

SEEDS OF PEACE

Vol. 4 No. 2 MAY 2531 (1988)

VIOLENCE, PEACE & RELIGION



DHAMMIC INVESTIGATION

*ACTIVE NON-VIOLENCE
IN ISLAM*



members of our editorial staff were received by His Holiness the Siamese Supreme Patriarch on his 90th birthday

Seeds of Peace

is published thrice annually in January, May and September, in order to promote the aim and objectives of the Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development (TICD). For subscriptions and further information, please contact the commission at 4753/5 Soi Watthong Noppakun, Somdej Chaophya Road, Klongsan, Thonburi, Bangkok 10600, Thailand. Tel. 437-9445. Suggested minimum donation US\$ 10 per annum, postage included.

Objectives of TICD

1. To coordinate work among individuals, groups of individuals and various agencies dealing with religions and development in course of working together.
2. To share experience in and knowledge of religions and development as well as exploring ways and means of working together.
3. To offer training and secure resources in terms of man-power and materials to support and enhance the agencies that need help.

Guest Editor
Vira Somboon

Cover
Prof. Fua Haripitak copied
from an old mural at Sukhothai



**THAI INTER-RELIGIOUS
COMMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT**
GPOBOX 1960
BANGKOK 10501 THAILAND

Contents

Editorial Note	3	
An Excellent Siamese Monk	4	
Violence Peace and Religion	6	<i>M. Sastrapratedja S.J.</i>
Dhammic Investigation	9	<i>Phra Devamoli</i>
Death & Dying	12	<i>John B. Cobb</i>
Active Non-violence in Islam	17	<i>Md. G. Ahmed</i>
Culture & Environment	20	<i>S. Sivaraksa</i>
Appeal to Save the Chakma	23	<i>R. Sewan</i>
Thai Nuns	23	<i>P. P. Sirikanchana</i>
Books	25	
Obituaries	28	
Phya Anuman's Project		
Dr. Puey Ungphakorn	29	
Anti-nuclear Exhibition in Bangkok	30	<i>H. Aramaki</i>
Networking and Coordinating	31	<i>S. Sivaraksa</i>
Poems	33	<i>A. Kelayanapong</i>
Letter	34	
Thai Buddhist in Sri Lanka	35	<i>Phra Phaisan Visalo</i>
Is Foreign Money Good for Thailand?	38	
Thai Resistance to Military Stockpiling	39	

Editorial Note

There is a contemporary motto: "Think globally, act locally," to which it should be added - "cooperate regionally." A day when peace may be achieved at the global scale is too far; and if it is to be possible, it will only grow out of close cooperations among networks of people of various regions. This is why some on-goings in Thailand and her regional friends should arrest our attention.

In the previous issue, we published the chronology of events and campaigns concerning the refusal of the Thai government to allow His Holiness the Dalai Lama to enter Thailand. Despite the government's stubborn reaction, the event raised much interest among the Thai in the situation in Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. Then in December last year, we received the following news from Dharmasala:

To celebrate His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's achievement of the fifth cycle and his 60th birthday anniversary, five hundred Tibetan lamas and monks gathered at the Mahayana Central Cathedral, Dharmasala, on December 5, 1987 and performed an elaborate ritual ceremony: The Prayer of 16 Arhats, A Set of Eight Profound Prayers and An Eulogy to Arya Avalokiteshvara, The Buddha of Compassion, fervently requesting these sublime beings to bestow on His Majesty King Bhumibol of Thailand longevity and all prosperity.

This is indeed a highly propitious news. It was publicized in *Thai Rath* and received attention from the public. Later, on February 11th this year a group of enthusiasts, both monks and laymen, met at the office of the Thai Inter-religious Commission for Development to discuss the prospect of establishing a center for the studies of Tibetan Buddhism.

From mid-February to early March, a group of Thai monks and laymen visited Sri Lanka to learn about the situation there and to exchange ideas and experiences on Buddhism and development as well as Buddhism and non-violent reconciliation with Sri Lankan non-violent activists. Phra Phaisan Visalo, a leading member of the groups, shared his experience and thought with us in this issue.

During 5th - 19th of April, there was a regional seminar on "Asian Active Non-violence Training and Sharing," participated by pacifists and non-violent activists from Bangladesh, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Observers from International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) also joined the seminar. The seminar, organized by Asian Active Non-violence (AANV), was held in Prajuabkirikhan, a province 350 kilometers south of Bangkok. A report on the seminar will be presented in the next issue.

These are all good news, which point to further regional cooperation of non-governmental organizations and religious and non-violent movements in Asia. Let's wish for their success.

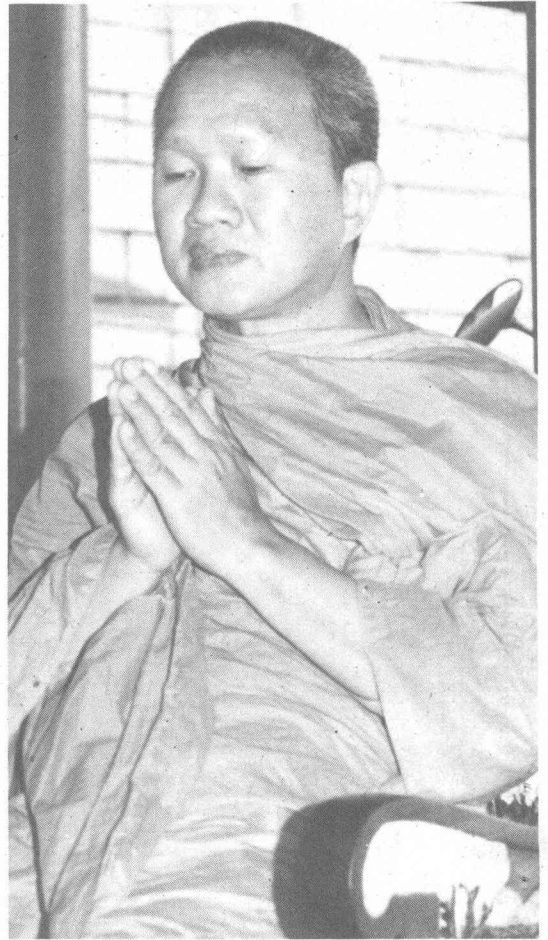
An Excellent Siamese Monk



พระครูไพฑูริย์
พระครูไพฑูริย์
ไพฑูริย์

The Venerable Bhikkhu Payutto was born in Sri Prachan, Suphan Buri on January 12, 1939. His lay name was Prayut Arayangkura. He entered the novicehood at the age of twelve and, while still a **samanera**, attained Parien IX, the highest academic achievement in the traditional Buddhist education system. He thus entered a very limited and distinguished scholastic circle as only three other novices in the history of the Bangkok era had attained the Parien IX grade, one in the Third Reign, one in the Fifth Reign and one in the present Reign. It may be noted that two of these novices later became Supreme Patriarchs (**Sangharaja**) of the Siamese Sangha. In recognition of his scholarly excellence, his higher ordination as **bhikkhu** was sponsored by His Majesty the King in the Royal Chapel of the Grand Palace. He was given a religious name of Bhikkhu Payutto.

Bhikkhu Payutto received his B.A.



(Buddhist Studies) from Mahachulalongkorn, one of the two Buddhist Universities in Bangkok. At the very early age of twenty-five, he was appointed as Deputy Secretary General of this Buddhist University, and he served with distinction in this position for many years. Shortly after this appointment, he was given a **rajagana** title, Phra Srivissuddhimoli. Since then he was entitled to be called **Chao Khun** (Mon Senger). In 1971 he was promoted to the senior **rajagana** rank with the title Phra Rajavaramuni. He is best known with this name. However on the King's 60th birthday anniversary in 1987 he was promoted to even a higher rank with the new title of Phra Devavedi.

The Chao Khun was instrumental in revising and expanding the curriculum so as to make it more relevant to the increasingly refined role play of the educated Sangha in the community development and social service spheres. He also helped develop several programs which involved the training of monks in community



development techniques and the assignment of university monk graduates to work in provincial and rural centers with the responsibility to promote a wide range of educational and community service projects.

While still in his thirties, Bhikkhu Payutto was appointed Abbot of Wat Phra Piren in Bangkok and, until recently, carried out the heavy administrative burdens of this position in a most creditable fashion.

