

SPECIAL NEWS FEATURE

Michael Roche: REPORT FROM BANGLADESH

This is the second of two articles based on Mike's recent trip to Bangladesh to investigate the situation of the tribal people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The trip was sponsored jointly by the BPF and the International FOR.

The persecution of the tribal Buddhists of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh has intensified. The hoped-for abating of hostile actions after the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman last May not only failed to materialize, but the situation has escalated as the military has sought to reassert its strength.

More violence has ensued and the influx of Bengali (Muslim) settlers into the Hill Tracts has increased. The veneer of orderly "emigration" has, to a large extent, been dropped and Muslim settlers are being armed as part of "Peace Committees" in Hill Tract villages. Much of the Bengali settlement has occurred during this year's rainy season (roughly June through August). At this time, the Bangladesh Rifles and Army of Bangladesh began aggres-

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sive exercises in the Hill Tract villages, a thinly veiled invasion that took place during the cultivation of rice crops, disrupting the village economies. The brutalities of this invasion forced approximately 30,000 people to flee from their villages, nearly 20,000 of them to adjoining Tripura State in India, a very poor district and an area of constant confrontation between India and Bangladesh. Indeed, there is speculation that this action was initiated by a pro-Pakistani faction of the army to sour relations with India.

PEACEMAKING**& THE PRECEPTS**

For thousands of years the Precepts have inspired and challenged students of the Buddha Way. The Insight Section beginning on Page 8 investigates what they say to peacemakers in the rich and violent milieu of 20th Century America.



The refugees became pawns in a political struggle between India and Bangladesh and early this year, some 18,000 of them were "repatriated" to Bangladesh. These tribal people were met at the border by hostile Bangladesh officials and were given the equivalent of \$8 and were left to their fates. Return to their native villages is, of course, impossible for these refugees because their homes and possessions have been appropriated by Bengali "settlers", so they join the tens of thousands of homeless now in the Hill Tracts. Harassed by government authorities, unable to flee the country and without any means of support, they live in limbo in a land where the quality of tribal life approaches the infernal.

I hope I have not numbed you with this tale of despair. In an age where the possibility of nuclear conflagration is ever present, so is the possibility of psychic numbing, and I realize that situations such as this exist in many areas of the world. As Buddhists, we endeavor to practice compassion, and as Western Buddhists, we are striving to practice this compassion independent of sectarian and nationalist alignments that seem to

be hampering some Buddhists from traditional cultures in coming to the aid of these people. We are redressing a karmic imbalance when, as a nation that exported so much suffering to Southeast Asia during the past two decades, we make efforts to bring peace to part of that area. The BPF is one of a handful of organizations (including Amnesty International, International Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Anti-Slavery Society) standing between the tribal peoples and annihilation. We are the only Buddhist group I am aware of that is approaching this situation from a political perspective, although some Asian Buddhist groups are providing important economic relief.

What then constitutes a Buddhist (enlightened) perspective in this political situation? I think the answer is to be found in the traditional concept of enlightened action, that is, action that combines the two elements of wisdom and compassion. I will elaborate on this in practical terms with the understanding that it is a tentative analysis and is subject to any and all suggestions from BPF members.

Under the rubric of wisdom we must educate members of our govern-

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ment and the public in general about this situation. Since there are so many peace issues facing us at this time, notably nuclear disarmament, it would be advisable if only one or two members of the BPF in a given area act as part-time resource persons on this problem for the group. Perhaps these persons could combine this role with information dissemination about similar situations, such as the present persecution of Buddhists in Vietnam, or the Tibet situation. The BPF presently has materials on these situations which it will provide to such a resource person. In delegating information-gathering in such a way, I hope we can maintain a high degree of flexibility and prevent the kind of burn out that constant exposure to a plethora of disturbing issues can cause.

Equipped with this information, we should begin informing certain individuals in the government about the Chittagong Hill Tracts situation. Since the conditions there are not well known, the initial contact should be accompanied by BPF-supplied information from the world press, Amnesty International and IFOR. This initial contact should be made by the community resource person. Suggested persons to be contacted are President Reagan, Secretary of State Shultz, your U.S. senator and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Senators of particular interest to contact are: Sen. Charles Percy (R-Ill.), Sen. Patrick Moynihan (R-N.Y.), Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), and (probable senator) Jerry Brown of California.

