

FWBO NEWSLETTER 48

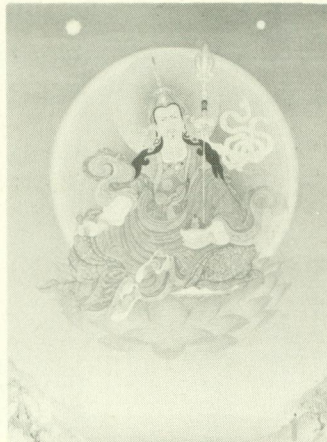
Price 65p

**“Let us
live happily;
among the
ailing let us
live in
health.”**





A) Green Tara



B) Padmasambhava



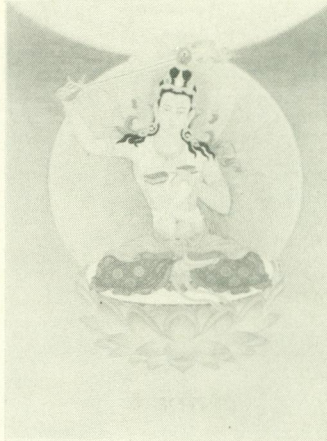
C) Amitabha



D) Vajrapani



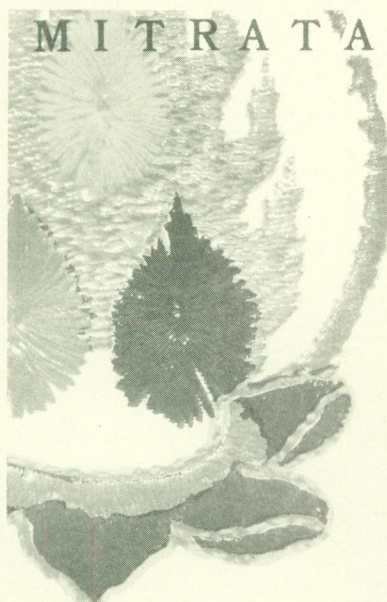
E) Manjughosha



F) Manjughosha

Colour photographs of paintings of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, both traditional and contemporary by Western Buddhist Order artists. Obtainable from **Windhorse Associates**, for details and prices write or telephone: 119 Roman Road London E2 0QN Tel: 01-981 5157

Windhorse Publications



Going for Refuge 1



Peace is a Fire

A collection of sayings, poems, aphorisms, and reflections by the Ven. Sangharakshita. *Peace is a Fire* communicates with stark urgency the need to examine our views, our patterns, our assumptions, and to transform them. Available from Windhorse Publications £1.50

Mitrata

Mitrata is a magazine for practising Buddhists. It offers practical guidance to those who are making a sincere effort to follow the Buddha's path of human development.

Themes covered include the place of moral observances in the spiritual life, overcoming inner hindrances, meditation and *dhyana* states, karma and rebirth, individuality, self and other, etc., etc.

Mitrata comes out every two months. One year's subscription costs £4.00.

Individual copies cost 65p.

Windhorse Publications

119 Roman Road, Bethnal Green,
London E2 0QN. 01-980 2507



Editor: Nagabodhi
Production Assistants Ashvajit
and Marichi

Layout and Design by
Windhorse Associates,
119 Roman Road,
London E2 0QN.
01-981 5157

Published quarterly by the
Friends of the Western
Buddhist Order (Publications),
119 Roman Road,
London E2 0QN.
01-980 2507

President:
The Ven. Maha Sthavira
Sangharakshita

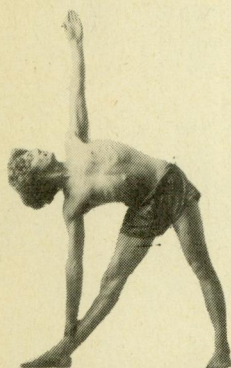
Printed at Windhorse Press,
51 Roman Road,
London E2 0HU.
01-980 1843

Typeset by Blue Lotus
01-981 1407

©Windhorse Publications
1980

Subscriptions £3.25 pa
(Surface mail to all parts of
the world)
Please make cheques and
P.O.s payable to:
Windhorse Publications

Cover photo by Vajradipa



Editorial

At the time of writing, the newspapers and radio news bulletins are very much filled with the latest information on the earthquake in Italy. It is terrible to know that, not very far away, thousands of people who were living peacefully and normally until a week ago are now suffering the horrific shocks of bereavement, injury, and loss of shelter.

Elsewhere, wars and border skirmishes, religious and ideological rivalries, famines, economic shifts, and corrupt governments, continue as ever to create their own particular pockets of misery and despair.

The air, the seas, the earth, are becoming polluted, and entire species of wildlife are becoming extinct. Bombs and missiles now exist in numbers great enough to ensure that man could go the same way as the dodo — and recently there has been a disturbing upsurge in the belief that such an eventuality is inevitable.

Yet here we are, bringing out an issue of the Newsletter on the theme of 'health', devoting our pages to articles on massage, Yoga, wholefoods, and so on. At first glance, it may seem a little self-indulgent, a little escapist. Are we just fiddling while samsara burns?

If you have any knowledge of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, you will surely know that it is not a Movement of idle dreamers. There is no lack of realism or concern for others. It is precisely because we recognise the limitations of social organisations based on mundane values that so many of us are engaged, full-time, in an attempt to create a 'new society'. This is not intended to be some fairy-tale refuge from the unavoidable realities of life, but it is and will be a radical alternative — economically, culturally, morally and spiritually — to the existing order of things in the West.

It is relatively easy to sit back and think about a new society, to philosophise, make plans, and dream dreams about the ideal world, but it is another thing to get up and start building it. It is not easy to make very limited resources stretch a very long way; it is not easy to live a simple life — working very hard and receiving just the bare necessities of life. It is not easy to enter into direct communication with people — to give and receive fierce friendship. And it is not at all easy to be constantly confronting and opposing years of habit and conditioning.

To build a new society, to be of real help and use to ourselves and the world, calls for tremendous reserves of energy, vitality, clarity, warmth, and optimism. It calls for *health* — not some mentally conceived notion of health, but real flesh and blood health. If we really believe in what we are doing then it should show in the way we take care of ourselves.

Nagabodhi

Contents

Features

Taking care of yourself	2
Get into your Body	5
Buddhism and Wholefoods	9
A Brush with Death	10

Book Review

The Healing Buddha	11
--------------------------	----

Facets

News from Centres around the world ..	13
Events in 1981	23

Taking Care

Looking after oneself, caring for one's health, and well-being is perhaps the most basic and fundamental aspect of personal responsibility; the first thing to be attended to if we are to develop our fullest human potential. Yet surprisingly enough, until maybe a year or so ago, when words like squash and jogging started being heard in Friends' circles, physical health and well-being had been somewhat neglected and overlooked, not to say derided in our Movement. It was almost as if, in our spiritual life and practice, bodily considerations were of no concern or importance, if not in fact seen as actual hindrances.

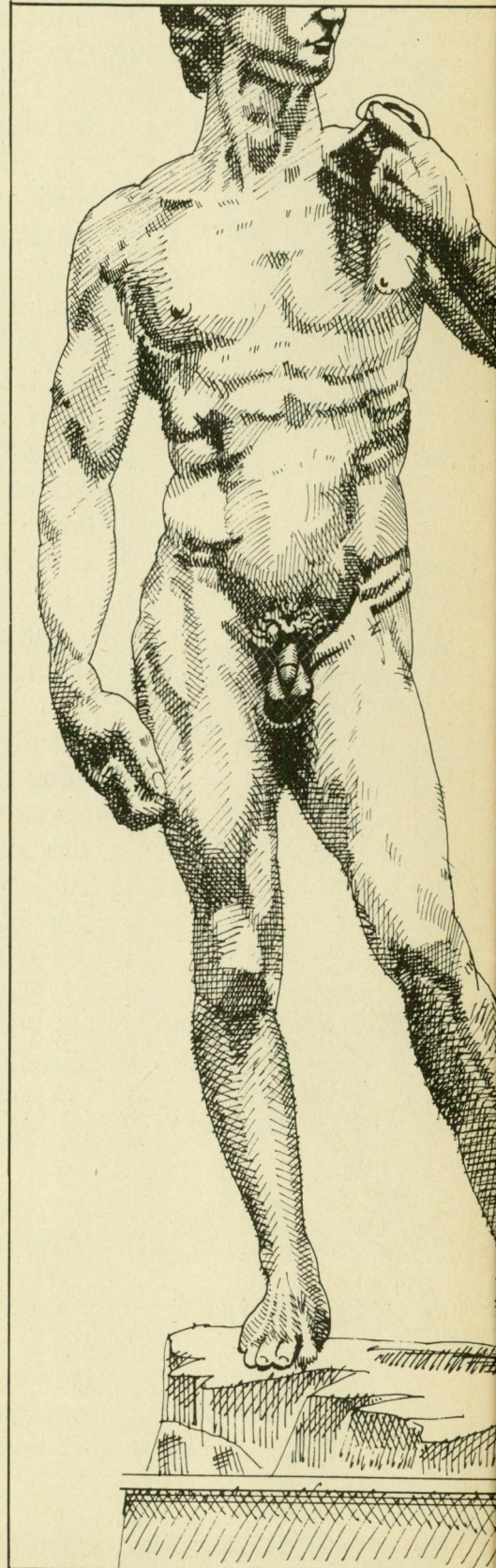
Of course there has always been a handful of yogis in our midst, and probably most of us have at least flirted with macrobiotic foods, and of course we are all vegetarians. But despite this, I think it is generally true to say that most of us have not given, and do not give our physical health much consideration, and all too often in fact do harm to ourselves.

Yet really this is ridiculous if you stop and think about it. Here we are, supposedly bright, intelligent, aware people, trying to grow and develop as individuals, yet often totally neglecting our physical well-being, as if that didn't matter, didn't count, or in some cases didn't even exist. So why should this be the case? I think there are many reasons, but perhaps the most important one is the pseudo-spiritual idea many people still hold, that the body is somehow low, defiled, base, and inferior to the 'spirit'. This, of course, was the old Indian idea which prompted the Buddha-to-be, to practice his terrible austerities. The idea was that the more you mortified the flesh, the more free your spirit would be to unite with God or Atman. This also explains why many people still hold the idea that the spiritual person is somehow very timid, meek, emasculated, someone whose body is rather weak and atrophied. We have after all had a Western Christian conditioning, and consequently our idea of spirituality is usually a Christian one at least unconsciously, if not consciously, which means we tend to think that if one is

developing spiritually then one ought to be a timid, meek, God-fearing, obedient sort of person. We still tend to see the spiritual as something very rarified, intangible, non-corporeal; something lacking guts and strength and bodily vigour.

But this is not the Buddhist view, and it certainly was not the Buddha's view. We know that having practiced austerities for six years, he gave them up. He realized that if he was to gain Enlightenment, then he needed a healthy body. We also know that, according to traditional teachings, amongst all the six Realms of Conditioned Existence, it is only from the Human Realm that one can gain Enlightenment. It is for this reason that human birth is so highly esteemed in Buddhism, especially in the Tantra, where the human body is seen as your vehicle, your indispensable means for gaining Enlightenment. Human life therefore is seen as a wonderful opportunity, not to be wasted, and a body with all five senses intact is seen as a great personal endowment. There are other reasons however why many people neglect their physical health and well-being. Primary amongst these, I think, is ignorance, which I see as being of two kinds. There is firstly what I shall call spiritual ignorance and secondly what I shall call just plain ignorance. By spiritual ignorance I mean that the person in question has no spiritual vision, no goal, no ideal. He is not aware of how fortunate he is to have a human body, not aware of the wonderful opportunity he has to evolve, so consequently he neglects his body. By plain ignorance I mean that a person who may be quite bright and intelligent may often maltreat his body simply because he has little or no awareness of it, and its needs. I think this applies to a great number of people.

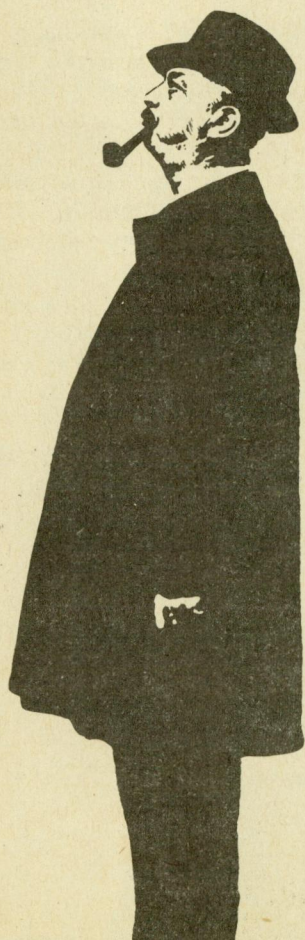
Let us take the case of food. Many people in our society eat what is known as "junk food"; food, that is to say, which has been denatured, processed and so on. The consequence is that many people are effectively undernourished. Yet most of them do not realize this.



of Yourself

Upasaka Mangala

"There are still too many admirers of gods and heroes, and not enough people trying to become them."



They really believe that rubbery white bread is good for you or that chocolate bars really do give you energy, and so on. And it is not surprising really, when they are being told this every day on television, in the newspapers, and on advertising hoardings.

Yet another reason why some people, especially perhaps the young, neglect their physical health, is a kind of intoxication with youth or, if you like, with their present good health. This kind of intoxication (just like alcoholic intoxication) can make you a bit heedless, a bit reckless. You feel young and healthy now, so you tend to think you will always be that way. Of course, when you are young you can get away with a lot: your body is young and strong and can take a certain amount of punishment and neglect before it starts to complain. But eventually of course too much neglect will take its toll and make itself felt. So even young people have to be careful.

The fourth and last reason why many people neglect their physical health is of course an old friend: sloth and torpor, or perhaps we should just call it plain laziness. Some people just cannot be bothered. They do not bother to eat properly or take any exercise. They do not care how they look, feel, and so on. You can understand youthful intoxication with good health; you can understand that some people just do not know any better, and that some people do not have any spiritual vision. But when you *know* you are neglecting your health and well-being, but cannot be bothered to do anything about it, then things are really bad.

These then are at least some of the reasons why we so often neglect our health. So the question now arises, what can we do about it? Firstly, we have to realize the need for the importance of good health for our spiritual development. We need to throw out once and for all the idea that spirituality is somehow akin to ill-health and weakness. We have to see that the *truly* spiritual person is strong, healthy, energetic; and not just a vague association of spiritual qualities, however positive. In other words we

need to start by taking responsibility for our own health and well-being and giving it the consideration it deserves.

As Buddhists we have already, or are in process of, taking responsibility for our own growth and development. So we have to see that growth and development includes physical growth and development. Because as we have seen, our body is our vehicle, our means, not only to our own development, but to that of others as well. There is not much point in having lots of wisdom and compassion if we are constantly dogged by physical illness and lack of energy. If this is the case, our spiritual qualities will not be much good to us or to anyone else for that matter. So all this implies that just as we consciously try and develop our minds, so we should consciously develop and look after our bodies, our physical health. Now by develop, I do not mean that we should all take up weight-lifting, or body culture and that sort of thing. This is merely physical development for its own sake, as an end in itself: narcissism. What we need I think is more to follow the Greek ideal of cultivating a fine mind in a fine body, with one reflecting the other.

What we need therefore is to become more aware of our own bodies, or perhaps 'alive' to our own bodies would be a better expression: alive to what we need to keep ourselves in optimum condition, or, in some cases, to get ourselves in optimum condition. We must be alive to our bodies' needs in terms of sleep, sex, food, exercise and so on. And of course, this is something which varies from person to person. So we each have to take responsibility for it. We each have to find out what is best for us; find a way of life, a regimen if you like, which suits us.

All this of course becomes more important as one gets older. As we have seen, when you are young, your body is more adaptable, you can burn the candle at both ends as it were. But as you get older your own individual needs and rhythms come more into prominence, become more important. They are in fact aspects of your emerging individuality and have to be acknowledged and taken into account.

Now I am not implying that we should become very precious about the whole thing and spend hours in front of a mirror or become incredibly fussy about food, sleep and so on. What I am really talking about is having metta (love) for oneself; and by metta I do not just mean sitting on a cushion wishing that you will be well and happy. By metta I mean actually having some care and concern for one's physical well-being as well, giving oneself what one needs. Metta doesn't exist in the abstract, but in the concrete. It is not enough just to feel it, it must be acted out. It is amazing sometimes to see how little connection there is between people's theory and their practice. They may sit for hours doing the metta-bhavana practice, and then dash off for a cigarette or to some other unwholesome activity immediately afterwards. This kind of pursuit of pleasure, really indicates a lack of metta, a lack of any real regard for oneself, which shows that it is possible to 'please' oneself without loving oneself, without having metta for oneself.

Now I am not condemning pleasure here: far from it. It is very important that we should have pleasure in our lives. But pleasure, real pleasure, should be something which nourishes us, enriches us, and not something which harms us. Pleasure really should be a simple fact of existence, something which is naturally there in our lives, not something which we have to pursue. It should be the natural result, consequence, of having a healthy body and healthy senses, which are open and alive to existence.

Most of us, however, are really only half alive, and do not really experience our physical senses in an open, healthy way. I think we need a lot more physical awareness, a lot more physical activity.

There are still too many admirers of Greek gods and heroes, and not enough people trying to become them. We need a lot more physical openness and robustness otherwise there is a danger that we will get too 'cultured' and 'spiritual' in the wrong sense, so that we end up as a Movement of alienated aesthetes, more concerned with passive appreciation than active participation.

Now so far I have concerned myself particularly with our physical needs and physical health, but we also have aesthetic needs and non-material needs, which for the truly human being are just as much needs as the more basic ones.

We should for example take pride in our appearance; actually like ourselves and the way we look, not to mention the place we live in, our environment and so on. We also have cultural needs; for music, art, films, recreation and so on. Again it is disappointing to see how conditioned many of us are in this respect, still regarding these things as an extravagance, or a distraction from our spiritual development, as if the spiritual life consisted of penny-pinching puritanism and threadbare asceticism, where any enjoyment or more aesthetic pursuits are frowned upon. Of course there is a danger here, since even cultural

interests can be a distraction, but I think that all too often we use our so-called spiritual motives to rationalize our lack of metta for ourselves.