It is only in the last few years that the Chao Khun divested himself of his various administrative responsibilities and devoted himself exclusively to scholarly pursuits. He has written and edited numerous academic treatises, dictionaries and encyclopedias. Among his more renowned works are *Buddhist Philosophy of Education for Thais*, *Buddhists and Social Destiny*, *Buddhadhamma*, and *Buddhist Ethics*. He has published widely in English and Siamese in both Buddhist and secular academic journals, including *Visakha Puja* annual publication of the Buddhist Association of Thailand and *The Journal of the Siam Society*. The Chao Khun remains one of the Sangha's most intellectually innovative and articulate interpreters of the social dimension and application of the Dhamma in our modern day lives. His succinct treatise, *Buddhadhamma*, summarises and interprets the essential teachings of the Buddha so clearly and eloquently that it has become a standard textbook in a number of colleges. The Chao Khun was honored by his academic peers in being selected to deliver a lecture on **Buddhadhamma** at Thammasat University on the occasion of H.R.H. Prince

Wan Waithayakorn's 80th birthday in 1971.

His *Dictionary of Buddhism* has now been published by the Department of Religious Affairs. The Chao Khun's exemplary exposition of *Buddhist Ethics* has been recognized for its scholarly merit by the Ministry of Education which uses this work as a textbook in Buddhist schools throughout the Kingdom. Traditionally, the late Prince Patriarch Vajiranavarorasa's *Navakovada*, expressly written for newly ordained monks, has been considered the best introduction to an elementary understanding of Buddhism. The Chao Khun's *Buddhist Ethics* may be viewed as a sublime effort to build upon the seminal work of the Prince Patriarch. *Buddhist Ethics* serves today as an excellent introduction for lay persons with but a rudimentary knowledge of Buddhism.

Given the generally anti-clerical bias of the educated youth in Siam today, it is significant that Bhikkhu Payutto enjoys great respect and reverence among the younger generation and has a significant following within the University student community who continually seek his guidance and advice.

The Chao Khun is both known and respected by scholars of Buddhism in the West. His works are often quoted by his Western academic peers. He was invited to teach Buddhism and Pali at Swarthmore College and has later been honored by an appointment at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University where he lectured and pursued his research for a six month period.

After his return from USA he gave a lecture on *Looking to America to Solve Thailand's Problem* which has been published with many editions and it has now appeared in English. His best known work, *Buddhadhamma* is also being translated into English.

In 1981 the Chao Khun was the second monk, the first being Venerable Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, to be elected Honorary Member of the Siam Society under royal patronage. Since then he received a number of honorary doctorate degrees from Thai universities.

The strength and vitality of the Siamese Sangha finds expression in the life and works of such an exemplar of moral and academic achievement as Bhikkhu Payutto.



Violence Peace and Religion

the great thinkers of the Western philosophic tradition before the nineteenth century, and had to wait for a Georges Sorel to make it the centre of his studies". (J.M. Domenach "The Ubiquity of Violence", in: *International Social Science Journal* XXX, No.4, 1978, 717).

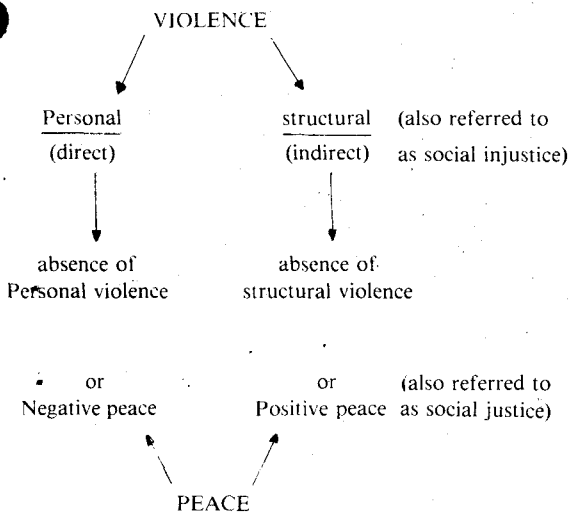
The study on violence is very important for the understanding of the meaning of peace. J. Galtung defines peace as "absence of violence", and violence is present "when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" ("Violence, Peace and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research*, 6 (1969), 67-91). In other place Galtung defines violence as "any avoidable impediment to self realization". (*The True World. A Transnational Perspective*, New York: The Free Press, 1980, p.67). He stresses the criterion that violence should be **avoidable**. In the words of Erich Fromm, violence is a "historical dichotomy" which is the opposite of "existential dichotomy". Existential dichotomies are fundamental facts of existence: that we are born without our choice but ultimately die, that our abilities are limited while our desires are unlimited. Historical dichotomies are historical contradictions which can be overcome by human efforts such as the problem of war and hunger in the midst of the advance of medical technology. All these are violences which can be avoided. Those who benefit from these historical dichotomies try to convince others that they are unavoidable and in fact are existential dichotomies. (J.A.C. Brown, *Freud and The Post-Freudians*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1967, p.153). In the above definition "personal growth" is applied to body (**soma**) as well as to self (**psyche**). Violence brings about deprivation of goods

This paper tries to examine the relationship between peace, violence and religion. In fact peace and violence are as old as the world itself; they are found in various mythologies and legends. Javanese shadow play or **wayang** provides us with rich description of violent acts and peaceful situations, war and tranquility. Hannah Arendt in her work *On Violence* (New York, Harcourt: Brace & World, 1970, p.8) says that although violence has always played an enormous role in human affairs "it is.....rather surprising that violence has been singled out so seldom for special consideration". J.M. Domenach reiterates this judgement by saying that violence, which is so much discussed today "had never been taken as a theme in itself for

which are needed to satisfy the fundamental needs and the inner development of the person.

It is clear that an extended concept of violence leads to an extended concept of peace. (J. Galtung, art.cit.) Violence, according to J. Galtung's analysis can be personal or direct. The absence of personal violence is called negative peace. Violence can be structural or indirect, such as the uneven distribution of decision power, of resources, and medical service. The structural violence can be called social injustice and the absence of structural violence is referred to as social justice.

This can be put in the following scheme:



Violence can be grouped also in the following way:

- (1) **direct violence:** survival
- (2) **poverty,** deprivation of basic material needs: physiological, ecological and social.
- (3) **repression,** deprivation of human rights (freedom, politics, legal, work).
- (4) **alienation,** deprivation of higher needs in relation to society, to others, to self and to nature.

Three out of four types of violence are structural and inequality particularly inequality in the distribution of power is the main factor of structural violence. (Cf. Rasheeduddin Khan "Violence and Socio-economic Development", *International Social Science Journal*, XXX, 1978, 836-837).

This frame work of thinking can help us



to understand not only the extent of the meaning of peace but also the notion of development. "If development is to build, then violence is to destroy; hence violence is antidevelopment. If peace is the opposite of violence, then peace must have much in common with development" (J. Galtung, *The True World*, p.66). Development often starts out from basic structure that is marked by injustice. All injustice is violence.

Violence is a specifically human phenomenon. The question is whether the cruelty of human beings is innate or accidental? There are various theories which try to explain the relation between the phenomenon of violence and human nature. According to Robert Gurr there is a linear relationship between the frustration of goal-directed activity and aggressive acts. The discrepancy between people's

expectations is a necessary precondition for violent civil conflicts. The social-learning theory rejects the notions of instinct as the root of aggression. It emphasizes the role of culture in shaping human character. Violence is a social outcome. The third theory says that violence is biological-instinctual. This theory is criticized on the ground that the role of instinct in man is very little. Recent philosophical anthropology argues that deprivation of instinct and consequently also the possibility of culture is that which distinguishes man from other species. "Man is man, because he has no instinct" (Ashley Montagu). Hence violence is conditional or accidental rather than innate human phenomena. It is our task to identify the circumstances under which violence does or does not occur (Cf. P. Peachey, "Anthropological and Sociological Reflections on Human Aggression and Social Conflicts," *Concilium* 164, 1982, 1-8).

Religion has cultural, social and psychological dimensions. Hence there are certain religious areas which can engender conflicts and violences. I try to mention several examples:

- (1) Religion provides man with a system of interpretation about the reality of the world and human existence. The role of religion in interpreting reality can be challenged by other symbolic systems either religious or secular. Nothing can be more threatening to human beings than the destruction of their cosmos, that is, the set of definitions of reality. Religion tends to monopolize a certain particular definition of reality. From this perspective religion may create a conflictual situation. Conflicts between different religions can be considered as intergroup violence where each one tries to defend its own definition of reality. It is in fact an interreligious rivalry in defining reality.
- (2) Religion carries with it the capacity for generation intergroup conflicts by reason of its nature as a means of self-identity, individual and group.
- (3) The mingling of religion and politics is another root of conflicts.
- (4) Even monotheism, as history has shown, has the capacity to engender intolerance and conflicts.

