

## cloud-hidden friends letter

KUAN YIN 13<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese Porcelain

The "Cloud-Hidden Friends" are a small non-sectarian religious correspondence group. "Our pages are your letters", so we ask as our "subscription fee" that you write us a letter now and then. Letters should be in the universal spirit of the Dharma, and we would emphasize practice more than mere belief.

We look to Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, Alan Watts, Nyogen Senzaki, and Shunryu Suzuki as our honorary founders. Although they are usually associated with Zen Buddhism, the spirit of their Dharma was a free-ranging and universal one, going quite beyond the usual sectarian confines of Zen. They were pioneers in a Buddhism for the West.

Thomas Merton might be another example of the kind of spirit we have in mind. In his later years he commented that he could see no contradiction between Christianity and Buddhism, and that he "had determined to become as good a Buddhist as I can".

Our phrase "Cloud-Hidden" is taken from the title of a book by Alan Watts. He in turn borrowed it from a ninth century Chinese poem by Chia Tao. Lin Yutang translates it:

Searching for the Hermit in Vain

I asked the boy beneath the pines.  
He said, "The master's gone alone  
Herb-picking somewhere on the mount,  
Cloud-hidden, whereabouts unknown."

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CA 94121

1. Here is the November issue, successfully concluding our second year. Our active participant-subscribers continue to hover around 40 in number. Complimentary copies to newcomers, friends and libraries brings the total up to about 60. The first 1985 issue will be out in late December in time to catch a bit of the holiday spirit.

If you can't have your letter typed, please feel free to send it on in anyway. We'll take care of it somehow. By the way please leave about one inch margins on both sides of the paper to make photocopying etc. easier.

2. In this section of the last issue I commented on the subject of Patriarchal Zen versus Tathagata Zen, suggesting that the latter might include Nyogen Senzaki, D.T. Suzuki, and Alan Watts, and maybe quite a few others "cloud-hidden". It might be said that Tathagata Zen is non-sectarian, mostly unorganized, and generic, with origins in China going back before Bodhidharma. Patriarchal Zen is sectarian and generally highly organized, with official temples and sacerdotal ceremonies, and with everything centering primarily on Zen Masters who have apostolic succession from the Buddha on down to the present. I have no doubt suggested some real antagonism between the two views, although I don't actually know of anyone willing to stand up and defend the side of Tathagata Zen, other than perhaps myself. However in any case such antagonisms would seem to be not at all in the spirit of the seventh Bodhisattva precept, which is not to proudly defend ones self while criticizing others. I take this precept seriously, and here plead guilty. The following reaction to my remarks on the subject by Roshi Robert Aitken are then quite justified :

"I think your Tathagata/Patriarchal Zen dichotomy is untenable, just as mistaken as concepts of "Other-Power" and "Self(-centered) Power" of Honin Shonin; and "Great Vehicle" and "Inferior Vehicle," invented by early Northern Buddhists. "Comparisons are odious." "Other and Self", "Great and inferior," "Tathagata and Patriarchal"-- these categories smell of intolerance.

Sectarian paths exist because people want them. Even a so-called non-sectarian path, like that of Krishnamurti, is quite sectarian. The Zen Center of San Francisco, of which you are a Board Member, is a sectarian way. Let one-hundred sectarian flowers bloom !"

Steadfastly yours,

Robert Aitken

3. Note Gary Snyder' Smokey the Bear Sutra , reprinted in this issue. It seems to me we need more of such, if the Dharma is to truly continue and grow. However if you can please don't make them too magnificently long, at least not for the CHFL since we only have room for maybe 3 or 4 pages.

Editor, Ananda Claude

A Letter Recieved  
 By The Cloud-Hidden Friends  
 From The Soldiar Of The Wave  
 Of The Northern Land 'O Lakes

H.Dairin Love  
 3126 Emerson Ave.S.  
 Mpls., Mn 55408  
 9/12/84.

Tom out by their roots  
 And tossed upon this garbage heap,  
 Who could not Love these Sunflowers?

Dear Cloud-Hidden Friends,

Howdy! Please let me introduce myself. I was born at an Army Hospital in Osaka Japan. My given name is LeRoy Dennis Love, My mothers family name is Hashimoto (as common as Smith in J-pan) and Dainin Katagiri Roshi named me Dairin, "The Big Fish", after San Sheng's fish in The Blue Cliff Record. I am a student of Katagiri Roshi's. I live a Poetic life & put bread on my table by: Moving pianos, doing house cleaning and carpentry.

I am in Minneapolis studying and practicing Zen and writing. I plan to move back to the country when my studies are complete. Why? Because any place that will not sustain natural wildlife is not a healthy place for humans. Any city over 500,000 should be dismantled and returned to nature. Minneapolis is full of lakes which gives me sanctuaries of fresh water (I am a native of the Great Lakes, so this is very important), and its winter blizzards give me some solace (A blizzard in a big city is nature's way of saying to man, "So who's mastered who?"). Above all, I am a self proclaimed avocate of all sentient beings who cannot speak for themselves.

Sweeping the stone path  
 A dead leaf sprouts brittle legs,  
 Cicada's brief song.

