



# BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 7, No. 2 1985

## The Dalai Lama Visits the United States

*This is the second visit of the Dalai Lama to the U.S. His first visit was in 1979. A man of peace, he never stops teaching us to LOVE WITHOUT FEAR, to have the COURAGE TO ACCEPT CHALLENGE AND TO MAKE FRIENDS. In order to bring peace, he told us to get to the real cause of aggression, to be like the warrior working for the happiness of all beings. This is a talk given by His Holiness on Oct. 19th, 1984 in Los Angeles.*

*(transcribed by Jenny Hoang)*

I am very happy to be here. I enjoy visiting this beautiful country and its proud people. The highly developed technology in this country has given you many nice things, many good facilities, but technology can also destroy your happiness. Its negative effects can cause you more anxiety and loneliness, and a restless and unhappy mood only brings you more enemies.

Money does not bring happiness, maybe fifty percent, and sometimes it only brings trouble. On the other hand, love and compassion bring inner peace and assure 100% happiness. It is, therefore, very important for you to practice the Buddha way of loving kindness to help stabilize the mind. Have the courage and determination to work for happiness.

We don't turn our minds inward enough. Only when we think inward, can we experience different levels and stages of consciousness, including feelings, mental perceptions and sensory organ functions. Then we can directly experience our negativities such as anger, hatred, attachments, and jealousy, but at the same time we can experience also kindness and tolerance.

When you mindfully investigate the nature of conscious-

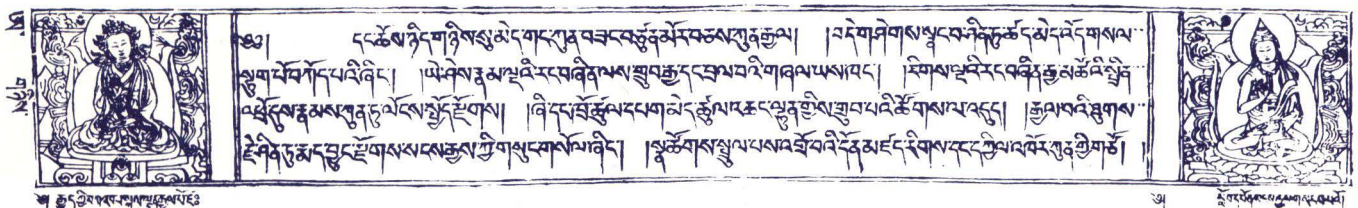
ness, you will see those blind attachments are of a suffering nature, and you will have a clear idea of what makes up this impermanent world. This clarity will influence your thinking and an inner development of harmony and unity will follow.

This world is short of "humanity." Put yourself to work for others, which is the basis of our humanity. Then, humanity will respond to you. If your motivation is for yourself alone, you will lose. Your self-centered behaviour only isolates you from everyone else. You might have some people who surround you because they can take advantage of you, but these are unreliable friends; the minute you are unstable they will leave you. You might have power and money and people come to you, but when you are in trouble, nobody will come. Real friends are concerned about your well being, and will always be there.

If you want to be selfish, be very wise also: make more friends. Through prayers, through smiles, through kindness, make more friends. I myself lost a country, but I instead gained many, many friends. Humans are social animals. One of the human qualities is the wish to be friendly with each other. Bees and animals know how to be altruistic. They know we should depend on each other. Experiencing temporary happiness on Earth will make a better society and a more fulfilled humanity.

Love and Compassion brings mental peace. Mental peace expresses itself in physical action which is peace action.

Investigate more into your own nature. It doesn't matter what religion you practice. All religions offer the same message. Fighting and division create more sufferings. Follow sincerely your own faith without criticizing or interfering with others' faith. In any system of politics, in any ideology, have the courage to seek unity and keep your heart warm with hope.



A typical example of a modern woodblock print, excerpted from a commentary on the *Gabyagarbbatantra*, printed in Uchen script. From John Stevens *Sacred Calligraphy of the East*, Shambhala, 1981.



---

There are three categories of Compassion:

1. That which observes the suffering sentient beings without understanding any further.

2. The second level of compassion is deeper and utilizes wisdom to look into the real nature of suffering. Impermanence is at the root of men's fear, anger and attachment. Knowing this will prevent us from using each other blindly and hatefully. Suffering is like illness. Two people caught in anger are like two ill people arguing. There is no real reason to feel anger because the other person is just like oneself and he or she can be a friend instead. So, you can have compassion for them instead of anger. Having that understanding, that distinction between anger and compassion, between friend and enemy, you can change your mind. Since thoughts change, and thoughts come from mind, so you can have different thoughts.

3. The third category of compassion has to do with emptiness. It reposes on the principle that all beings are illusion. It is a complicated one so I am not going to get involved in discussing it.

For us now, all beings exist, and our survival depends on the kindness and efforts of others. In a lifetime, how much do we depend on others for food, clothes, for facilities, and our going from here to there? My staying at the Century Plaza is the labor of so many people, and I am using the resources of all beings on Earth. Shouldn't we be kind to them, and hold them dear and have compassion for them? Please don't wait until you have a motivation to love and to help. I have a nice watch; it has helped me throughout the years. My watch does not have any motivation to help, right? Even our enemy teaches us, and we should be grateful.

### *Questions and Answers*

A.: How can one practice patience before the nuclear war threat?

DL.: Analyzing the situation without losing control and without anger, only then is one able to take strong measures.

Q.: Are you returning to Tibet?

DL.: I have been invited to go back to Tibet, but right now I think I could be more useful outside, than inside, Tibet.

Q.: Why is it so difficult for me to practice loving kindness?

DL.: Do you have any alternative? In order to have mental peace, one needs compassion and kindness . . . and patience. Our enemies are our teachers about patience . . . be mindful of kindness. Every being is very kind to us; we should be grateful.

Q.: How can we turn anger into kindness?

DL.: Think about the good aspect of that person. Use breathing and one-pointedness to weaken the thought of anger. In daily thinking, see the disadvantage of being angry and the value of kindness.

Q.: What can one person do about the threat of a nuclear war?


DL.: Individual inner peace can influence family harmony

and family harmony can extend further. Education brings about an external development. The general outlook of the whole society may change.

Q.: How can we get anger out of our system? Scientists say it is better to get it out by expressing it. Please comment.

DL.: There are two types of consciousnesses that have to do with anger. When you experience grief, when you go through a traumatic experience, it is better to express it by talking with someone so that it will disappear. But when it comes to hatred which is worse, you should have more control, and it takes lots of seeing into the real root of it. I talked to scientists about this and they agreed with me.

Q.; I try to love people, but it's very hard when they are not happy and they don't like me. What can I do?

DL.: They have the right not to like you. We should develop basic health to diminish fear and to create a healthy atmosphere for the spirit of brotherhood. 

## *President's Column*

The recent events of President Reagan's visit to West Germany and his comment that Nazi soldiers were also victims of the war bothered me into making a response. In the process I've come against the limits of my understanding. I've also had very good discussions with friends. This is the best I can do so far, and I'm counting on you to help me see better.


I think Reagan was trying, however dimly, to approach the idea of reconciliation, but he left out at least two essential things: what the word victim means, and that a Nazi soldier isn't separate from us.

He didn't make clear the distinction between a war victim who receives horrible pain and death at the hands of another, and the owner of those hands. The distinction between one who is subjected to torture, and who who consciously and willfully performs it. The one forced to die, and the one who chose to kill.

What I think Reagan was trying to say is that in Germany many soldiers were boys who, as did the unresisting populace, got eaten up in the pressure of an insane ideology. It was indeed a time of great darkness, but they were not victims, they were participants. They chose to follow the orders.

What I wish Reagan had said is: We are not different from the people who became Nazis. The ignorance, the fear, the darkness belong to each of us. Any one of us could follow those orders.

And any one of us could choose not to follow those orders. It's very, very hard to go against the national tide, to risk your job, to risk your person.

And then we have to remember we have a choice. For instance: whether to send more Pershing 2 and cruise missiles to West Germany. 

