



BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP

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Summer 1983

IN MINDFULNESS: The American Visit of Thich Nhat Hanh

"I am aware that we are walking together,
along Lake Calhoun, in Minnesota."

The words didn't seem so much to break the silence in which we walked, as to arise from it, or, better yet, to be included by it. During his recent visit to the U.S., Thich Nhat Hanh made many such gentle reminders to those whom he met -- we are here, together, sharing this time and this life on this green earth. It's strange that it is so easy to forget.

As many readers know, Thay Nhat Hanh ("Thay" is Vietnamese for teacher) is a Zen Master, poet and peace worker; for many years a leading exponent of "engaged Buddhism" who has in word and deed given clear expression to "the Buddha way as a way of peace and protection of all beings." Last June at the Reverence for Life Conference in New York City, I had the good fortune to spend several days with Thay and his co-worker, Sister Cao Ngoc Phuong. During the course of the conference, Zentatsu Baker-roshi invited Thay to visit San Francisco Zen Center and Tassajara Zen Mountain Center the following spring. A few days later Thay expressed his pleasure with the prospect, and his interest in including in his itinerary visits with members of some of the other Buddhist centers and traditions, as well as some opportunity to speak with members of the broader peace community. He suggested that if the board liked the idea, Buddhist Peace Fellowship could sponsor and help plan the trip in coordination with San Francisco Zen Center and the other centers he would be visiting. "I hope," he said, "It will be a chance for Buddhists in America to work together and grow closer."

The BPF board gave the idea their enthusiastic support, and so we began. Much of this issue of the Newsletter is a sharing of impressions, anecdotes and information about Thich Nhat Hanh's time with us here in the States. It indeed was, and continues to be, an opportunity to work and learn together, and to remember.

"Please enjoy your breathing."

The schedule of talks, workshops and meetings was a full one, perhaps too much so. It seemed that for each scheduled activity, two unanticipated ones arose. But in the midst of the many demands, there was time for "not-doing-anything": walking, breathing, silently enjoying the presence of new friends.

"I have heard from boat-people refugees that when a small boat is caught in a tempest, it is likely the boat will sink if those on board panic. But if there is one person aboard who remains calm, lucid and aware, that person can help the others, and they can survive the danger. All of the teachings of Buddhism agree on this one point: we are each that person.

Our earth is like that small boat in a dangerous storm, and so we must be ourselves; we must be our best. Please remember: one person is very important; one person is very much."

They arrived in San Francisco on March 12, a rainy Saturday, for three weeks as guest of the San Francisco Zen Center; half the time at Tassajara and the remainder divided between the City Center and Green Gulch Farm. He was "enchanted" by Tassajara, and was clearly delighted with his role there as "the abbot's brother": speaking with the Tassajara students about Buddhist meditation and monastic training, and with the twenty guests (including the BPF board) on engaged Buddhism.

"The term 'engaged Buddhism' is, in a sense, redundant. Buddhism means to be awake -- mindful of what is happening in one's body, feelings, mind, and in the world. If you are awake you cannot do otherwise but act compassionately to help relieve the suffering you see around you. So Buddhism must be engaged in the world. If it is not engaged, it is not Buddhism."

After Tassajara it was back up to the Bay Area, meeting the kind, creative, diverse and numerous Buddhist sangha; lecturing to large audiences at the Berkeley Zen Center, Green Gulch, the Buddhist Temple of Alameda (Jodo Shinshu), S. F. City Center, (have I forgotten any?); quiet discussions with individuals and smaller groups; and a memorable poetry reading with Gary Snyder and Robert Creeley.

From San Francisco we flew to Los Angeles, where we stayed at the Zen Center of Los Angeles. The first night's talk was sponsored by L. A. Buddhist Peace Fellowship and drew together a broad range of friends from the Los Angeles religious peace community -- Catholic Worker, Nihonzo Myohoji, Jewish Peace Fellowship, S.C.L.C., and so forth.

The following night was a smaller discussion with the Catholic order of Sisters of Social Service; and the next night a talk for L. A. Buddhists in the ZCLA zendo. Los Angeles has perhaps the largest Vietnamese Buddhist community in the States, and Thay spent his last two days in California at the Vietnamese Buddhist Temple, where clergy and laypeople had come from around the country to greet him and discuss the challenges they face in their new country.

"My name is Thich Nhat Hanh, and I'm a lazy monk living in France. When I was a novice in the monastery in Vietnam, I used to hide under the Buddha altar during the day and take naps."

We took a late afternoon flight from L. A. to Minneapolis, where we were greeted at the airport by members of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center and their teacher, Dainin Katagiri-roshi. Driving from the airport along Lake Calhoun, I asked if the Zen Center was near the lakeside. Katagiri-roshi laughed, and gesturing out toward the lake and beyond, said "This is all my property!" Thay and the roshi seemed to understand one another quite well.

The schedule in Minneapolis included a two-day seminar at the Zen Center (tapes are available from the Minnesota Zen Center, 3343 E. Calhoun Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55408), a meeting with Minneapolis' Vietnamese community, a public talk (outside the talk someone said to Thay that he was interested in knowing more about Gandhi; a brief pause, then, "If you know more about yourself, you'll know more about Gandhi."), and slow, mindful (and cold!) walks along the lake.

