

FROM A LECTURE

The following is the gift of Reverend Susuki's response to a question from one of his students during the Wednesday evening Lecture, February 26. The question refers to the lines from Engo's Appreciatory

Word: "After a great thunderstorm, a cool wind came.

Oh this wonderful pure clean wind,

who knows the mystry of such tremendous cleansing power!"

Question: Is it necessary to go through thunder and storm in order to attain the clear calm healing wind?

Answer: "Not always. If there is no thunderstorm, you cannot undergo it! Once when I was traveling alone in northern Japan, I met a man accompanied by a dog held by a great dog chain. The first thing he said to me (we were on a boat going to a small island) was 'Be careful, the dog is very dangerous.' We became good friends. He told me that if it was my business to save all common people, then I should know what happened to them. I had to experience what they experienced. He for instance had women and drank sake. I should practice the same in order to understand him.

"If the occasion comes to drink, it may be all right. If you have to do something, if it is inevitable, then there is the possibility of real training. But if I drank sake in order to train myself, then I would not be doing it in the same way as he, so it would not work. He agreed.

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

"It is dangerous to undertake something on purpose in order to train yourself. We monks go to Eihelj monastery for training but it is not always successful. If you go of your own will, often there is wrong motivation. You expect something when you have completed it; you expect to gain enlightenment or improve your character or something.

It is quite dangerous. You must be very careful of your motivation when you do something on purpose. If we have had wrong motivation, then when we come out of the monastery, we become arrogant or conceited. We have spiritual pride in what we have done. That is very dangerous.

"There are many ways to train, the monastery is a good one. While you are there, you have to do many things. You know, if you walk through the fog, your garments will become wet, without any effort or being conscious of it, they quite naturally become wet.

"That is why we begin training with the basic teaching of transiency: there is no self and all things are changing. If you really understand these two points, and if you just remain faithful to the truth, you will be rid of useless ambitions and one day acquire good character.

"Sometimes we want hard training. If you are in discomfort or pain then it might be quite difficult to accept the fact of no self. If your legs hurt you want to have the stick on your shoulders. It takes your mind off your legs; it is a very kind thing that stick. Thus, sometimes we want hard training; but if you have the right attitude in all you do, you will be successful in your training of yourself.

"But I do not ignore the thunder or the rainstorm. It is quite interesting to walk in the storm and rain."