

PRIMARY POINT

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(This exchange of questions and answers which took place at Empty Gate Zen Center in Berkeley in April 1984, is typical of Zen Master Seung Sahn's teaching style.)

Q: A lot of us spend a lot of time trying to get rid of our bad karma and just end up accumulating more karma.

SSN: Is karma good or bad? Karma is not good, not bad. If you don't like karma, then take away your mind and all karma will disappear. All karma is from your mind. If your mind disappears, your karma will disappear. That's the point. When mind and karma both become empty, that is returning to your true self.

But if I have bad karma, how can I make it function correctly? How can I not be attached to my bad karma? By helping other people. In Korea there is a man like Robin Hood. He does many bad actions, takes money and gives it to poor people. So this is bad action, but how does it function? Even if you have bad karma, it's not for you but for other people, it becomes good karma. Likewise, good karma which is only for you becomes bad karma.

So it's very important how your good or bad karma functions. So don't be attached to it, don't check whether you have good karma or bad karma. You have karma, so how you use it is very important. The correct function means only helping other people, making other people happy. Then it's ok.

Once a man had very good music karma. That is very wonderful, but he used it for bad action. The music was so beautiful that people would lose consciousness, then another man would take their money. That is using good karma and making bad action. So bad karma is ok. How do you use it? How can you make it function correctly? Everybody has karma, and any karma is ok. The correct function of karma is very important.

Q: Where do good karma and bad karma arise from?

SSN: Good and bad have no self nature. You make the category "good," so you have good. You make the category "bad," so you have bad. Zen practice is about not making "good" and "bad." When you practice, what is your original face? If you

THIS UNIVERSE GIVES US EVERYTHING

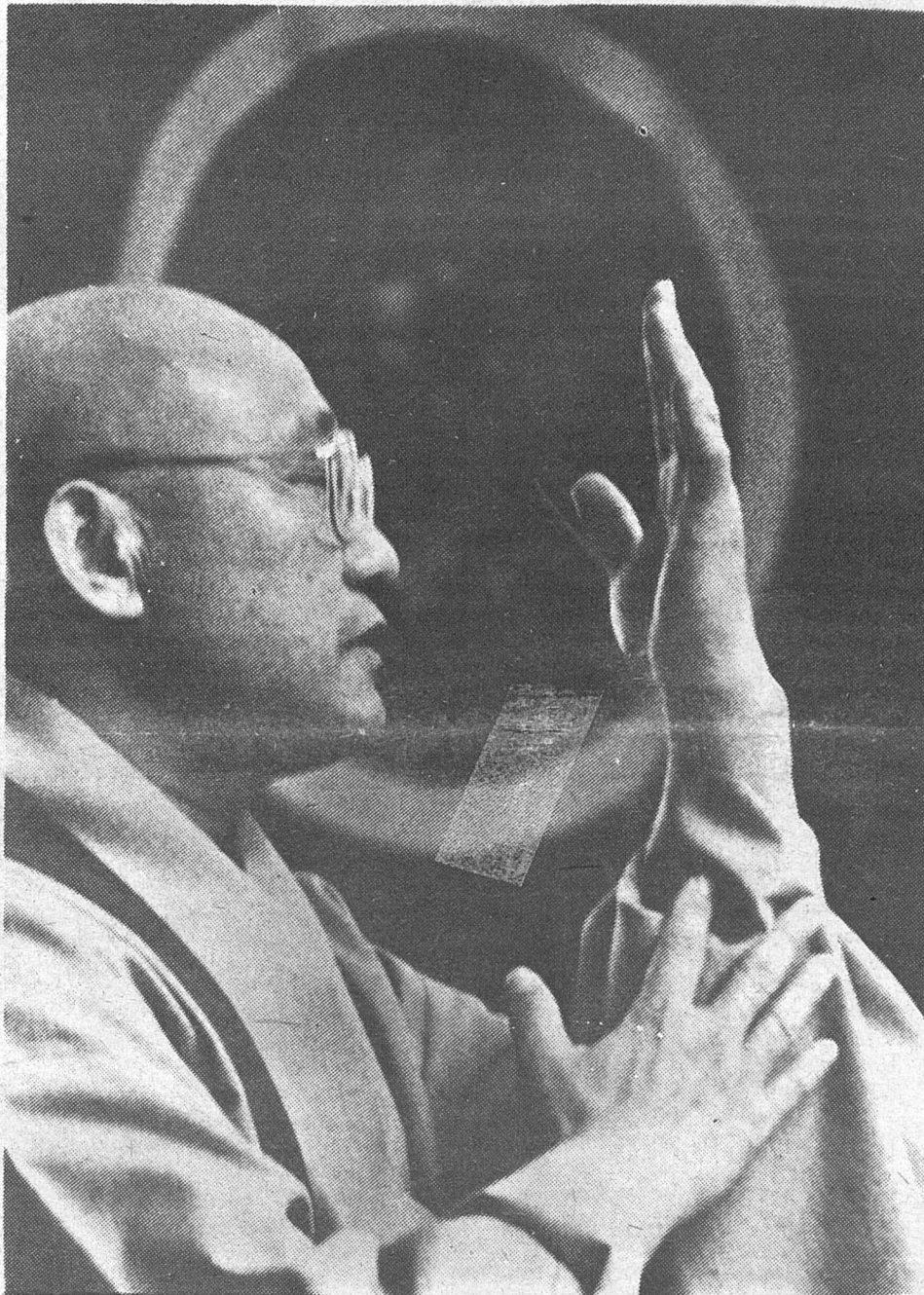


photo by Morgan Alexander

think, "I am bad," then you have bad. Don't think that, don't be attached to "I am bad." Just bring your attention back to the question "What am I doing?" If you do a bad action or make a big mistake, and you think, "I am bad," then that bad never disappears.

The mistake was made already, so how do we make it correct? How to make it correct is a very important point. Don't be attached to bad, and soon return to "What am I doing now?" If you do a bad action to someone, say "I am sorry." Then it is all finished. Understand?

Someone told me this story. A man and his girlfriend decided to do something together. In the daytime he went to the office and was working very hard. Time passed. He forgot to meet his girlfriend. She was very angry. How could he explain so that his girlfriend would feel good?

Someone suggested that he say, "I was so busy I forgot." Or, "I didn't feel so good, so I didn't go." When you are in a situation like this, many opinions occur to you. You check how your mind was at that time. Zen means don't check your past mind. Never check that. Only go straight. Already you made a mistake, so you go to your girlfriend and say, "I am sorry, I made a mistake. If you don't like me, then kill me, please." She will not kill you. But first, you have to make everything correct, then there is no good and bad.

Q: So what you are saying is, we are all bound by the law of karma and it's better to give than to receive.

SSN: Don't check on giving and receiving, just DO IT! (laughs) Just Do It! is very important. If you love somebody, then only love is enough. Don't check. If you are checking, that's like saying, when you like somebody, "I love you, why don't you love me?"—that's not love. Love is unconditional. Only giving, only giving, just as this earth, this universe, gives us everything.

Every day we breathe in, breathe out. Nobody pays money for that. Living in this world, food is very important, clothes are very important, a house is very important. For all these things we must pay money. If for only ten minutes you do not breathe, you die. But no one says "Thank you very much" for their air.

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SCHOOL CONGRESS JULY 26-28 AND ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN'S BIRTHDAY CEREMONY

The Third Annual Kwan Um Zen School Congress will be held at the Providence Zen Center over the weekend of July 26-28. Members and friends from all of the Zen centers and affiliates, including such faraway places as Brazil, Spain and Korea, will be coming to add their energy and wisdom to the common direction of the School, which is "to understand ourselves and save all beings from suffering."

There will be discussion and workshops on Zen practice in its many aspects, training for old and new Dharma teachers, and op-

portunities to develop our vision through the organizational structure of the school.

This weekend marks one of the four principal ceremonies in the School, namely, the birthday of our teacher and founder of the Kwan Um Zen School, Zen Master Seung Sahn. The ceremony, which will be held Saturday evening, will feature tributes from students representing the various Zen centers as well as others whose lives he has touched over the almost 14 years since he came to the United States. Following the ceremony will be a party.

On Sunday morning directly after bows (instead of the afternoon as originally planned), there will be a Precepts Ceremony for those taking the Five or Ten Precepts, Bodhisattva and Traditional Monk's vows.

**Zen Master
Hae Am
(1886-1985)**

The oldest living Zen Master in the world, Hae Am Su Nim, died at the age of 100 in May at Sudoksah temple in Korea, where he had been the Zen Master since 1956. Over 5,000 people attended the funeral ceremonies on May 23.

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This Universe gives us Everything

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The universe always gives us this air. This air has no hindrance, it connects with everybody, not just human beings. The air connects with trees and animals and sky. We are all connected by this breathing in, breathing out. When you sleep, when you're awake, whether you have good thinking or bad thinking, you breathe in and breathe out. Always. If you stop, you die. So this much is given to you, this air. This is love mind. Think about it.

Also, if we had no sun, we would die. If we exploded all the missiles that Russia and America have, a cloud would cover the earth. No sun could penetrate this cloud. The earth would grow cold—then what? Everything would die. So this sunlight is very important, but no one says, "Thank you very much, sun."

Any time you do not believe in love, you die.

Next is water, very important. For water we pay money. We don't pay the water, we only pay to have the water brought here from the mountain. Nobody pays the water any money. Also, if we had no earth, then what? We could not grow any food, any trees, any flowers.

Air, fire, water, earth—the four elements. The universe takes these elements and makes your body. That's your life's root. Correct roots. Nowadays, human beings don't understand their roots. "I go to the factory, I make money, so I make a living. I don't have to believe in God, I don't owe the universe anything. What's the big deal? I have money, I take care of myself." This style of thinking. We have all forgotten our human roots. If you have no air, no ground, you cannot stay alive.