From Minneapolis we flew to Rochester, NY, where we were hosted by the Rochester Zen Center. Although Philip Kapleau-roshi wrote the Introduction to Thay's Zen Keys, this was their first face-to-face meeting and they had much to talk about. On the evening of our arrival Thay spoke with about 300 members of the Rochester and Genesee Valley Zen Centers, who had assembled in the Buddha Hall. The following night, Thay, Kapleau-roshi, and Gary Snyder (coincidentally in town at the same time) gave a public talk attended by upwards of 700 people. The third and final night in Rochester was spent meeting with thirty or so members of Rochester BPF.

"When you look at this chair, can you see in it the forest from which the wood came? Can you see the sun that shone upon that forest, and the clouds that rained upon it? Can you see the woodcutter and his family? And the wheat that fed them? Can you see that the chair is comprised of the whole non-chair world? Can you see that the sun is your own heart, and the atmosphere your lungs?"

All things exist in a state of inter-being -- we inter-are with everything. 'This is because that is; this is not because that is not.'"



Photo by
Don Farber

The next stop was the Mt. Tremper Zen Center near Woodstock, NY, where Thay conducted a two-day workshop co-sponsored by the Temple of Understanding and the Zen Center, and attended by an interesting mix of people associated with Pax Christi, Insight Meditation Society, Traprock Peace Center, Zen Community of New York, and Fellowship of Reconciliation, among others. While at Mt. Tremper he also gave evening talks in the meditation hall, visited the Tibetan Buddhist Karma Triyana Dharmacakra Monastery, and enjoyed the beginnings of spring in the Catskills.

After six days at Mt. Tremper we drove down to New York City, stopping on the way at the FOR office in Nyack, where Thay met with the staff and renewed old and close friendships with FOR Executive Secretary Richard Deats and former Executive Secretary Alfred Hassler. Upon arriving in the City, Thay spent several hours with another dear friend over the years, Father Daniel Berrigan. (In his introductory remarks at the public talk that evening, Father Berrigan read the poem that appears on the back page.) In his talk, the last of many on this trip, Thay offered a proposal for independent reductions of defense spending by the U.S., a proposal markedly similar to one offered to the U.S. more than a decade ago by the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam. (The text of this proposal, "From Weapons to Human Solidarity," is available from the BPF office in Berkeley.)

At the conclusion of the talk, Thay left for New Jersey to spend several days with his brother's family, who have been living in the States since leaving Vietnam by boat three years ago. On April 18th, with many seeds well planted, Thay returned to France. Awaiting the boarding announcement, amidst the noise and bustle of Kennedy Airport, I was struck by how he moved through it: slowly, naturally, in mindfulness -- just like at Tassajara or by Lake Calhoun. And I, in turn, became aware that we were walking together, in Kennedy Airport, breathing.

-- Andrew Cooper

JOIN BPF

If you aren't already a member, write
Buddhist Peace Fellowship
PO Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704

News

-- Dr. K. D. Chauhan requests donations of new or used books on Buddhism for the thousands of India's "new Buddhists" -- tribal people who have converted to free themselves from the bondage of the caste system. Donations or inquiries may be sent to him at PO Unjha 384170, N. Gujarat, India.

-- Rochester, NY, BPF, with a number of new members in the wake of Thich Nhat Hanh's visit, reports that they are meeting together monthly. They have formed a steering committee, and are giving their attention to supporting the nuclear weapons freeze movement and protesting the suppression of the Unified Buddhist Church in Vietnam and the imprisonment of its leaders, Thich Quang Do and Thich Huyen Quang. (More information on this can be found in the last two issues of this newsletter.)

-- On June 4 & 5 Los Angeles BPF co-sponsored a workshop led by Joanna Macy entitled "Awakening in the Nuclear Age." At a meeting on May 23 Armando Grant, formerly a professor of Latin American Studies, spoke on the background of the crises in Central America. For the past year, LABPF has included at the end of such monthly meetings a 10 - 15 minute letter-writing period, a practice they've found to be a good one.

-- Twenty people marching under a Buddhist Peace Fellowship banner joined 20,000 others at the March anti-nuclear/peace march in New South Wales, Australia. BPF friends in Australia are also at work organizing a deep ecology conference for later this year, and a conference on meditation and social action for Spring 1984.

-- A number of California Buddhists took part in the demonstrations and civil disobedience activities at Vandenburg Air Force Base in January and March. The June issue of No Need to Kill features an article describing the March events by BPF member Chuck Davis.

-- The following report was submitted by the Bay Area BPF. We hope that BPF members and chapters will remember to share news of their activities by regularly sending word to the newsletter.

BERKELEY/OAKLAND/SAN FRANCISCO AREA

This spring has been an eventful time for the Bay Area BPF. February saw our second open meeting, at San Francisco Zen Center's Green Gulch Farm. In early March Joanna Macy led a workshop entitled "Being Bodhisattvas in the Nuclear Age." Besides boosting our energy, the workshop, as a benefit for BABPF, bolstered our treasury. Thich Nhat Hanh's coming to the Bay Area later that month involved our direct participation in two events: a seminar with Nhat Hanh and local Buddhist peace workers, and the poetry reading with Nhat Hanh, Gary Snyder, and Robert Creely. April brought us Dr. A. T. Aryaratna, founder of the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement, and Joseph Goldstein, Dharma teacher of Vipassana meditation. Both gave public talks, proceeds from which were generously given to BABPF.