*Catherine Parker*



# *A Talk by Achaan Maha Ghosananda*

## *on Modern Buddhism*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a great honor to be here today—to listen and learn from each other. It is a collective response of the human spirit to the human suffering in the world.

The suffering of the Cambodian people has been only a mirror of the suffering of the world. The Buddha's Four Noble Truths tell us that enlightenment begins with the simple realization that life is suffering. Many people have misunderstood this truth to be a negative pessimistic view of being. Rather it is only a statement of circumstances to be viewed without attachment. In fact, as Gandhi knew, our suffering is the path to self-purification. He said, "When the Satyagrahi practices Ahimsa and suffers voluntarily, his love develops tremendous potency, and due to the principle of spiritual unity he affects and elevates the entire environment and all people around him, including the opponent." He calls Satyagrahi "The Law of Suffering." And as the Buddha taught, suffering teaches us Compassion, Karuna. And so when I think of the suffering of my people, the Cambodian people, I am filled with great Compassion.

When I was asked to speak about Modern Buddhism and self-determination, the most obvious beginning is with each individual. The Buddha said upon his Maha-Parinirvana, "You must work out your salvation with Appamada." What does this mean? We are each one of us responsible for our own salvation. This is self-determination in its purest, most essential meaning. And all understanding of liberation, be it personal or rational, must start from this. There has also been misunderstanding about the idea of personal salvation. It is debated among many different religions and schools of thought within Buddhism. Personal salvation does not mean a salvation exclusive of the whole of humanity. For if you follow the Eightfold Path of the Buddha, your growing union with the universal spirit becomes a natural unfolding until your Love embraces all living beings with Compassion. The personal salvation is only a microcosm of human salvation. If you meditate on the Ten Paramitas of the Buddha, then you will gradually transform yourself into a selfless person and cannot help but elevate and inspire others around you. Gandhi said, "The Satyagrahi seeks his self-realization through social service." The Dalai Lama also, in a letter to me, said, "To exterminate the Root Cause of all sufferings, we must seek Refuge in the Triple Precious Gems and strive hard to develop a strong will, brotherhood, and altruism. It is my firm belief that this will bring lasting Peace and Happiness for the entire human race."

The key to social service or social ethics in Buddhism is, I believe, Metta. And Metta is really no different from Ahimsa. The Buddha teaches Ahimsa or Metta both as Love and Avoidance of injury to self and others. The Love that the Buddha teaches is the deliberately radiated Love of well-being

towards all living beings whatsoever. According to Buddha, even when one's body is dismembered, one should radiate good will towards all beings, remain patient for the sake of delivering even those that do him harm, and do then no injury even in thought.

In the Buddha's Metta Sutra, he says, "As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son, so let there be good-will without measure prevail in the world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of differing or opposing interests. If a man remains steadfastly in this state of mind, all the while he is awake, whether he be standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, there it comes to pass, they say, 'Even in this world Holiness has been found.'"

If we are to approach the subject of Modern Buddhism and self-determination as a way which is relevant, it is not important to focus on the circumstances of Buddhists and to reiterate that Buddhist Cultures and peoples are suffering in Tibet, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Rather we need to address what we, as Buddhists, can do to foster liberation of the human spirit and therefore of every nation and the greater human family. We must begin to use our Religious Heritage as a vital, living resource. We must find the courage to leave the traditional temple and enter the temple of the teeming human experience, filled with suffering. If we truly listen to the Buddha, if we truly listen to Christ, if we truly listen to Gandhi, we cannot do anything else but this. The Refugee Camps become our temples, the prisons, the ghettos...the battlefields. In this respect, we have much work to do, for the majority of the so-called strongholds of Buddhism (as well as other religions) are merely tools of the status quo, and with this kind of blind acquiescence, the very heart of our faith is destroyed. Indeed, this is a slow process of transformation, for the people have been trained to rely upon a traditional monkhood, and even many Cambodians say to me, "Monks belong in the temple." It is difficult for them to adjust to the truer more vital role which is in tune with the organic needs of mankind—a role which answers the increasing cries of suffering in a most natural way. In working out our salvation with Vigilance, it is important to remember that we carry our temple with us always. We are the temple.

And so, in regards to Buddhism, I ask some specific questions. What can Buddhism do to heal; what did the Buddha teach that I can use in helping to heal and up-level the human condition? It is important to remember that one of the Buddha's most courageous acts was to walk into the battlefield to stop conflict. He did not sit in a temple; he did not wait for the opponents to approach him . . . but he walked right into the battlefield to stop conflict. In Western language, we are developing this knowledge. We call it conflict resolution. How do we resolve a conflict, a battle, a power struggle? What does reconciliation really mean? Gandhi gives some answers, "The essence of the non-violent technique is that it seeks to liquidate



antagonism but not the antagonists." This is important to remember. The opponent has our respect; we trust implicitly human nature and understand that ill-will is caused by ignorance. Through appealing to the best in each other we both achieve the satisfaction of Peace . . . we both become Peacemakers. Gandhi called this "bilateral" victory and not "unilateral." Reconciliation then is a means to Peace and what is the tool? Metta is the tool. One of the immovable pillars of Buddha Teaching is in fact the Truth of non-violence. The Buddha stated very clearly that in no situation could violence be cured with violence, could hatred cease with hatred. Only in loving can hatred be appeased.

In July the U.N. held a conference to discuss the future of Cambodia. During that time, we held a Buddhist Ceremony for Peace in Cambodia. At the end of the ceremony a Khmer Rouge came to me very cautiously and asked that I come to Thailand to build a temple at the border. I said I would do that. "Oh," thought many people, "He is talking to the enemy. He is helping the enemy. How can he do that?" I reminded them that Metta embraces all beings, be they noble-minded or low-minded, good or evil. The noble and the good are embraced because Metta is flowing to them spontaneously. The low and evil minded are included because they are those who are most in the need of Metta. In many of them the seed of goodness may have died merely because warmth was lacking for its growth, because it perished from coldness in a Mettaless world.

Gandhi also said that he was always ready to compromise. He said, "Behind my non-cooperation there is always the keenest desire to cooperate on the slightest pretext even with the worst of opponents. To me, a very imperfect mortal, ever in need of God's grace, of Dharma, none is beyond redemption."

And I do not question that loving one's oppressors—Cambodians loving the Khmer Rouge—may be the most difficult thing to achieve. But it is a law of the universe that retaliation, hatred and revenge only continue the cycle—never stop it. And reconciliation does not mean that we surrender right and conditions, but rather that we use Metta in all our negotiations—that we recognize ourself in the opponent. for what is the opponent but a being in ignorance—and we are also ignorant in many things. Therefore, only Metta and Right Mindfulness can free all of us.

Again I would like to repeat a quote from Gandhi. I mentioned earlier, "When the Satyagrahi practises Ahimsa (Metta) and suffers voluntarily, his love develops tremendous potency, and due to the principle of spiritual unity, he affects and elevates the entire environment and all people around him, including the opponent." Remember this and you have the key to reconciliation. Gandhi also said, "The more you develop Ahimsa in your being, the more infectious it becomes, until it overwhelms your surrounding and by and by might over-sweep this world.

And so to bring the discussion back to self-determination, we see two things:

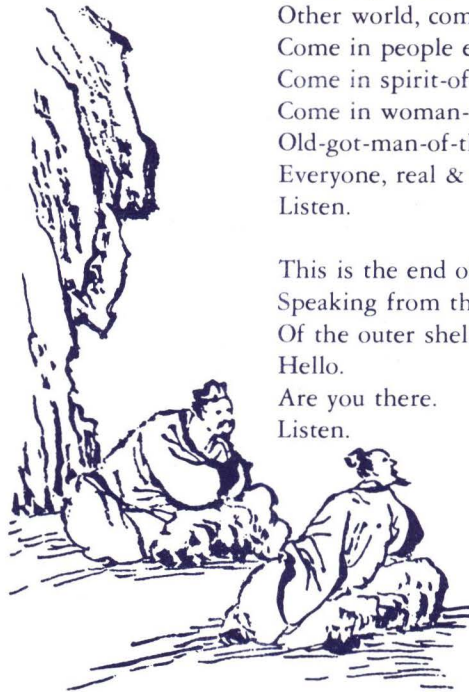
1) that we are all individually responsible for our own salvation, our own happiness, and that

2) through our service we find a road to this salvation—service being Metta, the loving of all beings, the neutralization of opposing forces, and the upleveling of ignorance into light.