These inquiries should probably emphasize the fact that U.S. aid should be withheld from Bangladesh until the government there addresses this human rights question. The results of these contacts should be made known to the community and pursued. It is quite probable that the BPF will initiate a letter-writing campaign in the near future, and if

the channels have been opened by BPF resource people throughout the country, I think we can expect a fair degree of success.

From the perspective of compassion, we are not only seeking to provide political relief for these people through intelligent political action, but would like to provide some material relief for their ever-worsening circumstances. The BPF has already sent \$175 to Hill Tract Buddhist orphanages, made possible by a \$300 grant to BPF by the Buddhist Churches of America through the offices of Buddhist activist Rev. Ryo Imamura. It is likely that we will solicit contributions in the future to continue such relief.

In closing, I would like to say that I know you are all daily bombarded by the news of many urgent world issues and I thank you for taking the time to keep up to date on this one. I hope that at least one person from every Buddhist community with a BPF membership will be able to make the issue of persecuted Buddhists part of their practice of compassion. I would also like to emphasize to these people that it has never been the policy of the BPF staff to dictate policies in any area, and any suggestions that are workable in this area will be adopted.

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BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP

P.O. Box 4650

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JODO LEADER DENOUNCES ARSENALS

The threat of nuclear holocaust has reached "a very dangerous stage," declared His Eminence Koshin Ohtani at a March press conference in Honolulu. Ohtani, Monshu of the ten-million-member Jodo Shinshu sect, has asked Jodo faithful to "work for a peaceful world, free of the danger of nuclear war."

Appointed to lead the sect in 1980, the Monshu stopped in Honolulu on the first leg of a tour which will carry him to each of the 10,389 Jodo Shinshu temples around the globe. Peace appears to be a major theme of the tour.

Rejecting the U.S.-backed campaign for increased Japanese military forces, His Eminence commented that "many people who are rabble-rousing are saying, 'The Russians are coming' and public opinion is being whipped up towards building a larger fighting force." Part of his personal response is "going out to meet people of other faiths and other concerns on a more global level" and helping "to encourage a passing back and forth of love and trust for one another in order to obviate the necessity of building arsenals. . . ."

Letters

Dear Dhamma Friend,

I am writing on behalf of the Education Committee of the Young Buddhist Association of Malaysia in which I am a national council member and the chairman of the education committee. I am 25 years old and have been a civil servant in the education service since my graduation with a B.A. Hons. Ed. in 1980. I am new to your fellowship and accepted Buddhism also not too long ago.

. . . It may interest you to know that a group of dynamic young graduates have formed a fellowship with two strong bases in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. We aim to carry out dhamma projects to train undergraduates and high school students based on the Buddhist principles of peace and nonviolence. . . .

There are many Buddhist groups in Malaysia, but sometimes they fail to understand that peace and nonconflict is part of the dhamma. Being unenlightened, many so-called Buddhist leaders usually conduct meetings in a most unpeaceful way. The YBAM is a federation of some 80 Buddhist youth groups all over Malaysia. We definitely hope to instill peaceful means and nonconflict as an essential part of Buddhist life.

. . . I must say it is our good kamma that I came across your name. I hope we will continue to exchange information through the years. In the meantime, do let me know what I or the YBAM can do to help you. We would like to cooperate.

With metta,

Benny Liow
117 Bukit Palah
Melaka. Malaysia

Dear Friends,

. . . I was wondering if there might be someone in the Buddhist Peace Fellowship who would be interested in contributing some symbol of Buddhism to the national Fellowship of Reconciliation headquarters. As an interfaith group, our office should reflect the various faiths that make up its constituency. I think what would be truly beautiful would be a stone head of the Buddha or a statue of the Buddha in the lotus position. Could you give it some thought?