Death of Zen Master

Continued from previous page

Dignitaries included officials of the Chogye Order of Korean Buddhism, sutra masters, government officials and congressmen, and over a thousand monks and nuns.

Hae Am Su Nim was born Seung Chun Choi in North Korea, the son of a farmer. When his father died, Hae Am Su Nim entered Phon Guk Sah temple near Seoul at the age of 11. He became a novice monk at 15, a Zen meditation monk at 23, and a full bhikku at 25. His monk's name was Hyeon Muh. He first studied with Zen Master Hye Wol, then with Zen Master Gong. In 1929 at the age of 43, he received inka and transmission from Zen Master Mang Gong. He was the abbot of many large temples, coming to Su Dok Sah at the age of 70.

Soen Sa Nim tells the following famous story. One day Zen Master Mang Gong and some of his sangha took a boat trip to an island where they were going to stay. As they went by a mountain, Mang Gong asked his companions, "Is the boat moving or is the mountain moving? Which one is correct?"



SOEN SA NIM PRESENTED WITH A WORLD PEACE AWARD at the Hyatt Hotel in Seoul, Korea on May 13, in ceremonies attended by thousands. The occasion: was the Peaceful Cultural Reunification Festival, the Asian Peace Art Festival, and the convention of Men of Culture for World Peace, with the support of the government of the Republic of Korea and sponsored by the International Cultural Federation.

A lengthy biography of Soen Sa Nim was read which included his many years of establishing Zen Centers in Japan, the Americas, Europe (especially Poland), his great contributions to Korean Buddhism, and his helping Western minds to get "peace mind" and understand correct direction and correct life. The award was presented for Soen Sa Nim's "long distinguished work in the cultural world, thus contributing in the true spirit of the WVM to the eternal peace, co-existence and co-prosperity of mankind."

Among many other dignitaries that Soen Sa Nim met following the ceremonies was former Governor of California Pat Brown, the father of another former California Governor, Jerry Brown, known for his strong interest in Buddhism and vegetarianism.

If you think "I am bad," then you have bad.

Anytime you do not believe in love, you die. What is your life? The whole universe is only giving, giving to you. We call that unconditional love. It has no condition. So you must also give to this universe. Loving and helping this universe is necessary. Don't make atom bombs, don't kill animals, don't pollute the air or anything.

Many people have seen the movie, "Never Cry Wolf." Human beings never understand their correct situation. Human beings are the number one bad animal. We have destroyed much of nature, air, water and trees. Then we say we want world peace. Not possible. That is number one stupid!

Even if you have bad karma, if it's not for you but for other people, it becomes good karma.

So that is not so good. Human beings must just now WAKE UP—that is important. If we do not wake up, we cannot continue this human world, ok? It will soon disappear.

Q: If all the animals in the world can exist in peace without human beings, then why are we here? (Laughter)

SSN: Why are we here? I ask you, why do you eat every day? (Laughter) If everyone gives to each other, then there's no problem. The universe gives us everything. We are holding our I-my-me, our "I want this?" so this earth has a problem.

You must understand correct love. There's the famous story about two women arguing about a baby. Each one said, "This is my baby." The King said, "Bring the baby here, I will divide it in two. You take half, you take the other half." He picked up his sword to kill the baby and one woman said, "Oh, you take this baby!" to the other woman. That is unconditional love. Not for myself, but only love for others.

FUNERAL POEM FOR GREAT ZEN MASTER HAE AM

Facing the blue sky, Ha! Ha!
Ha!
Looking down at the ground,
Aigo! Aigo! Aigo!

May 23, 1985

From the sky, the Sun, Moon,
Stars all into the ocean.

From the Ten Directions, all
Buddhas and Bodhisattvas
face the East and cry.

Un Mun's dry shit on a stick,
Dong Sahn's three pounds
of flax, disappear into space.
Joju's Mu is dancing under the
white rocks.

Great Zen Master Hae Am's
great wisdom shines bright
under the Dok Seung Mountain
pines.

Great Zen Master Hae Am's
great Dharma speech is
clearly heard from the sound
of the Su Dok Sa stream.

Great Zen Master Hae Am Su
Nim, where is he now?
DOL!

Shortly before he died, Zen Master Hae Am Su Nim was installed in February as the First Patriarch of the new Dok Seung Chongnim, or special training center at Su Dok Sah Temple on Dok Seung Mountain. There are only three other special training centers in all of Korean Buddhism, the "Three Treasure Temples." Hae In Sah (named as a chongnim in 1967) which is known as the Dharma Treasure Temple since it houses the entire Buddhist Tripitaka on 80,000 wooden blocks; Song Gwang Sah (named in 1969) known as the Sangha Treasure Temple, noted for its large number of Western students and whose famous Zen Master Ku Sahn died last year; and Tong Do Sah (named in 1984), known as the Buddha Treasure Temple where relics of the Buddha are enshrined in a stupa.

A chongnim is autonomous, enjoying complete freedom in its financial management and appointment of its abbots. The expression "chongnim" means "thicket." Literally, chong=the growth of grass without disturbance, and nim=the growth of trees without disorder. This expression signifies that within a monastery there are rules and regulations.

According to Zen Master Wol Ha of Tong Do Sah, the First Patriarch of the Tong Do Sah training center, a chongnim "is a place where the four trees grow well together and look like a single tree from the distance." The four "trees" means the four training halls of Zen meditation, sutra study, vinaya (monk's precepts) and chanting.

(We are indebted to Samu Su Nim, founder of the Zen Lotus Society of Toronto and Ann Arbor, and the editors of their quarterly SPRING WIND, for many of the above details about Su Dok Sah and chongnims.)



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ICE MELTS UNDER WATER:

Journal of a Winter Solo, Part II

By Master Dharma Teacher
George Bowman

George Bowman has been with Providence Zen Center since its inception and is now living at Cambridge Zen Center. He studied anthropology and biology at Brown University, and attended Duke University on a Ph. D. program in anthropology of religion in 1969, until he left to study Zen fulltime. He has studied extensively with other Zen Masters living in America, and led the first three Winter Kyol Che retreats at Providence Zen Center. A long-time runner, he has done extensive racing, including a number of marathons. George is a skilled carpenter and has worked on all the major PZC building projects. He was ordained a Bodhisattva monk in 1982.

(The following excerpts are from a retreat journal kept by Master Dharma Teacher George Bowman during the winter of 1983-84. We published other portions, under the title "Journal of a Winter Solo", in the Spring 1984 issue of PRIMARY POINT.)

Tuesday, Jan. 14. Yesterday was warm and sunny. I sat outside for a while with my shirt off and noticed all the insects that had come out to enjoy the sunshine and forage about. A honey bee came to inspect the bright color of my book and underwear, perhaps thinking it some strange winter flower that had bloomed.

Small spiders crawled about in the grass. It is so cold in winter here that everything freezes solid. Where do these tiny insects go in the extreme cold? Are they frozen solid or do they just find some



crevice in the earth and go below the frost line? Imagine being frozen solid in absolute samadhi only to wake to a new day with the warm sun shining. No history, no dreams, no doubt or interpretation—just going about their business. What a remarkable thing. Teeming millions of those creatures in their own world of eating, shitting and creating more of their kind. Perhaps insects shall inherit the earth after man's folly has run its course!

In the meantime I continue to sit, to go to bed to dream wild fantasies of the shadow self.

This morning is shrouded in grey fog. In the distance the sound of cars taking their occupants to and from work. The neighbor's geese were cackling about early this morning. Dogs bark and life goes on.

If it is true that this planet is becoming more conscious, bit by bit, then it is taking place in a time dimension hard to imagine.

To be aware of our cruelty and insanity, our pettiness, defensiveness, is to be aware of the end of it. The more practice, the more aware we become and with this wisdom is also the unfolding of the extent of our consciousness, and our limitations.

Continued on page 9

"For the cultivation of samadhi and wisdom"

FIRST INTERNATIONAL 90 DAY MEDITATION INTENSIVE AT JUNG HYE SAH, KOREA

How can we make world peace? "By sitting together and finding our true human nature," says Zen Master Seung Sahn (Soen Sa Nim). To accomplish this purpose he has set up numerous Zen centers around the world so that people can experience living together and sitting together. Long meditation intensives are ancient and powerful tools for attaining clarity of mind. This year the Kwan Um Zen School is offering three separate 90-day retreats, called "Kyol Che" or "tight Dharma:" one in the United States, one in Poland, and one in the mountains of Korea.



Tiny Jung Hye Sah in Korea is one of the most famous temples on Dok Seung Mountain. Built by Zen Master Mang Gong, Soen Sa Nim's grand-teacher, as a special meditation retreat for his senior students, Jung Hye Sah is the place where many great Zen Masters got enlightenment, so it has special meaning for our school. Soen Sa Nim strongly encourages his students to sit at Jung Hye Sah at some point in their practice, because he considers Dok Seung Mountain the "primary point" for the Kwan Um Zen School.

His Dharma name, Seung Sahn, means "man of Dok Seung Mountain." He stayed at Jung Hye Sah after he got enlightenment. Soen Sa Nim has said that during the Japanese occupation of Korea, the Su Dok Sah temple complex (of which Jung Hye Sah is a part) was the only large temple complex in Korea in which the monks kept the tradition of celibacy. All of the other large temple complexes allowed their monks to marry and have families.

The first 90-day meditation intensive for international students at Jung Hye Sah will start on November 26. The schedule will include 12 hours of formal practice a day, including rising early, sitting, bowing, chanting, working and eating together in total silence. Soen Sa Nim will open and close the retreat, but it is unlikely there will be other formal teaching during the retreat.