Throughout it all the newsletter of the chapter, No Need to Kill, has been coming out each month, an enterprise made possible by the generous contribution of copy, time, and energy, of a circle of people which widens with each issue. (If you would like fuller coverage of the events above, write: NNTK, 2490 Channing Way #503, Berkeley CA 94704. Back issues for March, April, and May are available at \$1.00 each.)

Main events coming up for us in the near future are: the Buddhist Circle for Peace Day, June 18 (see update in this issue); the International Day of Nuclear Disarmament, June 20; and a meeting of

those interested in a Sarvodaya-type Shramadana in the Bay Area, on May 25. BABPF welcomes communication with other chapters and members of the BPF. Please write to us at: PO Box 4544, Berkeley, CA 94704.

-- A lot of good work on the part of BPF members and friends across the country went into supporting Thich Nhat Hanh's visit to the U.S. Thanks to/from all!

NOTES FROM BPF BOARD MEETING

The conference at Tassajara with Thich Nhat Hanh afforded an opportunity for the current Board of Directors to have its first face-to-face meeting on March 21-22. Board members present were Robert Aitken, Joanna Macy, Ryo Imamura and Gary Snyder (prior commitments required Nelson Foster's early return to Hawaii). Also attending the meeting were BPF members Patrick McMahon, Nina Sprecher, Mary Belshaw, Tyrone Cashman, and Andy Cooper. Some of the topics discussed include:

-- Mail list: Proposal for computerizing the list was approved.

-- FOR: Ways in which BPF can contribute to the broader FOR community should continue to be explored. Along these lines, Fellowship magazine has a longstanding request that BPF members submit articles reflecting a Buddhist perspective on peace work for consideration. Aitken Roshi offered to begin work on just such an article.

It was also suggested that BPF work with FOR's Interfaith Office to broaden FOR's language and perspective to include religious traditions outside the Judeo-Christian context.

Ty Cashman offered to be a nominee for the FOR National Council, and this was heartily encouraged by all present.

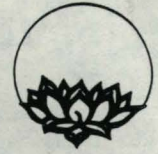
-- Opening channels of communication with ethnic Buddhists: Everyone present agreed on the importance of efforts to include Buddhists in America of Asian background in BPF's work. One step in this direction occurred at a meeting of the Buddhist Churches of America in February, 1983, in which a resolution was passed endorsing BPF's Statement of Purpose. Ryo shared his thoughts on how the resolution can be translated into action.

-- Membership outside the U.S.: Until now little has been done to encourage BPF membership outside the U.S. It was felt that we should consider more thoroughly how best to plan such a growth for BPF. (Thorough consideration or no, a BPF chapter is presently forming in Australia).

Though no policies were formulated about foreign membership or extending BPF activities internationally, it was agreed that we should develop open and frank contact with such Buddhist movements as Sarvodaya Shramadana in Sri Lanka and the work of Sulak Sivaraksa in Thailand.

-- Future events: Possibilities for BPF-sponsored events -- retreats, outings, conferences -- were discussed. One such idea is to conduct a retreat each year for BPF members and friends, combining meditation, study and discussion of issues of Buddhism and peace work.

-- Newsletter: With BPF moving into a role as a switchboard for information concerning local Buddhist peace activities and groups, the newsletter can be an important service as a networking tool. TO DO THIS IT NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES, TIPS, NEWS, IDEAS, etc. Please keep it in mind.



LETTERS

APPEAL TO SUPPORT

THE VIENNA PEACE PAGODA

We human beings have reached the point where the adoption of violence and arms to resolve our problems risks the annihilation of our species. We have an absolute need to create a world with the faith and action of non-killing and non-violence -- a world without need of war nor dependence on any arms.

After the World Peace March converged at the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament II, I joined the European Peace March. Initiated by women from four Scandinavian countries, this peace march started in Stockholm, proceeded to the Soviet Union, continued through Czechoslovakia and ended in Vienna. This was the first time in history a peace march -- originating in the West -- went through Eastern countries, attracting the attention of all the common people of those countries. Given Europe's particular vulnerability in the face of nuclear war, the march inspired further growth in the European Nuclear Disarmament movements.

During this peace march and others like it the building of Peace Pagodas for world peace became widely accepted in Finland, Greece, France, Italy, and Holland. It was well known the completion of a Peace Pagoda in England in 1979 contributed significantly to that country's Nuclear Disarmament Movement.

Three of these peace marches started from Paris, Athens, and the USSR. Vienna was their final destination, and when they met the talks began to build a Peace Pagoda in that city. Now construction is already underway at a site near the Danube River, and completion is scheduled for September 1983. Since Austria is a neutral country at the center of Europe -- connecting East and West -- the Peace Pagoda in Vienna will play an important symbolic role towards world peace.

This is a common cause all can join, regardless of religion, philosophy or ideology. But we believe the Nuclear Disarmament Movement is the ultimate of spiritual issues. Our Lord Buddha teaches us to build Peace Pagodas to save the human race from self-extinction, and we know throughout various eras of history the most peaceful times have existed when Peace Pagodas were built.

