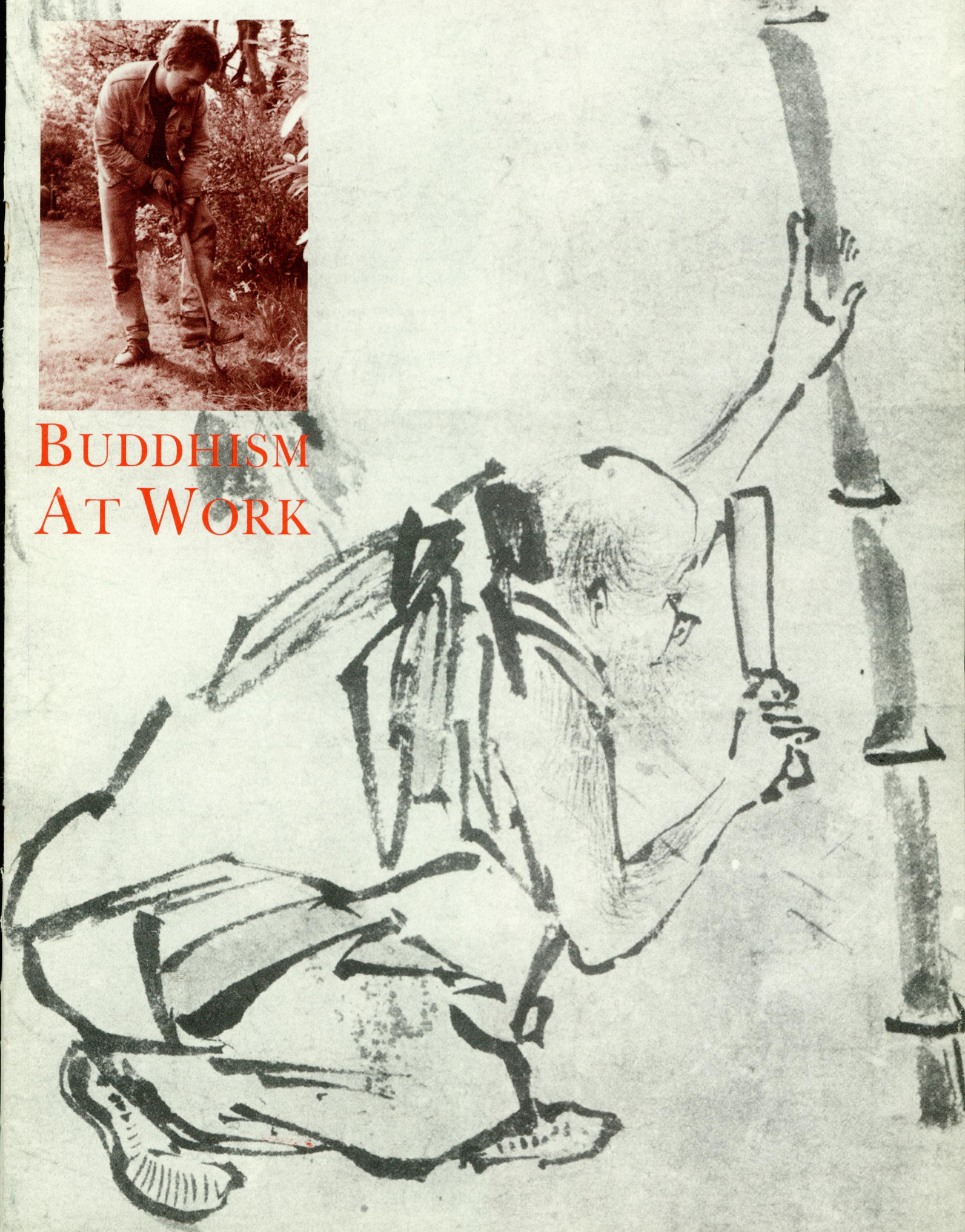


GOLDEN DRUM

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BUDDHISM
AT WORK



GOLDEN DRUM

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Editor Nagabodhi
Editorial Assistance Shantavira, Chris Pauling
Books Editor Tejananda
Design Paramabodhi
Printing F. Crowe & Sons Ltd,
11 Concorde Road, Norwich, NR6 6BJ

Subscription address and advertisement enquiries: 136 Renfield Street,
Glasgow, G2 3AU

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Suddenly, and with an efficiency hitherto unknown, the extraordinary complex of discoveries and inventions now known as the Industrial Revolution made it possible for a privileged, or especially enterprising, few to gain control of the 'means of production', and thus determine the economic and social lives of the many. If some would claim that the subsequent history of mankind has been nothing less than a pageant of exploitation and oppression on an unprecedented scale, then it must equally be argued that many potent ideological and political developments over the past two centuries have arisen out of mankind's attempt to moderate the social imbalances that the technological advances of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made possible. In every developed country, successive governments—whether communist, liberal, or 'centre-right'—have tinkered with, and occasionally bludgeoned, the delicate mechanisms of financial, industrial, and social organization in their attempts to establish societies that were—or at least seemed to be—reasonably fair.

Don't worry. I am not about to make a party political point. What I do wish to suggest is that many things to which we in the West have grown accustomed are about to change—perhaps more radically than any of us can yet imagine—and that we must be alive to the sharp winds that are beginning to encircle us.

Until technological advance had reached its present stage, it was possible for governments—whether responsible for tiny states or vast empires—to fret over their economies in more or less splendid isolation. Certainly, there is nothing new in international trade, the balance of payments, or international investment; but, until very recently, things moved reasonably sedately, were not too complex, had not become too densely interrelated; it was even possible for a country to erect economic barriers between itself and the rest of the world so as to avoid the risk of financial or ideological contamination. This is no longer the case.

Today, a loss of confidence in the dollar in London will affect the price of the yen in New York, the eruption of a political scandal in Tokyo might seal the fate of a take-over bid in Sydney, the shelling of a military installation in Libya might make somebody's fortune in Hong Kong—all within a matter of seconds. The entire economic and social welfare strategy of a communist state may depend on the international price of oil over the coming months and years, and thus on the astonishing vagaries of those enigmatic folk who haggle behind closed doors at the gatherings of OPEC.—And so on: With gathering pace the world's economies are turning, willy-nilly, into a single world economy. This is happening for the straightforward reason that technology makes it possible, and it is happening whether we like it or not, want it or not, and—above all—understand it or not.

What the world very possibly requires is some form of international government, a trans-national effort to devise and impose new checks and balances on the flow of wealth around the world. But the arguments and clashes that still characterize the workings of the UN, EEC, and even—one now hears—COMECON, suggest that such a goal is very far off. Meanwhile, an assembly of politicians and statesmen is

gathering on the world's stages whose 'courageous initiatives' amount to little less than the progressive dismantling of economic and political restraints to full-blown private enterprise.

These people deserve our sympathy. Perhaps knowing that they are powerless to exert any meaningful control over their home economies, they are simply creating the conditions for their countries to do as well as possible in the generalized, undisciplined scramble for the world's wealth. Technological advance has rendered planned economic self-determination obsolete; habit, suspicion, prejudice, and self-interest, render international co-operation ineffective: we are left with the law of the jungle. The regular, clearly defined, fenced-off fields of the world's economic system are being allowed to overrun each other—and to lie fallow, simply because nobody knows what else to do. Perhaps out of the chaos and disorder will arise new systems, new forms of order. We shall have to wait and see.

Meanwhile, the implications for Western Buddhists are enormous and far-reaching. To look on the brighter side, the stresses and strains of life in a highly competitive world could drive people to meditation practice and Buddhist teachings in new and extravagant numbers; the universality of Buddhism, and the internationalism of the Buddhist community, may have some contribution to make to a world seeking to transcend its old separatist ways. But we will feel the strain as well.

The FWBO, along with the Western Buddhist movement as a whole, has really found its feet during the past two or three decades, decades that have offered little in the way of ideological certainty, and thus effective competition. Relatively free from the pulls of conventional Christian dogma on the one hand, and unashamed materialism on the other, and protected from the consequences of failure by state benefits, many Westerners have been able to experiment with their lifestyles—without giving the risks involved much more than a passing thought.

Now, people will think longer and harder before taking that kind of leap. The economic and social pressures will simply be so much greater than those which many of us have yet encountered. Those who do decide to work full-time at creating the institutions of a Buddhist 'alternative society' will have to be more wholehearted, and work harder *on every level* than ever before. And as increasing numbers of people decide to practise their Buddhism within the context of more 'conventional' careers and lifestyles, we will have to find ways of guaranteeing the spiritual integrity of our Buddhist community—whilst avoiding the old, rigid, monk/lay syndrome that has dogged Buddhist history so far.

In the *practice* of Right Livelihood, our spiritual life and our economic life meet, and often clash. Through the *achievement* of Right Livelihood, our economic life becomes a part of our spiritual life. We sometimes say in the FWBO, 'Commitment is primary, lifestyle secondary': in the coming decades we must prove that we know what we are talking about. Irrespective of our achievements so far, I feel sure that the issue of Right Livelihood will provide us with one of our greatest tests.

Nagabodhi



THE PRACTICE OF RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

What is Right Livelihood? Virachitta reviews its place and significance in Buddhist tradition.

Everyone needs money in order to live. No matter how unworldly we may be, we still need some form of income, some means of earning (or at least receiving) a living. For most people, this means work in the usual sense of 'paid employment', but for others it may mean living on a pension or on investments, claiming unemployment benefit, or being supported by others in order to do specific tasks, such as raising children or teaching meditation and Buddhism. The question of Right Livelihood is therefore one that concerns all of us who are trying to follow the Buddhist path. We all need to look, from time to time, at our means of livelihood, and see whether or not it measures up to our ideals. If we have a job, then we need to look carefully at the work it involves. Does it have a good effect on us? Does it have a good effect on the world around us? Does it contribute anything to society? Is it merely harmless—or even damaging? In this article we will be looking at some guidelines to Right Livelihood that have come to us through the Buddhist tradition.

Right Livelihood (*samyak ajiva*) constitutes the fourth limb of the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path. As such, it occupies a central position in one of the most important formulations of Buddhist teaching, and is accepted by all major schools of Buddhism. It is one of three aspects of the Eightfold Path which embrace the practice of morality or ethics—the other two being Right Action and Right Speech. It is not difficult to see why action and speech should be given such prominence, but perhaps it is less obvious why livelihood should be singled out, rather than simply subsumed under the heading of Right Action. If we stop and reflect, however, then the importance of work will soon become apparent.

Most of us spend a remarkably large proportion of our waking lives working. In Britain, it's normal to work seven or eight hours a day, five days a week, forty-eight weeks a year, for forty-five years! This is a staggeringly large part of a human life, but many people seem not to be content even with this, and work overtime or take work home with them. It is to be expected, then, that the work we do has a powerful effect on us—a cumulative effect year by year. Added to the sheer time involved is the very strong sense of identification which many people build up with their work. When people first meet us they usually ask 'What do you do for a living?' This is not merely a social convention but reflects the fact that, very often, the single most important and defining thing about us is our occupation. We almost seem to think that we are our occupation. Perhaps it is now clear why Right Livelihood should be a limb of the Path in its own right.

When we turn to the suttas of the Pali Canon for guidance on this topic, we are mostly given a list of proscribed modes of livelihood. For example, in the *Majjhima Nikaya* we read that 'trickery, cajolery, insinuating, dissembling, rapacity for gain upon gain . . . is wrong mode of livelihood'. Correspondingly, the right mode of livelihood is defined as abstention from these. There are also five trades which have been specifically prohibited to all Buddhists: trading in arms, in living beings, in flesh, in intoxicating drinks, and in poison. These would include, presumably, military service, as well as working as a hunter or fisherman. The categories which have been proscribed are as valid today as they were two-and-a-half-thousand years ago. It is still impossible for a sincere Buddhist to make a living from the manufacture or sale of armaments, from working as a butcher or in a slaughterhouse, or from the supply of intoxicants or poisons to others. It should be remembered that the damaging effects of such occupations are felt not only by their direct victims but, also, through the action of karma, by those who engage in such work.

It is easy to list jobs which are wrong livelihood, and which cannot possibly be transformed into Right Livelihood, but many jobs today are more subtly unethical. Examples would include the manufacture and sale of useless luxury goods, of shoddily-produced goods, or the advertising industry—surely at times blatantly 'insinuating' and 'dissembling'.

So far, I've dealt mostly with abstention from wrong livelihood, and it is important that we take whatever personal steps are necessary to do this. But if we stop here then our practice is really only half-hearted. If we want to perfect our livelihood, then we must try to do something that makes a positive contribution to ourselves and to the society in which we live. Professions that spring to mind would include those of doctor, nurse, teacher, writer, or artist. Work undertaken to fund worthwhile projects (such as social and educational projects in the Third World, or Buddhist retreat centres) is another way of contributing. If we are going to spend most of our lives working, then it is imperative that we make our work as much a force for good as we are capable of. Anything else would be to sell ourselves and our ideals short.

