one in six American Indian adolescents has attempted suicide, a rate four times that of other teenagers," according to a recent study published by the American Medical Association. "This is the most devastated group of adolescents in the United States," the study said. So how does it feel to them to celebrate the Columbus Quincentennial?

Seeing things as they are means seeing what's in front of your face. And what's in front of your face is the whole world. As we educate ourselves, hopefully we take away the veils of ignorance, so that we know that the suffering of others is not only real for them but real for us. ❖ — *Susan Moon*

BUDDHISTS GAY, LESBIAN & BISEXUAL will be our focus in the next issue of *Turning Wheel.* Tell us what it's like to be gay or bisexual in your practice, and in your sangha. How is sexual orientation important in your encounter with the dharma? (How is it unimportant?) Tell us your stories, and help give voice to the not-so-straight Buddhist community. Send articles, letters, poems, or artwork by Aug. 17 to: *Turning Wheel,* P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704. (Submissions can be published anonymously on request.)

Winter '93 ***Turning Wheel*** will focus on animal rights and rights of other sentient beings (bermuda grass? staphylococcus?) and the first precept (no killing). Deadline: November 13, '92.

Tentative themes of subsequent issues are as follows:

Spring '93: Race and sangha. Deadline: mid-February.

Summer '93: Right livelihood, money, poverty, wealth. Deadline: mid-May.

Fall '93: Right speech, censorship, violence in the media. Deadline: mid-August.

Turning Wheel

Editor
Susan Moon

Assistant Editor & Advertising Director
Will Waters

Consulting Readers & Editors
Thelma Bryant, Denise Caignon, Veronica Froelich, AJ Kutchins, George Lane, Patrick McMahon, Miriam Queen, Alan Senauke

Production & Design
Lawrence Watson, Mary Barrett, Thelma Bryant, Susan Moon, Will Waters

For advertising rate sheets, please contact the National Office

International Advisory Board
Robert Aitken, A.T. Ariyaratne, V.B. Dharamawara, Christina Feldman, Maha Ghosanada, Ane Pema Chodron, Mamoru Kato, Joanna Macy, Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, Gary Snyder, Tenzin N. Tethong, Christopher Titmuss

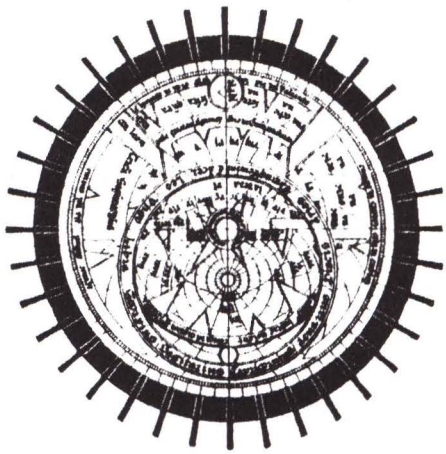
National Coordinator
Alan Senauke

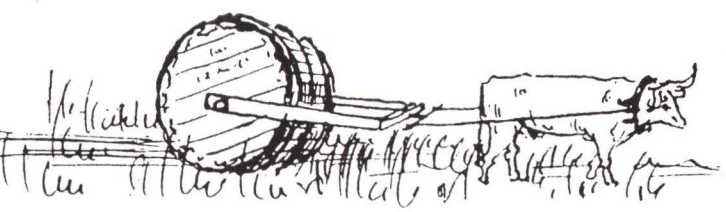
The Buddhist Peace Fellowship was founded in 1978, as a network of individuals and local chapters, to bring a Buddhist perspective to the peace movement, and to bring the peace movement to the Buddhist community. Membership and subscription information are on the back cover. Single copies $4.00 postpaid from:

BPF National Office.
Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704
510/525-8596

printed on recycled paper

CONTENTS





LETTERS

On American Sanghas and Race Relations —

Dear Editor:

We are long overdue for some discussion of the racial and ethnic insularity of North American Buddhist meditation groups in general, and of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in particular. So I am grateful to Cate Gable for raising the matter in the last issue of *Turning Wheel* ("American Sanghas: Too White?"), and I particularly appreciate the extent to which she was willing to expose her own feelings and thought processes on the subject. The article seems like an excellent starting point, for the manner in which the questions are framed, and the assumptions underlying them, tell a great deal about what the real problems are, and even point to some solutions.

The general predicate of the article appears to be that "American Sanghas" are "too white." But most practicing Buddhists in the United States are *not* white — they are Asian-Americans (notably Japanese-Americans) and refugees from Asia (including Thais, Cambodians, Laotians, Burmese, Vietnamese, Sri Lankans, etc.). Certainly this is true in California, where both Cate Gable and I practice. Granted, they are not all "meditators," but I believe deeply that underlying all of our Buddhist sects is the same fundamental understanding of birth and death; of suffering, origination, cessation and The Path.

It seems to me that a fundamental practice of Buddhist meditation is *to stop falling for it* — that is, to accept all of the silly and necessary distinctions we make, but to cease our reflexive belief that there is any meaning in those distinctions. In some areas — like the difference between living and dying — this is very hard indeed. On the other hand, the idea that the Dharma is only the Dharma if it comes in the right kind of package presents a wonderful opportunity for letting go of the sort of habitual thinking that keeps us enslaved. I would even suggest that it is the same sort of thinking that leads to the racial and ethnic divisions among us.

So the first two steps, I think, are to expand our field of awareness, and to be open to the possibility that neither we ourselves, nor our particular sitting groups, are the totality of American Buddhism. And what is the next step? If we are troubled by the experience of practicing with an insular group of affluent white folks, how can we change it?

Perhaps the most facile answer is: You could go practice with Buddhists who are not affluent white people. You could go to a monastery in Asia, in which yours will assuredly not be the dominant language or culture. Without leaving California, however, there are any number of Asian teachers — like Maezumi Roshi in Los

Angeles, or the wonderful Burmese vipassana teacher Rina Sircar in the Santa Cruz mountains — who are likely to have more "non-whites" in their groups than Cate found at the Toni Packer retreat she speaks of.

I like this approach better than the one implied in Cate's article, an approach that asks: "How can we make our group more accessible to poor, suffering black people?" I would suggest that within that well-intentioned question is the very ethnocentricism that would discourage all but the most resilient minority person from wanting to join "us." Particularly when we are just beginning to learn the practices of an ancient Asian religion, as passed on by countless generations of Asian teachers, it is not helpful to come at the question of our own insularity by thinking like missionaries.

Still, I think it is also too glib to say to Cate Gable (or to myself) that the only appropriate step is to go practice somewhere else. One of the hallmarks of Buddhism is its willingness to shed its packaging and take on whatever cultural form is going to be most accessible to suffering people. As they say, "Dharma gates are boundless"; if the best entry point for you is studying with an exceptionally talented westerner like Toni Packer, or with a Jewish Zen master, then I believe that it serves all living beings for you to follow that route.

What I propose is that we start from where we are and make the obvious and helpful connections with our dharma sisters and brothers. Perhaps one way would be to visit the temples of other, "ethnic" Buddhists; I suspect that you will generally be well received there.

Perhaps this does not seem to respond to the deep concern implicit in Cate's article, a concern which recent events have brought to the fore of most everyone's consciousness: how to bridge the poisonous gap that separates most "white" people in America from most African-Americans. I can't really answer that. I do believe, though, that a start can be found within the core of our practice, by learning to drop our own habits of ethnocentric thinking and by not being fooled by the illusions of "us" and "them." This is hard, but I think it is more productive to start right where we are than to display an interest in the "black woman with three children" or the "Iranian who runs the corner grocery" that is based solely on their race or ethnicity. I have faith that to the extent that we really practice the way of the Buddha, we will open to and experience a truly wide range of people — Asian, black, white, Native American, impossible to classify — as part of our sangha, as reflecting jewels in Indra's net, as ourselves.

—Albert Kutchins, Berkeley, California

Dear Editor:

I'm a European-American woman, primarily of English, Irish and German descent. Though there was a long history of genealogical interest and pride on my mother's side, I have recently come to understand that racism in America has robbed me of my ethnicity and of my own roots of resistance. I have been lumped together with millions of other Americans — I am called "white."

Though I was raised by a liberal mother with whom I attended NAACP gatherings as a child in the sixties, I didn't become interested in the issue of racism until recently. I knew that progress had been made in the Civil Rights movement, and I thought that the racially connected cycle of poverty was an injustice to be solved by electing more compassionate government leaders. I continued to go about blithely in my white world for 32 years, unaware of my privilege, like a fish who does not see the water she swims in.

I became concerned about racism through my work as a peace and environmental activist. I was already terrified about the deteriorating ecosystem. The small number of people of color in the meeting rooms I sat in further alarmed me. Martin Luther King Jr. said we need to "live together as brothers [and sisters] or perish together as fools."

I looked to the writings of African-American female authors and their "womanist" critiques of the white middle-class feminist movement for clues about the disproportionate whiteness of these progressive movements. I realized that my environmental work had been concerned mostly with issues on distant shores. I had been in sympathy with, but had not "stood with" those who face apartheid and extinction in our own inner cities. For those who struggle daily for survival, without hope of a decent future for themselves or their children, the greenhouse effect and the depletion of the ozone are the concerns of some other world.

I was thrilled when I saw a notice for a gathering of the Interracial Buddhist Council at Spirit Rock in March. This enthusiastic meeting of about 50 was a beginning — an acknowledgement of the predominant "whiteness" of most of the non-Asian American sanghas. We discussed the need to encourage our sanghas to become more proactive against racism in America.

A couple of weeks later, I attended a weekend workshop at Rigpa, a Tibetan Buddhist center in Berkeley, on "overcoming barriers to compassion: facing racism and other forms of social oppression." There were only about 20 of us, but again, it was wonderful just to be in the company of other Buddhists committed to overcoming racism, right now, at home.

Three days later, the Rodney King verdict was announced. White America was shocked, not only by the verdict, but by the riots in Lost Angeles. Actually, as an Hispanic friend pointed out, the word "riot" does not do justice to the events there. "Riot" is a word imposed from above, by those who define the social order. "Uprising" expresses the scope and nature of the real struggle, the need for profound change. Have Palestinians and black South Africans been rioting all these years, or fighting for their lives? I'm just

surprised the L.A. uprising didn't come sooner.

BPF called a "town meeting" in Berkeley ten days after the King verdict. The topic was "violence and racism in the U.S." I was somewhat disappointed with the gathering, though I'm not sure what it was that I expected. Perhaps I'd hoped to find, among this mostly white and articulate group, more indignation, outrage, and resolve to act, and not just self-disappointment and mutual examination of our own attitudes about race. Yes, we need to change our thinking, but this is not enough to overcome malnutrition, lack of medical care, lead poisoning and street violence. Yes, it's important to work on our own personal demons, but not at the expense of or instead of going into our poor neighborhoods and working side by side with poor people of color. Buddha taught that there really is no self and no other. I am not my sister's keeper — I *am* my sister. As we act in the world, we may find that many of our personal issues are also resolved.

The Buddhist tradition and language supports us in this work: to see things as they are and to feel our connection with the suffering of all beings — everything we do, and don't do, matters.

I have decided to focus my work in two areas having to do with interconnectedness. Since the L.A. uprising, I have attended some coalition-forming gatherings of people who are working out of their faith commitments. There has been a rich religious tradition within the African-American community. Ignorance about another's religion often underlies racial prejudice. There's both an opportunity and a need for truly interfaith community networks, not just Judeo-Christian or even pan-Buddhist ecumenical ones.

I will be doing my ministerial internship at the Oakland Unitarian Church beginning next fall. I will do what I can to create an interfaith network to work on local issues, at the same time tying them to the wider world. Too often, ecumenical cooperation has focused solely on foreign issues, and tends to be elitist. I believe that working together locally on tangible issues with visible results can help ordinary people understand how much our various religious "languages of love" (Gandhi) have in common, and how all of these different traditions support us in the struggle for justice and compassion. All of Oakland's citizenry has the same yearning for education, jobs and safety, regardless of nationality, religion, race or class.

Also, inspired by the emergence of "eco-rap" in Oakland, I hope to focus on the issue of environmental racism in my parish work. The health of poor people in the inner city is being daily destroyed by our society's toxics. Here is an opportunity for environmentalists, including the "distant shore" ones, to work together with people of color for social and racial justice, and to nurture a better understanding of the interdependence of these struggles.

—Veronica Froelich, Oakland, California

On the Columbus Day Quincentennial —

Dear Editor:

I'm thinking about Amilia, who is 28, and came here from Guatemala with her mother and sister. All three women had their husbands murdered in front of them by government troops. They fled to California with their six children. I'm thinking about little José, from Salvador, who sits in a foster home in San Francisco while authorities argue about using local funds to shelter an undocumented child. These are our brothers and sisters — other "jewels in Indra's net" whose joy and suffering are reflected in our own beings.

Can we Buddhists celebrate the Columbus Day Quincentennial? Can we celebrate a movement which brought slaves here and which enslaved and massacred the native people, which still glories in armed power, which believes that those with money have the right to subjugate those without, which seeks to rip from Indra's net the jewels who get in the way? To me, Columbus Day is a symbol of such abuses of power, and of the greed and attachment we fight in ourselves every single day.

But within ourselves and within our nation there are other values we can support. The growing realization of our world-wide interdependence is one. At Spirit Rock, a Vipassana center in Northern California, "Interdependence Day" is celebrated on July 4. Perhaps other Buddhist communities are following this example.

Let's celebrate the spirit of service which supports the oppressed in their own struggles. I don't mean a Lady Bountiful approach of "giving to the poor." I mean, for example, the folks in the Sanctuary movement who work with indigenous people in Central America to help them become economically self-sufficient, who send telexes to officials when union leaders in Guatemala are jailed, who support refugee-run food programs here. I mean the people who have taken Tibetan refugees into their homes and helped them find work. I mean the AIDS hospices, the homeless programs, the literacy programs.

Let's celebrate the nonviolent protester, the witness to injustice. Let's celebrate our dharma (and Christian) sisters and brothers who regularly go to jail for attempting to block arms shipments. Let's celebrate the elderly woman, back severely bent by osteoporosis, who stands on the street corner holding a sign decrying war.

Yes, we have plenty to celebrate. But first we have to get our values straight. Then we can begin to craft celebrations which will keep us on the Eightfold Path.

AIDS Volunteers Day? Signholders for Justice Day? Tree-Saving Monks Day?

Maybe we could have a contest among BPF chapters to name a special day in 1993 so we all have something we can celebrate.

— Sandy Hunter, Berkeley, California

READINGS

Interracial Buddhist Council

Dear Dharma Friends,

We wish to invite you to join us in helping create the Interracial Buddhist Council. The council, open to all who wish to join, will be an organization which develops programs and a network of support to directly address the issues of racism and multicultural inclusion in Buddhist communities in the West.

Purpose of the Interracial Buddhist Council (IBC):

1. To bring the Dharma to the West in a way that is open, honoring and inclusive of all races and cultures.

2. To bring awareness to the suffering created by racism and prejudice in order to heal and eliminate the pain we have inflicted on one another by our ignorance. To address the root causes and underlying delusions that sustain racism. To bring to the Buddhist community, the West and the world a freedom from the bondage of racism and a liberation of spirit in all dimensions.

3. To support and sponsor activities, publications, retreats, conferences, teachings and education to implement these ideas.

The IBC is in its formative stages. We have only begun to initiate some first programs. Together, those who join us in 1992 will help clarify our vision and develop a beginning plan of action for networking, gatherings, and programs.

We invite you to join us.

(Signed)

Ralph Steele, Julie Wester, Jack Kornfield, Marlena Willis, Linda Velarde, Mary Orr.

For information, write to: Interracial Buddhist Council, c/o Spirit Rock Meditation Center, P.O. Box 909, Woodacre, CA 94973. Phone: Ralph Steele, 505/982-4183. Marlena Willis, 510/654-3833.

Anti-Gay Measures In Oregon

A powerful and well-funded Christian Right group has successfully backed a far-reaching initiative in Springfield, Oregon to curtail gay and lesbian expression, and is gearing up for a similar initiative in the November election which would amend the Oregon State Constitution.

In the May 20th primary election, Springfield voters passed an amendment to the city charter declaring that city monies and properties shall not be used "to promote, encourage or facilitate homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism, or masochism." The Springfield City Library has reportedly already had to withdraw books from its collection as a consequence of the new law.

The Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA), which sponsored the measure, is now collecting signatures for a statewide initiative which would amend the State Constitution with virtually identical wording. The Constitution would also be altered to include the following paragraph:

The State Department of Higher Education and the public schools shall assist in setting a standard for Oregon's youth that recognizes homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism and masochism as abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse and that these behaviors are to be discouraged and avoided.

If this measure is passed by Oregon voters, it could effectively eliminate most protections for the civil rights of gays and lesbians in Oregon.

After the Springfield measure was passed, the head of the OCA reported that he had received phone calls from individuals in 27 other states asking how they could get a similar measure into law in their own communities.

BPF member Kuya Minogue has been working against the OCA as part of the Religious Response Network, an interfaith committee opposing the use of religious doctrine for the oppression of minorities. BPF members — Oregonians or others — who wish to help can contact Kuya at the Eugene Zendo, 3480 Potter St., Eugene, OR 97405, tel. 503/345-0361.

Japanese Artist Gives Memorial Peace Scroll to U.S. War Cemetery

Old soldiers now, we chat and reminisce —
we pray for good harvests,
for the blessings of heaven and earth,
for universal peace.

And for our fallen comrades
Eternal rest.

These are the closing words of the poem written on a *kakemono*, or hand-painted hanging scroll, which was created by Japanese war veteran, poet and artist Masakitsu Yoshida as a memorial to Americans who died in the Pacific war during World War II.

The *kakemono*, which depicts a sitting Buddha with the poem, was presented as a gift to the Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno, CA on June 6, the golden anniversary of the Battle of Midway.

In 1987 Mr. Yoshida, who was an officer in the Imperial Navy during World War II, met Douglas Davis, an American holder of the Navy Cross who was visiting Japan and hoping to meet Japanese veterans of the Pacific war. Both men were survivors of the Battle of Midway, and the friendship they developed inspired Mr. Yoshida to create the *kakemono* scroll as a contribution to world peace.

"I was overjoyed," wrote Mr. Yoshida, "by the response I have been getting from so many people. I would like to bring this treasure from so many individual warm hearts to America. For example, when I went

to buy fabric to wrap my scroll, the shopkeeper did not charge me at all. He said, 'I would like to be part of your blessing for America, so please take my fabric.' Thoughts like this are growing, and I believe the circle of this warm thought will spread out."

International Tribunal of Indigenous Peoples

Led by the American Indian Movement, an International Tribunal of Indigenous Peoples and Resistance Movements will convene in San Francisco from October 1-4, 1992, in anticipation of the lavish celebrations planned by the U.S. and other governments for the Quincentennial of Columbus Day on October 12. In protest and as a constructive alternative, the International Tribunal will commemorate 500 years of resistance to colonialism on the part of the majority of the world's people — people of color.

The gathering, which will bring together people from Africa, Asia and Europe as well as Native Americans, will hear testimony and hold discussions about the great violations of human rights and international law perpetrated against people of color. Special emphasis will be placed on the impact of the Columbian legacy for people of color within the U.S. — American Indians, blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans/Chicanos. A distinguished panel of international jurists is being invited to participate, and national and international human rights organizations will be in attendance.

The Tribunal process will be applied towards helping make the next 500 years different, to exposing and changing those patterns developed over centuries of oppressive practices which promote hatred and inflict psychological and physical violence.

For more information, write or call International Tribunal, 2940 16th St. #104, San Francisco, CA 94103; tel. 415/626-1875.

Continued Detention of Monks & Priests in Vietnam

Amnesty International reports that at least 60 prisoners of conscience continue to be held in detention in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the peaceful expression of their religious beliefs. Members of the Protestant church have been detained without charge or trial, and a number of others have reportedly been sentenced to three years' imprisonment after a sham trial. AI's report, which appeared in April, also expresses concern about the continuing detention of Buddhist monks and Catholic priests, several of whom have been held for a number of years in untried detention.

When the Vietnam Buddhist Church (VBC) was established in 1981, not all Vietnamese Buddhists welcomed the government's move in establishing this single official Buddhist organization. Some of them, including Thich Quang Do and Thich Huyen Quang, who have been under house arrest since 1982, criticized the authorities over alleged persecution, human rights violations, and state control over Buddhist institutions. Although several monks and nuns were released from prison in 1989, at least eight Buddhist monks are known to be currently detained or under house arrest for "national security" reasons.

Full information is available in a seven-page report, titled *Viet Nam: Continued Detention of Members of Religious Organizations*, which is available from Amnesty International, 322 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10001.