Dependence on military strength must be abandoned -- replaced by trust, harmony and peaceful co-existence among all the peoples of the world. It is our belief the realization of a Peace Pagoda in Vienna will make a living contribution to the establishment of World Peace.

I urge you to support the Vienna Peace Pagoda.

the Reverend Gyoten Yoshida

Nipponzan Myohoji c/o Lind Mayer
Dammhaufen 50, 1020 Vienna
AUSTRIA

Dear Friends in the Dharma,

The enclosed resolution was adopted by the Buddhist Churches of America Ministerial Association at its annual meeting in February. I hope the 90 Ministers and 22,000 lay members, who are for the most part of Japanese descent, will feel encouraged to join the BPF.

Gassho,
Ryo Imamura

RESOLUTION BY THE B.C.A. MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION

WHEREAS the stated purpose of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship is to raise the issue of pacifism among American Buddhists and to promote peace-related projects undertaken by American Buddhists, and

WHEREAS the Buddhist Peace Fellowship is the only national Buddhist organization which brings together American Buddhists across sectarian lines in oneness and common purpose, and

WHEREAS the Jodo Shinshu teaching promotes the practice of peace and nonviolence, and

WHEREAS the Buddhist Churches of America is an integral part of the American Buddhist community, now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the B.C.A. Ministerial Association endorses the stated purpose of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, and be it further

RESOLVED that the B.C.A. Ministerial Association encourages the participation of all B.C.A. ministers and lay members in the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

adopted on February 23, 1983

Dear friends,

I thought the new issue of the BPF newsletter was well done. It was good to read Thich Nhat Hanh's letter. What a fine cartoon -- "Zen Living"!

I wonder whether there are members of BPF who might like to read the magazine we publish here. Perhaps a note about it could be put in a future issue of the newsletter? It is \$15 a year. We can send a sample copy and a brochure about IFOR on request.

I am glad to see, among the members of the board of directors, the name of Gary Snyder. I have enjoyed his poetry for many years.

friendly greetings,

Jim Forest

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION

Hof van Sonoy 15-17 1811 LD Alkmaar Holland

Walking the Green Earth

Gary and I are hiking to Suzuki-Roshi's gravesite one rainy dawn, the last day of the conference. We'd been here before, on the road going out of Tassajara camp, past the baths, along the river. Aitken-Roshi had been showing a group of us Nhat Hanh's practice of mindful walking, harmonizing step and breath. The creative aspect of that practice is to find words for the expansive awareness that comes with slow and mindful walking, and to key those words to the breath, step, sights, sounds. This morning a phrase comes to me from one of Nhat Hanh's talks: "Walking on the green earth..." As I carry the words, the green earth emerges as the landscape lightens--the outline of the mountaintops, the unusually lush growth of grasses and wildflowers and chaparral, the stones of the wall bordering the road, and the succulents between the stones, puddles in the road, ripples of rain drops. Sounds--distantly, sounds of service in the Tassajara zendo, drone of chanting, voice of the bell. Blue jays squabbling... roar of Tassajara creek, speaking of the recent heavy rains. Feeling of foot on soft earth.

"What would you do, Patrick," my companion's voice breaks this sound-full silence, "if Tassajara Creek suddenly stopped running?"

Slowly I wind my way back to the world of problems. I protest: "I can't think how it could stop with all this rain."

"But saying it did."

"Well....I'd put large containers under the rain spouts. That way we'd catch enough to get by."

"You're not thinking of the danger."

Danger? I hadn't considered that. I was just concerned to keep life going on as normal.

"Think carefully about it. The lives of your friends could hang on it. What would it mean that the creek stopped running?"

This was more serious than I at first thought. I pour on the thinking, but if it all depends on me, we're doomed. I can think as far as making the best of the situation--conserving water--but I'm not equipped to think about 1)the hidden meaning of the situation, or 2)how to save it.

"I give up. You save Tassajara."

Gary's face is a grinning fox's, delighted at his own problem. "If the creek stops it can mean only one thing--somehow it's been blocked. Likely a big slide has crossed it, damming it up into a growing lake. At some point the dam will break, and there goes Tassajara."

"So what can we do? Head for higher ground?"

"You could save yourself that way, but you couldn't save Tassajara. That could possibly be done if someone were to walk up the creek bed with a few sticks of dynamite to the dam. With some well-placed charges the lake could be bled off safely."

Relief. Nine bows to the courageous dynamiters. But, I reflect, the possibility Gary has raised has likely never been considered. If the creek were to stop running this moment, the best we could do is climb the hills. And if it were to happen at night, we might well be washed away in our beds. Already my trust in Tassajara as the ultimately safe haven has been washed out.

Gary, relentless: "It could happen, you know. Any day, with the rains we've been having. And has, to little settlements situated just like Tassajara. The whole show could disappear in a moment."

I'm glad when we drop the matter and head on up to Suzuki-Roshi's gravesite, which is on reassuringly high ground. We bow three times before the massive stone which commemorates him, and, heading up the trail a few steps farther, view a waterfall across the valley. Those waterdrops will be passing the dining room at Tassajara, just as we are sitting down

to breakfast--if we're lucky. Just then we hear the gong announcing the meal, and another day of thinking and talking about what we can do to keep from being washed away. On our way down I notice that my mindfulness as I walk has taken on another dimension. I see glimpses of that which is not immediately evident. There are worlds included in a breath of wind, in the fresh growth sprouting from the base of the fire-blackened limbs of manzanita, in the unusual patterns of plants evident since the big fire five years ago. Gary's question haunts: What does it mean that the creek stops running?