To engage truly in Right Livelihood, we need to ask ourselves two questions. Firstly, is our work beneficial to ourselves and to society at large—or, as an absolute minimum, is it at least doing no harm? Secondly, are our motives for doing that work, and the habitual mental states we experience while doing it, positive? We therefore need to choose a suitable occupation or profession, and then we

need to work on purifying our motivation and improving the mental states which we bring to the work. For example, working as a doctor is obviously an appropriate mode of work for the practice of Right Livelihood, but if we do the work purely for self-aggrandizement, then it is not likely to bestow any benefits on ourselves or on the patients. Similarly, if we bring habitual mental patterns of unmindfulness or antagonism to the work, then it can hardly be described as Right Livelihood at all.

Approached in a positive manner, work can become a part of our spiritual practice. It may even become the leading edge of our practice. After all, it is relatively easy to be mindful and to experience positive emotions when on retreat or when attending a Buddhist centre, but remaining so when tired, at the end of a long day's work, surrounded by unhelpful colleagues, with objective deadlines to meet, confronts us with a real test of how deeply our practice has penetrated. It is at this point that we can see how much we've managed to transform ourselves—and how much more we still have to do!

So far I have said nothing about how Right Livelihood is practised in countries which are traditionally Buddhist, and, indeed, traditional Buddhism as it has been transmitted to the West has had little to say about Right Livelihood other than listing the proscribed occupations. This may be due to the emphasis which has been placed on the bhikkhus—or monks—who support themselves by begging, and have therefore had to pay little attention (in the West at least) to this aspect of the Path. In the East, it seems that monks did resort to divination and fortune-telling as a means of supporting themselves and, in spite of the Buddha enumerating over sixty different variants of this as 'wrong means of livelihood' (as recorded in the *Digha Nikaya*) this practice seems to continue. Tibetan monks often have a trade, such as tailoring, but this is not true of the high lamas with whom we tend to be familiar.

In the suttas themselves there is a paucity of information about Right Livelihood, though we do discover that the Buddha's lay disciples had a wide range of occupations: bankers, merchants, blacksmiths, cowherds, and farmers. Perhaps Right Livelihood is an aspect of Buddhism which is ripe for exploration and development here in the West.





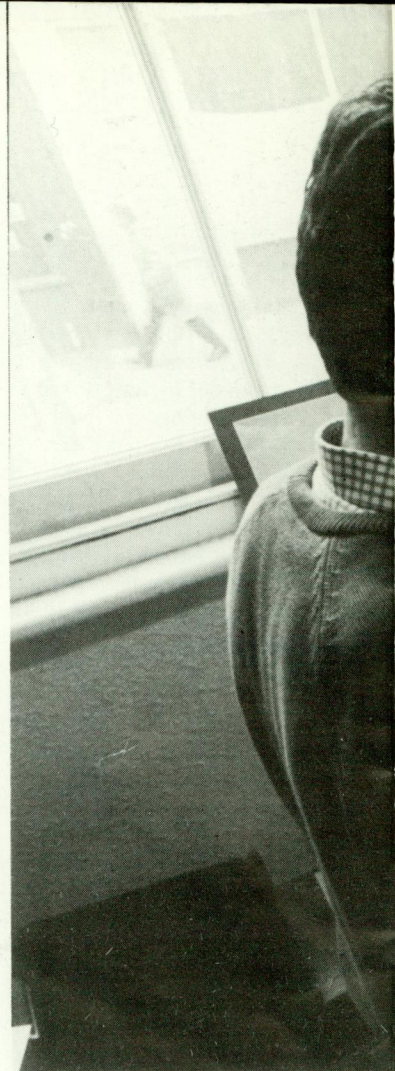
take for granted simply did not exist. Over the next twenty many more occupations will come into existence—mostly in areas of information and technology—while some of our present occupations will disappear.

Human history can be viewed in many ways. From a certain point of view it is reasonable, if rather radical, to divide it into just two sections: one taking place before the detonation of the first nuclear weapon in 1945, and the other taking place afterwards. With that explosion the world entered a new and uncertain age, with no historical precedents on which to rely. It is as if we need to create a new operating manual for human society and planet Earth—and we need to create one fast!

So in the area of work, what can we use as a basis for judgement? Provisionally I shall define Right Livelihood as 'work which is in harmony with the Five Precepts (of ethical behaviour)'. Does our work cause harm to living beings? Does it involve taking the not given, any form of sexual misconduct, or false speech? Or does it have a mind-befuddling effect on ourselves or others? If one examines one's work in the light of the Five Precepts, and tries to modify it so that it is more in harmony with them, a great deal can be achieved. This simple method may not exhaust the possibilities of Right Livelihood, but it can be used by anybody, whatever their present circumstances. Special situations may help, but we do not need a special situation. Whatever we do, however we work, we can use the Precepts to bring our work more into harmony with the principles of Right Livelihood.

When I first encountered Buddhism I was working as an electronic engineer on the design of a weapon system. One of my first acts as a practising Buddhist was to find a job which was more ethical. I still work as an electronic engineer, but I have steered my career towards the design of items which are at least ethically neutral, and preferably of benefit to the world.

Actually, the electronics industry provides a very good illustration of the ethical



complexities of the modern world. The silicon chips at the heart of every home computer are identical in design to chips used in the missile guidance systems for which they were first developed. The same technology which enables a fighter pilot to aim and fire missiles simply by looking at the desired target can also be used to improve the lives of the severely disabled. Mass communications and data storage can link together diverse countries and peoples, to educate, inform, and disseminate culture, or to spread propaganda and misinformation.

Medicine has an ethical side. Our potential for healing with drugs and technology has never been greater. But there is a dark converse: genetic engineering and experimentation, abortion, and the questionable value of 'life support' without reference to the quality of that life.

We cannot abandon technology, nor would it be wise. The only solution is to learn to use it creatively and ethically.

One of the distinguishing features of the modern world is in our attitude to work. Much work today is divorced from any apparent product or

THE MODERN CONTEXT

The world was a very different place when the Buddha first taught Right Livelihood. Sanghaloka considers how we can approach this teaching today.

Being a practising Buddhist, you decide to follow the principle of Right Livelihood.

You set up a vegetarian sandwich bar in a busy town centre. Business goes well, particularly at lunchtime. After a while you get to know some of your customers and discover that the bulk of your lunchtime trade comes from the large offices of the Ministry of Defence, around the corner. What do you do? Should you close down? The Ministry of Defence will only get its sandwiches elsewhere, and a few Buddhists will have lost a useful means of livelihood. To what extent has the ethical basis of your business been compromised?

This hypothetical situation suggests just how complex the area of Right Livelihood can be. Anyone trying to live a life based on Buddhist values, and faced with the need to earn a living in the modern world, must surely wonder from time to time whether Right Livelihood is possible at all.

When the Buddha first formulated the principle of Right Livelihood, 2,500 years ago, the world was a very different place. Even a hundred years ago many occupations which we now



service, simply because of the size of our organizations and the complexity of the processes involved. Since the beginning of the industrial revolution there has been a trend towards this compartmentalization of work. This produces an alienated attitude, with little job satisfaction, in which the only reward is money which allows you to 'live' when not at work. Effectively you 'die' for eight hours per day, five days per week, in order to 'live' at weekends. The end result is a feeling of resentment, stultification, and apathy with regard to one's work. To be resentful, stultified, and deprived of meaning for a large part of one's waking life obviously has a negative effect on one's entire life, and will certainly inhibit spiritual development.

In order to practise Right Livelihood one's time at work must somehow be rescued from that fate. It is up to each of us to fashion our lives in the best way possible. New ways of working must be created to ensure that our work is meaningful, useful, and a support to spiritual life.

I would like to suggest five aspects according to which we can evaluate work and bring it

more into accord with the principle of Right Livelihood. These are: support, enjoyment, vocation, transformation, and myth. In conjunction with the precepts, these five aspects could provide a flexible basis, and a critique for evaluating our present work and deciding what changes are either necessary or possible.

Our income from work must be sufficient to provide support for ourselves and any dependants we may have. 'Support' should not be taken to mean 'subsistence'; it should allow for the necessity of treating ourselves and our dependants with kindness and *metta*.

Being able to take pleasure in, and feel satisfied with, our daily activity, knowing that we have done our best, is a very important part of turning work into Right Livelihood. Of course, not all individual tasks will be pleasant, but the overall picture should be one of enjoyment and satisfaction. Some jobs just may not offer this possibility, in which case we may need to look for work elsewhere.

When the teaching of Right Livelihood is first encountered, many people think in terms of a vocation. Obviously to be employed in a vocationally

Technology in the service of the Dharma—the secretary's office at the LBC oriented profession such as medicine, social work, or teaching can confer enormous advantages, since the work has an innate potential for ethically sound activity.

The widest goal of Right Livelihood is the transformation of society. Through our work, and our communication with those with whom we contact at work, we can have an effect on the fabric of society. We can all have some effect in this area, simply by making others aware of the values by which we live.

If the connection between 'myth' and work seems a little strange, that is perhaps because of our devalued sense of the importance of the mythical in life. This area certainly needs much development and refinement in the light of individual experience, though there are precedents in the stories of some of the Mahasiddhas of Tantric Buddhism. In the area of personal practice this aspect consists in contacting our personal myths—such as hero, rescuer, healer, magician—and then living out and enacting those myths in the arena of livelihood. Perhaps an simple example of this would be the myth of the healer conjoined with work in the field of

medicine. This sort of basis would provide a full-blooded and powerful motivation for Right Livelihood. The resources of energy available in our mythic depths are quite immense.

In summary, the implementation of Right Livelihood is as complex today as our world is complex. Provisionally, we can begin our move towards Right Livelihood by evaluating our actions at work in the light of the Five Precepts. Wherever we work, some degree of Right Livelihood is usually possible. It would be a mistake to think of Right Livelihood as something that we can only practise in a specific situation. Right Livelihood is rooted in an attitude of mind—one which can transform existing situations.

We can further examine our livelihood under the aspects of support, enjoyment, vocation, transformation, and myth. While we cannot be certain that the ideal of Right— in the sense of Perfect— Livelihood will ever arise in our complex society, it is possible nevertheless to keep moving ourselves ever closer towards it, even in the modern world.



WORKING INSIDE THE MOVEMENT

From jumble sales and sponsored walks to 'team-based Right Livelihood co-operatives' . . . Tejamati reflects on the FWBO's encounter with Right Livelihood.

'Fundraising is a necessary preoccupation within the FWBO—we are always short of money.' So said Devamitra in the Spring 1979 issue of the *FWBO Newsletter*. Some things never change; the need for money and resources will always be endless. It was this demand that lay behind the FWBO's first Right Livelihood initiatives.

In the beginning there were simply fundraising projects, the kind that every charitable organization sets up: jumble sales, sponsored walks, etc. But in New Zealand in 1978 a more adventurous spirit found the Friends a contract to

Friends Building Services—an early co-operative business

make 8000 jack-in-the-boxes as a promotional stunt for a manufacturer of fibreglass insulation. Not only did this project earn some much-needed money, but it galvanized people's energies and brought them together in a new and exciting way. The venture made upwards of £3000, but as their report to the *Newsletter* stated, 'this was secondary to the other benefits of inspiration, confidence, and depth of friendship'.

This breakthrough did not happen just in New Zealand: it had come two to three years earlier in the UK. The discovery that work and spiritual practice could go together came as something of a surprise. The conviction that making a profit was immoral was deeply ingrained in many of us, so engaging in business naturally seemed inimical to spiritual practice. This view is mistaken, though I believe it still stalks the FWBO and inhibits some of our businesses even today.

It is very difficult to pinpoint the exact time and place when the first FWBO Right Livelihood businesses came into being. In some cases it is not clear when a fundraising activity became a business, or when a service, initially offered to the Movement, became a business. For the present purpose, I shall define a Right Livelihood business as a project which is intended to run long term, which trades with the 'world', and is team-based (though perhaps we must be careful not to apply our definition too rigidly to these early ventures).

As far as I can ascertain, Windhorse Bookshop, established in Brighton in January 1975 by Buddhadasa, must claim the honour of being the first Right Livelihood venture in the FWBO. On the ground floor, books, incense, candles, crafts, and some Indian clothing were sold, whilst upstairs a room was offered for meditation classes. The shop made a modest profit and also helped to introduce people to the FWBO. But, really, it was not until the 'big push' to create the London Buddhist Centre got under way that a more sustained and lasting breakthrough came. Here the demand for funds was greatest, and it was here that we were prepared to be more speculative and daring. At its peak, in 1978, there were seven, almost eight, businesses operating: Friends Foods wholefoods, Friends Building Service, Windhorse Transport, Windhorse Press, Friends Hardware, Windy Words editorial service, and Friends Trading secondhand shop. The almost-ran was a damp-proofing business.