What do I cherish in life? My partner Jean, Hugging big pine trees, good beer/saki/wine, full moons, motorcycle ridin', fresh water (& snow which is water claiming the land wherever its worth claimin'), sun set/risings, good no-bullshit-friends, walkin' the dog, workin' up an honest sweat, makin' my livin' without rippin' anyone off, standing between tradition & innovation, large bodies of fresh water, drums, good books, gut splittin' humor, thunder, flowers, folk music and touching others heart to heart.

Zen and The Art Of Roshi Maintenance.

I believe that it is important to have a teacher and people of like mind near you when you are trying to formulate your personal spiritual path. Any teacher or group that tries to make you dependant upon it is not a true being in the way. It is tradition in Zen, to have an initial period of training that allows the individual to go off and explore on his own as a wandering pilgrim, a mountain hermit, a temple priest that administers to the needs of a community or as a poet or an artisen of some sort. My wish for American Zen is that it will grow broad shoulders and long arms so that it will be able to embrace all things, not worrying about differences that are just preferences as long as the heart and spirit of the way is there. The Cloud-Hidden friends are an important support in my path. Thank you Ananda Claude for creating this forum and thank you Marian for introducing Me to it.

Cut Daffodil flowers  
 Before Avalokitesvara  
 And after a cut man.  
 -Gassho and Ho!-

*Dairin*

An Excerpt From a Letter Received From Robert Glenn Breckenridge.  
 He is with a small group showing their concern for our planet  
 by walking across the U.S. It is called "Walk For the Earth".

Now walking through Kentucky and headed toward Virginia, I find myself thinking a lot about the founders of our country, including a few family ancestors who came to this country to get away from the King of England and the oppressive feudal systems of Europe. I recall that our constitution, I believe, states that we are endowed by our creator with the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These freedoms seem very real here in Indiana, Missouri & Kentucky where the small farms and lack of crowding seem to nurture a strong sense of personal worth and independence. I suppose a lot of these people will vote for Ronald Reagan, more defense and less welfare. Being away from the misery and crowding of cities it is easy to see why.

In any event it seems quite clear that America still provides most of us with a chance to have life, liberty & happiness but these are and have always been something that each of us must find for ourselves and the governmental system can only provide a situation where that is possible. Here, now, away from schools, jobs, large and rather inflexible institutions, one can pursue life & liberty with gusto. The walk group provides a perfect laboratory/workshop to speak out, take risks, explore and expand ones limits to freedom & happiness. The here and now, day to day, down to basics mostly outdoor sort of life has taken many of us away from all the security systems and possessions which often end up owning us more than we own them.

But some seem dedicated to life, liberty and the pursuit of unhappiness. They have their perceptions pre-programmed to continually discover "what's wrong." What's wrong with the government, the corporations, the available products, the food, the chemicals, etc. etc. There is apparently no end to the number of things one can find that are wrong and misery does seek company. Even without a radio or TV and no newspapers certain fellow walkers excitedly announce the discovery of new wrongs daily.

If one has decided not to pursue unhappiness it is a bit of problem to avoid getting caught up by the "what's wrongers". It's all too easy to decide that they are what's wrong and thereby having a lot of wrongness around.

I've taken to giving a "what's wrong" report in the morning circles in which I announce amazing discoveries. For example: If you decide that eating meat is wrong for people, there are several people who are wrong - billions in fact - who are wrong - often every day. On the other hand one can decide that freedom is OK, let everyone eat what they want and let vegetarians be vegetarian, too, and an enormous amount of wrongness vanishes in a flash. It leads one to wonder if it would be possible to think it through, avoid judgement and get rid of all the wrongness completely.

Well, in my researches, I asked a local who was sitting in a horse barn with a can of Budweiser in his hand "what's wrong around here?" "Nothing" he replied "everything's just fine" and added "That's what pisses me off, there's nothing left to complain about anymore."

Yesterday morning I joined a few fellow members of our Cafe society (also known as "WE - LO" the "Walk For The Earth Liberation Organization") for a little respite at "Bud and Mabel's Restaurant" alongside the road near Lawton Kentucky. After a few cops and a little conversation, Bud got out his guitar, shared a few pluckings & strummings with our own wandering minstrel, Teddy, and then got out his songbook and sang this one for us:

Keep Walkin

I searched and I searched  
For the road that leads to heaven  
I wondered if I'd ever find the way  
I sat down to rest  
For my feet had grown so weary  
And then I heard the voice within me say:

(Chorus) You've got to keep walkin  
Walkin in the light of the Lord  
You'll get to heaven someday

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Better get in the right way  
Walkin in the Light of the Lord.

I prayed and I prayed  
For the Lord to give me mercy  
I prayed for him  
To brighten up the day

(chorus)

I was so afraid  
For the road now seemed so weary  
Until I heard a voice within me say:

You've got to keep walkin -  
Walkin in the Light of the Lord  
etc.