Now assuming we followed all the above recommendations, even assuming that we were very careful and mindful and felt metta for ourselves and so on, unfortunately — life being what it is — sooner or later we are probably going to get ill. This is because there will always be some factors we cannot take precautions against. We should not therefore become too neurotic and spend too much time and energy trying to avoid illness, as one can in this way often precipitate illness. One could say that someone who is preoccupied in this way, is already ill. We should not therefore let the fear of illness dominate our lives and activities.

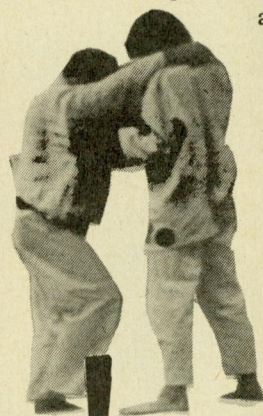
This does not mean, however, that we can go to the other extreme and adopt the attitude that if one is probably going to get ill anyway, then one may as well indulge one's bad habits. One can never guarantee good health. However mindful and careful one is, sometimes one will just have to accept illness. But, if one is being mindful, careful and so on, then there's a much better chance that one will be healthy.

If we are to create the New Society, if we are to be New Men and Women, then we need a new concept of spiritual health, one far removed from the weak, pasty-faced notion of spirituality that we have become used to in the West. We need something more akin to the young Greek god as our ideal. We need to be really healthy, really strong; far healthier and stronger than the old men in the old society, because there is just so much to be done, so much to be overcome. But by healthy,

I do not just mean positive mental states in a decrepit old body, but a perfectly healthy, perfectly integrated, organism.



Get Into your Body!



It was neither historical fact nor mere fantasy that ascribed the founding of the major Chinese martial arts systems to Bodhidharma who introduced Ch'an to China in the 6th century: in this case, the symbolic truth of the legend was of prime importance. It points to a far deeper significance in the curious link that exists between the introspection of Zazen and an ostensibly violent activity that is a martial art. Certainly, traditionally, a martial arts practice meant far more than just a convenient skill for unprotected monks living in times of political unease; it was eminently useful, both as a metaphor for those rigorously following the spiritual life, and as a physical and mental training.

This applies as much to its modern counterparts as to the depth of tradition in Chinese and Japanese history. Jigoro Kano, who founded Judo at the end of the last century, regarded the importance of Judo not so much as a means of defence, but as a training and an education which would enable the exponent to work more capably for the benefit of all beings.

It is no coincidence, therefore, that there have always been individuals within the 'Friends' who have been attracted to one form of martial art or another — many have tried Karate or Kendo or a softer form such as Tai Chi. I came across Judo by accident. I had watched my small son practise Judo for about a year until I could hold out no longer. The beauty, the excitement, and, perhaps, the challenge, drew me to it, and I knew, from the moment I first stepped on to the mat and felt the canvas under my feet, that this was for me.

That was a little under four years ago now. I have watched my involvement with Judo begin with a once-a-week practice and develop to the point at which I generally work at least once a day. The harder I trained the more I realised how much there remains to be done — on the day I was graded to First Dan my Sensei pointed out how in Japan a black belt is regarded only as the end of the apprenticeship: the real work still lies ahead.

On that day, a couple of months ago, I realised also what Judo had done for me. It is too easy to forget that Judo (and its companion systems) is an art form with an aesthetic of its own. This, perhaps, is more difficult for the non-practitioner to appre-

ciate for unlike the Western arts, the martial arts do not set out to communicate to an audience. So each person's view of Judo will be peculiar to himself or herself. What follows is my view, and I write it in the hope that it will interest a sufficient number of people within the Friends to enable us to start classes of our own.

Essentially, Judo is about personal change, personal development. That is one reason why it is called a Path or a Way — literally translated it means The Gentle Way. As we travel along it, we change. We change physically. We become fitter and more flexible; we develop better posture and therefore our movements become more graceful, more precise. As we move through the grades, our movements become less wild and more co-ordinated. We are more relaxed, using only those muscles we really need to use. When a white belt, a beginner, is attacked, he often goes as stiff as a board. Everything stiffens, including his mind. When a more experienced Judoka is attacked, he does not remain immobile, but he only moves what he needs to move.

We also change mentally. Our muscles and bodies move according to the dictates of the mind. At the beginning, in Judo, our minds are either in a state of shock when attacked, or a state of confusion, as we try to assimilate what are really complex techniques which themselves alter in thousands of tiny ways according to different situations, different partners. But through diligent training we can begin to sort out some of these mental confusions and achieve a greater clarity. Two things differentiate the advanced Judoka from the beginner: a clarity of mind, and the ability to translate mental decisions into controlled action, creative action.

Technically, the essence of Judo is movement, or more precisely the harmony of movement. Your partner moves in a certain direction and for a split second you have to move even faster, but with great accuracy, in order to harmonise with him. Then you are in a position to take over control. There are few things more beautiful than a near-perfect throw, and the curious thing is that it doesn't seem to matter (almost!) whether you are the thrower or the thrown. One moment you were walking in a direction, and the next moment you are flying through the air. There has been no effort, no brutish tug of strength. Often, when this happens, the thrower is as surprised as the person being thrown. Both appreciate that something special has happened, and both feel it was a privilege to be at that place at that time.

Of course, it isn't easy: such occasions occur relatively rarely when two judokas of equal grade are working together. But that is the central delight of the technical side of Judo. It comes only, of course, after much hard work, after many falls, mentally and physically. Each time one is thrown one has to pick oneself up again and return to practice; each time one deepens one's ability to remain quiet and composed, yet determined and alert. As the months pass we can see our bodies and our movements

In the following three articles we hear how three of our Friends are looking after their bodies.

Be warned! United in their belief that physical activity has a direct bearing on our spiritual practice and well-being, they waste no opportunity to urge us all into action.

by

**Nick Soames
Michael Scherk
Upasaka Vajradaka**

developing; we learn, too, what real effort is, how wasteful wild, wilful and brutish actions can be, and how beneficial is clarity, purposefulness and precision. We learn not to panic at moments of great stress but remain centred and poised. We learn to submit when we are beaten by a good technique, yet we learn not to submit just because we are overwhelmed by a blinding fear.

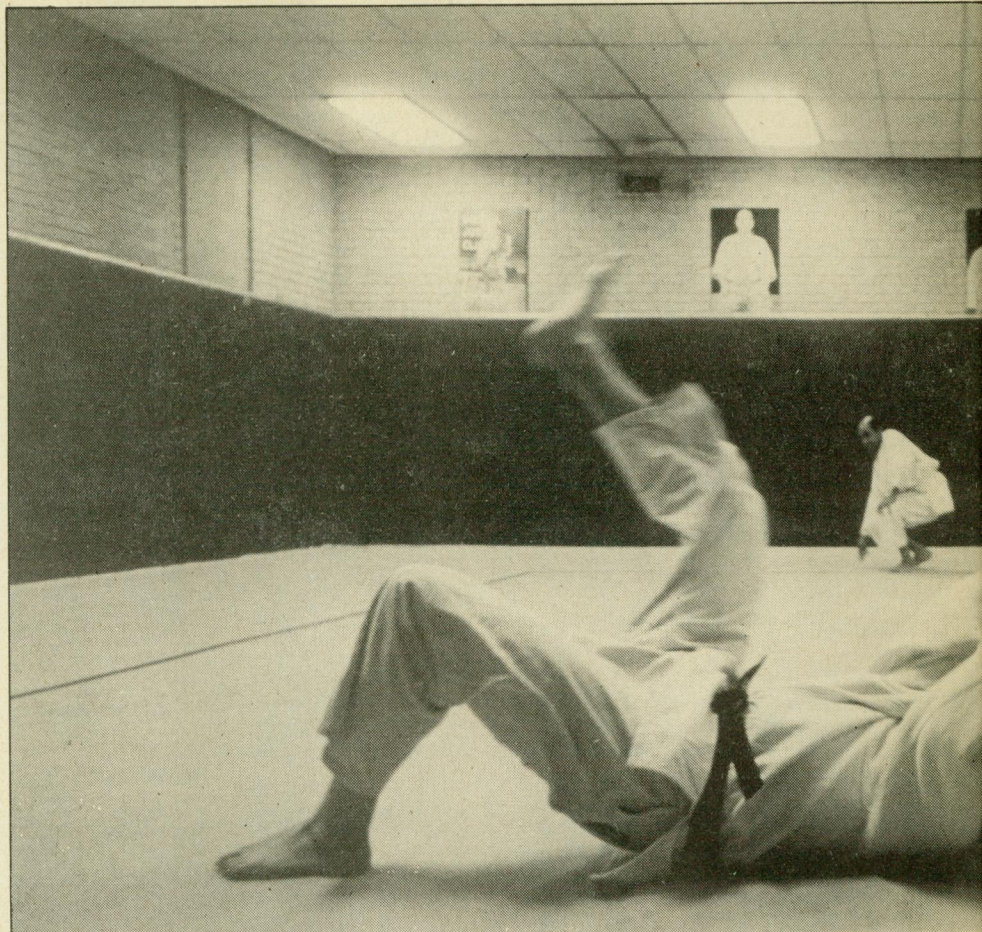
Gradually, you lose much of the sense of fear, at least physical fear, and the grosser forms of mental fear, and with that loss comes a marvellous sense of freedom, of lightness. Aggression has no place in good Judo because aggression involved hate which is an unstable state of mind and leads to sloppy, unstable Judo.

Perhaps the most important use of Judo is not so much as a physical training or a means of self-defence, or even an inventive and constantly interesting pastime. It is when Judo is used as a mirror of one's own self-development that it becomes so fascinating, so absorbing, and above all, so useful. Judo is black and white, to a certain extent. If you train hard, and your techniques are good and your mental preparation is correct, you will succeed. If you are deficient in one of these areas, you will not. It is as simple as that. But very often the problems that manifest on the Judo mat are merely forms of problems, perhaps greater problems, that exist in one's everyday life. If you are too aggressive in life, or too woolly in life you will be able to see it there in real, concrete form, in your Judo. Life, death, excitement, passion, control, jealousy, fear, violence, sexuality, compassion, beauty; the acceptance of people for what they are, with all their foibles; decisiveness, indecisiveness, change, ideals, concentration, inspiration, stimulation, — they all manifest on the Judo mat, as clear as day: and, what is more important, the Judoka can see in a remarkably clear way where he stands in relation to them.

Judo also offers the element of competition. It is not enough to practice in private. One must be able to produce one's best at the times when it is particularly needed.

Competitions can be ugly and even unpleasant, because not very many people practice the best kind of Judo. There are quite a number of thugs on the Judo mat. But one has to be able to produce one's own good Judo even during a meeting with a thug; when he is pulling you roughly all over the place, one has to retain an inner quietness, a balanced posture both mentally and physically. Sometimes, if one has trained hard enough, the superior technique will overcome the thuggery. Sometimes the thuggery will prove superior, but then the mental poise of the real Judoka should remain unaffected. He should be prepared to bounce back, his ideals and intentions unchanged. After all, competition is ultimately not about winning or losing, but about producing one's best at all times.

I once remarked with a certain amount of levity that the martial arts in general offered one of the best ways to develop metta, and despite the frivolity, there is much sense to



**“There are few things more beautiful than
is that it doesn't seem to matter (almost!)”**

that. On the mat one acknowledges the unskillful actions of others without regarding those actions as personal insults. If the person wants to behave in that manner, that's his problem, but it does not prevent us from giving as much as we can in the way that we feel is appropriate.

At the same time, as one's training progresses, one feels a greater sense of freedom, freedom from fear, freedom from the wild actions of others which we just avoid with a simple, silent sidestep. And it becomes increasingly clear how the same applies to the world outside the Dojo, in all one's contact with other people.

Nicolas Soames

Yoga

Six-and-a-half years ago it was obvious to me that yoga was nothing but an effeminate form of pseudo-exercise shrouded in mystical mumbo-jumbo which could only delight the weakminded Westerner out of touch with his own culture. Knowing nothing of the different schools and 'limbs' of yoga, I finally attended a yoga class to gain ammunition for arguments with more gullible friends. By chance it was a Hatha Yoga

class of the Iyengar system and took place in an FWBO centre. An hour-and-a-half later I was bowled over, utterly and completely. My body was exhilarated in the sheer physical pleasure of the most scientific and systematic form of exercise I had ever experienced. And the final 'corpse pose' gave me a deeper relaxation than I could ever recall having experienced previously. So I came back again and again, becoming ever more enthusiastic and discovering more exciting dimensions to this wonderful new activity.

At the same time I was affected by the surroundings and atmosphere of the classes, and gradually realized that their setting, the old North London centre of the FWBO, contributed greatly to the benefits of the yoga and to my enjoyment. I was impressed by the friendliness, human warmth, and vitality of the people I met. Just as importantly, I realized that the good yoga teachers I encountered, whether or not in the FWBO, possessed what I could only call a 'spiritual element' — for lack of a better term. So why did good yoga teachers need to be somewhat 'spiritual'? Or, rephrasing the question, how is Iyengar yoga far more than a sport or system of exercise? In what ways is it conducive to health of body and mind and to spiritual growth?

Quite fundamentally, yoga releases energy. The practice of the postures taps seemingly inexhaustible resources. Some postures, such as standing poses and backbends, give a more vigorous and outward-going energy valuable at the beginning of the

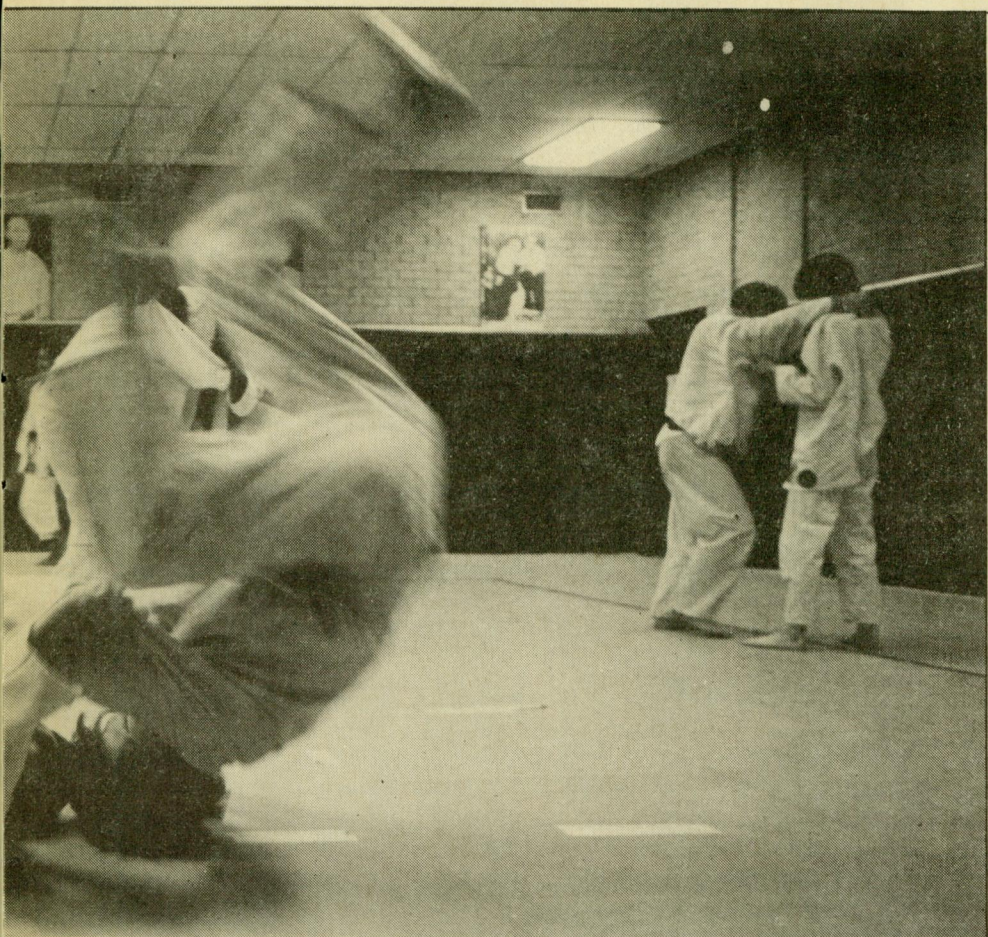


Photo Vajradipa

a near-perfect throw, and the curious thing whether you are the thrower or the thrown."

day. Others, such as forward bends and inverted postures, release a quieter, more recuperative and receptive energy of benefit at the end of the day. These energies of differing quality arise through opening the chest and hips and other locked areas and the associated *chakras*. Suppleness and flexibility are increased greatly. The entire body is strengthened: unlike sports, yoga actually strengthens *all* parts of the body, including fine muscles of whose existence the practitioner was in the past blissfully unaware. A further difference is the increasingly subtle awareness of ever more parts of the body, from within the body. Linked to this is an increasing ability to dwell in the body rather than 'be in the head' or even 'outside' oneself altogether. Moving less and less at society's pace, one feels one's own flows and rhythms, and experiences the joy not just of being in the body but of being in oneself.

Obviously these results increase the yogi's resistance to illness. In addition to this preventive function, however, yoga can act therapeutically. Most teachers are in a position to instruct a pupil on poses to alleviate a sore back or headache, menstrual pains, or diarrhoea. But you can go well beyond this. In Pune I watched Mr Iyengar give therapeutic classes to pupils who were suffering from troubles ranging from constipation to brain damage!

Thus it hardly needs mentioning that there is no clear boundary between the physical and psychological effects of yoga on the health and well-being of pupils. Many

pupils notice an improvement in their sleeping and a greater resistance to colds and headaches within a short time of taking up yoga seriously. But unquestionably of greater importance is the growth of awareness, which extends beyond the cells of the body to mindfulness: 'Am I speeding?' 'Why am I eating this?' 'Do I feel hunger?' 'Do I feel tired?' 'What am I *actually* feeling?' In fact, conscientious practice of yoga can bring the pupil in contact with his real feelings on several levels, as if he were to open internal shutters. The view onto the other side can be disturbing and temptation arises to slam the shutters closed again: many do, and also give up yoga. But you need not! Especially if you practise meditation and have the support of true, spiritual friends, it is possible to venture beyond the shutters and explore the vastness of one's mind. Even without meditation, yoga can work on the mind, particularly helping to break down that alienated self-consciousness which is such a hallmark of our culture.