Friends Foods was founded by Ratnaguna in 1976 from the profit he made out of catering for that year's Order Convention. That profit, together with a little extra finance (£200), enabled him to set up a wholefood stall in a local market which quickly expanded into three stalls around London. By May 1978 the shop at the front of the London Buddhist Centre was born. Another of these pioneering enterprises was a transport and removals business called Windhorse Transport,

started in early 1977 by Vimalamitra. I joined later in 1977 when apparently the business was at its peak, and continued to be, along with Friends Foods, the most successful of our Right Livelihood enterprises at the time. Our slogan was 'Sure-footed and fast'. If it ever was sure-footed and fast it was only occasionally, and it was finally laid to rest, with considerable relief to all, in June 1978.

Although surpluses from Windhorse Press, Windhorse Transport, and Friends Foods just managed to support Sukhavati community, there was nothing left over to contribute to the conversion work. So, in November 1977, out of the workforce engaged on the building work, Friends Building Service was launched under the foremanship of Atula, a master carpenter and general builder, upon whose skills the business was entirely dependent. The setting up of FBS represented Right Livelihood on a new level. Whereas, previously, friendship had been a kind of by-product of the activity, the demanding nature of this work and the size of the workforce meant that a lot of effort was required to maintain communication, team-spirit, and motivation.

In 1977 and 1978 Right Livelihood projects were beginning to be formed throughout the Movement in the UK. A vegetarian restaurant, Sunrise, opened in Brighton; two shop premises were acquired in Croydon and converted into a wholefood shop and café; Ink (a screen printing/design business) and Gardening Friends appeared in Glasgow; Oranges vegetarian restaurant in Norwich came into the Movement along with its founder, Kulananda; a transport and removals business was formed in West London; Spectrum painting/decorating service and Kusa cushions was started by the women's community in Wanstead; Rainbow Cleaning was started in Manchester, a gardening business in Edinburgh, a candle-making business at Padmaloka in Norfolk, and a design studio in East London.

Most of these businesses started life informally as minor trading activities. After a year or two, and as our activities became less minor, a new legal structure had to be found, one that would adequately represent our principles of Right Livelihood. The one which most suited us was the 'workers' co-operative' with its emphasis on responsibility, communication, and co-operation. The first co-operatives were the Rainbow Co-operative, which supports the activities of our Croydon Centre, and the Pureland Co-op, which is associated with the London Buddhist Centre. These two were established in May 1978. Following their example, many of the businesses mentioned above were organized into co-operatives and, later, new co-operatives were established wherever a new FWBO centre was started.

Our approach in those early days was to encourage any business ideas that people had. Retrospectively it was perhaps all rather mad, but it was this spirit that got us started. Many have since



Clockwise: The design department at Ink Print & Design, Windhorse Bookshop, Kusa Cushions

faded away for a variety of reasons: lack of start-up and working capital, low level of skills, lack of committed people, sometimes even a shortage of people willing to work at all!

Of those that do remain, the most notable in the UK are: Ink, our print and design co-op in Glasgow; Rainbow Co-op in Croydon, which runs Hockneys vegetarian restaurant and Friends Foods wholefood and sandwich take-away shop; The Pure Land Co-op in East London which runs the Cherry Orchard vegetarian restaurant, Friends Foods health food shop, Jambala book, homeware, and gift shop, and Windhorse Photosetters, a photo-typesetting service. In West London there is another Friends Foods shop and Friends Gardening, in Lancashire a window cleaning co-op called Clear View, and in Cambridge there is Windhorse Trading, an importer and wholesaler of gifts and fashion jewellery. These enterprises between them employ eighty-five people and have an annual turnover of approximately £2,000,000.

Elsewhere in the world there are presently Right Livelihood ventures in the USA and India. In the USA there is a wooden toy and gift-making business based at Aryaloka in New Hampshire. In India, Right Livelihood businesses have been running since 1984. Presently there are grocery shops, an insurance and investment business, a co-operative credit society, and a candle-making business.

As one would expect, some clear principles have evolved, over the years, which govern our business enterprises. Of these, three have a particular centrality. Firstly, the work must be ethical: it should not harm, exploit, or deceive any living being, nor damage the environment. Secondly, the work, where possible, is team-based and provides an opportunity for giving and receiving friendship (*kalyana mitrata*). Thirdly, the work should serve some wider purpose, either in itself, or through the profits made, the spirit here being one of generosity. These principles are absolutely fundamental to any of our Right Livelihood businesses and, where possible, should be present in equal strength so that the business stands strong and stable. These principles are like the legs of a tripod. If one is missing

or undeveloped, the business will be out of balance and unlikely to be as spiritually productive—or as commercially potent—as it could be.

From the perspective of the late eighties, with its emphasis on training, business plans, and cash-flow projections, many of us look back in wonder, and horror, at the basis upon which our enterprises were established. But going through the confusion, learning to co-operate, learning about cash-flow the hard way, is precisely what has made our foray into the arena of Right Livelihood as rewarding as it has been. The challenges have been varied and numerous: learning to work without the support of an authoritarian hierarchy, dealing with the tensions that accompany an attempt to work and engage with the world from an ethical basis, living by the principle of 'give what you can, take what you need', objectifying our needs and having them discussed by our fellow workers, staying motivated whilst receiving a low level of financial support, trying to do a job for which one has little or no training, learning to throw off the comfortable shackles of passivity and learning to take initiative. . . . None of this has been easy, but it has been worth the try. As Nietzsche said, 'That which does not break me, makes me strong.'

Not surprisingly, many businesses did not last, but a few have pulled through to become respected enterprises. There is still far to go. We have by no means 'cracked' Right Livelihood, nor will we ever. But team-based Right Livelihood is now a vital aspect of the spiritual life of the FWBO, and not just a source of funds. To strengthen our Right Livelihood projects and develop new ones in the more demanding climate of today, we need to tackle our lack of management and financial expertise, develop new skills, strengthen the quality of friendship and team spirit in our businesses, and take a fresh look at the training principle 'give what you can, take what you need' and see how it can best be applied. If these elements are taken seriously and the business ventures of the FWBO are supported unequivocally by the spiritually committed, then the FWBO will indeed become a dynamic force for good in the world—and for the many, not just for the few.

CLEAR VISION

In this case study, Pramodana provides a portrait of the window cleaning business he has created along with Friends from the Lancashire Buddhist Centre.



In the beginning, Heather Jones and myself began window cleaning part-time in order to try to free ourselves from jobs which involved shift work. We had recently started meditation and Dharma classes in our town, and were constantly having to swap shifts to attend the classes. The management of the residential rehabilitation centre where we worked was not helpful and we were forced to rely on the co-operation of our fellow workers.

We persuaded our bank manager that window cleaning was a safe bet, borrowed a few hundred pounds, and purchased a part time 'round' (in the north of England, window cleaning is bought and sold as a going business). Initially we worked at window cleaning, did a shift at work, and would then lead a class, all in one day!

We began work in January, which caused some problem—Heather complaining that no matter how hard she rubbed, the window was not getting clean. We finally realized that the water was freezing on the windows. But it was an exciting time. We had got a grip on our own destiny.

By June Heather had quit work, and in July I followed, mainly because we had borrowed some money from two Friends at the Centre to buy more work. Another, unemployed, Friend volunteered to work with us to help repay our debts. Now we were three. Ahead lay a very hard struggle to make ends meet; indeed much of the time we did not, and we found ourselves sliding into debt.

That autumn, another local Friend and Ray Bromiley from Manchester indicated that they would like to come and work with us. For a while it seemed that we had insufficient capital to make this possible, but a tip-off about the Lancashire Co-operative Development Agency resulted in a grant

from European funds of £9,000. This enabled us to employ everybody, pay off debts, and proceed full steam.

Our daily routine went roughly as follows: start work at 10 a.m, lunch from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m, and finish work at 4.30 or 5.00 p.m. Initially we reported-in daily but this soon became weekly. We nevertheless organized set times for washing our equipment so that we could at least spend a few minutes together every hour or so. This was important as we did not see much of each other whilst working. At such times it was easy to get out of touch with the others and feel resentful that someone might not be pulling their weight.

One of the merits of window cleaning is that it is a simple business to run. I took responsibility for the administration—wages and suchlike, Pete was responsible for the vehicle, Satyabandhu for work materials, and Ray for time keeping. We took responsibility for the quality of our work in turns, but this was not always satisfactory because sometimes the person responsible for guarding against streaks on the glass was the one leaving them.

A window cleaner is part of the local community, and we would often find ourselves providing the only human contact that some of the elderly would have during the day. We never said we were Buddhists, but occasionally an article about the our Centre would appear in the local paper and a customer would recognize us. The response was never negative. At its best, our contact with customers was good, but there were the inevitable complaints. At such times we had to accept things with good grace even if we were not at fault. Patience was needed when you got to the end of a day, perched on one toe at the top of a ladder, and a customer wanted you to come down to look at another

window.

Although things had worked out with the grant we still had problems—mostly of our own making. But one of them was definitely not our fault. One evening, a gale blew the side of a house onto our car while Heather was driving it. Fortunately, she was not seriously hurt, but the car was totally ruined; the whole affair is still in the hands of solicitors and will probably take years to resolve!

The problems of our own making were caused by the workers. We kept going on retreat! This was not unreasonable: we were, after all, trying to practise Right Livelihood. But Heather went to live at Taraloka for three months—and would go on to attend the whole of the 1988 Women's Ordination Course. Ray and Satyabandhu went on Ordination request retreats—with Satyabandhu going on to become ordained at Guhyaloka. I had Study Leaders' retreats and Chairmen's meetings to attend. Very often there were only two workers in the business, and occasionally only one. It is just not possible to draw four wages from the work of one or two people. Added to this was our tendency to sit down and sort things out if there were any problems in communication between us. This might have been very good from one point of view, but it was not good for the business. In retrospect I would say that we gave too much weight to the 'subjective needs' of the workers and did not worry enough about the needs of the business.

The original plan for the business had been to buy domestic window cleaning rounds, which we did, and then to canvass for commercial window cleaning contracts, which we did not do. This was partly due to our inexperience in quoting for commercial work, but mostly it was due to the wider situation. In

response to an appeal from Windhorse Trading we decided that it would be better if Ray were to go and work for them. This he did—and very successfully too.

So that is the current situation: Satyabandhu, Heather, and myself are just doing enough domestic window cleaning work to support ourselves. Satyabandhu is planning to leave some time next year.

How to sum up? Our business grew into a Right Livelihood venture almost by accident. Yet it has fulfilled the needs of its workers—one was ordained, one attended an ordination course, and all have been financially supported. But there are limitations. The business is never going to make a lot of money unless we move into the commercial field. The work is physically exhausting which does not make it suitable for everyone.

Even so, we have learned a lot about working with people and about business acumen. There are now several more people around our centre who are interested in working in a Right Livelihood business, but who are not interested in window cleaning. We are presently investigating the possibility of a new business. I

feel confident that the experience gained from our window cleaning business will be 'transferred' to a new business.

A number of hurdles must be negotiated in the process of establishing a successful business. Some have been mentioned here: shortage of capital, the balance between retreats and work time, and so on. Others include staff shortage, the difficulty of working co-operatively without coercion of any sort, developing faith in one's own and other people's abilities, and having the courage to do it. It is far easier to become skilled in some area, such as being a therapist, and then simply depending on yourself, than it is to trust in the successful outcome of a collectively run Right Livelihood business.

Team-based Right Livelihood businesses are an essential aspect of the FWBO's activity. In time they will give us a secure economic base, and will allow people who do not have the opportunity to live in communities to experience sangha as a living principle. They will begin to transform society. Here, in Lancashire, we have at least begun to take our first steps.



A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

Kulananda, founder of Windhorse Trading, ventures a peep into the future of Right Livelihood in the West.

Future-gazing is a risky occupation, and it is with something of a cautious eye that I hazard this hazy peep into the uncertain future of Right Livelihood and tomorrow's FWBO.

There will always be areas of work which can be characterized as being 'inside' the Movement, and areas of work which will be 'outside' the Movement. What proportion of Friends will be working outside and what proportion inside the Movement it is impossible to say, but certainly very many people associated with the FWBO will need to be occupied in Right Livelihood 'outside' the Movement.