### *Ground Zero Calling*

Come in, world.  
Other world, come in. Come in.  
Come in people everywhere.  
Come in spirit-of-the-mountain.  
Come in woman-under-the-sea.  
Old-got-man-of-the-desert, come in.  
Everyone, real & mythical.  
Listen.

This is the end of the world calling.  
Speaking from the inner edge.  
Of the outer shelf of our continent.  
Hello.  
Are you there.  
Listen.



*Jerry Martien*



### *Leaf*

The leaf swings, it has the right to swing,  
as the mind breaks open  
and everything has the right to be here.

A million French-Russian-Chinese revolutions  
do not shake the world  
like this fragile leaf.

Put your head on my chest—  
All the leaves inside are stirring  
soundlessly—I cannot bear it—

this innocence breaking out of my brain.

*Noelle Oxenhandler*



# *BPF Hosts Public Workshop*

*By Tom Berthoff & Paul Shippe*

On Saturday April 13 the Denver/Boulder chapter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF) completed a successful workshop intitled "Peace & Aggression". More than forty people attended including poets Allen Ginsberg and Pat Donegan, co-director of Karma Dzong, Ane-La Pema Chodron, local BPF members, and a wide range of people from the Boulder/Denver area, including teens and children.

The event was modeled after a workshop format developed by Joanna Macy, a teacher of world religions who studied with the Sarvodaya self-study movement of Theravadin Buddhists in Sri Lanka. The workshop was held at 1111 Pearl Street in Boulder and was the result of collaboration by members of the Karma Dzong sangha, the Denver Zen Center, and Interhelp, a world network founded by Macy.

The local all-day workshop was facilitated by David Silver, M.D., Christine Caldwell, head of the Dance Therapy program at Naropa Institute, Allen Ginsberg, Paul Shippe and Barbara Meier of the Boulder BPF, Sam Rose of the Denver Zen Center, and others. The workshop was an admirable forum for reflection and experience. It was also a lively expression of some of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship goals such as making "clear public witness to the Buddha Way as a way of peace," raising "peace and ecology concerns among American Buddhists," and promoting "projects through which the sangha may respond to these concerns."

Joanna Macy speaks of "Despair and Empowerment" in her recent book\* that describes the workshop format, a series of cumulative exercises founded in Buddhist meditation. The local workshop provided an opportunity to study Macy's new work in detail through a varied combination of formless and structured exercises that draw on artistic and non-conceptual forms of expression such as dance, song, drawing, walking, touch, etc.

The workshop began with hosts welcoming participants into the large airy room. They were then asked to draw with crayons on butcher paper, in groups of four, something they love about life. Suns were drawn, and trees, oceans, ghetto blasters, families, dancing people. Individuals were then paired up and asked to introduce each other to the whole group now formed into a large circle. The large mandala-like pictures, now hanging on the walls, were used to introduce the person. An atmosphere of playfulness and humor prevailed.

The focus for the morning was supposed to be, according to Macy, "despair"—connecting with one's own feelings of fear towards death and war, with a sense of the preciousness of individual life and potential. Instead of presenting conventional information and promoting discussion about an "issue" the exercises were crafted by David Silver and Christine Caldwell to help foster an atmosphere of permission and

validation for whatever feelings came up. There was no demand to do anything with the feelings. Several of the participants later expressed gratitude for this unusual sensitivity.

The main morning exercises involved random walking and actually seeing the people one passed, making brief eye contact, recognizing the basic worth of each human being and the ephemeral, fleeting nature of life. This exercise began with stretching movements and developed naturally into a quiet mindfulness practice of just noting sensation. The walking began slowly and built up to a hurried pace. Slowing again we began to acknowledge people around us, then to touch hands and actually see the person while responding to a suggestion that this person might die in a nuclear war.

The vulnerability of opening together to the truth of impermanence seemed to connect immediately to warmth, tenderness, and a feeling for others that was often expressed in tears. Macy's description of this experience as "despair" or even as "pain for the world" seemed only minimally accurate for us. As Ane Pema Chodron expressed it, there was an "archetypal, primordial quality" to the sorrow, and "heroic" feeling not especially connected with nuclear arms or war at all but more to the simple reality of life. Some of us wondered later if the workshop as planned really was about a concern for nuclear war and the condition of the planet. The answer is yes and no. Yes, because environmental degradation and a nuclear threat are a real aspect of the world we live in. No, because a touching awakening to our humanity was revealed that we often shut down.

Our group seemed to experience this process as an immediate sense of "making peace with our own aggression." There was no long drawn out process of "getting in touch with feelings of despair," or wallowing in touchy-feely emotion. Rather, there was a direct sense of caring for others more than for oneself. Because this was shared in the open there may have been embarrassment for some. We ended the morning with a "check-in" where people expressed simply their reactions to the exercise. A theme commonly expressed was how much one is habitually closed off to other people. A middle-age woman confessed it was the first time in her life she ever realized her "family" was larger than her son, daughter, and husband. We prepared for lunch with a rousing rendition of "My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean," followed by a hilarious version of the same tune called "My Neighbors Are Dead" led by a 10-year-old boy.

The afternoon session was punctuated generously with singing led by poet Allen Ginsberg on his harmonium. This was the "empowerment" section, so to speak, concentrating on recognizing our individual abilities and discovering the workability of the world and our problems. Many said this had already happened to them quite naturally in the morning. Exercises included sitting meditation, tong-len or "Breathing

\* *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age*



through" as Macy calls a similar technique, a large group drawing, and song.

The central practice was called the "Four Abodes of Brahma". This exercise, done in pairs, involved a guided contemplation of one's partner including suggestions of the potential for positive and adventurous work you could accomplish together. It is difficult to convey in words the power, sincerity, and magic of this experience for many of the participants. Again, it was a direct awakening to a wider humanity in ourselves. The exercises seemed to give people a soft quality, a feeling of living compassion right on the spot. Song became a natural expression of this joy and power. We spent at least half an hour singing crescendoes of AH along with Allen Ginsberg. Beethoven's Ninth Symphony couldn't have sounded better at that point.

The workshop began winding down towards the "real" world with a discussion, and the concerns of people's daily lives arose. "Love and light is wonderful, but what do we do now?" seemed to be one possible sentiment although no one expressed this directly. No one was really sure what had

happened. Former peace activists spoke of their disillusionment with changing the world. New peace activists spoke of their confidence. Kids spoke of their friends. No one expressed a need to resolve anything intellectually.

We finished with another song, a simple tune from William Blake's poem "We Welcome In The Year." It seemed appropriate enough for a Saturday afternoon in April. After several choruses conducted by Ginsberg and harmonium the large circle began spontaneously to dance weaving in and out changing partners in a joyous reel. The wordless conclusion seemed to be that people had touched themselves and others in a way they wouldn't forget, had fun, and were glad they came. It was a party!

Longer range goals of the growing local chapter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship include hosting a late autumn visit of Thich Nat Hanh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, poet, and author (*Miracle of Mindfulness*) living in France, and helping to establish a curriculum in peace studies at Naropa Institute.