At home in the body, the pupil gradually learns not to manipulate it like a machine but as himself. *He begins to take responsibility for his body, in fact, for himself.* This development has profound psychological consequences. It is an antidote to the conditioning that has alienated us from ourselves physically, to the 'run-to-the-specialist' attitude. Followed through to its logical conclusions, this antidote is, in fact, subversive towards a society that requires for its smooth functioning a herd of humanoid sheep.

Where can such a subversive turn, when, by his very growth and expanding awareness, he has made himself unfit for the realm of normal society and has implicitly rejected its stagnation? — Obviously to association with like-minded people. This does not mean some elitist mini-herd. Individuals who are developing, when they freely come together, form a creative community.

This is the main reason why yoga taught and practised in the FWBO takes on yet another dimension. Separation from materialistic society becomes a natural fact. FWBO yoga by its very nature encourages the growth of different values and positive emotions — of healthiness, responsibility, friendliness, dynamism, and human warmth. For the yoga takes place in a context which regards it neither as weird nor as a form of the higher gymnastics; it takes place in a spiritual context, a context in which yoga is one of several practices pursued for the sake of personal evolution beyond the animal and pseudo-human. The insights and discoveries which yoga brings are welcomed and encouraged. But what is more important is revealed by the atmosphere of an FWBO yoga class, dominated by friendliness, concern, rapport, contact — real communication among people, based on their positive side.

Michael Scherk

Massage

The 'Body-Mind' approach, pioneered on the West Coast of the USA, is rooted in the recognition that the human body is affected not only by such directly physical factors as heredity, nutrition, activity, and environment, but also by psychological factors — the emotions especially. This is so much the case that our psychological state is directly expressed, in various ways, throughout the body. To a large degree, the body and the mind are inseparable.

Until the emergence of the 'Body-Mind' approach in the 1960's, massage was, at least in the West, an exclusively body-oriented technique, either in the form of 'Swedish' massage, or as a kind of physiotherapy. These techniques which had to do simply with the manipulation of musculature were carried out either in a cool, clinical manner, or in the pure pursuit of pleasure. The mind and the emotions were not taken into account at all, emotional involvement being considered as somewhat taboo, particularly in the clinical environment.

However, when the body-mind principle was applied to massage, the whole person was taken into consideration, and massage thereby became many-faceted. In this renaissance, new techniques emerged, often derived from the ancient practices of India, China and Japan. In a short space of time,

massage had been transformed, from a cool impersonal 'rub', to a highly complex and multi-dimensional hotch-potch, which was still generally known as 'massage'.

Very broadly, there are five main ways in which massage can be used: 1) For first-aid; 2) to develop relaxation, awareness, and energy flow; 3) For healing; 4) As a form of psychotherapy; 5) For pleasure.

1) The potency of simple massage to overcome headaches, sprains, cramps, and tensions caused by misuse of the body (lifting weights badly, spending long hours hunched over a typewriter, etc.) has been demonstrated many times over. In my opinion, massage is safer and more direct than nearly all the powerful drugs which are prescribed for such day-to-day ailments — and which so often cause unwanted side-effects. I believe that in an ideal society there should always be people within easy reach who are able to administer this useful service.

2) Until the body-mind approach emerged, massage involved an active-passive relationship between the masseur and his client: one worked, while the other dozed. Now, the person receiving the massage is encouraged to be constantly aware of the point of contact between the masseur's hands and his body. He should try to be 'right there', feeling whatever his body is like: whether it is dull and dead, whether it is painful, or whether it is relaxed and alive. The implications of this kind of awareness are particularly relevant to people who are practicing the Dharma.

Someone who is being massaged in this way finds that the warmth and life in the masseur's hands will help him to focus awareness onto his body in a way in which he was incapable without help. As a result, he might discover large parts of his back, for example, in which he had been experiencing no sensations at all, before. Some muscles are dull, and some are painful to the touch.

In this way, the masseur can help the recipient to focus his awareness, which in turn stimulates the flow of basic physical vitality and relaxation. After a massage, we should try to keep in touch with those new-found areas — particularly before and after sleeping. In this way we will come to know when we are misusing our bodies. We will be able to tell when we are getting tense, and so will be able to relax, or at least become aware of the state of mind that is causing the tension. Catching symptoms of tension before they have gone too far will begin to

reverse the habitual processes that were leading to stiffness and rigidity. The new awareness will lead to an increasing flexibility and refinement of energy.

The most important effect that this kind of massage can have is to stimulate a sense of personal responsibility for one's own body, and a greater degree of integration between the mind, the emotions and one's physical being.

“Conscientious practice of yoga can bring the pupil in contact with his real feelings on several levels, as if he were to open internal shutters.”

3) Each of us has the ability to heal ourselves of disease and physical weakness, but very often we lack the integration and concentration to muster and focus that ability. Our self-healing power is actually energy functioning on a number of inter-penetrating levels. Fundamentally, the process is simple. We have to conduct our basic 'physical vitality', permeated with warm, well-wishing emotions, to all the parts of our body. This is done through awareness and self-experience, rather than in a wilful way.

The healing process between two people is a form of communication. Initially, one person is in touch with his healing power to some degree. He helps to arouse that ability in the other person, allowing him to focus onto the needy part of his body.

There are probably many people in the FWBO who have this ability to focus their healing power as a natural by-product of their spiritual practice. But many of them are unaware of it, or dismiss it because it because they do not consider themselves to be 'that kind of person'. Massage can be, for them, a direct way of coming into contact with, and expressing that ability.

4) In the context of psychotherapy, massage can be used to awaken and resolve repressed emotional content which is caught up and blocked within the body. the masseur directs his energy into the energy field (aura) which radiates from the affected muscles. In this way a repressed emotion can be brought to life, and into consciousness very quickly. All that the recipient of the massage has to do is lie there and be massaged. This approach has two major disadvantages. Firstly, it can lead us to an encounter with emotions that we are not yet ready to assimilate. This can have the effect of making us fear new and un-experienced emotion, and perhaps lead to an even stronger blocking-off.

Secondly, it does not lead us in the direction of taking responsibility for ourselves. It encourages a passive, 'patient-like' mentality, which sees problems as things that can be resolved only with recourse to therapy, rather than being overcome in the course of everyday life and interaction. Such a mentality is far removed from the attitudes that we are trying to cultivate within the FWBO. Here, we are trying to create environments and situations in which we can experience and develop our emotions in a progressive and creative manner. Within the context of meditation practice, and a broad, rich, and ethically based lifestyle, the unintegrated emotions bubble up to the surface, and are absorbed into our ever broader, more positive outlook, an outlook that has a strong spiritual orientation. Thus our emotional difficulties are dealt with in an organic way, according to the temperament and the efforts of the individual concerned, rather than being seen and related to as 'problems' with a life of their own.

5) Actually, many people regard the use of massage for purely pleasurable reasons as a form of therapy. It is seen as a way to overcome deep-rooted puritanical attitudes to the so-called sinful nature of the body and its functions. Certainly it is true to say that our bodies have a healthy need to be touched. This is something quite different from our sexual urges, but it is probably because there are no socially accepted ways in which this need can be met in Western society (where it is considered wrong for friends to enjoy much physical contact), that the needs for physical contact and for sex have become so confused with each other. Massage can to some extent allay this confusion, when done well and with integrity, but in the long term it is our attitudes to touch and to our bodies that have to change. A healthy body is spontaneously pleasurable. **Vajradaka** ■

Buddhism and Wholefoods

Upasaka Dharmananda

Buddhism and wholefoods? A union of the sublime and the ridiculous? Yet wholefoods are clearly a part of daily life for many of us in the FWBO. Our co-ops include, and intend to expand upon, a number of wholefood shops and market stalls, as well as vegetarian restaurants which serve a largely wholefood cuisine. And in our communities, wholefoods feature strongly in the larder.

'Wholefoods' is a vague, collective term for foods which have been produced as naturally as possible, and presented for sale without subjection to refinement processes. But what an emotive term it can be. Mention it and devotees will beam to their visions of steaming brown rice, Miso, and organically grown vegetables; disbelievers will flee for refuge to the nearest hamburger bar. Such can be the strength of peoples' faith in their food preferences.

Food is one of the major preoccupations of daily life, one of the basic needs we have to provide for. And in common with other biological needs, food is a concern with which we have a strong emotional involvement. Our habits and preferences with regard to eating are deeply ingrained. They begin to form almost at birth, and are liable to reinforcement at every meal.

Is there, then, a link between Buddhism and wholefoods? Buddhism, the Dharma, is concerned with the spiritual growth of individuals, guiding them ever on towards Enlightenment. Can wholefoods really help? Do they fit in with an individual's attempt to follow the Dharma? Or is the eating of wholefoods just a pseudo-spiritual blind-alley? For it is only to the extent that an activity can be integrated into the spiritual life that it has any relation to the Dharma.

Wholefoods is not an issue of burning concern in Buddhism. The Buddha did not have to consider food additives, refined flours, or cholesterol in His teachings. He was concerned only to communicate His Enlightenment and the way to it. Had the issue of wholefoods been a contemporary one, it is unlikely that He would have dealt with it at all, except perhaps as an aside.

More people in the West today eat of such foods as they enjoy most, in whatever abundance they can afford. They may worry about the ill-effects of over-eating some of them, but it is rarely that they consider any question of ethics in their eating habits.

The Dharma is a communication of the Buddha's Enlightenment. But it is far from being a fairground for the carousing intellect; it offers the most distinctively intelligent and *practical* advice that is available to the spiritual aspirant. The Dharma is something to be experienced. Practice of the Dharma should infuse and enrich every aspect of our lives.

Many of our activities may in themselves

have no end higher than sustaining bodily function, but the *way* in which we conduct them has an important effect on our mental state. According to Buddhist teaching, ethically skilful actions are those which stem from, or lead to, mental states of friendliness, generosity, and understanding, rather than those of hatred, greed, and ignorance. Far from being the dry bones of moral 'rules', covered by the dust of ages of uneasy obeisance, the ethics of the Dharma are alive with the positivity and clarity from which they spring, and to which they happily lead.

When taken for granted, and without any consideration most of what we do in our daily lives. Activities like eating, sleeping, talking and working are simply 'done'. We 'do' them often without awareness that we are doing anything at all. But all these actions, however simple, however mechanically performed, have an effect on, and contribute to our mental state. If we bring to them the awareness that we are *doing*, an awareness permeated with emotional warmth and vigour, then they will be transformed into integral parts of our spiritual life.

More specifically, vegetarianism, the abstention from eating meat, is central in the lives of those who follow the Dharma. It is a direct expression of a desire not to harm life, a practice based on love, and supported by wisdom. (See *The Path of the Inner Life*: 'The "Problem" of Ahimsa', by the Ven. Sangharakshita. Windhorse Pubs.) Harmlessness, or more positively, kindness to all life, is probably the best known feature of Buddhist ethics.

Sadly, not all those who follow the Dharma are able to practice vegetarianism. Some, such as the Tibetans, are restricted by their environment, where the terrain makes for difficulty in producing high-quality plant foods. But others have to admit to a lack of effort, a lack of willingness to change their habit patterns. Meat eating is axial to the diet of most human societies. There is a massive emotional investment in the security which is felt to be offered by meat. But it is an absolutely false belief that human health depends on the nourishment that meat provides. The taking of life for the sake of supporting our own is rarely necessary for most of us, and it is clearly not at all in keeping with the practice of kindness.

The Buddha's teaching to His followers on this issue was clear. They should not order the slaughter of animals for their food, and they should not partake of meat that they know to have been prepared specifically for them. If, in the course of begging, they are given meat by people unaware of their practice, they should accept it graciously, as their practice requires.

In the West, vegetarianism is historically based on a passion for health and vitality, rather than conscience. If you read the vegetarian press you will no doubt see a concern for the welfare of farm animals, and for those animals whose by-products make for an attractive Western style of life. But the principal message is related to fitness, extended youth, low blood-fat, and beauty. Vegetarians in the West have ever been keenly aware of the need for a healthy balanced diet. In this way, wholefoods, which is to say, wholesome foods, have become a corollary to vegetarianism.

A Buddhist, however, is a vegetarian, firstly, because of his practice of the Dharma, and it is only in connection with his vegetarianism that wholefoods may find a place in his life.

However, it should be noted that the Dharma speaks quite clearly about the value and good fortune of human life. We are urged not to squander it but to grasp this opportunity and apply ourselves energetically to it. We do this not only for our own benefit, but for the benefit of all. We should maintain such good health as we have. So a diet of wholesome food has a significance for us, not just as an accident of vegetarianism, but as an intelligent choice of diet. Of course there are some people who believe that a 'pure' diet has the power to bring about the fruits of spiritual practice. This is a wholly pseudo-spiritual fallacy. Good food supports a healthy physique, which supports — it does not create — a spiritual life.

Wholefoods in the market-place have a rather assorted set of images, from hippies in woolly hats, to grossly over-priced 'health-food' shops. Attendant on its image also is an army of political, economic, sociological, and ecological groups and issues, with which we at our market stalls are liable to be connected by society at large.

Some of the groups have a clearly intelligent concern for the way we use our planet, though they are sadly often used as a front by political intriguers. Some champion the cause of animals who suffer by man's mindless dominion. And yet others look with hapless wonder to the stars for the unfolding of a bright New Age of Man. We do not rejoice in sharing this motley brotherhood, however much sympathy we may individually have for some of their aims. We certainly do not look to Aquarius for help. Such groups are acting from mundane bases, and are sometimes negatively motivated even in pursuit of the most laudable of aims. We are in the wholefood market place to sell food which may help people to eat more economically, healthily, and harmlessly. Clearly, our involvement in wholefoods is a simple ethical one; and a healthy one at that.

A Brush with Death

Upasaka Kularatna

A criticism often levelled at Buddhism is that it is negative and pessimistic in its outlook and vision of existence. To anyone remotely connected with living Buddhism as exemplified by the way of life being pioneered in the FWBO, such a charge must seem absurd.

It is undoubtedly true that the Buddha did have a lot to say about matters such as sickness, suffering, and death; they are very important aspects of life, and cannot be ignored by anyone who is seriously trying to understand himself and the nature of the world in which he lives. There is a tendency in our modern society to try and distance ourselves from the harsher aspects of the world, and especially from death, but the Buddha taught that to realise how life and health are comparatively fragile things, and that one day we will die, can be a tremendous spur to action. Indeed, on a deeper level, He said that such realisations can give us an insight into the very nature of Reality.

I want to look at how reflection on these aspects of life can be helpful to someone who is trying to develop as an individual, who is trying to lead a more creative and positive life. I want to do so by relating some of my own experiences. I have recently recovered from a serious illness. It lasted for just over a year and not only provided me with first-hand experience of sickness and suffering, but also brought me, at one point, to a confrontation with the fact of death. The illness, Hodgkins Disease, which is treatable today thanks to which I am alive and well, but until recently it was fatal, and for a time I thought that I was in the grip of a fatal illness. As you can imagine, this provided me with a lot of food for thought.

For a long while, even before I learnt that I had the disease, I was in declining health. I could feel the very life and vitality draining out of me; I could feel myself on a slippery slope of ill-health leading to death. There were times indeed, when I could almost visualise the hooded, dark-cloaked, mysterious figure of Death hovering over me.

I spent quite a bit of time in hospitals, including a cancer hospital, where I saw many very ill people, and much suffering.

All this sounds rather grim — and it was, much of the time. But I feel that the experience has taught me a lot, and I feel a richer person for having gone through it. The way I live has been changed; I feel a stronger sense of purpose and direction in my life. I think that I take less for granted. It has helped me to understand people more: how they suffer, and how they show courage. It has made me appreciate more what a unique opportunity and adventure my life is. It has taught me lessons in solitude and acceptance of misfortune. Most of all, the experience has made me glad to be alive, and determined to do

something worthwhile with my life. I will try to explain how these unpleasant experiences could have these effects.

By experiencing and coming into contact with suffering that was often quite intense, and by seeing the ways in which people react to such suffering, I think I have come to understand more clearly what qualities I admire and value in people. Suffering lays a soul bare, and both strengths and weaknesses are shown up in sharp relief. Suffering can bring out the best and the worst in people; it can call up tremendous reserves of courage, fortitude, endurance, and emotional positivity in people, or it can make

**“Death is very real,
and only something
equally real and strong,
or stronger, can stand
up in its face and
not be swept away.”**

them give up and become weak, dependent on others, and self-centred. It can evoke, and spotlight, strength of character and moral integrity, and can show the supreme value of these qualities. Most people are capable of far more strength and heroism than they believe, and in a crisis, such as the suffering that accompanies serious illness, these reserves are called up and become apparent.

I could also see the various ways in which people react to a sick and suffering person. I could see this in the attitudes and behaviour of friends, relatives, and hospital staff towards seriously ill and unhappy patients. Again one could see a spectrum of human strengths and weaknesses revealed, ranging from hardened indifference and guilt-like misery on the one hand, to genuine concern and compassion on the other. Serious illness breaks down the walls and defences that you usually put up to other people. You are forced to become open, and to become more aware of the emotional attitudes of those around you. Genuine concern, friendliness, support and compassion are so important to a sick person, and I became aware of the importance of these qualities, and also of how rare and precious they are.

The most powerful experience in all this time for me was the time when I had to face the possibility — and indeed, I thought at the time, the likelihood — of death. My whole world was suddenly turned upside

down. It seemed that all my plans and ambitions were not to be, and that my life was coming to a premature end. This made me intensely aware of what I really found to be of value in life: it made me aware of what I was going to lose. I was sad to be losing it — not afraid, but sad that I would not have the chance to develop my potential, to express myself in the world. I felt a strong affirmation of life. I was no longer just passively alive: someone to whom things just happened, but I felt that my life had a meaning and direction in it. My life seemed a process of unfoldment, which had hardly begun to reveal itself; it contained the seed and potential of something more, something greater within itself. There were — are — things that I want to do with my life. This was not to say that I had my whole life planned out ahead of me, but rather that there is in me some sense of direction and growth that reveals its own purpose as it proceeds.