(For more detailed explanations see, Haim Gordon and L. Grob, *Education for Peace. Testimonies from World Religions*, Orbis Books, New York, 1987; Otto Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, Orbis Books, New York, 1979; Paul Peachey, art.cit.,)

Regarding the Catholic teaching on peace and war, there are at least four sources which influence it. The first is the Roman notion of war as "diplomacy by other means", that is, political power is exercised by the military. Peace is the cessation of armed hostilities. The second is the Greek concept of peace as harmony, balance, and war as disruption of what ought to be. The third is various myths which perceive war as savage and as characteristic of a stage of human development to be transcended by civilization. The fourth is the Judaeo-Christian concept of peace as *shalom*, that is the fullness of life and well-being. (M.E.Jegen, "An Entirely New Attitude", *Concilium* 164, 1984, 51).

At the present moment there are three trends of peace ethics which are the responses of the Church to three different situations: (1) a situation in which the conditions for a peace are determined by the continuing threat of nuclear war and the effort to maintain a balance of nuclear and other power in accordance with the strategy of deterrence; (2) a situation in which development is the crucial task for the realization of peace; (3) a situation in which peace can be achieved only through a liberation from unjust, repressive political and economic structures (Cf. The Report of the Baden Consultation on Christian Concern for Peace, organized by SODEPAX in 1970). These three ethical theories are (1) the modified just war doctrine, (2) the ethics of social justice and (3) the ethics of non-violence.

The moral question regarding war is "under what conditions should we go to war?" To answer this question Thomas Aquinas developed a doctrine of just war. The just war tradition is now becoming obsolete. It has largely broken down in face of the universally destructive weapons available and incompatible with limitations traditionally imposed. New efforts to reformulate the just war doctrine have been made especially in facing the problems of the morality of nuclear weapons. A revised



just war tradition in the present context of nuclear weapons is formulated by Joseph S.Nye in five maxims:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Motives | 1. Self-defense is a just but limited cause |
| Means | 2. Never treat nuclear weapons as normal weapons |
| Consequences | 3. Minimize harm to innocent people |
| | 4. Reduce risks of nuclear war in the near term |
| | 5. Reduce reliance on nuclear weapons over time |

(J.S.Nye, *Nuclear Ethics*, The Free Press, New York, 1986, 99).

Recently there has been a shift of emphasis from the concept of **negative peace**, that is, peace as the absence of war (peace as **tranquillitas ordinis**) to the concept of **positive peace**, that is, peace as **social justice** (peace as **opus iustitiae**). The relationship between justice and peace is developed more fully in the encyclical **Populorum Progressi**, which calls integral human development including its

social, economic and political dimensions, "the new name for peace".

The third teaching is based on the awareness of the structural character of evil. Special attention is given to the problem of the acceptability or unacceptability of violence as a means to achieve justice and liberation used by the people as well as by the states. The discussion can be described in the following scheme

		PEOPLE		STATES		
		justice	injustice	justice	injustice	
violence	violence	violence leading to justice	violence leading to injustice	violence	violence leading to justice	violence leading to injustice
	nonviolence	nonviolence permitting injustice	nonviolence leading to justice	nonviolence	nonviolence leading to justice	nonviolence permitting injustice

(Cf. R.Jeurissen, "Peace in the Ecumenical Movement", *Exchange* 46, April 1987).

Recent years have seen a deepening and spreading acceptance of nonviolent resistance in the world generally, and in Church and theological circles as well. Now people nourish fresh hope that there exists the human capability to apply nonviolent methods of conflict resolution to various kinds of conflicts.

M. Sastrapratedja S.J.

Paper prepared for International Seminar on "Religion and Ethnic Conflict in Development" organized by The Indonesian Society for Pesantren and Community Development, Tugu, 9-12 December 1987.

An Instruction of the Dhammic Investigation

(The Book of Dhamma - vicayanusasa)

This is a sermon based on some Buddhist proverbs in the *Parabhavasutta* delivered for the benefit of all Buddhists. The Buddha's proverbs and teachings are undoubtedly perfected with three benefits: the present, the future, and the supreme benefits or *nibbana*. These three benefits are for the

good of both an individual and the public.

Human existence can be seen as the indispensable path towards both blissful states (*sugati*) and woeful states (*dugati*). It is for those who will be reborn in hell or heaven in the future. Unfortunately, owing to strong attachment to their own knowledge, human beings



This sermon was preached by a famous Siamese Buddhist monk after Siam entered the First World War. He was a meditation master from the northeast and became abbot of a royal monastery in Bangkok. King Rama VI was so upset with the sermon which His Majesty thought was an attack on the government's policy, so he had the royal title of Phra Devamoli as well as the abbotship removed from the preacher. Yet soon afterwards the King had to restore him back as abbot and promoted him to a higher rank of Phra Upali Gunupamacariya, Deputy Chief of all the Forest Monasteries.

prefer seeking happiness in the path of suffering. For example, if they know how to kill animals, they will be pleased with killing animals, and so on. A Buddhist sage had composed a verse; *'asevana ca balanam. panditananca sevana* -to associate with a wise man and to avoid a knave are the supreme blessing." The association with wise men always brings a proper knowledge because wise men will lead one to the good side of the arts. The association with knaves, on the other hand, always leads one to the evil side of the arts and thus drowns one in a whirlpool of difficulties. The Buddha who is very skilful in preaching thus uttered once in Pali:

"Suvijano bhavam hoti"

- A proper knowledge is like a compass guiding to prosperity.

"Duvijano parabhavo"

- An improper knowledge is like a compass guiding to degeneration.

"Dhammakamo bhavam hoti"

- The love of dhamma is like a compass guiding to prosperity.

"Dhammadessi parabhavo"

- The hatred of dhamma is like a compass guiding to degeneration.

In other words, the improper knowledge is like a bridge leading to degeneration; the love of dhamma is like a bridge leading to prosperity. Both types of knowledge, proper and improper, however, are concerned with truth; therefore one needs to understand them clearly. Even the Buddha himself knows them perfectly well. Having known both types of knowledge, one needs to practice according to

the proper knowledge and avoid the improper knowledge.

First, one should know what the proper knowledge is. It is *suvija*. Any knowledge and arts composed of *Brahma-vihara* (loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity) are called *suvija*. According to the *sappurisadhamma* (the seven qualities of the Good), those who abide with *suvija* normally have knowledge of *dhamma* (the cause of all phenomena), of the nature of *dhamma*, of themselves, of moderation, of timing, of their society, and of the individual. Nevertheless, the knowledge of oneself (self-knowledge) is the supreme knowledge. In the doctrine of the Dependent Origination (*paticca-samuppapada*), the Buddha explains the meanings of the merit of self-knowledge and the demerit of self-ignorance. Whenever one knows oneself, i.e. as male or female, one should fulfill one's own duty accordingly. Both men and women are equal in their dhammic practices. Only as a human-being, male or female, one can become a Stream-Winner (*sotapanna*), a Once- Returner (*sakadagami*), a Non-Returner (*anagami*), or an Arahant. Some men and women, however, who are physically or mentally handicapped and are slaves of defilements, certainly lack human qualities and cannot cultivate any good traits in their thoughts, speeches, and actions. They are not considered real human beings because they cannot cultivate knowledge in themselves.

Since human lifetime lasts only 70-80 years, it is too short to fulfill all of the world knowledge. Thus, one needs to master merely some fields of knowledge which can really make one self-dependent. Oneself is the only vehicle to attain one's destination, e.g., worldly success, the realm of heaven, the Brahma's world, the Supramundane State, and so on. One should carefully select the best path for oneself. The best path leading to the blissful states is the Noble Eightfold Path consisting of Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Those who go through the eight Paths will finally become Arahant (s). Nevertheless, if one does not want to be an Arahant but would rather enter heaven, one merely needs to fulfill

certain moral disciplines : Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood. If one wants to enter the Brahma's world, one needs to fulfill both the moral disciplines and spiritual practices : Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. Moreover, if one prefers the Supramundane State or *nibbana*, one should fulfill the moral disciplines (*sila*), the spiritual practices (*samadhi*), and the body of wisdom (*pañña*) consisting of Right View and Right Thought. Whenever one can successfully follow the Noble Eightfold Path and attain *nibbana*, one will be able to eradicate one's cycle of existence and one's suffering.

Secondly, as to the improper knowledge (*duvija*) which arises from greed, hatred, and delusion, one may be misled to harm the whole world. Those who master this kind of knowledge always try to take advantage of others. Some *duvija* are unnecessary and dangerous for humankind, e.g., a military knowledge including a skilful use of weapons. In 1914 C.E., during WWI in Europe, all world beings experienced great loss and agony because of *duvija*. In fact, we, as human beings, should love and protect one another in order to justify our so-called civilized species.