Help Stop Japan's Plutonium Drive

Plutonium Free Future, a group based in the U.S. and Japan and affiliated with the Community of Mindful Living, has been formed to alert the world to the Japanese government's plans for large-scale plutonium-based energy production. Plutonium, which is not found in nature but is produced by burning uranium in nuclear reactors, is one of the most toxic and hazardous radioactive substances on earth, much more dangerous than uranium itself.

Japan already has many uranium-based power plants in operation, and is now pursuing two national programs which would greatly increase the use of plutonium. Nuclear complexes now under construction in Japan include reactors and reprocessing facilities of a kind abandoned by most other industrialized nations as too difficult to control. People living near reprocessing plants suffer from plutonium contamination; many cases of leukemia have been reported by workers and their families near Sellafield, a British reprocessing facility (whose principal customer is Japan).

Transport of plutonium is the second grave danger posed by Japan's dependence on plutonium; while its own new facilities are still under construction, Japan sends its spent fuel to England and France to be reprocessed, and the resulting plutonium must be shipped back to Japan. The first shipment from France is scheduled for October 1992. Shipments are slated to continue for at least 18 years. The shipping route is likely to pass through the Panama canal and across the Pacific Ocean, putting the entire world in peril. Accidents could happen at sea or in port, in loading and unloading or during overland transport by truck. Even a small amount of plutonium released in an accident could cause lung cancer in hundreds of thousands of people.

The Japan-U.S. Nuclear Cooperation Agreement requires U.S. approval for overseas transport of Japanese plutonium; thus the U.S. Congress has the power to veto the upcoming first shipment.

Please write to your Congress members and government leaders to take action against this threat to planetary health. Write to the people of Japan through the

Emperor, the symbol of the nation, and the Prime Minister, the elected head of the government. Send copies of your letters to the editors of your local media, to the Japanese media, and to Plutonium Free Future. For more information, write to Plutonium Free Future, 2018 Shattuck Ave., Box 140, Berkeley, CA 94704.

H.I.M. Emperor Akihito and People of Japan, Imperial Household Agency, 1-1 Chiyoda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101.

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and People of Japan, Prime Minister's Office, 1-6-1 Nagata-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100.

Asahi Newspaper Co., 5-3-2 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104.

Massacre in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

Hundreds of Buddhist tribal people were reported massacred by Bangladeshi military and settlers in an incident on April 10 that appears to have been vigorously covered up by the Bangladeshi government. The military has made the area in southeastern Bangladesh off-limits to all visitors, including journalists, and reports on the massacre vary widely in their estimates of the death toll. Many Indian newspapers reported that 200 hill people were killed in the incident; but Buddhist groups and the London-based group Survival International say that over 1200 people, mostly women, children, and old people, were forced into their homes and locked in before the military set fire to their houses, burning the inhabitants alive.

The incident took place in a village called Logang, in the district of Khagrachari. The only official word on the event has been a government statement released on April 11 saying that 10 Chakma tribespeople were killed. But suspicion of a government cover-up grew after the local administration blocked a visit by a 23-member team of human rights investigators, opposition politicians and journalists.

The incident appears to have been set off when a group of Bengali youths assaulted and attempted to rape a hill woman who was herding cows at Logang. Two other women defended her, killing one of the assaulters. The other youths fled to their village, but claimed that Hill Tribe guerrillas had attacked them and killed their friend. Enraged Bengali settlers immediately set out to avenge the killing, enlisting the help of paramilitary security forces in the indiscriminate shooting of tribal villagers and the razing of their houses by arson.

Bangladesh, which is the size of Wisconsin, has 111 million people. (The entire U.S., by comparison, has less than 250 million people.) This grave overpopulation has forced the government to move over 400,000 Bengali settlers, who are Muslim, from the plains onto the lands of the tribal peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Chittagong people have found their livelihoods, their various native cultures, and even their lives threatened by this "colonization." Having failed to achieve a political

or legal solution through talks with the government, a minority of the inhabitants formed a guerrilla resistance group, Shanti Bahini (lit. "peace force"), which has for 16 years fought a bush war for control of the region. The result has been violent reprisals by the Bangladeshi army on all tribal people. The conflict had already claimed more than 4000 lives — some reports say far more — before the April massacre.

Those hill people who have not fled to the jungle or over the border to India have been required to move into "cluster villages." The village of Logang, where the April massacre occurred, was one such cluster site. A Western diplomat familiar with the region reports that 25 percent of the land in Khagrachari district alone was taken away from the tribals illegally — but land records in the district office have been destroyed by fire, and there is suspicion that the fire was not accidental.

Please help the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) by writing to the Government of Bangladesh and expressing your dismay at the massacre of the Chakma people. Ask for an end to violence against all the tribal peoples of the CHT, a halt of the militarization of the CHT, where there is now one member of the "security force" for every 20 tribals, and recognition of the Chakmas' right to their lands. Begin *Dear Prime Minister*, and write to: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Sugandha House, PM's Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

For a very good summary of the troubled history of the CHT, request the "Update on the Chittagong Hill Tracts" from IWGIA, Fiolstraede 10, DK 1171 Copenhagen K, Denmark; tel. 033.124.724.

Thailand Update, and an Appeal

After the May pro-democracy rallies in Thailand which ended in the shooting of hundreds of demonstrators by military forces, there have been some unanticipated developments for the better, along with some more causes for concern.

In a surprising move, Anand Panyarachun, who served as Prime Minister for several months last year, has again been chosen as Prime Minister. This move was a temporary measure in order to defuse the explosive situation in Thailand. Our friends at the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) in Bangkok report that many people were relieved at the appointment of Anand; it had been feared that a pro-military politician — a close friend of Army General Suchinda — would be chosen for the post after riots forced Suchinda to rescind his own self-appointment as Prime Minister. Anand is a good short-term solution; he is seen as an honest and liberal "technocrat" who will help to restore Thailand's economy and will work to ensure a fair election when his term is up. That will be within a few months, since the Thai parliament has just passed an amendment requiring the Prime Minister to be an elected member of parliament (which Anand is not). In the new elections, it will be more difficult than in the past for pro-military parties, with the blood of the May massacres on their hands, to buy votes.

According to Bangkok's newspaper *The Nation*, 1176 people are still missing after the May uprising and shootings. 50 bodies of demonstrators were found near the Thai-Cambodian border, apparently carried there and dropped by helicopters. More bodies are reported to have been loaded onto trucks during the massacres and taken to outlying areas for burning and burial.

Several pro-military groups which were used to crush the student uprising in 1976 have been reformed under an umbrella group called Apirak Chakkri. These groups appear to be spreading misinformation, and may be used by the military to intimidate and possibly assassinate pro-democracy leaders. Members of one of these vigilante groups wear jackets with the slogan, "I have righteousness to kill wrongdoers."

The key demand that needs to be met if democracy in Thailand is to develop is that the amnesty decree must be revoked and those who are responsible for the massacres that took place from May 17-20 must be brought to trial.

Please fax the King and the new Prime Minister urging them to pursue the prosecution of those responsible for the massacres. Inform them of your concern at the reemergence of right-wing vigilantes and assure them that you are following events in Thailand closely. You can send faxes to:

•Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun, Government House, Bangkok 10300, Thailand; fax 66-2-280-1443

•King Bumiphol Adulyadej, Chitlada Palace, Bangkok 10200, Thailand; fax 66-2-282-5984. ❖

Pro-democracy rally, May 17th, Bangkok, prior to the massacres of May 17th-20th. Estimated crowd: 250,000.

"The more spiritual you are, the more political you must become. Only when you cry for the Jews are you permitted to sing Gregorian chant."

— Dietrich Bonhoffer, German Lutheran clergyman who was jailed and killed by Hitler.

Education Column —

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

by Patrick McMahon

Scratch a teacher and you'll find a missionary. One teacher wants to lead his inner-city minority students out of the ghetto. Another carries the American flag. And the missionary in me seeks converts to mindfulness. Our various missions are often at cross-purposes, but we all join ranks in the Grand Mission: to carry the torch of learning to the — well — the uncivilized. Eavesdrop on us in the teachers' lounge sometime, as we talk about our students, if not as heathens and savages, then as little twirps and troublemakers.

The Mission, ruinous to indigenous cultures everywhere, is surely at work in the colonization of children that we call education. We whisk them out of the rich web of community and remove them from the natural environment, cutting them off from their greatest teachers. Like any indigenous people, children then become easy prey to dependence on the conquering institution.

But this is 1992, and the Mission is crumbling. Our civilizing intentions meet with apathy if not outright resistance. Our backs to the school wall, we react with righteous indignation: "The trouble with kids these days is . . ."

But righteousness is a heavy burden, and at this late date in the school year, I'm too tired to carry it. I've been giving over more and more to the native energies of my students. It's clear that for a long time I've been carrying coals to Newcastle.

I'm at my desk working on report cards, distracted by the sound of clapping and singing outside my window. Over the course of the spring this particular routine has become deeply familiar: call and response, rhythmical clapping, and the chorus, "Da-da-da . . . get *bus*-y! Da-da-da . . . get *bus*-y!" With a sigh I put down my pen, and get up to close the window. On the asphalt outside, a dozen girls, seven and eight years old, stand in a double line, with an older girl stationed at one end, apparently directing. She beckons one girl down the line. The little one struts her stuff — shaking shoulders, lifting high the knees, tilting her head back — while the others chant, "Gere-mee-ka. . . get *bus*-y!" She reaches the end and another girl feeds in: "Na-tasha . . . get *bus*-y!" The bell rings and they dance back to their classrooms.

I wait at my door for my students, suddenly overcome with self-doubt. What they pull together in one ten-minute recess exhibits more color, grace, and intelligence than I'm able to elicit from them in a whole hard-planned day. My mission has received a severe blow. What business do I have in converting these already highly cultured souls? As they take their seats, I stand in my power place, the spot in the room where I have the best chance at commanding attention. I marvel as my students once again navigate the transition from the culture of children to the culture of adults; and from their ethnic roots in Puerto Rico, the Ivory Coast, Tonga, Mexico, Russia, Ireland, to a crumbling, California school. "Please open your books to page 143," I intone, as we embark again on mission impossible. My hope is that they will continue to show me how to bring the energy outside the Mission walls, in. ❖

Patrick McMahon edits Teaching Circle, *a journal for educators who practice meditation. For a complimentary copy of the summer issue, please contact him at: 2311 Woolsey St., Apt. 3, Berkeley, CA 94705.*

Ecology Column —

Snow on Easter Sunday

by Stephanie Kaza

KEEEew, kEEew, kEEew! A bright red cardinal pierced the dawn air with brilliant self-announcement. *Cheerio, cheerio, cheerio!* A male robin sang a warble of attraction — find *me!* find *me!* In the first hours of daylight I was lured from my bed by the bustling activity of spring courtship. Scent of lilac beckoned from the open window, and green leaves just open caressed my eyes, so long sore from the empty landscape of winter. I hopped on my bicycle, following the impulse to play, cruising down to the waterfront path by the lake. I wanted to know for sure that the ice was really gone, that spring was really here. My body had been waiting for two months to find the local rhythms of spring in northern New England. I was more than ready for the year's turning.

When I moved to Vermont last fall, people warned me about the winters. Though I grew up as a kid in Buffalo, New York, I had completely replaced that winter knowledge of slush and snow with over twenty years of benign living on the central California coast. I knew I had to go through a Vermont winter from start to finish before I could come to any conclusions about whether this transplant would take.

I made it through December all right, living off the remembered delight of magenta maples, golden aspens, and red-orange sumac. And January flew by in a blur as I began my first teaching semester at the University of Vermont, with 250 students in one class, 33 in another. But by mid-February I was ready for California spring. I knew that in California the plum trees were flowering and the first grass shoots had cloaked the hills with luscious green. I could feel precise signals that the early wildflowers were out on Mount Tamalpais and along the Miwok Trail. My body began to go a little crazy.

For two months I lived in the confusion of two worlds — the world out my window still frozen and skeletal, and the world in my body in tune with the green sensuality of California. It was more complicated than simply being homesick. The hard truth was that my body was made up of California elements — my cells fed on the water, air, and sunshine of California, my rhythms determined by the rhythms of the coastal landscape. My *internal* experience of seasonality was so much more familiar than the cold whiteness of Vermont that I sometimes could not believe what I was seeing outside (for example, the two heavy snowfalls on Palm and Easter Sunday weekends in April).

So finally, as I write this, spring has come to northern Vermont: the tulips and daffodils have just peaked, mosquitoes are hatching out, and yellow-rumped warblers are in full display. Though the weatherman has predicted more frosty mornings, I don't think it will snow again. For the last two months I have felt like a strange fragment of the California landscape, out of synch with the white wilderness of northern Vermont. I did not anticipate this disjunction caused by separation from the larger body of California that shaped my smaller body so thoroughly. I did not know there could be such an affliction as *bioregional schizophrenia* . . .

It is with great relief that I sing the praises of green again, finally uniting the sensuality of smaller and larger body in one rhythm, responding to the lure of the gleaming, growing, glorious spring. Timing, timing is everything in the business of "being at one." ❖

STORY ABOUT FEELING

by Bill Neidjie

Following is an excerpt from Story About Feeling, *in which Australian Aboriginal Bill Neidjie talks about his world. The book is transcribed from tapes and edited by Keith Taylor.*

Bill Neidjie was born in about 1911. He lives on tribal land and devotes himself to sharing his knowledge and love of the country with us all, so that it will not be lost.

Story About Feeling *is available from Magabala Books, P.O. Box 668, Broome, West Australia 6725.*

Well I'll tell you about this story,
about story where you feel . . . laying down.

Tree, grass, star . . .
because star and tree working with you.
We got blood pressure
but same thing . . . spirit on your body,
but e working with you.
even nice wind e blow . . . having a sleep . . .
because that spirit e with you.

Listen carefully this, you can hear me.
I'm telling you because earth just like mother
and father or brother of you.
That tree same thing.
Your body, my body I suppose, I'm same as you . . .
anyone.
Tree working when you sleeping and dream.

This story e can listen carefully, e can listen slow.
If you in city well I suppose lot of houses,
you can't hardly look this star
but might be one night you look.
Have a look star because that's the feeling.
String, blood . . . through your body.

That star e working there . . . see?
E working. I can see.
Some of them small, you can't hardly see.
Always at night, if you lie down . . .
look careful, e working . . . see?
When you sleep . . . blood e pumping.

I love it tree because e love me too.
E watching me same as you
tree e working with your body, my body,
e working with us.
While you sleep e working.
Daylight, when you walking around, e work too.

That tree, grass . . . that all like our father.
Dirt, earth, I sleep with this earth.
Grass . . . just like your brother.
In my blood in my arm this grass.
This dirt for us because we'll be dead,
we'll be going this earth.
This the story now.

Tree e follow you'n'me,
e'll be dead behind us but next one e'll come.
Same people. Aborigine same.
We'll be dead but next one, kid, e'll be born.
Same this tree.

Wind for us.
That way e come blow wind
and you feel it lovely, nice,
feel it cold now . . . lovely.
And I love it that wind.

Bark painting, unknown artist, Australia

That wind is wind for anybody . . . no-matter who.
Sometimes when you feeling you like outside
you might say . . . "I camp out there, camp outside
and I might go sleep."

Because e blow wind
because e's yours
Not for yours yourself . . .
for anybody.

That's why I'm outside.
Last night . . . oh, e blow wind.
Yes . . .
that's the one for anybody. ❖

NON-REFUNDABLE TICKETS

by Melody Ermachild and Susan Moon

Death chased us into Nevada. Sue and I had decided to go together to the Nevada Nuclear Test Site, to participate in the annual Easter protest. Then, while the plane tickets waited in a basket on my desk, Sue's friend Diane died. Sue had made this same trip three years before with Diane, and I worried that repeating it now would add to her sadness.

And while the tickets waited in their basket, a Judge set the final date for the execution of Robert Harris for the night of our scheduled return. Sue worried that I would be preoccupied with the coming execution, since I work as a private investigator for the defense on death penalty appeals.

Protesting nuclear testing no longer seemed the highest priority for either of us, but our tickets were non-refundable. We agreed to go. We had tea in a red plastic booth at the airport restaurant, and Sue held out a photo of Diane sitting with her family — husband and three children — on a huge fallen redwood tree, their arms wrapped around each other. It was time for our flight.

I spend every Wednesday interviewing my clients on Death Row. Over the past few years I often saw Harris, whom his friends called "Bobby". He would be locked into a visiting booth with his lawyer, next to the one where I sat with my client. The best word to describe him is *ordinary* — brown hair, medium weight, medium height. As the turn of the roulette wheel of appeals spun him closer to arbitrary selection as the first to die in the California gas chamber in 27 years, he developed a furrow between his eyebrows. The other men began to call out kind words to him: "Hang in there, man," and "Hey, Bobby, take it easy."

When the date for the execution was set, and I realized that I would be in Nevada for the last three days of Harris' life, I felt somewhat guilty. On my last visit to the prison, six days before the execution, I asked my Death Row clients how they were feeling. They said they could not believe it would really happen. And when I looked at Bobby, hunched over, with his face close to his attorney's, talking seriously, I, too, found it impossible to imagine that the State was premeditating his murder.

I realized, as the date got closer, that I was becoming more and more numb. It felt like the buildup to the Gulf War: you knew it would happen, you knew you couldn't stop it, but you tried anyway. It began to make you sick.

It felt like being a child trapped in an abusing, incestuous family: you knew that all events were driven by unconscious, unspeakable motives. It began to make you crazy.

In that moment I felt simply human, and exhausted; not better, not right, just tired of hatred — and sorry.

*

Good Friday, Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas. Slot machines ringing in my ears. My friend Melody and I have left jobs and family responsibilities behind and come to Nevada together for a long weekend. Two middle-aged women on a package tour. The particular package we have chosen includes a rented car and accommodations an hour outside of Las Vegas at a peace camp in the desert, next to the U.S. Nuclear Test Site. We're heading out there this afternoon. But first, a little blackjack.

I cling to Melody's arm like a child while we wander through the casino. A handsome man in a toga with a plastic wreath on his head stands on a raised platform among the slot machines doing a magic trick: he pours "gold dust" from a wine glass, and as it falls it disappears into thin air before our very eyes. I feel like Alice in Wonderland, like a space alien, like a tribal villager who has left my valley for the first time.

In Las Vegas, everything is artifice, manipulation of desire. Melody and I walk through an indoor jungle garden where "real" palm trees have plastic vines growing up their trunks. But we have to stop and pick at them with our fingernails to make this distinction. With an equanimity that puzzles me, I admire three white Bengal tigers (an endangered species) pacing in a glass cage in the middle of the casino. Their white fur with black stripes looks beautiful as they pose in front of a colorful mural of an Henri Rousseau jungle painting.

The last time I was in Las Vegas was exactly three years ago. My friend Diane and I sat together at a $2 blackjack table, laughing, betting, drinking free Bloody Marys. I was losing, but Diane, a math professor, was winning, and she kept passing me her chips. In the end we came out about even. The next day we crawled under a barbed wire fence and walked onto the Nevada Test Site with a thousand other people, all of us holding hands in a long line. We walked for about ten minutes, stepping around tumbleweed and sharp cholla cactus, before we were arrested.

That was three years ago. Since then some things have

changed. The blackjack dealer shuffles more decks of cards together so it's harder to win. I've stopped drinking Bloody Marys. The Russians and the French have each declared a moratorium on their nuclear weapons tests. And two weeks ago, Diane died of cancer.

Every Tuesday morning for the last five years, Diane and I took a particular walk in the hills behind Berkeley — up through redwoods, down through live oak.

I want to play blackjack, in memory of Diane. I just can't accept her death. I figure there are all kinds of carcinogens floating around in the air, and like milkweed seeds drifting in the wind, like the little ball in the roulette wheel, where they land is chance.

In this case they landed in the healthy body of my friend, who was, among other things, the mother of three young children.

Why should she be the one to die, so beloved by her children, her husband, her students, her friends, her flowers? Why not me? My children are grown, and I don't have a husband or a garden to leave untended. Not that I would have offered myself in her place if I could have. I don't want to die, either.

I buy $10 worth of chips and find a seat at a $2 table. Betting just $2 at a time, I lose, win, lose, win, lose. A waitress asks if I want a drink, and I shake my head. I have the fleeting thought that I'll write to Diane and tell her it's not much fun to play blackjack without her. And then, remembering she won't be getting letters, I start to cry.

Melody stands beside my chair, keeping me company. She touches my shoulder. I put down my remaining $8 of chips and lose them in the next hand.

"That's over with," I say, getting up from the table. I feel grateful for Melody. I could never be here without her.

Melody says, "Doesn't it seem strange that when you were here with Diane, you never could have imagined that in three years she would be dead?"

"Everything seems strange," I say. And I wonder: In another three years?

❋

We drove out to the Peace Camp, just across the highway from the gate to the Test Site. On the exit ramp, remarkably, an official road sign warns: "Demonstrators on Roadway." We set up our yellow dome tent among hundreds of others, bright-colored bubbles dotting the desert. We strolled around, surveying this instant community of about a thousand people, with kitchen, medical and registration tents, and rows of porta-potties. The peace campers were almost all young, our kids' ages. Lots of tie-dye, lots of beads. We wondered who and where their parents were.