Living conditions are simple (outhouse and only occasional hot water) but Korean temple food is excellent. Only seasoned Zen students willing and able to live with few amenities should consider this retreat. Time for sightseeing in

Korea will be arranged following the retreat. Since formal invitations must be obtained from Korea, please write or call the director, Kwan Um Zen School, very soon if you are interested in doing this retreat. Participants must sit the entire retreat.

Jung Hye Sah is about an hour's hike above Su Dok Sah and its grounds are the forests of a rugged national park. There are numerous small hermitages and monuments on the mountain, each with its own special history. American students who have been to Jung Hye Sah attest to the strong energy of the place. From the courtyard and other vantage points, you can see a hundred miles. It is a wonderful place to practice.

The present Zen Master at Jung Hye Sah is Baek Cho Sunim, who came to Su Dok Sah at the age of 9 carried on his father's back. He and his father became novice monks together and trained under Zen Master Mang Gong. Baek Cho Sunim never left the mountain except for an occasional pilgrimage or outing. He is a muscular man with a strong voice and did a great deal of the construction work around the temple, including building many of the stone walls and stairs by himself.

Last fall, Baek Cho Sunim, then 85, gave a talk to some of Soen Sa Nim's American students who had been sitting a retreat at Jung Hye Sah. He said, "Your body home may be in America, but your mind home is here."

The present director of Jung Hye Sah is Hye An Sunim, who speaks some English. He is very interested in helping Soen Sa Nim develop the temple as an international training center. In order to become more acquainted with Soen Sa Nim's American style of Zen teaching, he came to the United States in March for several weeks to visit and practice at Providence Zen Center, Head Temple of the Kwan Um Zen School.

Mu Sang Sunim, who has traveled extensively with Soen Sa Nim, recently returned to the United States after a year-long retreat in a hermitage just ten minutes hike from Jung Hye Sah. He spoke about the warmth and directness of the Koreans he met and of the support he received from the monks at Jung Hye Sah, especially Hae An Sunim. He highly recommends visiting Korea and experiencing it firsthand, especially on Dok Seung Mountain.

KYOL CHE IN KOREA

Location: Jung Hye Sah, Korea
Teachers: Zen Master Seung Sahn at opening and closing only.
Dates: Nov. 26-late February
Registration: Entire 90 days. For experienced students only.
Cost: No charge for monks and those willing to shave their heads. Others, \$300.
Contact: Director, Kwan Um Zen School 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864

KYOL CHE IN AMERICA

Location: Diamond Hill Zen Monastery
Cumberland, RI 02864
Dates: January 5, 1986-April 4
Teachers: Lincoln and Barbara Rhodes
Registration: 90 days or periods of 21 days or one-week intensive
Feb. 16-23
Cost: \$400 (\$300 for members) for 21 days
\$1250 (\$1000 for members) for 90 days
\$175 (\$125 for members) for 1 week intensive Feb. 16-23
For experienced students only.
Contact: Director, Providence Zen Center 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864

KYOL CHE IN POLAND

Location: Warsaw Zen Center, Poland
Dates: July 1-September 30
Teachers: Jacob Perl (July 1-25 and Sept. 15-Oct. 5) and Barbara Rhodes (Aug. 7-18).
Registration: 21 day periods.
Cost: \$100 per period.
Contact: Director, Kwan Um Zen School



BY Ellen Sidor

(This account of a 12-day visit to Poland in May was written by Dharma Teacher Ellen Sidor, Editor-in-Chief of PRIMARY POINT. She was in Poland for the first time in 1982 with Soen Sa Nim, experiencing one of the famous "60 people and only one bathroom" retreats which Soen Sa Nim calls "matchbox practicing".)

Am standing in line at the Warsaw airport customs with hundreds of other travelers trying to get my bags inspected, so I can join the sangha friends I haven't seen for three years. They are waiting on the other side of the glass partition, periodically waving flowers. The official stamps the form without looking at it and waves me through. I stagger out through the glass doors into the arms of Andrzej and Teresa: Andrzej, Abbot of the Polish Kwan Um Zen School, Bodhisattva monk and old Dharma friend, and Teresa, a brand new friend but there is a compelling sense of having known her before, maybe for years. Several days later she confides she had the same strong feeling about me: instant family! Everywhere on this trip it is the same, mutual feelings of familiarity and affection.

We arrive at the Warsaw Zen Center in the middle of a work retreat. The good-sized house with the brand new Dharma hall attached to it sits in a very large grassy yard with flower beds, a small vegetable garden and huge piles of bricks and lumber covered with bright blue tarps. Andrzej explains they are preparing for a big Buddha's Birthday ceremony with all the Buddhist sanghas in Poland in four days and are expecting around 300 people. The Dharma room must be finished in case it rains and the ceremonies have to be held inside.

The bricks and the lumber are for building two small family cottages on the far side of the yard. It is very hard to get building materials in Poland, so projects don't get started until all the materials have been procured. We go into the new Dharma hall to bow to the Buddha: new pine floors and walls, clean-smelling, lots of windows. Good light, good feeling. Bowing on the bare floor in my traveler's clothes, a sense of coming home again.

Andrzej and his wife Ala and their two toddler daughters live on the second floor of the Zen Center in a small apartment with a hot plate and a sink in the bathroom. The visitor is put up in the Master's room, an airy, spacious guest room with plants on the windowsill. From the window you can see the roof of the new Dharma room and the backyard, where children are playing in a huge sandbox. There is the sound of hammers and drilling. People are working after supper to finish the electrical wiring in the Dharma hall.

Later that evening after a brief rest from the day of traveling, I sit in the old Dharma room with the retreat group. They are wearing robes and chanting strongly. The Heart Sutra in Polish is a real tongue-twister, but I use my "cheat-sheet", a phonetic guide to pronunciation that Polish friends and I worked

out in hilarity three years ago. Already we are at home with each other. Soen Sa Nim's genius: having the same form in all these different places, so anywhere you go, you are at home.

A short talk by the visitor, then questions. Head Dharma Teacher Ola Porter translates for me. What is happening with Kwan Um Zen School in America? How many people live at Providence Zen Center? When is Soen Sa Nim coming again, and Jacob Perl? How long can I stay?

And then more personal, intense questions: what can I say to my family who don't approve of me practicing Zen? How can one discover one's karma and use it to help others? Why do we have to use these strange robes and chants? Can one get enlightenment if one doesn't live in a Zen Center? The same questions are asked in America, Brazil or Korea.

After a day of letting me settle in, Andrzej and Ola present my schedule: visit all the Polish Zen Centers and one of the groups in the next nine days! It would mean traveling to a new place almost every day, returning to Warsaw for the ceremonies and the monthly School Council meeting, then leaving again for three more days of traveling. I groan but agree.

The first side trip is to Lodz. I feel a bit nervous, traveling alone with only a Polish phrase book and some creaky French, but the sangha has arranged greeters at every point who meet me with flowers. (In Poland flowers are very popular and are sold on many street-corners.) The train ride to Lodz is beautiful: the Polish landscape unfurls like a mosaic, with fields greening and fruit trees in bloom.

Jacob, Abbot of Lodz ZC and a Bodhisattva monk, and Olek, Head Dharma Teacher, meets me at the station at midday. We go to the Zen Center, a small neat apartment on the sixth floor of a building in a massive complex of apartments which houses maybe a thousand people out on the fringes of the city. I soon discover that all of the Polish Zen Centers (except Warsaw) are on the top floors: many steps! Lodz is an industrial city, a mixture of grand old European architecture and gray apartment complexes with no trees. Sometimes it takes years to get an apartment. The Lodz sangha has been waiting two years for a larger place, so they can hold bigger retreats and live as a group.

In the afternoon we go to the ruins of an old Jewish cemetery where many famous Polish Jews are buried. Many gravestones are broken or defaced. There are memorials to martyrs and victims of the massacres that occurred in the 1930's and 1940's. Old signs of war show in stones pockmarked by machine gun fire. Jacob says there are very few Jews now living in Poland, after

THE FLOWERING OF THE



Bodhisattva Monks Andrzej Czarnecki, Dorota Krzyzanowska and Jacob Brzezinski

the terrible experiences of the war. As we walk back through another gray apartment complex built on the site of a Jewish massacre, Jacob said many of the residents feel uneasy, living over a mass grave.

DHARMA COMBAT

At a large Catholic monastery on the rural outskirts of Lodz, a new seminary is being built for the training of Franciscan monks. Soen Sa Nim gave a talk here in the fall and the monks were amazed to meet their first Zen Master. We are guided through the building by a young monk whose eyes shine as if he has just finished a long meditation retreat. When word gets out about the American Zen visitor, we are invited to tea. An old monk appears and slyly asks how long I have been teaching Zen in the United States.



Then he begins asking questions. What can Zen offer the Western mind? How can rational thinking people put down thinking, and of what use is such a practice? How can Eastern and Western philosophy truly meet, with such radically different approaches to life? Little do I suspect that I am to be drawn into full-fledged Dharma combat! This old monk, a good speaker and well-educated, asked the same sharp questions of Soen Sa Nim. As we drink tea, I slice the apples we brought and answer his questions, Jacob translating with great poise. The energy in the room becomes intense. More monks keep slipping into the room, as word of the Dharma sparring match gets around.

Why we don't eat meat becomes an intense topic. I find out later that the patron saint of this order, St. Francis, was one of the very few Catholic saints who stopped eating meat after his enlightenment. As the combat went on for over an hour, I was very grateful for Soen Sa Nim's teaching of "Just now, what are you doing?" When it is over, we go outside for a photograph, monks and Zen students together. My companions embrace me. By some miracle I have not

disgraced them!

The confrontation with the old monk is very helpful, as it points out how important it is in Poland for Zen students to build good relationships with Catholics. Poland's unusual degree of freedom of religion is largely due to the vigor and power of the Catholic church. Poland is almost unique in Europe in that its number of Catholic monks is growing. Many of the young people in our sangha have been brought up in Catholic homes and have broken away, so it jars them a little to be reminded of the debt they owe to the Catholic church, in being free to practice Zen.