In a world where jobs and resources tend to be ever more fiercely competed for, it becomes ever less easy to expect people to 'drop out' from secure situations, to give up their toe-holds on the ladder of material security. In Britain, as elsewhere in the modern world, the era of easy state welfare benefits seems to be drawing to a close and a major shift is taking place in many people's attitudes to the issue of work and wages. It is certainly no longer as fashionable to depart from the mainstream of social and economic life as it was when many of our current Right Livelihood enterprises were first established. For many it is perhaps not even wise—those with family and other commitments will have to think long and hard before throwing their lot in with an enterprise which has not yet proved its economic viability.

Thus the future looks like being a more competitive place where Buddhist businesses will be harder to initiate, and although many more Right Livelihood enterprises will be established within the FWBO context, and many of these will doubtlessly thrive, Friends and Order Members will also have to give thought to getting work outside the Movement.

This will not be a bad thing. The world needs Buddhists. Friends and Order Members working outside the Movement will help to provide links between the Movement and the world.

Buddhists working in the world will be able to set an example of kindness and consideration, mindfulness, liveliness, and ethical conduct in situations which appear to be growing increasingly devoid of these characteristics. Friends and Order Members working outside the FWBO could provide an example of the benefits of the Dharma to those who would not otherwise have heard about it, and will doubtless attract many people to the Movement who would not otherwise have come upon it.

Besides this, Friends and Order Members working in the world will be in a position to help support the Movement financially. People in work increasingly command very high levels of pay. We

can anticipate a future where the difference between what one actually needs to live a healthy and dignified human life and the average level of pay is going to be far greater even than it already is in the West today. This difference represents a surplus which could be used to great effect by the FWBO of the future.

Working in the world will be a very effective practice for those Friends and Order Members who engage in it in the right spirit. They will be continually challenged to maintain a balanced approach to their work, to treat others with kindness and consideration, to retain their mindfulness in times of stress, to keep in touch with their own vision of the possibilities of human transformation, and to maintain their own ethical standards regardless of the standards of those around them.

At the same time, many Friends and Order Members will take up the challenge of establishing Right Livelihood enterprises within the context of the FWBO itself. Here we are likely to see a far wider range of enterprises than are currently found.

The world is in a very parlous state. Not only are human social and political relationships producing dangerous conflicts in many quarters, but the environment is under attack as never before. Hopefully, the FWBO enterprises of the future will begin to tackle some of these global issues at our own micro level.

We could begin to play a far larger part in designing and manufacturing goods which do not harm people, animals, or the environment. We have already made a start in this with the wholefood shops which exist within several FWBO complexes and to some extent with Windhorse Trading, which tries to find 'vegetarian' alternatives to leather products such as wallets and brief-cases. Hopefully, this tendency will extend to include clothing and other necessary items. Perhaps we can look forward to the day when an FWBO business sets about marketing adequate vegetarian alternatives to leather footwear, for example, and to the day when we can buy our clothing from an FWBO shop confident that we have not involved ourselves in the iniquities of sweated labour.

The issue of consumerism and waste will be addressed as we establish enterprises which recycle items which had previously been wasted, and as we start to play our part in the arena of appropriate technology. There will be Buddhist bicycle shops and Buddhist garages helping people meet their needs for transport in a way which is least environmentally damaging, and keeping older machines going rather than scrapping them. FWBO building teams

will arise with a reputation for quality craftsmanship and aesthetic sensitivity.

Thus it should be possible to meet our needs for clothing, furniture, transport, and housing within the context of the economy of the Movement, and we will be confident that the products we are buying have not caused any undue harm.

Order Members and Friends with professional skills will also join together to form firms of solicitors and accountants which match the needs of people to the needs of 'the system', never allowing people to become mere statistics. Buddhist doctors, dentists, acupuncturists, homoeopaths, osteopaths, and others will come together to provide a more holistic and wide-ranging form of healthcare, drawing on techniques from many different traditions.

Many Order Members and Friends are currently developing skills in the area of human communication, psychotherapy, counselling, and stress management. Many people will find their livelihood in these areas and perhaps they too might come together to form consultancies of various sorts, basing their approach upon Dharma principles.

Order Members and Friends with an interest in social work will also come together for the sake of helping those less able than themselves, and our own charitable trusts will hopefully be able to raise the money to allow such people to engage in social work as a means of practice and livelihood.

Hopefully too there will be Buddhist schools where children are treated with respect and kindness. There will be Buddhist theatre based on positive values and, no doubt, Buddhist musicians and other artists.

Surplus finance from these and other enterprises will be donated to the FWBO's public centres to underwrite their programmes of meditation instruction and Dharma practice. People will be supported to go on retreat, deepening their meditation practice or furthering their Dharma study. In time we will be able to support far more Dharma teachers, while older Order Members, the elders of the Movement, will be maintained so that they are in a position to pass on their wisdom and experience.

We can therefore see, sometime in the future, a movement which is economically independent and strong, a 'new society' which, although in the world, is not a part of it—yet interacts with the world in a truly creative manner. That movement could become a blazing beacon of higher values and a true exemplar of the value of the Buddha's teachings for all people and all times.

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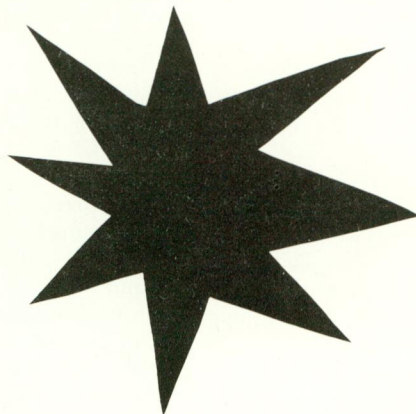
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READ ALL ABOUT US

Buddhism for Today
(new edition)

by Dharmachari Subhuti
Published by Windhorse
pp. 234, Paperback
price £6.25

For a member of the Western Buddhist Order to be reviewing (or rather, re-reviewing) Subhuti's *Buddhism for Today* in the pages of *Golden Drum* may strike some readers as suspect. After all, how impartial is a member of the WBO likely to be when it comes to reviewing a book about the FWBO itself? And especially *this* book. For, as the back cover blurb of this expanded edition tantalizingly states, '*Buddhism for Today* has proved a popular work which has excited much interest—and even controversy'.

The flurry of controversy which the first edition stirred up five years ago, and which Subhuti's 'reply' in *An Old Net for New Monsters* two years later further fuelled, perhaps only highlights the fact that the FWBO itself is a rather controversial movement—at least as far as certain other Buddhists are concerned.

But to answer my earlier question before I proceed: I make no pretence of impartiality at all. Partiality and critical objectivity are by no means necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, Subhuti himself demonstrates this clearly enough. While proving himself a vigorous, even passionate, exponent of the FWBO and WBO, he does not shy away from, for example, pointing out various faults, failures, and misdirections which have arisen in the twenty-one years that the Movement has existed. In this respect, *Buddhism for Today* reads as a convincing and realistic account.

The book falls into two principal sections. Parts I and II, taken together, amount to a straightforward and stimulating introduction to Buddhism: its premises, history, and expression in everyday life, as taught and practised in the FWBO. A passage from the Introduction succinctly

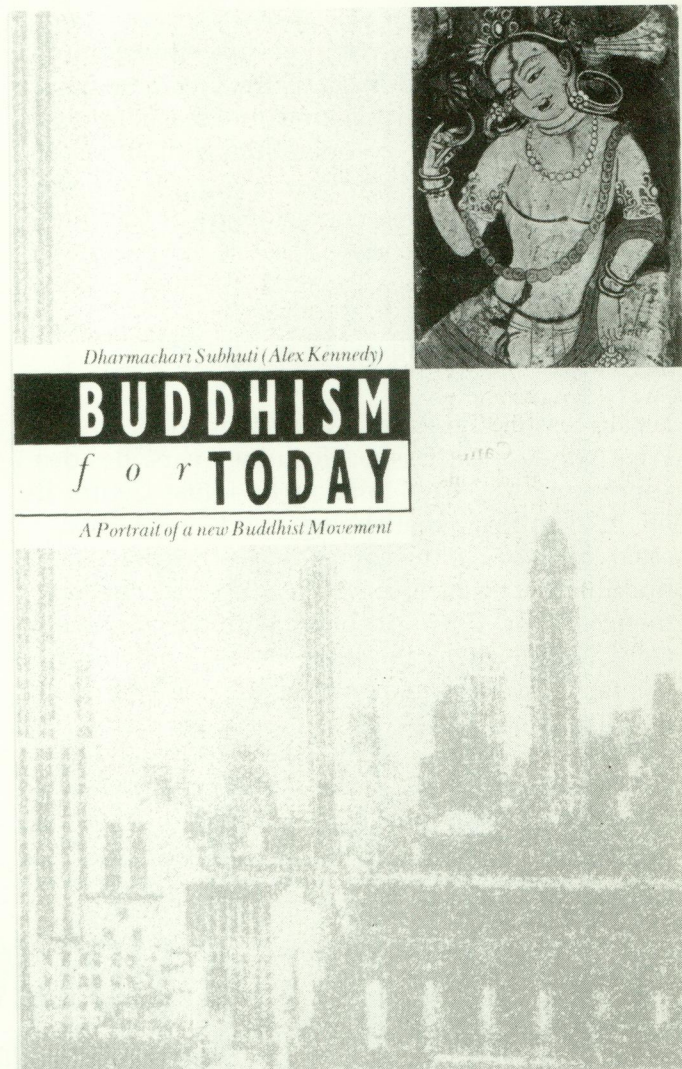
expresses the basis of the 'FWBO approach': 'For Buddhism to have any relevance in our day it must be lived in full awareness of the specific environment which surrounds it and which it must try to transform.'

Subhuti's exposition shows the clarity and rigour with which this criterion has been applied in the FWBO, starting with Sangharakshita's re-expression of traditional Buddhist teachings in more 'Western' terms (e.g. the 'Higher Evolution of the Individual' and the distinction between the 'individual' and the 'group'), and carrying on into the areas of ethics, meditation, devotion, spiritual friendship, and so forth.

The bulk of part III is an introduction to the 'institutions' of the Movement, and the principles upon which they operate: the Order, the 'mitra system', public centres, residential communities, and Right Livelihood businesses. The final chapter is a much-needed 'update' on developments that have taken place since the first edition was published (although at some point a more thorough revision is going to be necessary, as there are by now, inevitably, a number of minor inaccuracies in the main body of the text).

Chapter 17, 'The New Society and the Old Society', was the focus of much of the controversy when *Buddhism for Today* first appeared, mainly on account of Subhuti's critique of Christianity and of the nuclear family. For me, however, this chapter sums up one of the most stimulating and appealing aspects of Subhuti's approach: his complete unwillingness to pull punches! For example, of 'romantic love', he writes 'at best it serves a biological function, at worst it creates an égoïsme à deux, a relationship of mutual neurotic dependence.' (p. 86)

Subhuti's criticisms of Christianity, too, are quite harsh. These also raised the hackles of some reviewers, but it is important to remember



that *Buddhism for Today* is an exposition of Buddhism for Westerners. For many Western Buddhists, coming to terms with the fact that aspects of their Christian conditioning are a hindrance is actually part of their practice of Buddhism. Points made as strongly and clearly as Subhuti makes these (and there are many more throughout the book) cannot but provoke a strong response from the reader. Whether one agrees or disagrees with him, he demands self-examination, and clarity of thought to equal his own.

One point which I was not particularly happy with in *Buddhism for Today* was the invariable use of the pronoun 'he' to connote 'he and she'. It is true that this is technically the correct usage; it is also true that there is no simple—or elegant—way round it, but the fact remains that many women readers these days—and especially five years on—feel

subtly (or not so subtly) excluded by this kind of language. This is clearly far from Subhuti's intention, but nevertheless it is a matter which, I believe, requires careful consideration.

No doubt readers will continue to find fuel for controversy in *Buddhism for Today*, as in the FWBO generally. But, then, controversy has always been as integral an element of the Buddhist tradition as has tolerance. If there were no longer any controversy, one would fear that the Dharma was at last dead. The FWBO/WBO is both one of the most recent, and one of the most radical ('radically traditional'), manifestations of Buddhism. *Buddhism for Today* represents a stimulating introduction both to Buddhism in Western perspective, and to the radical ongoing experiment which is the WBO and the FWBO.

Tejananda

ENGAGING WITH THE WORLD

The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism

Edited by Fred Eppsteiner
Published by Parallax
pp. 219, Paperback
price £9.95

The *Path of Compassion* comprises twenty-three articles, varying in length from two to twenty-five pages, and written by authors from the Tibetan, Zen, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Theravada traditions, as well as one or two Western scholars and yet others who don't fit neatly into any particular Buddhist tradition. The common thread which links these writers is their connection with the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, an umbrella organization acting 'to raise peace and ecology concerns among American Buddhists and to promote projects through which the Sangha may respond to these concerns'.

