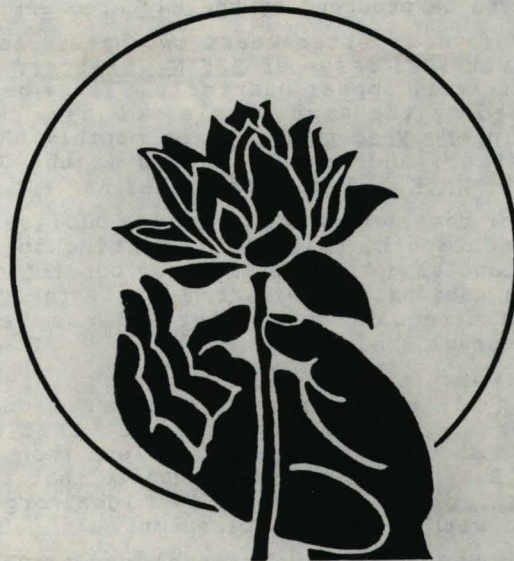


BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

Vol. 6 No. 1

Jan. 1984



Working for Peace in the Courts

In the road we did willfully sit,
But acts wrongful we didn't commit.
'Twas never our ploy
To vex or annoy.
Promoting world peace was our bit.

The trial of 229 Livermore protesters ended suddenly on December 8, 1983, in a makeshift courtroom in the cafeteria of the county fairgrounds in Pleasanton, California. During the trial, race horses flashed by the picture window, on the adjacent race track. I was one of eleven representative defendants who appeared in court for the larger group. We were all found guilty of "willfully and maliciously obstructing the free movement of persons" when we sat in the road to protest the work of the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Laboratory last June. We had prepared and hoped to bring into court evidence about the Lab's leading role in the development of nuclear weapons, its violations of international law, and the imminent danger we are all in because of these weapons. We had a wonderful array of expert witnesses ready to testify, including Linus Pauling and Dan Ellsberg, and we had each been preparing our own testimony, describing the various and very personal journeys that took us up to the point of sitting in the road at Livermore.

Judge Clifford Bachand unexpectedly denied all three of our defenses: international law (the Nuremberg Treaty prohibits weapons of genocide), defense of necessity (you can trespass to save a child you see drowning in a swimming pool), and state of mind (as to if we were malicious). In essence, we were not allowed to tell why we sat

in the road, but only whether we sat in the road; and in pre-trial negotiations with the District Attorney we had already stipulated that we did sit in the road, because we never meant to present a technical defense. So there was nothing left to say, and in the end we decided the most powerful statement we could make was not to testify at all. "The defense rests," was all our lawyer said when our turn came. I should point out that this was only after extensive and eloquent argument by our three lawyers before the judge as to why the above defenses should be allowed.

The trial still accomplished some good things. During the two weeks of jury selection over 300 prospective jurors from the Livermore area were interviewed, saw us working together, and learned something about the weapons work at the Lab. We had decided not to ask for a change of venue because we specifically wanted to address the people in the Livermore area. We think their response will be more positive the next time they hear about an anti-nuclear protest.

We received extensive and fairly sympathetic coverage from Bay Area newspapers and TV, including the two Livermore papers.

We worked well together. The eleven representatives and three lawyers, a varied group, made all decisions together, by consensus process. This was probably the first jury ever chosen by consensus, the very process a jury itself uses in reaching a verdict. How much easier our decisions would have been if there had been even one wishy-washy person among us! We took care of each other, gained confidence in ourselves and each other, and all of us came out of the trial with a deepened commitment to work for peace.

And--we are appealing the judge's ruling on evidence. This appeal has important implications for the peace movement. At present there has been no higher court ruling on any of the three defenses, which means that it's up to the individual trial judge whether to allow testimony on the underlying issues, and perhaps one in 200 does so. A higher

(continued on page 6)



From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of BPF Newsletter to be produced by the Bay Area BPF!

This newsletter wears two hats. It is the first 1984 issue of BPF Newsletter. As such, it will appear quarterly. It is being produced by the same people who have been producing No Need to Kill, the monthly BABPF newsletter, and in fact serves as the Jan. issue of NNtK. (That's the other hat.)

For those of us who have been publishing NNtK each month, this is an exciting opportunity and an acknowledgement of our efforts. For the national organization, it is the promise of a regular newsletter and a (more or less) established staff.

I want it to be clear that my point-of-view in all this comes from my position as founder and editor of NNtK. Not that BPF members should expect anything less than the best! But readers should recognize that the Newsletter is being put out by a local organization with a regional perspective.

No Need to Kill has developed a loose, mostly local network of writers and assistants who, miraculously, produce a newsletter each month. Articles show up when I have resigned myself to a short issue; someone new helps with pasteup and we finish early.

We need a similar network to support BPF Newsletter. I hope to see reports from chapters around the world and articles submitted from strange and exotic places like Rochester, NY, or Minneapolis, MN. Perhaps someone will fly in from Hawaii to help with the layout; an expert in Los Angeles will call to consult about production ideas....

The truth is, a newsletter needs support from its audience to continue. We look forward to receiving contributions, advice and encouragement from all of our new readers.