Back in the city, Tassajara is a dream, but what Nhat Hanh taught us there about walking on the green earth, about slowing down to experience the big world we contact through our eyes and ears and feet and breath, is fresh. Further, Gary, with his keen attention to what the seen indicates about the unseen, has helped me understand something about the connection between the mind which is open to the way things are (that mind nourished by mindfulness) and the mind that initiates intelligent, compassionate action. Walking more often, and walking more slowly, I see on the streets of Berkeley more than I once had. Yesterday, an old lady, companionless, tottering along on shoes she must have salvaged from a free box, they fit her so badly. What does it indicate about our society that an old person could be suffered to be so obviously alone, uncared for? Further, how do we live and act in a way that addresses the problems of our time--at the root?

"Walking on the green earth" can be practiced any time, any place. The signs we apprehend as we walk--in the voice of the stream, the roar of the traffic--inform appropriate, compassionate action. When to do civil disobedience at Livermore, when to grow flowers to give to the elderly, we clarify by taking Nhat Hanh's slow walk.

Patrick McMahon

Poetry Reading with Thich Nhat Hanh

This was unquestionably an Event. By 2:30 p.m. people were gathering. It was, for a change, a beautiful afternoon, and people loitered on the steps, greeting each other as the momentum of new arrivals increased. Soon streams of people were pouring from every direction, funneling up the stairs and through the doors of the Martin Luther King School auditorium. Buddhists, artists, students, academic intelligentsia and literary types all rubbed shoulders and smiled a great deal. The mood was festive, full of expectation, and with good reason. Two highly regarded West Coast poets, Gary Snyder and Robert Creeley, would be reading their work along with the featured guest, the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnamese poet, Zen master, and long-time worker for peace. The "afternoon of poetry and discussion" was a benefit for the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. By the time it began a thousand people had crowded into every seat, cramming walls and aisles.

Introducing the three poets, Richard Baker-roshi said, "They all speak in a voice of concern and truth.....of the singularity and inseparableness--with-the-world of each individual." He pointed to the "extreme likelihood" of an intentional or, more likely, accidental nuclear war, "a kind of genocide that will bring the voiceless and already suffering plants and animals along with us."

Gary Snyder opened the program with a series of poems from his new collection Ax Handles. But his first words were "Please enjoy your breathing for a moment"--an instruction of Thich Nhat Hanh's, he said. His poems were vibrant with felt experience, kinship with the physical world, and pulsed with an

insistent male energy. At the end of the afternoon, Robert Creely read selections from his work including a newly published book, Collected Poems. His language was direct and unadorned and full of naked, untransmuted personal pain.

In the middle of the program was Thich Nhat Hanh. "At last," said Baker-roshi, "here's a true Buddhist teacher." "Please enjoy your breathing," Nhat Hanh said. "That I just learned from Gary Snyder!"

And then, quietly, emphatically, he began--sometimes first in Vietnamese--to read his work. At first, making the transition after intermission, the audience seemed unsettled. There was shifting about, whispering. Some people left, others moved to take their seats. Then gradually, as the soft voice read the powerful words, the quietness spread, and there was a perceptible shift to deepened attention.

Do not say that I'll depart tomorrow
because even today I still arrive.

Look deeply: I arrive in every second...

I am the mayfly metamorphosing on the
surface of the river
and I am the bird which, when spring comes,
arrives in time to eat the mayfly...

I am the twelve-year-old girl, refugee on a
small boat,
who throws herself into the ocean after
being raped by a sea pirate,
and I am the pirate, my heart not yet
capable of seeing and loving.

("I would like very much to take the side of the girl," Thich Nhat Hanh had said. "But that would be too easy. It would be easy to make the pirate my enemy. But if I were born in his village, had his life...I cannot be sure that I am out of the pirate, and not responsible for the tragedy.")

My joy is like spring, so warm it makes
flowers bloom in all walks of life.
My pain is like a river of tears, so full
it fills all four oceans.

Please call me by my true names, so I can
hear all my cries and laughs at once,
So I can see that my joy and pain are one.

Please call me by my true names, so I can
wake up and so the door of my heart can
be left open, the door of compassion.

A true teacher. At last.

Lenore Friedman

(the two foregoing articles are from the May 1983
issue of NO NEED TO KILL ~ Bay Area BPF)



Dear Tax People:

Please note that we are again depositing 35% of our computed Federal Income Tax in the Escrow Account of the Conscience and Military Tax Campaign for a World Peace Fund. This amount will be held by CMTC until legislation that provides a way for taxpayers to earmark their payments for non-military purposes is passed by Congress, and signed into law by the President. This legislation has been introduced into every Congress since 1972. Upon passage of the legislation, the amount in escrow will be paid into the United States Treasury. The 35% figure is our best estimate of the portion of the Federal tax receipts that is budgeted for current military purposes.

This is our second year of such action. We are a year older, and as senior citizens this means that we are more conscious of nearing our own natural ends.