Sitting in front of our tent, between cactus plants, we heated water for tea, and watched the sun set. When it got dark, we admired the brightness of the constellations in the desert sky, until the moon came up and faded them.

At dawn on Easter morning, the Native American drum woke us. Corbin Harney, the spiritual leader of the Western Shoshone, was calling us to a circle. The moon still hung in the western sky as the sun rose and Corbin prayed in his language — words heard in this land for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. Those gathered there offered tobacco blessed by Corbin to the fire. At Corbin's invitation, many people spoke — of peace, resurrection, Mother Earth.

A disheveled young man took the center and spoke too long and loud about his own suffering. He went

I want to play blackjack, in memory of Diane. I just can't accept her death.

on about his meeting with a caterpillar on the road, who, as he put it, was out there all alone, too. It was clear he lived disconnected from others, and had just stumbled into this gathering. His self-absorption and intensity were threatening.

He reminded me of many of the condemned men on Death Row, wounded in similar ways, their hurt spilling out onto others. I asked myself to be patient. I concentrated on my breathing, and pushed my shoes more firmly into the rocky desert.

Sooner than I expected, the young man quieted himself, and I was grateful for the collective power of the circle that calmed him.

Later, we walked down the road to the cattle-guard gate of the Test Site, which we could not cross without being arrested. Here beside the barbed wire fence, some demonstrators were celebrating Easter Mass. A card table was covered with a white cloth, taped down to keep it from blowing away in the wind. Loaves of bread and a carafe of wine were on the table ready for communion.

Father Alain, a Franciscan priest with a white beard and flying white eyebrows, celebrated the mass with a French accent. He said that Christ was given the death penalty because of people's greed and stupidity — "Stupeedeetay," he pronounced it. He asked God to forgive us. He spoke of *satyagraha*, the power of unconditional, all-encompassing love, which, he said, we misname nonviolence. Satyagraha is more than nonviolence. It is the love and forgiveness we give to our enemies.

As I watched Father Alain's long-fingered hands spread out in blessing against the blue sky, offering wine, tearing the bread for the sacrament, I wondered how I could ever love the pro-death penalty demonstrators, the white men in suits and ties I had seen on the road to San Quentin four days before. They had been

holding up big posters with vengeful Bible quotations.

Corbin, the Shoshone elder, took communion. So did a Moslem woman from Kazakhstan, so did a Nichiren Buddhist monk, and so did Sue and I.

Father Alain invited people to offer prayers. I thought of asking for prayers for Robert Harris, scheduled to die a day and a half away, but I found I could not speak, and did not really want to.

I sat quietly crying, listening to the people singing a refrain, "Jesus our healer, hallelujah." At last, in the too bright desert sunlight, I was able to face what would happen. I imagined Harris' rather small and ordinary body being strapped into the chair above the tank of chemicals, imagined his suffocation in the lethal gas.

Behind the barbed wire, and all around us, the desert was in bloom with dozens of different wildflowers. Sister Rosemary, the elderly nun assisting Alain, said the flowers, coming after an unusual amount of spring rain in the desert, made her feel that Mother Earth was forgiving us for the wounds we make at the Test Site.

Suddenly I wanted to let go of my self-righteous judgments of the pro-death penalty people. I wanted to understand whatever hopes they had that Robert Harris' death in the gas chamber might relieve them of their pain and fear. In that moment I felt simply human, and exhausted; not better, not right, just tired of hatred, and sorry — sad for all of it. I didn't need to struggle to cry or to stop crying. My grief just found me.

"It's so awful, so cruel and stupid," I said to Sue, sobbing. She simply stood close to me, in sympathy. Here, hundreds of miles from San Quentin, I had come far enough from the numbing horror of the coming killing that I was able to feel it.

Melody and Sue on the road in Nevada

✱

To the beat of both a Nichiren Buddhist drum and an Indian drum, the Shoshone elders lead the march to the gate when the time comes to walk across the line. And right behind them some marchers hold up a huge flag with a hammer and sickle in the corner. What could this be?

For an hour we watch hundreds of people cross the cattle guard and get arrested. Melody and I have decided not to get arrested ourselves, because it might mean returning to Nevada at a later date for a court appearance, a trip neither of us feel we can afford. We decide instead to use our rental car to ferry arrestees from jail back to the peace camp.

The Shoshone elders and the Catholics cross the line first. Later, the Easter Bunny is arrested. Some people go limp and are dragged in ways that look very uncomfortable, but in general both demonstrators and police play their parts well in this symbolic choreography, and nobody is injured. It strikes me that one achievement of all these years of demonstrations is that many cops, as well as demonstrators, have received a kind of training in nonviolence.

We're excited to meet a group of about ten Kazakhs and Russians from Kazakhstan, in the former Soviet Union. The flag with the hammer and sickle is theirs — out of date now that Kazakhstan is independent, but a recognizable symbol of where they're from. The Kazakhs, like the Shoshone, are indigenous people. The group is traveling around the U.S., speaking out about the importance of ending nuclear testing. Semipalatinsk, the principal Soviet Test Site, is in Kazakhstan, and because of a strong people's movement, it has been closed permanently. A moratorium has temporarily halted testing at the other Soviet Test Site.

The logo of the Nevada-Semipalatinsk movement is a picture of a Kazakh and a Shoshone, each in traditional dress, smoking a peace pipe. The drum that awakened us this morning was presented to Corbin by the Kazakhs, and was painted with that logo.

The delegation from Kazakhstan includes a young man who speaks some English, in addition to Kazakh and Russian. He's an artist who holds his brush in his teeth because he was born without arms. One in three births in the region near Semipalatinsk are either stillborn or have birth defects.

At one point we find ourselves in an unlikely group. A young woman with an English accent introduces two Nevada sheriffs to the delegation from Kazakhstan. One of the policemen is very engaged by the Kazakh artist, and after a lively conversation, everybody poses for a photograph — the Nevada cops, the Englishwoman, the Kazakhs and Russians, and me and Melody, in our

Buddhist Peace Fellowship T-shirts.

The arrested protesters are taken by bus to the town of Beatty, an hour and a half further out on the highway. We allow time for them to be cited and released, then follow in our car. It isn't hard to find the demonstrators in this small Nevada town. We offer to take three people back to the peace camp, and we're honored when, in addition to two white women, one of the Shoshone elders, Bill Rosse, climbs into our car. He's the chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee of the Western Shoshone National Council. He wears blue denim, a western hat and a string tie fastened with a beaded bolo. Although he's tired from a long hot day of demonstrating, he uses the time in the car to talk with us about the Shoshone struggle. He points out Yucca Mountain, on Shoshone land, which the Department of Energy is planning to use as a nuclear dump. And we drive past a scarred piece of desert which he says is already in use as a toxic waste site, though you wouldn't know that from the big sign that proclaims "U.S. Ecology." He tells us that when the wind blows towards Las Vegas, they don't test, but when the wind blows towards the Indian reservation, they do.

When we reach the peace camp and Bill Rosse gets out of the car, Melody says, "We just had our own personal teach-in."

❋

It was our last morning in Nevada. On our way to the airport, I wanted to take Sue to Red Rocks Park, a place I'd been before on a climbing trip. Driving through the desert in our air-conditioned compact, we talked about the weekend, and wondered aloud whether it made any difference that we were there. The numbers of demonstrators have been dwindling year by year. The U.S. and Britain still test nuclear weapons at the Nevada Test Site.

We complained to each other that we were tired of demonstrating against testing. I had hoped we'd be able to go on to something else, something more positive, after the Soviet Union collapsed.

The desert we drove through, lit up by peach-colored sprays of flowers, was once Shoshone grazing land. Now it was more and more poisoned by invisible radioactive waste. Every once in a while a crater was formed when the surface of the desert collapsed into an underground cavern blasted out by a bomb test And over our heads there were invisible holes in the bright blue sky.

That night, the night Harris was scheduled to die, I would go to San Quentin to vigil at the gates. Sue would go to Diane's house to make dinner for the kids while their father went to a meeting.

We both felt so sad. We had to remind each other, once again, that there's no measuring these things. Peace is not an object to be gained. It has no sign to tell you you've arrived. The only sign says "demonstrators on roadway."

❋

We stop at the visitor center at Red Rocks Park to get a map and to look up the wildflower we have been seeing everywhere. It's called apricot mallow.

We follow the "scenic drive" along the base of great cliffs of rock. The rock is incredibly red, the sky behind it unbelievably blue, the trees and shrubs folded into the canyons impossibly green. Perhaps it's another display created by a casino. I want to touch the rock to see if it's real.

We stop and get out at a picnic area. "I have something to show you," Melody says, and she leads me along a trail fragrant with redbud. We pass behind some willows into a fold in the rock.

"Look," says Melody, pointing at the red wall just above our heads. I see black marks on the red rock: a flock of hands with their fingers spread. "These were drawn," Melody tells me, "over 2000 years ago."

I reach up and press my hand to an Indian hand. The stone is warm. ❖

Melody Ermachild is a private investigator, a freelance writer, and a member of BPF. Susan Moon is the editor of Turning Wheel.

"Mrs. Stene-Tu, a Tlingit Belle" 1906
from Native American Portaits, *reviewed on page 40*

They Did Not Return to Thank Us for the Original Gifts

by Darryl Wilson

The following letter was addressed to the Dalai Lama, on the occasion of his visit to Siberia, in the former USSR, to commemorate 250 years of Buddhism there. The letter was hand-delivered to him at Lake Baikal in the summer of 1992 by Frank Lake of the Native American Student Union at the University of California at Davis.

Your Eminence:

We understand that you will be celebrating the 250th year of Buddhism being practiced within the boundaries of the Soviet Union.

As professors and students of history, we are well aware of the parallels that exist between your people and our Original Native Nations. Tibet is currently smothered under an ocean of Chinese military might, even as the native nations of the Americas are smothered under a blanket of arrogance calling itself Democracy.

The Americans came to our homeland with the same purpose the Chinese imperial powers had when they came to your door. They came to kill, to conquer, to colonize, to capture, to torture, to take, and to destroy that which they could not take. They created laws which claim that they, the intruders, are the rightful owners of our sweet and precious motherland. And they manufactured a name for themselves: Americans.

They demanded gold and other precious gifts. And when we gave them the amount deemed sufficient by our Council of Elders and our Chiefs, they decided it was not enough, and cut off the hands of the gift bearers. They razed our homes, decimated our tribes and nations, and decided that our homeland was too good for us — a homeland given to us to care for by the awesome power that scattered the stars in the vastness and gave us songs to sing to them. The Americans came with an invisible God, a God who told them to take our land for their own. This God-Who-Cannot-Smile issued many commandments to them — one commandment was to destroy us to the last child.

The Europeans penetrated our domain without welcome. They kidnapped our people and spirited away our food staples, so they could pump fresh life back into a Western Europe that was facing its own created demise.

The Europeans came in wave after diseased wave. Today that tide refuses to ebb. In the holds of their ships were strange animals from the European continent. And in the holds also, another *possession:* black people from the African continent, chained one to the other, and to the planks of the vessels.

They did not return to thank us for the original gifts. And today and tomorrow they feverishly prepare for what they see as their 500th "birthday."

Since 1492 the Original Native people of this hemisphere have received only criminal treatment from "Americans" and their government. The strangers came and, with barbed wire, fenced us out of our most sacred places of worship. They built roads upon the graves of our ancestors. They constructed universities (including the University of California at Davis) upon our sacred burial grounds.

They have not yet asked our Chiefs' pardon for their original trespass. They may not even possess the ability to realize that they are out of balance with the powers of the universe.

On October 12, 1992, some "Americans" and many Europeans will be celebrating the Europeans' destruction of our peoples. They will cheer, and they will commit further crimes against our people, to prove their original trespass was just. All people who care for justice know that the Euro-Americans are trespassing upon this land even as the Chinese Imperialists are trespassing in Tibet.

Let us unite our songs to float across the vastness of time, and mark a beginning to the ending of the atrocities that are visited upon us daily. Our languages, our traditions and our dances are our foundation. Knowing this, the Americans are constantly stripping these precious elements from us.

In which season will the earth-people unite in the struggle for that which belongs to us, not by the political power "that comes from the end of the barrel of the gun" (Mao), but by the power that turns the earth around the sun, and the sun around a greater wonder?

Until that time, we ask you to join us in protesting any "celebration" that might be devised by those who identify 1992 as 500 years of freedom — for it has not been freedom for the Original Native Nations any more than it has been freedom for the Tibetans, your precious people, since the invasion by the Chinese Imperialists.

The Americans would rather eliminate us than give us the recognition that *Great Wonder* gives us every moment of every day.

This letter to be delivered to your hands by Frank Lake, President of the Native American Student Union, University of California at Davis.

Thank you, and we are, sincerely,

Dr. Steve Crum, for the Native American Faculty
Denni Schultheis, for the Native American Society of Medical Students
Darryl Wilson and Frank Lake, for the Native American Student Union, University of California at Davis

Darryl Wilson is a Pit River Indian from the Northeast corner of California. He recently graduated from the University of California at Davis and is about to enter a Master's program in Native American Studies at the University of Arizona.

The Old People Knew What We Needed

by Julian Lang

[Following is an excerpt from a talk given at a Conference for Native American activists on appropriate responses to the Columbus Quincentenary, in July, 1991, in Berkeley, California.)

We don't want any government funding. We don't want any more bullshit from this society. It's irrelevant to us. Their goals and their objectives mean nothing to us and our people. We *mean* to ourselves. We are meaning unto ourselves, because of our heritage, because of our past, our traditions, our languages, our religious ceremonies and our day-to-day living.

The mere fact that we are here today is meaning enough. We don't need Housing and Urban Development, or federal regulations defining our lifestyle. We don't need any of that. So, we dropped out. About 20 years ago, a group of us dropped out. We found ourselves relating to the old people. They were crotchety in some instances, and kind of vague in other instances. *But they were always there.* And when it really came down to it, they knew what we needed and what we were looking for. They knew it didn't come from the institutions of learning, that it came from *their life, their blood.* They were saying to us, "This is what you need."

Suddenly a whole new thing started growing. We realized we were all standing there looking onto a new horizon. Looking and looking. After we dropped out, we were poor but we were free. We had become ourselves again.

We are ourselves now, and we're going to do it in the Indian way.

Now it's 20 years later, and many of those old people are dead. They're gone. And we have to take stock.

It has nothing to do with Columbus. It has nothing to do with Europe. It has to do with the idea that once again we're standing here looking out on the horizon again. This time we don't have the old people. Only a few of them are still with us. But their *spirit* is there. The knowledge they pass on to us is there. It exists. It still exists within the traditional form. This is how it has always happened.

We're standing here now, in 1992, and we're the ones who are looking out on the horizon. We're the ones who possess an understanding that doesn't come from an institution, something that doesn't come from a shelf in the supermarket. It comes through our veins. ❖

Julian Lang is a member of the Karuk tribe. He's an artist, a writer, and the founder of the Institute of Native Knowledge.

We Need More Silence

by Larry Cloud-Morgan

[Following is an excerpt from a conversation with Pat Darling and Sean Gosiewski, of Minnesota BPF, about the next 500 years.]

I'm concerned about the day after the Quincentennial. Some might be ready to breathe a sigh of relief and say, "Well it's over." But that will be just the beginning. I invite us all on the day after "Columbus Day" to divest ourselves of distractions so that we become more conscious of the Earth.

We need more silence. Terrible changes have gone on here on our continent over the past 500 years. People do not see these things. Most of us are in denial. American culture gives us many diversions that keep us unconscious: TV, alcohol, busy schedules. The one thing which can cut through these diversions is silence. I am spending more and more time in silence attending to the simple daily activities of my life, and looking at the reality of our situation. Only as we get down under our denial about what is going on will we be able to transform our society.

In the Ojibwe tradition, when one grows older, at a certain point in my life I start letting go. On this day I don't need to read any more. I have read everything I need to read. I need to begin to practice everything that I have "learned," and put it into effect in my life. From that day forward I need to concentrate less so that the sun's rays warm me less and less, the food I consume is less, the smells diminish until I reach the point that the great spirit gives me the choice of being nothing or becoming everything. It is a part of listening.

As we listen, we know that the grass makes a noise when we step on it and that the trees cry and that the waters long to be pure. We will continue to walk on the grass, but more slowly and gently. When we approach the waters we will seek to clarify them instead of putting more into them. Instead of cutting the trees and hearing them cry, we will enjoy their shade. We need to do this with our children and elders. The elders need this so that the Earth is not only their last resting place, but so that they are connected with Her.

Larry Cloud-Morgan is an Ojibwe Indian, peace activist and artist who is active in the struggles of the people of the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota and serves on the board of Clergy and Laity Concerned.

Sitting Bull, photo by George Scott, 1880s, albumen print from Native American Portraits, *reviewed on page 40*

OCCUPATION OF THE LAND AND THE MIND

by Helen Jones

In April 1992, I spent two weeks in Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza and Israel with a twelve-member women's peace delegation sponsored by Earthstewards and the Mideast Council of Churches. We were Jewish, Christian and Buddhist. We wanted to learn about the Intifada ("throwing off") which has been going on for four years, engage in citizen diplomacy, and learn of the refugee situation firsthand. We met with dignitaries, human rights and peace movement leaders, and with ordinary Palestinian people, in whose homes we stayed. As I review my conversations and experiences, I find myself asking: in this situation, who is the occupier and who is the occupied?

I learned that apartheid is in effect in the Occupied Territories, where all Palestinians are required to carry passes which are color-coded according to their place of residence, whether the holder has been detained, and which determine where the holder is allowed to travel. I learned that most Palestinian schools and universities have been shut down during the past four years of the Intifada, some continuously, some sporadically. I also spoke with Palestinians who had been held in continuous administrative detention for as long as six years.

The Israeli government has responded to the peace talks by increasing the repression of Palestinian people by detention and curfew, by expropriation of Palestinian land and homes and by the accelerated construction of settlements in the West Bank. It is clear that the Shamir government, through its creation of "facts on the ground," is attempting to create a situation whereby its presence in the Occupied Territories will make a land-for-peace settlement impossible.

Palestinians are farmers, people of the land. It is a lovely land, with small Arab villages and terraced hillside farms surrounded by low walls of stone. The dirt is reddish brown and the grass is lush and green, thanks to about 30 inches of rainfall a year. Many farmers still work the land with a horse-drawn plow. Their land is slowly being taken from them by Israelis, through a complex system of law and historical precedent which amounts to the exercise of eminent domain, for the purpose of Israeli settlements.

Perhaps more than any single experience, it was our stays in refugee camps which opened our eyes to the meaning of the term "occupation." The inhabitants of the camps are Palestinians whose villages were destroyed, or whose land was taken away. Some of the camps have existed since 1948, some since 1967; many people have lived their whole lives in the camps. We noticed how quickly we adapted to the mindstate of occupation, getting used to the sound of gunfire, to soldiers on the ground and on the roofs, to taking pictures surreptitiously.

Two members of our group stayed in a camp near Hebron, where Jewish settlements are being constructed in the middle of the old city and settlers go about their errands with Uzis at their sides. The evening our friends stayed at the camp the residents were exhibiting Intifada art — an illegal act under the occupation. When word came that soldiers had been spotted, the people grabbed the paintings and hid them. Later that evening, soldiers came to the home and arrested the teenage son of the hosts. The family took our friends up to the roof, where they could see that soldiers had rounded up about 200 teenagers in the middle of the camp, and were interrogating them, claiming that rocks had been thrown at them. The mother of the host family did not know whether her son would be back that evening or whether it would be weeks or even months before she saw him again. In this case, the son returned several hours later, but such is not always the outcome.

It would be unfair to leave the impression that the dualism of Arab-Jew exists for all the people we met. For example, without the aid of Israeli human rights groups, Palestinians would be unable to press their claims before the Israeli court. Israelis help to document human rights abuses, help with prisoners rights cases and argue in the Knesset for a two-state solution. Israelis and Palestinians in dialogue groups, and communities in Israel like Neve Shalom, comprised of Israeli Arab and Jewish families, work at the day-to-day details of living interdependently.

Beth Goldring is an American of Jewish birth working with families seeking a way through the maze of military orders which separate Palestinian families in the Occupied Territories. Families have been separated by war, confiscation of land, and Israeli military orders and regulations. It is the Israeli government policy to approve only the "minimum possible number" of applications for family reunification by Palestinians resident in the Occupied Territories. As a result, many families may live together only for a short time and then the non-resident must leave again. Families are required to post a high bond to assure that the person will not overstay their visas. Women and children are most often the dislocated members of the family.