A few notes to potential contributors:

1. ORIGINAL ARTWORK IS ESPECIALLY APPRECIATED! Send us your drawings, cartoons, whatever. Send small, wide art, we love it.
2. Brevity is the soul of wit. Our space is limited; 500-1000 words is a good length.
3. Hard experience has taught me to be ruthless about deadlines. This is necessary for my sanity and the smooth functioning of our working group. Material for inclusion in the April issue must be received by March 1. NO EXCEPTIONS!
4. Send material to BPF, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA, 94704.

Kent Johnson



Election Results

An election was recently held to fill the seats on the BPF Board being vacated by Robert Aitken-roshi and Nelson Foster. The winners are Fred Eppsteiner, of Rochester, NY, and Jenny Hoang of Los Angeles, CA.

Letters

Dear friends,

The summer 1983 newsletter arrived today and over and over again encouraged me to enjoy my breathing. Yes!

What a good issue, and how encouraging to sense the way Buddhists are coming together in such a peace fellowship. I will try to find some way to bring this more into IFOR Report. I long for the Buddhist Peace Fellowship to take root in other countries, and also want non-Buddhists to learn from it and be nourished with its spirit and practice.

Yours in peace,
Jim Forest

International FOR Coordinator

P.S. We continue to encourage BPF members to ask us for a sample copy of IFOR Report. The address is Hof van Sonoy 15-17, 1811 LD Alkmaar, Holland.

Dear friends,

I was wondering if you would be interested in the practice of Buddhism from an urban and Black perspective. I noticed in the BPF board meeting notes that nothing was said of the need for BPF to reach out to the poor and other minorities in this country.

As we all know, the Buddha worked all his life to change the caste system and help the poor find true liberation. I'm sure that Buddha's teaching would apply very well in America and to the spiritual crisis this country is facing. I truly believe that it has come time for Buddhists to show people that Buddhism is against racism, injustice, poverty and any other ideas that add to people's suffering.

As a Black American practicing the teachings of Buddha, I meet many Blacks who are interested, but feel that Buddhism is a form of escape from the problems of the world and that Buddhism is a fad for middle class whites. Being a Buddhist myself I find myself explaining Buddhism and trying to change some of the false images. I feel it's important to help all people get a correct view of Buddhism.

Yours in Peace & Blessings
Ralph A. Johnson

[Note: Ralph publishes a bi-monthly, Black Health, about which he says, "...it will be carrying some of the sayings and teachings of the Buddhist and other masters". Address P.O. Box 41, Pratt Station, NY 11205.]

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter is published for the BPF by Bay Area BPF. It appears quarterly as a special issue of BABPF's monthly newsletter, No Need to Kill. The BPF newsletter is sent free of charge to all BPF members. No Need to Kill is available for \$10/12 issues, payable to B.A.B.P.F. and sent to No Need to Kill, 2490 Channing Way #503, Berkeley, CA, 94704. Address the Buddhist Peace Fellowship at P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA, 94704.

Contributors this issue: Nelson Foster, Robert Aitken-roshi, Michael Roche, Kent Johnson, Patrick McMahon, Nina Sprecher, Laura Zucker, Susan Moon, Judy Wells, Jim Forest, Ralph A. Johnson, Lenore Friedman, Jim Perkins, Catherine Parker, Barbara Meier, Wendy Tripp, Mike Steinberg.

Produced by David Simon, Sara Oechsli, Kent Johnson, Violet Ray, Sonda Beal, Ross Taub, John Fleischhauer, Harvey Rosen and others yet unknown.

BPF President's Column

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship is growing in membership, in numbers of chapters, in ethnic and sectarian diversity, and in programs, and I look back on the past year and on the past years since our establishment with a certain provisional satisfaction.

Our membership rolls now stand at 456, more than double our numbers since the beginning of last year. Our chapters have increased also, with new groups establishing themselves in Rochester, NY, Minneapolis, in Boulder, Colorado, and in Australia. Others may be developing in Portland, Providence, and England.

But most important, perhaps, we have begun a transition to decentralization that will, we hope, give individual chapters incentive to take on national programs, as well as local ones. The most evident example of this change is in our newsletter, which is now being published by the Bay Area BPF, in conjunction with its ongoing journal, No Need to Kill. The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter will appear quarterly, with an insert for Bay Area people giving local news, and No Need to Kill will come out for its own subscribers in the intervening months. The Bay Area BPF has shown admirable initiative in producing its own newsletter, and we are all of us very pleased that the editorial staff has agreed to take on this new, very large responsibility. To all the staff of No Need to Kill, a warm thank you, and a thank you also to Andy Cooper, who edited earlier issues of the BPF Newsletter almost completely alone, and who has now agreed to continue to serve as a corresponding editor.

At this time we are soliciting suggestions for a name to give our BPF newsletter. So far we have the following suggestions: Sangha, Ahimsa, Together with All Beings. Please send your ideas to the Editor, Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Other moves to decentralize the program were made when two chapters expressed interest in taking on projects. The Honolulu chapter is taking on the Chittagong Hill Tract project expressing concern about the persecution of Buddhists in Bangladesh. The Rochester chapter is taking on the resource project which aims to produce a collection of previously published but hard to find articles on the Buddhist rationale for peace and environmental work, right living, anarchism, deep ecology, nonviolence, and such movements as Sarvodaya.