This was not a new feeling for me — to some extent I had always felt it — but never so strongly or clearly as this. I wanted to live, not because I was afraid of death, but because I wanted to give of myself and to add something to the richness and value of the world. This feeling of purpose, of challenge, of wanting to give to life, is at the bedrock of my being; I have experienced nothing deeper than it. To me it is synonymous with the Bodhisattva Ideal, the aspiration towards Enlightenment for the sake of all beings. It can be obscured by trivial, petty cares, but it can never be completely lost.

Death is very real, and only something equally real and strong, or stronger, can stand up in its face and not be swept away. Trivial cares and worries, intellectual theories about the nature of Reality, and so forth, just evaporate, and one is left only with oneself, one's life, and what one has made of it.

So I hope that you can see how reflecting on sickness and death is not a morbid and fearful denial of a full and enjoyable life. Rather it can be the opposite, and it thus has a part to play in the life of a growing individual.

However, it is important that these reflections occur in their proper context: human contact with other aspiring individuals, and a positive emotional atmosphere. Without the support, encouragement, and companionship of my spiritual friends, I think that my experience would have been quite different — frightening and confusing. Instead, I feel that I have learned and grown through my experiences, and I am glad to be alive in a world that holds richness, adventure and variety, and to have the opportunity to do something fantastic. ■

THE HEALING BUDDHA

Upasaka Virabhadra



The Bodhisattva *Bhaishajyaraja* ('King of Healing') from a gold Thangka of the eight Medicine Buddhas.

Usually we take our body for granted. Our awareness of it extends only as far as the gratification of those demands, such as food and sex, which it forces upon us. Otherwise it is a rather cumbersome piece of apparatus, subject to mechanical failure, wearing out and finally to be discarded when obsolete. We may resent the way in which flesh and blood are unable to keep pace with the soaring spirit, dragging us down again and again with mundane demands for attention.

As Buddhists our perspective must be wider than this. The body is rather to be prized as a valuable asset in the uphill struggle towards Enlightenment. Indeed without such concrete flesh and blood the process of development would be almost impossible. We know from our own experience how indispensable is Kalyana Mitrata — communication with our spiritual friends — to our own growth. No such communication is possible without the means of expression afforded by writing, visual arts and speech, as well as our highly refined sense organs. By

virtue of these faculties we are able to participate fully in the Spiritual Community.

The maintenance of good health therefore becomes of great importance to one

Raoul Birnbaum:

The Healing Buddha

Rider & Co., London.

pp. xi + 253 £4.50

wishing to live the spiritual life. In the first part of this book reference is made to passages in the Pali Canon concerned with medicine as one of the four 'requisites', along with food, robes and lodging, the very barest necessities of life allowed to the Bhikkhu (p3). It appears from these texts that thera-

peutics mainly consisted of natural medicines such as herbs and honey. As if to emphasise that Bhikkhus should only practice medicine in this context, a very interesting passage from the *Digha-Nikaya* is referred to (p5). This contains a list of occupations not considered 'right livelihood', among them several pertaining to medicine. The intent seems to be to discourage monks from becoming full-time doctors, possibly motivated by material gain rather than compassion.

An appendix refers to 'Healing Agents in the Pali Canon'; however the content of this book is not merely an account of the traditional remedies in use at the time of the Buddha. Rather, the wider significance of illness and healing for those involved in spiritual development is discussed. Ancient Indian medicine is of historical interest but as Western Buddhists we are more concerned with the fundamental principles behind the Buddha's teaching on these matters.

In His teachings the Buddha did refer to the causes and cure of disease. The influence of unskilful activity is dramatically illustrated (p9). "... a monk repeatedly denounced two of the elders of the Order. The ferocity of his undermining and false accusations and the intensity of the multitude of negative thoughts motivating the statements were such that — by karmic repercussion — his entire body broke out in boils, discharging pus and thus causing death".

When he had contact with the sick the Buddha responded according to the gravity of the condition (p10). To those with a fatal illness He preached Impermanence; to cure less severe ailments He used the teaching of the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment. As the disciple meditates on the successive stages of this exposition of the creative process, from the recollection of awareness (smriti) through to the attainment of Tranquility (upeksha) the disease is overcome. "Receiving and accepting the full teaching of the seven limbs, Kassapa thereupon '... rose up from that sickness. There and then that sickness of the venerable Kassapa the Great was abandoned.' " (p11). It seems entirely appropriate that these people committed to their own development should be encouraged and inspired in this way to overcome illness by their own efforts, almost as a side-effect of a renewed and vigorous taking to heart of the Buddha's teaching. Apparently the Buddha Himself made use of this principle when taken ill (p11). (For a full account of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment see the pamphlet *'Mind — Reactive and Creative'* by the Ven. Sangharakshita.)

The maintenance of health in order to enable people to practise the spiritual life is not the only point at which healing and the Dharma intersect. This book explores fully the exciting concept of disease and health as a paradigm of the human condition itself. "According to these teachings, a person who is not liberated, who is still subject to the sufferings brought on by insatiable craving, is considered 'ill'. Therefore the healing process is akin to the Enlightenment process... In order to recover from a serious disease, one usually needs a physician to diagnose the disease and prescribe a treatment, one needs the systematic healing treatment itself, and one needs attendants to give aid. In the Pali Canon, the Supreme Physician is the Buddha; the healing treatment — the medicine and therapeutic regimen — is the Dharma; and the attendants are members of the Order." (p15).

With the emergence of the Mahayana this paradigm, first formulated in the Buddha's time, is fully elaborated and refined. Mr. Birnbaum traces this line of development historically from Central Asia, and possibly

Kashmir, into China. By way of four great Mahayana Sutras we follow the gradual crystallisation of the healing energy immanent in the Dharma into the forms of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

Vimalakirti used his own illness as a means of teaching those who came enquiring after his health: "His own face gaunt and creased by illness, vividly impressing upon visitors the transitory nature of earthly

As Buddhists we find repeatedly that the most effective means of development is the engagement, at as deep a level as possible, of our own emotional energies with the powerful creative force of the Dharma.

In order to do this we need to contact within ourselves our own response to the creative archetypes which the figures of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas represent.

existence, Vimalakirti urged them to seek the 'Buddha-Body'... The sage's further comments, succinct and moving, indicate that his own illness stemmed from the burden which a Bodhisattva takes on when he pledges to save all beings: 'I am ill because all sentient beings are ill. If the illnesses of all sentient beings were to come to an end, then my illness would be ended'... Significantly, Vimalakirti instructs Bodhisattvas to convert the experience of illness into something positive, to generate wholesome striving energy from this experience." (p14).

The White Lotus Sutra features the Bodhisattva 'King of Healing' (Bhaisajyaraja) in a prominent position, including a description of his famous act in a past life, when as the Bodhisattva 'He Whom All Beings Delight to See' he burned his own body as an offering to the Buddha of the time. (p30). In the *Surangama Sutra* a further past life of Bhaishajya-raj, together with his brother the Bodhisattva 'Supreme Healer'

(Bhaishajya-Samudgata) is related (p34). The Vows of the two Bodhisattvas are laid down in the Sutra which bears their name, the translation of which from the Chinese forms part of the second half of this book.

This line of spiritual evolution reaches its peak with the emergence of the form of Bhaishajya-guru, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Buddha, Master of Healing. He is sometimes depicted alone, sometimes at the head of a company of seven Healing Buddhas. In his left hand he holds the lapis lazuli bowl of Amrita; in his right hand, making the gift-bestowing mudra, is a myrobalan-fruit.

With the form of Bhaishajya-guru and his mandala of accompanying deities the archetypal symbol of the Divine Healer is fully manifest, with its conceptual counterpart in the 'Bhaishajya-guru Sutra', also translated in this book. Having become fully manifest in this way it is now possible for the symbol to be incorporated into those practices which are concerned with the direct mobilisation of creative energy in the individual, i.e. the Vajryana. This incorporation did indeed take place. In the chapter on 'Images, Meditations and Ritual Worship' the outline of a Tibetan sadhana on Bhaishajya-guru is given. The use of a complex Mandala as part of an esoteric ritual is also described.

As Buddhists we find repeatedly that the most effective means of development is the engagement, at as deep a level as possible, of our own emotional energies with the powerful creative force of the Dharma. In order to do this we need to contact within ourselves our own response to the creative archetypes which the figures of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas represent. Out of our meditation on the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Buddha arises our own aspiration to self-transcendence, with a consequent welcome reduction in the extensive case-load of the Great Physician.

Virabhadra



ISSUE 47

'New Books on Buddhism (Part One)', the book review section in the last issue of the Newsletter went uncredited. The writer was, as many readers no doubt guessed, the Ven. Sangharakshita. To those who did not guess, and to the Ven. Sangharakshita himself we offer our apologies. Bhante is hoping to be able to continue with Part Two, which will be devoted to some new books on Zen Buddhism, in the next issue.

FACETS

Europe

At the end of the summer people returned from innumerable retreats glowing — and, in some cases, brown from the sun as well — and plunged back into all the things they had left for a while with a new burst of enthusiasm and vigour.

Since then the leaves have changed colour and fallen, and we have all started fishing out thicker clothes, turning on the heaters, and preparing for winter. A lucky few are preparing to winter in sunnier climes — Dhammadinna, the women's mitra Convenor, is off to New Zealand for six months, and a group of Hatha Yoga enthusiasts will soon be in Pune to attend one of Mr Iyengar's intensive courses, and to visit the Indian FWBO centre there. Sona has gone to brave the Scandinavian winter and spend the next three months learning Swedish in preparation for starting a centre in Stockholm. Meanwhile he will be holding yoga and meditation classes there. Others who had also intended to leave the country have not been so lucky yet: the American team are finding that sorting your way through the red tape of U.S. immigration laws can take a very long time, but Achala has arrived in Boston, where he has found a house, started meditation classes, and is doing what he can to make things ready for the others when they do get there. Visas and international immigration red tape are looming larger on the FWBO horizons these days: in New Zealand, Buddhadasa is finding it slow going gaining permanent entry to Australia, and several Malaysians who were to come to stay in communities around the London Buddhist Centre have been experiencing difficulty in getting permission to visit this country. It seems probable that we shall soon be seeking help from lawyers specialising in the complexities of immigration, since this looks like being an increasingly problematic area for the Movement as it grows across the world.

Holland and Germany

At the end of October, Sona and Padmasuri went to Germany for a three day retreat near Osnabrueck



In September, about 50 Order members and Friends from several centres converged on central London for a flag day in aid of a school for Tibetan refugee children in Kalimpong. Activities such as these are a happy reflection of the increasingly outward-going, and even international flavour of the FWBO. (Report, page 17.)

with about fifteen people. This was the second retreat to be held in Germany this year, Sona and Tejandra having held one in the Eifel in June. The retreat took place in flat farming country, in a large barn converted into a meditation room, with a kitchenette at one end and a sleeping room upstairs. For several of those present this was their first retreat, but others had not only been on FWBO retreats in Holland and Sweden, but even to events at Padmaloka. The focal point of the retreat was meditation, but there was also some yoga, and a couple of talks which were followed by lively discussions. That weekend there was a very hard sudden frost and a large part of the work periods were spent chopping wood to keep the log fire blazing.

On the way there and back, while Sona was renewing contacts in Germany and making his way to Stockholm, Padmasuri was exploring Amsterdam, Utrecht, Arnhem and Rotterdam with Friends who live in those cities. As luck would have it she was in Utrecht for one of the meditation and puja evenings that takes place there every Monday. These sessions were started at the end of the summer by five women who have been going on FWBO retreats for some time. To help their own spiritual practice, they decided to meet every week, bringing along any others who might be interested. One of them also organised a three day retreat near Utrecht in September. Little by little, hampered as always by the difficulty of finding suitable venues, long weekend retreats are becoming part of the regular calendar of events in Holland, and soon perhaps in Germany too. There is another planned in Holland in January, and one in Germany for the spring. There is a growing sense of continuity between these retreats — a growing germ of Sangha in Europe.

UK

Meanwhile, back in England, quite a few of those who went on the summer retreats found their views of life had radically changed afterwards and have started working in co-operative situations as a result, notably around the London Buddhist Centre. Some are even considering moving into the various communities. Phoenix, the housing co-op attached to the LBC is slowly but surely tracking down houses for communities around the centre. They've rehoused sixteen people so far and hope to be instrumental in housing at least two other communities quite soon. The women's communities especially are looking for another large house so that they can rearrange themselves with much more room for expansion. A dream that may become reality in the next few months is the founding of a community of men in their fifties and sixties who want to create a situation through which people from classes such as those which Vangisa and Vajradipa are holding in adult

education centres in central London could be introduced to a Buddhist lifestyle in a way that may be a little less initially overwhelming than a visit to the communities that exist already in London.

In West London the women who have been trying to move from their house in south London for many months have at last found a house in West Kilburn, just a mile or so down the road from the men living at Ratnadvipa. They have also entered into negotiations for a shop in a prime position in Notting Hill, which will be a new outlet for their wholefoods business which has been doing increasingly well at their daily stall at Hammersmith market. At this new shop they may also be able to develop a take-away food service which will eventually lead to the long planned vegetarian restaurant and meeting place. The West London centre itself is now living temporarily in Swiss Cottage in North London, but it is still firmly the West London Buddhist Centre. However temporary, this new home for the Centre is much closer to what they have been looking for: it is much more spacious than the old one, and more aesthetically pleasing, with large bay windows overlooking a garden and tall trees. West London also have a new Order member in Parami (formerly Anne McMillan) who with her enterprise and vigour, and her great capacity for friendship, brings added strength to combat the difficulties West London have had to deal

with for so long.

In Glasgow, where work continues on the splendid new centre renovation at quite a fast rate, with immigrant workers coming up from England to give them a hand, and at Aryatara, where there is so much happening all the time, they have been holding silent meditation retreats — sometimes for a day, sometimes for a weekend — which give the participants a chance to find more internal space after an intense and busy week.

Tyn-y-Ddol

The Tyn-y-Ddol meditation centre in North Wales has swung into action with a continuous series of retreats organised well into next year and beyond. At the same time the community of men who live there all the time (except during women's retreats when they move temporarily down the road to Tyddern Rhydderch) has recently grown from three to five which has changed it a lot and given it added strength. It is this community that gives shape to the meditation retreats held at Tyn-y-Ddol. A common retreat programme there has silence from the evening puja till at least one o'clock the next day, about eight or nine hours a day of meditation and puja, and time to go off for walks in the surrounding meadows and wooded hillsides, — and in summer to bathe in the rushing ice-cold river. Tyn-y-Ddol is situated along a rarely

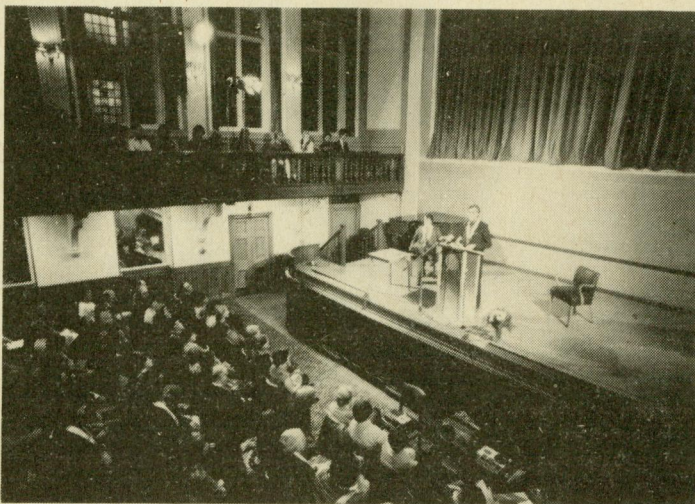
used footpath on the side of a hill, overlooking a curving valley covered in a mass of different greens and reds of trees, bushes, grasses and heather. In the distance lies Snowdonia, appearing and disappearing with changes in the skyline at an amazing rate. This setting and the high standard of renovation, the simplicity of the decoration, the clear beauty and stillness of the shrineroom and the simple austerity of the polished wooden shrine which has the most beautiful and inspiring rupa, all bring an enormous sense of physical and emotional spaciousness to those lucky enough to be there. But there is no intention of turning meditators into uncommunicative recluses: the community at Tyn-y-Ddol have been working hard to ensure that communication between themselves stays at a high level of clarity and positivity (with daily 'house meetings') not only for their own sakes, isolated as they are on a remote Welsh hillside, but also for the sake of the whole Movement. Thus the only barriers to meditation are the ones you bring with you, and the spaciousness and clarity at Tyn-y-Ddol all point to the effectiveness of the community in their enterprise. Intensive meditation can be very powerful, and its effects are flowing back into the centres. Parallel with this is news that there will be a mains water supply there very soon, which, to those who've carried water by the bucket up from the stream there, is very good news indeed!

Padmaloka

At that other centre of energy and space, Padmaloka, it is estimated that about 1000 people passed through their doors in the last twelve months. Quarterly mitra events are held there, attended by increasing numbers of men crammed into every available space for an intensive weekend, and there are quite a few visitors, some coming from abroad, who stay for a few days to share the life of the community, which usually means they learn about making and finishing candles too. The candle business continues to flourish and send money to India, keeping a lot of the community members busy quite a lot of the time. The community has changed a bit this year, especially with Subhuti moving in to work on his book about the FWBO, and Sona going to Sweden, and Kulananda departing for London. In the middle of this the Ven. Sangharakshita continues his writing, and has also held another couple of seminar weeks, this time on various *Songs of Milarepa*. On full moon days he also holds a study day for the community.

FWBO restaurants seem to be doing well at the moment: the Cherry Orchard in Bethnal Green will be featured in a good food guide early next year (the noodles were especially good that day), and Oranges in Norwich are attracting more and more customers all the time. In

The Taste of Freedom



On the evening of 13th November, the 'Great Hall' at Caxton Hall, in central London, was packed to capacity. About 500 people from all centres of the FWBO, as well as a number of newcomers, were there to hear the Ven. Sangharakshita deliver his first public lecture for a year, a *tour de force* entitled 'The Taste of Freedom'. A full account of this talk will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter, but in the meantime you can not only hear it for yourself on tape, but you can order a colour video recording and see it too, if you want. Both can be ordered from Dharmacakra Tapes (see last page for advertisement).