The situation is particularly bad following the Gulf War; of the 370,000 Palestinians who are refugees as a

continued on page 24

EATING DEAD MEN'S FOOD

by Beth Goldring

For the past five years I have been doing human rights work and journalism in the Israeli-occupied territories, within the Palestinian community. Recently, my work has focused on the problems of Palestinian families divided by Israeli residence policies and subjected to forced summary deportation.

Since December 1987, the Palestinian community has been in a state of sustained uprising against military occupation, an uprising which initially won a great deal of world sympathy, but lost much of it from the combined pressures of internal disintegration, Palestinian sympathy for Saddam Hussein, and the Gulf War and its aftermath.

At the personal level, my teacher, Maurine Stuart Roshi, died February 26, 1990. Soon after, I was forced to close the press office my partner and I shared, under combined pressures from the Israeli government, Palestinian internal conflict, economic collapse, and the near death and continued incapacity of my partner, who was hit by a bus in Rome and spent 45 days in a coma. My mother was gravely ill during the Gulf War, and a favorite uncle, from whom I have been estranged by my working here, died shortly afterwards. His death, like Maurine's, took place while I was far away, and so I couldn't help my aunt, whom I love dearly, despite the abyss between our views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Beth Goldring

For many people here, Palestinian and foreign, the post-war period is one of serious reassessment, of beginning again under far more adverse circumstances. Even as we do this, the situation continues to worsen. While diplomats talk of peace and worry over niceties which would not be barriers if a will for peace were there, the Israeli government confiscates land and water, forcibly separates Palestinian families by deporting members denied residence status (this is in addition to the more publicized political deportations), destroys Palestinian homes, increases taxation and restrictions on a community already over 50% unemployed, some of whom are on the brink of starvation, and accelerates the building of settlements for exclusively Jewish use. The Palestinian community dissipates much of its energy in internal conflict, increased fundamentalism and oppression of women, increased theft and use of drugs, and general demoralization and depression. The internal leadership of the uprising has also become less able to set effective policies and enforce them.

Although I need to be aware of this political context, it is not, strictly speaking, any of my business. Human rights work is the understanding of reality from the bottom, from the perspective of the sufferers rather than of the planners. But this understanding is difficult to maintain in the current period, when the results of our work seem to have been altogether swept away.

In the past year two lessons have been brought home to me, one general and one personal. The general lesson is easily enough stated, although less easy to live with: that people who live in an environment in which human rights are systematically violated are, for the most part, deformed by that process. I expect that there is no one who works in this kind of environment who has not seen the characters of people they love change and who has not been horrified by those transformations. Or who does not treasure those who are able to withstand that process and use it as a means to strengthen their integrity.

The second, more personal, lesson is about the margin for error and about how much smaller it is than under normal circumstances. I used to say to Maurine that the reason I had to be in a war zone was that I don't have a mind for subtleties, that reality has to be spelled out harshly for me to learn what other people could learn under gentler conditions. The danger, of course, is of being carried away by that harshness, of becoming a participant in the destructiveness rather than a counterweight, as in Thich Nhat Hanh's story of the monk who goes out to right evil and becomes a demon himself. It is a danger I have fallen prey to in both predictable and unexpected ways.

Tosui, the monk who left his temple to live with beggars under a bridge in Kyoto, has always been one of my favorite characters. (See *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones,* compiled by Paul Reps.) Recently, however, I find myself thinking more about the monk who found Tosui under the bridge and tried to live with him. Tosui told the monk he could remain if he would do exactly as Tosui did. The monk put on beggar's clothing and helped Tosui bury a beggar who had died; but he couldn't sleep afterwards and couldn't eat the dead beggar's leftover food. Tosui dismissed him — permanently.

It intrigues me that what the younger monk was dismissed for was not under his conscious control; he

dressed and acted correctly but could not sleep or eat. It also makes sense to me in terms of my own experience. When conditions in our office were deteriorating under multiple pressures, I found myself increasingly dealing with the surface of things. I tried to maintain the quality of our work in English; I made small adjustments in office conditions. But I did not understand enough of what was actually taking place, and so did not have the power to provide an effective counterweight to the larger political, social and economic processes that were undermining the office's existence. My partner, for different reasons, did no better.

Perhaps it would have been impossible under any circumstances. Better managed institutions than ours were also being destroyed under the increasing pressures. But I understand now that certain fundamental errors I made, errors having to do with my own personal history, crippled my capacity to respond to the developing crisis. I harmed myself, I harmed the people I was involved with, and I failed to be fully present when it was essential that I be so.

The monk helped bury a beggar who had died; but he couldn't sleep afterwards and couldn't eat the dead beggar's leftover food.

I think about Tosui, who went to live with beggars after years of teaching and who simply no longer wanted the responsibility of students. When my partner was first in a coma and his life was in danger, our office was subjected to an attempted political takeover from within. One person central to the attempt was a young woman I had been particularly close to, having trained her as a translator, helped her with certain personal difficulties and in general been an older friend to her. One of the things I particularly enjoyed in the relationship was the sense of exercising specifically teaching energies, something I have not done much since I left university teaching. Had I not been seduced by my own activities perhaps I would have seen more clearly who she actually was. She might not have acted differently, but I would have been more prepared for what occurred.

Tosui is not refusing to teach the younger monk. What he is refusing to do is to engage in that specific teacher-student relationship, a relationship whose demands can sometimes interfere with what is essential. If the monk can be a genuine partner, if he can inhabit the same larger learning space, then Tosui can accept him. But the space itself makes certain demands, and if the monk can't meet them, then Tosui has no time for him.

When Tosui was old and making vinegar for a living, one of the beggars gave him a picture of the Buddha. Tosui hung it on the wall, but with the following sign: "Mr. Amida Buddha: This little room is quite narrow. I can let you remain as a transient. But don't think I am asking you to help me be reborn in your paradise."

Tosui is one of the toughest monks I know, one of the most uncompromising characters in Zen literature. But he is uncompromising without fanaticism. He will let the young monk stay if he meets the conditions; he will learn to make vinegar when he is too old to beg; and he will hang the Buddha picture on the wall with the sign to remind himself, and anyone who visits, of the true nature of things.

Unlike the young monk, I have been given another chance to remain here, at least temporarily. Our office began working again, and my partner is slowly recovering. What I make of this opportunity will depend not only on how the situation develops here, but, more importantly, on how able I become to live without the margin of error I am accustomed to. On how able I am simply to respond to reality, however disturbing or unappealing: to eat dead men's food, to share what little house space I have with the Buddha without expecting anything in return, and to go on making vinegar. ❖

Beth Goldring is coordinator of the Women's Human Rights Project, a part of the Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees.

Occupied Territories, continued from page 22

result of being deported from Kuwait (the majority were life-time residents of Kuwait), less than 10% have been permitted to move to the West Bank, where many of them have relatives.

Beth works with the Women's Human Rights Project of the Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees, and it is her work to intervene with Israeli authorities on behalf of separated Palestinian families. It is difficult and heartbreaking work, and Beth told us that she did not feel that she could continue much longer, and is, in fact, looking for a replacement.

The hardest lesson for Americans to learn is that this situation may not be solved soon. But in such an ancient land, the Palestinians take a long view of the peace process, and, despite the nearly impossible conditions of their lives, still speak of their hope for the coming generations. ❖

Helen Jones is a student of Tibetan Buddhism, studying with Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche. She is active in social justice and peace issues, and is a teacher in Women's Studies and the director of a university women's center. She lives in Reno, Nevada.

How I Killed ROBERT ALTON HARRIS

by AJ Kutchins

When people ask me about my practice, sometimes I'm not sure which one they mean. Day to day and moment by moment, my law practice and my practice as a student of the Soto Zen school of Buddhism tend to seem quite distinct from each other, and often they seem at odds. But when I take a step back, I see many ways in which each "practice" has informed and guided the other.

Soon after I started sitting, I spent a week at the Zen Center at Tassajara. Although Tassajara during the summer guest season now feels to me as much like a dude ranch as a monastery, on that first visit the cool austere zendo and the luminous trees, tucked into the rough palm of the mountains' hand, immediately felt like home. When I returned to my work in a downtown San Francisco law firm, I found it unbearable. I still believed strongly in what I did — representing working people and labor unions — but, having been delivered to the experience of life in the present moment, I found that I could not stand how my life felt there. I took a leave of absence from the job, and never went back. Instead, I did my first winter practice period in the cold Tassajara valley.

When I came back to the city, I looked around for some legal work to tide me over until I could answer *What Next?* A few different lawyer friends gave me research and writing projects; one of them — my friend Alex — asked me to help out on a death penalty case.

Alex has the distinction of being one of the very few people who have won reversal of a death penalty sentence from the current reactionary California Supreme Court. Alex wanted me to help with a second death penalty appeal: *People of the State of California vs. Ralph International Thomas.* "International," as he is known, had been convicted of the absolutely senseless killing of two young people who were following the Grateful Dead. No one had seen him commit the killings, and there was no apparent motive, but circumstantial evidence pointed to him as the killer. Besides, he seemed "the type."

I agreed to do the research needed to insure that the case could be taken to federal court, if and when the California Supreme Court gave it the heave-ho that it generally employs in death cases. I thought the nature of the case would protect me from being too emotionally vulnerable about International's fate. For one thing, he had a long and scary record of violence. On top of that, he had been convicted of murdering a couple of kids who reminded me a lot of myself 20 years ago. More important, I could not be more than remotely responsible for what would happen if the appeals failed and the state took his life.

Despite all the insulation, the experience was painful. I had to review, in gruesome detail, the evidence regarding the murders of the two young Deadheads, forensic photos and all. And I had to read what seemed like hundreds of other murder cases, looking for the relevant legal points, while their horrible facts became a montage in my mind: "his parents were butchered like animals —" "photographs showing the mutilated bodies —" "pleaded for mercy —" "after sexually assaulting her, the assailant shot the victim three times in the back of the head — " It shook me. I found myself questioning my own lifelong opposition to capital punishment: was it really better to save the lives of those who do such monstrous things? At the same time I grew desperately anxious that I might make a mistake, overlook the case or the footnote that could save the life of the man whom the state was determined to kill.

I finished my work, turned in my research, and resolved: No more death penalty work for me. Alex and Nancy could stand vigil while their briefs — and International's life — were passed to the uncaring hands of the courts. I can't even watch a scary movie, and I used to lie awake at night worrying about whether the union members I represented got their jobs back at Safeway. I'm not cut out for this stuff.

*

My interim research and writing work gradually evolved into my own appellate law practice. I found that concentrating on the intellectual work spared me many of the creepier aspects of being a lawyer — like being screamed at daily by sociopaths in business suits. Also, the fact that appellate work comes in discrete projects has made it possible for me to take three more extended monastic retreats. Besides, working for myself lets me choose what cases I take. I have only one firm rule: I have to believe that working on the case will make the world better rather than worse. Right livelihood.

Much of what I do involves criminal law, and I have become a sort of expert, I suppose, in criminal appeals. I remember asking Alex, years ago, how he could represent criminals. He took a deep breath and patiently explained that, mostly, his clients were just poor people in bad situations with limited alternatives who made

the wrong play. Few actually hurt anyone but themselves. I wasn't convinced then, but I have since come to feel that this is the most compassionate thing that I could be doing. Criminal defendants have replaced lepers as the lowest and most reviled members of society. We have collectively come to view diseased people with compassion, but to see criminals as non-persons, as being a disease themselves — as "a walking depraved cancer," in the words of the man who prosecuted International Thomas. Nonetheless, despite my expertise and my commitment, I still have not been willing to undertake a capital appeal.

*

Among the non-criminal cases I got involved in during the last few years was the lawsuit brought by Brian Willson against the Navy, after he lost his legs to a munitions train during a nonviolent protest at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. As one of the team of lawyers that worked on that case, I was responsible for the "legal" end of the case — that is, fighting the endless motions and interim appeals by which the government tried to wear us down. I also represented one of the other protesters involved in the case, a professional journalist named Michael Kroll. Michael got into the protest (and lawsuit) in some measure because of Brian; he is perhaps Brian's best friend. Another of Michael's friends was a man named Robert Harris.

*

I first heard of Robert Alton Harris over a decade ago. I was a law student, working at the California Supreme Court, when his first petition for review was submitted. It was my job to read over and initially assess petitions for Justice Tobriner — my boss, my hero, and a staunch opponent of capital punishment.

I read about the man who had stalked and murdered two teenagers, and who laughed as he ate the fast-food burgers his victims had bought for lunch. I thought: Sometimes, people stop being human beings. Not even the very progressive California Supreme Court — the same one that was essentially voted out a few years later for being "soft" on the death penalty — was willing to save this man.

But my client Michael spoke to me of a different person — his friend Bobby. Michael had met Harris on death row, while doing the anti-death penalty work that has become his vocation. Michael's friend Bobby was a sweet, childlike man who had literally been kicked out of his mother's womb, deformed from fetal alcohol syndrome, and who had endured a nightmare childhood of beatings and abuse. Robert Harris the adult was a swaggering ball of rage when he killed those two boys. Ten years later, he lived in an inferno of regret for what he had done to his victims and their families. He loved and forgave his own family. I was particularly touched when Michael showed me some beautiful nature studies Harris had drawn from photos and dim memory. It was clear that now he really wanted to live.

There was no excuse for Robert Harris' crimes, but at least we can understand his pathology. The more I know about it, the less I can understand the pathology that led us, the People of the State of California, to murder him in the gas chamber. Study after study has proven that capital punishment does nothing to reduce the murder rate. I personally believe that the conscious indifference to life that we collectively adopt when we execute people actually promotes the same attitude in those who kill without legal sanction. It is expensive in every sense — far more expensive in dollars and cents than lifetime incarceration.

As the date for Robert Harris' execution drew near, I made plans to go to Tassajara. I felt relieved that I would be at a safe distance from the gory media carnival.

And, after a few years of criminal appeals, I have learned all too well how easy it is for innocent persons to be convicted by bloodthirsty prosecutors and intellectually corrupt judges who know that they will only lose their sinecures for one of two reasons — getting caught in an illegal act or coddling criminals. (For anyone with doubts about this, I recommend Errol Morris' chilling documentary, *The Thin Blue Line,* a true story which presents the strongest argument against capital punishment I have ever seen.) I also know too well that the Rodney King case was no aberration — that punishment is never meted out in this society fairly and evenly among the various races and classes. Michael often pointed out that the reason the authorities were so hot to make his friend the first to be executed was because Harris was white — which would obscure the fact that a disproportionate number of those in line behind him are African-American and Latino.

I have also taken precepts, and the first of them is to protect life. I do not understand that category to exclude persons who have themselves violated the First Precept. Yet, every time I was approached by friends and colleagues about taking the case of one of the ever-growing number of unrepresented death row inmates, I always begged off. None for me, thanks.

*

As the date for Robert Harris' execution drew near, I made plans to go to Tassajara, and help prepare the place for its annual metamorphosis from monastery into spa. I got there on Saturday; the execution was scheduled for midnight on Monday, and I felt relieved that I would be at a safe distance from the gory media carnival in the meantime.

Shortly after I arrived in Tassajara, I heard that Judge Marilyn Hall Patel had stayed the execution on a ground that seemed to me to be beyond debate: Slow asphyxiation, which our state requires as the means of death, constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment." I didn't realize how concerned I had been until I felt my breath release.

Because news travels slowly back into those cold mountains, I missed the circus-like drama that was played out in the federal appellate courts over the next two days. At six A.M. on Tuesday, as Robert Harris was choking to death on cyanide, I was sitting in the zendo, confident that his life was safe for a little while, anyway.

As the day progressed, I became concerned that something had gone wrong. Zoe, a friend and dharma sister who lives at Tassajara, returned that afternoon from a brief trip to the Outside World. I took her aside and asked whether they had killed Robert Alton Harris. Yes, she said, and in a particularly unkind way. She recounted the many last-minute delays of the execution night, and, to the surprise of us both, I began to cry.

As Robert Harris was choking to death on cyanide, I was sitting in the zendo, confident that his life was safe for a little while.

The thing is, I said, the thing is that we killed him. Zoe drew back, confused. I explained: Robert Harris was prosecuted and executed by the People of the State of California. That's us. He was killed by an entity that is nothing but an expression of the collective will of all of us.

Zoe recoiled. Not me, she said, I haven't voted that way in years. I'm not going to own that . . . except on the level that I'm also responsible for killing all the Jews in Germany.

It was my turn to be startled. I was pretty sure Zoe had lost a good deal of her Jewish family in the Holocaust. There was something fundamentally wrong with the analogy, but I was in no mood to argue with her. We agreed that, in any event, there should be some sort of memorial for Harris.

So I went to find Daigon, the Ino, the person to talk to about a memorial service. Daigon, I knew, had been speaking out against socially-sponsored slaughter ever since his own experience with it during the Korean War. I did not think that I would have to explain much about why we needed to do a memorial service for Robert Harris.

A memorial? Daigon asked; You mean a regular memorial service, putting his name up on the altar and all that? I don't know, I have to think about it.

The thing is, I said, this seems special, because Harris was killed in our name.

Okay, said Daigon, I can see that. But we'll have to explain it.

I suggested: Why not just say that this morning, Robert Alton Harris was killed in the name of the People of California, and that includes most of the people here, and many of us have taken precepts against killing people.

Good, said Daigon, write it down.

No, I said, you're a poet, you can say it better in your own words.

At service that evening, Robert Alton Harris' name was on the altar; an artist in the community had calligraphed it beautifully on a little card. Daigon stepped up to the bowing mat. He said something like: A man was executed this morning at San Quentin. We all might have different feelings about capital punishment, but when the lowest among us is harmed, we are all diminished.

Robert Harris was never mentioned by name. Nor were people invited to offer incense in his memory — although these things are standard parts of a memorial service. I don't think Daigon meant to slight Robert Harris; he was just nervous about causing a controversy. He forgot the details. I was touched by what Daigon said, but it hadn't been the ritual I needed. As everyone sat down on their meditation cushions, I offered incense at the altar. There was barely an ember left to burn the incense chips I offered; maybe they didn't burn at all. It somehow did not matter.

During the rest of my stay in Tassajara, I kept thinking about what had happened. I saw what was wrong with Zoe's analogy, at least for me. There is a difference between the generalized responsibility we share for all actions of all creatures, and — on a more ordinary level — the particular responsibility each of us has for the things we do and permit to be done in our names. I do hold all Germans who lived through the Holocaust accountable for the murder of the Jews, and of the Gypsies, gays, and others murdered in the name of the German people. I expect them each to be able to account for what they did to stop that barbarity. And if people are being coldly, deliberately, choked to death in my name, I must give account also.

*

A while before I went to Tassajara, Alex finally appeared before the California Supreme Court to argue for International Thomas. He came back depressed; he's usually a cheerful guy. They don't even pretend to be interested anymore, he said.

When I got back, the Court had issued its opinion in the Thomas case, voting 5 to 2 to deny his appeal. I called Alex to say I was sorry, and found him in remarkably good spirits. The two dissenting justices

had written persuasive opinions on the most important issue in the case, concluding that there was no reliable evidence that Thomas had killed either person "deliberately and with premeditation."

Armed with their dissenting opinions, Alex would have a much better than average chance of convincing the federal court to take a look at the case. If the federal courts agreed with the dissenters, that would be the end of it — International could never be in jeopardy of execution for those crimes again.

Alex, I said, I want to do the case with you in federal court. Great, he said, that's wonderful.

I don't know how much I will be able to do to stop the systematic slaughter that is looming on the death rows of this state and this nation. I want to honor my own limitations, and I am not interested in acting out of either guilt or grandiosity. But now that I understand my responsibilities, I can begin to line them up with what I do and with the precepts I took. ❖

AJ Kutchins is an attorney, a student of Soto Zen, and a BPF Board Member.

Walking in the
suburban winter
dusk with my
73-year-old
mother we discuss
the spirit & I
am content —
big dream of
the sky — I'll
lose her someday —
lose everyone
in fact —
vast pink
smog of
L.A. valley —
how peaceful

Marc Olmsted

THE WAR IN LOS ANGELES

by Christopher Reed

Sunday, May 3rd

Half a dozen people have called to say they won't be coming to our Sunday "Day of Mindfulness." They're going down to South-Central Los Angeles to help with the cleanup. But the rest of us decide to meet as usual. We practice meditation for one period and then pass around the talking stone. Each one of us speaks in turn. Each person speaks for all. There is so much hurt and anger, confusion and sadness. No single person can express it all. After everyone has spoken we agree that the only possible continuation for our Day of Mindfulness is to go out towards the center of the city until we find a way to help, to engage.

It's the first time I've been east from Venice since Wednesday — the day the Rodney King verdict was announced. We drive south on Vermont Avenue. Charred remains are still smoking. Stores are boarded up. Sometimes you can't tell if they were boarded for their protection or if they have already been looted and burned. There are burned buildings on almost every block, but since all this volunteer support arrived the streets are cleaner than they've ever been. A sign is painted across one of the boarded windows: "Human Owned Por Favor."