The board welcomes inquiries or suggestions from chapters that might be interested in working on other projects. We see a specific need for outreach and conference projects, and other needs will no doubt arise. The outreach program would encourage new membership and the development of new chapters through various means--visits to Buddhist centers, articles placed in the various Buddhist newsletters, development and circulation of BPF literature, and so on. I hope that it would focus particularly on ethnic and sectarian groups which are not now well represented in BPF.

The conference project would involve all the planning and organizational work necessary for an annual or biennial conference of BPF members. A year-round project for this purpose should result in very successful gatherings that would give good stimulus and incentive for work in the months between. The Boulder group, just formed, has expressed some interest in this kind of project and might be able to take it on.

The Buddhist Circle for Peace program was initiated, planned, and carried through by members of the Bay Area BPF in June, 1983. The board has encouraged the Bay Area people to continue this as an annual event. It is this project that gave us the idea that BPF should decentralize, with the chapters carrying primary responsibility for projects beyond their locales.

In addition, Buddhists Concerned for Animals continues to be a lively movement in San Francisco. I hope that we give all possible support to this work and strengthen our ties to it.

The broadest program change in 1983 was instituted at this time last year, when the membership voted to change our statement of purpose to establish BPF clearly as an all-species organization. Our publicity now reflects our concern not just for human beings, but also for animals, plants, and their habitats. With the extraordinary nuclear dangers pressing upon us, it is important for us to listen to the earthworm, for, as Blake reminds us in The Book of Thel, she and the Lily of the Valley, the clouds, and the "Matron Clay" are all of them asking why we are destroying ourselves and the world.

The BPF is an organizational member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and we on the Board have felt concerned about the exclusively Christian terminology carried in FOR publicity and in the journal Fellowship. Accordingly, we communicated our objections to the FOR staff, and were invited to submit an article on the subject to Fellowship. I composed a piece titled "Peace, Buddhism, and Perennial Knowledge" which is now awaiting publication. I will send it to our own newsletter for consideration after it appears.

During the year, the BPF board embraced the intentions of the Fast for Life, endorsed a statement by the Committee for a New Korea Policy proposing nuclear disarmament in Korea, and (with qualifications relating to the mainline political arrangement for its board of directors) lent BPF's support to the proposed United States Academy for Peace. We also established guidelines for such endorsements which will help us to get a good sense of the concerns of the membership in advance.

That's it. I wish to thank my fellow Board members, Joanna Macy, Ryo Imamura, Gary Snyder, and Nelson Foster, for their unstinting and creative work this past year, and our staff person, Patrick McMahon, for holding it all together and keeping the rest of us in line. I step down this year, and am looking forward to continuing an active role, but now as a mere member.

Happy New Year, everybody. May our 457th monkey change everything!

Robert Aitken

Arrests and Executions of Tibetan Buddhists

This was written by a young Tibetan refugee studying in this country. It is as accurate an account as I think we can get.

Mike Roche

It is always difficult to obtain information of events in Tibet. But the channels of information that do exist, in particular from the underground churches and resistance movements, have consistently proven to be reliable. These channels now bring us sad news--since August of this year some 1,500 Tibetans have been arrested; three thousand more are on the hit list. On September 30 four so-called criminals were executed in Lhasa, Tibet's capital city. The next day five more were shot in the head, kneeling on a dirt floor. On October 15 more executions were planned, but, so far, there is no confirmation they have been carried out.

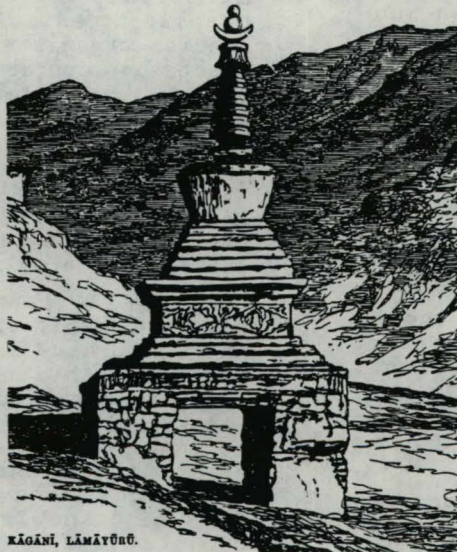
The men who died were Tibetans who voiced opposition to the Chinese occupation of their country and the persecution of their religion: Buddhism. By the Chinese authorities, such people are regarded as a threat to "the unity of the Motherland." They are called anti-social or counter-revolutionary elements, a crime according to the law of the People's Republic of China. It is true that other official Chinese government sources have insisted the executed Tibetans were murderers, rapists or gun-runners. We do well to bear in mind, however, that such terms have always been used in communist China for political dissidents.

The latest reports coming from Tibet via Nepal claim that Tibet today is once again in a state of terror. The brief spell of liberalization, started in 1980, has come to an end. In the last three years the authorities had initiated measures to improve the economy, devastated by years of "Democratic Reform" campaigns and "Cultural Revolution." At the same time, a policy of limited and controlled religious freedom was introduced. Moreover, some Tibetans were, for the first time since the abortive revolt of 1959 and the Dalai Lama's escape, allowed to visit relatives in exile in India and Nepal, and Tibet was opened slightly to western tourists and journalists.