All the best,

Richard Baggett Deats,
Executive Secretary FOR

SITTING PRETTY AT N.Y. PRISON

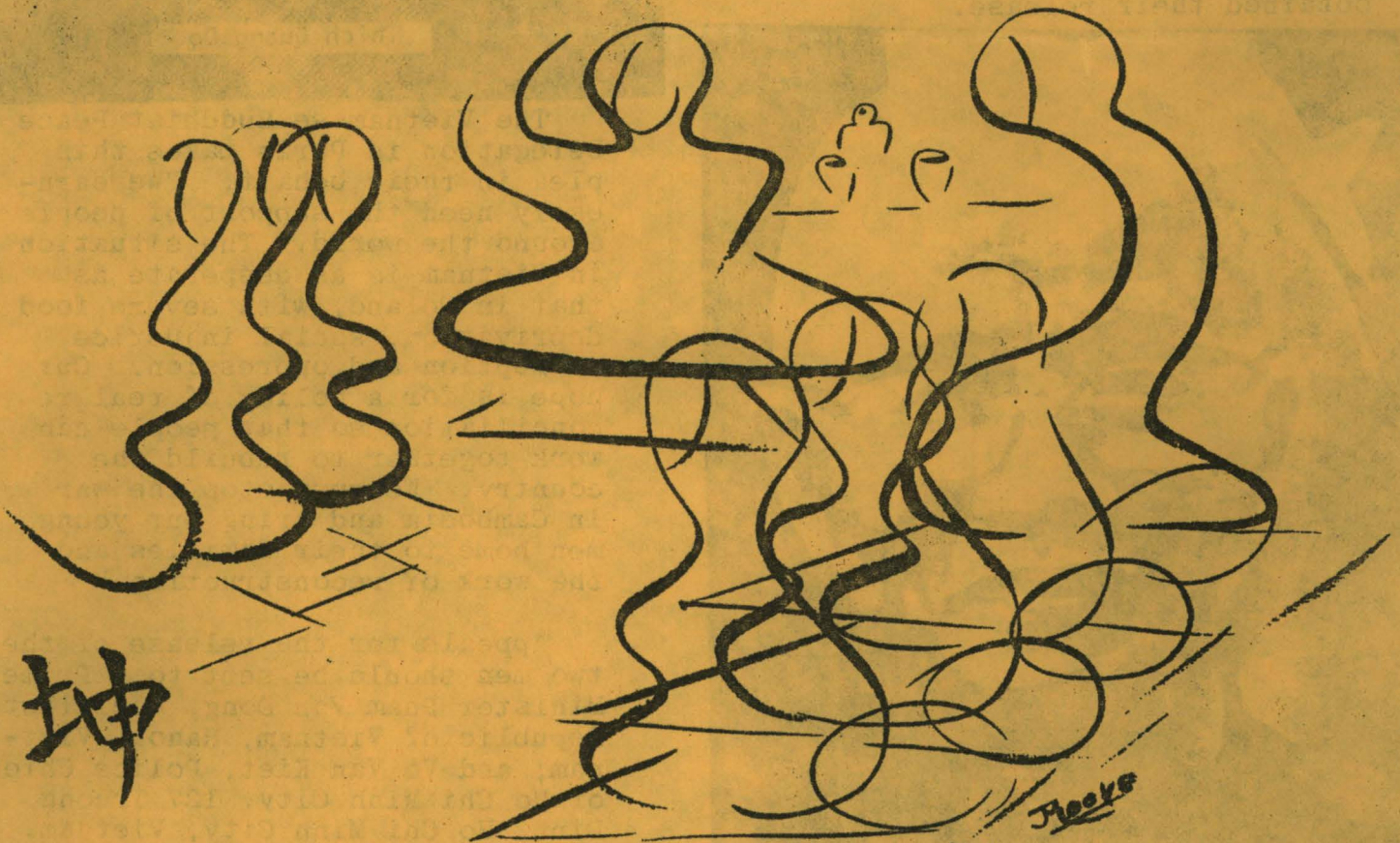
Letters from Buddhist inmates and BPF members at Auburn State Correctional Facility (N.Y.) indicate that their recently won opportunity to practice together has brought great personal satisfactions. Our correspondents report good group effects, too:

"...The service today was especially good because everyone is beginning to come together. What is most important of all of this is the fact that all of the brothers here will benefit from the meditation."

The ink drawing below is "an impression of our meditation service" at Auburn by James

R. Moore. Jim comments, "I have named it K'un (see the symbol on it), the Receptive, which represents the earth, as does the number two. The receptive demonstrates the nature of man who serves, and the second place is his station."

"The fourfold character of the Receptive is yielding, devoted, moderate and correct. 'If he tries to lead, he goes astray, but if he follows, he finds guidance.' It is linked with the tenth month (November-December). Our first meditation was Dec. 16th, 1981, here at Auburn."