We continue south. The streets are choked with cars. People who never visit this part of the city have come to gape, others are looking for some way to lend a hand. Armed marines have replaced the National Guard. Three or four stand at a Pioneer Chicken fast food outlet. The last intact building on the block, it's surrounded by the twisted remains of a mini-mall. In front, a forty-foot covered wagon, the sign for Pioneer Chicken, still stands. I catch sight of marines keeping watch from the roof. The image is both eerie and comical. A year ago these marines were still in the Gulf. Symbolic figures of power continue to protect a symbolic way of life. With sirens blaring and lights flashing, five fire-trucks go by, also manned by marines. One of the drivers waves at the marines on the street.

An African-American is taking photographs. He has two cameras slung around his neck, and two telephoto lenses. I make an ironic remark to the others in our van about how new his gear looks and where he might have acquired it. Part of me believes that his cameras are the prize of a recent looting spree. With them he deliberately photographs the burned-out mall, the marines, the fire-trucks. Another part of me considers that perhaps he's a journalist for the New York Times.

There's a long line of people outside the African-American Unity Community Center, a converted church at the corner of 53rd Street. It turns out that the center needs people to sort huge piles of donated clothes and to bag the food that's coming in by the truck load. I spend the afternoon trying to fit clothes to people and people to clothes, as they are filtered through a large room at the back of the center. Suddenly I feel lighter, joking with people who come through; Hispanics, Blacks, Whites, Asians. A truck pulls up and half a dozen Koreans from Orange County unload box after box of brand new designer clothes. I open the boxes and find a pair of pants large enough to fit the enormous man who has been hunting through piles of clothes trying to find something he can use. Then I find a sweater fancy enough to satisfy my new friend, seven years old and very fastidious. She has already acquired her first pair of high heel shoes. The sweater makes a perfect match. Some who come through are sullen, shamed by what is referred to already as "the war." Others are happy, playful. Many are delighted to see white faces and tell us so.

I realize that although countless lives have been shattered by the events of the last few days, for many people things have not changed much. When there is no hope to begin with, how can things get worse? Burning your own neighborhood is a kind of collective suicide — burning the future because it promises nothing.

Is this "war" about race or is it about economics? The two things are inseparable. The burning has been an expression of a collective sorrow. People of all ethnic and economic backgrounds participated. It is a sorrow that cannot be expunged by access to the proverbial American dream, if that delusion was even possible. I fear for the children. I fear for what is to come. The issues of race and economics are so pressing that the issues of long-term population increase, environmental degradation, the gradual breakdown of infrastructures, are unseen or ignored. Economists on television, black and white, discuss the problems of inner city America as though these other issues had no bearing on the situation.

Tuesday, May 5th

My wife, Michele, and I are delivering food packages. We drive all over South-Central L.A. I am happy to see parts of the city I have never even visited before. We are treated with indifference at some of our destinations, welcomed at others. There is something vaguely awkward about our participation in this massive attempt to give help to the victims. How many outsiders will still be in these areas in a month, in a year? How much can charity actually help?

I remember a man I met a few months ago who offered to clean the windows of my car in the parking lot of our local store. He was African-American, living on the streets. I told him that I had no cash. He asked me how I was going to pay in the store.

I said, "With a check."

"Then buy me a pack of cigarettes."

When I came out he was still cleaning the windows. I told him to take his time, that I was in no hurry.

He was surprised. "Well you must be the only one — you and me. Everyone's rushing around as though they meant to get some place."

He explained how he had once owned several houses. Things had been fine. But somehow the economy had taken its toll and now he had nothing. He seemed perfectly happy as he described his former troubles.

"You know," he said, "if people just paid attention to the sun. If people just remembered where they came from. Without the sun there'd be no life, but the sun just gives it all away for free."

He laughed. I gave him his pack of cigarettes.

Overheard in Santa Monica:
"I'm so bored, I hate not being able to go out at night."

A day or so ago in Santa Monica someone was overheard commenting on the way they felt about having to stay at home through the curfew: "I'm so bored, I hate not being able to go out at night."

We drive through a predominantly middle-class black neighborhood. I notice a large billboard showing a picture of Martin Luther King gazing skyward. In the sky floats the caption, "The fulfillment of the dream is in financial security."

In the evening, driving home on the Santa Monica freeway, I notice that the brush which grows under the freeway overpasses is being bulldozed clear. This is a place where many homeless people find shelter. Does someone actually imagine that the problems of the homeless can be addressed in this way? Does someone think that homeless people will magically disappear?

Back on the West side, the shops are crowded. Riots and burning throughout the city, while on the West side people go shopping. Baskets are filled with crab meat and artichokes, fine wine, corn chips for a long night in front of the TV.

I'm grateful that our practice connects us to those parts of the city that are deep in crisis. ❖

Christopher Reed is a therapist, and the contact person for the Los Angeles Chapter of BPF.

This article is reprinted with kind permission from Mindfulness Bell.

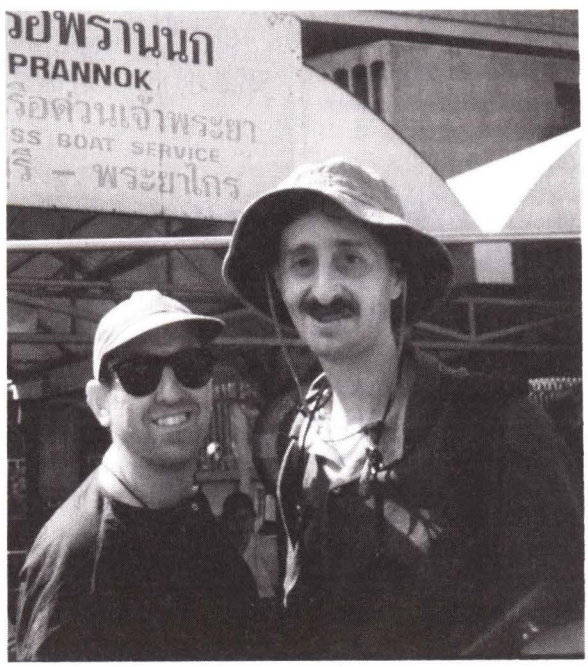
Reports from the Engaged Buddhist Conference in Thailand

S A N G H A

by Donald Rothberg

I was privileged to attend the nine days of INEB (International Network of Engaged Buddhists) meetings (pre-conference and conference) in Thailand, near Bangkok and Chiang Mai, in February 1992, as well as to be a number of days in Bangkok with INEB friends before and after the meetings. I also visited the innovative Buddhist forest monastery Wat Suan Mokkh in the south of Thailand, where I was able to meet with its founder, Ajahn (teacher) Buddhadhasa, now 86 years old, who has deeply influenced engaged Buddhism in Thailand. Following the meetings, I spent five days at the more traditional forest monastery Wat Pah Ban That, founded by Ajahn Maha Boowa, near Udon Thani in the northeast, not far from Laos.

I experienced a wonderful sense of warmth and community at the INEB gatherings, extending through national boundaries and ethnic diversity. Sharing both Buddhist practice and a commitment to social action, we formed the kind of personal bonds that help enrich, inspire, and sustain each other's lives, and that make the news headlines more real and urgent. This occurred very simply, through sharing our lives together in these days.



Alan Senauke & Donald Rothberg in Bangkok

Images and memories come easily: of an hour's conversation after lunch with a young Cambodian monk who had lived the last ten years in one of the refugee camps near the Thai-Cambodian border — a fire a few days earlier had destroyed his and several others' homes and limited possessions; of our visit as a large group to the local Buddhist temple the evening of the full moon; of my time with the Buddhist Chakma people of Bangladesh and India (in exile), hearing their (often horrible) stories, sharing political analyses, and planning to work together in the future; of the constant invitations to visit new friends — in Ladakh, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, France, Germany, Australia; of perhaps 70 of us, a third monks, traveling together for 15 hours, on a happily overcrowded old bus into the din and traffic of Bangkok, to wait several hours at the train station, and then travel overnight to Chiang Mai in an engaged Buddhist slumber party on our two train cars.

It was also quite inspiring to be in a Buddhist culture, where spiritual values are supported to a significant degree, despite the interrelated impacts of military dictatorships, international capitalism and "development," AIDS and prostitution, and considerable ecological devastation. It was particularly inspiring to be with people who, like myself, are trying to integrate the spiritual and social in their lives. The special atmosphere of the INEB conference nurtured us all in that effort.

I met Phra Phaisan, a Thai monk, who spends much of each year at a remote forest monastery in northeast Thailand, in meditation and helping with the monastery, yet who also is often present in Bangkok, working on various social issues. He has somehow found time in the last years to write several books on social issues.

I met and spoke often with Santikaro Bhikkhu, an American monk from Chicago, who combines life at a small ascetic branch monastery in the jungle with writing and translating in close connection with Ajahn Buddhadhasa, leading meditation retreats for Westerners, and helping at INEB training sessions on nonviolence and conflict resolution throughout Asia. There is a rich tradition of activist monks and Buddhist laypersons, many of whose current exemplars (like Phra Prachak, Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, and the Ven. Maha Ghosananda — all mentioned in Alan Senauke's report) were present at the meetings. INEB both draws upon and supports this tradition, which has much to offer to Westerners, even as many Asians acknowledge that they have much to learn from the enthusiasm, concerns, and innovations of Western engaged Buddhists.

After the INEB meetings I stayed at Wat Pah Ban That, a well-known Buddhist forest monastery. This

continued on page 36

under a thatched roof

by Alan Senauke

My thoughts about INEB's 1992 Conference (February 15 — March 6) have been re-shaped by the events of May, when Thai people called on General Suchinda Kraprayoon to resign from his self-appointed role as prime minister. Suchinda (who has since stepped down), the police and military responded with violence beyond my imagination. More than 800 are dead or missing, thousands injured.

Before I left California for Thailand, I talked with Sulak Sivaraksa, then our guest in Berkeley, about the upcoming elections in Thailand and the military's heavy hand on the democracy movement. It was sad and strange to leave Sulak in exile at the gate to the Berkeley Zen Center, my home, while I was free to travel to *his* home. It is sadder still to recognize how right was his vision of what harm might come to pass.

Traveling in Thailand — The raft is not the shore.

INEB Pre-Conference

Flying into Bangkok I was carried back thirty-five years to winter vacations with my grandparents in Miami during the 1950s — stepping off the plane into the smell of a tropical night mingled with airplane fuel and exhaust. It was a familiar but melancholy sensation. Sulak had packed me off to Thailand with about sixty pounds of his new Parallax Press book, *Seeds of Peace,* so it was a great relief to pass Thai customs unexamined. INEB staff member Jon Watts was kind enough to meet me at the gate and we sped off into the roar of Bangkok's 24-hour traffic.

After a steamy night's sleep at a guest house on the outskirts of the city, I crowded into a van with a dozen other INEB delegates for the drive to Wongsanit Ashram, INEB's bucolic retreat near Bangkok. There were about eighty of us at the pre-conference, almost a third monks, from twenty countries, including Thailand, Burma, Japan, Laos, Cambodia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Europe and the U.S. For four days we met in plenary sessions and in small groups to learn about each other and to forge links that created a dharmic community out of so many different cultures and circumstances, as a preliminary to the more action-oriented planning that would take place at the conference itself.

Our group sessions explored potentially overwhelming issues like Buddhist teachings and social action, community development, women in Buddhism, human rights, the environment. In each area, panelists drew on concrete situations to illustrate the larger questions. Often we used small group formats to discuss our own experiences and explore avenues of resolution.

Several sessions stand out clearly in my memory. Phra Prachak, a weathered-looking forest monk from the north, spoke of his resolve to save the forest in his area and of his action of ordaining trees to help prevent poaching and communicate the sacredness of all life. Professor Chatsumarn Kabilsingh discussed the role of women in Thai society, their low status in the Sangha, and the need for education and ordination. Her presentation minced no words and left us with the unanswered question: "If she can be your mother, why can't she be a teacher?"

Small group work, although Western in form, sometimes had the effect of simultaneously highlighting and bridging our cultural gaps and habits. One painful afternoon, we did a communication exercise that revealed just how easily and unthinkingly the Western men dominated these groups. But it was clear as the days spun by that we were building trust and relationships, and more hesitant voices began to speak out. We also agreed, during the evaluation at the end of four days, that next year we would look for some "non-Western" forms to use for our meetings, although no one was quite sure what these forms might be.

On several evenings we had informal cultural offerings — heartfelt or hilarious (sometimes both!) songs,

stories, dances that helped us to understand each other. Monks in Asia don't usually partake of "entertainment," but we were all there to learn about each other. I'll never forget the wide-eyed amusement and unstifled laughter of the young Cambodian monks watching two Australians lurching through a rowdy version of "Waltzing Matilda." Another evening we joined a candlelight procession to the local temple, in celebration of Maha Puja, the Theravada Day of the Sangha.

Mornings at the ashram were beautiful and cool. After meditation I stood on the plaza to watch the sun rise and the moon set on opposite sides of the sky. Days were just plain hot, although it was still winter. And at night, as we gathered for meditation or talk, we were joined by countless tiny mosquitoes. By bedtime I was glad for a foam pad to lie down on and a mosquito net to crawl under until morning.

INEB CONFERENCE

Rickety bus to Bangkok, overnight train to Chiang Mai, up late talking, windows open while the countryside sped by unseen, open taxis to the conference site at Wat Umong at the foot of Doi Suthep mountain near Chiang Mai. Our group grew to more than a hundred for the three working days of the conference. The days were cool and clear, and the sprawling grounds of this old forest monastery seemed perfect for meditation and a deep contemplation of the world's suffering.

Morning and night we meditated in the dark, often with words of guidance from Ven. Maha Ghosananda, the saintly, smiling Cambodian elder. By day we met in this same thatched-roof, open-air hall to listen and talk. During the first sessions, we heard from many of the organizations represented, including BPF. Then we had lengthy reports and working groups on INEB's Asian countries of concern and other organizational issues. Some of our conclusions are described below. Despite the deep teachings of Maha Ghosananda, Ven. Rewata Dharma (a senior Burmese teacher who heads the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara in England), and others like INEB co-founder Maruyama Sensei of Japan, Ven. Bimal of Bangladesh, and Ven. Sanghasena of Ladakh, I often felt overwhelmed by words, information, and accounts of great suffering. I appreciated our time in meditation, silent walking, and the few quiet spaces of the day. I was also glad that BPF Board members Donald Rothberg and Michele Bohana were present to share the work of BPF.

Our gathering came to a bittersweet end as Pracha Hutanuwatr stepped down as Executive Secretary of INEB, after four years of constant work. Pracha remains committed to engaged Buddhist activity, but the day-to-day operations will pass to Supaporn Pongpruk, who has worked in the INEB Secretariat office for nearly two years. Supaporn is smart and energetic, and willing to carry the load. She can also help INEB lead the way to a redefinition of women's roles in Asian Buddhism. We offer Pracha and Supaporn our deepest thanks and best hopes. We all look forward to next year's INEB conference in Nepal.

RESOLUTIONS 1992-93

Burma

INEB will continue to support the forces of democracy and nonviolent struggle against the SLORC military regime, working with other groups to mount a worldwide campaign integrating human rights, democracy, environmental and other concerns. INEB's Burma Project will continue its grassroots trainings in health, federalism, English, appropriate agriculture, and ethnic relationships. There is an intensified focus on the environmental destruction now taking place under SLORC, and its relationship to development and business interests of outside countries and agencies. INEB also intends to create a faster and more reliable network to collect and distribute information about Burma.

Cambodia

INEB will continue to aid in the reconciliation and reconstruction of Cambodia, building cooperation and exchange with other countries in the region. A Dharma Walk in Cambodia for April and May was jointly sponsored by INEB and Coalition for Peace & Reconciliation (CPR). INEB also plans trainings in meditation, Buddhist education, and active nonviolence in both Cambodia and several of the refugee camps. Through CPR we can help monitor the delicate repatriation process and provide information on human rights issues, forced repatriation, and other urgent tasks.

Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

Oppression of the mainly Buddhist population in this region of Bangladesh threatens their physical, cultural, ecological, and religious survival. [See "Readings."] INEB will help develop an international campaign to raise the case of CHT. It will work with various governments to attach conditions regarding CHT to all aid to Bangladesh. International monitoring by NGOs and fact-finding teams are encouraged to press these questions. INEB also resolves to set up an office within its Secretariat to focus on the case of CHT.

Other Issues

The resolution and planning process took nearly two days, and included plans and positions regarding India, Nepal, Siam, Sri Lanka, Tibet, as well as more general concerns such as INEB's structure, women's issues, and building an information center. For full details you can write to INEB and ask for the latest issue of their journal, *Seeds of Peace.* They will welcome your inquiry and they would also welcome your financial support and membership. The address is 127 Soi Santipap, Nares Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand. ❖

Alan Senauke is the National Coordinator for BPF.

MAHA GHOSANANDA

It was particularly pleasant to meditate at Wat Umong. The more northerly Thai climate is a little brisk at morning and evening. A feeling of deep calm arose in the meditation hall where so many had sat before us. At dawn the second day, we drifted into the open, thatched-roof hall to sit, before the first light could be seen. As my eyes adjusted to the dark, I could make out a willowy figure in a chair beside the altar, robes wrapped around his head to protect him from a chill. Maha Ghosananda appeared like a wraith seated before us. And then his warm voice spoke some dhammic words of encouragement as the first light came up.

Later that same morning Maha Ghosanada asked us: "What is life, what is the most important thing?" The heart of his answer is also included in his wonderful new book from Parallax Press, Step By Step: Meditations on Wisdom & Compassion. *Here is an excerpt from the book's version of this talk.* —Alan Senauke

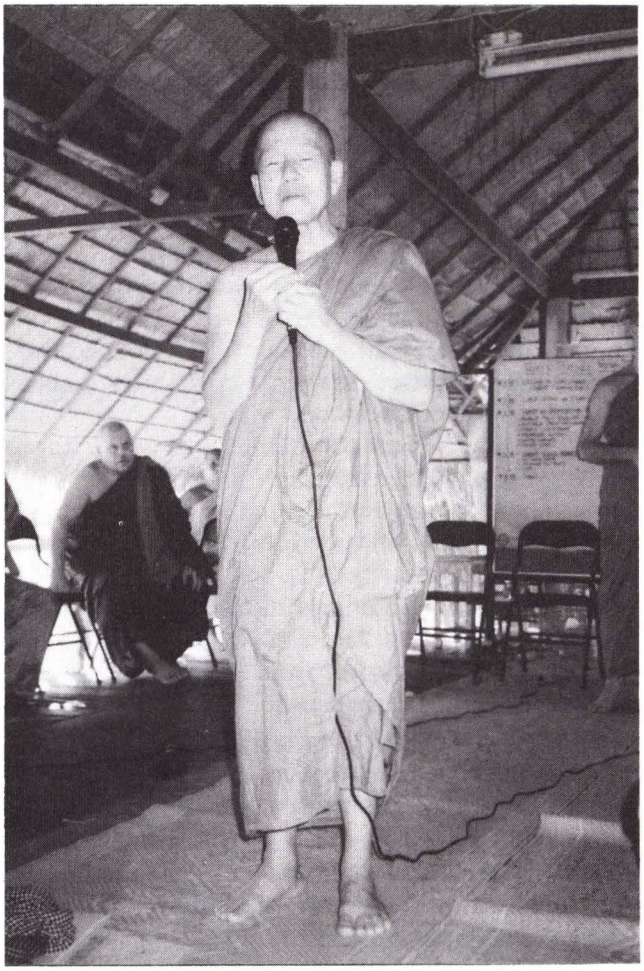
We Must Eat Time

What is life? Life is eating and drinking through all of our senses. And life is keeping from being eaten. What eats us? Time! What is time? Time is living in the past or living in the future, feeding on the emotions. Beings who can say that they have been mentally healthy for even one minute are rare in the world. Most of us suffer from clinging to pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings, and from hunger and thirst. Most living beings have to eat and drink every second through their eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin, and nerves. We eat twenty-four hours a day without stopping! We crave food for the body, food for feeling, food for volitional action, and food for rebirth. We are what we eat. We are the world, and we eat the world.

The Buddha cried when he saw this endless cycle of suffering: the fly eats the flower; the frog eats the fly; the snake eats the frog; the bird eats the snake; the tiger eats the bird; the hunter kills the tiger; the tiger's body becomes swollen; flies come and eat the tiger's corpse; the flies lay eggs in the corpse; the eggs become more flies; the flies eat the flowers; and the frogs eat the flies . . .

Time is also an eater. In traditional Cambodian stories, there is often a giant with many mouths who eats everything. This giant is time. If you eat time, you gain nirvana. You can eat time by living in the moment. When you live just in this moment, time cannot eat you.

And so the Buddha said, "I teach only two things — suffering and the end of suffering." Suffering, eating, and feeling are exactly the same. All kinds of feelings are suffering, filled with vanity, filled with "I am." If we can penetrate the nature of sensations, we can realize the pure happiness of nirvana.