The sub-title of *Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism* makes the general emphasis of the book clear. 'Socially engaged Buddhism' is 'a Buddhism which is not just in meditation halls but which pervades all our everyday lives and concerns'. To explore this, the book is divided into two sections: firstly, 'Thoughts on spiritual practice and social action' and, secondly, 'Exemplars of engaged Buddhism'.

The first group of articles deals with the theoretical implications of taking compassion into everyday life. Some writers (particularly the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Chagdud Tulku) approach this mainly in terms of inner transformation, in terms of the necessity to cultivate peace and kindness within, before (and while) taking it out to a wider world.

The other articles in this section seem to be largely concerned with justifying the acceptability, within the Buddhist tradition, of engaging in acts of compassion on a material and social level. They appear to be addressing themselves to refuting the opinion (never directly stated)

that Buddhist practice consists in isolating oneself as far as possible from the 'world', and that compassion, in these terms, is a rather abstract concept devoid of any involvement with humanity at large. I was surprised that they felt it necessary to argue the case for taking compassion out into everyday life, and that one contributor even felt obliged to argue that social work could be a form of Right Livelihood. It should not take much examination of *sutras*, or contact with Buddhists, to realize that compassion must find expression before it can be truly considered to be compassion. However, the fact that so many contributors felt that the case must be clearly stated suggests that this particular wrong view is widespread. It will only be fully overcome as more and more people come into contact with Buddhists who are taking their Buddhism out into their everyday lives in a way which touches those around them.

The second group of articles makes stimulating reading for anyone interested in the expression of Buddhist insights in a wider context. For me, the high points were two contributions from Robert Thurman, a scholar who has already delighted us with his translation of the *Vimalakirti-Nirdesha*. His first article deals with the manner in which the Emperor Ashoka attempted to rule his kingdom after his conversion to the Dharma. Ashoka's projects included the encouragement of non-violence (including vegetarianism, which apparently proved no easy practice for the Emperor himself), a strong emphasis on education, building rest-houses and hospices for the poor and sick, importing doctors and medicines, investigating complaints of judicial harshness, decentralization of government to make the rulers more accessible to those ruled, and many others. It is salutary to reflect that many of these ideas are still only partially implemented 2,200 years later. A full length study of Ashoka

and his reign is long overdue and would make fascinating reading.

The theme of government is continued by Thurman in his commentary on Nargarjuna's *Jewel Garland of Royal Counsels*, the original work being addressed to King Udayi. These two pieces bring to mind the Indian concept of the *Dharmaraja* or 'one who rules in accordance with Truth', a concept which we could very usefully import to the West.

Closer to present times there are articles on the work for peace by Buddhists in Vietnam during the war (including a moving story of self-sacrifice), on the *Sarvodaya* movement in Sri Lanka (a self-help movement inspired by Buddhist principles), on the danger of a nationalistic identification with Buddhism,

and on such diverse topics as the advisability of becoming a Member of Parliament, and how to cope with rape.

As might be imagined, a book with over twenty contributors will display a plethora of styles and opinions, which can prove rather indigestible when taken in large doses. Personally, I found it much more satisfying just to dip into the book and read one or two articles at a sitting. If I have one general fault to find, then it is in the lack of emphasis placed on the activity of spreading the Dharma as a means of expressing compassion; but perhaps that is adequately covered elsewhere. This book will be avidly read by all those who are interested in the social and political implications of their Buddhist practice.

Virachitta

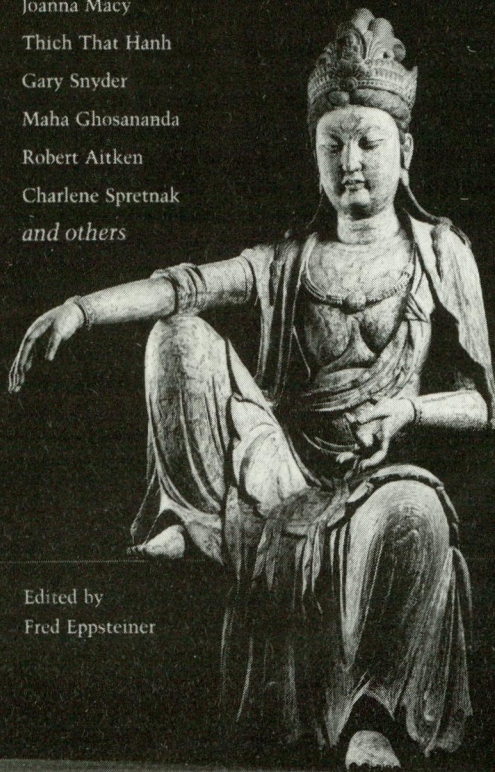
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THE PATH OF COMPASSION

Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism

Dalai Lama
Joanna Macy
Thich That Hanh
Gary Snyder
Maha Ghosananda
Robert Aitken
Charlene Spretnak
and others

Edited by
Fred Eppsteiner



POWERFUL MEDICINE

The Great Path of Awakening: A Commentary on the Mahayana Teaching of the Seven Points of Mind Training

by Jamgon Kongtrul
translated by Ken McLeod
Published by Shambhala
pp. 90, Paperback
price £7.95

This book expresses the thinking of two inspiring figures, whose approach to the Dharma has important similarities with our own in the FWBO. The first is the great Atisha (982-1054), an Indian teacher who profoundly influenced all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism. His life story is deeply inspiring. For the Dharma he was prepared to undergo the hazards of a sea voyage to Indonesia, in order to receive teaching on *Bodhichitta* from Serlingpa. He also willingly shortened his life by travelling to Tibet to spread the Dharma there.

As for the similarities of approach, Atisha was a great proponent of what we should call the 'Path of Regular Steps'. His *Bodhipathapradipa*, which presented a *lam rim* or 'graduated path' to Enlightenment, was taken up by all Tibetan schools. More than this, he put great emphasis on the importance of Going for Refuge—so much so that he was known as 'the Refuge Scholar'. He also devoted much teaching to ways of developing positive emotion. This emphasis was fostered perhaps by the visions of Tara—the Bodhisattva who embodies the quintessence of Compassion—which he had throughout his life.

It was Atisha who brought the *Lo Jong*, or 'Mind Training' tradition to Tibet. *Lo Jong* is a practical and systematic method of developing the Bodhichitta. It includes teachings on Wisdom, but its main thrust is towards developing Compassion. Its methods drive home the idea that all our sufferings are caused by cherishing and overvaluing ourselves. This self-concerned attitude is the

enemy which *Lo Jong* aims to destroy. After all, it would point out, nowadays there are three billion other human beings on this planet, and limitless other forms of life. So which is more important: all of them, or the one of you? It is the voice, deep within us, which whispers 'me!' in answer to this question, which *Lo Jong* seeks to banish.

In place of self-concern it instils compassionate care for others. It teaches ways of utilizing all situations, even sickness and death, as opportunities for developing altruism. With your dying breath, it says, you can mentally take on the sufferings of others, and share your happiness with them.

Lo Jong is strong medicine. For those still working to generate some spark of positive feeling for themselves in *metta bhavana* (the meditation on universal loving-kindness) the system may be, for the time being, rather too much to take on. Yet the precepts of *Lo Jong* are mostly very down to earth, and would serve as useful ways of checking how far you are taking *metta* into your everyday life.

This translation is a commentary on the *Seven Point Mind Training* by Geshe Chekawa (1102-76). Though attributed to him, the text obviously owes a great deal to Atisha. The commentary is by Jamgon Kongtrul (1813-99), a Kagyu teacher, and the second figure with whom we share similarities of approach.

Jamgon Kongtrul was one of the founders of the *Rime* movement. *Rime* means 'no boundaries'. The lamas who started the movement tried to overcome sectarian differences between schools of Tibetan Buddhism by swapping initiations and sharing lineages. **One of Sangharakshita's teachers**, Jamyang Khentse Chokyi Lodro, was an important figure in this movement. You could even say that the FWBO represents a further expansion of the *Rime* vision. Sangharakshita studied

with teachers of all three *yanas*, and has created a movement which draws freely not just upon all Tibetan schools but on the whole of Buddhism. This is a logical continuation of the *Rime* principle.

There are already commentaries on Geshe Chekawa's text available in English, by the late Geshe Rabten (*Advice From A Spiritual Friend*, Wisdom Publications, 1984) and the first Dalai Lama (*Bridging the Sutras and Tantras*, Snow Lion, 1984). For those who want to study the *Lo Jong* system in depth, it is interesting to compare them all. Geshe Rabten's commentary is rather more expansive and analytical; Jamgon Kongtrul's is terse and pithy. However, there is a great deal of overlap between the three. In some sections the lamas make virtually identical points.

This brings me to a more general issue. Reading the steady flow of new books on Tibetan Buddhism by lamas of all schools, one is struck by how many of them cover the same ground. Trawling through shoals of books dealing with *Lam Rim* and the Four Foundations, one finds differences of style and detail, but it is hard to net any substantially fresh idea, approach, or application.

In a way, of course, there cannot be too many books on the basic Dharma, and originality has never been valued by Buddhist tradition as an end in itself. Doubtless, too, Western students of Tibetan lamas appreciate having books by their own teachers. Nonetheless, one is left with a sense of frustration. To translate a teaching from Tibetan, edit, and publish it requires a major expenditure of time and energy. Whilst being grateful for what is being done, one could wish to see more of this effort going into producing original material—especially to making available sutras lost in Sanskrit and preserved in Tibetan.

Vessantara

ALSO RECEIVED:

Leah—A Story of Meditation and Healing

by Stuart Perrin
Wisdom

Rudolf Steiner—Essential Readings

selected and edited by Richard Seddon
Crucible

Emanuel Swedenborg—Essential Readings

selected and introduced by Michael Stanley
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The Tibetan Dhammapada—Sayings of the Buddha

translated and introduced by Gareth Sparham
Wisdom

What is Enlightenment?—Exploring the Goal of the Spiritual Path

edited by John White
Aquarian

New from Windhorse Publications

AMBEDKAR AND BUDDHISM

by Sangharakshita

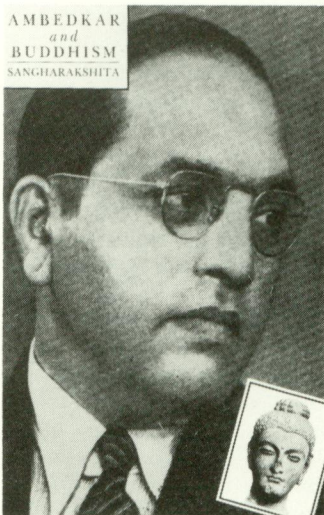
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HUNGRY FOR CHANGE?



WFB CONFERENCE IN LOS ANGELES



This November, the Hsi Lai Temple with its commanding view of the San Bernadino Valley and Los Angeles was the venue for the first meeting of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB) and the World Fellowship of Buddhist Youth (WFBY) to be held outside Asia.

The conferences were hosted by the Ven. Master Hsing Yun, the founder of a number of temples and social projects in Taiwan, including the famous Fo Kuang Shan Temple, his headquarters. Hsi Lai Temple is just about complete—after six years of legal negotiations, two years of construction, and an expenditure of almost \$26 million. The structure itself was built to a traditional Chinese design, incorporating a Buddha hall, meditation room, library, residential and administrative quarters, a lecture theatre, conference room, and exhibition hall. The

building project was managed by a small team of nuns.

The week-long programme consisted of one day for the opening ceremonies, two days of plenary sessions and meetings of standing committees, a day long symposium consisting of three presentations by the Ven. Hsing Yun, Dr Anand Guruge, and Dr Lewis Lancaster, and a day long tour of local Buddhist centres.

The conference was attended by Buddhists from most east Asian countries, from the Indian sub-continent, and from the USSR and Mongolia. There were a few Europeans and a dozen or so Caucasian Americans. Lokamitra, Buddhapalita, and I attended on behalf of the FWBO.

The plenary sessions left me feeling rather dissatisfied. The business of these meetings was to propose constitutional amendments, to elect officers, and pass resolutions. The constitutional changes occupied the delegates for half the first day. The election of officers took an entire morning. The resolutions, prepared by the standing committees, were presented and mostly passed. They expressed fine sentiments, but one wonders how much effect

they can have considering the restrictions placed upon the WFB by severe financial limitations and a complex array of political implications.

The symposium, however, provided an occasion to experience a Dharmic contact with others present. I hope that the introduction to this symposium indicated a movement to include more papers and discussion in the WFB/WFBY meetings of the future.

Most of the men and women present clearly felt strongly about Buddhism and had devoted their lives to the practice and propagation of the Dharma. I was particularly impressed by the mindfulness of many of the Asian Buddhists, and enjoyed the atmosphere of generosity. But this form of meeting could not really provide an effective means of communication between the participants. A seven day symposium would have been far more useful.