Our government's policy of nuclear confrontation is also a year older, a year closer to the point of critical mass that will bring explosive and agonizing end to all life and all history. As Buddhists we hold beliefs in the way of peace and reconciliation, and we must speak out in the most effective way we know: to withhold our dollars from this desperately dangerous war machine.

For further information about the World Peace Tax Fund, write to the Conscience and Military Tax Campaign, 44 Bellhaven Road, Bellport NY 11713.

Respectfully yours,

Robert Aitken

Anne Aitken

* Please write your representatives urging their support.

Note: With this issue of the Newsletter we are initiating the use of a computer service to help keep in order our burgeoning mailing list. We hope the service will enable us to keep up with our highly mobile membership. Please keep us informed as to your movings about, so that we can get the Newsletter and other mailings to you in whatever remote part of Los Angeles or Tibet you happen to find yourself.

Also, with the computer we will now be able to better organize information concerning the backgrounds of our members -- the various Buddhist traditions represented in the BPF, affiliations with specific Buddhist centers or teachers, and membership or participation with local BPF chapters. If you became a member of BPF prior to March, 1983, we would appreciate hearing from you regarding the above information. Please write Buddhist Peace Fellowship, PO Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.

A note about the person behind the computer, Kent Johnson. Kent has been very active with the Bay Area BPF since its beginning, and is presently editor of the chapter's newsletter, which is produced with the aid of his computer. The mailing list of the chapter is also organized by the computer. If you need help putting your mailing list in order, or have use for related computer services, write: Kent Johnson, 2490 Channing Way #503, Berkeley, CA 94704.

report on BUDDHIST CIRCLE FOR PEACE

(By the time you read this, Buddhist Circle for Peace Day will have already taken place. Nevertheless, we thought it quite worthwhile to include this report.)

Last September a circle of three people began meeting regularly to explore a way for many people to practice together as an expression of peace. We had first met in the Sangha Affinity Group, getting ready for the demonstration at Lawrence Livermore Lab last June 21st, and we felt a need to complement non-violent civil disobedience with a focused time of group meditation. We started calling our group Buddhist Circle for Peace and planning an event for June 18, 1983.

After the first meeting of the Bay Area Buddhist Peace Fellowship in December our circle doubled in size. Now we are seven: Wendy Tripp, Peter Schein, Betsy Sawyer, Loie Rosenkrantz, Kent Johnson, Barbara Gates, and Lenore Friendman. We continue to govern ourselves by rotating roles at each meeting and allowing for consensus. There has been clear and consistent appreciation of the need to remain meticulously attuned to the ongoing process of the circle.

At first we tried to include all people everywhere in the idea of a planetary day of practice. Due to limited time and finances this first year, coupled with the importance of developing a solid and broad foundation, we are now mainly focusing our effort on the San Francisco Bay Area.

Over the months we have been fortunate to consult with Rev. Ryo Imamura, Master Seung Sahn, Dr. Joanna Macy, Zentatsu Baker-roshi, and Robert Aitken-roshi. Each of these individuals helped us clarify issues of focus, language, philosophy and form. We are a working sub-committee of the BABPF and are sponsored by the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

We have begun to consider this idea of a gathering of the Sangha as an expression of peace to be a practical experiment. We are attempting to contact all sanghas in the greater Bay Area to share this idea and to invite participation. In addition, there are also other areas around the world where people are planning to participate in Buddhist Circle for Peace Day. These now include Rochester, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Hawaii, and Fresno, CA, in the United States, as well as England, Peru, Denmark, Germany, Japan, Switzerland and Australia. Any group or interested person can write to Buddhist Circle for Peace, 2490 Channing Way #503, Berkeley, CA 94704.

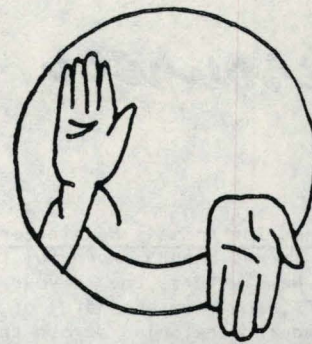
The proposed format of Buddhist Circle for Peace Day in the San Francisco Bay Area is the following:

Morning - Individual or group meditation or other expressions within our own sanghas or in selected public places (planned by each person or community).

Afternoon - Beginning at 1 pm, a silent, mindful walk from various parts of San Francisco to Lindley Meadow in Golden Gate Park.

We hope Buddhist Circle for Peace is an experiment which many will like to join. All are welcome.

-- Loie Rosenkrantz



The following three statements were generously given to Buddhist Circle for Peace:

As we form our Circle of Peace, we acknowledge our imperfections as avatars of peace, and we appeal to our friends to acknowledge theirs. We find in our lives that violence and aggression lead only to suffering in our families. We learn that threats lead only to counter-threats, and that our defensiveness leads to defensiveness in others. We strive to perfect ourselves, and to find the way of true peace and harmony in our daily lives.

I am sure this is the very path that even the most combative world leader seeks to follow at home. But what about our Earth home? Can that be separated from our personal dwelling?

The threat of war can only lead to war. This is the way of the human being. The offer of peace, made with true relinquishment, can lead only lead to peace. This too is the way of the human being.