Maha Ghosananda at the INEB Conference

Feelings and sensations cause us to suffer, because we fail to realize that they are impermanent. The Buddha asked, "How can feeling be permanent if it depends upon the body, which is impermanent?" When we do not control our feelings, we are controlled by them. If we live in the moment, we can see things just as they are. Doing so, we can put an end to all desire, break our bondage, and realize peace.

The world is created by the mind. If we can control feeling, then we can control the mind. If we can control the mind, then we can rule the world.

In meditation, we relax our body, but we sit up straight, and, by following our breathing or another object of concentration, we stop most of our thinking. Therefore, we stop being pushed around by our feelings. Thinking creates feeling, and feeling creates thinking. To be free from clinging to thinking and feeling is nirvana — the highest, supreme happiness.

To live without suffering means to live always in the present. The highest happiness is here and now. There is no time at all unless we cling to it. Brothers and Sisters, please eat time! ❖

BORDERLANDS

Courage and Revolution on the Thai-Burma Border

by Paula Green

Bamboo and thatch houses, hidden from view by thick jungle foliage, perch precariously above the Moie River that forms the border between Thailand and Burma. Inside these huts, students, monks, ethnic leaders and the exiled Burmese pro-democracy movement plan the revolution they hope will topple the military dictatorship that has dominated Burma for three decades. This is Manerplaw, just inside the Burma border, the heart of the Burmese and Karen resistance to the oppressive government of SLORC, the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

One bamboo building is the newly constructed monastery of the All Burma Young Monks Union, built with donations raised from Buddhist activists in the U.S. and Japan. A sign reads:

ALL BURMA YOUNG MONKS UNION
REVOLUTIONARY AREA
LONG LIVE HOLINESS

This monastery served as the guest house for the witness delegation that journeyed to Manerplaw under the sponsorship of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists and Karuna Center.

Included in the delegation were BPF's Director Alan Senauke and Board Member Michele Bohana, two Greenpeace activists, Sri Lankans, Cambodians, Japanese, Australians, Thai, and Ven. Rewata Dhamma, a renowned Burmese monk living in exile in England. The purpose of our journey was to bear witness to the war and devastation occurring in Burma, to communicate directly with the resistance and with refugees, and to use this witness for global and local educational campaigns on behalf of peace and justice in Burma.

Manerplaw was our first destination. To reach this outpost on the Burma side of the Moie River, in the Karen ethnic group's territory, we traveled by bus, truck and boat over terrain seldom traversed by outsiders.

Under our mosquito nets at night in Manerplaw, our sleep was disturbed by mortar shells from a nearby mountain ridge. It was frightening. It was also an opportunity to experience the reality of life in a war zone, and to open the heart to sadness.

We were greeted warmly in Manerplaw, sought after by Rangoon intellectuals and university students who felt the isolation of exile and were hungry for news and good talk; by generals explaining their strategies; by monks, doctors and pro-democracy government leaders anxious for us to tell their stories to the world. It was an honor to witness their courage. How we wished we had answers, magic cures, or at least pockets full of medicine and boxes full of books, copiers, computers and faxes!

At the time of our visit, during the 1992 winter dry season, Manerplaw was under repeated threat of attack. SLORC wished to claim victory on their Armed Forces Day in late March, to demonstrate to their citizens and the world that Burma's pro-democracy movement had capsized in the jungle.

The question of armed self-defense especially challenged those of us who are Dharma students, nonviolence trainers or philosophical pacifists. It also provoked the All Burma Student Democratic Front, the organization of students in exile, to split into two groups over the issue of defensive warfare.

Many of the ethnic group leaders and students feel they have no choice but to fight back. Other students and the monks do not carry weapons of war but instead aid the community through humanitarian relief, political organizing and education. I listened, aware that my belief in nonviolence has not been challenged by danger to my life. One ethnic leader, whose people are involved in armed self-defense, confided in me that a training workshop in active nonviolence given by the U.S. Fellowship of Reconciliation was very useful to him. This was a touching reminder of the importance of planting seeds of peace in times of war.

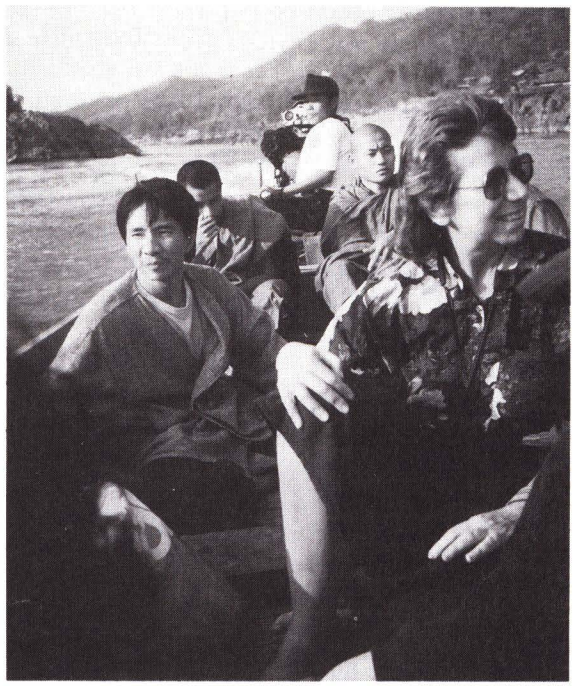
The monks were kind hosts and a great inspiration. Theirs is engaged Dhamma on the front lines. Because of their activism, they had had to leave comfortable monasteries in Mandalay or Rangoon, and now they experienced malaria, malnutrition and extreme hardship at the front. Their leader, U Kema Sera, personally escorted us from the INEB meeting to the monastery in Manerplaw, suffering all the while from a bout of malaria, which strikes frequently and with a vengeance. Despite his illness, he looked after our welfare during our visit to Manerplaw with great attentiveness. I have traveled with him for three years now, and I bow to his courage.

Venerable Rewata Dhamma, the senior Burmese monk from England, was a special guest with the delegation. He gave dhamma talks in a bamboo hut, to students in army fatigues, while mortars pounded in the hills. He upheld "sila" or ethical conduct and nonharming as true Buddhism, saying that so-called "Buddhists" inside Burma who committed atrocities and manipulated the Sangha with gifts were not true Buddhists.

We left Manerplaw, with its little Burmese-style teahouses, its rutted mud road named "Aung San Suu Kyi Boulevard," its trenches and flags and signs proclaiming "Revolutionary Area," with fear and sadness for

our friends there, knowing they might soon be directly attacked by SLORC. Indeed, Manerplaw was attacked in the ensuing weeks, and many died, but the settlement was not captured, and still stands as a symbol of hope for the people of Burma.

Our journey next took us to the refugee camps of ethnic people (mostly Karen) and Burmese students on the Thai side of the river. An estimated 100,000 refugees have already streamed into Thailand from Burma, with 200,000 more displaced inside Burma and unable to find asylum. Most of the refugees along this border are ethnically Karen, 80 percent of whom are Buddhists. They tell stories of rape, mutilation, enslavement, and destruction of villages, paddies and forests.



Pracha Hutanuwatr & Paula Green on the boat to Manerplaw

They come to the camps with their children and their old people. Thailand does not want them, and so does not grant them refugee status, which would entitle them to official relief. So they are stateless persons, forbidden to find jobs, living on land they cannot claim or farm, receiving rice and minimal medical aid from overburdened relief organizations. Somehow they find the courage to begin anew each day, tending their children, cutting bamboo and thatch for new housing, holding together the fragments of a broken life. They hope for repatriation in a free Burma. We hope with them.

One particularly heinous practice of the Burmese military is the enforced servitude of porters to carry weapons and supplies through the rugged jungle mountains. Burmese citizens, ethnics and Burmans alike, are press-ganged into service by being captured, not only in their villages, but also in train stations and movie theaters in the cities. It is possible in Rangoon to leave for work one morning and never return, because you were captured on the bus and sent to the jungle to die as a slave. Women, children and old people are not exempt.

We met and interviewed a sixty-year-old man who had been left for dead on the trail and was later rescued by some villagers. He showed us raw bruises on his arms, legs and back from beatings with bamboo. He couldn't walk due to nerve damage, and was thin as a matchstick from malnutrition. Dr. Myint Chu, a Rangoon-trained physician who has served on the front lines since the 1988 massacre of demonstrators inside Burma, translated for the porter and told us he was in critical condition. Dr. Myint Chu himself is another hero of the revolution: he has endured forty-three bouts of malaria in four years, yet perseveres as one of the few doctors serving many thousands of war-ravaged and ailing people. Having seen the doctor sick with malaria on previous trips, I was glad to find him intact, energetic and serving once again.

Since change is the law of the universe, Burma is bound to change. How or when that change will come remains uncertain. SLORC is under strong international pressure to improve its abysmal human rights record and to cease the flow of refugees into neighboring countries. On the other hand, SLORC offers enticements of trade in natural resources to nations and companies greedy for profits, who then avert their gaze from the government's brutality. SLORC is clearcutting the teak and hardwood forests in the ethnic areas on the perimeters of Burma, and as the forests are stripped, opium fields take their place. Burma already controls 80% of the world's opium market, having doubled its output in the four years since SLORC took power, and the percentage is increasing with the new planting policy. Opium sales mean money for weapons, such as the $1 billion in arms purchased from China in the last year. Controlling SLORC and uprooting this opium folly are two tasks awaiting strong action from the world community.

You can help by writing letters to your Congresspeople and the United Nations demanding full economic sanctions on Burma until SLORC is abolished and asking for the unconditional release of Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners. Financial donations to directly aid the monks, students or refugees may be sent c/o Karuna Center. Educating your Dharma community about our sisters and brothers in Burma is also important. As engaged Buddhists, we have a special relationship to Buddhists in Asia, many of whom are in very distressed situations. Let us take heart together and offer our energy until all beings are free. ❖

Paula Green is the director of Karuna Center, a BPF affiliate project that develops training workshops in communication, nonviolence and human rights from a Buddhist perspective.

Aboriginal Art, Oenpelli, Australia, 1967
from Story About Feeling *(see page 14)*

INEB, continued from page 30

was also illuminating, both in letting me experience further the simplicity and beauty of the life of the forest monk or nun, and in clarifying one of the challenges of engaged Buddhism. Every day I conversed with an older monk, who had been there thirty years. He was quite clear in expressing a viewpoint that seemed in blunt opposition to that of many, if not most, at the INEB meetings. He believes that helping with social problems may be useful and should be encouraged for those interested, but that this isn't the job of monks or nuns. Monks and nuns have only one goal, the uprooting of "defilements" (anger, greed, ignorance, etc.). It's very difficult, if not impossible, he thinks, to have enough support, focus, concentration, and time for spiritual practice while socially active. When I returned to the pell-mell Westernization and crazed traffic of Bangkok, and, a few days later, to the familiar yet now somewhat alien world of United Airlines, reports on the Winter Olympics, Hollywood movies, and a foot of mail, I came to see his perspective as a challenge to all of us in BPF and INEB — to clarify and further develop engaged Buddhism as a full-fledged spiritual path. ❖

Donald Rothberg is a BPF Board member, and a writer and teacher at the Saybrook Institute in San Francisco.

What Is Compassion To A Fish?

by Marilyn Stablein

[Excerpted from The Census Taker: Tales of a Traveler in India and Nepal. *Copies are available for $9.95 (postage included) from Black Heron Press, P.O. Box 95676, Seattle, WA 98145.]*

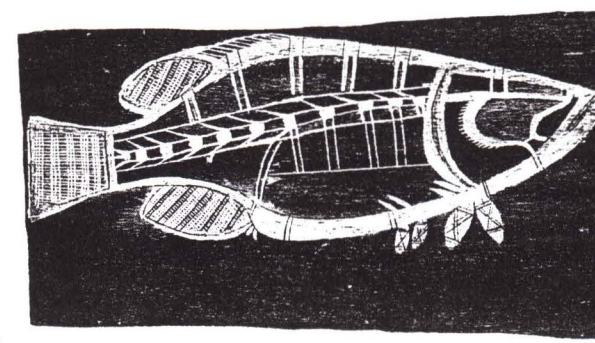
Fish in India, like cows, often lead privileged lives. It is even considered lucky to be reborn a fish in a sacred lake or pond, where one is treated royally, fed with offerings for the gods, able to swim unmolested and live to a ripe old age.

In Bodh Gaya there are fishmongers who cater to the pilgrim trade. For a modest sum a fish can be purchased from them and set free. The merit of such a compassionate act increases the pilgrim's chances for a better rebirth.

Pilgrims from many regions converge upon the village in great numbers doling out compassion, as alms for the poor. In shopping for merit, some unusual questions arise. Do fish have souls? Do larger fish have greater souls? What is compassion to a fish? Indeed, the good intentions of the pilgrims are laudable.

But the fish? Each two-rupee liberation finds them cast loose in the same pond from which they were caught, as no rivers flow out of the village. So the fish make the rounds from the pond to the buckets and back to the pond again. There's no telling just how many times a fish has been liberated. ❖

Marilyn Stablein's new collection of stories, Thinking and Sleeping in Caves, *is in search of a publisher. She lives in Berkeley, California.*



Aboriginal art, Croker Island, Australia, 1967
from Story About Feeling *(see page 14)*

RADICAL INSIGHTS

In the Absence of the Sacred

by Jerry Mander
Sierra Club Books, 1991. $25

Changing Consciousness

by David Bohm and Mark Edwards
Harper San Francisco, 1991. $16.95

Goatwalking

by Jim Corbett
Viking, 1991. $10

Reviewed by Joan Tollifson

These three books are must-reads for anyone seriously interested in the future of life or for anyone wondering about what meditation has to do with ecological survival or social justice.

In the Absence of the Sacred by Jerry Mander (author of *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television)*, is subtitled "The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations," and that's what it's about in a nutshell.

In the first half of the book, Mander explores technology: computers, television, space travel, artificial environments, genetic and molecular engineering, robotics. He shows us how *quickly* it's all happened and how fast it's moving. When he was born, a mere fifty-five years ago, none of this existed.

Mander argues against the prevailing view that technology is neutral, that whether it's a good thing or not depends on how it's used. He shows that technologies inevitably move society and individuals in a particular direction because of the inherent nature and demands of the technologies themselves. Nuclear power invariably demands greater centralization, for example, as do computers. Widespread use of automobiles requires that the earth be paved over to accommodate them.

Mander reveals frightening proposals now in the works for technological solutions to environmental problems — proposals that may well be tried by people in power who are bent on "correcting" these problems without slowing down growth. For example, there is a plan to "correct" the greenhouse effect by releasing large amounts of sulfur dioxide at high altitudes. The negative side effects of this would include an increase in acid rain and a change in the color of the sky from blue to whitish. "This is not a big expense," Mander quotes the plan's designer arguing, "compared to the impact on industry if we give up reliance on fossil fuels."

The second half of the book is about Indians: their past and current struggles to maintain their land and way of life. The Indian way offers us important keys to realizing an alternative to technological culture. In addition, the many Indian land struggles that are going on right now in this country and around the world are vital to the future survival of life on this planet.

Mander gives a good, capsule look at many of these struggles, and illuminates the real history of the United States vis-a-vis Indians. He stresses that U.S. government atrocities against Native peoples are continuing today. He provides a thought-provoking look at a lifestyle that is not centered around growth, accumulation, efficiency and speed.

In pre-agricultural hunter-gatherer societies people do not work the long hours we do. Australian aborigines, for example, work between three and four hours a day. The Bushmen average two hours of work a day. Not everyone in the society works, either. Substantial amounts of time are spent napping, hanging out, socializing, playing games, doing nothing. Such societies are not interested in surplus production. They deliberately under-use the environment's full economic capacity. Among traditional indigenous people, decisions are generally made consensually in long discussions where everyone participates and there are silences around the words.

We, by contrast, live in a society of supposed labor-saving devices where nobody has any time, and people are working more hours than they did a decade ago. The average work week in the United States today is forty-seven hours.

"The natural world is *really* slow," Mander writes. "To experience nature, to feel its subtleties, requires human perceptual ability that is capable of slowness . . . Life in the modern world does not encourage that . . . We are all being sped up. The natural world has retreated beyond our awareness. We hear people say that nature is boring . . . We don't know how to be with it. We are not slow enough."

This hints at the value of meditation (although Mander doesn't talk about it). Anything that slows us down has got to be good. There's so much social pressure on all of us to "be productive" and busy, and even to be busy at saving the world. We are terrified to be still, to do nothing, to listen.

Which brings me to ***Changing Consciousness,*** by David Bohm and Mark Edwards. Subtitled "Exploring the Hidden Source of the Social, Political and Environmental Crises Facing Our World," this book is a dialogue between Bohm (a physicist who worked extensively with J. Krishnamurti) and Edwards (a photographer), juxtaposed with photographs taken by Edwards all over the world showing almost every imaginable aspect of the human condition.

Bohm and Edwards begin where Mander leaves off, with a world in serious trouble. They, too, note the more holistic lifestyle of indigenous cultures, and they have things to say about what makes people living in the modern world so different besides our technology.

Bohm and Edwards talk about the nature of thought. They discuss how thought has developed, and show how it is at the root of all our social and environmental problems. Our most crucial task is to understand thought, and this, of course, is precisely what any kind of insightful meditation work is all about.

Thought is abstract and fragmentary by nature. It mistakes itself for reality. It creates situations and then treats them as if they got there independently. It tries to solve things as separate pieces instead of holistically. It has a tendency to become non-negotiable and to defend itself against evidence of its falseness, especially when basic values are questioned, and it imagines a self who controls thought the way we used to imagine gods who controlled the weather. The authors look at the connection between thought and feelings, and how thought plays a crucial role in evoking and especially in sustaining feelings.

"What we need is a kind of attention that is subtle enough to see how thought is working," Bohm says, and "what is meant by thought is the whole response of memory, including feeling, muscular tension, emotional excitation, and so on."

This kind of attention or awareness has everything to do with action. "According to your attention, your intention will develop."

Many people worry about meditation being too inward, and seem to see social engagement as something that happens when you get up off the cushion. This book reveals how true meditation is a crucial part of social change work, since it gets to the root cause of the problem. Not to discourage activism of other sorts — Bohm and Edwards both encourage and support such efforts, as do I. But this book reveals that meditation, in and of itself, is engaged (*if* there is real discovery happening and not just rote re-conditioning of the mind). Meditation, as Bohm and Edwards understand it (and I'm not sure they even use the word) is not about a quest for personal peace of mind. It is an exploration of the source of our present crisis in the workings of the human mind.

Bohm is particularly interested in a process of dialoguing in ongoing groups with the intention of opening up and investigating what he calls "non-negotiable assumptions." These are any ideas we believe in that we are not open to questioning. If you think about it, you'll discover you have a lot of them. Consider, for example, your views on abortion, gay rights, Palestine/Israel, armed struggle, or sexual misconduct.

As we begin to see the thinking process with greater clarity, and as we become more able to dialogue openly,

Ashaninka Indian in the Amazon hunting with bow and arrow. Photo by Mark Edwards, in Changing Consciousness.

even with people who hold opposing views, we will find that we correct each other in a constantly evolving wholeness that requires all of us to be complete.

And this brings me to Jim Corbett's book ***Goatwalking:*** "When I seek truth, right, or communion rather than victory, my adversary is precisely the teacher I need. For Gandhian nonviolence — *satyagraha* — my own position's greatest truth-deficiency must be corrected with the truth to be found in my adversary's position."

I heard about *Goatwalking* from a Christian friend who recently stayed at our house, a man who had given away all his possessions many years ago to follow the Gospel calling: sell what you possess, give to the poor, take nothing with you, be like the lilies of the field. He was reading this book.

Goatwalking ("A Guide to Wildland Living / A Quest for the Peaceable Kingdom") is written by a Quaker who was one of the cofounders of the sanctuary movement. A man in late middle age who grew up on a ranch, Jim Corbett has spent much of his life working as a cowboy and sheepherder as well as a teacher and scholar.

Goatwalking is a way to step out of a corrupt and lawless society and to survive without having to depend on a symbiotic relationship with those who stay behind. Two milk goats can provide all the nutrients a human being needs with a few exceptions, and those can be gotten from edible plants available even in the desert.

You may have difficulty picturing yourself wandering off alone into the desert with two goats, but Corbett's point isn't really that we should all quit our jobs and take up goatwalking as a permanent livelihood, although he does provide detailed instructions on milking, tracking, humane slaughtering, finding water and edible plants, and he does recognize that: "Industrial civilization has destabilized the earth's climate beyond the point of no return. The fair-weather agriculture on which our civilization depends is doomed."

But this is no manual for survivalists. On the contrary, this is a political and spiritual book about gathering ourselves into base communities "that open an exodus" by taking civil initiative, creating new ways of living in harmony with the land. It is a book about "sallying out beyond a society's established ways to live according to one's inner leadings."