The main purpose of the conference, and of the organization itself, seems to be to support the organization. There needs to be a much clearer purpose for the organization over and above its own administration and survival. Even the conference's theme, 'Unity for World Peace',

seemed a little less than galvanizing. World Peace is universally acclaimed—even among warmongers. As Buddhists we are unified by our Refuge in the Three Jewels. It is too easy to give a few talks on the subject of peace, find agreement, and then get on with eating and politicking. Too much concern with internal matters, passing of well-meant resolutions, and choice of the next host, over and above matters relevant to the Dharma, will keep the WFB/WFBY from ever becoming a force for the good of all.

On the last full day of the conference we were treated to a stimulating tour of the Buddhist centres of Los Angeles, and on the morning of the final day we were joined by several thousand people for the official opening of Hsi Lai Temple. This involved a colourful and well choreographed cultural programme, and offerings to the Three Jewels—represented by Buddha relics, piles of sutras, and about a hundred monks and nuns—by women dressed in Chinese, Indian, and Korean costumes. It was an uplifting end to the week's activities.

Manjuvajra

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AN ETHICAL BANK

How does the ethically conscious individual approach the question of savings and investments?

When using conventional banks and investment institutions, few investors have any idea how their money is being used. In the era of the multi-national company there is every likelihood that invested funds are deployed in ways with which a Buddhist would not be happy. The modern world is not overly concerned with making its business decisions on non-violent, ecologically sound principles. It is thus almost impossible for small investors to find ways of consciously directing their savings towards projects for which they may feel active sympathy. In the future Buddhists everywhere

will have to address the issue of ethical banking.

We may like to take as our model Mercury Provident plc, which happily admits to being 'Britain's smallest bank'. Founded in 1974, its purpose is to put into practice some of Rudolf Steiner's ideas regarding finance and social organization.

The concept around which Mercury operates is that of enabling people to deal with their money consciously, so that depositors are encouraged to influence the way in which their deposits are applied. A regular magazine introduces projects that Mercury has agreed to support, and potential investors are invited to support specific projects and to specify the rate of return they would like.

Mercury pays its depositors

interest up to an agreed maximum, adds on a small percentage to cover its own expenses, and lends at very favourable rates to those projects it agrees to support. If a depositor is particularly keen to support a specific project and wants to take less than the maximum rate of interest offered by Mercury, the difference is passed on to the recipient project.

In its early years, Mercury concentrated on projects within the Steiner movement: schools, curative homes, businesses. More recently they have branched out widely, supporting workers' co-operatives, bookshops and wholefood stores, a cancer rehabilitation research centre, and many other ethically based concerns. They have recently made a substantial loan to

Windhorse Trading, an FWBO business, enabling them to purchase premises for two communities and the Cambridge Buddhist Centre. All these loans are on far more favourable terms than could be obtained from a mainstream bank.

At a time when the unbridled free market is so widely in vogue, it is highly encouraging to know that there is an alternative, and we offer our congratulations to Mercury for the work they are doing.

If anyone would like to know more about Mercury Provident, their address is Orlingbury House, Lewes Road, Forest Row, Sussex, RH18 5AA, England.

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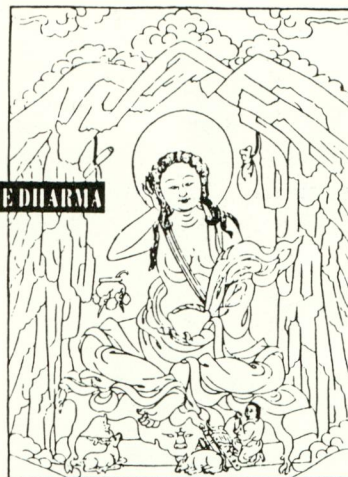
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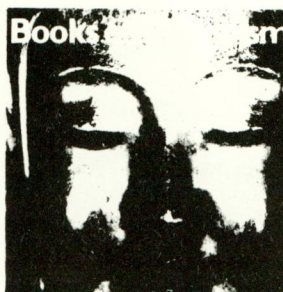


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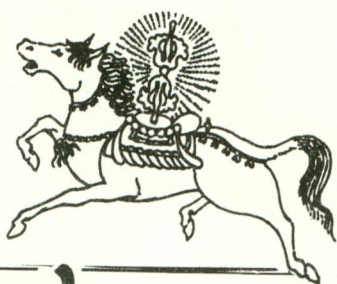


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Part of the audience in Worli

SANGHARAKSHITA DIARY



The Englishman stepped off the Indian train to a rousing welcome. 'Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita' yelled the waiting crowd in unison, as women in white saris performed a quick puja before him, and showered him with flowers.

As Sangharakshita emerged from the station into the bright sunlight outside, hundreds of people waved Buddhist flags and chanted his name. A woman ran up, gracefully swung a thick white garland of flowers around his neck, and disappeared again. Someone nearly lost his balance in the surging crowd, but fortunately scrambled to his feet unhurt. The welcome was certainly robust! And somewhere in the middle of it all a camera crew was busy filming the extraordinary scene for British television.

Wherever Sangharakshita went he was greeted with similar enthusiasm and vigour by his followers. To the ex-Untouchable Buddhists of

India, Sangharakshita has the makings of a legend—indeed he has already become one, as I saw when I accompanied him. Soon the British public will be able to see this colourful story too, when the hour long documentary *In the Footsteps of Ambedkar* is broadcast on Channel 4 this January.

Sangharakshita is, of course, no stranger to India. His first visit was over forty years ago, as related in his memoirs, *The Thousand Petalled Lotus*. Interestingly, this latest visit and TV programme both arose from this same book, recently reprinted. A review copy arrived on the desk of producer Bob Mullen—who in time became interested enough in Sangharakshita to make two TV documentaries about him, taking us on location to India for the second one. He was fascinated that an Englishman could be honoured as a spiritual leader in India—it usually being the other way round. Also, Bob found that

As readers of Sangharakshita's *Ambedkar and Buddhism* and Nagabodhi's *Jai Bhim!* will know, Sangharakshita, whom Ambedkar consulted about Buddhism and conversion, helped the movement to rally at this point. For much of the next ten years he worked closely with the ex-Untouchables. He then returned to Britain and in 1967 founded the FWBO. Later, some of his Western disciples moved to India to continue his work among the ex-Untouchables. For a while there was little to show materially for their hard work but, eventually, the ambitious programme bore fruit, aided by money raised in Britain. Today a wide span of activities can be seen, ranging from kindergartens, a clinic, school hostels, and numerous educational programmes, to things more recognizably Buddhist, such as public centres, retreats, Dharma talks and study groups, and meditation classes. Hopefully the film will show much of these, and serve to emphasize the strong connection between these on-going activities and Ambedkar's work.

During the three-week visit, Sangharakshita and the film crew visited western and central India. In addition to being interviewed extensively for the documentary, Sangharakshita also gave four major public talks, performed some ordinations, and met many hundreds of his followers personally.

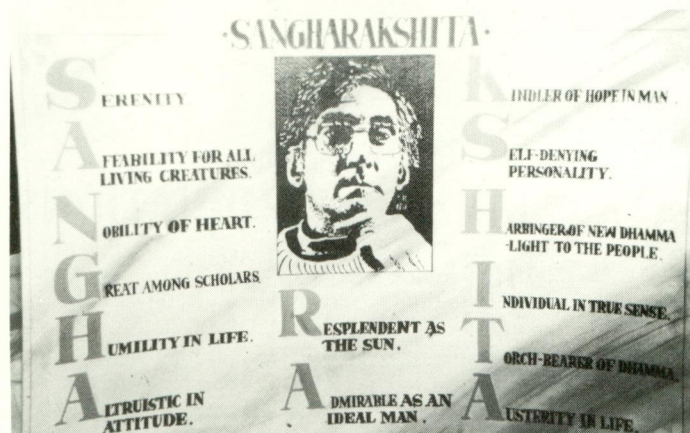
In Bombay, he spoke to an audience of ten thousand at Worli, attended a formal welcome at Siddhartha College, founded by Dr Ambedkar, and visited Ambedkar's memorial stupa at Chowpatty Beach. He then went on to Poona where he encountered the vigorous reception described above. While in Poona, he led a foundation ceremony for the Mahavihara Dhamma Centre, which will be built by TBMSG at Dapodi. He then spent several days on ordination retreat in the hills at Bhaja. This culminated in the ordination of nine men, which

several thousand people came to witness. On his last day back in Poona he was visited by Mrs Ambedkar, who had come specially from Bombay to see him. Flying on to Aurangabad, he gave a talk that evening at a foundation ceremony for the new TBMSG hostel building. He shared the stage with an unusual poster of fourteen Buddhist qualities, the initial letters of which formed his name: S-erenity, A-ffability . . . and so on: an example of the ingenuity and devotion of at least one follower, though the H must have been a challenge!

Sangharakshita had the gift of being able to explain things to the camera in a simple and precise way, yet being completely unaffected by the surrounding clamour of the filming. As the title of the film suggests, the figure of Dr Ambedkar is fundamental in any account of Sangharakshita's Indian connections. Right at the end of his life of struggle, devoted to freeing his people from the inequalities of the Hindu caste system, Ambedkar chose Buddhism as the best means for their transformation. However, his movement suffered an immense setback when he died at a very early and crucial stage in its formation.

His final stop was Wardha, where he opened a new TBMSG hostel block and then gave what was the last public talk on this visit to India. It was over twenty years since he had last been to central India, but many still remembered him from earlier occasions when he had given talks there. For example, the local man who provided the lighting and platform was delighted to hear who the speaker was, having done the same thing for Sangharakshita in the past. Over ten thousand people came to hear Sangharakshita. There were many murmurs of agreement when he criticized those in the region who were hindering Ambedkar's work by engaging in petty political quarrels, rather than following the spiritual principles of

An inventive placard at Sangharakshita's talk



Buddhism. There was much applause, though, when he said that the Buddhists of Wardha were among the most harmonious in that region. The next day, Sangharakshita and I flew out on our way back to Britain.

Back at Padmaloka again, the mealtime conversation often revolved about the recent trip. On one occasion Sangharakshita half-jokingly pictured himself still doing such visits to India in his eighties, white haired and leaning on a stick. He added, almost as an afterthought, that

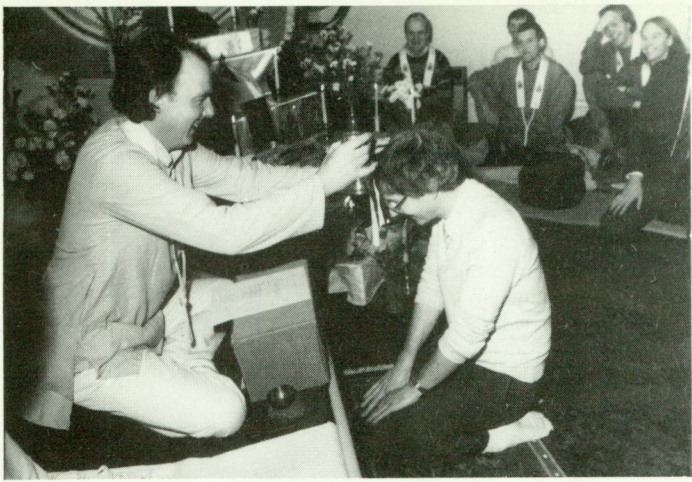
due to the Indian veneration of old age he would probably be treated with even greater respect then!

The final transmission date for the second documentary about Sangharakshita, filmed at Padmaloka, has yet to be finalized. However we have been assured that it will almost definitely be shown during the first week of March. The film has been made on behalf of Anglia Television, but will be networked throughout the British ITV circuit.

Dharmadhara



With Mrs Ambedkar



Subhuti officiates at the public ordination ceremony

EXTRAORDINARY ORDINATIONS

On 2 January, six men were ordained as members of the Western Buddhist Order at Padmaloka. These ordinations were especially significant, firstly because they were the first in the West not to be conducted by Sangharakshita, and secondly because none of the men involved were able to attend the more customary three-month ordination course, due to professional and/or family commitments.

The public ordination ceremony for the six new Order members—which was witnessed by 130 people—was conducted by Subhuti. Private ordinations were shared between Subhuti and Suvajra. The ceremonies were held in the course of a resoundingly successful Winter Retreat at Padmaloka, in which seventy-five men took part.

The six men ordained were Mike McGhee (now called Vipassi), a philosophy lecturer at Liverpool University, Michael Keogh (now Indrabhuti), a teacher from Manchester, Bill Hard (Achulavajra), who trains National Health Service staff in Bristol, Chris Pye

(Achulabodhi), who runs his own woodturning business in Bristol, David Vinten (Vidyananda), a teacher who runs the Harlow group, and Paul Crummey (Amaraketu), who until recently helped run the Ipswich group, and now works at Windhorse Trading in Cambridge.