*Tom Berthoff and Paul Shippe are members of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.* ♪

## "Hello Mr. Secretary-General" An Interview with Brother Chon Le

*This past Fall, with my wife and two children, I spent two weeks in southern France with Thay Nhat Hanh. His community, Plum Village, is both a retreat center and an agricultural enterprise. Overseeing the farming operation is Chon Le, who left Vietnam as a 'boat person' in 1980. He lives in the lower hamlet at Plum Village with his wife and three sons. A quiet unassuming man, he outwardly appears as a simple hard-working and tireless farmer, but has a presence that shines through his mud-stained clothes, long rubber boots and straw hat. Thay Nhat Hanh held Chon Le in the highest respect, as did the rest of the Tiep Hien community there. So it was with great delight one Sunday that we attended a Plum Village tea ceremony hosted by Brother Chon Le. Now dressed in brown robes, he conducted himself with great dignity and warmth. Afterwards, I requested an interview with him. At first, he was reluctant. "My life is not worthy of much interest," he said. I replied that based on some talks I'd had with Thay, I felt Chon Le's life and thoughts would be of great interest and inspiration to American Buddhists. He relented.*

*The translator for the interview was Sister Cao Phoung, herself an exemplary and deeply compassionate human being. An interview with her will be published in the next Newsletter. Special thanks to Evelyn Talbot of the NYC BPF for help in transcribing the tape of this interview.*

*Fred Eppsteiner*

FE.: When you were growing up in Vietnam, did you have much interest in Buddhism? At what point did your attitudes begin to change and Buddhism became more meaningful or relevant?

CL.: I was born in a Buddhist family and my family lived

near to a Buddhist temple. As my parents were Buddhist, I was too. I went to the temple and recited the sutras like the others. Normally, for most people there is not that great an interest in religious matters. It was only at the age of almost twenty that I began to study Buddhism as well as other religions. Then I found out that I had a rich religion. I found Buddhism to be more interesting than other religions, so I became more involved in it. I started learning about many other religions and I compared them and had a kind of sense of judgment about them. My change was not drastic. It came through gradual involvement and not by duty of religion or by friend's pressure.

FE.: When did you first encounter or think about the ideas of engaged Buddhism? Was it something that grew within you or did you read a book or meet somebody inspiring?

CL.: After high school, I attended college, graduated and became a teacher. I then taught high school for about three years. But then Thay Nhat Hanh started the School of Youth for Social Service and I felt very interested in it, more than being a high school teacher. So I left my other job and came to join the School of Youth.

FE.: What personally motivated you to join the School? I think it's hard for you to talk about yourself. You're not used to it. Could you express a little bit concerning what went on within you, because the ideas of engaged Buddhism are not mainstream Buddhism, especially in Vietnam.

CL.: When Thay founded the School for Social Service, my feelings were so natural. It is the duty of everyone to be involved. Young people especially should become involved in



such programs. So I came and I felt it natural that I work for the School rather than in some other place.

FE.: At that time in Vietnam, the students and teachers were involved in different political factions. Wasn't there any confusion in your mind? Shouldn't I be more politically active, oppose the war more strongly, fight against the Americans?

CL.: At that time, there were many political factions in Vietnam. Some students felt that to save the country, we had to join the NLF and there were those who felt we have to join the government to kill all the communists. Then there were Buddhists, so-called Buddhists, who want to demonstrate and get power and have a Buddhist government. But I was very deeply influenced by one book of Thay's called, *Actualization of Engaged Buddhism*, and that book was very clear, very brilliant and I felt very close to its message. I felt that what Thay said already existed in me. It said something like everybody has to fulfill their own role or duty. If you are a mason, you have to do the work of the mason and not do the work of the carpenter. A carpenter cannot do the work of a mathematician or something like that. As Buddhists, we have to fulfill and develop the role of all the qualities of the Buddha, such as non-violence and love. These are the basis of Buddhism. I found that those so-called Buddhists that demonstrated and demanded for a Buddhist government were playing a kind of partisan politics, and this is not real Buddhism. Real Buddhists should do every act that illustrates the spirit of the Buddha—non-violence, compassion, love and understanding. And so it was natural for me to see the School of Youth for Social Service more attractive than doing other activities like demonstrating.

FE.: As Secretary-General of the School, what kind of work were you and the School involved in?

CL.: My main work was coordinating at the same time two kinds of major activities. One was the work of basic change of society by reconstruction and building, while the second related to coordinating the relief work, to relieve the suffering of people from the war, like war victims, orphans, and refugees. But the basic work was very important, so let me explain it. We saw that the situation of Vietnam was that there was much poverty in the rural areas, while in the cities a small number of people had education and became the ruling class. These people enjoyed all the good things. The majority population in the countryside had no education and were poor. So our work was to create change, but not by taking power to create change. You cannot make a revolution, when people don't want to change. So we wanted to change both the mind and the structure in the countryside. Our worker's plan was to go into the countryside, stay with the peasants and educate the children. Then we'd educate the adults for improvement in agriculture, animal husbandry, health care, and so forth. All this basic work we do from our own abilities. We didn't start with a big project and large amounts of money. Our basic work was to start with everything that we had in our own heads. When we arrived in a village, we knew that we had no money and that most of the peasants didn't either. But we knew that

one man did and another had many bamboo trees. So we don't make a big project, like five thousand dollars for a school, for example. We start the school by asking the rich peasant for a small piece of his land, and the other peasant for some bamboo trees, and other peasants for other items. So in a few weeks we can gain the sympathy of the peasants by teaching their children under the trees. Then, people ask us, "how much money do you earn from the Government?" We reply, "None." Then we say that we are Buddhists and that in the past the Buddha said that if you do good work for the temple, one earns merit. But we think that helping the children right here is meritorious and is more Buddhist than doing good work for the temple. So we teach the children, and people are now motivated because we use the word "punya"—merit—and they say, "Ah, I know that if I have some free time, I go to the temple to earn some punya." And we say that we earn our merit by helping the children. So the peasants come to us and we set up a village school from money and resources that are in the village.

FE.: So you're going into traditional Vietnamese villages and telling the peasants that going to the temple isn't the only way to earn merits. Didn't this bring you into conflict with the Buddhist hierarchy, the local temple and traditional Buddhist religious values?

CL.: In fact, all the Buddhists were not so difficult. Yes, our way was truly revolutionary, but they didn't mind. If they didn't like us, they didn't like us, but they didn't fight against us. They just ignored us. But I think that those who were against us were less than those who supported us, especially in the countryside. In the rural Sangha and temples, we obtained much support from everyone. In the bigger hierarchy, there were those who didn't like us, but they didn't cause any damage. They ignored us and didn't help us, but we really didn't need them.

FE.: Thay told me that you were drafted at one point into the South Vietnamese Army.

CL.: When I first joined the School, it had no statute for military deferment. So I was drafted and was very unhappy, but I didn't know what else to do. One is caught and everyone is caught in the war situation. It took me three years to find a solution out of the army and that was by pretending to have drowned.

FE.: During your three years in the Army, did you have to engage in combat?

CL.: During my service in the Army, I very much wanted to leave, but I could find no way. I saw many miseries and unhappy things. Since I didn't try to be a good fighter, I was always a low class soldier. Most college graduates became officers in the Army, but I always remained at the lowest grade.

FE.: Being a believer in non-violence, how did you function in the Army?

CL.: When one is part of the war machine, one cannot avoid war. I tried to cause the least damage to my friends as well as



---

the other side, the "enemies," as I could. First, since I was caught in the war machine, I tried my best to do my minimum duty and cause the least damage to anybody. Secondly, the more I was in the Army, the more was I witness to all the stupidity and craziness of both sides in the fighting. People are so crazy and cause so much suffering to each other for so little reason.

FE.: So you were finally able to get out of the army by pretending to have drowned. Then you returned to Saigon and became re-involved with the School. I know there was some persecution of the school and its workers. Some were hurt and some were killed. What gave you the strength to endure three years in the army and then return to another type of 'war' situation in your work for the School of Youth?

CL.: As Buddhists, we know that all this pain and suffering is life, and we have to overcome it. We have to be outside all this suffering and bitterness. Yes, we must be detached. Detached doesn't mean detach and forget, but detached and involved. We help with detachment and do our best. This doesn't mean our efforts will be excellent, but what we can do within our own abilities, we do at our best with the detachment spirit. Thus, we will not be too sad or unable to achieve what we wish. Often, it is not within our ability to accomplish all our goals. We are not Buddhas or Bodhisattvas yet, so we cannot completely achieve what we wish. This is life. If there are many bad things, we do our best. Success may come now or later, but it will come eventually. This is my belief.