As a matter of fact, the cause of WWI is just a trivial one. A Serbian had assassinated the Austrian Prince and his consort during their trip in Serbia. Serbia and Austria then entered warfare along with their allies. The war spread all over the world and destroyed countless number of lives and properties. Both parties are proud of their *duvija*, i.e., the knowledge of inventing new kinds of weapons and destroying others.

Duvija as mentioned earlier is external. It can be also viewed as internal properties of human beings : greed, hatred, and delusion. If a person knows that s/he possesses these evil properties and immediately gets rid of them, s/he can finally attain prosperity in his/her future. On the other hand, despite his/her knowledge of evil in him/herself, s/he still prefers being its slave, s/he will certainly end up in disaster.

Duvija may imply the meaning of false knowledge. Here, it is a misconception leading one to wrong beliefs and practices, e.g., the belief that nothingness is *nibbana*, the in-

sistence that there is no life after death, and so on.

Thirdly, one should know that the love of *dhamma* is the cause of one's prosperity. Especially, one needs to understand clearly the meaning of "dhamma". All teachings of the Buddha are called the Dhamma. It is good in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end (*adikalyanam majjhenakalyanam pariyosana-kalyanam*). It is good in the beginning because it propagates the doctrine of *sila* (*morality*). It is good in the middle because it propagates the doctrine of *Samadhi* (*concentration*). And it is good at the end because it propagates the doctrine of *pañña* (*wisdom*). In short, the doctrines of *sila*, *samadhi*, and *pañña* and the Dhamma which should be personally experienced (*sanditthiko*). In order to purify oneself with the *sila*, one should be well aware of one's body, speech, and mind. Human mind is the most important means of all moral actions. It yields an intention which can restrain one from all evil speech and acts. Those who abide with *sila*, *samadhi*, and *panna* are the lovers of dhamma. They will gain prosperity and happiness in return someday.

Fourthly, one should realize that the hatred of *dhamma* will lead one to degeneration. Those who indulge in greed, hatred, and delusion are the haters of *dhamma*. They are the enemies of themselves because they let their own senses ensnare them in an eternal suffering.

The Buddha's teachings concerning the proper and improper knowledge and the love and hatred of *dhamma* can be summarized into one kind of knowledge — the knowledge of one's own self. To have a proper knowledge is to know oneself perfectly well. To have an improper knowledge is, in other words, to be ignorant of oneself. Whenever one loves *dhamma*, one simultaneously loves oneself. And if one hates *dhamma*, one will also hate oneself. Certainly, a person who knows him/herself very well is the person who possesses the supreme knowledge.

Phra Devamoli (Siricando Candra)
Borom-nivas-vihara Temple



Death and Dying

A Christian Perspective in the Context of Buddhist-Christian Dialogue

Death has been an essential topic for Christians from the beginning. In the first instance this has been Jesus' death. But that death and the following resurrection have been understood in relation to human mortality generally. Death was seen by Paul as the final enemy. Of course the death of individual believers did not preoccupy the early church. It lived in anticipation of the imminent coming of the reign of God. Paul assured the faithful that those who die before the end would be resurrected to take part in that glorious day. But with the fading of the expectation of a radical transformation of the earth into the realm of God, personal life beyond the grave assumed increasing importance. The dying and death that are the lot of all people were responded to by interpreting the sacraments as the medicine of immortality, and viewing the Christian life as one of deification, which meant primarily immortalization.

The contrast between the pleasures of this world that fade away and the everlasting joys of Christian salvation led to ascetic rejection of the world on the part of some. To encourage such rejection, death was

emphasized. In view of the powerful attraction of this worldly enjoyment, only the deepest realization of its transitory character could break attachment to it. This was sometimes attained by concentrating attention upon dying and death. In recent times meditation on death has been recommended by Martin Heidegger in order to break concern for what others think. To realize deeply that we face death alone, enables us to make our own decisions out of our own convictions and projects, rather than to try to please others and win their approval.

Some Christian theologians have emphasized the ugliness and evil of death in order to magnify the greatness of the promise of resurrection. Others call us to face the fact of death realistically out of concern that its relative hiddenness in our time leads to a psychological denial that ill prepares us for the reality.

Not all Christians have accepted the view that death is evil. For some, the assurance of a more blessed life beyond death leads to picturing death as a transition, one that is to be welcomed rather than feared. Especially those who have lived a full life and have lapsed

into weakness and pain, rejoice that death is at hand. They too find support in the New Testament.

The welcoming of death as a friend is not limited to those that are confident of blessedness hereafter. There are others who feel that death is as natural as life. Untimely death is evil, but death at the end of a good life is part of the good life, not something to be feared.

Despite this diversity of attitudes toward death among Christians, there is near consensus that the end of personal life on earth is a radically unique event for each of us. It is not just one among the transitions and losses that constitute much of human life. Instead, it is incommensurable with all other events. The accent is on its stark finality. The sense of the radical uniqueness of death arises from the assumption that personal identity from birth to death is given. Death is the end of that personal career, at least on earth. There are many losses and much suffering during the course of life, but they happen to a person who continues to exist and have new experiences. Death is the end of that road. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is affirmed against the immortality of the soul to emphasize the finality and evil of death, despite confidence in life beyond death.

Buddhism offers a powerful alternative vision. For it there is no given personal self that comes into being at some point and ends at another. Belief in such an underlying substantial reality is an illusion that leads to suffering. The true self is realized only as one becomes free of that illusion. It is the complete openness in each moment to all that is, an openness that is attained as one gives up clinging to the supposed reality of things as structured by our concepts and emotions. The true self is hence new and complete in every moment.

As a Christian I have much to learn from Buddhism. There is no substantial person underlying the flow of experience. Personal existence is not all or nothing, but rather more or less. The memories and continuities of personality that constitute personal identity are continuously coming into being and passing away. My personal being begins to die as soon as it begins to live. By freeing myself from a



false hypostatization of myself, I can indeed attain a greater freedom and openness, fuller relatedness to others. I can also see the death that comes with the last breath and the cessation of the beating of the heart, as less drastically different from the dying that is part of all of living. It, too, I can let occur in its due season.

Yet I remain shaped primarily by my Christian heritage. One reason death has loomed so large in that tradition has been the conviction of the goodness of the created order. Life, even ordinary life, is a great good. We know that it is corrupted and filled with suffering, but we affirm it even in its corrupted form, as worth enjoying. Also we see in the continuities that pervade the flow of personal experience, something positive. Experience can become richer because of the accumulation of experience. Understanding and wisdom can grow, memories can bring to the present, balance and contrast that enhance experience. This is not to deny that personal existence is replete with sorrow and suffering, but the fundamental Christian judgment is that it is nevertheless good as the created order in general is good. To understand that personal existence is a construct rather than an ontological given can enable it to be better. It need not bring it to an end. In short, I want as a Christian, to celebrate the ambiguous, ordinary, fallen world with all its mixture of joy and suffering.

Nevertheless, the Buddhists' analysis rightly relativizes biological death. It cannot be the final enemy. When we ask today what is the final enemy, the answer is, for me, the dying and death of the earth. Such dying and death includes much individual suffering and many personal deaths, but it transcends these in its significance. It is not simply the addition

of individual cases, it has a finality they lack. The dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima initiated a profound change. The collective consciousness gradually assimilated the realization that technology now exists that could destroy life on the planet. We may ourselves participate in the death of the earth. Even if it survives us, it can do so under the threat of death. Beside this inclusive death, my personal death pales into relative insignificance.

Although the possibility of the death of the planet became evident with the advent of the nuclear age and although this has provided a new context for the understanding of all suffering and death, it has been possible to



hope that the utter devastation of a major nuclear war can be indefinitely postponed. Mad though we human beings are, it seems possible that the awareness of the ultimate horrors to be inflicted on all sides in such a war, may continue to deter the use of these weapons. There is no ground for confidence, but there has been no need for hopelessness.

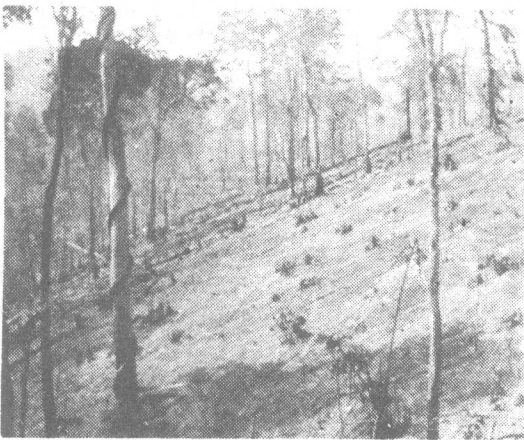
In my case, the deeper threat to hope has come from the awareness that even apart from such a war, human activity is destroying the earth. We are poisoning the air, the water and the soil. Our heating of the atmosphere will cause catastrophic climate changes, leading to the rise of ocean levels. The ozone layer that has protected the biosphere from damaging rays of the sun is being reduced, topsoil is pouring into the sea, nuclear wastes are putting posterity in permanent danger, species are disappearing at a rapid rate, on and on. The biosphere is already dying and its capacities for self renewal are being pressed beyond their limits. Only drastic changes in human behavior would slow

this process, and instead our self propagation becomes still more rapid and our quest for greater consumption continues unabated. The awareness of a present and actual dying already well advanced, affects me more deeply than the threat of a sudden death that may be indefinitely postponed.