Brighton, Surprise has expanded into a quiet spacious upstairs room and to being open from 7-10 pm on Friday evenings. They hope to open on Saturday evenings as well soon. Brighton's Windhorse Emporium has been extending itself too. Following their success at the Festival for Mind-Body-Spirit, they decided to run stalls at a couple of similar festivals where they not only made a good profit (now spent on lots of new stock), but also made contact with quite a few people who wanted to know more about meditation and Buddhism.

Another way of making contact with Buddhism is to listen to the Ven. Sangharakshita's lectures. This November Bhante came to London to give a public lecture at the Caxton Hall called 'The Taste of Freedom', and it is now available on cassette from Dharmacakra Tapes. (Dharmacakra Tapes have also come to be part of publications in London, from Manchester, since their manager there, Sagaramati, is also leaving Manchester, though he's going further — to India, to see Lokamitra in Pune.) Bhante's lecture which he gave with his usual impeccable care, concentration and brilliance, was also video-taped for the first time and copies are available from Windhorse Associates at Golgonooza. Also mentioned in other parts of this Newsletter are the various new publications that are beginning to appear at a slightly faster rate now that there are more people working together as a publications team. The design studio at Golgonooza has also had a boost in the shape of Dhammarati, who has come from 'Ink', the press he started in Glasgow, and the ordination of Windhorse Associates' photographer Roger Jones as Vajradipa, has given yet more impetus to their work.

But Windhorse Publications are not the only ones in the Movement producing books. Lokamitra has published in Pune a book called *Flame in Darkness* on the life and work of Anagarika Dharmapala, and it is being distributed in the UK through our Centres, and from Windhorse Publications. (£1.50 + 20p. p+p). Aryatara, like several other Centres in England, is also playing to host to visiting speakers: several Order members have become excellent lecturers on different aspects of Buddhism, and they are much in demand. They all seem to enjoy speaking at Aryatara where they can be fairly sure of a particularly receptive audience. Aryatara's Sangha Day too was the one with the fireworks and a big bonfire in the evening — and Handel's Firework Music, though it seems to have been a very special and celebratory day everywhere. People at the LBC managed to include mime and music and poetry too, and to make some stupendous offerings. At all centres there was a ceremony in which all the mitras in the area individually made offerings of flowers, incense and

candles in celebration of their Mitra-ship, and afterwards many mitras mentioned how moving and important they found this reaffirmation ceremony to be.

Other good news is that Sthiramati and Tejamatra have found a house in Bristol (56 Granby Hill, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4LS, telephone: Bristol (0272) 28220) and are in touch with several existing Friends who live locally and who can now come along to a weekly meditation and puja. They have also started a course in meditation and Buddhism at the local university where there seem to be quite a lot of people interested in learning about the Dharma.

Around the other centres now, plans are well in progress for the various winter retreats: at Padmaloka for men, at Loch Ard in Scotland for women, at Seaford for men and women. What better way to spend the Bank holiday period!

Marichi

FWBO Auckland

Spring has come early and warm in Auckland with vigorous growth — not just in the realm of Nature, but in the Realm of Gold (*Suvarnamdhātu*), in the 'Auckland Buddhist Centre' as it is now called. This new name is significant as it is in line with the naming of the other FWBO Centres, but it is also significant as it marks a definite stage in the growth of the Movement here. Physically the Centre has grown, with the acquisition and complete redecoration of two new rooms next to the existing rooms on the second floor of our central-city build-

ing. One room will be an Office and work space, the other, larger one will be a second Shrine Room and talks/study room. Attendance at the Centre has also grown and this is due principally to more attention being put into the ongoing meditation courses on Thursdays, and to the new 'Open Night' on Tuesdays. Concurrently, the 'Wednesday regulars' night has grown as more people see the value of coming together to do double meditation and Puja. The recent Sangha Day celebration summed up this Spring burst of growth.

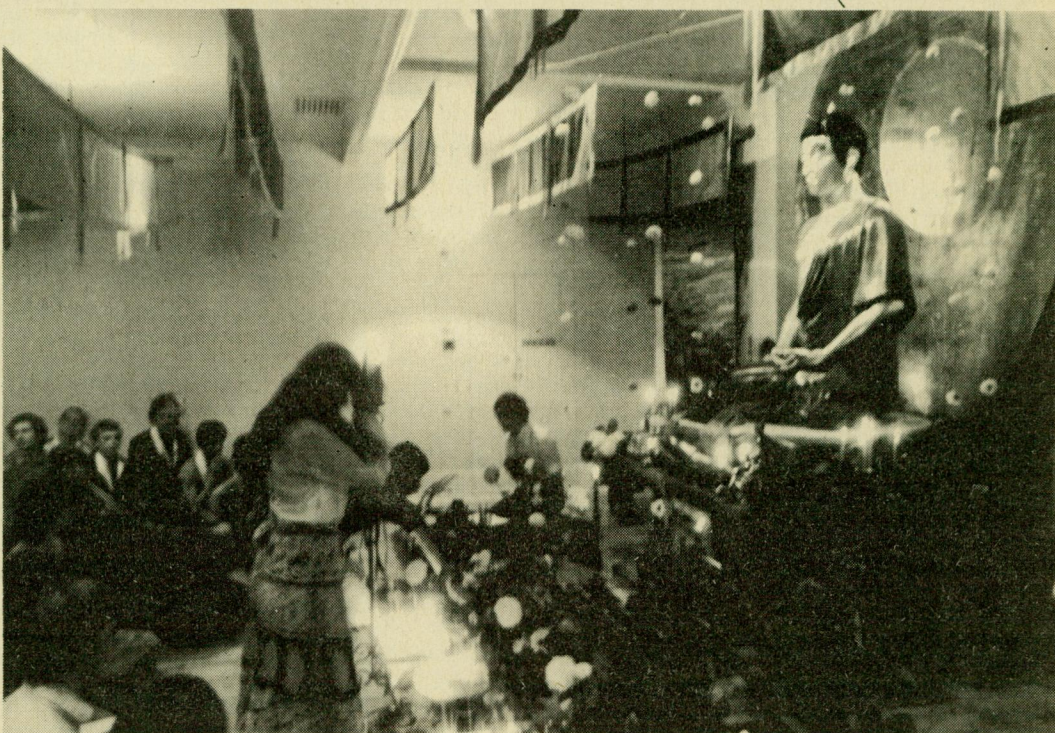
Looking forward into 1981, there will be at least two retreats every month, beginning in January when there will be four retreats in a row, each ten days' long, at the Strathean Camp in Otaki, forty miles north of Wellington. Firstly there will be an Order Event from the 25th Dec, then an Open beginners' retreat, then a women's mitra retreat, and lastly a men's mitra retreat. These events are looked forward to eagerly by everyone as they are an opportunity to recharge energy, renew friendships and centre oneself in the Dharma. Anyone in the Southern Hemisphere who wishes to attend the Open retreat should contact the Secretary at the Auckland Centre.

The new growth is also manifest in the changes in the two communities. Both the men's community and the women's community have moved, from Mt Eden to Mt Albert which is still within the central city but in more spacious surroundings next to a large park. The men's community, *Suvarnamaketu* ('Golden Comet') is once again glowing in the

deep blue firmament of FWBO spiritual communities and it is expanding with the increased interest in community living amongst the men here — from just four Order members to about eight Order members, mitras and Friends. Two of the members of the 'Australian Team' — Buddhadasa and Dharmamati — are staying at the community, and their presence is certainly welcome. Two more Order members are expected in November: Dhammadinna, the women's Mitra Convenor, will begin a visit of a few months, and Dharmadhara will be moving from Wellington where he has been qualifying in medicine in the last two years.

Lastly, this growth has been expressing itself in more fundraising work. The most fruitful method of fundraising in the past has been seen to be 'outwork', or piece-work for factories producing certain goods which are in line with the principles of Right Livelihood. At present several people are earning money for the Centre through putting together toys and cushions in their spare time. One night a week at the Centre has been set aside for this. In addition, a Benefit Dinner is planned for the 8th Dec, especially to raise funds for the Centre in Pune. In one way the recent growth in all areas here in Auckland has been a pleasant surprise, but in another way it is the logical outcome and fruit of the care, sincerity and energy that has been invested over the last three years. This is the beginning of a new phase and we are looking forward to further unfoldment over Summer and into the New Year.

Priyananda

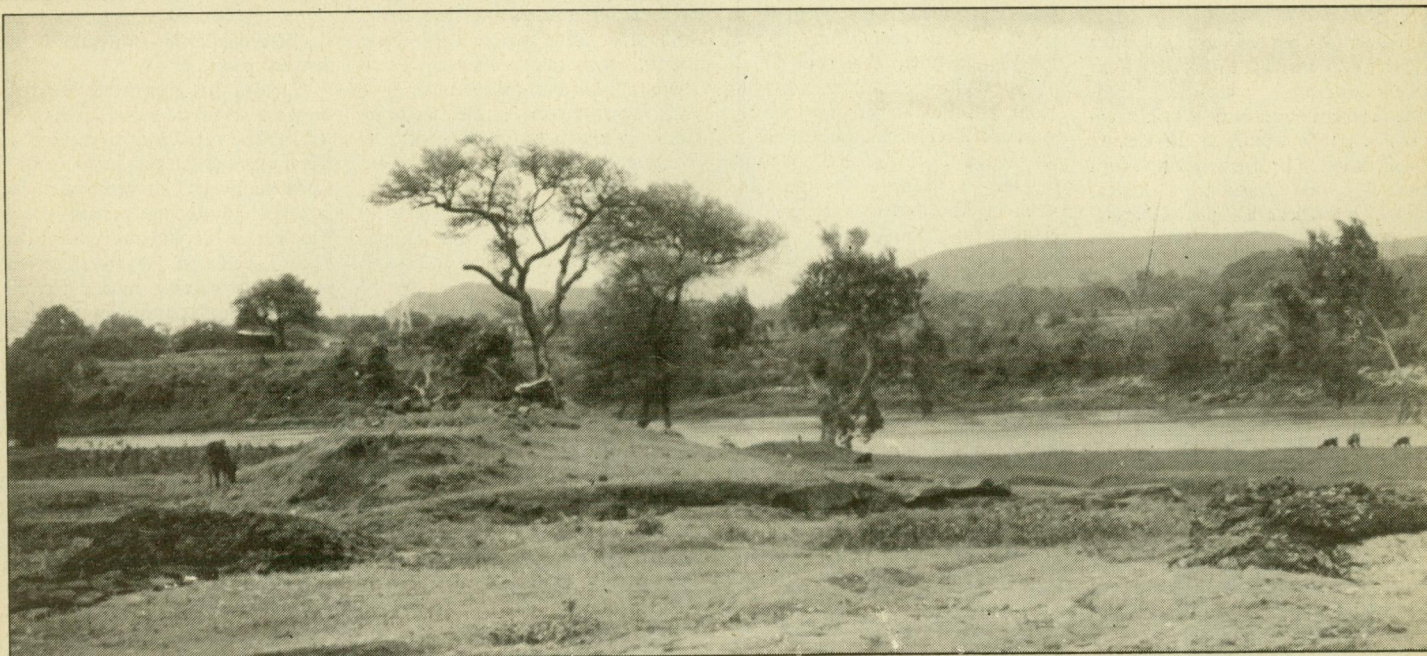


Sangha Day at the LBC

India

For the last few months we have been trying to acquire just over one and a half acres of land at Dapodi, a district of Pune. The land is situated on the bank of a river and surrounded by agricultural land, but very near bus and train services to all parts of Pune, and within easy reach of most Buddhists in Pune. Our plans are to build a centre, quarters for a residential community, a medical centre, Right Livelihood workshops, and a school. At present there are only very few viharas in Pune and all of them are small, and most very shabby, the people being very poor. There are supposedly over 100,000 Buddhists in Pune and we want to build a vihara which they can all be proud of. The residential community would enable Buddhists from all over Maharashtra — and indeed India — to come and stay and train with us.

Upasakas Virabhadra and Dharmadhara, recently qualified doctors, are intending to come out here to start a medical mission, with the support of Upasika Padmasuri, a trained nurse. More will be written about this when we actually have the land in our possession which hopefully won't be long from now. The owners are very keen for us to have it, and being Buddhists, although very poor ones, they are giving us the land at an extremely low price. This is typical of the generosity of the poor people here. The transaction is taking time however because of the complexities of Hindu Land Law, the matter being more complicated by the fact that it is ancestral land with a number of joint owners.



We have plans for this piece of land (see next page).

At present we are operating from 'Dhamma Vijaya' Vihara. This consists of one room ten feet by twelve, another ten feet by eight, and a small kitchen and bathroom. Here we run classes and a book shop. Near by we have another bungalow, exactly the same size, at present being decorated, which will serve as our residence. There are three of us living there at present: Purna, Sharat (a mitra), and myself. However in December we are expecting several Order Members from UK and also mitras and Sahayakas from Aurangabad and Ahmedabad.

Five minutes walk away we have our office. Purna and myself are joined there by Dharmaditya who has retired from his service and is only too keen to devote himself fully to Dhamma work. Vimalakirti, a much younger Order Member, is at present trying to leave his job so that he can also work full time. There is plenty of work for all of us and more, especially with our publications work, run under the name 'TRIRATNA GANTHA MALA'. Our quarterly Marathi language magazine, *Buddhayaana* is arousing a lot of interest all over Maharashtra. Not only is there the correspondence from that but also the subscription and distribution work which is very time consuming. We have just brought out our first publication in book form, *Flame in Darkness: The Life and Sayings of*

Anagarika Dharmapala. One of our friends in Andhra Pradesh commented that it is most appropriate that, as Anagarika Dharmapala was the first to bring Buddhism back to India, our first publication should be about him. Ven. Sangharakshita, the author, wrote the different sections of the volume some 25 years ago, but because they are out of print we decided to bring them out together in this volume. The book is being well received here, and within the next month, we hope to bring out a Marathi translation.

We are planning to bring out an English language bimonthly, each issue of which will consist of one of Ven. Sangharakshita's lectures or essays. Many people here speak English and would appreciate this. However it has been delayed because the Registrar of Newspapers has not accepted our proposed name 'Kalyana Mitra'. We are re-applying and hope that it will be out by January. It will be available in UK, and those interested should contact Padmavajra at Aryatara.

We hold some of our classes in a central part of Pune in the room of some Sahayakas. The family consists of 27, and they have three rooms, one of which they are kind enough to let us use. Quite often we celebrate festivals there. The most recent of these was the anniversary of Anagarika Dharmapala on September 17th, at

which I gave a talk on 'The Life and Example of Anagarika Dharmapala'. It was on that occasion that we released *Flame in Darkness*. We must have had 100 people crammed into that room and there were many standing outside the house and squeezed in the corridor. We haven't found any really suitable halls in Pune for such occasions, so we decided to celebrate the recent Sangha Day out of doors at Dr Ambedkar Society where our vihara is. After a lecture emphasising the practice of the four boundless states (Maitri, Mudita, Karuna and Upeksha) and the four speech precepts as the foundation of the New Society, we saw some slides of our work in the UK. All were happy that the Dhamma, for centuries confined to the East, was now being established on a firm footing in the West. And all were inspired by our wholehearted and total approach to the Dhamma, exemplified by our communities, Right Livelihood concerns, and by the fact that we do all the work ourselves.

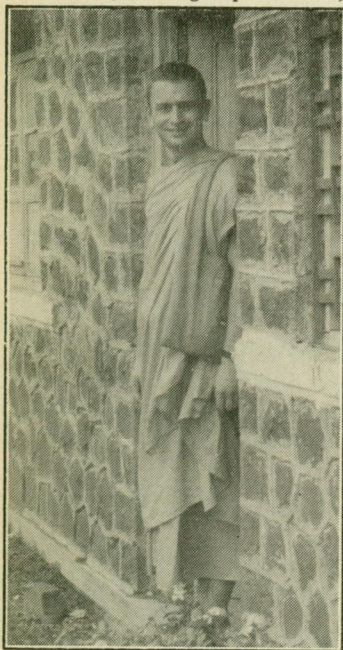
We celebrated another festival on 19th October. That is the anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism and is a historic day in the revival of Buddhism here in India. It happens to fall on *Ashok Vijaya Dashmi*, the day when King Asoka is also said to have converted, so it has a double significance. This is the first year I have spent in Pune on this

occasion, the previous years being spent in Ahmedabad, Aurangabad and Nagpur. This year we held programmes in three different localities in the morning and in the evening held our main programme at the public garden surrounding the statue of Dr Ambedkar in the town. Despite the fact that the garden is situated at a busy traffic intersection, and that people are often quite distracted on this day, the audience was excellent, sitting on the grass, quietly attentive to the lecture. So often, 'Dhamma' is just the sugar coating to political pills. Many people are really relieved to find the Dhamma being presented by us in a way which is 'pure in the beginning, pure in the middle, and pure in the end'. After the lecture, some of us went to a newly established vihara to dedicate it. Vimalakirti lead the recitation of his Marathi translation of the Ven. Sangharakshita's Dedication ceremony. Usually on such occasions chanting is performed, but very few understand the meaning of what is being chanted, and as a result the ceremony has little or no meaning. Our dedication was therefore very much appreciated.

For the 19th October and Sangha Day, Purna was in Ahmedabad where he also took classes and led a weekend retreat. We have both paid individual visits to Aurangabad recently each giving a number of talks. I have made two visits to Bombay, where I

Aid for India

had been asked by Madame Wadia, an old friend of Ven. Sangharakshita's, whose husband published 'The Survey of Buddhism', to give a talk at Theosophy Hall. Besides this I gave a number of talks in the chawls (see Newsletter 45) and slums of Worli, a district inhabited by thousands of Buddhists. These went very well. Often these talks are held in corridors 8ft x 100ft. These are usually packed with a few hundred people. Despite the poverty a very good reception is usually given. Sometimes, as we go up the stairs,



Anagarika Purna at the Pune vihara.

ladies clad in white saris stand on both sides holding trays with lights, incense and flowers which they wave round us as a traditional welcome. Garlands are offered, dana is given, *Buddhayan* is bought. These occasions are so positive that one doesn't mind the disturbance of a few restless children.