VIETNAMESE CLERGY ARRESTED

Two leaders of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam have been arrested in Ho Chi Minh City for "openly opposing the revolutionary government" and for "trying to sabotage efforts to unify Buddhists." The two, Thich Huyen Quang, UBC acting chairperson, and Thich Quang Do, UBC executive secretary, have been seeking nonviolently to promote human rights, reconciliation and cooperation in rebuilding the country peacefully.

The arrests are part of a renewed government effort to suppress the UBC, which opposes militarism and objects to compulsory military service. Quang and Do were arrested and imprisoned for two years in 1977. Only an international campaign which emphasized their nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize obtained their release.



Thich Huyen Quang



Thich Quang Do

The Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation in Paris makes this plea in their behalf: "We earnestly need the support of people around the world. The situation in Vietnam is as desperate as that in Poland, with severe food deprivation, social injustice, corruption and oppression. Our hope is for a policy of real reconciliation so that people can work together to rebuild the country. We must stop the war in Cambodia and bring our young men home to their families and the work of reconstruction."

Appeals for the release of the two men should be sent to: Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam; and Vo Van Kiet, Police Chief of Ho Chi Minh City, 127 Truong Dinh, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. For more information contact: IFOR, Hof Van Sonoy, 15-17 LD Alkmaar, Holland.

Health Problems at Sera

Sera Monastery in South India (about 60 miles from Mysore) is home to 800 Tibetans, most of whom are children or teenagers who have gathered there to absorb the traditional dharma instruction and culture of their native country. Tragically, the monastery also exposes its residents to tuberculosis and other diseases. More than 10 percent of its population has contracted TB. A larger group suffers from intestinal worms, scabies and fungal infections.

To meet Sera's pressing health needs, Australians have formed the Committee for the Prevention of Tuberculosis among Tibetans and have dispatched a nurse and community organizer to establish a dispensary. The nurse now on station, Maxine Ross, is a member of the Sydney Zen Group and had previous experience at the Tibetan Children's Village Dispensary in Dharamsala, North India.

In a first report from Sera, dated December, 1981, Maxine and co-worker Gerard Allan indicate that overcrowding, inadequate water for washing and poor sanitation compound existing health problems. They ask financial help for their efforts to provide medicine and public health information to Sera's people. Treating TB is expensive: the standard two-year treatment costs near \$300 for medicines and dietary supplements.

Contributions of any size are welcomed. Especially needed are sponsors for individual TB patients (about \$12 per month). Write and send checks to the Committee for the Prevention of TB at 175 Denison Rd., Dulwich Hill 2203, NSW Australia.



FREEZE CLEARINGHOUSE

Chances are that work has already begun in your area to promote a freeze on the further testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons. But if no action is apparent or you need a name to contact, write the National Freeze Clearinghouse, 4144 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108. Phone (314) 533-1169.

The Precepts

A WAY FOR 20th CENTURY PEACEMAKERS

We are grateful to Ben Olson for suggesting and assembling this feature on the precepts, as well as for contributing the lead article. Thanks also to all other contributors.

Implications for Peacemaking

When I first heard the Buddhist Precepts I equated them with the Ten Commandments and in the same movement of the mind, I dismissed them. It wasn't until several years ago when I heard Robert Aitken Roshi's teisho on the Precepts that I came to realize that a much more intimate encounter was possible.

Since that time, I have spent many hours with the Precepts and my encounters have been fruitful, especially during the three years that I lived in Korea. While I was there President Park was assassinated, General Chun staged his coup, and the Kwang Ju insurrection took place.

It was impossible not to become radicalized. The Precepts provided a foundation and continuous support for work in a struggle that could easily lose its foundation in peacemaking.

The following is an outline of just a few of the possible implications for peacemaking that are offered in the Precepts:

1. "Do not take Life." This is the cardinal principle of all peacemaking. Without it, peacemaking becomes a modified form of making war. There are no half-way measures to peace. This precept can be amplified, I think, without losing its original meaning to include "Do not take away from life." That is to say, do not diminish the life of any living being. To diminish is to destroy and to destroy is to kill. The other nine precepts are amplifications of this first precept. We diminish life in many ways.

2. "Do not steal." To exploit others--or to participate in their exploitation--is to steal. Yet how many of us endorse exploitation when we are indifferent to the policies that create it? And how many of us, perhaps unwittingly, actually participate in that exploitation? Millions of Americans greet each morning with cups of coffee and slices

*What precepts are there
but the warmth
at the center of the chest?*

the pain we share?

the space in which it all floats?