Well, you know, sometimes I walk along chanting  
the Hare Krishna:

Have Krishna	→	Have Rama
Have Krishna		Have Rama
Krishna Krishna		Rama Rama
Have Have		Have Have

using the string of 108 beads that were given  
to me at the Hare Krishna Temple in St. Louis.  
("Hare Krishna" and "Have Rama" incidentally both  
are merely invocations of the supreme pleasure  
of Krishna (God-Christ) consciousness). Sometimes  
most of the small thoughts of the little ego-driven  
judgemental mind drift away. I get a notion of  
what that "walking in the Light of the Lord"  
might be all about. I'm not sure Christians  
would consider this getting to heaven in the  
right way but over the years I've done a  
lot of things that are much weirder and  
it seems to be working out O.K.

Love, Peace, Joy (and occasional upsets)

Robert Glenn

(In honor of my Father, grandfather and other  
republican ancestors and the Kentucky Democrat  
Breckenridges, too, I've decided to use my full  
first + middle name. No diminutives - Bob, Bobbie, etc.  
will be accepted)

## IN THE ARBOR

Marble statue poised to walk  
    through roses and camellias,  
        palms down,  
blessing the empty lawn chairs...

Rimless glasses,  
    starched habit,  
        a long life of prayer.  
    is she crazy?  
        is the Order too harsh?  
            talking to a statue,  
            laughing, imploring,  
            like a little girl  
                80 years old.

did it answer?

Beyond the mind.  
    beyond the rising & falling  
    of the mind. beyond all the  
        arts and deceptions--  
a weathered statue,  
    an old nun.

-Joel Weishaus

1115 Copper N.E.  
Albuquerque, NM  
87106

Dear Fellow Students:

I have felt for a long time that in Zen there should be a way of meditation for everyone. At least the potentiality should be there. It might be too much to expect this to be so for the content of meditation, but surely it should somehow be true of the physical form, and this is here my concern.

Unfortunately however, the physical requirements alone of traditional Zen meditation, or zazen, are such that they automatically exclude many if not most people from such a practice.

The traditional posture for Zen meditation is lotus position, with legs crossed and feet resting on the top of both thighs. In some instances half-lotus is also permitted, and in Japan seiza posture with legs folded straight back under the buttocks is often expected of women. A few zendos are so liberal as to give permission to sit in a chair. However there is almost always an unspoken message added, and this clearly reads that there is no real alternative to formal lotus or seiza. The net result is for example, that generally older people are simply not present in the zendo, and for good reason.

Clearly the form of Zen meditation alone eliminates many good and sincere students. This might be all justified somehow if Zen were really only intended as an exclusive monastic practice for some kind of elite, with a special emphasis on some kind of painful macho asceticism. But I don't think this is what is really intended, although it often appears to be so.

The difficulties are compounded when it comes to the length of the meditation period and some regular daily schedule. Many people are able to grunt and groan and get into some kind of lotus posture, but if then asked to hold that posture for more than a minute or so it becomes impossible. However the traditional meditation period is usually from about 30 minutes to 60 minutes long, and is strict and unyielding. There would also be at least several such periods everyday, and sometimes all day long for days on end. Such a schedule might make good sense for a bunch of young monks in training at some monastery far off in the mountains someplace, but it seems not at all harmonious with the rhythms of ordinary everyday life. Nor does it make much sense in terms of a lifetime practice, and as far as I know this is also true for monks and Zen Masters, who usually do not follow such in their older years.

The question then seriously arises about any possible alternatives, especially in the context of a lifetime practice that could include everyone. Loosening up zendo regulations so as to include an occasional chair or two doesn't seem to really work. A more fundamental change is required, something maybe a bit



revolutionary. In this regard there is a story about a Zen priest in India which might indeed suggest such a revolution. It may be in part legendary, but the thrust of it is I think quite clear :

Not many years ago a Zen priest came from Japan to India. He was just an ordinary priest, but he loved the Buddha very much, so he wanted to help spin the Wheel of the Buddha's Teaching. However this seemed next to impossible since he spoke no Indian languages, and had little hope of ever being able to do so. Pondering upon his predicament, he decided to condense his own modest understanding of the Teaching into just one short and simple phrase. It was then easy enough to have this phrase translated into a dozen different Indian languages, and to memorize each. With this phrase as his Dharma call he then went forth wandering through the Indian countryside as a beggar monk. In English it would be "Ten Minutes of Zazen is Ten Minutes of the Buddha". He was often warmly received by villagers, and if it seemed the least bit appropriate, he would joyfully repeat his phrase, hoping that he might persuade others to join him in 10 minutes of zazen. Such simple purity and enthusiasm of course proved to be hard to resist, so he was often joined right then and there by those willing to give it a try. He was quite happy to have people take any meditation posture they pleased, and sitting on an old log would do just as well as lotus. It was all quite gentle, and there was even a liberal sprinkling of smiles. Today, years later in India, it is said to be not so unusual to find someone sitting silently for 10 minutes, with maybe a hint of a Buddha smile.

Now there is an alternative for you, and a bit of a revolution. At the same time it is quite traditional in its own modest way. Basically, the model of the story is the Buddha sitting silently under the Bodhi Tree, realizing the true nature of all things just as they are, and attaining unsurpassed perfect awakening. Also the story unmistakably affirms the teaching that everyone verily has the Buddha Nature.