But when as a result of this policy the true feelings of the Tibetans, so long suppressed, came to light, the Chinese were truly shocked. Not that they had ever had the illusion the Tibetans supported the "Liberation" and occupation of Tibet. But the extent of nationalism of the people was a surprise. What was even more alarming was to find out that, as one Chinese Party official

put it, "about 100 percent of Tibetans still believe in Buddhism" after thirty years of communist indoctrination and persecution. When the Dalai Lama's delegations visited Tibet in 1980, Chinese officials could not believe their eyes: desperate crowds of thousands upon thousands of Tibetans pushed and struggled to see, touch or talk to the delegates, pouring out tales of horror and woe. Some threw themselves in front of the delegates' jeeps just so that they would stop and their friends could hand over messages for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Compassionate One. These scenes, which I later saw on film, brought tears to my eyes and a growing determination to help these brave, desperate Buddhist people.

Recently, thirty-four Tibetan monks, who were illegally reconstructing the devastated Ganden Monastery near Lhasa (one of Tibet's largest monastic universities, which had been reduced to ruins along with some 8,000 other monasteries and temples), were arrested. The Chinese soldiers, members of an occupation force of 5-6,000, bound the monks' arms with ropes and loaded them onto trucks like stone bricks. They were beaten so severely that many fainted. One monk, an elderly one, said to be a former chanting master, told the soldiers "No matter how severely you beat us, you cannot destroy the will of the Tibetan people; no matter how many Tibetans you kill, by the grace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the question of Tibet's independence will not die." He was beaten so severely that he fainted three times, but each time he regained his consciousness and repeated such statements. Finally, he died from the beating in the truck, before reaching Lhasa.



KAGANI, LAMAYUNO.

This is only one of the many sad tales that reach us these days. For Tibetans there is no distinction between struggling for their religion and for their country, and the Dalai Lama symbolizes both as one. They have suffered so immensely in the past decades that it is hard to believe the continuing determination and the overwhelming hope they still have--a hope they draw wholly from their faith.

Tibetans need help. They need it now. What little we can do, we should do. At the very least, we should let the Chinese authorities and our own government know that we are aware of what is happening in Tibet, that we are shocked and distressed and that we condemn such atrocities. Write to the Chinese Consulate or Embassy, to the President of the United States, to your Senator or Congressman. It might help, and at any rate, it will give Tibetans courage in these hard times. Let us pray for them, and all others who are being oppressed for their beliefs.

Chapter News

There's a good deal of news to report since the last Newsletter, mainly due to an array of developments at the chapter level. Unless otherwise indicated, the reports in this issue's "Chapter News" were prepared by me based on correspondence and telephone calls. In the future, we hope to have more first-hand reports from the chapters. Reports should be received at the Newsletter address by the first of the month preceding the next issue. For the next (April) issue, then, we should have material no later than March 1. Please volunteer to be a regular correspondent.

Jim Perkins, formerly of the Mt. Tremper Zen Center, has in the last months joined a Christian-based resistance community in Baltimore, called "Jonah House." Recently he sent us a copy of Jonah House's newsletter, Year One, and with it the following letter:

Dear Patrick,

We find many ways to express ourselves. I spoke (uninvited) before the Technological Marketing Society on Monday. Was given the bum's rush, but no arrest. Meditating daily with another Buddhist living here at the house. We're doing ok.

Jim Perkins

Included in the newsletter is an article by Jim on a protest of the Euromissiles at the Pentagon, and the trials of various persons arrested during the demonstrations, Jim being among them. We don't at this time have word of the outcome, but news, and the newsletter, can be obtained from Year One/Jonah House, 1933 Park Ave., Baltimore, MD 21217.

Patrick McMahon

Minnesota

Since June the Minnesota chapter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship has endorsed Walker Church, a local church giving sanctuary to Central American refugees, and has heard the tale of one such refugee, Alberto Giron. It also endorsed the "Fast for Life," with members fasting briefly in sympathy. The chapter participated in "Buddhist Circle of Peace Day" in the form of a family picnic and discussion. After the TV-movie, "The Day After," the group talked of their feelings and discussed Joanna Macy's article, "How to Deal with Despair." A current activity is getting acquainted with the Honeywell Project, a Minneapolis-based group seeking to halt corporate production of weapons.

Actually our biggest accomplishment has been coalescing as a group. For the new year, plans include: extending a welcome to all Buddhist groups, most of which are in the Asian community; starting a person-to-person correspondence with people in the Soviet Union; hearing a talk on Central America by a couple who have recently traveled there; and organizing a presentation for Minnesota Zen Center.

Catherine Parker

Rochester

The Rochester (New York) Buddhist Peace Fellowship is meeting monthly. In 1983 the RBPF sponsored a visit and public appearance by Thich Nhat Hanh, provided support for the Fast for Life, held letter-writing sessions,

distributed to 2,000 people an "Access" card with phone numbers and addresses of elected representatives, and began to publish a monthly newsletter. In addition, the RBPF is an active participant in the Finger Lakes-Genesee Nuclear Disarmament Network.

Two RBPF task forces, one on hunger and one on disarmament, meet regularly to share information. Participants have attended a variety of workshops and lectures to educate themselves on relevant issues. One member gave presentations on nuclear disarmament to schools and various community organizations.