*"Nothing to do"
easier said than done*

*"Just being"
easier done than said*

*"Nowhere to go"
easier and easier*

*The pain points the way
to the obstacles
of no precepts.*

--Stephen Levine

(Stephen Levine is a poet and meditation teacher. He is director of the Hanuman Foundation Dying Project in Taos, New Mexico.)

of banana to go with their breakfast cereal. These foods--like pineapples, chocolate, coconuts and many others--for most Americans, are not locally grown. They are imported from the Third World countries where these cash crops bring incredible profits. Profits, not for the workers, but for the multinational corporations which systematically plunder these countries for our tables. Enterprises of this magnitude need massive areas of land, and so, small farmers are bought out and, having lost their land and their means of survival, must work for the large corporations for extremely low wages. This precept asks us to look very closely into this matter of stealing. It asks us to make our political activity a way of life and our lifestyle a political act.

3. "Not to commit adultery." Adultery is not just the breaking of sexual mores or a violation of the institution of marriage (we may not even recognize the institution as valid). It is a violation of trust; an essential ingredient of dialogue. Adultery is deception. Instead of a straightforward dissolution of one relationship for another, we practice deception, and in deception, we diminish the other and ourselves. This precept, which warns us of the dangers of using sexuality as a weapon, also counsels us to cease the practice of deception in all encounters.

4. "Do not tell lies." Like the precept "do not steal" this precept brings awareness that much of American society is built upon lies. Militarism, racism and sexism, among others, are lies. The peace movement of the sixties,



strong in its opposition to war and racial bigotry, was plagued by sexism, which seriously impaired its effectiveness and diminished the lives of those involved.

This precept calls for political and social acuity. No matter what our intentions are, our actions become lies if we don't see with great clarity and in that clarity, act. To see with great clarity is to see a fact at the very source of the fact.

"Do not tell lies" is to see and act the truth, deeply and intimately, and to avoid taking the easy way out: the way of slogans and excitement.

5. "Do not take intoxicating liquors." Beyond the dangers of drunkenness this precept points to the danger of clouding the mind. To cloud the mind is to cloud perception

and without clear perception, action is invariably violent. Drunkenness clouds the mind, but this precept points as well to the confusion and strife brought about by envy, jealousy, greed, hunger for power, ambition and all the factors which prey upon the mind. Just as a clouded mind finds it impossible to sit in zazen, so a mind confused by ambition and power is unable to adequately handle the rigors of peacemaking. To attempt to do so is invariably disruptive.

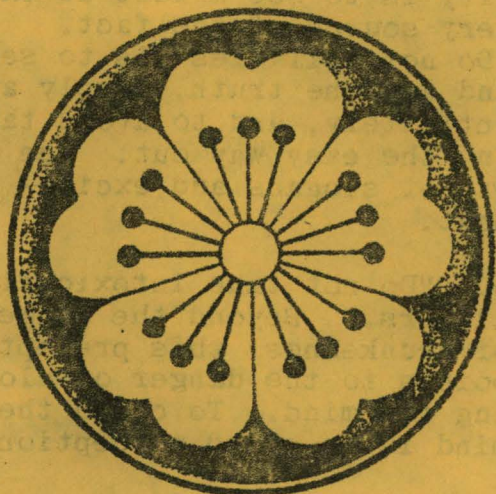


6. "Do not speak of the faults of others." Firstly, this precept does not advocate blindness to the faults of others, but admonishes us to avoid speaking of those faults. Anything that diminishes life is a fault. The exploitation of workers in the Philippines, torture chambers in Korea, massacres in Bangladesh, nuclear power plants in America: these are all "faults". They are also facts; facts which are sufficient in themselves. We do disservice to the truth and to ourselves when we distort these facts, when we use them to fit our own vested interests. To speak the truth is to let these facts tell their own story. To "speak of the faults of others" is to use these facts to tell our story. This precept does

not counsel indifference; it warns of the dangers of propaganda and vested interests and addresses itself to the classic dilemma of tactics.

7. "Do not praise yourself and blame others." This precept points to the dangers of comparison. To compare is to diminish and it always involves violence. It compounds our problems by creating an exaggerated sense of "enemy". Peacemaking is mostly laying the groundwork for dialogue: that crucial point when two "adversaries" come together as partners in the task of creating peace. If the two cannot meet as equals, and of course they cannot if there is comparison, then they cannot meet at all.