FE.: It is true what you say. Yet there must have been times when you felt bad or desperate. There was so much suffering in Vietnam. What did you do then, personally, to nurture and restore yourself?

CL.: There are moments of great difficulty, when everybody feels stuck and cannot do anything. So I just put it down and forget it, and go for a walk or play or do some other things. You don't want to commit suicide, it is only a waste. So just forget all the work, all the duty and go and relax with other things. No responsibility. Then you will see the balance again and can return to your work.

Now when I say relax and play, it doesn't really mean play. When I was stuck with difficult situations at the School for Youth, I would forget the difficult situation and just drink tea or do walking meditation or relax and take care of the trees. Acting as if I have nothing to do with the School, I would do other work with a relaxed and mindful mind, with good care and no thinking. Then, when I'm relaxed, I look back to the difficult situation which I must deal with, but at that moment I'm more detached than before. I can see in a clearer way and know what I must do to remove the obstacle.

FE.: What happened to you and the School after the NLF

takeover?

CL.: Before the arrival of the Communist forces, there was much chaos. There were those for Saigon and those who were for the Communists. But we never tried to make big propaganda for ourselves and the School. Our way is not to make propaganda. Only those who were helped by us, like the war victims and refugees, knew our work. We never made big publicity for our work in the village also. When you make big publicity, you can create friends, but you also make more enemies. And our way is a silent way. We just do silently for those who we help, and then we are happy and that's all. And those who know us, they just come and go quietly.

As I said before, I had been in the army and knew a lot about the situation in South Vietnam. I knew that sooner or later the national government would lose the war. They trusted too much on the Americans and their aid. Also, I knew that the collective karma of Vietnam was large, and that I could not change everything by myself. I could only do my best with my ability within the milieu and environment that I found myself. Before their arrival, I had had no experience with the Communists. Yet I knew, since I heard from Vietnamese who had fled the North, that if the Communists seized power, there was no chance that they would agree to work with us. They always monopolize everything and always want control. But we still had to do our best.

The Communists took power in April, 1975, but we continued our work until July, 1975. At that time, there was much relief work to do since there were many war victims and refugees and orphans. We still had medicines and foods and other things for them. As soon as there was a new government, we met with the Minister of the Social Welfare Department. We presented what we had done in the past ten years to help change the conditions of the rural poor and about our relief work. We said we were ready to continue our work with the Government's permission. They said that they appreciated our good work in the past, but that now they have their own plans and don't need us and we should stop our work. So we closed the School.

FE.: This was in 1975 and you didn't leave Vietnam until 1980. What occurred during those five years?

CL.: After ten years of work, one cannot just stop and ignore the suffering. We had to do something to continue our work, but in a silent and individual way, not collectively as before. So other students and workers of the School did what they could individually, but not me. The government thought I was the head of a big party and that I was dangerous to them. They confiscated many things of the School, searched records and did violence and robbery to our property. I knew that sooner or later, I would be arrested, so I moved away from the School to another slum far away. There nobody knew who I was and I declared to the police that I was an employee of a private

---

*all beings protect all beings protect al*



organization. So I didn't lie, but I didn't tell the whole truth. But after four years they discovered the truth. They invited me to the police station and said, "Hello, Mr. Secretary-General of the School of Youth for Social Service...." Surprisingly, they treated me kindly. They said, "We know that you didn't like the presence of the Americans in Vietnam. You also didn't like the puppet regime, but we know that you don't like us also." And we laughed. I knew then that sooner or later I would be arrested and could be killed. So I said to myself that I must keep my dignity. Even if I have to die, I must die with dignity.

I told them that, of course, we are Buddhists and we have to live according to the Buddha's teaching. If there is something good in you (meaning Communism), we can work together. But if there is something wrong, we must be against it. It's a Buddhist law that we must work for the realization of happiness and compassion. So we cannot totally follow the government's way. I said that this is our way and we must live by it. The official replied that there is only one unique way and that is the way of the Party. He said he knew also that our literature and magazines contained sentences that were harmful to the present government. So I repeated to him the sentence from Thay's book that I like so much, the one about masons must do the work of masons and so forth. I said, "We are Buddhists and have to do the Buddha's work, which is a non-violent way of helping our country. Of course, we couldn't accept the presence of the Americans or the violence of Thieu, as well as your way. I feel that we can contribute to the country in our own way." After more interrogation, they let me return home. Several months later, they started arresting many writers and intellectuals. Some had previously been interviewed, given a short term of reeducation and released. But then suddenly the police returned and re-arrested them. So when I saw this happening, I was afraid that I would be arrested also, so I fled by boat with my family.

FE.: Talking with you, it's obvious that you've experienced much injustice during your life. Do you ever feel yourself experiencing feelings of anger or bitterness to those who've wronged you?

CL.: I didn't like the way of the French or the Americans or the South Vietnamese government or the Communists. I think that what I admire most in Buddhism is that there is no word "hate" in Buddhism. So when we don't like something or someone, we must live in a way that contradicts the way they behave or act. Since they destroy, we construct. Because they kill, we help to save lives. I think the Communists, as well as others, create hatred in order to use the energy that hate arouses. They use hatred in order to build up energies to achieve their objectives. We understand that this is completely wrong, because hatred is an energy that destroys and creates more hatred that just keeps circling around. So we must do our best to live in compassion and love, and not the energy of

hatred. People act in bad ways because they don't understand and are being misled. So we shouldn't hate them, but love them and help them to understand. The only way to change the situation is to try to understand that they behave like that because they are misled by hatred. So let us not continue to hate them, but to understand them and lead them in a better way.

FE.: If you were to look over your whole life and experiences and crystalize its lessons, what would you want to pass on to your three sons?

CL.: I would like to share with them the understanding of what's happened in my life. Not only in Vietnam, but here and everywhere. This is not a lot of knowledge, but the spirit of understanding, a deep understanding about the nature of life. I also hope that they'll be deeply inspired by Buddhism, the spirit of Buddha. If they are deeply inspired by the spirit of Buddha, they will know how to act for their future. I cannot know what they will do in their future, because I will not be there. But if they are deeply inspired by the spirit of the Buddha, then they will know how to act properly in all situations. ♪



*"Even children who, in play, gathered sand for a Buddha's stupa; such people and beings as these, have all attained to Buddhahood." From Saddharma Pundarika Sutra, "The Lotus of the Wonder Law." W.E. Soothill, 1930*

*ings protect all beings protect all beings*



# Tribal Buddhists Struggle for Life in Bangladesh

Nearly five years ago, a Buddhist monk from the Chittagong Hill Tracts brought word to BPF of his people's heavy suffering—a suffering unknown to any of us at that time and still unknown, probably, to most of us. The situation of these tribal Buddhists has worsened over the intervening years, and it seems time to ask ourselves again what we can do to help.

The Hill Tracts, in southeastern Bangladesh, are the historic refuge of 12 tribes that are ethnically, culturally, and religiously different from the Bengali Muslim majority. Their lands, once regarded as marginal, have become attractive due to the nation's intense population pressures, and the tribal people—scorned as inferior—are being driven off in favor of Bengalis brought from other parts of Bangladesh.

In a report published last year, Survival International criticized the Bangladesh government for waging "a campaign of violence that in the past decade and a half has reached genocidal proportions." The report summarized the situation thus:

*... tens of thousands of innocent tribal men, women, and children have been murdered; 12 to 15 thousand tribal people have been detained without trial, tortured, and some of them killed; thousands of tribal women have been kidnapped, raped and many of them forcibly converted to Islam; tens of thousands of tribal farmers have been herded into concentration camps and their farmlands have been distributed among the outsider Muslim Bengali settlers; about 85% of the tribal houses have been burned; Buddhist temples have been desecrated and destroyed; Buddhist monks have been detained without trial, tortured and some of them slaughtered . . . . In 1947, the tribal population and the Muslim Bengalis formed 88% and less than 2% of the total population of the CHT respectively. By 1982, the Muslim Bengali population accounted for more than 50% . . . .*

A recent letter from the Hill Tracts concludes, "The government's declaration is: 'Either become Muslims or go away to other countries.'"