Ten minute zazen would indeed seem to be something that anyone and everyone could easily do, and what is more, it could be a lifetime practice. It wouldn't make any important difference whether one were old and arthritic, young and supple, brilliant, dull, obsessively busy, lazy, neurotic, republican, bohemian, or whatever, plus in various combinations of such.

For some people the stricter traditional forms of Zen meditation are no doubt of great value. However there is also the danger that they might become hindrances. It is all too easy to identify practice with some architectural form, impressive ceremonies, priestly hierarchies, and official robes etcetera. Such can easily become a necessity and a crutch. What that priest in India then emphasized is that the universe can be one's zendo.

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Wherever that priest went, there was his zendo. As a way for everyone, and as a lifetime practice, this makes an awful lot of sense.

A more orthodox view might be to insist on having an official zendo with formal 40 minute periods and all. Indeed from an orthodox viewpoint that priest in India was not even qualified to teach, since he was only an ordinary priest and not a Zen Master. To this my response would be to thank the Buddha he was not more orthodox.

In my own life there have been a few Zen teachers to whom I feel especially grateful. Among them is one Nyogen Senzaki (d. 1958). He also reminds me of that priest in India. As a young Zen priest he came from Japan to America, and made it his home. He too was a wanderer, having no permanent abode. Wherever he was there too was his zendo, or "floating zendo" as he would often call it. He loved to give talks on the Dharma to his fellow students, but he claimed no special titles such as "Zen Master". He was only a monk who loved the Buddha and his teacher Soyen Shaku very much. He had little use for the usual concerns of organized religion, whether Zen or otherwise. He no doubt could have easily founded some big temple, but that was not his way. What was important to him however was meditation. As for lotus posture, that was fine for some, but he himself sat in a chair and encouraged others to do so. He did however much prefer a longer period than 10 minutes. His contribution to Buddhism and Zen may not be as conspicuous as some, but he was one of the true early pioneers of Zen in America. I for one would say that the kind of spirit he represents is even more relevant today than it was back then, even though somewhat traditional Zen temples seem to be springing up everywhere these days.

One of Senzaki's close friends in his earlier years was Paul Reps, who shared with him much the same kind of spirit. Poet, artist, teacher, student, Reps is a most amazing fellow. The usual categories don't seem to apply to him. He also is a great wanderer, and loves to gather together others here and there for a bit of meditation in a spirit not so different from that priest in India. He is quite willing to go even farther and suggest only one minute of zazen, while hinting that later 10 minutes would be a good idea. Somehow he manages to get people to relax and smile during the whole process. If one way of meditation doesn't seem to be working for someone he is more than willing to suggest another, such as in his book "Ten Ways to Meditate". In describing him, one word which does not occur is "orthodox".

I might add that I sometimes think of Daisetz T. Suzuki of one minute zazen, although I don't really know. He had a way of stealing a minute here and there while right in the midst of things, apparently lost in meditation. Sometimes he would do this in the middle of a lecture, or in response to a student's

question.

Although I have been a Zen priest for years, I am no longer content to stay within the usual mold. Perhaps underneath I've always felt that way, but then did not have the gumption to go and do something about it. Recently however I've come up with quite a bit of gumption, maybe mostly because of that Zen priest in India, Nyogen Senzaki, and Paul Reps. Now I take the universe as my zendo, or "floating zendo". Also I've begun sitting in a chair here and there, for periods of ten minutes and maybe somewhat longer. Perhaps someday after I've gained enough experience I will even graduate to one minute zazen.

So far I find this kind of meditation can serve one very well indeed. It is a way anyone could practice, even when old and arthritic, as many of us will someday be. I am amazed at how well it harmonizes with the rhythms of ordinary everyday life. Even in family life, finding a willing ten minutes here and there is as easy as falling off a log, or rather sitting on one I guess I should say.

So, I don't know if it is likely that we will be bumping into each other anytime soon, but if we do, what do you think about maybe pulling up an old log and meditating together for ten minutes, or possibly even one?

Nyogen Senzaki was very serious about the floating zendo. There would seem to be no better way to conclude than to quote him on the subject:

"I carried the Zendo with me as a silkworm carries a cocoon. The silk thread surrounds me unbroken. It may weave a brocade of autumn leaves or a spotless spring kimono for the coming year. I only feel gratitude to my teacher and all my friends, and fold my hands palm to palm."

Gassho,

Ananda Claude

Joe Lawrence Lembo  
 PO Box 99444  
 San Francisco 94109



Dear Cloud-People:

Do you believe in miracles?

When I first visited Alan Watts' old ferryboat Vallejo a few years ago, I was particularly attracted to an old carved wooden cherub that was propped up in the window. Marion (current owner of the boat and former friend of Watts) explained it was the "guardian angel" of the boat and had been there a long time.

A few months ago I wrote an article about the boat, "The Ancient Mariner," and sent it to many of the New Age magazines for publication. But only received rejection slips.

Recently Marion called me and said: "The angel (cherub) spoke to me this morning and said it wants to be in your house." So, she invited me for tea and, before leaving, gave me the angel. It made me very happy!

Just two days later I received a call from SAN FRANCISCO MAGAZINE saying they were interested in publishing my article. Needless to say, the angel had begun working its magic.