8. "Do not indulge in anger." Why is it necessary to have a precept on anger when the fifth precept on clouding the mind would seem to cover it more adequately? Perhaps because it is precisely when we indulge in anger that hatred arises and from hatred comes violence. This precept is very specific. Without clarity we weave ourselves into every act. Our problems become the problems of peace. Our vested interests create havoc and in the confusion anger and ultimately hatred come forth,



bringing the very thing we seek to be free from: violence.

10. "Not to defame the Three Treasures." The Three Treasures are all-inclusive, bringing together the whole earth. No one is excluded from the enlightenment of the Buddha or the way of the Buddha, or, certainly, from the fellowship of the Buddha. It includes all the earth as one household. To be otherwise would make our first vow "to save all beings" a sham. This precept admonishes us, like A.J. Muste's marvelous summation -- "There is

no way to peace, peace is the way" -- to look to means as well as ends. Not only are the means important, but, in peacemaking, the ends and the means are one. The peacemaker can never strive for peace; to strive is to bring strife. If, in peacemaking, we diminish the life of even one person, then we have become the enemy and the enemy is real, for the enemy is violence, toward one or a million. The last precept is really the first: "Do not kill." To kill is to be the enemy and as long as there is an enemy, there is no peace.

Right Livelihood

Dr. H. Saddhatissa, a Ceylonese monk, is one of the leading Buddhists in Great Britain. In The Buddha's Way, he discusses Right Livelihood (from the Eightfold Path) and the Precepts. After making a very traditional analysis of the Precepts and their implications for right living ("A very useful beginning, but it is only a beginning," he writes), he proceeds to ask of the reader some questions designed to go a little deeper into the meaning and value of the Precepts.

"Among the problems raised by an attempt to practice samma ajiva (Right Livelihood) are:

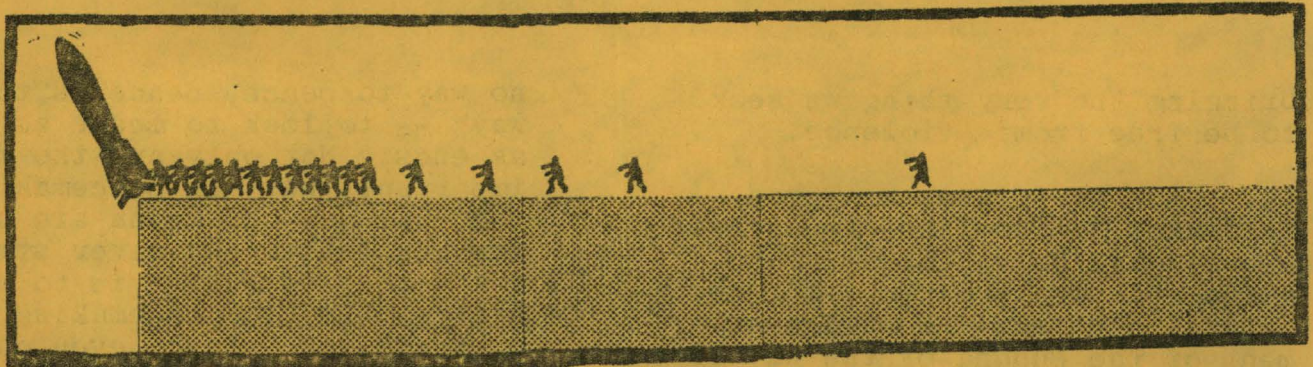
1. Whether one can support, by working, paying taxes and accepting benefits, a government which is engaged in warfare or actively preparing for it;

2. Whether, in the name of the relief of human suffering, one can engage in medical research that involves sacrificing the lives of countless animals; and, more subtly, whether one can prescribe, sell--or even use--those drugs which have been discovered and tested by means of such experiments;

3. Whether one has the right to destroy disease-bearing insects, or work in the preparation of materials for that purpose;

4. Whether the third and fourth precepts would prohibit one from working in advertising or mass production work.

The list is endless. The questions are all ones that can be answered only by careful analysis of the circumstances, the motives and the attitudes of the people involved."