Four of these men have families, and all would have found it very difficult to attend the three-month ordination course, now held at the FWBO's remote retreat centre in Spain, and formerly in a disused monastery in Tuscany. Until recently this retreat—itsself the culmination of a long period of preparation—was seen as an almost essential requirement for men seeking ordination. In the eight years since these retreats were introduced only two men, in the West, have been ordained without attending. The ordination of these six men at one time therefore represents a significant change to past practice—a change which will give much encouragement to other men who genuinely cannot attend a lengthy ordination course.

SUNSHINE AND SOLITUDE

Guhyaloka, our retreat centre in the Sierra Altana range of mountains in southern Spain, is offering two self-catering huts for men who would like to undertake solitary retreats.

If this idea appeals to you, please send a booking request to the Secretary, Guhyaloka, CAM, Sella (Alicante), Spain.

Please wait for a *booking confirmation* and then send your payment (rates: £7.00 per night) to the Order Office at Padmaloka. Cheques are to be

made payable to FWBO Surlingham, and a note should be included with the cheque explaining that it is payment for a retreat at Guhyaloka.

Please note that a letter can take up to two weeks to reach Guhyaloka by the normal postal system. Letters sent by Express Post can take just a few days. Directions for getting to the Centre will be sent along with the booking confirmation.

LBC CELEBRATES ITS FIRST TEN YEARS

In the summer of 1974, the large, fire-damaged Victorian property standing on the corner of Roman Road and Globe Road in London's Bethnal Green was a derelict fire station. It took a sizeable team of volunteers three-and-a-half years, and a great deal of money, to turn it into Sukhavati Community and a functioning 'London Buddhist Centre'. At the end of November 1988, reports Mary Healy, a week of celebration and commemoration was held at the LBC to mark the occasion of the tenth anniversary of its opening.

In a symposium of three talks, Dhammadinna, who was a key figure in the original fundraising effort, Atula, who led the team of builders, and Prakasha, who took over the Centre's chairmanship from Subhuti, each gave a personal and often moving account of the efforts—and hardships—that were involved in establishing the Centre.

Also included in the programme of events were an Open Evening and an Open Day, which gave people an opportunity to see the Centre. For the Open Day a special effort was made to invite local residents and traders. On this occasion a local government official unveiled a plaque on the Centre's wall. This plaque had been installed as part of a comprehensive grant-aided refurbishment of the building's

entire exterior. Apart from giving the brickwork a thorough scrub down, the funds also provided for an elegant Victorian lamp which now hangs over Roman Road, and a line of lettering that extends across the building's front unambiguously proclaiming the existence of 'The London Buddhist Centre'.

For those closely involved with the LBC mandala a special mandala party was held. This was attended by more than a hundred community dwellers, Centre teachers, administrators, and co-op workers. The evening's master of ceremonies was Nagabodhi—who lived and worked in and around the LBC for seven of its first ten years. The entertainment included music, mime, and the showing of some archive film of early FWBO retreats and the building of the LBC.

The week culminated with Sangha Day on Sunday 27 November. Here, the special guest was Subhuti, the Centre's founding chairman, who gave a talk about his own experience of, and involvement with, the Centre.

It was a week which evoked much emotion—and many memories of times that had not always been easy. But, above all, it was a week of joyous celebration which left everyone with an increased sense of appreciation for the existence of their Centre.



Dhammarati with a visiting councillor at the London Buddhist Centre

DOCTORS ON RETREAT

Osea Island, off the Essex coast, is the ideal retreat venue for those who might be distracted by thoughts of the life they are temporarily leaving behind: accessible only by a causeway at low tide, the island provides a true sense of retreat. We were a small group occupying a holiday cottage which had all we needed, including enough space for study and meditation over the weekend.

It was something of a special occasion: the FWBO Doctors' Group has been meeting for some two years, and during that time has met for day events once every couple of months. This was the first occasion on which we had the opportunity to spend time together in a context of more intensive Dharma practice. Over the two years the pattern of meetings has been much the same as described in my report to *Golden Drum* in April '87: meditation, reporting-in, and business relating to the group, followed by a special topic, sometimes with an invited speaker. Finally we conclude with a puja.

For the retreat programme there seemed to be a need to continue the reporting-in in more depth than is usually possible, and this was arranged by starting the first day's reporting-in with general matters, helping us to catch up with each other's lives.

Towards the end of the retreat was a second session, devoted more specifically to how we each see the relationship between the Dharma and our working lives. This seems to be a recurrent theme whenever we meet, and each of us has a different perspective on it. One way of looking at this relationship is in terms of the question 'Does being a Buddhist make you a better doctor?'

The facile response would be that spiritual practice and an ethical perspective automatically enhance sensitivity and the ability to communicate, both key elements of the doctor-patient relationship. Unfortunately, things may not be that simple. The Dharma is strong medicine and its effects may be quite beyond those which we envisaged when we first set foot in a Buddhist centre and decided to learn meditation. Perhaps our original motivations and aspirations come under the influence of new understanding; seeing a wider vision of human existence may make it quite difficult to continue to function under the same assumptions and preconceptions which we have all acquired.

A sort of moral discomfort is engendered by this kind of experience, a discomfort which may be difficult to resolve, at least in the short term. Under such conditions a job which

demand an extensive commitment of physical and emotional energy may start to present an impossible burden. Some physical and emotional space for reflection and reorientation is required. Such space may be afforded by a retreat, but for most of us these are all too infrequent oases. Having got over the *michchaditti* (wrong view) that creating enough time for one's own development is a sign of weakness, some doctors have gone further by taking on a part time job in general practice, or by changing their career plans away from a path likely to interfere seriously with their involvement in the Buddhist movement.

Hospital medicine is particularly problematic: the present career structure for hospital doctors in the UK is one which makes it very difficult for anyone to lead an ordinary life in society, let alone consider devoting time to individual development or to the activities of the Buddhist movement. Latterly, an appreciation is growing among the general public and in Parliament of the dangers to patients of maintaining a large number of hospital staff in a state of permanent exhaustion, with hours of work exceeding eighty per week in a large proportion of cases. It is to be hoped that this results in action to improve conditions in

the near future.

Perhaps the answer to the original question is that Buddhism in general, abstract, or partial form may have no effect, a good effect, or even a negative effect on our functioning in our working lives. There is no magic wand to be waved, rather a process of progressive understanding and harmonization of the way we work in accordance with that understanding. As individuals vary in their needs and aspirations so will their ways of bringing together conflicting demands and commitments.

In his choice of study material Ian Groves did well to point us in a different direction to the immediate cares and concerns of Buddhist medics. We studied from a book by the Vietnamese teacher Thich Nat Hanh on the subject of mindfulness. The chatty, almost naïve style of the expositions I found initially off-putting, but on going into his teachings in detail one felt his warmth and clarity of mind being revealed. It left me reminded that the Buddha taught mindfulness as a way of seeing the truth and resolving conflict. Mindfulness itself allows one to rise above the present limited way of seeing things and to recollect the real objective, too easily lost in the confusion of everyday life.

Virabhadra

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RIISING APPETITE FOR WHOLEFOODS

Friends Foods, the wholefood shop in Notting Hill Gate run by women associated with the West London Centre, reports that 1988 was its busiest year yet. During the seven years of the shop's existence, turnover has improved each year. But this year has been exceptional, with a 16% rise in takings.

At present, six women work in the shop full time, while another works part time. Later this year, however, the team will be down to four full-timers and two part-timers, as Taraloka Retreat Centre exerts its magnetic attraction on a couple of the team's longer standing members. This means vacancies in the business, so

any women looking for an opportunity to work in one of the Movement's oldest Right Livelihood ventures may now apply. . . .

The West London Centre itself has now been in its present Culver Houses premises for over three years—its longest ever stay in any one place! Bodhiruchi reports that this is beginning to pay dividends: the Centre is getting better known, and its classes are expanding. During 1989, the Centre team intend to offer more classes at venues outside the Centre, thus building a broader base for their activities.

CAMBRIDGE CENTRE OPENS

The new Cambridge Buddhist Centre was dedicated on 15 November, in a ceremony attended by thirty-five invited people, all of whom had contributed significantly to the project in terms of either time or money. The new Centre is visually very attractive, and features a particularly beautiful shrine room. This pleasing environment was created by dint of much hard work—walls and chimney breasts were removed or underpinned, staircases were modified, ceilings were replaced, floors were dug out and re-laid, and the premises were rewired, replumbed, and redecorated.

The pace of activities in

Cambridge is increasing fast. The Cambridge team now runs eight classes a week, including a relaxation and meditation class at King's College, and a course of lectures on basic Buddhism at Clare college. There are now seventeen mitras living in the city, and the Friends' sangha around the Centre is growing rapidly and is very enthusiastic.

Windhorse Trading, a Right Livelihood co-operative based in Cambridge, is considering the purchase of more property in the city to provide long-term warehouse space—possible prospects include a large funeral parlour. In an interesting initiative the co-op has linked up with the Fulbourne Mental Hospital to allow patients to do occupational therapy at Windhorse Trading.

A HOME FOR WINDHORSE PUBLICATIONS

Some readers may remember that the Editorial of our last issue left Nagabodhi high up on the Yorkshire Moors contemplating the prospect of a house-hunt in Sheffield. His hunt was successful, and on 21 December he, Shantavira, and Chris Pauling—three core members of the Windhorse Publications team—moved to a three-storey house on the city’s western side.

The property, which has been bought by Windhorse Publications with the help of a generous fifteen-year loan from a sympathetic Order member, is big enough to house a community of six or seven as well as an editorial office.

For the time being the community (to be known as Vimalakula) will be composed of those working on publishing projects and, Nagabodhi hopes, others who would like

to begin FWBO activities in Sheffield—England’s fourth biggest city. As Windhorse expands, it is possible that the entire community will eventually be dedicated to literary and publishing work.

The acquisition of a permanent base for Windhorse Publications marks a considerable breakthrough for the Movement’s developing publishing wing. Until now the team of mainly volunteer workers has been spread all over Britain, communicating by letter, phone, and an electronic mailboxing system! The creation of a definite focal point and a community comprising at least some of the charity’s key workers will doubtless lead to greater efficiency and an atmosphere more conducive to the generation of new ideas and initiatives.

CROYDON RESTRUCTURES

There are currently several vacancies in the Right Livelihood businesses associated with our centre in Croydon. On the positive side, these vacancies offer an opportunity for a number of people to join one of the Movement’s oldest, largest, and most successful enterprises. On the darker side, the departure of a number of the co-op’s members in recent months suggests that all has not been quite right.

The birth of the Rainbow Co-operative in early 1978 confirmed the transformation of Aryatara Community into a lively public centre. It would be no exaggeration to say that, since their inception, the co-op’s businesses—Hockneys and Friends Foods—have gone from strength to strength, supporting ever more people, providing the finance that supports the Croydon Buddhist Centre, the arts centre, and several Movement-wide ‘causes’, and making it possible to acquire Rivendell Retreat Centre, and a new men’s community in Clapham.

The ideal of turning team-based work—and especially the demands thrown up by very hard work at an extremely high level of excellence—into a form of spiritual practice has been pursued in Croydon perhaps more single-mindedly than anywhere else in the Movement. Inevitably, however, as a business develops to the degree to which Rainbow has developed, and as its overheads and funding commitments increase, there is always the risk that the delicate balance between work as spiritual practice, and sheer hard work, for the simple sake of getting through the day, will be jeopardized. The warning signs are perhaps predictable, manifesting in a lack of sufficient time for direct spiritual practice, the development of increasingly rigid structures of responsibility and authority, and a general bleeding of warmth and receptivity from the communication between those involved. The departure of several co-op workers amid a considerable groundswell of dissatisfaction suggests that the

Rainbow Co-op had, if only temporarily, lost its balance.

The hows, whys, whens, and whos of the matter will provide fuel for much serious thought and reflection over the coming months, not just in Croydon, but throughout the Movement in Britain. Certainly—if regrettably—it is beyond the scope of these columns to offer more than a hint of the many complex aspects of the subject. A few lines, or even pages, of text would be inadequate to convey the seriousness with which the issue must be considered. The FWBO is very young, and our experiments in the field of Right Livelihood—as sketched out in this issue of *Golden Drum*—are even younger. We have, no doubt, many mistakes still to make, and it is essential that we learn as much as we can from each of them.

Despite the dissatisfaction and departures, the businesses have kept going, with Christmas trade extremely brisk. The work is still hard, and the demands are still daunting, but the general mood is uncommonly bright as the adventure of ‘restructuring’ the Croydon situation gets under way. Clearly, that restructuring will involve a greater sharing of responsibility and more participation by the co-op’s members in the decision making process, a greater emphasis on open communication, and more time for meditation and Dharma study. Right now, Croydon is a good place to be.