After BPF was alerted to the crisis in the Hill Tracts, board member Michael Roche made a secret visit to the area and witnessed the plight of the tribal people firsthand. BPF began at that point a modest effort to bring this situation to the attention of relevant U.S. government agencies, human rights groups, and organizations such as the Asian Development Bank, which funnels most aid to Bangladesh. More recently, members of the British BPF have taken up the issue in a very active way.

At least two important human rights groups, the Anti-Slavery Society and Survival International, have now adopted oppression of the Hill tribes as a central concern. With the help of the Anti-Slavery Society, the Rajguru (Buddhist teacher of the king) of the Hill Tracts' largest tribe flew to Geneva last August to bring the issue before the U.N.

Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The World Council of Indigenous Peoples has also taken an interest, and BPF is now helping them gather information on which to act.

BPF members are urged to educate themselves about conditions in the Hill Tracts. We recommend the Anti-Slavery Society's booklet *The Chittagong Hill Tracts: Militarization, oppression and the hill tribes*, available for \$5 from Third World Publications, 151 Stratford Rd., Birmingham B11 1RD, U.K.

Politely worded letters of concern should be directed to General H.M. Ershad, President of the Republic of Bangladesh, Banga Bhawa, Dhaka, Bangladesh and to the Asian Development Bank, Roxas Boulevard, Manila, The Philippines. Letters to the ADB should ask that aid projects in the Hill Tracts be discontinued until such time as impartial observers can visit the projects and confirm that they benefit the tribal people. ☺

## Buddhist Peace Fellowship STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- To make clear public witness to the Buddha Way as a way of peace and protection of all beings.
- To raise peace and ecology concerns among American Buddhists and to promote projects through which the Sangha may respond to these concerns.
- To encourage the delineation in English of the Buddhist way of non-violence, building from the rich resources of traditional Buddhist teachings a foundation for new action.
- To offer avenues to realize the kinship among groups and members of the American and world Sangha.
- To serve as liaison to, and enlist support for, existing national and international Buddhist peace and ecology programs.
- To provide a focus for concerns over the persecution of Buddhists, as a particular expression of our intent to protect all beings; and
- To bring the Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace and ecology movements.

*Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world;  
it is appeased by love. This is eternal law.*

*Dhammapada*



*Summary of  
Buddhist Peace Fellowship  
Board of Directors Meeting,  
March 30-31, 1985  
at Green Gulch Zen Center.*

**Attended by:** Catherine Parker, Steve Walker, Jenny Hoang, Fred Eppsteiner, Ruth Klein, and Kenryu Tsuji. Also Present: Judith Gilbert, Andy Cooper, and Ryo Imamura.

**Staff Report:** Judith's application to receive work-study funds to match BPF for her salary was not accepted. BPF is now paying Judith \$200/month salary.

**Treasurer's Report:** Steve Walker submitted the treasurer's report. Once current bills are paid, we will have approximately \$1825. Current membership dues should generate approximately \$6,000. A rough budget estimate, including expenses for newsletter, staff, travel, phone, and office/printing is \$10,000. We will need to do considerable fund-raising to make up the difference.

**Membership Report:** Judith reported that the BPF office receives about 25 pieces of membership-related mail each week. At the present time BPF has 456 members.

**Fellowship of Reconciliation:** Ryo Imamura, past-President of BPF, attended the F.O.R. conference in Pennsylvania on March 28-29, 1985. He has been elected to the F.O.R. National Council, and is the first Buddhist in this position! Larry Christensen, of New York BPF, and Ryo attended the conference as representatives of BPF. Ryo started the first day of meetings with a Buddhist service. Thich Nhat Hanh is the honorary vice-chairman of the F.O.R. Ryo suggested that we encourage BPF members to join F.O.R., and to write for their publication, "Fellowship."

**Newsletter:** Fred expressed an interest in developing a higher quality quarterly, both editorially and in terms of production. It was decided that any change will be contingent on a specific proposal, and additional costs. The board acknowledged Kent Johnson's excellent job in editing the newsletter.

**Non-Profit Status:** Judith presented the steps necessary to filing an application for non-profit status, which would transform BPF from a "profit" to a legal entity.

**L.A. Fundraiser:** Jenny reported on the great success of the L.A. Fundraiser, co-sponsored by the L.A. BPF chapter, and the UCLA Writers Extension Project. The event was excellent PR for us.

**New Chapters:** The board moved that we accept the Portland Chapter application. There are 16 members, all of whom belong to national BPF. Jodo Shin and Zen are represented.

**Chapter Guidelines:** The Board will work on revising chapter guidelines. The following issues were discussed, and will be given consideration: \*withdrawal of chapter status when a chapter becomes moribund; \*guidelines on chapter officers, including a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and national BPF liaison; \*a minimum number of chapter members; \*chapter autonomy; \*the ecumenical nature of National BPF being reflected in local chapters; \*whether there can be more than one BPF chapter in any one city.

Jenny suggested that chapters read the "Purpose of BPF" guidelines at the start of each meeting. After group discussion, the board moved that all local chapter members be required to be members of National BPF.

**Engaged Buddhism:** Fred reported that "The Path of Compassion," edited by Fred and Dennis Maloney, should be available by April 15. All Board members need to help distribute this publication of contemporary writings on engaged Buddhism. Reviews are encouraged by all BPF members, as a means of generating "free advertising." The book will be available primarily through the Rochester Chapter of BPF.

**Regional Conference:** Regional gatherings were discussed as an important "next step." To some extent, it is hoped that Thich Nhat Hanh's visit in the fall will generate regional communication.

*Respectfully submitted by  
Ruth Klein, Secretary*



Board Member Addresses

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Fred Eppsteiner<br>114 Richland St.<br>Rochester, NY 14609    | • Catherine Parker<br>2629 Fremont Ave. S.<br>Minneapolis, MN 55408               |
| • Jenny Hoang<br>706 S. Mariposa #206<br>Los Angeles, CA 90006  | • Kenryu Tsuji<br>PO Box 2237<br>8134 Old Keene Mill Rd.<br>Springfield, VA 22152 |
| • Ruth Klein<br>RFD #5<br>528 Pound Rd.<br>Cumberland, RI 02864 | • Steve Walker<br>PO Box 1815<br>Nevada City, CA 95959                            |



## A Report from Ryo Imamura

Thanks to your support and votes, I recently became the first Buddhist elected to the National Council of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. For the next three years I will be acting as a liaison between BPF and FOR, and maintaining a Buddhist presence in FOR activities and deliberations.

As my first action as BPF representative to the FOR National Council, I strongly urge you to become a member of FOR (see enclosed FOR membership brochure) if you aren't one already. FOR, which has an American membership of over 33,000, is the oldest and largest international peace organization and the only one with an interfaith religious base. The FOR Fellowship magazine is a beautifully-written and highly respected peace journal, which contains articles by peace activists such as Robert Aitken, Thich Nhat Hanh and Joanna Macy and updated news about American and international peace activities.

My trip to Nyack, New York, for the annual FOR National Council meeting was both exciting and rewarding. I felt most grateful for the opportunity to spend four days with long-time peaceworkers with diverse backgrounds and affiliations and

from all areas of the U.S. What impressed me the most about the proceedings was the loving and thoughtful attitude expressed even during discussions on the more complex and intense issues—truly in the spirit of reconciliation.

It is an understatement to say that FOR is happy to have a Buddhist serving on their government body. I was given the honor of opening the first full day of the meeting with a Buddhist service. The service consisted of a Buddhist sutra chant from the Pure Land tradition followed by a forty minute meditation session during which I read *The Discipline of Peace* written by Thich Nhat Hanh. To my surprise they sat beautifully—so quiet, respectful and in perfect seiza posture. After the service, many of them came up to tell me how very peaceful and meaningful it was and how they must add meditation to their religious services back home. And everyone requested copies of *The Discipline of Peace*.