The reason I had written the article is because Marion is now interested in selling the Vallejo and hopes a group of spiritually oriented people will become the new guardians of the boat. It needs exterior and hull restoration, but has a unique potential as a historical landmark, a commercial enterprise, or a private residence. And with appropriate planning and renovation it could house a museum, gallery, cultural or educational center or retreat.

The Vallejo has approx. 4,000 square feet of living space, which includes three apartments with kitchen/bath, two pilot houses, and a large gallery/reception hall. The interior appears to be in fine, livable condition.

Alan Watts used to say that the old ferryboat was like an oyster: all rough on the outside and beautiful on the inside. (Certainly it contains pearls of wisdom!)

If you know of anyone who may be interested in purchasing the old ferryboat and carrying on its rich tradition, please write or call MARION SALTMAN, 36 Varda Landing, Sausalito, Ca 94965. (415) 331-1495. Thanks!

# SMOKEY THE BEAR SUTRA

Once in the Jurassic, about 150 million years ago, the Great Sun Buddha in this corner of the Infinite Void gave a great Discourse to all the assembled elements and energies: to the standing beings, the walking beings, the flying beings, and the sitting beings—even grasses, to the number of thirteen billion, each one born from a seed, were assembled there: a Discourse concerning Enlightenment on the planet Earth.

"In some future time, there will be a continent called America. It will have great centers of power called such as Pyramid Lake, Walden Pond, Mt. Rainier, Big Sur, Everglades, and so forth; and powerful nerves and channels such as Columbia River, Mississippi River, and Grand Canyon. The human race in that era will get into troubles all over its head, and practically wreck everything in spite of its own strong intelligent Buddha-nature."

"The twisting strata of the great mountains and the puisings of great volcanoes are my love burning deep in the earth. My obstinate compassion is schist and basalt and granite, to be mountains, to bring down the rain. In that future American Era I shall enter a new form: to cure the world of loveless knowledge that seeks with blind hunger; and mindless rage eating food that will not fill it."

And he showed himself in his true form of  
**SMOKEY THE BEAR.**

A handsome smokey-colored brown bear standing on his hind legs, showing that he is aroused and watchful.

Bearing in his right paw the Shovel that digs to the truth beneath appearances; cuts the roots of useless attachments, and flings damp sand on the fires of greed and war;

His left paw in the Mudra of Comradely Display—indicating that all creatures have the full right to live to their limits and that deer, rabbits, chipmunks, snakes, dandelions, and lizards all grow in the realm of the Dharma;

Wearing the blue work overalls symbolic of slaves and laborers, the countless men oppressed by a civilization that claims to save but only destroys;

Wearing the broad-brimmed hat of the West, symbolic of the forces that guard the Wilderness, which is the Natural State of the Dharma and the True Path of man on earth; all true paths lead through mountains—

With a halo of smoke and flame behind, the forest fires of the kali-yuga, fires caused by the stupidity of those who think things can be gained and lost whereas in truth all is contained vast and free in the Blue Sky and Green Earth of One Mind:

Round-bellied to show his kind nature and that the great earth has food enough for everyone who loves her and trusts her;

Trampling underfoot wasteful freeways and needless suburbs; smashing the worms of capitalism and totalitarianism;

Indicating the Task: his followers, becoming free of cars, houses, canned food, universities, and shoes, master the Three Mysteries of their own Body, Speech, and Mind; and fearlessly chop down the rotten trees and prune out the sick limbs of this country America and then burn the leftover trash.

Wrathful but Calm, Austere but Comic, Smokey the Bear will illuminate those who would help him; but for those who would hinder or slander him,

**HE WILL PUT THEM OUT.**

Thus his great Mantra:

Namah samanta vajranam chanda maharoshana  
Sphataya hum traka ham mam

"I DEDICATE MYSELF TO THE UNIVERSAL DIAMOND  
BE THIS RAGING FURY DESTROYED"

And he will protect those who love woods and rivers, Gods and animals, hobos and madmen, prisoners and sick people, musicians, playful women, and hopeful children;

And if anyone is threatened by advertising, air-pollution, or the police, they should chant

**SMOKEY THE BEAR'S WAR SPELL:**

**DROWN THEIR BUTTS  
CRUSH THEIR BUTTS  
DROWN THEIR BUTTS  
CRUSH THEIR BUTTS**

And **SMOKEY THE BEAR** will surely appear to put the enemy out with his vajra-shovel.

Now those who recite this Sutra and then try to put it in practice will accumulate merit as countless as the sands of Arizona and Nevada,

Will help save the planet Earth from total oil slick,

Will enter the age of harmony of man and nature,

Will win the tender love and caresses of men, women, and beasts

Will always have ripe blackberries to eat and a sunny spot under a pine tree to sit at.

**AND IN THE END**

**WILL WIN HIGHEST PERFECT ENLIGHTENMENT.**

thus have we heard,

Dear Cloud-Hidden Friends,

The question posed in Richard Boersler's letter (issue # 10) seems to me to be relevant to all of us who practice some form of meditation. Action or non-action? Is that really the question? Is there a difference between storming the Pentagon and herb-picking on the mountain? Would it be better to sit an extra hour tonight or use that time to write a letter to my congressman? Is one way better than another?