In the evening we got to the sangha meeting in a rented classroom at the local "house of culture," which rents space to such diverse groups as musicians and martial arts classes. Our room is on the music floor, so our practice is punctuated by the sound of trumpets and pianos. We sit Zen for 30 minutes, then do some Tai Chi style exercises. More questions: how do you deal with severe depression and feelings of meaninglessness? What about parents who are opposed to your practice? How universal these issues are!

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY

The next morning I return to Warsaw by train, sleep through the correct stop, go 40 miles into the countryside and have to get off and buy a ticket for the next train back. At last, a rare chance to use my Polish phrase book! The sangha is so efficient that everywhere I go, they have provided an interpreter. During my Warsaw stay, Ola Porter worked tirelessly in this capacity in addition to being Head Dharma Teacher, running the work retreat, playing a major role in the ceremonies, and having a few minutes to be with her three-year old son when her husband brings him to the Zen Center.

On Friday it rains heavily. The yard gets sodden. We pray for good weather for the Saturday ceremonies, knowing the Dharma room will hold 150 people at most. The yard was sodden. Saturday arrives sunny with blue skies and a breeze which quickly dries everything out. Men from the different sanghas arrive and begin making temporary bleacher seats out of bricks and beams. A vertical altar is constructed and covered with silk. A small bronze standing Buddha is installed in a large porcelain bowl on the altar.

The Vajrayana students put up gaily colored streamers in all the trees. Kap-leu Roshi's students arrive with a huge "fish moktak" and a large Japanese bowl bell. These are two young Tibetan monks, elegant in their russet-colored robes. Indoors, the tiny Zen Center kitchen is crammed with people making huge pots of rice, a farmer's cheese dish and tea.

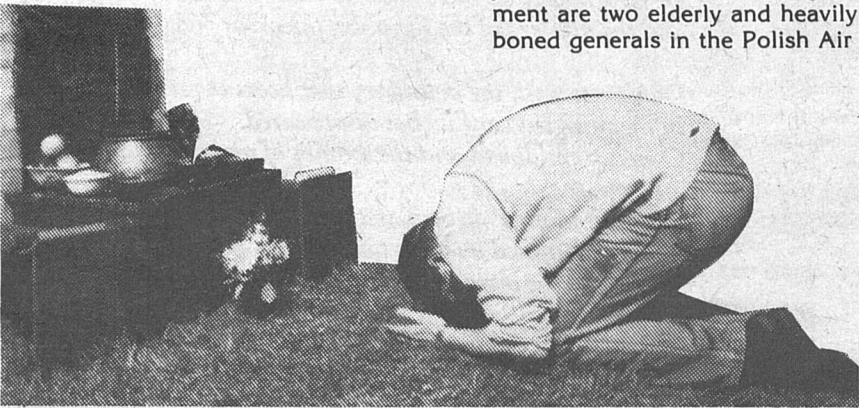
Around noon guests begin arriving in greater numbers. Families appear with backpacks, bicycles and young children, who immediately head for the sandbox in the far corner of the yard. A registration table has been set up just inside the

POLISH DHARMA

gate. A table of Dharma goods (beads, incense, Tibetan tankas and various books) is doing a brisk business. A cheerful hum of talking and laughing arises, children and dogs play in the grass, the streamers wave in the breeze.

Over 350 people attend the ceremony. Members from six different Buddhist sanghas (Kapleau Roshi, Zen Master Seung Sahn, the Tibetan Kagyu lineage, Maezumi Roshi, Sotetsu Sensei and Jodo) sit in a big semi-circle facing the altar. There is chanting from each tradition and prostrations to the Buddha, with parents leading children up to the altar for ritual drinking and pouring of sweet tea over the Buddha.

KUZS Director Dorota supervises a group of children presenting flowers to the Buddha. Moments before boisterously at play, the children stand awkward and shy in front of the large



audience. A mischievous little red-head, toddler daughter of the man in charge of the Japanese bell, does many antics in front of the crowd, trying to crawl into the bell and hiking up her pinafore to the general dismay of her father and the hilarity of the audience. In closing, the Tibetan monks, now wearing bright saffron kasas over their robes and holding incense, lead the entire assembly three times around the large yard, chanting "Shakymuni Buddha."

KUZS Abbot Andrzej is pleased with the turn-out. He feels the sanghas are working well with each other and is proud that the Kwan Um Zen School can host such a gathering at the Warsaw Center. He gives the opening speech, resplendent in a bright orange Bodhisattva monk kasa. Also representing the KUZS School in ceremonial bows to the Buddha, are two other Bodhisattva monks, Dorota and Jacob.

After the ceremony people stayed around for hours, listening to music and enjoying the warm spring weather. Highpoint of the afternoon is a free concert in the Dharma hall given by Ola's English husband, John Porter, one of Poland's foremost rock stars. The Dharma hall is packed and more people stand on tiptoes at the windows to see and hear John and his electric guitar.

On Sunday the School Council meets in the old Dharma room all day and into early evening. I was asked to present an update on KUZS activities around the world then answered questions, mainly about Soen Sa Nim's plans for the next year, the development of new Zen Centers in Paris and Seoul, and the timing of Master Dharma Teacher visits to Poland.

For all the work it entails, there is clear satisfaction in setting up and running a Dharma organization that can help people practice.

REUNION WITH AN OLD FRIEND

The next morning Dorota and I rise at 4 and walk to the train station for the 4½ hour ride to Gdansk. Dorota was my roommate on my very first visit to Providence Zen Center almost four years ago. She was learning to be a Dharma Teacher so she could go back to Poland to help organize Zen practice. Now she is Director of the Kwam Um Zen School of Poland and has many responsibilities. She comes to Warsaw as often but lives in Gdansk to help her mother and the Gdansk Zen Center. Most of our train ride is spent catching up, talking in the dinner car over innumerable bottles of juice and tea. In our seating compartment are two elderly and heavily beribboned generals in the Polish Air Force,

so talking under the direct gaze of their icy blue eyes is not so comfortable!

Gdansk Zen Center is a short bus ride from Dorota's mother's apartment and is located next to a block-long military installation. Sangha members have just finished interior renovations to the tiny center, which consists of a small Dharma room, (now appearing bright and spacious after renovating), a small utility closet, a bathroom, and a sink in the hallway which functions as a kitchen. Like all the other sanghas, Gdansk is trying to get a larger place and to support it financially.

Dorota and I find many parallels between the experiences of the American school and the Polish school. One amusing example is the conviction of each Zen Center that the "real practice" is going on in their center, not believing for a moment that the head temple in Warsaw is anything more than a place for ceremonies. In turn, the head temple feels that nobody else really understands how much work it does as the center of the organization. Soen Sa Nim's idea of establishing a separate school in Poland, rather than just a branch of the American School, has proven to be an excellent one. It has strengthened the sanghas in each city by making their jobs very specific. Also it has given the whole sangha a distinctive and well-respected identity among other Buddhist groups. There is so much business that the School Council meets every month in Warsaw.

Dorota tells me that KUZS has many friends in other Buddhist sanghas so that they work together, particularly during ceremonies and when any of the teachers come to Poland. One man who



has helped the sangha on many occasions is Genpo Sensei, Maezumi Roshi's Dharma heir, who just moved to Amsterdam and will be teaching more in Europe. He rented the Warsaw center's new Dharma room in June for an 8-day retreat and KUZS students were able to sit with him. Another good Dharma friend is Ole, a Tibetan teacher from Sweden who comes to Poland often and has many students.

From Gdansk I fly to Krakow and am met at the airport by Anthony Szoska, one of Soen Sa Nim's first students in Poland. As a result of meeting Soen Sa Nim back in 1978, Anthony and Andrzej went to Korea and America, an unheard of circumstance for Poles. Anthony and his wife and two sons, all of whom are talented artists, live in a small neat apartment on the outskirts of the city. After serving me a delicious lunch, they all show me their work.

The Zen Center is in a charming old neighborhood with Italian architecture, flower pots on the window sills, and many old shady trees. With its many art schools, bistros and shops, Krakow is considered the "San Francisco" of Poland.

A welcoming party is held at the home of an editor of a Krakow newspaper, whose wife is a Zen student. The editor and I swap shoptalk, and he has many questions about Zen practice and Soen Sa Nim, whom he has heard speak. He tells me that Zen is a real curiosity in Krakow and people don't know what to make of it. Is Soen Sa Nim interested in attracting thousands of people and getting powerful? I tell him Soen Sa Nim is only interested in waking people up.

PUBLISHING THE DHARMA

In the morning I meet with the Dharma publishing group, one of the most exciting developments in the Krakow sangha. Dedicated to publishing Soen Sa Nim's teaching, the group has just brought out the first newsletter of the KUZS in Polish: a goodlooking soft-bound booklet with some pictures, a Dharma talk by Soen Sa Nim, information about practice and the location of the Zen Centers and groups in Poland, as well as news of the international sangha.

Several members of the group have advanced degrees and have already translated several of Soen Sa Nim's books and some teaching articles from PRIMARY POINT. In addition, one man is compiling a Buddhist dictionary. They hope to make a right livelihood business by publishing Dharma books.

Stopping later in the great plaza of Krakow for ice cream at an outdoor cafe,

we have an interesting incident. There are no free tables, so we wait by a table of four people who were speaking English. Three of them leave and the fourth, a young Asian woman, invite us to join her. In the course of conversation, I volunteer that I have come to Poland to visit my Zen student friends. She is astonished. A Cambodian Buddhist, she is married to an American who has come to study in Krakow on a Fulbright scholarship. They are both meditators and have been looking for months for a group. By now they have become very pessimistic about finding anyone. Now she is sitting here, talking to the Abbot, Head Dharma Teacher, and former director of the Krakow Zen Center, which is just minutes away from her new apartment! It is a good lesson about not being shy in mentioning Zen practice.