My brief experience within FOR has been wonderfully rich and stimulating. I hope those of you who are not yet FOR members will take a few minutes to read the enclosed FOR brochure and mail in the membership application. ☺



## Buddhist Monks Arrested

Phai Doan Phat Giao Viet Nam  
THE VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST PEACE DELEGATION  
7 rue du 8 mai 1945, Escalier B  
92340 Bourg la Reine, France

May 30, 1985

The monks Thich Tue Sy, Tri Sieu, the nun Tri Hai and the writer Doan Quoc Sy are the most persecuted among those arrested on March 22, 1984 (12 Buddhist monks and nuns) and on May 2, 1984 (over 20 writers and artists).

The writer Doan Quoc Sy had already received a visa for Australia, where he was to re-unite with his daughter, when he was arrested.

The Australian writer Patrick White, Nobel Prize, the poet Judith Wright, the play-writer David Williamson, president of the Australian Writers Union and the Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs already have intervened on behalf of Doan Quoc Sy.

Until now, most of the detainees could obtain permission to receive food from their families and have been put in cells together with other prisoners. Tue Sy, Tri Sieu, Tri Hai and Doan Quoc Sy are still kept in dark isolated cells at night and

from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. in interrogation rooms. This has continued for more than a year.

Gia Dinh, a former prisoner of Phan Dang Luu jail, HoChiMinh City, reported to us that he saw them every night around 11 p.m. when they came out of the interrogation rooms. They looked exhausted, ghost like, and skeletal but they retained their dignity. They refuse to accept the label "American or Chinese spy" which the authorities try to force on to them. For this reason their families have had no news of them even though Amnesty International, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Pen Club International, League for Human Rights, Buddhist Peace Fellowship and several intellectuals from different countries have intervened on their behalf.

We beg you to do something as well. Courteously written letters on their behalf can be addressed to the Vietnamese embassy in your country or to His Excellency the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Van Phong Thu Tuong, Hanoi, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

For the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation,  
Cao Ngoc Phuong,  
General Secretary



## Political—A Short Essay

Several weeks ago I received a postcard from Gary Snyder inviting me to write something for the Buddhist Peace Fellowship Newsletter—and I laughed. For with a new baby, now just three months, and my return to work, my life just now is very much absorbed in the intensely personal.

But this evening I have just finished reading for the first time Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth*, a profoundly moving autobiography of her life during the First World War, and a startling portrait of the War generation in England.

Reading this book reminds me once again that political and personal are in actuality no different, and that to take refuge in one or the other, making it one's total world, is folly indeed.

Vera Brittain writes, "When I was a girl . . . I imagined that life was individual, one's own affair; that the events happening in the world outside were important enough in their own way, but were personally quite irrelevant. Now, like the rest of my generation, I have had to recognize that no life is really private, or isolated or self-sufficient . . . We are now each of us part of the surge and swell of great economic and political movements, and whatever we do, as individuals or as nations, deeply affects everyone else. We were bound up together like this before we realized it."

In searching for a way to communicate the history of her generation during World War I, Brittain first tried to capture the time and events in a novel, but was unsuccessful. Finally she wrote of her own life and the lives of her family and friends, and it is the personal honesty and intimacy of her account that makes *Testament of Youth* such a powerful statement on war.

Vera Brittain lost her lover and only brother in the war. She herself served as a volunteer nurse in England, Malta and France from 1914-1918, while she was in her early twenties. Broken and disheartened by the loss of those she had loved, she turned after the war to the study of history at Oxford, and then to lecturing for the League of Nations, and to writing.

After the war she traveled to the scarred face of Europe, visiting the grave site of her brother and fiancé. While she, like many others, had shared an initial idealism about the purpose of the struggle, she finally asked herself:

"What enemy could there have been whose annihilation justified the loss of even one soldier? . . . It had amounted, in the end, to nothing but a passionate gesture of negation—the negation of all that the centuries had taught themselves through long aeons of pain. . .

"Perhaps, after all, the best that we who were left could do was to refuse to forget, and to teach our successors what we remembered in the hope that they, when their own day came, would have more power to change the state of the world than this bankrupt, shattered generation. If only somehow, the nobility which in us had been turned towards destruction could be used in them for creation, if the courage which we had dedicated to war could be employed, by them, on behalf of

peace, then the future might indeed see the redemption of human beings instead of their further descent into chaos."

But it was not to be. Her successors have engaged in one battle after another. What became of the passionate hope of the young supporters of the early League of Nations? What has become of the passionate hopes of my own generation?

I remember very vividly reading Hannah Arendt at the age of 17 during my first semester at college. It was, I think, the first time I realized the extent of the persecution of Jews during World War II. For weeks I wandered around campus in one of those intellectual and existential dazes that seemed to characterize my undergraduate days, asking myself, "How did it happen? Why didn't anyone stop it? Why, if they knew about it, didn't they do something?"

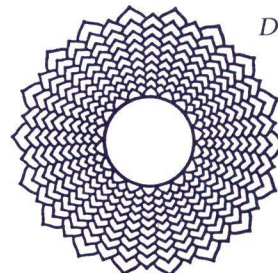
Now fifteen years later, with the disillusionment of Vietnam, and the spectre of Central America on the horizon, it seems as naive a question as Vera Brittain's eloquent postwar hopes. At this distance, such questions seem the province of the very young.

Yet if I do not continue to ask it now, surely it will once again be asked by my daughter, now sleeping so innocently in a tiny bassinet beside me. But the next war, as we well know, might will mean that there will be no survivors left to ask any questions.

And so I must ask it of myself now for them. And ask not only for my child, but for the grasses, trees, the streams, animals and birds. For indeed we are "bound together before we even realized it"—bound up together from the very beginning.

How can I let destruction occur? How can I stop it? What can I do? The necessity of doing something is obvious, but I despair of the means. I seem to have lost my faith in the political—in demonstrations and leaflets, in voting and bills. But certainly the personal is not enough. Though "the personal equals political" makes sense in terms of such issues as sexist language or birth control choices, it seems to pale as insignificant before the issue of nuclear war.

There's no wise conclusion to this essay, written in a couple of stolen hours between night nursings. I am left with only the questions, once again. I'm also left with the tasks which lie ahead for tomorrow—the load of diapers, the food shopping, going to work. I take refuge in them—they are my faith in peace, though I know it is not enough. But for now, it is all there is.



Deborah Hopkinson



# The Path of Compassion: Contemporary Writings on Engaged Buddhism

Edited by Fred Eppsteiner and Dennis Maloney

*The Path of Compassion* is a collection of contemporary writings on the engagement of Buddhism and Buddhists in the social, political, and economic affairs of society. Included are pieces by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on political action and social progress. Thich Nhat Hahn on mindfulness in activity, Robert Aitken Roshi on ecology and Gary Snyder on planetary culture. Robert Thurmond writes on historical events and contemporary guidelines for Buddhist social action, Joanna Macy on empowerment in the face of the threat of nuclear war, and Jack Kornfield on compassion and social action. Other selections describe the relevance of the Buddhist Jataka Tales to modern life, a Vietnamese nun's response to the war and conflict in Southeast Asia, and a Buddhist woman's response to rape.

To the non-Buddhist who believes that all Buddhists feel the worldly arena is to be shunned, *The Path of Compassion* offers explanation and clarity. To the Buddhist who feels unclear about the interpersonal and social implications of the Buddha's teaching, these writings offer guidance and inspiration.

*The Path of Compassion* is available by mail from the Rochester Chapter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. The book is approximately 175 pages long and sells for \$9.95 per copy. Postage and handling charges are \$1.05 for one copy, and \$.25 for each additional copy up to 12 copies. On orders for more than 12 copies, please get in touch with the Rochester BPF. Please send check or money order (in U.S. funds) payable to:

Rochester Buddhist Peace Fellowship  
P.O. Box 10605  
Rochester, New York 14610

## Thich Nhat Hanh's Visit to the United States

A Zen master, poet, and peace worker, Thich Nhat Hanh is a leading exponent of "engaged Buddhism"—the actualization of Buddhism's twin ideals of wisdom and compassion in and through the integration of meditation and work for the peace and protection of all beings.