If wu-wei (no action that doesn't arise spontaneously from present circumstances) is the Way (to avoid getting tossed about on the horns of the action vs. non-action dilemma) then before we ask the question "What are my present circumstances?" it might be helpful to ask the question "What is an action that arises spontaneously from present circumstances?"

Doesn't all action arise spontaneously from present circumstances? Isn't wu-wei the natural way of life? And isn't it "thought" tacked on to spontaneous action that creates the confusion? It seems to me that when we try to justify to ourselves and to others why we do or don't do something we create unnecessary problems for ourselves. How can anyone know their present circumstances--completely? John Muir said, "When one tugs at a single thing in nature he finds it attached to the rest of the world." And when one tugs at a single explanation for doing or not doing something one finds it attached to the rest of the world's ever-changing events.

Suzuki Roshi addressed this matter of spontaneous action in his book ZEN MIND, BEGINNER'S MIND (p. 30) when he said: "You may say 'This is bad, so I should not do this'. Actually when you say, 'I should not do this', you are doing not-doing in that moment. So there is no choice for you. When you separate the idea of time and space, you feel as if you have some choice, but actually, you have to do something, or you have to do not-doing. Not-to-do something is doing something. Good and bad are only in your mind. So we should not say, 'This is good!' or 'This is bad'. Instead of saying bad, you should say 'not-to-do'! If you think, 'This is bad', it will create some confusion for you. So in the realm of pure religion there is no confusion of time and space, or good or bad. All that we should do is just do something even if it is not-doing something." When Suzuki Roshi says "Do something!" I think he means do it wholeheartedly without comparing one activity with another. In other words, sit or march but don't wobble.

With gassho,

*Marian*

Norman Moser

Sept. 20, 1984  
Berkeley

Dear Be-clouded Friends:

In my last letter I mostly focused on how I'd gotten to where I am, my origins in a group very like this (or Ananda's Friday group-meetings). This time I'd rather focus more on the present--where I'm at now.

I said that though the road seems harder now to me than when I was first entering Zen and poetry, etc, that I still do find things to enjoy, perhaps less often or sometimes less intensely. I also don't smoke dope no mo' and now, this Summer, beeg achievement, I quit cigs. Now do I a day some days or none sometimes fer a week or more. Am real proud on this cause I grew up in tobacco cuntry, Durham/Raleigh area.

Am now back to werk, my 5-yr-old David finally got to beeg P.S. Kindergarten, and it's freakin him out some, compared to his cute small Bilingual Daycare center from before (where Mom/ex-wife, werks). My good solid growin joyful relation w/Dave is, as one fren sorta sadly put it, de best thang I got goin. Meaning, caint seem t sustain a relation w/a lady lately longer'n few weeks/r months if I'm lucky. But that's a real beeg subject I just stumbled onto, which will do whole beeg letter on soon's can git to it, I swer.

Meanwhile, am mucho engaged with this lovely boat we got goin here, it along w/my Buddhism uv 25 years, is another lovely/lively thing I/we got goin hotfooting it along now. Enjoy all r most uv yer letters'n poultry, but recently the Lembo sweet appreciation of Whitman was so joyful & appreciative it moved me very deeply.

But it's Joel W.'s observations on "a govt. whose solution to confronting the Other is force, violence, the arrogance of power," that really kicks orf me tharts here, to wit: anyone who allows his town, country or neighbor, or another cuntry far away, to be needlessly raped, sacked, etc, is not understanding his Buddhism or other mysticism properly. That's a one level of the argument. I agree w/ole buddy Joel on this. But I want to take a leetle farther as I feel it.

Does the govt. have any meaning in our lives that is tangible? Local govt., maybe. And yet, if it weren't fer the Fed. Govt., hardly any of the Civil Rights victories would've been won over the years. I used to think for sure that govt. didn't matter, that it only mattered what /I/ felt. I see now, that doesn't work. We ARE sharing a planet with folks many of whom we do not love or like or understand very well. Partly it's about just that, trying to somehow get along with others. Also, a very deep level of this truth, to me, goes like this: can't we judge a very elemental, deep need of human nature by what the tribal folks did, and did they not have leaders, different leaders for different things such as a war-general, a harvest chief or the like? Si?

Then leaders are very necessary. But since Reagan/Nixon can't do anything but manipulate images or people, the fact that we need a better leader-symbol up thar confronting us, eludes so many they either vote frivolously or don't vote at all. But you can also take another tack on this: So you personally don't need Reagan or any other leader to inspire or govern you? Perhaps so. But many others DO need leaders and feel very defeated or frightened in such circumstances as ~~warcours~~ these days. Vote, then, for a not-very-inspired (or inspiring), but good solid man like Fritz Mondale--or vote for Reagan if you truly prefer that squirrelgrin rascal. But vote for somebody--if you're registered for this election. You may even improve someone's job prospects, pos-

sibly even yer own, particularly if you mark the Mondale-Ferraro slot. I also truly feel it's quite exciting to have such a sharp, cute lady up for such a high office even though we suspect she may not be so great a person as we first hoped. As even the sweetcreazy radical ole Mine Troupe says in their Summer show just past, voting for these two can still be very valid even if it's as 'better of 2 rather sloppy ticks'. It's real hard t git wuss than Reagan. We cud try ole Frits/Gerry! Well, as Claude sez, we don wanna wax too political, so let's move on now to another recent thort I wanta explore.