FIVE FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPTS

The following excerpt is from a chapter called "The Five Fundamental Precepts" in Nichidatsu Fujii's Buddhism for World Peace. In this chapter Fujii Guruji discusses the necessity of practicing the five precepts of the Theravadan tradition. He writes, "The five precepts must be maintained by all, whether in Mahayana, Hinayana, Nijo or Bosatsu-jo, regardless of how advanced a stage one may be in. It is dangerous to tolerate their violation." His remarks on the first precept are characteristic of the whole chapter.

Gokai (the five precepts) are preached in the Kaihomon (the teaching of the precepts) which we have just recited. There are a number of writings by Ososhisama pertaining to the precepts in addition to this. As you understand from this work, it is preached that the Daijo-kai (Mahayana precepts) cannot be maintained while transgressing the five precepts.

"Firstly, the precept of non-killing the lives of beings by arousing compassion is named Fussesho-kai." Then it follows that "unreasonable taking of lives is repressed by it." There is no taking of life which is reasonable. However, here we can see the tone of the society in the Kamakura period in which people were violent and the taking of lives was very common.

There is another passage that says: "Killing one to let tens of thousands live is pardoned." To take the life of one which results in let-

ting tens of thousands live is excused here. This "one" refers to those holding important positions, such as kings in the old days. Should he be atrocious, and if the killing of this single person leads to letting tens of thousands live, it was tolerated. This teaching is called "issatsu-tasho" (to kill one for the lives of many), and people like Dr. Tokoro also pointed out passages from sutras that provide grounds for this.

However, in fact, this issatsu-tasho is indeed dangerous. Those who murder may defend themselves claiming that they have done it for the sake of the many. It is of paramount importance to seek to let multitudes live without killing a single person. Never take the lives of others, either good or evil. Unless this reason is persistently and thoroughly held, Fussesho-kai would not hold good.

In the Crucible

The following fourteen precepts are a unique expression of traditional Buddhist morality coming to terms with issues that confront all 20th century practitioners. These precepts were not developed in a secluded monastery by Buddhist scholars seeking to update the traditional Ten Precepts. Rather, they were forged in the crucible of war and devastation that was the daily experience of the inhabitants of Southeast Asia during the past several decades.

Responding to burgeoning hatred, intolerance and suffering, a group of Buddhists (many deeply experienced in Buddhist meditation and philosophy) founded a special order to be an instrument of their vision of engaged Buddhism. Composed of monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen, the order never consisted of great numbers, yet its influence and effect were deeply felt within the country.

Highly motivated and deeply committed, members of the order organized anti-war demonstrations, printed leaflets and books, ran social service projects, did anti-draft counseling, organized an underground for draft resisters, sang anti-war songs and cared for the myriad suffering innocents of the war.

Many of them now are dead-- some from self-immolation, some from cold-blooded murder and some from the indiscriminate murder of war. At this time, it is impossible to say whether any remnant of the order still exists in Southeast Asia.

Yet, this discipline of their order, these fourteen precepts that they recited weekly while war, political repression and immense suffering tore apart their familiar world now has been bequeathed to us.

Living at a time when their people and country were being destroyed in the name of supposedly irreconcilable "isms", the order was acutely aware of the

need for all peoples to realize the basic commonality of their humanness and to renounce all ideas of one truth or one way.

Thus, we find that their first three precepts deal directly with a renunciation of fanaticism and political or religious self-righteousness. Even Buddhism, they say, is not the truth, but solely one means to the realization of truth.

The fourth precept goes to the heart of Buddhist compassion and offers practitioners a direct challenge. Is it enough to practice Dharma so that some day in the future we can liberate sentient beings, or does their suffering diminish by our bodhisattvic activity in the present? This precept seems to imply that contemplative reflection on the suffering of sentient beings is not enough, and that the lotus can grow only when planted deeply in the mud.

I remember once talking to a Vietnamese monk about Kuan-Yin, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. He remarked that people mistakenly think that the only way to worship her is by putting offerings in front of her image and praying. Holding up his two hands and looking me directly in the eye, he said, "These are the best offerings one can give Kuan-Yin."

The fifth precept implies that Right Livelihood has more meaning than simply avoiding the forbidden professions, i.e., butcher, wine-seller, etc., and that the manner in which we spend our time, energy and resources is as much a moral problem as a practical one.

The sixth precept is similar to the standard Buddhist precept concerning anger, except that it challenges us to directly apply an antidote as soon as it arises. This impresses us with the far-reaching social effects of individual anger.