We in the Circle of Peace appeal to our neighbors, our friends known and unknown, and to people in high political places to accept the simple truths of peace and harmony in the broader families of community, nation, and the world.-- even if it means the end of powerful careers, even if it means a much lower standard of living, even if it means the end of the nation-states as we know them today.

We submit that now is the time for relinquishment and embracing.

-- Robert Aitken-roshi

First we must take away the inside atom bomb. If we remove the outside atom bombs, they will soon return, that's karma. It's the inside atom bomb that's dangerous -- each person's like-dislike mind, each person's holding "my" opinion, condition and situation.

So everyone must do together-action. Eating together, working together, practicing together. Don't keep "my" opinion, "my" situation, "my" condition. Then World Peace. Then the outside nuclear weapons will disappear by themselves.

-- Zen Master Seung Sahn

We as Buddhists have absolute faith in the supremacy of the mind. The world has reached a point where nothing short of universal consciousness can bring an effective influence to bear on those who have brought us to the verge of a nuclear holocaust. Buddhists all over the world have a unique challenge to develop supreme compassionate thought to influence the whole of humanity irrespective of religion, race, and national boundaries. Loving-kindness meditation, mindfulness of breathing meditation, and other forms of mental purification with the intention of bringing peace to the minds of all people is the surest path to peace.

We in the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement totally identify ourselves with this day of the Buddhist Circle for Peace.

-- Dr. A. T. Ariyaratna

Resources

Buddhists Concerned for Animals Newsletter.

"Dear Friends, It has been an eventful few months since our first Newsletter. Due to your support, we are seeing BCA grow from a handful of people to a network of concern stretching across the country. In addition, there are now BCA supporters in Canada, England, Germany, Holland, Japan, Poland, and Switzerland. The response we are receiving indicates the Sangha's readiness to engage in the effort to end animal abuse. The desire to do something about the terrible situation animals find themselves in, has been within many people for a long time. The goal of BCA is to bring this desire to the surface of as many lives as possible, and develop ways to transform this heartfelt wish into action." Buddhists Concerned for Animals, Inc.
300 Page Street, San Francisco, CA 94102 \$5.00



Board of Directors, Buddhist Peace Fellowships:

Robert Aitken
Nelson Foster
Ryo Imamura
Joanna Macy
Gary Snyder

Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter staff:

Andy Cooper Karin Hilsdale

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse by Peter Matthiessen.

A thorough investigation into the new Indian wars, the persecution of the American Indian Movement, and the strange circumstances surrounding the trial and imprisonment of A.I.M. leader Leonard Peltier. Crazy Horse is also a disturbing and compelling exploration of the complex and appalling history of the United States' suppression of the Lakota Indians over the last century.

The author is a long-time student of Buddhism and the highly-acclaimed author of numerous books including The Snow Leopard.

Resource Center for Nonviolence. As the name implies: publishes an excellent newsletter and brochures; distributes books, films, etc.; sponsors an impressive program of lectures, seminars, study groups; coordinates nonviolent actions -- there's more as well. There is no subscription fee for the quarterly newsletter, though contributions are appreciated. Write: RCNV, PO Box 2324, Santa Cruz, CA 95063, or call (408) 423-1626.

Humpty Dumpty Report. The title notwithstanding, there's plenty of useful/interesting material in this bi-monthly publication of the Interhelp Network. What is Interhelp?

"Interhelp is a nonpartisan network whose purpose is to provide people the opportunity to experience and share with others their deepest responses to the dangers which threaten our planet -- be they dangers of nuclear holocaust, environmental deterioration, or human oppression. We aim to enable people to know the power that comes from their interconnectedness with all life and to move beyond powerlessness and numbness into action.

Since a specific name for our activities has yet to emerge, they are commonly known as "the work." -- Interhelp, Glide Foundation,
330 Ellis St., #505
San Francisco, CA 94102

GET YOUR INFORMATION DIRECTLY--here are some excellent sources:

--The Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy "unites 51 national religious, labor, peace, research and social action organizations working for a peaceful, non-interventionist and demilitarized U.S. foreign policy." It publishes regular Action Alerts on key legislation and an excellent Budget Bulletin. 120 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002.

--The Nuclear Arms Control Hotline run by the Council for a Livable World, provides the latest information on nuclear arms issues in Congress in a 3-minute taped message updated every Monday. 202/543-0006

--The Friends' Committee on National Legislation hotline is broader in scope and briefer in content. 202/547-4343.

--The Central America Legislative Hotline provided by the Coalition includes information on which legislators sit on committees dealing with Central American issues and which ones are wavering in their positions and should be contacted. 202/483-3391.

NOTE: when calling, be ready with a fast pen or a tape recorder.

From BPF - the items listed below are available from BPF, PO Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704. Please indicate clearly which item and how many you want, and include with your order \$1.00 per item.