\* \* \* \*

By now most in the group recall that I am a writer & publisher of long standing. By publishing, at the outset of my brandnew 80s Book-series, primarily or all writers formerly featured in my mag., ILLUMINATIONS, who have not had much luck on the open market w/their books, including myself among that group, could perhaps call into question whether I'm/we're focusing solely on the past to the detriment of the present. And when I realize how much of my time/energy goes to getting these books published and distributed, out thar in yer stickly leel ole hands, yoo Readers, as opposed to putting more time behind the creation of new marvels in the here & now, I do sometimes despair. Now take the next book on the list, due in month or two, book of poems by ole friend & contributor (& incidentally a member of our/Amos' original S.F. Zen group, if indeed that is what it was), ~~Tim Holt~~ Tim Holt. Now this is Tim's absolute first book in 25+ more years of writing. Ye cud argue the point both ways: No matter what, either posthumously or presently, that book wud surely somehow exist in the world. So why now?

But why not now? Mebbe Tim needs that book out to inspire him on to the creation of another book. Mebbe we need to hear that craggy ole TimHolt voice again and again, not just one time.

Likewise, hardly anybody realizes the extent to which I am published, in 4 different genres too. If I don't successively bring out me own books of poultry, stories, essays, etc, as Whitman/Blake did, who will? A general broad kind of neglect in the world I've experienced now for many years; it isn't so bad as ye might suppose. But I for one do know of the extent, & hopefully the depth, of this particular goofy loopy collection of works in this world of ours, as do a few ole/new frensamine. Do I then have no duty or responsibility to these works of art? Not maybe to alluvem jus cause I writ em, but to the ones I do profoundly feel will interest the elusive ole Reader still? It's a hard question when yer as pore as me & not gittin any yunger now at 52. I think ye gather my answer.

It's the same answer I made when I did Hadassah Haskale's second buk. Sure enuf, she's hard at werk on another, eh! Mebbe this loopy goofy ole theory actually werks? Zowie. I hope so. And when I add the beeg upcoming ILLUMINATIONS ANTHOLOGY, 300 mo' pages of prose & poultry by c. 200 writers & artists, it better succeed, this theory, & better sales too, cause, Jeez, I/we gon havta cough up a few grand gittin all these beeg'n leetle buks in them stores, and it's not gettin t be mo' fun, is turnin into leel bit uv a burden, & Jeez, didn I always say that when it got to be not a joy but a burden I'd quit this damfool publishing anyway, that paupers shud not be publishers, etc etc etc...? ZO, how's by yoo folks, shud I cont. breakin me arse as a publisher r give up & jus live fer th present, fer joy & luv, by gum, & jus search me out a new gal. I probly be a damfool & keep on truckin as I have been. But yer feedback be much appreciated rite about heah. Whadda y'all think? No duties?

Yorn, w/for, by luv, joy, respect, & more,

*Norm Moser*



Yellow Mouse  
8/19/84

Dear Cloud Hidden Friens:

To mah mass buddy Rich B: in order to relate this "stuff" to US requires the Christian (King James ed.) idiom:

1 TIMOTHY 1: 5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:  
9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane -.

MATTHEW 5: 17 Think not that I (Jesus) am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill.

ROMANS (Paul) 2: 13 For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.  
10: 4 For Christ is the end (conclusion, not goal) of the law for (to obtain) righteousness to every one that believeth.

GALATIANS (Paul) 3: 11 But no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.  
12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.  
13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, -  
24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.  
25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.  
5: 4 - whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.  
5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.  
13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; -  
18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

HEBREWS (Paul) 7: 18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.  
19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing on of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

JAMES (James, the apostle) 1: 25 But whoso looketh into (as in a mirror) the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.  
2: 12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall (are to) be judged by the law of liberty.

CONCLUSION: the law is negative : THOU SHALT NOT - . The message of Jesus is positive : THOU SHALT DO unto others - . Law (Dogma) is unable to inform man of what his POSITIVE duty to and in the world is. The SPIRIT (breath) resides in and informs a man from within. No authority external to him can inform him. He is made free of the negatives of the law by Jesus (the Way, the Truth and the Light). Instead of being a captive of the law, man is to be FREE and

uninhibited (unrepressed) in his behavior so that he has the opportunity to make good actions, deeds, works. Modern totalitarian regulatory law and its enforcers (bureaucrats) enslave to the law men, who are to be free.

LAW = LAWE (MidEng) = LAGU (OldEng) = LAG = LOG(H) (OldNorse)  
from LEGH: to lie or lay = LOGH-O  
= LOGHAM (Teut): that which is laid down: law  
from LEG: to collect and speak (collect oneself)  
= LEGERE (Lat): gather, choose, read  
= LEGERE (Grk): gather, speak  
= LEX, LEGIS: collection of rules: law  
= LOGOS (Lat): speech, word, reason

THUS a gathering or collection of ideas, words laid down all together before the hearer. It is a collection, of necessity, of vicarious truths and thus requires an external authority to give them force.