"Pastoral nomadism is similar to most hunter-gatherer cultures in its concentration on the present . . . in its emphasis on unrelenting observation and awareness," Corbett tells us. Farmers and all who come after them (modern-day technocrats and so on) have to plan ahead and work hard. Goatwalkers just wander around. "Food is a gift, eternally regenerating itself."

"To learn why you feel compelled to remake and consume the world, live alone in wilderness for at least a week. Take no books or other distractions. . . . Don't plan things to do when the week is over. Don't do yoga or meditation that you think will result in self-improvement. Simply do nothing."

This book includes a moving account of sanctuary work and the development of the sanctuary movement, as well as the unsentimental and hard-hitting ruminations of a man who has spent most of his life in close connection with the earth as he thinks about such issues as right livelihood, community, church, conscientious objection, civil disobedience, civil initiative, Don Quixote and God. Even the sections on how to milk a goat are well worth reading, whether you ever plan to goatwalk or not.

None of these authors is out to romanticize indigenous cultures (or goats) or suggest a return to the stone age. "I recommend no regression to a precivilized condition," Corbett states. "Life on this planet urgently needs to evolve beyond human possession, but regression would just lead to repetition, because pretechnocratic societies disintegrate when brought into contact with technocracy. They disintegrate because technocratic civilization vastly extends the human ability to experience and do many things."

These three books are pointing not backwards, but forwards toward a change in consciousness and direction. They are all written out of the hope that such change is possible. Our task certainly is to step radically outside the bondage and conditioning of this present society, to find a new way of being together.

"Everything new started with a few people," Bohm says. "Small things can have big effects." ❖

Joan Tollifson is a writer currently living in Berkeley, California.

Telephone call from a New York Editor:
Mander, you've got two books out there now; they're both selling. Are you working on anything new?
Mander: Yes.
Editor: What's the subject?
Mander: Indians.
Editor: *Indians?* Oh God, not Indians. Nobody wants a book about Indians. Indians have been done in New York; they're finished. Indians shmindians . . . Mander, you're some kind of romantic. Like Brando or somebody . . . What's the title?
Mander: Maybe I'll use your title.
Editor: What title is that?
Mander: *Indians Shmindians* . . . It's memorable, and it does seem to summarize our cultural attitude.

— *from the Introduction to* In the Absence of the Sacred, *by Jerry Mander*

Five Books about Native Americans

Reviewed by Karen McCormick

Native American Testimony

A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-1992

Edited by Peter Nabokov
Viking Penguin, 1991. $25.00

If the prospective reader could select only one book to read during this Quincentennial year, I would recommend this comprehensive anthology edited by Peter Nabokov. A professor of anthropology who invested over 20 years of research in this work, Nabokov offers the Indian experience in the words of Native Americans, with a minimum of the anthropological extrapolations that Anglos have historically excelled in.

In personal letters, autobiographies, government documents, reservation newspapers, and interviews, over 100 Native American men and women speak here — from early prophecies that foretold the coming of Europeans all the way through contemporary debates about tribal sovereignty in this Quincentennial era. The renaissance of Red Power in the 1960s and 1970s receives its due in the chapter "Let's Raise Some Hell." In the final chapter addressing the "Indian Future," Nabokov speaks of the rampage of AIDS throughout Native America: "AIDS resurrected memories of other non-Indian scourges: smallpox, TB, trachoma, and influenza, which killed more Indians than warfare or old age." (Today, Sun Dance piercing is implemented with disposable blades and gloves.)

Here are a few of the intriguing essay titles: "A Shaman Obeys," "Geronimo Puts Down the Gun," "What Harm Is In Our Sun Dance?" "Invading Alcatraz," "Hopis and the Love Generation," "Confronting Columbus Again," and "The End of the World."

In the articulate foreword, Indian rights activist Vine Deloria, Jr. observes that "the final chapters of the story have yet to be written. Old prophecies relate that the white man will surely come to dominate the continent, but that his time in the sun will be the shortest of all the people who dwell here. He has not, as yet, come to grips with the land on which he lives."

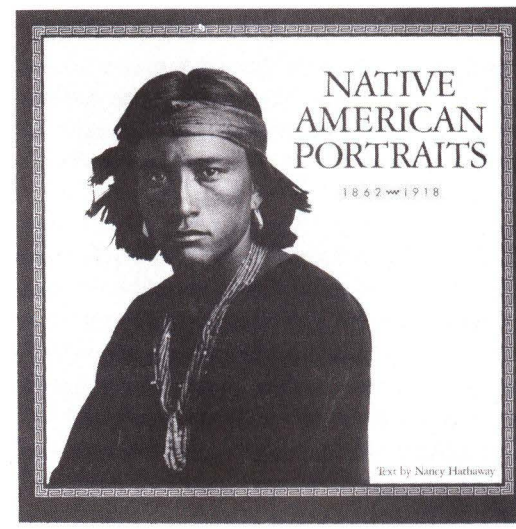
Over 75 well-chosen black and white photographs include heartbreaking "before" and "after" portraits of Indians (i.e. traditional vs. "assimilated") along with magnificent sacred sites like the Blue Lake above Taos.

I would like, for a start, to see *Native American Testimony* incorporated into every high school history curriculum.

Native American Portraits: 1862-98

Portraits from the Collection of Kurt Koegler

Text by Nancy Hathaway
Chronicle Books, 1990. $16.95



As Nancy Hathaway says in her Introduction, "The development of the art of photography and the devastation of the Native American took place simultaneously."

These previously unpublished photographs from the Kurt Koegler Collection in New York constitute my favorite album of older Native American images, a refreshing change from the ubiquitous Edward Curtis reproductions that we so often see in books and calendars. Curtis was fond of using a soft focus and sentimental poses, even fake costumes and props, to give his Indian subjects the romantic air of the "noble savage."

A number of the photographs in this new collection, by contrast, are arresting in their simplicity. Perhaps the most poignant photograph of all was taken by George W. Scott in the late 1880s: the once-invincible Lakota leader Sitting Bull, tears brimming in his old eyes, poses grimly with a broken monarch butterfly attached to his hat. "Mrs. Stene-Tu, a Tlingit Belle," photographed by Harriet Smith Pullen in 1906, wearing a horned headdress and nose-ring, is indeed a knock-out. Carl Moon's 1905 portrait of the beautiful face of a "Navajo Boy" graces the cover of the book.

Nancy Hathaway provides a lively introduction to the conditions of the period for both photographer and subject: "Whether [the photographers] snapped these pictures on an expedition charting the West, as part of their duties for an army trained to fight Indians, or in an attempt to reassert the beauties of Native American culture, the universal humanity in these portraits shines through. Although the people in these photographs are

long dead, their faces speak to us still."

Reproduced in mellow sepia duotones, these photographs have permanently recorded the luminosity that burned in Native eyes 100 years ago. And that intensity of spirit was not simulated.

Lakota Woman

by Mary Crow Dog, with Richard Erdoes
Harper Collins, 1990. $9.95

Here's an "as told to" autobiography that I couldn't put down. With searing honesty, Mary Crow Dog recounts her life as a half-breed Lakota who grew up happily in her grandmother's poor but loving home, was packed off to a dehumanizing Catholic boarding school where she became something of a rebel, and matured into young motherhood under fire, during the siege at Wounded Knee II in 1973. She earned the name "Brave Woman" for her courage as a warrior in giving birth under those circumstances. Mary later became the wife of the older medicine man Leonard Crow Dog, and bore three more children in a partnership that was both stressful and rewarding. Life was never short on adventure, or lacking in tragedy.

In the midst of political and ritualistic victories during the American Indian Movement (AIM) heyday in South Dakota, several of Mary's women friends and relatives were brutally murdered. Annie Mae Aquash was one of these political sacrifices, which Mary describes in a chapter called "Two Cut-Off Hands."

The pages of *Lakota Woman* overflow with Mary's very personal observations and experiences of the resurrected Lakota rituals. Many of the AIM characters and Lakota old-timers come to life through her descriptions. The book speaks strongly of one woman's dedicated spiritual quest in the face of great odds.

Crying for a Dream: The World through Native American Eyes

Text and photographs by Richard Erdoes
Bear & Co., 1990. $24.95

Color photographs of contemporary Native American life and ritual are accompanied by Erdoes' compassionate and informed text reflecting on his three decades of friendly alliance with indigenous cultures. "Most of the images are of close friends," he writes. Though he sometimes felt like a trespasser with his camera, Erdoes was more often invited to document ceremonies by the participants in them.

Many of the people mentioned in *Lakota Woman* appear in this book, including a younger Mary Crow Dog, the late medicine man Henry Crow Dog and his son Leonard Crow Dog. Archie Fire Lame Deer, the subject of another excellent book by Richard Erdoes, is somber in the four photographs of him here.

This book was my introduction to Lakota ceremonies: the Sacred pipe, the Sun Dance, the Sweat Lodge, the Vision Quest, the Ghost Dance, the Yuwipi ritual, and the Grandfather Peyote ritual of the Native American Church.

It is remarkable that "in the face of the Constitution's guarantee of religious freedom for all, the Sun Dance and all other Native American rituals were outlawed in 1881. Even taking a sweatbath became a punishable offense." The Sun Dance went underground until the FDR era when it re-emerged publicly in a modified version. The 1890 Ghost Dance that culminated in the Wounded Knee Massacre was revived under the direction of old Henry Crow Dog in 1974. Laws have eased up in the past 15 years, allowing Indians to practice religions which are, after all, indigenous to this continent.

In addition to sharing his understanding of the Lakota people, Erdoes offers a glimpse of Native Americans in the pueblos and deserts of the Southwest — again with outstanding photographs and many direct quotations. The author observes: "The Pueblo people live their lives with a sense of natural perpetuity which, sadly, has disappeared from white American society."

The People Shall Continue

Written by Simon Ortiz
Illustrated by Sharol Graves
Children's Book Press, 1988. $12.95

"The only existing overview of American Indian history for children written by an American Indian." Ortiz packs a great deal of history into 22 pages — from Creation to the coming of the Europeans and the aftermath of resistance and suffering for Native Americans. This unusual children's book has a wide range of appeal; my two-year-old was attracted to the bright illustrations and my twelve-year-old appreciated the text. The story ends with courage and hope:

We are all the People of this land.
We were created out of the forces
of earth and sky, the stars and water.
We must make sure that the balance of the Earth be kept.
There is no other way. . . .

Oyate is a nonprofit organization which distributes children's books and materials written and illustrated by native peoples and others. A carefully evaluated materials list is available from: Oyate, 2702 Mathews St., Berkeley, CA 94702. ❖

Karen McCormick is currently dreaming a move to northern New Mexico, where she would like to write about Southwestern Earth Mother archetypes and their mytho-geographical proximity to military and/or waste dump sites.

Two Reviews by Alan Senauke —

Seeds of Peace: A Buddhist Vision For Renewing Society

by Sulak Sivaraksa
Parallax Press, 1992. $12

The present crisis in Thailand is taking a terrible toll: many hundreds of lives, thousands of injuries and arrests. And the end is not in sight. A vast popular movement for democracy has brought about the resignation of self-appointed prime minister, General Suchinda Kraprayoon, but his military associates still hold power and the parliament drags its feet in making any kind of substantive change.

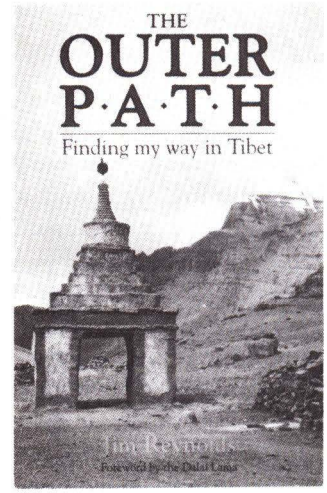
From exile, Sulak Sivaraksa is a beacon of clear thinking and direct words. Engaged buddhists are encouraged by his leadership and saddened that he must remain outside Thailand when wisdom and compassion are so needed there. And yet, neither this uprising and repression nor Sulak's exile are surprising. The circumstances of Thai society in particular, and Asia in general, are forcefully described in Sulak's new volume from Parallax Press: *Seeds of Peace — A Buddhist Revision for Renewing Society.*

Sulak is a prolific writer and a ceaseless organizer. He is the founder of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, the Asian Cultural Forum on Development, and the Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development; and author of dozens of books. *Seeds of Peace,* edited by Tom Ginsburg, is his first book published in the United States. It includes his most cogent essays of the last twenty-five years.

Sulak's vision ranges widely over issues of consumerism, the pitfalls of so-called development, Japan's exploitative relationship with Thailand and other Asian countries. But Sulak speaks most eloquently when he calls for Buddhism with a small "b," exploring the possibility of a society based on mutual respect, nongreed, and nonviolence.

> To alleviate suffering, we must always go back to our own spiritual depths—to retreat, meditation, and prayer. It is nearly impossible to sustain the work otherwise. It is easy to hate our enemies—the industrialists who exploit us and pollute our atmosphere. But we must come to see that there is no "other." We are all one human family. It is greed, hatred, and delusion that we need to overcome . . . As a worldwide network of friends, peaceful and loving, we can overcome all obstacles.

With this beautifully produced volume, Parallax introduces a mature Asian voice that wonderfully complements the more meditative writings of Thich Nhat Hanh. Engaged Buddhism involves an ever-shifting dynamic of inner inquiry, social analysis, and action, where the dharma informs us each step of the way. Sulak's *Seeds of Peace* provides invaluable tools: Buddhist analysis of regional and international interdependence, and the workings of greed, anger, and delusion. In Thailand's troubled times and here at the empire's center, it is essential reading for peacemakers. ❖



The Outer Path: Finding My Way in Tibet

by Jim Reynolds
Fair Oaks Publishing, 1992. $10.95

Five years ago, in March of 1987, Jim Reynolds left his home in California to practice meditation in central Thailand. But three months of mindfulness practice — sometimes for fourteen hours a day — did not quiet his restless energy. So he resolved to go back into the world and travel the outer path bicycling through Tibet.

The Outer Path, put out this year by Fair Oaks Publishing, is an inner and outer travelogue of his five-month journey in China and Tibet by train, truck and bicycle, through many areas closed to foreigners, just at the time when the door to Tibet was closing for independent travelers.

Making his way across China, Jim buys a sturdy bicycle in Yunnan Province and cycles up into the highlands near the border of Tibet. The spirit of his telling is light, as he recounts the joys and rigors of travel. He found wonderful people, warm hospitality, and strange customs. He also had to face fierce dogs, rain and cold, unpleasant Chinese officials, and constant stomach trouble.

His path led from China to Lhasa, then over the barren plateau of Western Tibet into the Himalayan mountains, with arduous pilgrimages around Mt. Kailas and other sacred places, cycling, trekking, and camping, sometimes alone, sometimes with several Western fellow travelers.

The Outer Path spins a good adventure. It also gives us a glimpse of inner turmoil and the difficulty of following one's inner path, particularly for someone who has the means to keep traveling on. Throwing himself into the rigors of bare bones travel, Jim Reynolds steadily confronts the sources of his own deeper suffering. Within the year he returned to Thailand to take up the robes of a monk.

Book royalties are donated to Tibetan refugee work. Suffering and generosity walk hand in hand. ❖

Coordinator's Report

April might be the cruelest month — what with the legal murder of Robert Alton Harris in California's gas Chamber, SLORC's persecution and expulsion of countless Muslim Rohingyas from the Northwest of Burma, continuing war in what used to be Yugoslavia, and an all-white California jury's exoneration of four policemen in the beating of Rodney King. All twisted up inside, I watched as angry looting, fires, riots, and sadly under-reported peaceful demonstrations made clear just how deeply our nation's racial and economic lines cut, despite all the election-year blather about democracy. The rioting continued into May. Then, in Thailand, hundreds of people were shot in the streets, dragged out of buildings, beaten and thrown in jail as they called for greater democracy and the resignation of self-appointed prime minister Suchinda Kraprayoon. Having been to Bangkok recently I could visualize the places where demonstrators and military faced off, but I couldn't picture the violence itself in the so-called "Land of Smiles." I couldn't hear any smiling in the stunned and grieving voices of the friends I spoke with daily in Bangkok.

Since Harris' death, a half dozen men have been executed in other states with much less fanfare or public outrage. Fires in Yugoslavia continue to burn. In Los Angeles much of the outrage has gone back behind closed doors, although thousands of people from all communities continue to offer their help and prayers. The root causes of the uprising remain and will likely flare up another day. The candidates continue to talk, though few of us believe their blandishments. General Suchinda has stepped down in Thailand, but why couldn't he have done that before blood was spilled? And there is a clear possibility of more violence.

I don't know. When asked what is the most important point of Buddhist practice, Master Sheng-Yen, a contemporary Ch'an teacher from New York City, said, "Regulate your life." I don't take this to mean we should make everything smooth, passionless, uneventful. Often we have no choice about the events that overtake us; they express our individual and collective karma. Instead we can try to regulate our life by returning to breath, inquiring who we are, where we are, what we are doing in the midst of every activity, even in the violence of a society torn apart, even as we face our own pain and death. I can regulate my life by remembering that each person's life is as precious to them as mine is to me. Little by little I try to practice this. I often fail, falling into self and other, and try again. It seems right to make this effort, even sitting here in the BPF office. It's the best I can do.

Meanwhile, thanks to many of you for your calls, support and effort in these various crises. We had a Town Meeting after the King verdict. Some of the discussion was awkward and painful, some of it very moving. It seemed at least a beginning of work we hope to continue. Members and friends did a lot of letter-writing about Thailand, and held several memorial services. There's more to tell you about, but I'd rather leave room for other voices. Take good care. ❖

— Alan Senauke

Chapter News

October's National Meeting

Our 1992 National Members' Meeting will have a regional and seasonal orientation this year. We are happy to say that the Vermont Chapter will host the weekend gathering on October 10 & 11 in Burlington. We hope that you can attend, meet with other members to share our practice and concerns, and help chart BPF's direction for the future. Despite the fact that this is called a "National" meeting, it is usually a warm and intimate event, small enough that people can actually make contact with each other. And what could be more glorious than Vermont at the height of the autumn foliage? For more information call Lois Polento of the Vermont Chapter at 802/223-5711 or the BPF national office. See you there.

Washington, DC

The Washington Area Chapter continues to provide support for MINORS, a program assisting orphan children in Thai refugee camps along the Lao and Cambodian borders. MINORS is in the process of developing a children's school in Vietnam, as well. In the past three years the chapter has raised more than $10,000 in direct aid for these children. Longtime chapter coordinator Greg Krech has moved to Vermont, but BPF activity will continue in close cooperation with the Washington Community of Mindful Living. The new contact person is Mitchell Ratner. See the back page for his address and phone.

Chapter Pages

Three informal but impressive newsletters have come in from the Boston, Vermont and East Bay Chapters. If you'd like ideas about activities and formats for your own chapter, these folks will be happy to send you a copy of the most recent issue.

The **Boston Chapter** has had a very busy Spring season. In April they co-sponsored with Wisdom Books an

evening talk and book signing by Thai Buddhist activist Sulak Sivaraksa, followed closely by a Day of Mindfulness at Cambridge Insight Meditation Center, in observance of Buddha's Birthday and Earth Day. The chapter has also been supporting several social action projects: Tibetan resettlement, tutoring Asian women in English as a second language, and serving meals to homeless and poor women at the Women's Lunch Place.

Aside from hosting this Fall's National Meeting, the **Vermont Chapter,** still a relatively new group, is also involved in a variety of Buddhist activities. Burlington is another Tibetan Resettlement site, and the chapter has been helping to find sponsors, jobs, and funds to support the twenty-five immigrants scheduled for the area. On July 4 they are sponsoring an Interdependence Day of mindfulness and celebration. Their newsletter also includes a seasonal list of Buddhist events in the Vermont/New England area, a resource that serves as a good model for folks in many areas of the country.

East Bay BPF in California is exploring work with Jubilee West, a community development agency in an impoverished neighborhood of West Oakland. Members will be involved in outreach and empowerment work. Chapter members participated in a Day of Mindulness at Green Gulch Farm on June 6. This was the day designated for prayer and commitment to the earth by the Dalai Lama. Waffles Against War, a community breakfast on Father's Day, was a fundraiser for East Bay BPF's various programs. It brings to mind other possible events like Omelettes Against Oppression, Croissants Against Conspicuous Consumption, Rice Gruel For Recycling. ❖

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

Announcements

THE FOUR CORNERS PROJECT is creating a center on private land near Flagstaff to help educate, preserve and regenerate the planet and its inhabitants. This will be a community where people can come together to share and teach others about living in harmony with the environment. A commercial-scale, sustainable organic vegetable garden and orchard are being developed for the area market. Some land has been set aside as a conservancy. The vision includes workshops, networking, and the arts. Many others who share this vision are needed to carry it out. Public meetings are held weekly at the Flagstaff Public Library; there will be a meeting in Sedona on August 23. For more information, contact: Four Corners Project, 22 S. San Francisco St. #438, Flagstaff, AZ 86001; tel 602/773-9669.