The meaningfulness of my life here and now is far more deeply threatened by the awareness that the whole biosphere is dying than by the knowledge that I am personally dying. The latter leaves open the sense that I can contribute to others, that living things will continue to make their contribution to God, that God's purposes still have some effectiveness in nature and history, whether I can discern them clearly or not. But if the whole world is dying, it is harder to see the point of living. There are no scenarios to be imagined in which my efforts could contribute to a better future. Meaning must be found either in the hope that the dying can be stayed, or in the immediacy of enjoyment here and now, or in some combination of the two.

Neither Christianity nor Buddhism seems well prepared to address this situation. Christians sometimes affirm that God will not let the global death occur. Before the dying process has gone all the way, they think, there will be an intervention ; supernaturally a new age will be brought into being, discontinuous with this one. This message may save some from despair, but only at the price of denying the seriousness of the real situation.

Conclusions can be drawn from it that hasten the dying process, for if God will intervene before we must pay the price of our murderous acts, then proceeding with the killing will do us no harm, may even hasten the intervention of God. Other Christians call for the full acceptance by humans of their sole responsibility for the fate of the earth. We say that God has limited the exercise of divine power to make space by the exercise of human freedom and that all depends on how we assume the responsibility thus placed on us. This encourages a realistic assessment of the crises as well as commitment to take action to meet them, but this stance does little to mitigate the threat of despair. Measured by the dimensions of the crises, the positive efforts in which we collec-



tively are now engaged are small indeed, and often at cross purposes. The principalities and powers that continue to kill are too entrenched to be much affected by occasional heroic actions. While here and there, new patterns of murder become evident. Further, each finds within herself or himself, how deep-seated are the habits by which we support the power of destruction even when we consciously commit ourselves to life.

The dominant Buddhist view seems no more helpful. Much Buddhist teaching has been developed for the purpose of gaining detachment from mundane matters. One technique has been to emphasize how vast are the reaches of space and time and how trivial are the matters that loom so large for us. Even the destruction of this planet appears as a detail in the whole cosmic sweep of things. Also the sense of beginnings and ends is replaced by a feeling of the endless ongoingness of things which make impossible any strong note of finality. In this way the Buddhists may be saved from both unrealistic expectation of divine intervention and the moral responsibility that leads to despair. But if one is freed from those dead ends by adopting a less engaged relationship to the events of our time, that cannot be simply a gain. Change depends on rigorous analysis of the causes of the dying and examination of alternative scenarios of political action that might slow down or reverse it. The general Buddhist analysis of the causes of suffering helps but little. There is danger what one will find in Buddhist practice is release from the torment of hope and hopelessness in an ahistorical way of thinking just when it is

most urgent to focus attention on history.

Despite these limitations, both Christians and Buddhists can contribute to the understanding and response to the dying of the planet. Consider first some contributions of Buddhism. Buddhist mindfulness can reduce the preoccupation with self that inhibits attention to the inclusive problem and distorts actions for good causes. It can also open us to the interconnectedness of all things and break us out of our age long dualistic habits of thinking. It can reduce our attachment to possession and consumption and enable us more realistically to appraise the issues and propose solutions.

Joanna Macey has demonstrated the fruitfulness of these Buddhist contributions in empowering concerned people to work more effectively for peace. Even more impressive is the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka under the leadership of Dr. Ariyaratne. Meditation here, as in Joanna Macey's case, is not employed as a step toward complete enlightenment so much as a means to enable believers to work effectively on the most pressing issues of our time. It has also been the Buddhist vision, strengthened by meditation, that has shaped the definition of the task, guided and motivated many of the workers, and won the serious participation of hundreds of thousands of ordinary Buddhist villagers. Although the Sri Lankan government, after long resistance, finally decided to seek economic solutions through entering the global trade system, the Buddhists rightly realizing that there is no long term hope for the people through Westernization, continue unaided in their program of village development. Thousands of villages have been helped to help themselves. So in spite of government policies that work against it, a healthy village life exists, one that may survive even the collapse of the multi-national system of trade. Perhaps it may have saved enough of the Sri Lankan ecology to stave off the threatening holocaust there too.

Christian faith also makes important contributions to an adequate response to the dying of the planet. Alongside the call to responsible action which can so easily burden the Christian beyond endurance, there is the assurance of the grace both of empowerment

and forgiveness. Christians can experience God's help and guidance and know that while their best efforts are still tainted by sin, their sin is forgiven and their efforts are affirmed by God. Even worldly failure is not finally failure, if it is offered to God as our best. Christians are encouraged by our faith to view the present situation in light of where it comes from and to what end it is headed. This supports a critical analysis of the social, historical, cultural, religious factors that are now operative along with sustained reflection. It also encourages imaginative visions of possible futures worth working for. These futures might be quite different from anything that has ever occurred in the past.

I propose Teilhard de Chardin as a distinctively Christian thinker. I select him for two reasons. One is that setting his vision over against that of the Buddhist, Ariyaratne, reveals its one-sidedness and failures, but also its vivid contemporary embodiment of distinctively Christian perceptions. The second reason is that a disciple of Teilhard is making concrete proposals for responding to the dying of the planet that are radically different from those of Ariyaratne, but still, in my opinion, of profound positive significance. I refer to Paolo Soleri. Whereas the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka aims at the renewal of traditional village life, Paolo Soleri proposes an urban habitat for the future. Whereas the Buddhist vision emphasizes human community on a small scale and the intimate interdependence of humanity and nature, the vision of Paolo Soleri aims to take the next step in the evolutionary development of human kind.

Soleri sees that the way cities are now built generates problems that cannot be solved and that can be alleviated only by ever greater efforts. As cities spread out over larger and larger areas, much of the world's best farmland is paved over. In each generation a larger population must be fed on a smaller agricultural base. Meanwhile urban sprawl separates the various ethnic and economic segments of society from one another, increases concern for private possession and consumption and reduces willingness to support public facilities. The spirit of citizenship declines. Further, for increasing numbers of urban dwellers, the

countryside becomes remote, accessible only in major expeditions.

Cities of this sort are extremely consumptive of resources. They also breed crime, disease, and drug addiction. The costs go on and on. Soleri's proposal is an architectural ecology or arcology. An arcology will be designed so as to take maximum benefit from the sun: ideally passive solar energy would supply all its needs. This would be achieved in part by great reduction of those needs. For example, the huge quantity of energy used in contemporary cities for transportation would be cut to a small fraction. Within the arcology there will be no motor vehicles. Also the arcology would be so designed that waste heat from the industry would supply the energy required for heating and cooling the remainder of the structure. Both of these changes would be achieved by conceiving of the arcology in three-dimensional terms. This would make it possible to locate industry beneath the other segments of the city. It would also greatly reduce distances between parts of the city. This compression of space will be facilitated by the abolition of motor transport. Given the much smaller distances to be traversed, elevators, escalators, and moving sidewalks would suffice. Rich and poor would have equal access to all parts of the city.

My topic is death and dying and not scenarios for urban habitat; so I will refrain from further describing Soleri's vision. My justification for introducing it here, along with that of Ariyaratne, is that both point the way of life in a dying world, whereas neither Buddhism nor Christianity in general respond helpfully to the reality of this dying, and both still prefer to concentrate on the individual persons suffering and death. Still both traditions are able to provide impulses that are genuinely relevant, indeed, far more promising than those coming from the general culture or from the tradition of the enlightenment nurtured in universities, think tanks, and national bureaucracies.