The last 24 hours in Poland are hectic. I fly back to Warsaw and almost miss Teresa coming to meet me in a taxi that took a wrong turn on the way to the airport. Back at the head temple, preparations are underway for a farewell party and I still have not packed. But amid all the emotions of leavetaking is a sense of our relationship. I have come with very little agenda, just to visit my friends, and have been treated most royally. It appears that Poland, for whatever karmic reason, is one of my true homes.

Going to the airport the next morning we all pile into the old green Zen Center van, in the pouring rain. Heavily laden with the Polish sangha's presents for the American sangha, I am again separated at the airport from my friends. On the other side of the barrier they talk and occasionally wave.

Finally someone appears, puts stickers on my bags without even opening them. A last goodbye wave to my friends, quick frisk at the security check station, and twelve days in Poland are gone like water.

In discussing the trip afterwards, KUZS Director Diana Clark remarked that it was interesting that I had gone to Poland on my own, with no particular plan or idea of my reception. I was not being sent by anyone or going as an official teacher. I was just going alone.

"Maybe that's what Zen is all about," she said. "Just being able to let things happen without making anything special about it. Just being able to be with people. In Poland they don't have teachers coming very often, so they learn from each other and teach each other. Maybe that's the trend in Zen as it comes to the West, that it will be "just us folks" instead of charismatic teachers from the Orient who will all disappear one day.

Zen has been based on the idea of hierarchy, but it teaches becoming independent. As people wear out their need to have father figures tell them what to do, maybe it will be all of us teaching each other, sharing our Dharma. Poland is a far-out place to do that, because Zen is so new there."

For some of us there is a strong connection with Poland. When we find connections like that appearing in our lives, we need to honor them. Clearly, some kind of energy pulled me to Poland after three years of obstacles. Something is definitely happening there. Everyone who goes there feels it.

Now we are meeting many Poles who have the Bodhisattva mind, which means making an effort even when you are tired, frustrated and depressed. Many Poles are practicing daily, struggling to establish centers and groups so they do not have to practice alone. Everywhere that we look beyond our own situation, we connect with others in the great ocean of suffering.

It must be time for this particular flower to bloom, the flower of Polish Dharma. It's like a blade of grass forcing its way up through a crack in a cement sidewalk. Nobody told it that it was the right time, but it came up. If we can trust that energy and not ask questions, just go with it when it appears, many wonderful things will happen.

It was a terrific visit. Thank you, Polish sangha!

Richard Shrobe, C.S.W., A.C.S.W.

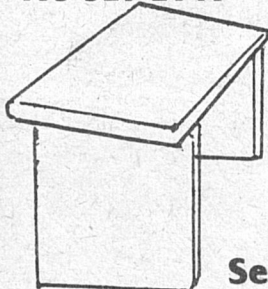
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Stephen Mitchell studied with Soen Sa Nim from 1973-77 during which time he compiled and edited *Dropping Ashes on the Buddha*. From 1978-80 he was a student of Aitken Roshi. Other books include *Into the Whirlwind: A Translation of the Book of Job* (Doubleday, 1979), *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke* (Random House, 1982), *Rilke's Letters to a Young Poet* and *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (Random House, 1983, 1984), *Sonnets to Orpheus* (Simon & Schuster, October 1985), and *The Selected Poetry of Yehuda Amichai* (Harper & Row, spring 1986).

I, 19

*Though the world keeps changing its form
as fast as a cloud, still
what is accomplished falls home
to the Primeval.*

*Over the change and the passing.
Larger and freer,
soars your eternal song,
god with the lyre.
Never has grief been possessed,
never has love been learned,
and what removes us in death*

*is not revealed.
Only the song through the land
hallows and heals.*

II, 12

*Will transformation. Oh be inspired for the flame
in which a Thing disappears and bursts into something else;
the spirit of re-creation which masters this earthly form
loves most the pivoting where you are no longer yourself.*

*What tightens into survival is already inert;
how safe is it really in its inconspicuous gray?
From far off a far greater hardness warns what is hard,
and the absent hammer is lifted high!*

*He who pours himself out like a stream is acknowledged at last by Knowledge;
and she leads him enchanted through the harmonious country
that finishes often with starting, and with ending begins.*

*Every fortunate space that they softly pass through, astonished,
is a child or grandchild of parting. And the transfigured Daphne,
as she feels herself become laurel, wants you to change into wind.*

II, 16

*Over and over by us torn in two,
the god is the hidden place that heals again.
We are sharp-edged, because we want to know,
but he is always scattered and serene.*

*Even the pure, the consecrated gift
he takes into his world no other way
than by positioning himself unmoved,
to face the one end that is free.*

*Only the dead may drink
from the source that we just hear, the unseen pool,
when the god, mute, allows them with a gesture.*

*Here, to us, only the noise is offered.
And the lamb keeps begging for its bell
because of a more quiet instinct.*

I, 22

*We are the driving ones.
Ah, but the step of time:
think of it as a dream
in what forever remains.*

*All that is hurrying
soon will be over with;
only what lasts can bring
us to the truth.*

*Young men, don't put your trust
into trials of flight,
into the hot and quick.*

*All things already rest:
darkness and morning light,
flower and book.*

...and Poetry

III

*Brew us the magic in which all limits dissolve,
spirit forever bent to the fire!
That fathomless limit of evil, first, which revolves
aslo around those who are resting and do not stir.*

*Dissolve with a few drops whatever excludes in the limit
of the ages, which makes our past wisdom a fraud;
for how deeply we have absorbed the Athenian sunlight
and the mystery of the Egyptian falcon or god.*

*Don't rest until the boundary that keeps the sexes
in meaningless conflict has disappeared.
Open up childhood and the wombs of more truly expectant*

*generous mothers so that, shaming all that is empty,
and not confused by the hindering wood,
they may give birth to future rivers, augmenting the sea.*

VIII

*We have overheard fountains all our days.
They sound to us almost like time.
But much more closely do they keep pace
with eternity's subtle rhythm.*

*The water is strange and the water is yours,
from here and from far below.
You are the fountain-stone, unawares,
and all Things are mirrored in you.*

*How distant this is, yet deeply akin,
long unriddled and never known,
senseless, then perfectly clear.*

*Your task is to love what you don't understand.
It grips your most secret emotion, and
rushes away with it. Where?*

IV

*Seek no more than what the stela knows,
and the mild image sculpted in the stone:
almost cheerfully, with a lightness, as
though they were exempt from earthly pain.*

*Experience no further than the pure
direction in the world's withdrawing stream—
ah, perhaps the icy jewels she wore
in the dimly lighted room.*

*Be all the more consoled by what you see in
the elements that are most truly yours.
Wind consoles, and fire is consolation.*

*Here and There: you must be gripped by both,
strangely without a difference. Otherwise
you drain the whiteness from the whitest cloth.*

THE 10,000 DHARMAS RETURN TO THE ONE: A Look at Engaged Buddhism

by Ruth Klein

photo supplied by Fellowship of Reconciliation



Vietnamese Zen Master coming to the US this fall

THICH NHAT HANH will be in the United States from September 20 through early November, sponsored by the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. He will be staying at the Providence Zen Center from September 20 until October 20. Public talks are tentatively scheduled for Sept. 22, in Northampton, MA; Oct. 3, in Boulder, CO; Oct. 13, in San Antonio, TX; retreat during the week of Oct. 16-20 and public talk Oct. 20 in Ojai, CA; during the week of Oct. 29, in San Francisco Bay Area.

For details of his East Coast schedule, contact Providence Zen Center, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864 Tel. (401) 769-6464. For his West Coast schedule, contact Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.

(Ruth Klein, a board member of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, has a doctorate in counseling psychology and is an artist. She has been a resident of the Providence Zen Center for the past four years and is a Dharma Teacher in the Kwan Um Zen School.)

En route to the Walk for Peace in New York City several years ago, I commented to friends that if I could get along with my Dad for several days, that in itself would constitute a major action for world peace. At the time it was a joke, and yet—who holds the scale to weigh the relative merits of each action? Where does inner work end and outer work begin? Are they different? Engaged Buddhism is grounded in the teaching of interdependence: the Ten Thousand Dharmas return to One.

Buddhist philosophy and practice has a unique contribution to make to the contemporary peace and ecology movements, to the realm of social and political action. At the heart of the contribution is the recognition of non-duality, that one need not perpetuate the patterns of confrontational politics which we experienced in the 60's and still encounter so frequently in today's activists and groups. Ryo Imamura, past-president of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, has noted that whereas peace has been traditionally seen as the absence or oppo-

site of conflict, in the Buddhist sense peace and conflict are one.

The cause of peace is not furthered by laying blame "out there." As Pogo, in the best Buddhist tradition, says, "We have met the enemy and he is us." There is no peace other than that which we experience in the moment; true compassion does not recognize boundaries, be they personal, geographical, or political. Peace does not take sides, does not seek to exclude.

Just as there is no "us" and "them," so there is no "inner" and "outer." Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, one of the most respected teachers of Engaged Buddhism who lives now in France, teaches the need for peaceful means to achieve the goal of peace. Without time set aside for quiet and meditation, "we will lose ourselves quickly in a life of worry and action, and our responses will become increasingly useless."

This emphasis on the means being the end is an acknowledgement of the law of karma, the law of cause and effect. A story is told of Nhat Hanh's response to a painful message about the persecution of Buddhist monks and nuns in Vietnam. The telegram was placed at the base of a statue of the Buddha and, recognizing a need to detach from the situation in order to function clearly and effectively, he withdrew to the forest for the day. In so doing he avoided what Thomas Merton called "a pervasive form of contemporary violence to which the idealist fighting for peace by non-violent methods most easily succumbs: activism and overwork." It is necessary, as Nhat Hanh teaches, to know when to "close our windows."