HELP REBUILD A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN CAMBODIA. The Khmer Buddhist Educational Assistance Project is seeking $9000 to assist the villagers of Trapeang Ang in Prey Krabas district, Takeo province, to rebuild one of their two primary schools. Funds are also needed to provide medical care for the monk Ven. Chea Chap who sought KEAP's assistance with this project; the Venerable is going blind. Please send donations in any currency to: KEAP, P.O. Box 45, Aranyaprathet, Prachinburi 25120, Thailand; fax 037.231.440.

TIBETAN DELEK HOSPITAL in Dharamsala, India, seeks assistance through the Delek Hospital Aid Foundation (DHAF) in Vancouver, B.C. The 45-bed Hospital, which provides care to the Tibetan and indigent Indian communities of Dharamsala, is overseen by the Ministry of Health of the Dalai Lama's Government in Exile. Additional funding will allow the Delek Hospital to improve its current limited services and offer free treatment to those who cannot afford it. DHAF has already sent antibiotics, local anesthetics and broncholidators to Delek Hospital. Please help by donating and becoming a member of DHAF! Send $10 or more (payable to DHAF) to: Andrew B. Cooper, M.D., Delek Hospital Aid Foundation, #103-876 West 16th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V5Z 1T1; tel. 604/872-4766, fax 604/875-4847.

SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL is a worldwide movement to support tribal peoples. It stands for their right to decide their own future and helps them protect their lands, environment and way of life. Membership is $30 U.S. or £12. To join, or for more information, contact Survival International, 310 Edgeware Rd., London W2 1DY, U.K.; tel 071/723-5535.

HOMELESS CHILDREN need toys to play with at the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center in Berkeley. If you have any toys to donate and/or would like more information, please call Thelma Bryant at 510/524-2468.

MIDDLE EAST WITNESS is sponsoring short- and long-term delegations to Israel and Palestine. The delegations establish an active, nonviolent presence in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, and meet Israelis from a variety of political perspectives. The moral authority of an international witness helps to shape public policy towards greater respect for human rights and self-determination for both Israeli and Palestinian peoples. For more information, dates of short-term delegations, and an application, contact: Middle East Witness, 515 Broadway, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; tel 408/423-1626.

CALL FOR ENTRIES for an anthology about the death of a sister or brother. Stories, diary excerpts, interviews, poetry and artwork will be included. For further information or to send material, contact Maura Williams at Matsara Books, 421 48th St., Oakland, CA 94609; tel. 510/652-5213.

HELP BUILD A BUDDHIST LIBRARY IN LADAKH. The Mahabodhi Society of Bangalore, India is undertaking the construction of Ladakh's first Buddhist library. The project has been boosted by a gift of one million baht from Thai Royal Princess Galayani Watthana. Deductions are tax-deductible and may be made to the Thai-American Project, 1440 Harvard St., Santa Monica, CA 90404. Funds will be routed through Princess Galyani to the building project.

Coming Events

SHAKUHACHI AND KOTO concerts by Rakugaki to benefit the Tibetan Nuns' Project. Three concerts in the S.F. Bay Area; proceeds will help build much-needed nunneries in India and Nepal. Friday, July 24, San Francisco: info 415/647-2272. Saturday, July 25, Oakland: info 510/845-6830. Saturday, August 1, Bodega: info 707/876-3004.

CHRISTOPHER TITMUSS will facilitate a two-day workshop on engaged spiritualiy called *Heal the Earth, 1492-1992* at Spirit Rock Center in Marin County, CA, August 26-27, 1992. He will be assisted by Henrietta Rogell, Dan Clurman and Donald Rothberg. The workshop is non-residential. For information and registration, contact Insight Meditation West, 415/488-0170 or 415/488-0164.

Classifieds

UNEMPLOYED BUDDHISTS living in Guelph area interested in developing alternative right livelihood business. Please contact Annabel Cathrall, 551 Kortright Rd. W., Guelph, Ontario N1G 3J6, Canada.

ARE YOU TIRED of rushing around? *Kokopelli Notes* is about developing lifestyle changes that support your spiritual values. Walk, bike and bus for a greener planet. FREE BROCHURE about the quarterly magazine devoted to the self-propelled life. Sample $3. *Kokopelli Notes,* Dept. TW, P.O. Box 8186, Asheville, NC 28814. 704/683-4844.

LOOKING FOR INVESTOR(S) or buyers with a vision, to develop property for a possible retreat center in the Colorado mountains. Location: approx. 30 miles west of Denver. Spiritually, environmentally, ecologically, nutritionally oriented. Deadline Aug. 31st. Voné Sumers, 777 El Camino Real #2, Burlingame, CA 94010; tel. 415/342-3802.

THE INFLATABLE ZAFU is actually an inflatable beachball inside a fine-quality zafu cover. Lightweight-Convenient-Guaranteed. Colors: Plum, Burgundy, Navy, Royal, Green, Black. Cost: $20 postpaid. *Products for the meditative lifestyle.* Free brochure. CAROLINA MORNING DESIGNS, Dept. BPFN, P.O. Box 2832, Asheville, NC 28802. 704/683-1843.

MORITA & NAIKAN THERAPIES are rooted in Buddhism and help cultivate qualities of mindfulness, action, compassion and service. They have been adapted for the West by Dr. David Reynolds. His work has been featured in East/West Magazine and Yoga Journal and praised by Dr. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross and others. Many Buddhists find this material more compatible with their spiritual practice than traditional Western therapies. For information on books, tapes and training programs contact: The ToDo Institute, P.O. Box 874, Middlebury, VT 05753.

> "Imagine India without curry, Russia without vodka, Italy without pizza, Switzerland without chocolate, or Africa without maize. Chili peppers, potatoes, tomatoes, cocoa, and maize-corn all originated in America. In fact 60 percent of all crops around the world were first cultivated and eaten by American Indians."
>
> — *New Internationalist, December, 1991*

FOR SALE FROM BPF:

- Thich Nhat Hanh letterpress broadside, beautifully designed, 6 1/2" x 12"; text taken from *Peace Is Every Step.* Suitable for framing — these are wonderful gifts. $3 for first one; $1 for each additional.
- T-shirts (blue or white) with black BPF logo: $12. Specify S, M, L, or XL and desired color. (Supply variable.)
- BPF buttons, with BPF logo: $1.
- Thich Nhat Hanh tapes: "The Practice of Peace" talk in Berkeley, April 1991. Two-tape set: $14.
- Sulak Sivaraksa talk: "Buddhism with a small 'b,'" Spring 1992. $14.
- Tapes from the 1991 BPF Institute for the Practice of Engaged Buddhism: $90 for complete set. $12 for individual tapes: contact BPF office for order form.

Postage included in all BPF prices.

BACK ISSUES OF *TURNING WHEEL*

Here is a catalogue of our most recent issues. All back issues are $4 postpaid from the BPF National office ($3 each plus postage for orders of 3-10 copies). Starred issues (*) are available as photocopies only.

***Spring '86:** Aitken Roshi; Kenneth Kraft; Rochester Conference on Nonviolence, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Big Mountain.

***Fall '86:** Joanna Macy on Sri Lanka, Changing Buddhism; Interview with Christopher Titmuss.

***Winter '87:** Thich Nhat Hanh on Reconciliation; Christina Feldman; Nicaraguan Children; Bangladesh Campaign; Kalu Rinpoche.

***Fall '87:** Persecution of Buddhists in Vietnam; John F. Avedon on The Rape of Tibet; Right Livelihood; Poems of Insight from Retreats with Thich Nhat Hanh.

Spring '88: Special Section on Buddhism and AIDS; Interview with Sulak Sivaraksa; the Dalai Lama on Buddhism and Nature; BPF Report from Nicaragua; Appreciating Conflict.

Fall '88: Special Section on Burma; Sacred Waste by Joanna Macy; Art in a Global Crisis by Kaz Tanahashi; articles on Tibet, Chittagong.

Spring '89: Buddhist Perspectives on Conscientious Objection and War Tax Resistance; Veterans, Molested Children and The Buddha; Tibet, a Tragedy in Progress; Interviews with Mayumi Oda and Ram Dass.

Summer '89: Special sections on Thich Nhat Hanh and on homelessness; Tibet and Tiananmen; Interview with Gary Snyder; Aitken Roshi on War Tax Resistance.

Fall '89: The Dalai Lama's Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, and excerpts from his talks in Costa Rica and New York; Robert Aitken's Guatemalan Journal; Interviews with Desmond Tutu and Kaz Tanahashi; Abortion.

Winter '90: Buddhists and the USSR; the Dalai Lama and the Jews; Vietnamese

Refugees: Forced Repatriation; Refugee Children in Thai Camps; Interview with Tai Situ Rinpoche; more Buddhist approaches to AIDS care; Listening to the Libyans.

Spring '90: *Earth Day Issue.* Galen Rowell on The Agony of Tibet; Emptiness as an Environmental Ethic; Interviews with Helena Norberg-Hodge on Ladakh and Dr. Chatsumarn Kabilsingh on Buddhism and Ecology in Thailand; Feminist Perspectives on the Dharma.

Summer '90: Buddhists and Native Americans: An Interview with Peter Matthiessen; A Ritual for Aborted and Miscarried Children; Theater Work with Young Cambodian Refugees; Thai Buddhist Women; Green Gulch Earth Day Ceremonies.

Fall '90: Special Feature: Disability and Buddhism; The Dying of Issan Dorsey; BPF Statement on the Persian Gulf Crisis; Compassionate Listening; Report from Asia Watch and Review of the Situation in Burma.

Winter '91: Special sections on: War and Peace; the Nuclear Guardianship Project; Trees. Features on Burma and the Tibetan Refugee Project.

Spring '91: Special Focus: Buddhist Teachers and Sexual Misconduct; feature sections on: Personal Responses to the Gulf War; Teaching Children and Buddhist Practice. Articles on International Network of Engaged Buddhists; Dharma and the Draft Counselor.

Summer '91: Thich Nhat Hanh on the Gulf War; Guidelines for Preventing Misconduct; The Kalachakra Mandala Incident; Prostitution in Thailand.

Fall '92: First Meditation in Action Institute: excerpts from Robert Aitken, A.T. Ariyaratne, and others; Sanctuary movement; Thubten Chodron on Conflict Resolution.

Winter '92: This issue featured a special focus on prisoners and Buddhism, and we are SOLD OUT of back copies. However, we plan to reprint this prison section as a booklet soon.

Spring '92: *Special issue on Community and communities.* ❖

GRATITUDE

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Board gratefully acknowledges generous contributions above and beyond membership between April 1 and June 25, 1992:

Susan Alaynick ❖ Ronald Alexander ❖ Stephen Ascue ❖ Nina Auchincloss ❖ Andris Baltins ❖ Asoka Bandarage ❖ Christie Banks ❖ Alan Baron ❖ Kallon Basquin ❖ Elizabeth Beldridge ❖ Berkeley Zen Center ❖ Linda Beutner ❖ Paul Bloom ❖ Allan Bomhard ❖ Richard & Mary Ann Brandon ❖ Don Brown ❖ Lynda Caine ❖ Scotty Cantwell ❖ Stephen Ritter & Luz del Castillo ❖ Laura Chasin ❖ Paul Cigler ❖ Dennis Clagett ❖ Susan Clements ❖ William Compton ❖ Andrew Cooper, M.D. ❖ Bill Cooper ❖ John Cooper ❖ Margo Cooper ❖ Jay Copeland ❖ Kay Corcoran ❖ Clelia Corona ❖ Kirkham Cornwell ❖ Nanda Currant ❖ Linda Deaton ❖ Dharma Rain Zen Center ❖ Tasha Dowdakin ❖ James Doyle ❖ Dennis Dyke ❖ David Evan ❖ Eileen Feigenberg ❖ Linda Filippi ❖ David Foecke ❖ Andrew Fort ❖ Mark Gallagher ❖ John Gibbs ❖ Laura Glasscock ❖ Maggie Gluck ❖ Trudy Goodman ❖ Sean Gosiewski ❖ Johndennis Govert ❖ Ann Greenwater ❖ Miles Hamada ❖ Margaret Harvey ❖ Natalie Hauptman ❖ Alan Hawkins ❖ Anne Heath ❖ Charlie Henkel ❖ Susan Henning ❖ Harriet Hill ❖ Barbara Hirshkowitz ❖ Harrison Hoblitzelle ❖ Mary Holte ❖ Senichi Victor Hori ❖ J.C. Hotchkiss ❖ Sandy Hunter ❖ Piet Hut ❖ Barbara Jackson ❖ Leavenworth Jackson ❖ Yorke Jacobson ❖ M. Anne Jennings ❖ Helen Jones ❖ Ronna Kabatznick ❖ Michele Kaemmerer ❖ M. Kassapa ❖ Dennis Kegan ❖ Nancy Ketchum ❖ Ruth Klein ❖ Karl Koehler ❖ Chris Kostoff ❖ Roger Krote ❖ Geoffrey Landis ❖ David Laser ❖ Ami Laws ❖ Rick Levine ❖ Alfred Lockwood ❖ Samuel Louie ❖ Terry Lyon ❖ Ann Mahoney ❖ Mo Malvern ❖ Maria Mather ❖ Michael May ❖ Mendocino BPF ❖ Catherine Merschel ❖ Marion Minewski ❖ Anne Mize ❖ Anne Moore ❖ Tozan Dirk Mosig ❖ Penny Nakatsa ❖ Alexander Naughton ❖ Meg Newcomer ❖ Trang-anh Nguyen ❖ Paul Norton ❖ Pat O'Hara ❖ Patricia O'Keefe ❖ M. O'Malley ❖ Jenny Ogier ❖ Russ Palmieri ❖ Peter Parish ❖ Ellen Peskin ❖ David Pettit ❖ Ralph Presnall ❖ Maddy Prest ❖ Robert Pryor ❖ Doug Pullin ❖ Marnie Purple ❖ Margaret Rader ❖ Brett Randall ❖ Ellen Rautenstrauch ❖ Christopher Reed ❖ Robert Rice ❖ Wilber Robert ❖ Sharon Rogers ❖ Eleanor Rosch ❖ Peter Rutter ❖ Sagaponack Stable Zendo ❖ Grace Sanchez ❖ Grace Schireson ❖ Robert Schoenholt ❖ Elaine Schroeder ❖ Victoria Scott ❖ Bruce Seidner ❖ Mary Selkirk ❖ John Sellers ❖ Lawrence Shainberg ❖ Margaret Sharp ❖ Jack Shoemaker ❖ Nancy Simmons ❖ Robert Smith ❖ Her Wild Song ❖ Cliff Straehley ❖ Steve Stucky ❖ Roberta Sutherland ❖ Lucetta Swift ❖ Michael Swords ❖ Walter Tamao ❖ Nancy Tamarisk ❖ David Tapper ❖ Yvonne Taylor ❖ David Teicher ❖ Lin & Ray Tetrault ❖ David Tetzlaff ❖ Rosemary Thompson ❖ Christopher Titmuss ❖ Renee Des Tombe ❖ Gordon Tyndall ❖ Michael Vargas ❖ Dr. Thein Wah ❖ Tanis Walters ❖ Mark Warner ❖ Carol Watts ❖ Dan & Jan Wessler ❖ Jean Westcott ❖ Deborah & Allan Wilkinson ❖ Phil & Elie Wood ❖ Michael Woodbury ❖ Denoya Wyatt ❖ Susan Zakin ❖

For donations above and beyond the call of fundraising:

George Draffan ❖ Rhoda Gilman ❖ Gene Knudsen Hoffman ❖ Stephanie Kaza ❖ Toinette Lippe ❖ Pat Rea ❖ San Francisco Zen Center ❖

❖ Thank you! ❖

BPF Chapters & Affiliates

BPF National Office
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704
tel. 510/525-8596
fax 510/525-7973

Chapters

Boulder/Denver BPF
Sheryl Stalcup
10050 West 13th Avenue
Lakewood, CO 80215
303/238-3376

Cambridge/Boston BPF
Jim Austin
43 Richfield Road
Arlington, MA 02174
617/643-2343

Durham BPF
Jackie Wilson
1004 N. Buchanan
Durham, NC 27701
919/286-2005

East Bay BPF
Margo Tyndall
88 Clarewood Lane
Oakland, CA 94611
510/654-8677

Los Angeles BPF
Christopher Reed
247 Horizon Avenue
Venice, CA 90291
213/396-5054

Marin County BPF
Wendy Johnson
Green Gulch Farm
Sausalito, CA 94965
415/383-3709

Mendocino County BPF
Gail Deutsch
P.O. Box 1490
Mendocino, CA 95460
707/937-3638

Minnesota BPF
Paul Norr
2832 Coolidge St. NE
St. Anthony, MN 55418
612/788-7159

New York BPF
Amy Krantz
115 W. 86th St.
New York, NY 10024
212/873-3142

NW Washington BPF
Matthew Jacobson
1742 S. Nugent
Lummi Island, WA 98262
206/758-2824

Oahu BPF
Carl Varady
2119 Kaloa Way
Honolulu, HI 96822
808/946-0666

Pennsylvania BPF
John Sellers
1808 Perkiomen Ave.
Reading, PA 19606
215/376-9581

Portland, Oregon BPF
Kathy Whitwen
P.O. Box 14241
Portland, OR 97214
503/288-3641

Prairie Buddha BPF
Richard Quinney
345 Rolfe Road
DeKalb, IL 60115
815/758-4310

Rochester BPF
Bill Anderson
P.O. Box 10605
Rochester, NY 14610
716/442-8803

Sacramento BPF
Steve Walker
7211 Brookridge Ct.
Citrus Heights, CA 95610
916/725-3547

NEW **San Francisco BPF**
Noni Welch
150 Downy St. Apt. 4
San Francisco, CA 94117
415/664-3729

Santa Cruz BPF
Tom Misciagna
610 Hanover St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
408/423-6769

Seattle BPF
Susan Baldwin
2223 NE 137th St.
Seattle, WA 98125
206/367-7377

Sonoma County BPF
Mary Porter-Chase
Box 892
Cotati, CA 94928
707/664-8598

Tallahassee BPF
Ellen Gwynn
2028 Chuli Nene
Tallahassee, FL 32301-5872
904/878-5796

Tumamoc BPF
Moss Stone
707 East 1st Street
Tucson, AZ 87519
602/622-2955

Vermont BPF
Alison Gardner
119 Buell St.
Burlington, VT 05401
802/658-2531

Washington, D.C. BPF
Mitchell Ratner
6814 Westmoreland Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
201/270-3009

Yellow Springs BPF
Ken Simon
241 Xenia Ave.
Yellow Springs, OH 45387
513/767-7602

Yuma BPF
Sally Sheridan
1423 Pebble Beach Lane
Yuma, AZ 85365
602/726-9168

Affiliates

Australia BPF
Gillian Coote
31 Bonnefin St., Hunters Hill
Sydney, NSW, Australia

Int'l Network of Engaged Buddhists
303/7 Soi Santipap, Nares Road
Bangkok 10500, Siam

Network of Engaged Buddhists
Ken Jones
Plas Plwca, Cwmrheidol
Aberystwyth, Wales, U.K. SY23 3NB
097/084-603

Karuna Center
Paula Green
49 Richardson Rd.
Leverett, MA 01054
413/367-9520

BPF National Board

Michele Bohana, Washington, DC
Doug Codiga, Honolulu, HI
Nanda Currant, Soquel, CA
Linda Cutts, San Francisco, CA
Margaret Howe, Salinas, CA
Sandy Hunter, Berkeley, CA
Stephanie Kaza, Burlington, VT
Albert Kutchins, Berkeley, CA
George Lane, Mill Valley, CA
Fran Levin, Nyack, NY
Donald Rothberg, Berkeley, CA
Jeff Scannell, Freestone, CA
Ken Tanaka, Berkeley, CA
Gordon Tyndall, Oakland, CA

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

❖ To make clear public witness to Buddhist practice as a way of peace and protection of all beings;

❖ To raise peace, environmental, feminist, and social justice concerns among Western Buddhists;

❖ To bring a Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace, environmental, and social action movements;

❖ To encourage the practice of nonviolence based on the rich resources of traditional Buddhist teachings;

❖ To offer avenues for dialogue and exchange among the diverse American and world sanghas.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION 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 $25 for U.S. residents, $30 elsewhere. Please make checks payable to "Buddhist Peace Fellowship." Contributions are tax deductible.

Members receive a one-year subscription (four issues) to *Turning Wheel*, the BPF Journal. For contributions of $60 or more, we will also send you a copy of *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism.*

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

Name _____

Street _____

City, State _____

Zip, Country _____

Phone _____

BPF encourages members to join the BPF chapter in their area (or start one!), and to join the Fellowship of Reconciliation in their home country.

Buddhist Peace Fellowship
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704 USA

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 413
Berkeley, CA

Address Correction Requested