Plans for the RBPF in 1984 include monthly meetings, letter-writing sessions, continued publication of the newsletter, and sponsorship of a visit by Joanna Macy in May.

If you would like further information about the RBPF, a sample copy or subscription to the newsletter (\$6 for 6 issues), please contact Jane Dallinger, 8 Averill Ct., Rochester, NY 14607, (716) 442-6290.

Hawaii

The Hawaii BPF is sponsoring a workshop with BPF Board member Joanna Macy in January, entitled "From Despair to Empowerment." Also during January, HIBPF will be co-sponsoring a conference called, "Religion, Values, and Community Development." Sulak Sivaraksha, Dolci Danilo, and Joanna Macy will be on hand. Look for a report on the conference in the Spring Newsletter.

Australia

The Australia BPF birthed its first newsletter last August, carrying articles on uranium mining in Australia, campaigns to save the rain forests of N.S.W. and Tasmania, and a "deep ecology" conference. The group is now fund-raising to purchase land for the aboriginal people. Contact the Australia BPF at P.O. Box 368, Lismore 2480, N.S.W.

Bay Area

The Bay Area (Berkeley/Oakland/San Francisco) BPF is feeling the need for a more personal tone in its activities. Now that we've taken on the publication of the national newsletter, it's especially clear that at the same time as we turn outward, we have to keep nourishing ourselves at home. At our first annual meeting this December, we started a process of reorganization of the chapter into smaller units, based on projects or interests--the Circle for Peace, a group to explore the effect of our lifestyle on world problems and solutions, the Newsletter collective, a group to help with the work of the National Office--to name a few. Contact BABPF at P.O. Box 4544, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Boulder

Several members of Karma Dzong and students and faculty at Naropa Institute have been meeting sporadically for the past year and a half to discuss our roles as Buddhists in the Peace Movement. At the October Encirclement of Rocky Flats approximately sixty of us joined hands with 20,000 other demonstrators. At that time we decided to make a request for official BPF chapter status, which was henceforth granted at the recent Board of Directors meeting.

Our plans include a steering committee meeting in December to be followed by our

first public open meeting in January. Members of the Denver Zen Center, a group affiliated with Kapleau-roshi, have expressed an interest in joining us; we plan to send out invitations to the other local Buddhist groups as well. During this first meeting, two Karma Dzong students of healing arts will report on the recent Physicians for Social Responsibility conference held in Denver. We will also explore how we can most skillfully manifest our new membership responsibilities.

It would be greatly appreciated if any members of BPF from other chapters traveling through Boulder would arrange to stop and speak to our fledgling group; we would be happy to provide accommodations. For further information on the Boulder chapter please contact Barbara Meier, P.O. Box 448, Boulder, CO 80306, (303) 442-7267.

Also of note: Naropa Institute has extended an official invitation to the Board of Directors of BPF to hold a public forum/conference here in Boulder; summer 1985 seems like a possible time. Thich Nhat Hanh has been invited to attend the Annual Naropa Christian-Buddhist Conference to be held in summer 1984. Vajradhatu has recently accepted responsibility for fundraising for the United Nations Lumbini Project, an endeavor to create a symbol of international cooperation and world peace at Buddha's birthplace. The project, first envisioned by U.N. Secretary General U Thant, would consist of a Sacred Garden, a cultural center and Hinayana and Mahayana monastic enclaves. For further information on this important project write: Lumbini, 1345 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302.

Barbara Meier

The following two groups are not officially chapters of BPF, but we've been hearing a good deal from them in the last months.

England

Buddhists in England have been quite active lately. Some thirty participated in a march in London on October 22, protesting China's persecution of Tibetan Buddhists. Later that evening they met to discuss the formation of a British BPF. Quoting from the minutes of that meeting, "...we would like BBPF to be open to 'Buddhist sympathisers' as well as to card-carrying Buddhists. Some of us have problems with labels; with statements of principles also, for that matter: to say one accepts a principle and then find one cannot live up to it can create conflict. On this point it was suggested that one's basic commitment is to the general principles rather than to a particular form of words."

The group seems to have as a principle focus resisting the persecution of Buddhists throughout the world--in Bangladesh, Tibet, Vietnam. Anyone working in this area, or interested in doing so, should make contact with the British group: c/o David Arnott, "Gilletts", Smarden, Nr. Ashford, Kent, England (0233 77224). More information about the group is in its newsletter, available from the above address. Please include something for mailing costs.

Providence

Buddhists from Providence, Rhode Island recently had a meeting to discuss forming a chapter. Sam Rose sent us the following com-

ments from participants in the meeting, which struck me as both familiar and fresh--a window onto the process of a Buddhist peace group in formation.

"The methods used in most political protests are difficult to take to heart. It's difficult to participate in them and feel like I'm telling the whole truth." "I wish to stay rooted in what's happening inside me as part of the process of taking action." "Thich Nhat Hanh spoke once of putting 95% of one's energy into preparation (clarification of intention) and 5% into action." "One sincere action is more effective than many incomplete ones." "Let's not get caught up in having a 'big effect'!" "I have a feeling of urgency and want to do something now." "Even though I know my motives may not be entirely 'pure,' I don't have to wait to be 'perfect' before acting." "We should do something together soon--and it should be small!" To contact the group, write Sam Rose, 12 Inkerman St., Providence, RI 02908.