It is all too easy for those who see hope for the renewal of third world rural villages to be unsympathetic to a vision of towering cities. It is equally easy for those who are focused on the novel solution to novel problems employing

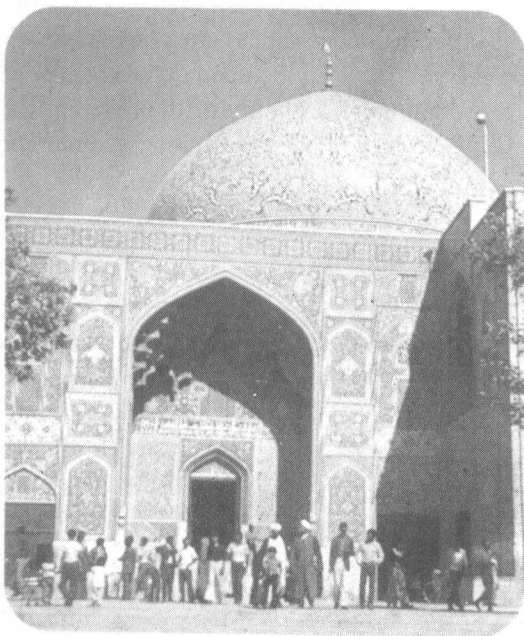
the latest technology to be contemptuous of the efforts to revitalize past forms of rural life. This is but a specific form of the difficulty of genuine mutual appreciation between Buddhists and Christians. But the time for mutual rejection and claims of superiority is long past. In a world in which almost all the dominant forces including those dominant among Buddhists and Christians, are actively or passively participating in the killing of the earth, the time has come for enthusiastic mutual support among those few who are genuinely on the side of life. Buddhist eyes and Christian eyes have been conditioned to look in different directions to see what makes for life, Buddhists, to the true reality that is always already here, Christians, to the transformed world for which we hope. But that does not mean that our conclusions and our proposals, however different, are contradictory, they are complementary. We need both. In the case of the present examples, rural and urban life are

both important. Traditional societies and new urban habitats can both support life in a way that our dominant present society cannot.

In the midst of my critique of both Buddhism and Christianity I have also made positive claims. These traditions have inspired the most hopeful responses to the dying of our world, the most practical programs for the strengthening of life. Now I want to make a stronger claim. To whatever extent each is faithful to its deepest commitments and their meanings in our time, it will repent of its participation in the murder of the earth and throw its energies into the struggle for life. They may do so in quite different ways and continue to orient us to different paths of healing. Indeed, just because we are different we need each other. Let us celebrate our differences, and if we must compete, let us compete in our gratitude to one another and our openness to transformation by one another.

John B. Cobb

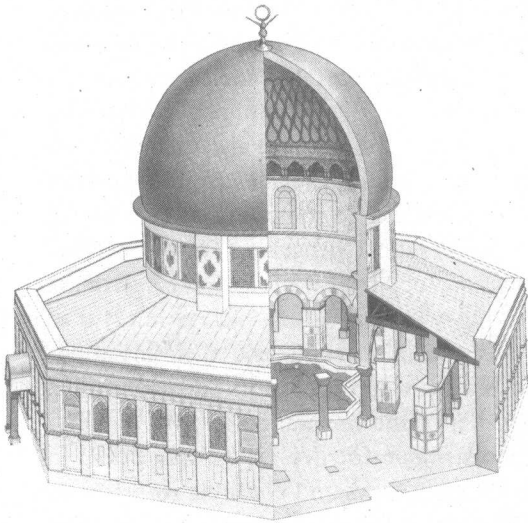
Active Non-violence in the Light of Islam



Introduction

I really do not have the scholarship to speak on such a topic as Active Non-Violence and Islam. However, I have come to this seminar both to learn and to share; so, please accept what I have to say on this subject.

Strictly speaking, if we look at AHIMSA (non-violence) from the literal point of view, we shall observe that absolute non-violence is not possible; only in **Behesta** (Heaven) is it possible to be non-violent. Ahimsa means not to kill, not to destroy. Yet, in my daily life, there are so many occasions where I have to kill or to destroy. If the pests invade my rice fields, I must destroy them; if a snake comes to attack me, I must kill it; if a mosquito sits on my body to bite me, I smash it to death. All this is violence.



Divine Sources of Non-Violence

What then is Active Non-Violence? It is when Justice prevails in society, when there is Peace, when the sufferings of men are less. It means an atmosphere of Peace throughout the world. Allah created this world for peaceful living; Love is the source of the stream of Life on earth. Thus, Allah is the source of Active Non-Violence.

In Islam, we are taught that before Allah created Man, He told His **fereshitas** (angels) about His intention to create Man as His **vice-regent** on earth. The angels protested saying that men would constantly be fighting among themselves, like the jinns (genie) whom Allah had created earlier, and who by their violence had destroyed the earth. But Allah quietened the angels by reminding them that what Allah knows they do not know. So, man was created; and Allah created man to do **ibadat** (worship of Allah) and to live in peace on earth. Man was to imitate the qualities of Allah, and to spread Islam (peace) all over the earth.

Examples in early Islam

Our Rasul Karim (the Holy Prophet--peace be on him) was very much persecuted during his lifetime. But whoever caused him hurt, bodily or mentally, him the Prophet loved more dearly. His life is full of such examples.

There is the incident before the last **Hajj** (pilgrimage) of the Holy prophet (s.m.) to Mecca, when he came to perform **Umrah**

(prayerful visit to the sacred shrine, outside the pilgrimage period), when the Quraish tribe of Mecca put obstructions in his way. The Shahaba (companions of the Holy Prophet) claimed that they alone had the right to perform Umrah. At the time of this incident the Prophet was strong enough militarily to fight the Meccans, but he relented; he was non-violent. He agreed peacefully to whatever conditions the Meccans imposed, including the striking off of the name of the Holy Prophet (s.m.) from the list of those allowed to enter the shrine. This was done fully in the spirit of Active Non-Violence. It was a military defeat for the Muslims as an army, but a great victory for peace, and for living in harmony.

Somone served poison to the Caliph Omar II (Omar ibne Absul Aziz). This great Caliph, instead of putting the guilty person to death, arranged that he flee the country so that no violence could be done to him.

Again, when Hazrat Abu Bakr became Caliph, all the leaders offered **bayat** (allegiance) to him; only Hazrat Ali did not. In this instance, the Caliph did not force the allegiance from Ali, but continued meeting him everyday, remaining very friendly with him; there was no violence, and ultimately Ali gave **bayat** to Abu Bakr.

Some Islamic Principles

If we want to be non-violent, first of all we must have **Iman** or faith. It means that **namaz** (worshipful prayer), **raza** (fasting) and the other Islamic practices must be part of our daily life. This is all included in the concept of **Iman**. **Namaz** is a quality of the Muslim; the **masjid** or mosque is the training ground for



namaz, and outside the **masjid** the real worship or true **namaz** is done. When the **azan** (call to prayer) is given, we are reminded of the greatness and goodness of Allah. When Allah calls, we are reminded that Islam is peace, and that a Muslim must live in peace and harmony with his neighbours. It is only after offering **namaz** or worship, when we come out of the mosque and behave like true Muslims, that true Peace will come to this world.

Simplicity of life is an essential quality of the true Muslim. **Zakat** (tithes) is the Islamic safeguard for a simple life. In the Islamic point of view, in four actions especially must man be simple and thrifty, namely: (1) in the building of his house, (2) in marriage ceremonies, (3) in dressing and (4) in food. Nowadays, we Muslims tend to do just the opposite. We forget the example of the Holy Prophet (s.m.) himself; at Taif, he was pelted with stones and suffered pain. And he prayed for his persecutors. Yet we are not ready to practise even a little of the example of the Holy Prophet (s.m.). If we can live simple lives, Active Non-Violence becomes easy.

A true Muslim is one who bases his life on that of the Holy Prophet (s.m.) Take **jihad** (holy war); it is to fight against the evil within ourselves, not to kill others. It is not to be envious of others, not to steal; all this is **jihad**. To live in peace with everyone, as the Holy Prophet (s.m.) did, with non-violence; this is true **jihad**.

Some Personal Experiences

One last year, after offering my afternoon prayer, I noticed some boys playing cards under a tree in the college campus. This aroused me very much; because they were outsiders, not my college boys. When I accosted them, one of the boys answered me rudely, "We are not your students, so what?" I was stunned by this reply, but somehow I chose not to carry the argument further, and then went on my way. I thought over the incident all night, and then I said to myself: I must follow the way of Islam, of peace and non-violence. From that day on, I went everyday past the house of that particular boy, and greeted him in Islamic fashion, and spoke in a friendly way. Soon, he was won over. Not

only did he become my friend, but he also now worships and prays with me in the same mosque.

In a certain **madrassah** (Islamic school) there was a rule that if a student did not take part in the **fazr** (pre-dawn) prayers, he would not be given food. It so happened that one student got up late one morning and saw that the prayer had already begun.

He then just rushed off to the prayers, without performing **wazoo** (ablutions). Who is really responsible for his faulty observance of **namaz**? prayers (**namaz**) cannot be enforced by law; this is not Islam. There is no compulsion in Islam, which is a religion of non-violence.