Nhat Hanh was instrumental in the emergence and development of Vietnam's Buddhist nonviolence movement in the 1960's. He helped found and direct two of its principle bases: Van Hanh University and the School of Youth for Social Service. In 1966, he came to the U.S. to speak to the American public on behalf of the Vietnamese people and their wish for peace. For his work, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. nominated Nhat Hanh for the Nobel Peace prize.

Unable to return to his homeland, Nhat Hanh now lives in France where he has continued his work as head of the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation and as vice-chairperson of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. A prolific and versatile writer, he has authored many books, both in Vietnamese and English, among them: *Zen Keys* (Doubleday), *The Cry of Vietnam* (Unicorn Press), *The Miracle of Mindfulness* (Beacon), and (as co-author with Daniel Berrigan) *The Raft is Not the Shore* (Beacon).

This fall BPF will sponsor Nhat Hanh's visit to the States. Many were deeply touched by his words and presence during his last visit, also sponsored by BPF, in 1983. We invite all BPF members and friends to participate again.

We look forward to your participation in this important event.



### Nhat Hanh's Schedule

Sept. 12-19	Montreal
Sept. 20-30	Providence Zen Center
Oct. 1-9	Boulder Colorado c/o Denver/Boulder BPF
Oct. 10-11	Sante Fe c/o Dharma Sangha
11-16	San Antonio
16-21	Ojai Foundation Retreat
22-27	Watsonville, CA
28-Nov. 6th	Bay Area, CA
Nov. 7-15	Hawaii
Nov. 16th	leave for New York

Please contact your nearest BPF chapter or The National Office for more details.





*Current Buddhist Peace Fellowship  
Chapters and Overseas Affiliates*

- National Office  
Buddhist Peace Fellowship  
c/o Judy Gilbert  
P.O. Box 4650  
Berkeley, CA 94704
- Denver/Boulder BPF  
2838 4th St.  
Boulder, CO 80302
- Minneapolis/St. Paul BPF  
2629 Fremont Ave. St.  
Minneapolis, MN 55405
- Oahu BPF  
2085 Makiki Pl.  
Honolulu, HI 96822
- New York City BPF  
118 East 93rd. St.  
New York, NY 10128
- Australia BPF  
P.O. Box 368  
Lismore 2480, NSW  
Australia
- Western Mass BPF  
c/o Joe Gorin  
106 Jackson Hill Rd.  
Leverett, MA 01054
- Tumamoc BPF  
c/o Moss Stone  
707 E. First St.  
Tucson, AZ 85719
- Providence BPF  
38 Ring St.  
Providence, RI 02909
- Rochester BPF  
P.O. Box 10605  
Rochester, NY 14610
- Los Angeles BPF  
706 S. Mariposa #206  
Los Angeles, CA 9006
- British BPF  
"Gillets" Smarden,  
Nr. Ashford, Kent  
England

## *My Path To The Lamas*

Ole Nydahl. *My Path To the Lamas*. Nevada City, CA: Blue Dolphin Press, 1985, 240pp.

Here is a genuinely compelling story of two Danes, Ole and Hannah Nydahl, who in 1968 became the first Western students of the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa. In Ole's words, "the aim of this book is to form a bridge between two cultures that need each other, and especially to give to all who are looking for their true being...an introduction to a time-proven way to Enlightenment."

Their exciting travels (as well-intentioned drug dealers) on the worn path between the green lowlands of Europe, through myriad cultural worlds, to the peaks of the Himalayas—and their real adventure from confused states of consciousness—led them to experience the skillful teachings of numerous Tibetan lamas who helped transform their minds into "limitless clarity and joy."

Taught at the feet of the Karmapa, and commissioned personally by him, Ole and Hannah have since traveled worldwide to establish hundreds of small Buddhist meditation centers.

This inspiring travelogue was originally published in German (*The Buddhas on Top of the World*, 1980), and in Danish (*When the Iron Bird Flies*, 1983), and is now available in English, 1985. The book includes many early photographs of respected Tibetan lamas, and conveys in its pages the unique power, compassion and wisdom of His Holiness, the Karmapa.

When so many in the West are searching for a solid and easy-to-read introduction to Buddhism, suggest this one.

To order, send \$9.95, plus \$1 shipping for one and .25 for each additional book. California residents, add 6% sales tax. 10% discount on orders of 5 or more. All orders must be prepaid. Bookstores and wholesalers: please write for discount terms. Please make all checks payable to Blue Dolphin Press, Inc., P.O. Box 1908, Nevada City, CA 95959.

## An Appeal for Funds

Dear BPF Member,

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship has grown substantially in the past few years. Membership has grown to about 600; a quarter-time staff person has been hired; an excellent newsletter is published quarterly; and a book on engaged Buddhism has just been published. And this fall Thich Nhat Hanh will come to the United States for four regional visits sponsored by the BPF.

In one area, however, the BPF has not grown correspondingly, and that is money. For the 1985 budget of \$10,000 only \$6,000 of income has been identified—the paid memberships. The BPF Board is looking for long-range solutions to provide stable funding, but right now I am asking for your help.

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship needs an additional \$4,000. Part of this is for seed money for Thich Nhat Hanh's trip. Part is for continued operations of the (minimal) BPF office and staff and Board. Part is for regional conferences. Part is to increase the ability of BPF to respond to world-wide appeals.

If you and the other BPF members each contribute \$7, the BPF can continue its work. If you can send more—\$20, \$35, \$50, \$100—the Buddhist Peace Fellowship can serve more energetically and more effectively. As it is, the BPF is limited by too little money.

Please help if you are able.

*Catherine Parker,*  
President

P.S. Twenty dollars would be wonderful. Even \$5 or \$10 will help. Make checks payable to: Buddhist Peace Fellowship; Send to: P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.



## Call for Contributors

At this stage in the development of American Buddhism, the BPF Newsletter is playing a significant role in articulating the social dimension of Buddhism. You, as readers, are the soil in which it is growing. We hope to enlist you more directly in this growth by asking you to consider contribution articles, letters, poems, and drawings to the Newsletter. What are we looking for? Articles of an historical and philosophical bent; articles of a contemporary and critical slant; articles about meditation and social action or about the politics of non-duality; articles that address current social issues from a 'Buddhist' perspective; articles that tell us what you're doing, how you're doing and what you're learning; anything you feel is relevant to the BPF Statement of Purpose. We also invite response to articles. Ryo wrote an article concerning abortion several issues ago, and there was not one response. Surprising, considering the amount of controversy surrounding that issue everywhere else these days.

If you wish to submit an article or discuss an idea for one, please contact the editor, Fred Eppsteiner, Box 10605, Rochester, NY 14614. By the way, what do you think about calling the Newsletter, "The Lotus"?



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

I affirm the principles of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and want to be a member. My signature attests to my commitment. (See page 11, this issue).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Though no contribution is required for membership, BPF relies on members' support and suggests a minimum annual donation of \$10.00 U.S. residents, \$15.00 overseas. Please make checks payable to BPF (Unless, for U.S. residents, you wish to make your contribution deductible for income tax purposes: then make the check payable to "FOR" and note "Donation to BPF" elsewhere on the check.)

I am enclosing a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support BPF's work.

I don't wish to be a member, but I would like to receive the Newsletter. I'm enclosing \$10.00 for a one-year subscription.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Street or P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, County, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Buddhist Affiliation (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

BPF urges its members to join the BPF chapters in their area, and to join the Fellowship of Reconciliation in their home country.

If you have friends who would like to know about BPF, please send us their names and addresses, and we will send them an information packet.

- I would like more information on the Fellowship of Reconciliation  
 I would like more information on local BPF chapters

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP P.O. BOX 4650 BERKELEY, CA 94704 USA

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

<p>BULK RATE U.S. POSTAGE PAID Permit No. 174 Grass Valley, CA</p>
--