Working in the Courts (continued from page 1)

court ruling will be binding on the lower courts, and we think there's a good chance the appellate court will reverse Bachand's ruling, at least on state of mind. By his reading, we were charged with willfully and maliciously obstructing traffic; but the word "maliciously" was put in the statute for a reason.

If we win the appeal on state of mind alone, trial judges will be bound to allow defendants to testify as to whether or not they were malicious, and why they did what they did. There are 229 defendants in this case, but every person who commits nonviolent civil disobedience in California from now on will be affected by this appeal. Civil disobedience actions are planned in January to protest the opening of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant, and there will be more c.d. actions back at the Livermore Lab in the coming months. All trials of people who plead "not guilty" to such offenses may be stayed pending a ruling on our appeal, so it has far-reaching consequence.

Our wonderful lawyers are dedicated peace activists who happen to be lawyers, but we don't hold that against them. They are us and we are them. The Western States Legal Foundation desperately needs money for our defense. This is the kind of "strong defense" we believe in. Our trial cost about \$20,000, of which we have raised about \$8,000; and the appeal will cost roughly another \$20,000. Please send your tax-deductible contributions to Western States Legal Foundation, 3124 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions (1631 Grant St., Berkeley, CA 94703. 415/548-2208).

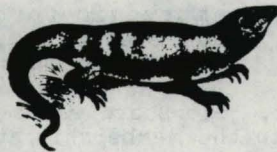
When our trial and sentencing were over, at the end of a long hard day, three of our jurors appeared and joined us in our closing circle, singing with us:

We are the soul in everyone,
We are the dance of the moon and sun,
We are the hope that will not hide,
We are the turning of the tide.

Susan Moon

38 Days,
I Fear for You, Dorothy

It was the contrast
I think
that startled me
Dorothy Granada, early
in her fast
Talking with hands
facial muscles
eyes
A woman of strong purpose:
"I am prepared to give my life
to stop the arms race."
Then 38 days into her fast
a woman, weak
facial muscles sagging
hands clutching a cup of water
all animation gone
yet still saying softly:
"I am still willing to sacrifice
my life."
And it goes, her life
away from her hands
her eyes
and I
I sit helpless
rolling towards West Oakland
with the newspaper in my lap
I want to stop
change directions
I want to tell Dorothy Granada
Dying in a Catholic Church
in East Oakland
"Stop it, Dorothy.
Stop your fast.
Here is a bowl of soup.
Eat, Dorothy.
You frighten me
with your will to die."
I eat potato chips,
salad, and bread
I want to be well-fed
when I look at you, Dorothy
I hunger for food
as you hunger for peace
But the bread goes thud
in my stomach
The potato chips cackle
The salad tosses to and fro
And I do not feel safe anymore
looking at you
looking at a Third World woman starving
looking at a bomb victim
looking at a mental patient
looking at Hiroshima
and Auschwitz
and that stretch of San Pablo
deep in downtown Oakland
I do not feel safe anymore
Dorothy, will you stop?
Dorothy, I want strong women to live.
Dorothy, will you drink this soup?
Dorothy, my hands are trembling.
Dorothy, I am frightened.



Judy Wells

Postscript: Dorothy Granada stopped fasting
on Sept. 13, 1983, the day I wrote this poem,
her 39th day of fasting.

Spring Issue:
Feature Section on An All Beings Fellowship

A year ago the BPF introduced some interesting language into its Statement of Purpose. The first principle had read:

To make clear public witness to the Buddhist commitment to peace and to nonviolence as the means for achieving peace.

It was revised to read:

To make clear public witness to the Buddha Way as a way of peace and protection of all beings. (Emphasis added.)

That phrase, "protect all beings," struck me at the time and has been a puzzle to me ever since--a puzzle on the order of the Bodhisattva's first vow: "Beings are numberless, I vow to save them." Who are these beings? How is it possible to save or protect them? Who is it that makes this vow, and what kind of separation is implied in the grammar of "we (humans) save/protect them (all beings)?"

I think that clarifying our thinking on this score would contribute something to, first, the peace movement in the religious community, and second, the larger peace movement. As to the first: "The Buddhist Peace Fellowship goes into its affiliation with the Fellowship of Reconciliation as the first peace group under the FOR umbrella to include in its charter a statement about peace for all beings". (Interview with Gary Snyder, from The Vajradhatu Sun, December, 1983.) We have a green light to helping to expand the thinking and language of the FOR, with its (until now) Judeo-Christian anthropocentrism.



As to the second, the disarmament movement seems to be largely motivated by human-centered worry--for oneself, family and friends, and the human race itself. Humans, and no other species, have created the mess, and humans, no less, are to save the day--or so the rhetoric goes. It's just possible that both sides of the arms race are handicapped by the same myopia, and that a way beyond the entrenched positions might be to think in terms of ourselves as just one more species in the whole planetary system.

While "protect all beings" is a pregnant phrase for us Buddhists and peaceworkers, we have not yet delivered it of its meaning. To this end the Newsletter will feature in its next issue a forum on what it means to protect all beings, and what the implications are for an All-Beings Fellowship. We want to hear from the ecologists, tree protectors, animal liberators, whales and coyotes themselves! We don't expect to produce a tidy and consistent picture, with everyone holding to a party line. We all get tired of agreement. So let's have some hard questions!