Unfortunately on the first of these recent visits trouble broke out afterwards, between a Caste Hindu community and some Buddhists. These sorts of disturbances are quite common in this area, but, because of the fear of a repetition of this, one of my talks on my second visit had to be cancelled. It is not the talks themselves which stimulate this disturbance, but just the fact that there are a large number of people gathering together for a Dharma meeting.

Sharat, the mitra who is staying with us, has been busy recently buying samples of handicrafts for Kulananda to sell in the UK. For some time we have been keen to get this going as we do need an earning arm for our activities actually based in India. We are operating under the name 'Windhorse Traders' (India).

Next month we will be visited by Sridevi and a number of mitras who are coming out to do an intensive Yoga course with Shri B K S Iyengar. We may even be blessed with a visit from Ven. Sangharakshita early next year....

Lokamitra

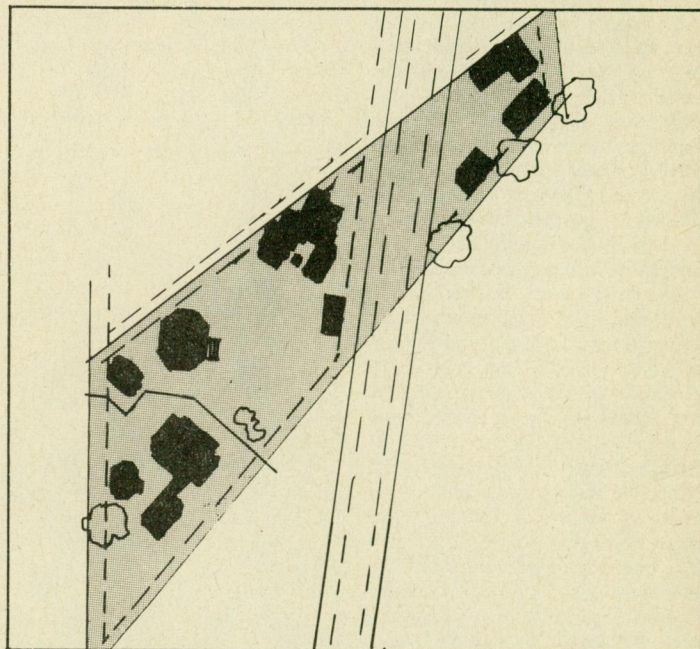
As most of you already know, a lot has happened in India since Lokamitra first went back there to continue the work left dormant for fourteen years after the Ven. Sangharakshita came to Enland in 1964. 'Bringing it all back home' was the slightly jokey title of the Newsletter which originally covered our activities in India but the reality is that we have had a lot to offer the people of Maharashtra in the last few years, and much has been received. There have been classes, lectures, study groups and retreats in Pune, Aurangabad, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and elsewhere. As a result of these activities a dozen Indians have gone for Refuge and joined the Western Buddhist Order, many many more have had their mitra ceremonies, signifying their desire for more contact with this Order, and thousands have benefitted to some degree from Lokamitra's initiative in going to India. In fact the Indian response to the Dharma, as understood and communicated by the Ven. Sangharakshita has been phenomenal, and we are beginning to see the possibility of a massive Buddhist movement in India capable of involving thousands of committed individuals.

Nevertheless, although India as a whole has vast spiritual potential it also has certain unique problems: people are poor, the distances separating them are vast and it is no easy matter to contact all those wishing to hear the Dharma. Nor is it easy for people to come together in one place to practice: there are no meditation centres, lecture halls, retreat centres, communities or Right livelihood projects as yet, in fact Lokamitra himself has not found permanent accommodation and has to make do with what he can find. So in India it is extremely difficult to match human potential with adequate material resources; this is true both in general and also within the particular orbit of Buddhist activities.

Which is where we come in. Lokamitra and the TBMSG, our sister charity in Pune, know what they need: what they don't know is how they can get it. They are planning, just in Pune to start with, a four stage project. This will include a centre where there can be permanent facilities for the practice of meditation, listening to talks, discussion, reading, administration, and so on. It will be something like a centre and community here in the UK, but much broader in scope to suit the local conditions. There will also be a medical centre, where Virabhadra and Dharmadara, two Order members who are qualified doctors, will form a team of both Indian and Western doctors and nurses to cater for the needs of the local community. There will be Right Livelihood projects, where people can learn skills and gain the confidence necessary to emancipate themselves from generations of degrading work. Finally a school is planned to cater for the local children, to give them the best possible start in life.

All this is going to take a vast amount of money, probably over £50,000, before all the building work is completed, with more needed every year to support a school and a medical team. It is impossible to raise this kind of money amongst those with whom we are in contact in India, so the TBMSG are relying on the Movement here for help. We have already sent out £6,000 but our slender resources will not easily stretch much further, so what can we do?

To start with we have formed a new charity called 'Aid for India' whose aims and objects are: the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion, and any other charitable



We have land and plans — so all we need now is the money.

purpose in India; quite a large task as you can imagine!

To turn these grand aims into practically realisable fundraising objectives we are employing Tim Lilley, a mitra from Aryatara, as our chief fundraiser. Tim has had seven years experience as a professional fundraiser, working with 'Action in Distress' and then 'Help the Aged'. At one time he was in charge of over one hundred fundraising 'commandos' making money from door to door collections.

This is the method Tim and I have decided to use on this project; approaching ordinary people in their own homes and asking them for a seven year covenant of £52 per annum. In this way we can establish a large regular income for the charity in a short space of time.

We have a team of ten Friends, mitras, and Order members working with us in this Right Livelihood project and they will have visited over 40,000 people by the middle of January. By working in this way we can find those who are genuinely interested in the project without imposing ourselves on people in any way.

We hope to collect £15,000 per year for the next seven years, that is over £100 per day per team member during the fourteen weeks of this project, a grand total of £100,000 at the end of seven years! Already in the first

six weeks we have raised covenants worth £4,500 per year for the next seven years. This has shown us that the scheme will work and earn large amounts of money, as long as we have enough people to do the job properly. If people from all our Centres are prepared to commit themselves to fundraising work, some time in the next few months we will be able to form enough Right Livelihood teams to raise the money we need.

In fact, you are the crucial factor in Aid for India's fundraising efforts. Without you we can do nothing. We offer you the opportunity to work in a unique form of Right Livelihood, in which your own efforts produce a lot of money to help others. We offer you your support, and the opportunity to give, and therefore to grow, in the context of the Friends. You can help to raise the money for medical, educational and Dharma work in India. Tim and I provide a full training programme which will enable anyone with a real commitment to the work to raise money whether they have experience of this kind of thing or not. The money is out there for the asking, Aid for India can organise its collection as quickly, efficiently and skillfully as possible, but only you can collect it! If you are interested contact myself, Kulamitra, at 51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 0HU, or ring me at 01-981 1255 between 9 and 10 a.m.

Kulamitra

Help for Dhardo Rimpöche

In the North East of India, in the foothills of the Himalayas, within sight of Kangchenjunga the world's third highest peak, lies the small border town of Kalimpong. Being on the main route from India through Sikkim to Tibet it was once a trading centre bustling with the goods of merchants en route for Lhasa or Calcutta. Nowadays, with the border closed, the Indian, Nepalese, and Tibetan inhabitants rely on the fertile land and the occasional Western Tourist. It was here that our teacher, the Ven. Sangharakshita lived from 1950 to 1964, and here too that he met one of his oldest Tibetan teachers and closest friends, Dhardo Rinpoche.

Dhardo was born in Tibet in 1917 and was soon recognised as a tulku or 'reincarnate Lama'. He was brought up and educated in monasteries of the Gelugpa school and after many years of intensive study and practice he received the title of Geshe. In 1949 the Dalai Lama appointed him Khenpo of the Tibetan temple at Bodhi Gaya in Northern India. While he was there the number of resident monks rose from about five to over twenty five, and a Rest House was constructed to accommodate the numerous poor Tibetan pilgrims who flocked to the site of the Buddha's great Awakening.

There, in 1959, disaster struck the Tibetan people: a rising against the communist Chinese in Lhasa failed, and the Dalai Lama and thousands of refugees fled to the safety of Northern India. It was a taxing period for all Tibetans but Dhardo Rinpoche responded to the challenge and founded the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Cultural Institute School at Kalimpong in 1954. Today there are over 200 pupils, and the Rinpoche personally supervises the upbringing of 30 orphans.

His aim in founding the School was much wider than that of most contemporary educators. As a practising Buddhist he recognised the need for emotional, psychological and spiritual development as well as the more familiar intellectual training. So every morning the pupils follow the West Bengal Government Syllabus, but in the afternoon the children study Tibetan language, literature and history together with moral science. Tibetan crafts, drawing, music and dance are also taught to the children in a conscious attempt to preserve the living tradition of one of the world's most lively and dynamic cultures. Some children learn to support themselves by the manufacture of traditional crafts, and the pupils generally specialise in public performances of Tibetan folk dances for which they are famous locally. All this gives the School a uniquely friendly atmosphere in which the children seem to behave out of love

and genuine respect for their teachers rather than from imposed discipline or fear of punishment.

In recent years a number of Order members and Friends have met Dhardo Rinpoche. They have been impressed by his kindness and generosity, and have fallen in love with the children of his school. So, since 1978, our Movement has been raising money to send to the school. So far we have raised over £4,000, mainly from Flag days and benefit dinners organised by the different FWBO centres throughout Britain.

The latest of these events was also the most successful to date. At a London Buddhist Centre-organised flag day held in September, forty collectors went out to try their luck in the London Borough of Camden, shaking their tins at the public. Friends, mitras, and Order members all took part with varying degrees of success, Nick Rhodes from Aryatara came out on top with a haul of £42.11 — seduced from the packed wallets and purses of those shopping at Camden lock market.

The day ended with everyone

counting their own takings back at the LBC — I would never have believed that such spiritually minded people would get such a thrill from counting cash: the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement. Afterwards a well earned meal was consumed in the 'Cherry Orchard', and those present received a small colour Photograph of Dhardo Rinpoche before they went home, happy in the knowledge that it had all been worth while. We raised £805 that day so to all who have helped, SADHU!

Kulamitra



Some of the children at the ITBCI School.

Co-op Managers Meet

In March of this year, a three-day business seminar, instigated by Kulananda and Jayamati, was held at 'Padmaloka'. The purpose of this seminar included having a long-term look at our Right Livelihood projects, discovering how best to expand our already considerable assets, and considering how to instil imagination and professionalism into our businesses. From that seminar have grown the monthly Co-op Managers' meetings, which are following through some of the ideas mooted at the Seminar and also discussing other relevant points. Over the last seven months the meetings have changed and gained substance. There is a high level of communication building up as people get to know each other well and learn how to work together.

The meeting has two main areas of

function — one practical, the other more visionary, i.e. concerned with developing vision for the future of businesses in the Movement. On the practical side there is a reporting-in session where managers can learn of any changes within individual co-ops and information gained can be disseminated on any matters of mutual interest, such as National Insurance and tax. On the more imaginative side there is room for the exploration of future possibilities. Areas which have been looked at in depth include — the formation of an Inter Co-op Secretariat, Training Courses, Structures, and Image or Common Identity.

The idea of an Inter Co-op Secretariat grew from the suggestion of a 'Joint Services Co-op', the function of which was quoted as being 'to pull it all together'. This would be a co-op

which could provide information and expertise on various fronts — legal, accounting, advertising, PR, and entrepreneurial know-how. It would save co-ops duplicating work already done by another co-op by having the facts assimilated and available in a common information pool. It was soon seen, however, that we do not as yet have the personnel to create such a co-op. A step in the right direction, and perhaps a more relevant step at this point, was the creation of the I.C.S., which would begin to move toward this eventual body.

One of the functions of the I.C.S. will eventually be to provide training courses covering various aspects of the business world. The first of these has already been arranged and will take place on the 11th and 12th of January 1981. It will cover relevant

aspects of accounting and auditing. We are also considering the use of training facilities outside the Friends. A few people attending these could then bring back their knowledge and hold one or two day courses on the subject covered.

The legal structure of the FWBO and the framework of the relationship between Centre/Co-op/Charity is another area which is being investigated and researched at the moment. Subhuti reported on this in the last Newsletter. This is a formative time in the growth of the Movement and it is important that we now look at the whole question of structures and find the method which gives us the greatest freedom to function as a New Society in action.

It is also a formative time in terms of the Movement beginning to move outward. Over the years of their existence the co-ops, like the centres, have achieved a great degree of autonomy or diversity, it is time to explore the possibilities of the Movement as a whole; to remember the truth of the principle that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'. On a recent Ordination retreat, Bhante stressed the need for more and more committed individuals in this troubled world of ours. As committed individuals with a practical vision of a New Society we have a definite responsibility to be as expansive as possible; to make as much impact as possible; to allow as many people as possible to learn of our existence as easily and as quickly as possible.

The co-ops have an important part to play in this. Through our businesses we are accessible to a far wider spectrum of society than we will be for some time through our other avenues of operation. With this in mind the co-op managers have been working closely with the chairmen and also with workers in their individual co-ops, considering how best to optimise on this. If the Movement in Britain is looked at as a whole we have 27 businesses covering 13 classifications of business. Most of these fall in the distributive trades and the services sectors of the commercial world, although we are also represented in the construction and in the professional and scientific services sectors. These are mostly outgoing trades with a lot of day-to-day contact with the general public. Impressive? However, with 8 different co-op names and at least 10 different trading names the impact is heavily diluted and diffused. How much more so as we expand both in Britain and abroad. As with the structures question we must consolidate the situation now and discover how to ensure maximum public impact in the future.

Other points which we have touched upon at the monthly meetings have included the possibility of our own banking service, pooled collateral and finance, the function of a co-op manager, setting up a minutes distribution service within the Movement and the distribution of goods made in India, thus allowing a Right

Livelihood situation to be set up there. To allow ourselves time to cover these items and others, and also to deepen our friendship and communication, the co-op managers are having a three day event in mid-November. Also happening in mid-November is the one day Inter co-op Forum which will serve not only as a means of taking information outward from the Managers' Meetings, but will also allow us to come together as a Movement. It will allow us to experience our strength and to see our individual co-ops as part of the greater mandala, part of the Bodhisattva Ideal in action in the world at large.

Parami

Hunt the ? Symbol

In the last issue of the Newsletter, Subhuti reported that 'Consideration is being given to using a single name for all FWBO businesses, and having a common symbol and design style' (for the Movement as a whole). (See 'Summer School and Structures', issue 47). A team of Order members, including members of 'Windhorse Associates' our media co-op, have been meeting since that report appeared in order to look into the matter. They are hoping to come up with at least a common symbol by the beginning of next year.

To alight on such a symbol is no easy matter, since the FWBO has so many facets and dimensions; to find a symbol that not only sums up the FWBO, but also communicates the spirit of the Movement to the general public, calls for a lot of thought. In fact, to help them in their deliberations, they have called on the help of Martin Morgan, a Friend who is a professional market researcher. He, with help from members of the team, will be conducting a series of discussion groups for Order members, regular Friends, newcomers, co-op workers, etc. These groups will help to define, firstly, how we see ourselves as a Movement, and secondly, how we would like to communicate ourselves to the world.

This research will not only help us to choose a fitting symbol, but it will also provide us with an invaluable mine of information on which to draw in connection with all our publicity work.

In connection with this topic, many people feel that it is time that our Newsletter had a new name. There are already several suggestions under consideration, but we hope that it will be possible to link the name with the new symbol. Certainly we would like to be able to use the name for our 50th issue, which is now only seven months away.

Nagabodhi



New Publications

Three books have recently appeared from the Windhorse Publications/Ola Leaves fold. The first of the three, *The Artist's Dream and Other Parables* is a collection of three short stories by the Ven. Sangharakshita. Written with great tenderness and gleams of refreshing wit, they are clearly intended to arouse the 'Heart Wisdom' of which the author has written elsewhere (*). The youthfulness of his vision (*The Two Roses* was written while he was in Kalimpong) in no way detracts from their perennial relevance to the spiritual aspirant, and the innocence and purity which shine through the tales pierce like shafts of sunlight into a murky world.

The second book, *The Religion of Art*, presents a 66-page essay that, for some who read it when it was first published, has been a deep well of inspiration where all else has failed. Here, the Ven. Sangharakshita is at his literary and visionary best, for, in the words of Shakespeare,

Herein lives wisdom, beauty and increase;

No praise is too high for work that can restore one's spiritual vision.

The third of the trio, *Human Enlightenment*, carries the full weight of the Ven. Sangharakshita's experience, not only as a *bhikkhu* in India, but also as founder and inspirer of the already burgeoning Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. This collection of edited transcripts of three lectures given in New Zealand is the definitive addition to the growing collection of introductory material about 'The Friends', and, handsomely illustrated by Upasaka Chintamani, it is a 'must' for everyone who wishes to acquire an understanding of what is meant by *Human Enlightenment*, and who seeks 'an encounter with the ideals and methods of Buddhism'.

Ashvajit

* Paradox and Poetry in 'The Voice of the Silence'. Pub. 1958 for the India Institute of World Culture.



Events like poetry recitations, musical evenings, and benefit dinners are usually connected with fund-raising drives. But they also provide us with an excellent opportunity to entertain ourselves. For some time, many Friends have recognised the incongruity of living and working within the New Society, while going 'outside' to be entertained. We are now starting to realise that we are capable of providing ourselves with entertainment that is not only easy on the pocket, but often more truly enjoyable and recreational than anything to be found elsewhere. The picture was taken at an evening of food, poetry and Indian music, recently held at the Cherry Orchard Restaurant in Bethnal Green.

Do you need a passport?

What does it feel like to go to an FWBO centre for the first time, or to go on your first intensive retreat? It is really impossible to say, since everyone's experience is different and unique. Here at least are some recent recollections, sent to us by two Friends from our Brighton Centre.



Vajradipa comes forward to receive his kesa, at the end of the retreat.