"Psychic numbing" refers to the process of shutting down in the face of vast amounts of suffering in today's world, choosing to become unaware. How can any one of us dare to open to this suffering and risk the feared consequences of living with so much pain? Through Buddhist practice and the development of non-attachment, honoring the law of impermanence, we can learn to open, and to let go; to take in the suffering and not get swallowed by it. Dr Joanna Macy and others teach this in the "Despair and Empowerment in the Nuclear Age" workshops which she developed.

Chakdud Tulku Rinpoche says of the transformative power of awareness: "Tibetan Buddhists use the peacock as the symbol for the Bodhisattva, the Awakened Warrior who works for the Enlightenment of all sentient beings. The peacock is said to eat poisonous plants which it transmutes into the gorgeous colors of its feathers. It does not poison itself, just as we who wish for world peace must not poison ourselves."

There are a number of groups whose major path is that of Engaged Buddhism. Nipponzan Myo Hoji, a Japanese Buddhist subject of the Nichiren order, is devoted to the establishment of world peace through their practice, oftentimes public, of chanting and beating on drums as they walk through the world. They have erected stupas dedicated to peace the world over. The first Peace Pagoda in the Western hemisphere will have its opening ceremony in Leverett, Massachusetts on October 5, 1985.

The Tiep Hien order, composed of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen, was founded by a group of Southeast Asian Buddhists as an instrument of their vision of Engaged Buddhism. During the Vietnam war members and supporters of the Tiep Hien order were active against the war, ran many social service projects, and cared for many of those suffering the war's effects.

Many members and supporters died, and today the order continues in France, with Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh its most well-known monk.

Started in 1958 by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, Sarvodaya Shramadana is a self-help movement in Sri Lanka, using Gandhian principles and Buddhist philosophy to channel spiritual awareness into social action in 6,000 villages.

In the United States, there are two organizations representing Engaged Buddhism, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and Buddhists Concerned for Animals. BPF is currently comprised of eleven chapters, with affiliates in England and Australia. Its statement of purpose includes raising peace and ecology concerns among American Buddhists, as well as bringing the Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace and ecology movements. The BPF is non-sectarian and brings Buddhists from many different traditions together with one common purpose, that of realizing world peace and harmony. BPF members initiated or were strongly involved with the full range of activities described below as being representative of Engaged Buddhism. The national office is sponsoring a visit by Thich Nhat Hanh to the U.S. in the fall.

Buddhists Concerned for Animals was established early in 1982, and now has about 2,000 members. They estimate that at least 25% of their membership is not Buddhist, but individuals who appreciate the Buddhist approach to this emotional subject. They were formed to work toward ending the often cruel and unnecessary use of animals in laboratory experiments. BCA launched a landmark campaign aimed at improving conditions in the animal laboratories at the University of California at Berkeley, and is currently engaged in a campaign for farm animal protection. Both BPF and BCA publish informative and thought-provoking newsletters.

The range of actions encompassed by the term Engaged Buddhism are as wide and diversified as are Buddhists themselves:

** June, 1982, members of the Minnesota Zen Center coordinated a 3-day zazen peace vigil in NYC coinciding with the U.N. Special Session on Nuclear and General Disarmament. A sign explained, "We are sitting to be peace."

** Study groups have been established to explore the relationship between lifestyle and ecological crisis; between military expenditures and world hunger.

** Robert Aitken, Roshi, and his wife Anne, are among many to withhold a percentage of their taxes as war-tax resisters.

** Monastics and laypeople from many different Buddhist sects joined in a peaceful public vigil, in 1984, in Los Angeles to protest the arrest in Vietnam of Buddhist monks and nuns from the Unified Buddhist Church.

** The Providence Zen Center, along with many others, endorsed and supported the International Fast for Life.

** Ven. Maha Ghosananda, one of the few surviving Theravadan Buddhist monks from Cambodia, has arranged for five monks in the refugee camps in Southeast Asia to come to the U.S. each month. The first monks arrived in June.

** Celebrating the tenth anniversary of Korean Buddhism in the U.S., Zen Master Seung Sahn hosted the Great Masters

World Peace Assembly in 1982 at the Providence Zen Center.

** Kahawaii, the Journal of Women and Zen, explores issues of Buddhist practice as it relates to lesbians and gay men, rape, abortion, motherhood, and the sexual relations between teachers and students.

At the same time, many actions have been and are continuously made on the personal and interpersonal level. To be at peace with oneself, to not inflict violence on self or others in the form of impossibly high demands and expectations, is the work of Engaged Buddhism, as is developing loving relationships with friends, family, and colleagues. As Chakdud Tulku Rinpoche says, "True compassion is utterly neutral and is moved by suffering of every sort, not tied to right and wrong, attachment and aversion."

We speak of compassion as a quality, a noun, when in fact it is a verb. Engaged Buddhism intergrates meditation and action so that social/political activity is the arena in which to make our practice manifest

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Volume 35, Number 6 December 1984

Attain utmost emptiness;
Hold firm to stillness.
The ten thousand things stir about;
I only watch for their going back.
Things flourish,
But each returns to its root.
Returning to the root is peace.
And peace is a going back to reality.

Lao Tse

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RESIDENTS, FRIENDS, ACTIVITIES FILL NEW TAHL MAH SAH ZEN CENTER

Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center is filled to capacity in its beautiful new quarters at 1025 South Cloverdale Avenue in Los Angeles.

An electrician, a film editor (who worked on the film *Witness*), a pre-med student, a computer programmer, a banquet manager, an acupuncturist, a law student and—for the first time ever—a baby are among the 14 occupants.

"Last November, when we first moved in, there were only six of us," said Zen Center director Jane McLaughlin. "At the time, we only had the upstairs unit. The tenants who lived downstairs moved out April 1."

The 1930's duplex features a red tile roof, tile porch and a spacious dharma room with shiny hardwood floors, delicate floral detailing on the pale green walls and plump new zafus and zabutans (made for the new surroundings by Elizabeth Van Dusen). Mu Dueng Su Nim and Tahl Mah Sah residents have been hard at work converting the Center's 4400 square feet into numerous small bedrooms and carving a 5'x5' garden out of the back parking lot.

"We only renovated because we needed space," Jane said. "The building was in excellent shape."

Today, Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center boasts a healthy relationship with its new neighbors, but such has not always been the case according to Jane.

"They were circulating a petition against us," she said, "This is a tightly knit community, and they were worried about what we stood for."

Blending Buddhist good will with enviable horticultural skills, resident Mike Quinn solved the problem. Thanks to Mike's tireless weeding and fertilizing, Tahl Mah Sah's grass was the greenest on the block. The next door neighbor-rumour-

ed to be the one who had started the petition—asked Mike how he did it. Mike offered to work on the neighbor's lawn. Soon, the two were sharing fertilizer, rosebush maintenance tips, beers and friendship. The petition was never seen again.

Inside, the Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center is alive with visiting lecturers and old friends as well as residents. Noted Tibetan Buddhist teacher, Ven. Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen is slated to speak there this summer. Head Dharma Teacher Bob Moore, a founding member of the New Haven Zen Center, directs the Center's meetings, which are frequently attended by such longtime meditators as Louise Sichel, formerly of the Providence Zen Center, and Bridget Steinberg, a past resident of Tahl Mah Sah.

"This place generates a wonderful energy," Jane said. "People are really interested in visiting and living here. This is the first house we have had that has not been connected to the Korean temple, so the move was a big step for us. And we are financially independent for the first time ever. After a long history of moving, Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center has really found a home."

L.A. ALL-SANGHA PICNIC

Gathered beneath a vast blue sky and a multi-colored Buddhist flag, 60 people from a variety of meditative traditions enjoyed Los Angeles' first all-Sangha picnic, held Saturday, June 22 at Will Rogers State Park.

On hand were residents and friends of Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center, Zen Center of Los Angeles, International Buddhist Meditation Center and the Ordinary Dharma Vipassana Group, which organized the event. They played frisbee and kickball; feasted on salad, wine, fruit juice and homemade pies and enjoyed the view from nearby Inspiration Point.

"The atmosphere was open, fluid and fun," said Jane McLaughlin, director of Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center. "It was such a success that we couldn't wait a whole year to do another one. We'll all be back in late August or September."



A BUDDHIST FLAG marked the gathering point for meditators from a variety of traditions at Los Angeles' first annual All Sangha Picnic.

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Ice Melts Under Water

continued from page 3

The eye of wisdom sees itself as part of the whole. A piece of the absolute that has the inexplicable ability to look upon itself. It sees on the one hand that fundamentally there is no problem, but in particular there are many problems. In seeing our frailties and blind spots, we realize the need to become more aware. So it is all endless unfolding and untying of the apparent knots and predicaments we have conjured up.

This morning I can't help but wonder where it's all headed. Expanding and dissolving into the light only to contract and begin again?

It's time to do the dishes and cut wood. That's where it's all going right now.

Jan. 21. 2 a.m. woke early and made a fire and noticed in the paper Star's meat market ad. Half rack of lamb \$1.99/lb. Whole chickens \$.49/lb. Lamb legs \$1.79/lb. Isn't it strange how easily and habitually we put a price tag on life? The infinitely precious life of a young lamb wandering through fields of clover and meadows of wild flowers—with the will to live, to manifest fully so innocent and young. Life is worth \$1.99/lb. Is the criterion for life intelligence? If that were so, would a visitor from another planet have the right to butcher young children at \$2.00/lb. simply because it is more intelligent?

I wonder how the great religions of the world deal with lust for blood. Was it God's plan to put this rich variety of life on the planet at man's dinner table?