- A transcript of Thich Nhat Hanh's recent talk at the Berkeley Zen Center.
- Anthropocentrism by John Seed. A short essay by a resident of Bodhi Farm in Australia, expressing the viewpoint of deep ecology.
- Mahasangha Meeting - a rough transcript of Robert Aitken-roshi and Gary Snyder's discussion with the Bay Area "mahasangha" in September, 1982.
- "The Development of the American Buddhist Peace Movement" (a paper presented at the Zen in American Arts and Letters seminar at the University of Southern California) by Paul Jaffe. A thoughtful overview and analysis of some of the trends, traditions, influences and questions at play in the development of Buddhist social consciousness in the West.
- "Japanese Corporate Zen," by Daizen Victoria. A hard look at some highly questionable aspects of Zen's sociopolitical role in Japanese history. "As Japanese militarism grew ever stronger in the 1920's and 30's, the emphasis on the efficacy of Zen training in actual combat also became more pronounced. Ichikawa Kakugen, himself a Rinzaï Zen priest and professor emeritus of Kyoto's Hanazono University, has written about this development in a number of books and articles. Zen Master Iida Toin, for example, is recorded as having said: 'We should be well aware of how much power Zen gave to Bushido. It is truly a cause for rejoicing that, of late, the Zen sect is popular among military men. No matter how much we may do zazen, if it is of no help to present events, then it would be better not to do it.'"
- During his visit to the San Francisco Bay area in March of this year, Thich Nhat Hanh brought together at Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery peace activists, Buddhists, and Buddhist peace activists in a five-day conference on the theme "Being Peace." Space in this newsletter does not permit printing all the written responses to the conference which the participants have sent to us. However, a comprehensive report of the conference can be obtained from BPF.

Members and friends of the San Francisco Zen Center conduct weekly silent vigils for nuclear disarmament in downtown San Francisco and in Mill Valley. The following is the text of the flier handed out to interested passers-by.

VIGIL FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

We are standing for our lives and the life of our planet. The fact that nuclear weapons exist, and that our governments conceive of using them, means that we face the terrible possibility of nuclear war. One of the greatest risks before us is the accidental launch of nuclear weapons, resulting from computer false alarms and insufficient time for reliable human response. (In 1980 the US was on nuclear alert 3 times, minutes from retaliation, twice caused by the failure of an electronic chip about the size of a dime and worth about 49¢.)

Nuclear war is difficult to think about. Most of us hope that it will not happen, and forget that in less than 30 minutes, with no warning, life as we know it could be ended. This means it could be a day like today, with you at work, shopping, seeing a client, cooking dinner, driving the children to school. For the first time in a war there would be no soldiers; civilians here, in the Soviet Union, and Europe would be the victims. Most experts agree that a limited nuclear war is unlikely -- once started, it would quickly escalate.

Our hearts and minds resist grasping the horror of this type of weapon. Nuclear weapons do not increase our safety; they include the possibility of the extinction of human life. Please ask yourself -- is any international dispute worth this consequence? No matter what your political belief, please, as a human being, do what you can to end this madness.

We invite you to join with us in this silent vigil, and to bring your friends. We have no particular political persuasion, but see this as an issue that affects every person. If you would like to join us, even for a moment, please remember that you can find us here in downtown Mill Valley every Friday from 12 noon until 1 p.m.

CONTRIBUTE . . .

articles, letters, news, and information to and through the BPF Newsletter,

905 S. Normandie
Los Angeles, CA 90006



"We are meditating to be peace, sitting in profound support of the work and goals of the UN Special Session on Disarmament."

UN Zazen vigil, June 1982

photo: Casey Frank ©



Z E N P O E M

How I long for supernatural powers!
said the novice mournfully to the holy one.
I see a dead child
I long to say, Arise!
I see a sick man
I want to say, Be healed!
I see a bent old woman
I long to cry, Be healed!
Alas, I feel like a dead stick in paradise.
Master, can you confer on me
supernatural powers?

The old man shook his head fretfully.
How long have I been with you
and you know nothing.
How long have you known me
and learned nothing.
Listen; I have walked the earth for eighty years
I have never raised a dead child
I have never healed a sick man
I have never straightened an old woman's spine.

Children die
men grow sick
the aged fall
under a stigma of frost

and what is that to you or to me
but the turn of the wheel
but the way of birth
but the gateway to paradise?

Supernatural powers!
then you would play God
would spin the thread of life
and measure the thread
five years, fifty years, eighty years --
and cut the thread?

Supernatural powers!
I have wandered the earth for eighty years
I confess to you
sprout without root
root without flower --
I know nothing of supernatural powers.
I have yet to perfect my natural powers!

To see and not be seduced
to hear and not be deafened
to taste and not be consumed
to touch and not be tricked

But you --
would you walk on water
would you master air
would you swallow fire?

Go talk with the dolphins
they will teach sweetly
how to grow gills

go listen to eagles
they will hatch you, nest you
eaglet and airman

go join the circus
those tricksters will train you
in deception for dimes --

Bird man, bag man, poor fish
spouting fire, moon crawling
at sea forever --
Supernatural powers!

Do you seek miracles? Listen
go
draw water, hew wood
break stones --
how miraculous!

Listen. Blessed the one
who walks the earth
five years, fifty years, eighty years
and deceives no one
and curses no one
and murders no one.

On such a one
the angels whisper in wonder --
Behold the irresistible power
of natural powers --
of height, of joy, of soul, of non belittling!

You dry stick
in the crude soil of this world
root, spring, leaf, flower!

Trace
round and round and round --
an inch, a mile, the world's green glory --
a liberated zone
of paradise!

by Daniel Berrigan
for Thich Nhat Hanh