I wasn't much looking forward to the two week summer ordination retreat. I was looking forward to being in the Norfolk countryside, but didn't relish the thought of intensive meditation. When it began, I felt apprehensive and unsure of my ground, which probably meant it was a very good time to grow and develop, — all the familiarity and security removed from you, and new ground lying ahead. I chose to hide behind a thin facade of bravado. It didn't last long. I soon felt the shallowness of my behaviour, and realised I was going to have to confront and get to know parts of myself I would rather have ignored. The retreat set this up for me, and I prepared to meet a few demons as well as a few unexpected friends.

On the second week, Roger Jones and Ray Chipps joined Karim Yasamee, so the three future Order members were all with us. Devamitra, who was leading the retreat, impressed on us the need to concentrate and intensify our energies, so that the best possible atmosphere could be created for the ordination ceremonies.

Four Order members who were on the retreat gave short talks on what ordination meant to them. I found that a strong experience, because each one declared in very honest and human terms, their feelings for, and faith in, the spiritual life. Their words also heightened my own conflict between the desire to grow and become an individual, and the fear I

had of the challenge of change and development. At each moment I realised it was up to me; the conflict will be there as long as I am a bundle of confused desires.

The Ven. Sangharakshita conducted the ordinations, both private and public. Roger Jones became Vajradipa, 'Diamond Light', Ray became Ratnapala, 'Protector of Jewels', and Karim became Jayadeva, 'Victorious God'. Each name seemed to me to have the sense of the hero in it, and more and more I feel that that is what the spiritual life is about. It is walking or running into the unknown, casting away the familiar, scorning so-called security, and travelling as Blake says 'on the abyss of the five senses'. The experience of being on that retreat changed us all to some extent, and perhaps, for most of us, it is only a matter of time before we individually take the leap into the unknown and take Refuge in the Three blazing Jewels.

Simon Chinnery



After my very first meditation practice, at the Brighton Buddhist Centre, a kindly mitra asked me: 'How did you get on?' How did I get on? I didn't know! I didn't know if I was on or off, up or down, on the threshold of something wonderful, or outside a pair of locked gates with a telescope but no key.

Having hovered, in a spasmodic, dilettante sort of way, for a year or two on the outer fringes of various spiritually-orientated groups, I had ended up (I should say *begun*) outside the 'Windhorse Emporium' in George Street, Brighton, reading a poster about learning meditation. And here I was. I'd very nearly spoilt the whole thing by getting lost on my way to 'Amitayus', turning up the wrong street, and eventually seeking help in the 'Racehorse Tavern' where, darts flying dangerously near my head, I shouted across the bar counter: 'Am I anywhere near the Buddhist Centre?' Response was slow in coming, but at last someone guided me to the exit, pointed out a saffron-coloured door some 20 yards away, and shook his head pityingly. I hung about for a minute, trying not to feel shy, then I gulped and pushed open the door.

What was it like, your first evening, your first moments in a Buddhist centre? When was it, six weeks ago... six years? Even if the latter, you can probably remember vividly how it struck you. Here's how it felt to me.

In a way it was like any first time anywhere. New faces, unfamiliar surroundings, uncertainty as to where to look. But there was this important difference: no one apparently required anything of me, no references, no explanations about why I had come, no membership fee. I was grateful for being allowed to merge into the general scene, the recipient of only welcoming smiles and nods. By the time an Order member approached me I already felt encouraged by the atmosphere of non-critical acceptance.

And yet, on the walk home, doubts set in. In a way I wanted to continue, in a way I felt nervous about getting involved in something I sensed would bring about major changes in my carefully-plotted, albeit plodding, life-style. It was all so strange. Even the vocabulary had me beat: Helpful voice on my left: 'That's Dama-something from Sukhavati'. Friendly murmur on my right: 'He's a mitra — used to be at Padmaloka'. Where were the Kathies from Kilburn, the Freds from Falmer? Who were these exotically-named women and men? Where on earth was Padmaloka, and did you need a passport?

Beginners' night came round again. A week had gone by, a week stuffed with the mundane, the trivial, the repetitive routine. It was as if my life had become as uninspiring as a load of unsaleable old jumble in a bag. Oh yes, I seemed to have consumed another bottle of sherry, I'd bought a skirt I didn't like, I re-arranged the living room furniture. I'd been to the Library to check out the list of local evening classes and very nearly enrolled in a course on rug-making. A week crowded with incident, to paraphrase Oscar Wilde, and if I went on like this much longer, I thought, tipping the empty bottle in the waste bin with the rest of the supermarket garbage, I, too, will know the price of everything and the value of nothing. So, as it had stopped raining, I went to the Brighton Centre a second time. I saw the light, everything suddenly came together and made sense? Well, not quite. You see, someone (a refugee from the mysterious Padmaloka?) gave a talk and it appeared there were beings called Bodhisattvas, one of whom was depicted as carrying a chopper and a human skull. Here, hang on a bit... Maybe I'd be better at rug-making...

But I looked at this book in the Reception Room. Then I started asking questions, talking to Order members. Very slowly, during the next few weeks, I began to understand that the groping, the stumbling was an essential part, one had to put aside so many second-hand opinions, and start again, as it were like a child learning to walk. To learn it by doing it. So I did the practices, I read, I came to classes, to a one-day Retreat, then a weekend Retreat. And it felt like I was waking up, drawing the curtains, letting the sun in.

I hope that some, or at least one or

two, newcomers will take a look at what I've written, maybe presumptuously, as I'm a comparative beginner, too, and no pamphleteer. Since coming to the Friends I've felt bothered at times, bewildered often, but the benefits to me are undeniable. I feel good, buoyant, alive. I've rediscovered what every child knows, that one's life, with all its pitfalls and putdowns, is a joyful thing, not just now and again, but every day. What's more — I know where Padmaloka is..

Valerie Perring

The Positive Precepts

Most FWBO events conclude with a Seven-Fold Puja. This is a devotional practice which both stimulates, and allows us to express, our directly emotional responses to the Three Jewels.

As I hope many of you know, the section which is entitled, 'Going for Refuge' is always followed by the chanting of the Refuges and five lay Precepts, in Pali. A recent innovation at many of our centres has been the recitation at this point of the Puja of the 'positive precepts', in English.

The Ven. Sangharakshita has always stressed the highly creative nature of the Buddhist approach to morality. A precept is not a rule but a training principle — it is a way in which we can come to an experience of the Enlightened state of mind. To recite the precept, 'I undertake to observe the training principle of abstention from harming living beings' (*Panātipata veramani sikkhapadam samādiyami*), for example, means that by abstaining from behaviour of which an Enlightened person would be incapable we can experience something of such a person's attitude. Even so, observance of the precepts goes further, since an Enlightened person would not only not harm beings, but would actually show love and kindness towards them. Our observance of the precepts must include something of this too.

The new addition to our puja seems to be very popular, not because it provides a 'translation', but because, quite simply, to recite these positive precepts together is a very positive thing to do!

They run thus:

With deeds of loving kindness, I purify my body.
With open-handed generosity, I purify my body.
With stillness, simplicity, and contentment, I purify my body.
With truthful communication, I purify my speech.
With mindfulness clear and radiant, I purify my mind.

Nagabodhi

Three new Upasikas

The ordination of Bonnie Quirk took place within the context of a women's weekend Order/mitra event at the LBC in August which was attended by over 40 people. Bonnie, a mitra originally from New Zealand but now working in Australia, had arrived in England in June to attend the women's seminar led by Bhante at Padmaloka. She had subsequently stayed at Beulah, worked in the Cherry Orchard cafe, visited other centres, attended the ten day women's retreat in Seaford, and had made strong contact with many Order members before her ordination.

Bonnie was given the name Vajrasuri. Bhante said Vajra meant diamond, unshakeable, pure, Transcendental. The Buddha is said to have gained Enlightenment seated on the Vajrasana or Diamond throne which really means that the Enlightenment experience itself is Transcendental, beyond time and space, and unshakeable. This part of the name symbolised Vajrasuri's deep, unshakeable commitment to the Three Jewels. He continued by saying that her journey across half the world to pursue her spiritual development was nothing less than heroic and so he completed the name with the word Suri meaning heroine.

Before flying back to Australia in September, Vajrasuri was able to attend a women's Order retreat at Tyn-y-Ddol, and to attend an Order weekend in London. She hopes to help the Australia team when they arrive in that country and possibly to return to England later on for a longer visit.

In mid October a special three day retreat was held at Mandarava in preparation for the ordination of Anne McMillan and Kay Roberts. On the Friday afternoon we made all the offerings mentioned by Santideva at the beginning of the 'Confession of Evil' section of the *Bodhicaryavatara*. The offerings, which included wishing trees, lakes of lotuses, and jewelled parasols with golden handles, were still decorating the shrine the following evening when Bhante arrived to lead the meditation preceding the private ordinations.

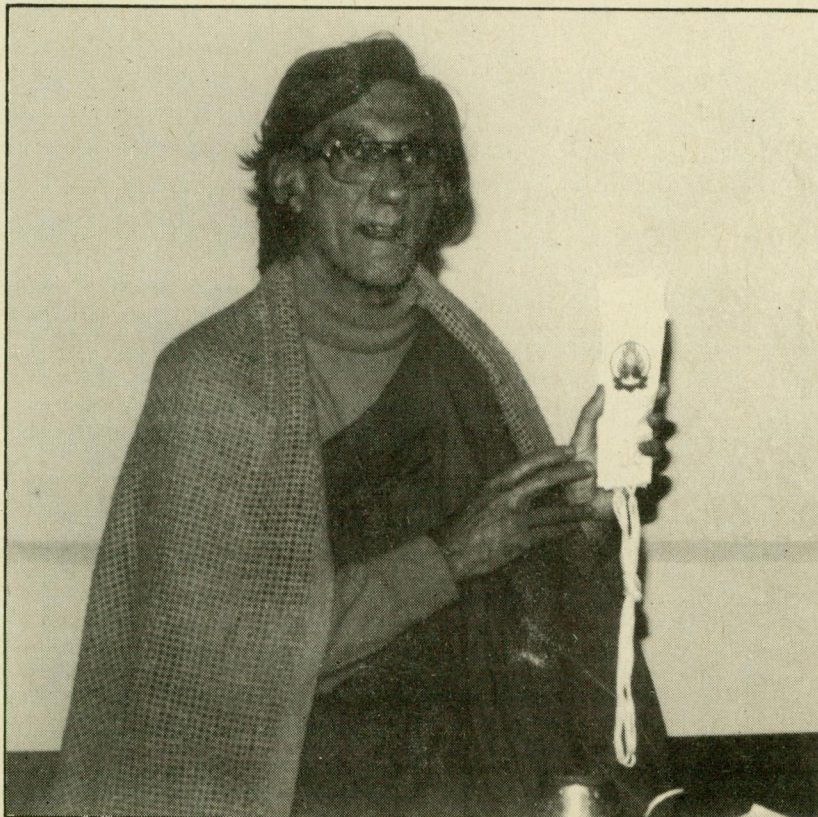
Before the meditation began, Bhante explained the significance of the private ordination, saying that it would take place within the context of a metta bhavana, within the context of silence, within the context of a retreat, which was itself taking place within an increasingly troubled world. He said he was therefore very pleased to be conducting these ordinations, as the world desperately needed the presence of more and more committed individuals.

He repeated this emphasis on the need for more committed individuals on the occasion of the public ordinations, which were attended by over fifty Order members, mitras and Friends. Immediately prior to the giving of the kesas Bhante paused to explain the symbolism of the new design. He pointed out that apart from being more colourful than the old design, the new symbol of the Three Jewels was more immediately relevant and direct. He explained that the Golden Jewel at the top symbolises the Buddha, or Enlightenment

itself; the Blue Jewel represents the Dharma or the more intellectual, as it were, expression of that Truth, and the Red Jewel symbolises the Sangha Jewel, or the more emotional aspect of the communication of Truth. Moreover, the Three Jewels do not merely flicker and twinkle, but positively blaze with light and energy and are surrounded by golden flames which burn up all impurities. The Three Jewels rest on a white moon mat, symbolising purity — not in its moralistic sense — but in the sense of total openness to the Three Jewels, and the moon mat rests on a red lotus symbolising the unfolding of one's own heart.

Anne McMillan was given the name Parami as in *Paramita* meaning Perfection. Bhante said, however, that this did not mean that she was Perfect but that the word really meant Transcendental and implied a continual going beyond on all levels. Kay became Vidyasri; *Vidya* meaning Knowledge of Reality, or Aesthetic Appreciation and *Sri*, radiance, glory or positivity. The two new Upasikas were heartily welcomed into the Order as members of the Spiritual Community, Parami returning to the West London Centre team where she is the Co-op Manager, and Vidyasri to the LBC team where she is also involved in the typesetting business. Both have had strong and deep involvement in the Movement as mitras and will undoubtedly contribute immensely to the Movement as Order members.

Dhammadinna



The Ven. Sangharakshita explaining the symbolism of the new kesa.

The Peace Pagoda Affair

A yellow-robed Thai Bhikkhu somewhere to our right mumbles vague platitudes — the same ones as an hour's worth of speakers have poured forth in Sinhalese, Thai, Japanese, Nepalese, Burmese, Mongolian, Russian, even English. 'Lord Buddha said we should be peaceful. The world is in a terrible state and needs peace as never before. We congratulate Ven. Nichidatsu Fuji on his noble work for peace. Thank you.'

The conference room is filled with that atmosphere which so often prevails at gatherings like this; boredom mingled with frustration and a strong sense of unreality seem to engulf everyone. Not a single one of the 150 or so people present is listening to the speaker. The lines of old Mahatheras from Ceylon — wizened brown bulldog faces atop a blaze of orange — are chattering and laughing, or else are staring benignly into the distance; the rows of tiny Japanese monks and nuns in their neat white clothes folded round with a yellow robe sit in polite and fascinated incomprehension. Ven Sato, the formidable General Secretary of the Japan Buddha Sangha who conducts the whole event with military precision, looks at his watch, makes notes in his voluminous file, and gives instructions to an obedient underling, all at the same time; the Most Ven. Nichidatsu Fuji, the 96 year old head of the Japan Buddha Sangha, sits frail and determined whilst his attendants flutter fussily, rearranging his hearing aid; the High Lama of Ladakh is frankly asleep. This is the International Sangha Assembly.

'For the first time in the history of Buddhism, the entire Sangha, composed of different representatives from Asia, Europe and America, both old and new, will meet together here in Britain. Therefore, it is of the greatest significance that the inner oneness of the Sangha will be demonstrated in the opening of the First Peace Pagoda in Europe, so that the Appeal to Humanity will enhance the universal striving for Peace and Emancipation, now all mankind is facing the immense danger of annihilation.'

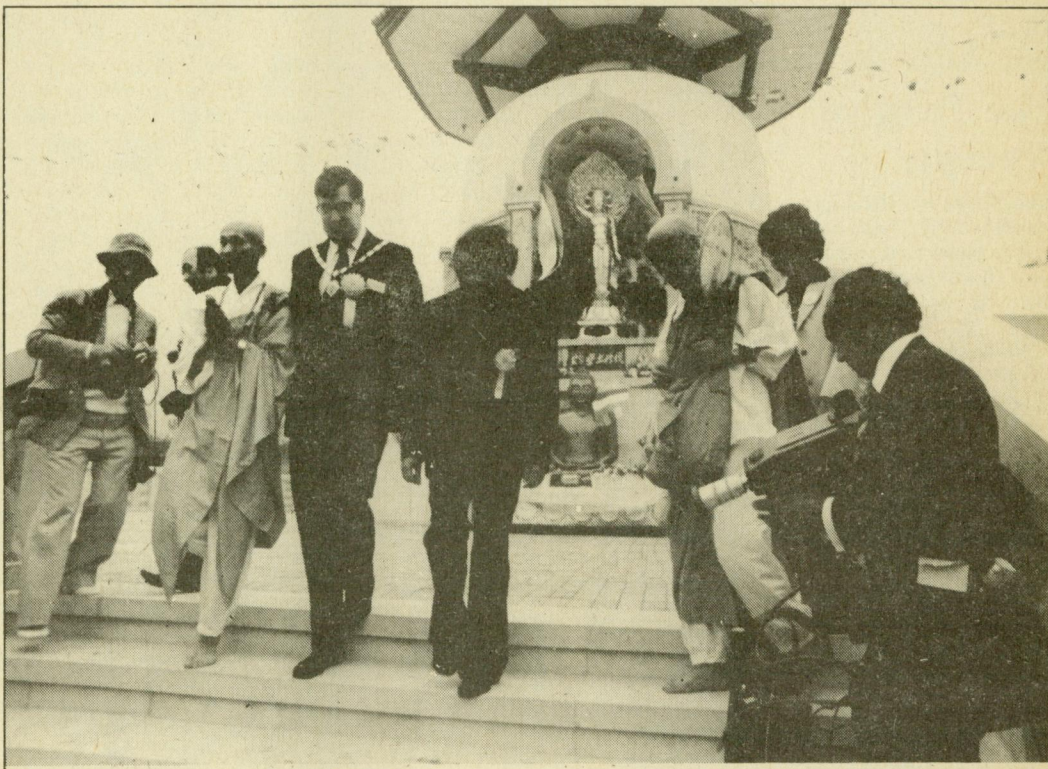
The Japan Buddha Sangha, a subset of the Nichiren School who place central importance on *The White Lotus Sutra* and the recitation of the Mantra '*Namyo Ho Rengye Kyo*', have devoted most of their efforts since the Second World War to the building of 'Peace Pagodas' all over Asia. On September 21st they celebrated the dedication of the first Pagoda to be built outside Asia at Milton Keynes, just north of London. The festivities began with the 'International Sangha Congregation' at a first class hotel in London's fashionable Kensington. The guests had been flown by the organisers from all corners of the world and were being accommodated in the luxurious surroundings of the hotel. Besides the Buddhists, there were Peace campaigners, diplomats, and, strange to say, six American

up of 'high ranking' dignitaries who came from a mixture of motives — some perhaps for political and strategic reasons: most however were simply there for the ride.

Individuals mattered not at all throughout this event. Dignitaries were wanted to add lustre to the occasion not with their personal qualities but with their high sounding titles. Robes were more important than the men they clothed and the widespread modern Buddhist cult of the robe prevailed. If someone was in

laypeople tactfully separated — they tucked in with obvious relish to large helpings of meat. So far as I could tell, Nagabodhi and I were the only vegetarians in the gathering.