LIBERTY = LIBERTE (OldFr) = LIBERTAS, LIBER (Lat): free  
from LEUDH: to mount up or grow  
= LEUDI (Teut): mass or multitude of people (LEUTE)  
= LEUDH-ERO = LIBHER = LIBER: free  
from LEU; LOOSEN, divide, cut apart + DHE: make happen, DO  
= LUEIN (Grk): loosen, release, untie  
= SE (apart) + LU  
= SOLVERE (Lat): loosen, untie: SOLUTE, SOLVE, ABSOLVE

THUS, since life and people have inherent in them an upward pressure to grow, increase, mount up to the heights, this will automatically happen if its bonds are cut, released, untied, FREED.

FAITH = FEITH, FETH (MidEng) = FEIT, FEID (OldFr) = FIDES (Lat)  
from BHEIDH: to persuade, compel, confide  
= BHE-AI + DHE: make happen, DO  
= BIDAN (Teut): to await trustingly, expect, trust: BIDE, ABODE  
= BHID = FIDERE (Lat): trust, confide: FIANCE, FIDUCIARY  
= BHOIDH = FOEDER (LAT): treaty, league: FEDERAL  
= BHIDH = FIDES (LAT): trust: FIDELITY, FEALTY, FAITH  
from BHA: to shine, sign, banner, light, to be brought to light  
: to speak, proclaim, summon, curse, BANish, prayer, BOON  
= BHA + MA = FAMA (Lat): talk, reputation, fame  
= PHEME (Grk): saying, speech  
= BHO + NA = PHONE: voice, sound  
= BHE + TO = FATERI: to acknowledge, admit: CONFESS

THUS BHA-DHE is to make happen, firm and secure the speech, proclamations and promises (that shine on the banners and signs) previously made which were so compelling for one to believe in = FAITH.

CONCLUSION: It is stifling to men to have their upward thrust of physical, mental and spiritual growth to be repressed by the authority of a collection of ideas and truths laid down by men who preceded them but who have not had their experience. They are set free of that repression by that work, action which actualizes, brings those promises, those truths written so shinningly on the banners, into reality. FREE MEN MAKE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN !

El-son Be snowed: Is it the Buddha (the bull) who carries a person or is the bull to be identified with the person who carries the Buddha ?

Go, Breck, GO !

Welcome, Maggie - just WHO? are you, ANYWAY ?

To Jo-El Pure-HO (& Claw-dhe): FREEDOM = FREE = FRE (MidEng)  
 = FRED (OldEng) from PRI: to love  
 = PRIYO = FRIJAZ (Teut): beloved (belonging to the loved ones)  
 THUS not in bondage = FREE  
 = PRIYA (Sanskrit): dear, precious  
 = PRIY-ONT: loving = FRIJAND (Teut): lover  
 = FRIOND, FREOND (OldEng): FRIEND (There you are, Friyonds)  
 = PRI-TU = FRITHUZ (Teut): peace = FRIDU (OldGer): peace  
 = PRIYA: beloved = FRIJJO (Teut): beloved, wife  
 = FRIGG (OldNor): Goddess of love  
 THUS FREE = peace, love, precious, friend and NOT IN BONDAGE.

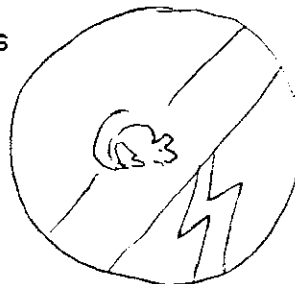
DEAR JOHNBOYd: Yes, we are "for" dominion over self while "they" want dominion over "others": what we call the baddies, black hats, ENEMIES and the Amer-indian calls the "Contraries". But they are US (Pogo).

ALAN Be TAPPED LOW: I recommend C.S LEWIS's PERELANDRA Trilogy, especially the third: THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH on the issue of wanting to be in, included, belong. And: Coomaswamy: "-the modern world is far more lacking in the will to seek, than likely to be led astray by false direction."

Norm Moser: Daddy: Da-Die: DAL, DHE-DHE, PA, PETER: what I have is too long for inclusion here: Sorry. Ask and ye shall receive (more than you ever wanted to know about - ).

Dalenberg = DAL + EN + BERG  
 BERG: a high place of safety, hills and hill-forts, fortified town  
 DALE: valley from DHEL: a hollow = DELL  
 EN: in, within, inside, and  
 THUS more than merely a Dale AND a Berg; possibly a Dell IN a Berg;  
 Probably a BERG WITHIN a DELL: a protected place of refuge, peace, sanctity within a pleasant fertile (thus nurturing) valley. THAT'S OUR CLAUDE !! (But, his Berg is hidden in the clouds.) "BRING WHAT ?" sounds like "SAYWHAT ?". Besides, that's a lot of dharma, anyway. Speaking of that: ROSH (as in ROSH HASHANAH, the Jewish New Year) means "head" (of the year). Say, just why did the Bodhirabbai come to the East ?

YELLOW MOUSE: GHEL-MUS



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FINIS  
 11-19