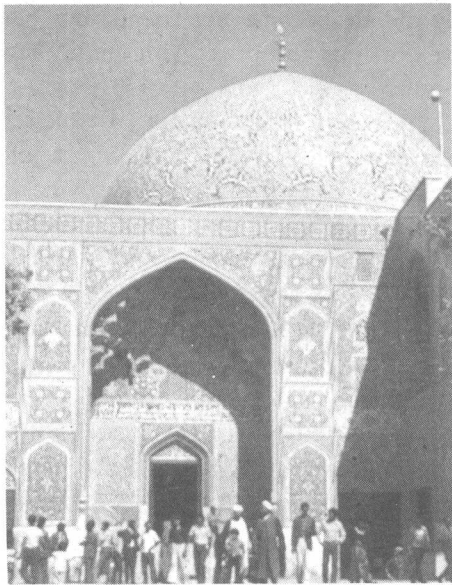
It is not by violence that we can change the world. One of my friends once used to strongly advocate violence in politics. Thanks be to Allah, I have convinced him of the opposite, and this was by making him pray with me and become a true Muslim.

In my family life also I have experience of Active Non-Violence, especially in convincing my wife to bear with my practice of simple living and having patience with others. For instance, she has difficulty in accepting why I, a College Principal, have to wash my own clothes and not send them to the laundry.

Personally; I am connected with the **Tablig Jamat**. We believe strongly in the peaceful propagation of Islam. It is not always easy to do the work of **Dawat** (invitation to Islam). A friend of mine, professor at Rajshahi University, encouraged me saying: your work is to spread the message of Islam; it is like a gas lamp, which even if the householder shuts the door upon it, once the light has entered the house something of the message remains within, while you still have the light with you. This is the spirit of Islam, the non-violent approach.

Conclusion

Let us begin by ourselves. Those of us who are Muslims, let us practise our religion properly. Islam means peace; I have coined an Islamic meaning for Peace, thus: P stands for prayer; E for Education; A for Action; C for Caution; E for Evaluation. This is a simple practical formula we could all follow.



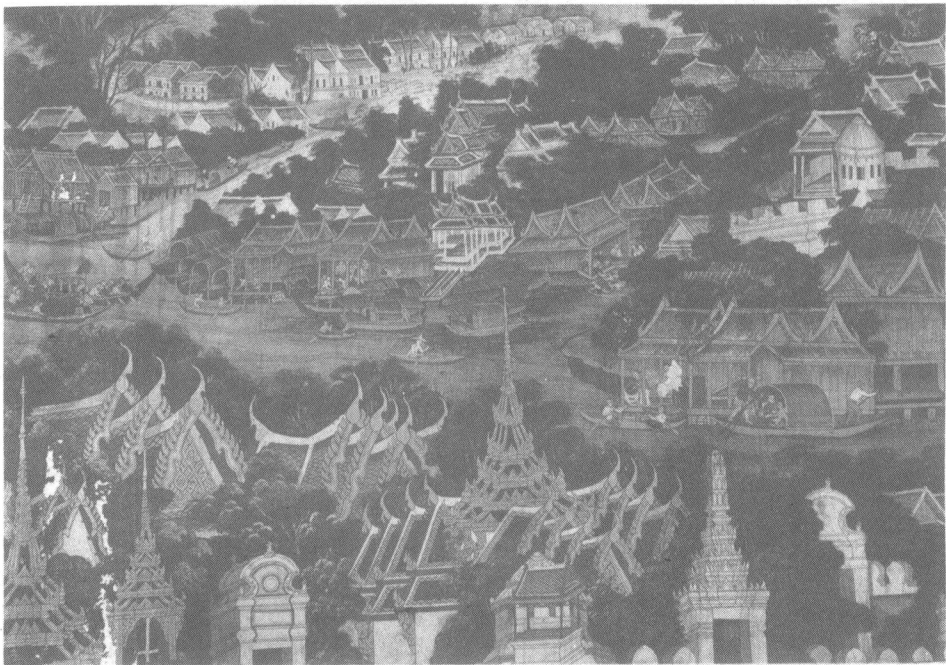
In our families we could also start by saying "Assalamu Alaikum" to one another, that is, Peace be to you. Wife and children may be surprised at this, because we are used to say this only to our elders and to strangers and others; but this is the beginning of peaceful living in practice.

If continually we speak of Peace, use peaceful words, and practise Islam, then Active Non-Violence is possible from the Islamic point of view

Md. Giasuddin Ahmed

Translated from the Bengali original by **Brother Jarlath D' Souza C.S.C.**

Presentation given at Non-Violence Seminar on February 13, 1987, The Peace Centre, Khalia, Bangladesh

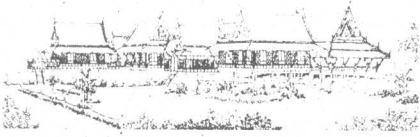


Comments on Culture & Environment

Since nobody challenged the four 'modes' that Chong Keat described—tribal, feudal, modern and international—I will take them as models. I feel that the word 'tribal' has both positive and nega-

tive connotations, but I think we are all partly tribal.

If you look at the Southeast Asian region from the perspective of culture and environment, there may be some discrepancies.



As for the so-called South, the poorer part of the world, you have to realize that our ills are not only within the region or a tribe or a country, but have also come from outside the region.

Speaking as a Buddhist, I will go right to the root cause: widescale greed. I think that is the cause of all evils. Of course, there are others such as commercialism. The more you sell to the richer part of the world, the more you are at a loss. It is the same when you talk of the second evil, hatred. It is now personified in the military and the superpowers.

Unfortunately, within the region we have been told to look outside the region. With respect to Dr. Chong Keat, his prime minister has said, "Look east"—meaning toward Japan. But do we want to be a little Japan or a little South Korea? Why don't the Thai look to the Malaysians? They have a lot of things to offer the Thai, politically and otherwise.

So, first, we ought to look within the region and, second, within our countries and cultures. My third point is *avijja*, or delusion, which seems to control the whole educational system. Higher education now is broadcast on television. The mass media educates people to look down upon their own culture and admire the consumer culture, greed, hatred and all the wrong values.

I think most of the universities in this country fail, just as they fail in America and elsewhere. But, in a poorer country, when we fail we suffer more. Two hundred thousand graduates in our country are unemployed. Worse than that, those who have graduated look down upon those who are illiterate.

But I want to end up in a positive tone. What do we do?

I agree with Chong Keat in that we cannot turn the clock back. But each society, nation and culture has to dig into its own culture, not for romanticism—although that is no harm—but for its own culture. A culture should be brought to be more meaningful

within its own society. This is now happening.

Now I will mention Indonesia. Since none of our discussants are from that country, I am safe. The Pesantran movement in Indonesia, a self-help Muslim education movement, is not perfect. But it has a Buddhist base and a Brahmanistic base, and it is fairly tolerant. Its movement has a membership of more than one million, I think the Thai Muslims and even the non-Thai Muslims, ought to look to Indonesia to learn from them.

In Malaysia, the Consumers Association of Penang has its weaknesses, of course, but this nongovernment organization is doing something wonderful there. Even smaller, the Aliran movement is Muslim, but at the same time, more ecumenical. From a spiritual and cultural base, it is very concerned with the environment.

Despite the fact that the church has ruled for so long in the Philippines, there is a nonviolent Christian movement there that played a leading role in overthrowing the Marcos regime. This movement has many hundreds of villagers. Unfortunately still limited to the Christians—both Protestants and Catholics—the movement is now linking with Muslims in the south. They are linking with us in this country and the people of Bangladesh.

Asian nonviolent action is going to be something strong. Of course, we may fail. This is where the Thai ought to learn—from the Malaysians, Indonesians and the Filipinos. I mention but a few of these alternative development models within each country's cultural context.



Within this country, Dr. Akin, director of a research institute, in the Northeast, has said that he has come to realize that all our research institutes, if we only look to the West, can never answer our problems. Dr. Akin is now looking to the Buddhist University. He is now supporting Luang Po Nan, a monk leader in the Northeast.

Many Thai monks, who are not yet a movement, are now going back to our traditional roots through meditation and the collecting of alms. Most of the monks come from the poorest of the poor. Although education, particularly under the modern system, makes the poor want to be upper class, these monks want to be back where they come from, to understand the poor and yet also have the political analysis of where the poor have been exploited. They are not Marxist because they use Buddhist meditation. They do not hate the oppressor but try to understand the system of oppression, so that compassion is possible, so that change will be nonviolent and peaceful.

And I am very encouraged. Dr. Brockelman said NGO's in this country are weak. Maybe they are weak, but I have been working with them for the last 20 years, and they have become much stronger, and they are linked together. In Chiang Mai there is a Northern NGO movement, and a good thing too. In the last few years they have come to realize that they must respect the local culture and that they must understand Buddhism. This is something new in the last two or three years. For me, that is encouraging.