The afternoon and the whole of the following day were taken up with a 'Peace Forum' held in the lecture hall of the Institute of Education. Here the proceedings took on a decidedly political tone. Speaker after speaker cited horrifying statistics and called for world disarmament. The Buddhist speakers were joined by



Monks, mayors, and movie-men at the Stupa.

Photo Vajradipa

Indian Chiefs. Accompanying the guests was a small army of members of the Japan Buddha Sangha, together with their lay supporters. Around them all, Japanese and Sinhalese camera men and video crews swarmed — acting sometimes with an astonishing lack of sensitivity.

The much vaunted 'Assembly of the Sangha' was a purely official occasion and was marked by a total absence of what is most characteristic of the Sangha — communication, *real* communication, that is, which is more than the exchange of information, and in which there is a degree of mutual awareness and receptivity. In this sense, deep communication can take place in silence and, conversely, many words and high-sounding speeches may communicate nothing. In the Assembly itself, no one had anything to say, and no one listened. Afterwards, when the opportunity for getting to know each other did occur, no one was interested. Here were assembled the supposedly committed followers of the Buddha from all over the world, yet there was no hint of that powerful atmosphere which is generated when people who share a common commitment to developing as individuals come together. Clearly few had any interest in truly meeting. It was an ecclesiastical occasion made

a robe, of whatsoever colour, he must be spiritually worthy and should be given the best seats, and precedence at meals. The Theravada Bhikkhus, known to be touchy about such matters, were treated with especial care. How little such formalism has to do with real Buddhism!

After the long recital of platitudinous speeches a motion was put before the Assembly endorsing the work of Ven. Fuji, and expressing the Assembly's desire for world peace. In the well-timed schedule of the meeting, agreement should have been a mere formality; however, Nagabodhi and I decided that we must dissociate ourselves with the whole charade and so we abstained. There was a mild flicker of astonishment and interest as we raised our hands but no-one asked us why, either then or later and the wheels ground on.

Each speaker had dwelt on the Buddhist teaching of non-violence. The simplistic basis of the Forum seemed to be that if enough people declared loudly enough that they wanted peace, it would come about. The realities of the very complex political problems which produce the nuclear arms race were largely ignored. They now were ushered into the dining room where — monks and

some members of the CND Old Guard, some Christian pacifists, and a very odd collection of 'Peace Workers' indeed: from the Palestine Liberation Organisation to the Kurdish Minority Movement. Apart from the ranks of Japanese from the Japan Buddha Sangha, there were very few seated in the hall. Most people were unable to endure the stupefying boredom of the event. What was it all about?

It was a fairytale world of wishing for a wish that might make the Russians and the Americans — although the United States was definitely the villain of the piece — blossom into brotherly love and throw away all their nasty bombs. For many people, it seems, the Peace Movement is an expression of impotence, a way in which frustration and anger can be vented in an acceptable form. None had any realistic solution to the problems of international tension beyond organising meetings, demonstrations, walks, and, of course, the building of Peace Pagodas. The Conference had, in the end, only gestures to offer a crisis-ridden world.

Besides the wishfulness of the Forum there was a disturbingly political note. The PLO, Kurds, Melanesians, Native Americans, and

Calendar of Events 1981

others gave the Americans a good drubbing — perhaps deservedly — but there was no corresponding indictment, that I heard, of Communist Bloc militarism. Certainly, neither of the Lamas from Mongolia and Russia criticised the attitude of his own country. I tried to make contact with the Mongolian Lama and his translator, but was given, politely but unequivocally, the brush-off.

After all the speeches and reports of various 'peace walks' the conference closed to declarations from the platform that it had been a true landmark in world peace.

Next day came the official inauguration of the Pagoda itself. It is a striking and even beautiful structure standing beside a lake in rolling green parkland on the outskirts of Milton Keynes where it can be seen from the M.1. Motorway. Some two thousand people walked in the drizzle past the Alf Garnet-like Englishman with his banner saying 'Go home Japs'. The white stupa was decorated with banners and flags and, set against the autumnal clouds, was a brave sight with the orange, yellow and maroon robes of the monks before it. At one point paper flower petals were released from the top and floated away on the turbulent wind like mandarava blossom falling from the heavens. First the Japanese monks chanted, then the Theravada monks chanted, then the Vajrayana monks chanted, and then the American Indians performed a ceremony. Finally, all the monks circumambulated the Stupa and went off to lunch.

Many times throughout the weekend I had noticed casual passers-by watching fascinated the various goings on. What would they think? So far as they were concerned *this* was Buddhism — a colourful and rather quaint set of customs. As a 'mere religion' they would know it, for little or nothing of real individuality or of the truly spiritual was present here. Whenever 'Buddhism' presents itself publicly in such an exotic guise, many people to whom *individual growth* might be of real significance simply dismiss it as an irrelevance.

The Japan Buddha Sangha is activated by an extraordinarily literalistic interpretation of *The White Lotus Sutra*. For them it takes on something of the nature of the Christian Scriptures — an infallible authority in which are hidden prophecies and specific instructions about current affairs. The sheer naivety of their beliefs leads them to very energetic gesture-making — such as the calling of 'Sangha Assemblies', the holding of 'Peace Forums', and the building of Stupas. They are remarkably successful and, ecclesiastical heir-arches always being attracted by success, they are able to gather to their events a galaxy of Buddhist dignitaries. But does it have anything to do with real Buddhism, or the task of individual development?

Subhuti ■

Mixed retreat at Seaford

24 Dec - 3 Jan

Women's retreat at Loch Ard

19 Dec - 3 Jan

Men's retreat at Loch Lomond

20 Dec - 31 Dec

Men's retreat at Padmaloka

12 Dec - 3 Jan

Parinirvana Day

18 February

FWBO & WBO Anniversaries, Buddha's Birthday

6, 7 & 8 April

Women's Retreat at Seaford

30 March - 12 April

Buddha Day

19 May

Dharma Day

17 July

Men's retreat at Padmaloka (4 weeks)

August

Mixed summer retreat at Seaford

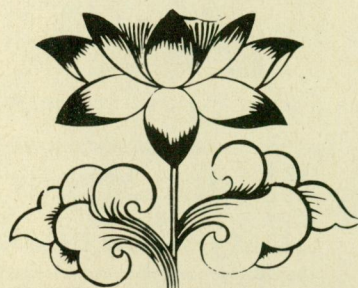
9 - 26 August

Sangha Day

11 November

This list is by no means complete. Each centre organises, in addition, weekend retreats for both beginners and people accustomed to meditation.

Contact your nearest Centre for details.



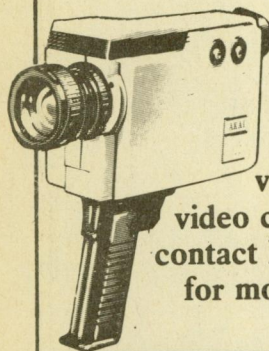
DHARMACAKRA TAPES

YOGA PRACTICE TAPE

Available now



NEW!



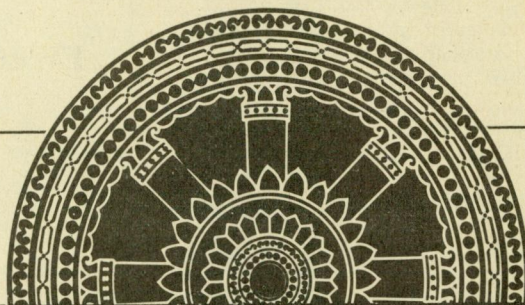
The Ven. Sangharakshita's latest lecture, 'The Taste of Freedom' is now available from Dharmacakra Tapes, not only sound, but also on vision. If you would like a colour video cassette copy of this lecture, contact Dharmacakra Tapes for more details.

For the past 15 years, the Ven. Sangharakshita's public lectures have been recorded on tape. This means that there are now some 150 lectures, on various aspects of Buddhist thought and practice, stored in this way — a wealth of information and inspiration available to anyone with a cassette-recorder.

High quality cassette copies cost £1.95 per lecture, plus 15p post and package for the first lecture in any order, and 10p for each subsequent lecture. (airmail: 30p per cassette)

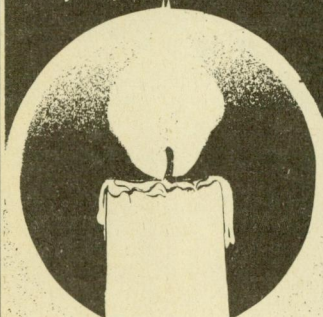
For a detailed catalogue (40p), and to place orders, contact:

DHARMACAKRA TAPES
119 Roman Road, London E2 0QN.
(PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS)



Coming Soon:
Massage Practice Tape
by Vajradaka

PADMALOKA CANDLES
Quality hand dipped candles
free of animal products



All Colours
Standard size (approx 11") Burning time 7-8hrs.
Box 10 pairs £2.50 Large size approx 16" £1.35
per pair. Other types/sizes made to order.

PADMALOKA CANDLES
Lesingham House
Surlingham
Norwich
NORFOLK, Surlingham 310.



Sunrise Vegetarian
Restaurant
16 North Road
Brighton. Tel. 603188

Mon. to Sat. 12-5pm.

Tasty Healthy Food Take Away Service

INK
Print and Design

21 Hope Street
Glasgow G2 6AB

041-221 6193



The Cherry Orchard
for delicious vegetarian meals
241-243 Globe Road London E2
Lunches: Mon-Sat
Evenings: Tues-Weds
(Just round the corner from the LBC)

WINDHORSE PRESS
tel: 01-980 1843



printed this magazine

Windhorse Press is looking for another printer, contact Hans at above number.

About the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

None of us is complete; more or less by chance, we are tossed up by our conditioning — biological, psychological, social, and cultural — as partial beings. Our future lies in each one of us making something of him or herself: making of that miscellaneous bundle of conditionings a happy, free, clear-minded, and emotionally radiant individual.

The conscious growth of a truly human being is the ultimate heroic act left to us. If we so choose, we can develop within ourselves a vivid awareness of existence, a powerful positivity towards all that lives, and an inexhaustible dynamism. Ultimately, we can become 'Buddhas', enlightened or fully awakened individuals who have totally liberated themselves from the bondage of subjective conditioning and who have a direct and intuitive understanding of reality.

One who commits himself or herself to this ideal of individual growth is a Buddhist. So the Western Buddhist Order is a fellowship of men and women who have explicitly committed themselves, in a simple ceremony, to furthering their own and others' development.

The Order forms the nucleus of a new society or culture in which the values of human growth are paramount. As a result of Order members taking responsibility each for their own lives and attempting to communicate honestly and openly with others, that new society is becoming a living reality. In those areas where Order members have gathered together there are found three things: Communities, Co-operatives, and Centres.

In communities, Order members and Mitras (literally 'Friends': people who, after some initial contact with Order members, have decided they wish to deepen their communication) live together in numbers varying between four and thirty. In these, a new and radical way of life is being forged, which encourages and inspires community members to grow. They are usually either for men or for women so as to break down the habitual psychological and social patterns usually found in our relationships with members of the opposite sex which so much inhibit growth. Often, community members will pool all their earnings in a 'common purse' from which all expenses, communal and individual, will be met. The flavour of the communities is as varied as the people within them.

In the Co-operatives, groups of Order members, Mitras, and Friends (those who are in contact with the Movement and participate in any of its activities) work together in businesses which financially support the workers and which fund the further expansion of this New Society. Present businesses either running or being set up in the Movement include a printing press, wholefood shops, a silkscreen press, a hardware store, cafes, a second-hand shop, bookshop, editorial service, metalwork forge, and graphic-design, photographic and film studio. Members of the Co-operatives are hammering out a way of working which is 'Right Livelihood': team-based so that each person has the opportunity to take responsibility for the work, and ethically sound: exploiting neither other people nor the earth's resources. Work is done not for remuneration, but for its value as a means of development (in what other situation might your workmates suggest that you go for a walk or do some meditation when you seem run down?) and from a spirit of generosity. Each worker either works voluntarily or is given what he or she needs to live.

The most direct and effective means to the evolution of consciousness is the practice of meditation. At the Centres, members of the Order teach meditation and conduct courses, study groups, talks, and discussions on the principles and practice of Buddhism. There are also ceremonies, festivals, and arts activities. Yoga, massage, and other practices are taught as valuable, though less central, methods of development. Centres are places where you can make contact with Order members and others already in touch with this burgeoning New Society. Above all, through the Centres, a bridge is formed over which those who wish may cross to a new and total way of life based upon the growth and development of individuals.

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order ('the Friends') is, then, a movement, always deepening and expanding, of people who wish to be authentic, integrated and dynamic. It was initiated in 1967 by the Ven. Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita, who spent 20 years in India as a Buddhist monk. He there studied, practised, or had contact with all the main traditional schools of Buddhism and returned to the West with a clear awareness that, though its essence remains the same, Buddhism always expresses itself anew in each new age and climate. The 'Friends' is the response of the Buddhist tradition of insight and experience to the circumstances of the modern West. It is an increasingly widespread movement with some twenty Centres and Branches throughout the world.

FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER

CENTRES AND BRANCHES

London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 0HU. Tel: 01-981 1225
Brighton Buddhist Centre, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex. Tel: (0273) 698420
Aryatara, 3 Plough Lane, Purley, Surrey. Tel: 01-660 2542
Grdhrakuta, 18 Burlington Road, Withington, Manchester M20 9PY. Tel: 061-445 3805
Heruka, 13 Kelvinside Terrace South, Glasgow G20. Tel: 041-946 2035
West London Buddhist Centre, Flat 6, 21 Fitzjohns Avenue, London NW3. Tel: 01-258 3706
FWBO Bristol, 56 Granby Hill, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4LS. Tel: Bristol (0272) 28220
Norwich Meditation Centre, 41a All Saints Green, Norwich. Tel: (0603) 27034
Lansimaisen Buddhalaisen Veljeskunnan Ystävät, FWBO
 Albertinkatu 21 C 12, 00120 Helsinki 12, Finland. Tel: Helsinki 642 462
Suvarniadhatu, PO Box 68-453, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand.
FWBO Christchurch, PO Box 22-657, Christchurch, New Zealand.
Wellington Buddhist Centre, PO Box 12311, Wellington North, New Zealand.
Trailokya Bauddha Maha Sangha, Sahayak Gana,
 Anagarika Lokamitra, 2A-Parnakuti Housing Society, Yerawada, Pune 411006, India.
Tyn-y-ddol Retreat Centre, Trerddol, Nr. Corwen, Clywd, N. Wales (visitors by arrangement only)

REPRESENTATIVES

Upasaka Aryavamsa, Elleholmsvagen 11, S-352 43 Vaxjo, Sweden.
Upasaka Bakula, Bakul Bhavan, Behind Gujerat Vaishya Sabha,
 Jamalpur Road, Ahmedabad, 380001, Gujerat, India.
Upasaka Dharmadhara, PO Box 12311, Wellington North, New Zealand.
FWBO Netherlands Wichard Van Pontlaan 109, Arnhem, Netherlands 010 31 85 61 0275
FWBO Boston, 27 Grampian Way, Savin Hill, Boston, Massachusetts 02125,
 USA. Tel: 0101-617 (Boston) 8259666

CO-OPERATIVES

The Blue Lotus Co-operative Ltd., 34 Daventry Street, London NW1. Tel: 01-258 3706
Golden Light Co-operative, PO Box 68-453, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand.
Oranges Restaurant (Norwich) Ltd., 16 Dove Street, Norwich. Tel: (0603) 25560
The Padmaloka Co-operative Ltd., Lesingham House, Surlingham,
 Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7AL. Tel: (050 88) 310
The Pure Land Co-operative Ltd., 51 Roman Road, London E2 0HU. Tel: 01-980 1960
The Rainbow Co-operative Ltd., 3-4 Saint Michaels Road, Croydon, Surrey. Tel: 01-688 2899
Windhorse Associates, 119 Roman Road, London E2 0QN. Tel: 01-981 5157
Windhorse Enterprises Ltd., 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex. Tel: (0273) 698420
Windhorse Wholefoods Co-operative Ltd., 13 Kelvinside Terrace South, Glasgow G20. Tel: 041-946 2035
Phoenix Community Housing Co-operative Ltd., 51 Roman Road, London E2. Tel: 01-980 1960.

COMMUNITIES

(Visitors by
arrangement only)

Amitayus, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex. Tel: (0273) 698420
Arunachala, 29 Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 9PJ. Tel: 01-980 7826
Aryatara, 3 Plough Lane, Purley, Surrey. Tel: 01-660 2542
Beulah, 95 Bishop's Way, Bethnal Green, London E2 9HL. Tel: 01-980 4151
Golgonooza, 119 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 0QN. Tel: 01-980 2507
Grdhrakuta, 18 Burlington Road, Withington, Manchester M20 9PY. Tel: 061-445 3805
Heruka, 13 Kelvinside Terrace South, Glasgow G20. Tel: 041-946 2035
Kalpadruma, 3 Saint Michaels Road, Croydon, Surrey. Tel: 01-688 2899
Khadiravani, 23 Tunstall Road, London SW9.
Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7AL. Tel: (050 88) 310
Ratmadvipa, 34 Daventry Street, London NW1. Tel: 01-258 3706
Sitavana, 141 Rosary Road, Norwich, Norfolk. Tel: (0603) 29965
Sukhavati, 51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 0HU. Tel: 01-980 5972
Suvarnabhasa, 3 Massie Road, London E8.
Vajrakula, 41b All Saints Green, Norwich. Tel: (0603) 27034
Vajrasamaya, 30 Cambridge Park, Wanstead, London E11 2PR. Tel: 01-989 5083
 329 Sauchiehall Street (top right), Glasgow. Tel: 041-333 0524
 71 Kilburn Park Road, London NW6.
 219 Amhurst Road, London E8.
 24 Birchfield House, Birchfield Street, Limehouse, London E14 8EY.

The Office of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order:

London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Road, London E2 0HU. Tel: 01-981 1225

The Office of the Western Buddhist Order:

Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 7AL. Tel: (050 88) 310