The seventh precept addresses the question of how Buddhist activists can maintain their practice in the midst of activity. The answer is traditional--mindfulness, awareness, regulation of the breath. The inner practice of the social activist is no different than that of the recluse; only their external conditions can be contrasted.

The eighth and ninth precepts speak directly to the Southeast Asian situation. Brothers fighting brothers, communities rent by political, social and religious division, factions within the Sangha, spies everywhere. These two precepts provide a model for Right Speech and Right Activity, while never losing track of the need to speak out about social injustice and oppression from the all-embracing nonpartisan viewpoint of Dharma, the oneness of life.

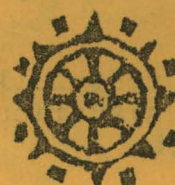


The twelfth precept, a reformulation of the traditional non-killing precept, states that not only is the practitioner enjoined not to kill life, but that we are obligated to protect it. And does not the thirteenth precept on non-stealing imply that the well-stocked shelves of one country relate directly to the empty shelves of another? Or that profiteering at the cost of human suffering is an immoral activity?

Most interesting is that the final precept deals with sexuality, especially since many of the order's members were monks and nuns. This precept seems to imply that respecting life and committing oneself to ending suffering is as real an issue within the most intimate of human relations as in the political and social arenas.

In summation, it could be said that these fourteen precepts issue a clarion call of Shunyata and Non-ego in action. Each precept is permeated with the understanding that concepts, thoughts and feelings are empty and impermanent and each enjoins a form of moral action that is based on non-separation and on unceasingly aware compassion.

Not holding on to a notion of self, we are invited to engage ourselves courageously in the world, to see the nature of suffering clearly, and with discriminating awareness to undertake the task of liberating all sentient beings.



DISCIPLINE OF THE ORDER

1. One should not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, any theory, any ideology, including Buddhist ones. Buddhist systems of thought must be guiding means and not absolute truth.
2. Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow minded and bound to present views. One has to learn and practice the open way of non-attachment from views in order to be open to receive the viewpoints of others. Truth is to be found only in life and not in conceptual knowledge. One should be ready to learn during one's whole life and to observe life in oneself and in the world at all times.
3. Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever to adopt our view, whether by authority, threat, money, propaganda, and even education. However, one should, through compassionate dialogue, help others to renounce fanaticism and narrowness.
4. One should not avoid contact with sufferings or close one's eyes before sufferings. One should not lose awareness of the existence of suffering in the life of the world. Find ways to come to those who are suffering by all means such as personal contact and visits, images, sound. By such means one should awaken oneself and others to the reality of suffering in the world.
5. Do not accumulate wealth while millions are hungry. Do not take as the aim of your life fame, profit, wealth or sensual pleasure. One should live simply and share one's time, energy and material resources with those who are in need.
6. Do not maintain anger or hatred. As soon as anger and hatred arise, practice the meditation on compassion in order to encompass with love the persons who have caused anger and hatred. Learn to look at other beings with the eyes of compassion.
7. One should not lose oneself in dispersion and in one's surroundings. Learn to practice breathing in order to regain control of body and mind, to practice mindfulness and to develop concentration and wisdom.
8. Do not utter words that can create discord and cause the community to break. All efforts should be made to reconcile and resolve all conflicts however small they may be.
9. Do not say untruthful things for the sake of personal interest or to impress people. Do not utter words that cause division and hatred. Do not spread news that you do not know to be certain. Do not criticize or condemn things that you are unsure of. Always

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speaking truthfully and constructively. Have the courage to speak out about situations of injustice, even when it may threaten your own safety.

10. One should not use the Buddhist community for personal gain or profit or transform one's community into a political party. One's religious community, however, should take a clear stand against oppression and injustice and should strive to change the situation without engaging in partisan conflicts.
11. Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature. Do not invest in companies that deprive others of their chance to life. Select a vocation which helps to realize your idea of compassion.
12. Do not kill. Do not let others kill. Find whatever means possible to protect life and to prevent war.
13. Possess nothing that should belong to others. Respect the property of others but prevent others from enriching themselves from human suffering.
14. Sexual expression should not happen without love and commitment. In sexual relationships one must be aware of future suffering it may cause to others. To preserve the happiness of others, respect the rights and commitments of others.

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
P. O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704