Certainly the creatures of the world exhibit a different kind of intelligence and sensitivity. They live in a silent world rich with smells, sound and sights unknown to the human being, or at least that we are only dimly aware of. A product of countless millions of years of evolution. A real Blue Stocking lineage of the natural world whose family tree goes back to the source,

is worth \$2.00/lb. Nothing can match the enormity of the human ego.

"The time has come, the walrus said, to speak of many things..."

Jan. 27. Eating rice and lentils for breakfast I thought of each seed that I'm consuming so matter of factly as a miracle unto itself. Each one is offering itself to me so I can live and carry on. It has the potential for a life of its own—each grain. Do we deserve this offering? Countless millions of tiny beings offering their lives so that we may live and destroy this planet? Hardly seems fair. Perhaps we owe something in return for this silent offering? Consider what kind of offering we make in return.

Another day has dawned. Let me wake up from the sleep of my ignorance!

Feb. 2. Yesterday it snowed 10 inches—everything is fresh, bright—but covered over. Nature's best quilt over the compost pile. The birch trees are bent over like old men under the oppressive burden of their snow. Many have cracked in half under the weight of life's load. The sun is so bright—untouched by human sorrow or the heart-shaped prints of the deer, those soft and innocent creatures that tiptoe in the night.

Yesterday I sat all day and night—hour-long rounds completely absorbed in the process. Not at all clear—but I felt as though my practice was being tempered and tested by every conceivable mind state. Perhaps when mind becomes still like a forest pool, then all the creatures of the forest will come to drink, leaving soft ripples and the brief reflection of their faces on the smooth surface of the pool.

I wonder if lust is a hooved ungulate or a feathered creature? Whether fear and horror are reptilian or perhaps amphibian? So many came to the water's edge to drink, leaving their mark. The pond reflected—tainted with its habit force of pleasure for some and repugnance for others—it must embrace them all to be free. Mosquito, snake, deer and owl—all are its children.

May all beings be happy in the light of awareness.

Sometimes it is satisfying to take balls of ice that have formed on your socks while cutting wood and toss them on the hot wood stove—jump, sizzle and disappear as steam in an instant. So the ice of our stuff disappears on the stove of vigorous, passionate practice.

Feb. 8. Chopping wood in the morning sun. Sitting Zen in the soft lamplight. Ahh—the tides of breathing. Seeing...hearing...sensing how boundless and vivid this life. The woods in winter clothes crisp white, subtle green.

Feb. 25. The rain has passed again. A light mist hangs over the field. Its beauty is that it will soon be gone—the bright light of morning awareness will burn it away. There is in the mist a rare, fleeting kind of beauty that cannot be held. It covers the trees and grasses with such a soft and gentle touch—a caress so light and subtle it cannot be approached with the mind. It can only be felt

in its exquisiteness when mind is silent and open, completely vulnerable—like a yawning clam!

March 2. It's cold this morning—the kind of bitter winter cold that numbs toes and fingers and makes you thankful to have a warm cabin and lots of wood to burn!

The eyes work just fine when no one is controlling them telling them how to see. Then you begin to see with your whole body instead of your head. We put such a severe restriction on the senses by making them be "my" senses. In effect, we cut their potential down to a fraction of what it could be.

Hearing is the same. When "I" is not there it is our nature that is hearing. It becomes lucid, rich and boundless instead of this interpretative newscast we're used to.

Even the process of thinking is so rich and natural when it is set free outside the domain of opinion.

In spite of all this we return to our old armored, insensitive and encrusted ways like anachronistic knights stumbling around in creaky armor. What a price we pay for our endless thinking.

This lesson must be learned in the body—body must be filled up with mind—energy flowing freely.

It really helps to throw awareness and concentration into the lower belly and let all the senses and mind relax. In the hara please! Let it function by itself.

March 3. Woke early at 3:30—the morning was cold. I could tell the temperature outside by how much the cabin has cooled down without a fire. Winter mornings here are such solitary affairs. There are so few birds singing. An occasional crow, chickadee or blue jay is heard but it is a time of cold and loneliness.

The stream has frozen over and there is a crust of ice over all the snow. A thin dusting of powder snow covers the ice. Just enough to see the animal tracks—the tracks of a rabbit tentatively meandering around the cabin. These are followed by tracks of the red fox in search of his dinner. Can you imagine being chased and eaten alive by a giant red fox?

Sitting with the breath, as the breath and the unknown. Thoughts and feelings come and go but always the Breath and the deep silence of the unknown. Thoughts which were quite disturbing are now commonplace and don't raise an eyebrow. Feelings of restlessness, anger, jealousy, appear and fade away in the light of unknown awareness.

Yesterday during yoga a mad woman with a skull for a face appeared at the door, only to melt into the deep quiet breathing and warmth of the fire.

If practice is stable the illusions melt like ice under warm water, only to return to the ground of their existence. Ice melts under water. So simple—why resist this simple realization?

Feeling mellow and patient this morning. Time to clean up and cut wood.

LET IT ALL MELT IN THE WARM LIGHT OF UNKNOWN AWARENESS.

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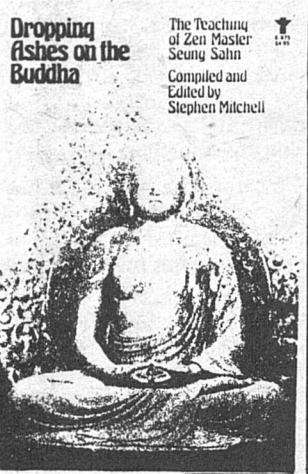
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Only Don't Know, The Teaching Letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn

Contemporary letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn, the first Korean Master to live and teach in the West, in which he responds to Western students' questions about daily life. Zen Master Seung Sahn carries on an extensive correspondence with his students worldwide, personally answering every letter written to him. Only Don't Know contains a rich choice of letters representing the broad range of the modern Zen student's concerns and the responses of a master. (Four Seasons Foundation, 1982) \$6.95.



Dropping Ashes on the Buddha, The Teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn

A delightful, irreverent and often hilarious record of the encounters of Zen Master Seung Sahn with his American students. Consisting of stories, formal Zen interviews, Dharma speeches, and the Zen Master's spontaneous interactions with his students. (Grove Press, 1976) \$4.95.



Bone of Space, Zen Poems by Master Seung Sahn

Since the T'ang Dynasty, poetry has been used to express the experience of Zen. These poems by Zen Master Seung Sahn continue that tradition of using words to point to original nature. (Four Seasons Foundation, 1982) \$4.95.

These books can be found at your local bookstore or at your nearest Zen Center.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL

The Teachers: Zen Master Seung Sahn is the first Korean Zen Master to live and teach in the West. He is the 78th Patriarch in the Korean Chogye Order, and became a Zen Master in his native Korea at the age of 22. After teaching in Korea and Japan for many years, he came to the United States in 1972 and founded the Providence Zen Center, now located in Cumberland, Rhode Island. He is addressed as "Soen Sa Nim" (Honored Zen Teacher) by his students.

Soen Sa Nim has established over 30 Zen centers and affiliated groups in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Europe and Korea. These centers comprise the Kwan Um Zen School. The Providence Zen Center is Head Temple in the United States. In 1984 a Kwan Um Zen School of Poland was formed which includes five Zen Centers and two affiliated groups, of which the Head Temple is Warsaw Zen Center.

Soen Sa Nim travels worldwide leading retreats and teaching Buddhism. In recent years he has been doing more intensive international peace work, bringing people of many countries and religious traditions together to demonstrate world peace. In 1985 he was presented with the World Peace Award by the International Cultural Federation, under the auspices of the Korean government. Working to strengthen the connection between American Zen and Korean Buddhism, he has established the Seoul International Zen Center in Korea and the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in the United States. At Diamond Hill, Zen students who wish to may become monks and live the traditional monastic life in the original practice style of Bodhidharma.

Soen Sa Nim has published **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha** and **Only Don't Know**, collections of his teaching letters and Zen stories, and a book of poetry, **Bone of Space**.

He has given "inga"—authority to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice—to six senior students. Called Master Dharma teachers, they regularly travel to Zen centers and affiliates in America and abroad, leading retreats and giving public talks. The Master Dharma Teachers are: **George Bowman**, Cambridge Zen Center; **Barbara Rhodes** and **Lincoln Rhodes**, Providence Zen Center; **Mu Deung Su Nim**, Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center; **Richard Shrobe** and **Jacob Perl**, Chogye International Zen Center of New York.

Training Programs: Each Zen center holds meditation practice every morning and evening, and a weekly Introduction to Zen talk. These events are free and open to the public. Some centers also offer personal interviews each month with the teachers in our school when available.

Introduction to Zen Workshops: Beginners and newcomers can experience Zen practice for a day, with instruction on meditation, question periods, informal discussions and lunch.

Short Intensive Retreats (Yong Maeng Jong Jin, or "Leap like a tiger while sitting"): Each month many of the Zen centers hold silent meditation retreats for 3 or 7 days under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn or one of the Master Dharma Teachers. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting, working

and eating in traditional temple style. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given by the Zen teacher. Advance reservation is necessary and requires a \$10 non-refundable deposit.

90-Day Intensive Retreat (Kyol Che or "Tight Dharma"): Conducted in total silence, long intensive meditation retreats are powerful tools for examining and clarifying our lives. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting and formal silent meals. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given frequently. Registration is for 90 days, 21-day periods or a one-week intensive. The School offers three long Kyol Che's (one each in Poland, Korea and the United States) and a short three-week summer Kyol Che at Providence Zen Center. See schedule on this page for details.

Chanting Retreats (Kido): Several times a year chanting retreats are held. A Kido is powerful training in keeping a one-pointed mind and using group energy to deepen awareness.