Please direct your letters, essays, poems, artwork, paw prints, and other spoors to Patrick McMahon, c/o BPF Newsletter. Deadline is March 1.

Patrick McMahon

News of the November BPF Board Meeting

Hello? The operator's voice: "Mr. McMahon calling from Berkeley for Mr. Foster. Mr. Foster?" I'm here, all right, ringed with documents--the minutes from August's meeting, the agenda, memos from staff and Board members, proposals for action, the Nominating Committee's report. "Please hold."

Manoa's colors are beginning to deepen in the late afternoon light. Somewhere in the darkness of space, a satellite-borne computer draws the links together, and suddenly we're all there: Aitken-roshi at his old home on Maui, Joanna Macy in San Francisco, Gary Snyder on his Sierra Nevada farm, Ryo Imamura and staff member Patrick McMahon at Patrick's house in Berkeley.

Roshi, Board President and meeting facilitator, scarcely pauses for the chorus of greetings. In the year this Board has been together, it's gotten good at these disembodied gatherings, unflappably dispatching BPF business in conversations suffused with wit and friendship. Despite a brisk pace, the meeting lasted over three and a half hours, and its minutes run a full nine pages. One of its decisions, part of a larger effort to strengthen communication within BPF, is that the secretary will now summarize the proceedings of each Board meeting, for publication to the membership. This report inaugurates the new practice, though the task is simplified because the meeting's major organizational decisions and some of its news have already been reported elsewhere--through the election mailing and Aitken-roshi's column in this issue.

The Board has begun to articulate an understanding that BPF is above national boundaries. Or below them, perhaps--more fundamental than boundaries. While it will probably remain useful to organize in national units, the Board is moving to establish primary project responsibility at the local chapter level and to develop a general membership and structure of consultation that is transnational, border-blind.

At November's meeting the Board approved in concept the creation of an advisory panel composed of such luminaries as Thich Nhat Hanh, the Dalai Lama, Nichidatsu Fujii, and A.T. Ariyaratne, along with a representative from each of the national BPFs. Eventually, if BPF continues to grow internationally, the responsibilities of administration, coordination, and policy formation that now rest with the (U.S.) Board could pass to this panel.

Ryo Imamura reported the formation of a Buddhist Action Group for Central America, a new group working in the Bay Area. Inspired by BPF member Dorothy Marschak's recent visit to Nicaragua, the group has adopted the twin purpose of encouraging the sangha to speak out for peace in Central America and to join the church movement in offering sanctuary to undocumented refugees. The Board approved BAGCA's request for endorsement and urges chapters to take up Central America and refugee work in whatever way seems fitting. The Board asked BAGCA to draft a position statement on Central America for consideration at

the next Board meeting, which was tentatively scheduled for January 10. For more information or to join BAGCA's efforts, write Dorothy at 138 The Uplands, Berkeley, CA 94703.

The Board is also deeply concerned about the violence that has broken out in Tibet. Reports indicate a crackdown by Chinese authorities, including several executions, and a resulting exodus of 2000 new refugees. (See article in this issue.) British and American BPF members have moved into action on this issue, which is particularly close to our hearts as Buddhists. The Board asked Michael Roche to prepare a review of the facts and a draft position statement for its consideration. Others who have information to share or who would like to form a Tibet action network should contact the BPF office.

Finally, let me mention two projects in the offing. First is a proposal for publication of a resource booklet on engaged Buddhism. Fred Eppsteiner of Rochester BPF, author of the proposal, points out that the growing literature on this topic is mostly scattered through small, often obscure or out-of-print periodicals and thus is generally inaccessible. Fred has gathered 17 articles which could be published as a single volume, perhaps the first in a series to be produced by Rochester or other BPF chapters. The Board has embraced this idea and is working with Fred to round out the table of contents. If you have a favorite article that might be added, send it to Fred at 114 Richland St., Rochester, NY 14609.

The other project, still in embryonic form, is a second BPF conference similar to the retreat with Thich Nhat Hanh that was held last March at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center. The Board wants the conference to be open to the membership at large and organized by a chapter at the site. Naropa Institute has extended an invitation to convene a retreat on its grounds in Boulder, Colorado. With a chapter now forming in that vicinity, the board is seriously considering this possibility. Stay tuned for more information.

One personal note. This is my swan song as a Board member and the conclusion of some five years in which BPF and I have been an integral part of each other's lives. It feels great, not because I need a breather (though that's true, too) but because BPF has outstripped any expectations I ever had for it. Most of all it has proved its value by providing avenues for us to deepen our practice of Buddhism--together, across group, sect, and national lines--in exploring what it means to implement our vows in this earth temple so full of bombs and bulldozers.

BPF may never become the kind of force that politicians respect. Indeed, my hope is that it will continue in its present course, helping individuals and small communities to give form (political, economic, social, etc.) to the change that Buddhist practice works in the heart. In that way, it will become--we will become--mysterious powers for completely decentralized change. Something like the wind or sun.