DHARMACHARI CHANDA

As this issue of *Golden Drum* was going to press, we were sorry to learn of the death of Dharmachari Chanda, on 11 January, at the age of 76. Chanda was ordained in 1969, and played an important part in the history of our Croydon centre. An appreciation will appear in the next issue.



AUTUMN IN ESSEN

The FWBO's first permanent centre in Germany, in the industrial city of Essen, is now almost a year old. This autumn it conducted its third session, which was dedicated to the theme of the Bodhisattva ideal. Two highlights of the session were the Sangha Day celebrations on 27 November—attended by over forty people, including ten from Holland, and some from as far as 400 km away—and the new Centre's first lecture series, entitled 'An Introduction to Buddhism'. This was attended by a lively mix of Buddhists (from the active to the armchair), Rosicrucians, Universalists, and the curious, who asked many intelligent questions. The five lectures in the series, given by Dharmapriya and Dhammaloka, dealt with the Buddha, morality, meditation, wisdom, and the Bodhisattva Ideal, and were the first contact with the FWBO for a number of those attending.



TBMSG WARDHA – THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESS

Writing from Wardha in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, Vimalakirti reports that the most important recent event for the Wardha branch of TBMSG has been Sangharakshita's visit to the region. Although September was exceptionally wet—even by the standards of this normally rainy monsoon month—the Wardha branch was very busy with the preparations for the event. These included clearing and levelling enough ground to accommodate a large audience, distributing handouts, putting up posters and banners, and collecting funds. Over 30,000 rupees were collected in about six weeks.

As the time of the visit

grew closer, attendances at classes continually increased, public interest in Sangharakshita and the movement in the West swelled, and a flood of requests poured in for Sangharakshita to give talks, open Viharas, or unveil statues of the Buddha or Dr Ambedkar.

Vimalakirti estimates that 20,000 people attended Sangharakshita's talk in Wardha, at which he opened a new hostel building. The audience filled a four-acre area of ground and spilled out into the surrounding streets. The talk was emotionally received, and as a result the Wardha branch has been inundated with requests to give talks, hold retreats, or run Dharma

Sangharakshita's audience in Wardha

classes in different cities, towns, and villages of the area—most of which cannot be accommodated with present resources.

In the wake of Sangharakshita's visit the demand for Dharma activities in the Nagpur region—the site of the first mass conversion ceremonies, and therefore a place of great importance to the Ambedkarite Movement—has been particularly strong. The Wardha branch has recently held two retreats in Nagpur, one for young men from an Ambedkarite volunteer organization (Samata Sainik Dal), and a general mixed retreat in Nagpur City which was attended by 270 people. This breakthrough in the Nagpur area represents an important success for the TBMSG.

Another significant step forward in the Vidarbha region is the purchase of eleven acres of land for the establishment of a retreat centre. The land is about thirty-five kilometres from Wardha, on the slopes of a thickly wooded mountain overlooking a green valley and a large lake.

CLASSES IN WOLVERHAMPTON

FWBO activities in the Midlands are now reaching the end of their second full year. From humble beginnings, FWBO (Midlands) now has a healthy, if still modest, presence in three Midland cities, Birmingham, Nottingham, and Leicester. From February a fourth city will be added to this list, when the first Buddhism and Meditation course begins in Wolverhampton. The Midlands team report that there is room for much further expansion of such courses in the area, but this cannot take place until more Order members or experienced mitras can be attracted to join them.

The Birmingham Centre's Sangha Day celebrations in November were attended by over forty people, including representatives of the Ambedkar Buddhist Movement in Wolverhampton, and of the Shakya Choling Centre in Birmingham. The day's events included meditation, a music recital, and a festive puja which included four mitra ceremonies, and concluded with a firework display.

CHRISTMAS PROFITS

Although Christmas is not a Buddhist festival, it is nevertheless a significant time in the calendar of most FWBO centres. The fact that the Christmas and New Year period is now viewed by many Westerners as one extended holiday means that some of the Movement's most intensive retreats take place between 22 December and 3 January. In Britain alone, retreats were held over the Christmas period by all three of the FWBO's retreat centres, by the LBC and the Glasgow Centre, and—at Water Hall—by a motley assortment of writers and performing artists.

However, as Christmas itself becomes more of a commercial event, it should not come as a surprise to find that the FWBO's involvement with the festival has taken on a more business-like slant. Christmas is a time when money can be made. This year, three short-term enterprises were set up to take advantage of the fundraising possibilities of the Christmas spending craze.

In an attractive Bristol lane a team of volunteers, led by Caroline Frost and Tim Bennett, created a gift shop whose profits were earmarked for Aid For India's Dharma-work fund. In six weeks of trading, the shop sold almost £7,000-worth of goods. It is hoped that there will be more of these AFI shops next year. Apart from earning some much needed money for our work in India, these brief encounters with commercial enterprise offer Friends an excellent opportunity to taste the benefits of team-based Right Livelihood.

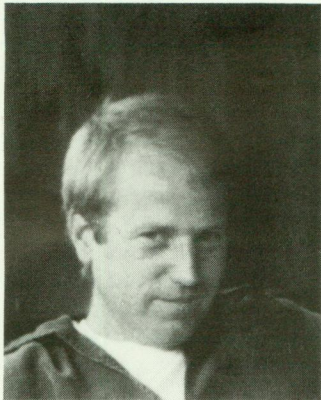
In the heart of Cambridge, an already stretched Windhorse Trading team decided to open a spacious giftware shop for the Christmas shopping season. This not only added a speedy £30,000 to the year's turnover figures but also freed up some much needed space back at the warehouse.

For two years now, the Taraloka Retreat Centre has been organizing a special fundraising push at Christmas

time. Pioneered in her native New Zealand by Vidyavati, the project involves decorating shop windows in an appropriately seasonal way. The work is relatively easy, fast, and lucrative—profits this year amounted to £5,000. This money will go some way towards the next phase of conversion work at the Retreat Centre—turning one of the barns into a lounge area. According to Sanghadevi, these first two years of window dressing have been seen as something of an experiment, restricted to the area around Taraloka itself. Now that it has been proved that the project works, more teams, covering a wider area, will be out in the shopping areas next year.

For the time being, Jambala, in Bethnal Green, is the Movement's only permanent gift store. There, takings are always spectacularly high at Christmas time, but this year broke previous records, with an astonishing £60,000-worth of goods sold in the few weeks leading up to Christmas.

ON THE WEST COAST



Aryadaka

The past few months have been a busy time for the two Order members living and working in north-west America. Three classes a week are now held in both Seattle and Vancouver, and a weekend retreat will be held in late January at Cloud Mountain in the south-west of Washington State. There has been a significant increase in interest in classes, and although numbers remain small both Baladitya and Aryadaka are optimistic about the future of the Movement in the Pacific Northwest.

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Aryadaka also reports that there is now a strong core of Friends in the San Francisco Bay area. In November a short retreat was held at the Vajrapani Institute, which is situated on an eighty-acre site among the redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains, about fifty miles south of San Francisco. This was organized by a group of local Friends, and jointly led by Manjuvajra, who had flown out from New Hampshire, and Lokamitra, who had come from India to raise funds for the Dharma work there. Over twenty people attended, and Aryadaka reports that a strong feeling of friendship was generated. The retreatants were also treated to a visit by a group of twenty-five lamas, who were paying their respects to a reliquary stupa containing the remains of the Institute's founder, Thubten Yeshe. After the retreat, Manjuvajra and Lokamitra travelled to Los Angeles to attend a meeting of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (see *Outlook*).

This retreat will be followed up by a meditation workshop in early February, to be led by Vajradaka, and there are plans for further retreats later in the year.

VAJRALOKA

Since the summer most retreats at the Vajraloka men's meditation centre have been full to capacity, and eleven people have asked to join for long-term stays in 1989.

In October the Centre held a 'Brahma Viharas' retreat concentrating on the development of the four 'sublime states' of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. This is the second such retreat to be held at Vajraloka, and both have proved so popular that two more have been programmed for 1989. This was immediately followed by a mindfulness retreat, led by Vajradaka. His approach emphasized the rich, enjoyable nature of mindfulness, making this readily accessible without compromising the traditional description of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

As well as retreats at the Centre itself, the Vajraloka team have also held meditation workshops in Bristol, Brighton,



and Norwich, and a workshop at the London Buddhist Centre's annexe for mitras who lead or support meditation classes. This latter workshop in particular was very enthusiastically received, and another is planned for 1989.

Although the response to the Vajraloka building fund appeal has been encouraging, more money is still needed to complete the barn conversion. But despite cash shortages the

facilities at Vajraloka and the neighbouring Vajrakuta are continually being upgraded, so that Vajraloka will soon have another shower, while the already extensive library at Vajrakuta is being enlarged and improved.

In mid-April Vajraloka will be holding a gardening retreat. Our correspondent, Nityajyoti, tells us that 'all sensitive, caring males will be very welcome'.

TARALOKA

Taraloka, now starting its fourth year as a women's retreat centre, is becoming more and more of an international focus for women within the FWBO. This is reflected not only in the community itself—which includes members from the UK, New Zealand, Australia, and Germany—but also in the composition of the retreats.

The intensive meditation retreats held this autumn were a good example of this international flavour. Co-led by Ratnashuri, Gunavati, and Dayamegha (from the UK, Finland, and Australia respectively), these were attended by retreatants from Holland, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, and the USA, as well as by women from all parts of the UK.

In an effort to beautify their already very attractive site, the Taraloka team recently held an event which may well be a first for the FWBO—a Tree Planting Retreat. Almost two hundred oak, ash, wild cherry, crabapple, and hawthorn trees were planted, all donated by women who had come to the Centre on retreat.



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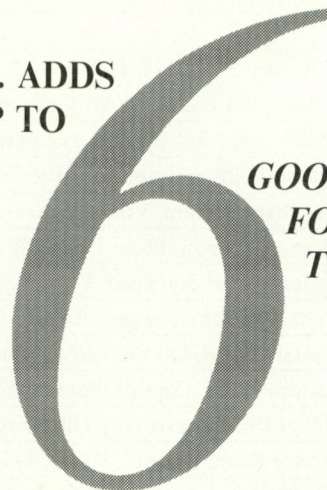


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Brighton Buddhist Centre, 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex, BN2 3HF. Tel: 0273 698420
Bristol Buddhist Centre, 9 Cromwell Road, St Andrews, Bristol, BS6 5HD. Tel: 0272 249991
Cambridge Buddhist Centre, 19 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8EG. Tel: 0223 460252
Croydon Buddhist Centre, 96-98 High Street, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 1ND. Tel: 01-688 8624
Glasgow Buddhist Centre, 329 Sauciehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3HW. Tel: 041-333 0524
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Leeds Buddhist Centre, 148 Harehills Avenue, Leeds, LS8 4EU. Tel: 0532 405880
Manchester Buddhist Centre, 538 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1LD. Tel: 061-860 4267
Norwich Buddhist Centre, 41a All Saints Green, Norwich, NR1 3LY. Tel: 0603 627034
West London Buddhist Centre, 7 Colville Houses, London W11 1JB. Tel: 01-727 9382
Padmaloka Retreat Centre, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 050-88 8112
Vajraloka Meditation Centre, Tyn-y-Ddol, Trerddol, Nr Corwen, Clwyd, LL21 0EN. Tel: 0490-81 406
Rivendell Retreat Centre, Chillies Lane, High Hurstwood, Nr Uckfield, Sussex, TN22 4AA. Tel: 01-688 8624
Taraloka Women's Retreat Centre, Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield, Nr Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 2LV. Tel: 094875 646
The Office of the Western Buddhist Order, Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 050 88 310
Karuna Trust, 186 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UE. Tel: 0865 728794
Dharmachakra Tapes P.O. Box 50, Cambridge, CB1 3BG

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FWBO Germany, Postfach 110263, 4300 Essen 11, W. Germany. Tel: 0201 668299
FWBO Netherlands, P.O. Box 1559, 3500 BN Utrecht, Netherlands
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TBMSG Aurangabad, c/o P G Kambe Guruji, Bhim Nagar, Bhausingpura, Aurangabad 431001, India
Bhaja Retreat Centre, c/o Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India
TBMSG Bombay, 25 Bhim Perena, Tapodhan Nagar, Bandra (E), Bombay 400051, India
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Auckland Buddhist Centre, P.O. Box 68-453, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand. Tel: (Auckland) 789 320/892412
Wellington Buddhist Centre, P.O. Box 12-311, Wellington North, New Zealand. Tel: 04-787 940
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