Membership: If you would like to become a member of the Kwan Um Zen School, you may either contact the Zen center or affiliate nearest you, or become a member-at-large by writing directly to the School. You do not have to be a member to participate in any of the training programs. However, rates for members are reduced and include a free subscription to the monthly NEWS-LETTER and the quarterly, PRIMARY POINT. The most up-to-date calendar information is in the NEWSLETTER. Non-members can subscribe for \$6.00 per year, and \$10.00 per year for PRIMARY POINT.

Retreat Calendar

- July 1 -Sept. 30 90 Day Kyol Che in Warsaw, Poland (**)
- July 26-28 School Congress at Providence
- July 30-August 18 21 Day Kyol Che Providence (LR) (intensive sitting similar to winter Kyol Che, talks and interviews given by Zen Master Seung Sahn and Master Dharma Teachers. Registration minimum two days.)
- Aug. 9 -11 Empty Gate (SS)
16-18 Cambridge (GB)
23-25 Tahl Mah Sah (SS)
- Sept. 6 -8 New Haven (LR)
10-13 Providence (special retreat led by BR and Maurine Freedgood Roshi of Cambridge Buddhist Assn.)
- 20-22 Cambridge (BR)
Kansas (LR)
New York (RS) or Sept. 27-29
- Oct. 4 -6 Empty Gate (BR)
Lexington (GB)
Seattle (LR)
Providence (no teacher)
- 11-13 Tahl Mah Sah (BR)
18-20 Cambridge (LR)
Ontario (GB)
- 25-27 New Haven (*)
- Nov. 1 -3 Providence (GB)
- 8 -10 New York (LR)
15-17 Kansas (BR)
Cambridge (GB)
Empty Gate (JP)
- 22-24 Lexington (LR)
Tahl Mah Sah (JP)
- 26- Opening of 90 Day Kyol Che at Jung Hye Sah, Korea (**)
- Dec. 6 -8 New Haven (*)
Seattle (*)
- 7 -13 Providence (BR)
- Jan. 5 - Opening of 90 Day Kyol Che at Providence

* Teacher to be announced
** Contact director, Kwan Um Zen School, for details

Please call the appropriate Zen Center to confirm these dates and teachers, and make retreat reservations at least two weeks in advance. Retreat leaders are indicated by their initials: SS, Zen Master Seung Sahn; GB, George Bowman; BR, Barbara Rhodes; LR, Lincoln Rhodes; MD Mu Deung Sunim; JP, Jacob Perl; RS, Richard Shrobe.

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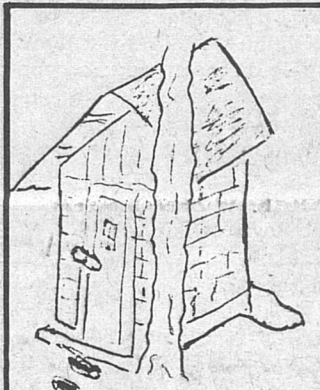
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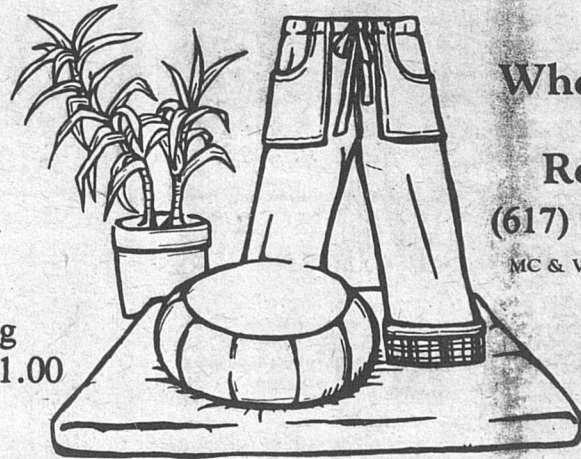
Tapes of Toni Packer's talks as well as copies of her book *Seeing Without Knowing* are available for purchase. Contact the

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NEW HAVEN ZEN CENTER CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

In a special ceremony held June 27 and presided over by Soen Sa Nim, the New Haven Zen Center celebrated its tenth anniversary. Special guests were Master Dharma Teachers Barbara and Lincoln Rhodes, Mu Sang Sunim, and the Rev. James Audlin of the North Madison Congregational Church. Congratulatory speeches were given, and the Zen Center received gifts and donations from other Zen Centers and individuals around the world.

The Rev. Audlin, a friend of the Center, spoke of the importance of the Center as a place where people could come in their search for freedom and let go of their attachments, and not be "merely transfixed by the finger pointing to the moon, but be able to experience Truth itself."

Abbot Rusty Hicks, whose dual role as an ordained Christian minister and long-term Zen Center Abbot has not always been an easy one, gave the opening speech. He recounted the early history of the Zen Center. It was started in 1975 when a monk named Mu Gak Sunim (now Stephen Mitchell) came to study at Yale University. He joined a small Zen sitting group on the campus and later introduced them to Soen Sa Nim, whereupon they decided to form a Zen Center and practice under the direction of Soen Sa Nim.

Another early member was Yale Music Professor David Mott, who bought a house on Mansfield Street in 1977 and rented the top two floors to the Zen group. The following year the Zen Center bought the house from him and has stayed there ever since. In addition to a large Dharma room, the property has a large garden and ample residential space.

The Zen center's resident population has gone up and down over the years, and currently has three residents and 20 non-resident members. Some of Soen Sa Nim's strongest students have trained at New Haven Zen Center over the years. To name just a few: Mu Sang Sunim (formerly David Gerber) who recently completed a one-year retreat in Korea; Senior Dharma Teacher David Mott, a renowned music teacher and performer in Ontario and director of the Cold Mountain Dojo which shares house space with the Ontario Zen Center; Senior Dharma teacher Bob Moore, a Bodhisattva monk and former Abbot of Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center; Senior Dharma Teacher Jim Doran (formerly Mu Guk Sunim), a Bodhisattva monk and first director of the Kwan Um Zen School; Dr. Steve Cohen, long-term non-resident Head Dharma Teacher at New Haven; and Mu Ryang Sunim (formerly Eric Berall), a Yale graduate and personal secretary to Soen Sa Nim as well as his international trip director on numerous occasions.

After the anniversary ceremony, Soen Sa Nim gave a public talk attended by an overflow crowd that filled the Dharma room and the office! The evening concluded with a party, and the beginning of a 3-day retreat led by Soen Sa Nim and attended by 24 people.

A brand new Paris Zen Group came into existence on July 14 in an opening ceremony officiated by Soen Sa Nim, accompanied by Mu Sang Sunim. After months of searching, the group located and is renting a small house in central Paris with enough space for a Dharma room, kitchen and several bedrooms.

Residents are Dr. Danette V. Choi, the teacher from Dharma Sah of Hawaii who will be dividing her time between Paris and her Honolulu center; Ji Gong Sunim (for-

VIVE LA ZEN!

merly Veronique LeGuyader), a native of Paris who lived at Providence Zen Center and became a nun in Korea in the spring of 1984; Subi Berger, former PZC garden-master and Second Head Dharma Teacher; and Yong Shik, a Korean graduate student

who is studying French and English. Also staying for a while to get the new center organized is Do Mun Sunim (formerly Larry Sichel), who sat the first monk's Kyol Che 90 day retreat this past winter at Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in Cumberland, RI.

Soen Sa Nim has given a number of public talks and workshops in Paris over the past few years which have generated a lot of interest in Zen teaching. As a result, the Paris group already has ties with RIGPA, a Tibetan Buddhist center, in Paris directed by Sogyal Rinpoche and other Zen students in Paris. Ji Gong Sunim reported she has already received letters from the Brazil Zen group in Sao Paulo and from Poland. She hopes to join part of the Kyol Che retreat in Warsaw sometime this summer.

NEW VIPASSANA CENTER IN CAMBRIDGE

Soen Sa Nim flew back from Paris to officiate at the opening ceremony of the new Cambridge Insight Meditation Center on July 21. The teacher at the New Vipassana center is Larry Rosenberg, one of Soen Sa Nim's first students in this country and a co-founder of the Cambridge Zen Center located just a few minutes away. The

Vipassana center joins more than a dozen Buddhist groups in the Boston-Cambridge area, reflecting a growing interest in Buddhist teachings.

Soen Sa Nim and his sangha have had close ties with the Vipassana sangha for many years, with students sitting each other's retreats. Every year at the end of the 90 day fall meditation retreat held at Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, Soen Sa Nim gives a talk and is treated to a renowned IMS dinner. Over the years, such IMS teachers as Larry Rosenberg, Jack Kornfield, Joseph Goldstein, and former IMS teacher Jacqueline Schwartz-Mandell have given talks at Soen Sa Nim's Zen centers.

The Cambridge Vipassana group is making extensive renovation to their new building on Broadway, a large 3-story house with a central staircase. Skilled carpenters hired for the project from the Cambridge Zen Center are Master Dharma Teacher George Bowman, Bill Highsmith and Peter Kennedy, all of whom worked extensively on the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery building at Providence Zen Center. In addition to residential and meditation room space on the ground and upper floors, the Vipassana group will be renovating the basement into a space for walking meditation, yoga classes and meetings.

The centerpiece of the new meditation room is an ornate five-foot high altar with

Bodhisattva figures carved into the front panels. This superb work, which was unveiled at the opening, was recently completed by the famous Korean woodcarver Sang In Kim. It is Mr. Kim's first major work in America and continues his tradition of carving masterpieces for Buddhist temples.

A living National Treasure in Korea, Mr. Kim has carved more than 30 altarpieces for temples in Korea. He is in residence at Providence Zen Center. Assisting him as an apprentice is Bodhisattva Monk David Klinger, a long-term PZC resident and a skilled woodworker. Mr. Kim and David were honored guests at the opening ceremony.

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