Nelson Foster

Introduction to the Legislative Alerts

Welcome to the bottom of the hill--Capitol Hill, that is--up which the mighty weight of public opinion must constantly be rolled. 'Tis aptly said that "freedom is a constant struggle," for legislative gains that have taken many years to achieve are by no means permanently assured victories. The task is that of constantly trying to move forward while recovering from backslides. This legislative alert page will, in the future, indicate where many-handed pressure may be effectively applied on Congress.

Thich Nhat Hanh made the analogy of a people and its leaders to drops of water in a stream: it is not that one drop leads the rest, but rather, it is pushed forward by those behind it. It is up to us to monitor the government, and to insist on being heard by those who claim to represent us.

Congressman Ron Dellums (D-CA) used another image: warning us not to mistake most congressmen for persons with integrity and conscience, he referred to them as mirrors, reflecting only what they see--the most visible of their constituents. Given this hall of mirrors, it is all the more important that strong, solid, and true models stand before the glass. Specifically, he mentioned that letters to legislators were one important way to make our presence known.

Statistically, it takes only 500 letters--each one representing 100-300 unexpressed opinions--for a legislator to seriously reconsider, or firmly take, a position on an issue; a scarcity of letters may allow him to ignore it altogether, or, to vote simply as a trade-off for another Congressperson's support later on. It is probably this very lack of principle; and the standardized responses to correspondence, that may have discouraged many people from pursuing the path of the pen as a means of effecting change. But while Mr. Dellums may have confirmed our worst suspicions that there's nobody at home in Washington, he is nonetheless emphatic about the need for transmitting our points of view in that direction, loud and clear.

The means are simple: a brief, hand-written letter, geared to one or two points on a single issue, is sufficient. If appropriate, mention the bill's number and sponsor. Be sure to put your return address on the letter, as envelopes get thrown away. Ask for your legislator's position, as well as stating your own; letters of support are needed as much as criticism. For the most part, correspondence to legislators other than your own is ignored, or referred back to them as a matter of "congressional courtesy." (The exception is writing to the chairman of the committee which is considering a bill. 90% of the bills coming out of committee for a vote by the full House or Senate are passed as-is, according to the committee's recommendation. Input is critical before the bill is either killed in committee, or reported out to Congress-at-large.) One should write to one's own legislators at the time a bill is first introduced in Congress to request their co-sponsorship. If it makes it back to the floor, it's time for another letter (or postcard) to your representative(s), urging them

to vote one way or another. Should the House and Senate versions of a bill differ, a compromise version will be worked out by a joint House and Senate Conference Committee, and then sent back for a final vote--your last chance to lobby.

Now why should this sort of factual, non-nonsense column appear among articles of a more personalized or "spiritual" bent? For one thing, we subscribe to and digest several sources of information--more than an individual might have time and money for. Also, taken in view of Practice, and not just practicality, letter-writing is actually quite amenable to Buddhist guidelines, when exercised without end-gaining ideas--the results of one's actions may be unknown, negligible, the opposite of one's intentions, or provide no satisfaction for the effort. It falls into the same category of activity as the well-used example of washing the dishes. (Incidentally, Ann Fagan Ginger, a Berkeley lawyer, strongly suggests that letters should be written before you do the dishes; that way they'll surely get done.) But there is also the possibility for each person's seemingly inconsequential response--or lack thereof--to have real effects on the lives of others. As a community, and as part of national networks, we can reinforce each other's efforts to influence policies.

Let us take heart from Citizen Sisyphus, for he found unsuspected solace from his punishment of unrelenting rock-rolling: he came to love his labor. Now, maybe that's just a rumor spread by someone who likes happy (un)endings, but it's useful, even as a white lie, given the choicelessness of the circumstances--namely, the absolute necessity for constant vigilance and strenuous public pressure upon Capitol Hill.

SOME EXCELLENT SOURCES: Get your information directly for well-timed action. Congress reconvenes on January 23th.

--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 Friends Committee On National Legislation Washington Newsletter focuses on a different issue each month, providing background to specific legislation. Also prints a Congressional Directory of legislators, including committee and key sub-committee assignments. 245 2nd St. NE, Washington, DC 20002. Their Hotline is broader in scope and briefer in content than the other hotlines. Updated weekly, generally Fridays. 202/547-4343.

--The Nuclear Arms Control Hotline provides the latest information on nuclear arms issues in Congress in a 3-minute taped message updated every Monday night. 202/543-0006

--The Central America Hotline includes information on which legislators sit on committees dealing with Central America issues, and which ones are waivering in their positions. Updated weekly, usually Fri. 202/483-3391.

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



BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
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Stray Thoughts on the Nuclear Age

When you develop a sense of history
You realize just how insane our world is...

Any moment
Any Second
Everything can end...

Someday perhaps
Our world may seem
Some shining memory
Of wonder and madness...

Are you going away
With no words of farewell
Will there be not a trace
Left behind...

We've made our world a vast park
Tame and safe for ourselves
And our children...

How safe we made our little world
How safe?

No place to run
No place to hide

from the fifty thousand warheads
And the silence and despair...

At any second it could go

At any second it could go

The point is not whether this missile or that
missile is a provocation
But whether the existence of all missiles,
all bombs,
Is the only provocation
The final declaration
Of human suicide...

What person
Or business
Or government
Or mechanism of any kind
Can you think of
That has never made a mistake
Or had an accident

Think of a world without the bomb

Mike Steinberg