Speaking as a Buddhist again, you may have heard of the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka. It has its shortcomings, but the monks there want to link with our monks. They want to use meditation practices to alert society to be aware of the wickedness of urbanization. Three or four missions have now come to learn from us, and we have sent some to learn from them.

And we are doing something similar with Japan. I have said, "You Japanese, how wonderful, you are rich but you are empty spiritually. Unless your Buddhism goes beyond funeral services, your Buddhism is dead. You may be able to export to the West, but you must learn from us and we must learn from

you." Very few Buddhists in Japan are linking with those of us in the South.

Not that the Thai culture is superior to the Malay culture, or that the Untouchable culture is inferior. No, each culture is unique in itself. Of course, each has its negative and positive effects, but we must learn from each other.

I agree that internationalism means that we learn from each other. Yet we must remain; I will ever remain a Siamese. But at the same time, I am a Southeast Asian, an Asian and a citizen of the world on this very small planet Earth. You see, if we look for something positive within our region or culture or society, then we are able to relate to others in Japan, the U.S.A. and elsewhere.

These things are happening not only in this region but also in America. The big superpower, on the whole, has been oppressing us politically, economically and culturally. Yet there are very, very good people in America who try to look for alternatives. We even have a very good USIS director who works very closely with us—not very often, unfortunately.

You see, we have been following the West. Some people might not like to hear it, but we have been following the West blindly and rather closely, I think.

The West has subtle aspects which are very meaningful and we should learn by following the West on the subtle aspects: the concern for human rights, the environment, (traditional) culture. Most importantly, we must learn to challenge the status quo to make justice possible. I think that we could learn that from the West more than anywhere else. At least I have learned that from the West.

I think that we must continue to learn from the West, but the West must also learn from us. We must work within the region, as we must within our cultures. With that, I think, perhaps the region will possess some thing positive, culturally and environmentally.



Appeal to Save the Chakma



Survival International has recently published a report on the ever-deteriorating situation in the CHT. Despite of the government restriction on the entry of foreign journalists and delegations of human rights groups to the area and in spite of the government suppression of any information about the plight of the Jumma people, **Survival International** has been able to gather evidence of systematic genocide of the CHT people committed by the security forces of Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi settlers. "These include descriptions of the following human rights abuses carried out by the Bangladesh Army:- unlawful killings, torture, rape, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment without trial, burning of villages, looting, forcible eviction of people from their land, forcible relocation of people into 'co-operative villages (in fact concentration camps)', desecration of Buddhist temples and forcible conversion to Islam"

The unscrupulous regime of Bangladesh has ignored repeated appeals from the entire civilized world to halt genocide of the Jumma people. Deeply alarmed by the Bangladesh Government's complete disregard for human rights, **Survival International** has given a clear picture of what is going on in the CHT to the compassionate international community. This conscience-keeper of the mankind wrote: "Despite the difficulties of verifying allegations of human rights abuses in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, independent testimonies appear to substantiate the claim that gross violations of the human rights of the tribal peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts continued during the first part of 1987. In spite of repeated appeals from the international community to halt these abuses and to control the activities of the security forces, the Bangladesh Government has continued to deny that human rights violations are occurring in the Hill Tracts".... "Similarly, the Government has continued to

ignore the claims of the tribal peoples of the Hill Tracts to their rights to their lands and to a degree of autonomy that will allow them control over their own development. Rather than revise its policy towards the tribal people in the Chittagong Hills, the Bangladesh authorities have sought to lay all the blame for the disturbances on the Shanti Bahini"

Once again, **Survival International** has reiterated its concern at the continuing reports of human rights abuse in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.... In a letter to the Bangladesh President, *General Ershad*, **Survival International** has urged that the National Committee give detailed consideration to the question of land ownership, to ensure that modifications are introduced into the law to give full recognition to the customary systems of land tenure. It has also "urged that the Government takes all possible steps to ensure that the tribal peoples are given a decisive voice in the administration and development of the Hill Tracts". It is, perhaps, worth-noting that **Survival International** made a fervent appeal to the *Indian Government* to keep the Jumma refugees in Tripura until their safe return to the CHT could be guaranteed. The compassionate *Government of India* has responded to its appeal and to the earnest appeals made by other human rights groups. But the Bangladeshi regime has neither removed the Bangladeshi settlers from the CHT nor has it withdrawn its armed forces from the region and thus it has failed to create a favourable condition for the safe return of the Jumma refugees to their ancestral homeland.

I fervently appeal to you to send an inquiry delegation to the CHT to investigate all human rights violations committed by the brutal Government of Bangladesh against the unarmed Jumma people. I believe this action will force the Bangladeshi regime to stop its genocidal activities in the CHT. I would also like to request you to take care of the 50,000 Jumma refugees who have taken refuge in the Tripura State of India. They need your help for their survival.

Ramendu Sewan

The Foundation of the Thai Nuns Institute: A Contemporary Female Movement within Theravada Buddhism

The total number of Thai nuns today is approximately 70,000. They live in different monasteries around the country. Some enter nunhood because of their

personal problems; but some choose the ordination because of their strong faith in Buddhism. Nevertheless, most Thai nuns generally lead their lives at will. Though they are ex-

pected to keep the Eight Precepts,* they are not quite serious with their practices. Some nuns become merely beggars of donations since they lack supporters and, according to the monastic rules, cannot go on an alms-round like monks. Besides, owing to their low education, most nuns have to depend primarily on monks' knowledge of the Buddhist doctrine and give them their services, such as cooking and cleaning, in return. In order to improve the image of Buddhist nuns, nuns' leaders from various parts of the country held a meeting in Bangkok in 1979 and unanimously founded the Thai Nuns Institute under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen. This was the first systematic movement originated by a group of Theravada Thai nuns for the sake of the female status and religious roles in Thai society.

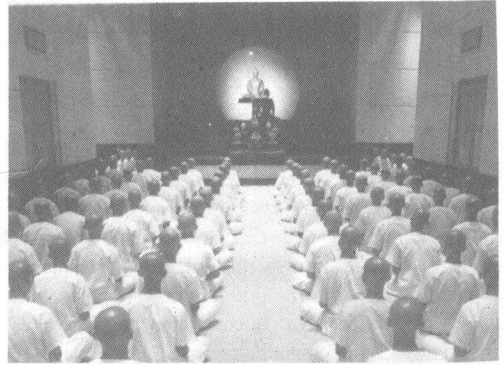
The Thai Nuns Institute has declared its objectives as follows:

1. To unite all Thai nuns
2. To encourage harmony among Thai nuns
3. To standardize Thai nuns' monastic disciplines
4. To improve the status of Thai nuns
5. To right some Thai nuns' misconducts
6. To provide Thai nuns with more knowledge and skills in propagating the Buddhist doctrine, performing religious duties, and serving community
7. To help all helpless old nuns
8. To provide poor girls with a proper education

It is not quite easy to fulfill all these objectives within a short time. Nevertheless, the Institute has tried its best to attain its goal. So far, its religious task has been done successfully. Its executive members regularly meet four times a year. The nuns' monastic rules have been enforced. Now, Thai nuns who are members of the Institute cannot conduct themselves randomly; they have to be serious with their monastic disciplines.

According to the Thai Nuns Institute's requirements, apart from the Eight Precepts,

* The Eight Precepts are the abstinence from taking life, from taking what is not given, from unchastity, from false speech, from intoxicants, from untimely eating, from worldly entertainments and decorations, and from comfortable luxurious couches.



nuns should adhere to the Fivefold Etiquette, the Six Virtues for Communal Living (*saraniya-dhamma*), and the Seventy-Five rules for Training (*sekhiya-dhamma*). They have to avoid the Ten unwholesome courses of action (*akusala-kammapatha*), the Seven Bonds of Sexuality (*methuna-samyoga*), and the Sixteen Mental Defilements (*upakkilesa*). The Fivefold Etiquette is for good manners in standing, walking, sitting, sleeping, and speaking. These must be performed properly and politely in order to make nuns respectable for all Buddhists.

The Six Virtues for Communal Living and the Seventy-Five Rules for Training are aimed to refine nuns' conduct. For example, a nun should not laugh and speak loudly; a nun should not swing her arms in a house of a layperson, and so on. All of the Institute's requirements are necessary for raising the image of Thai Buddhist nuns which, as one may know, has been deteriorated for a long time. If all Thai nuns conduct themselves well according to their monastic rules, they will become more respectable and gain more support from laity. Hence, they can have more chance to raise their status in Thai society.

Moreover, the Thai Nuns Institute has authorized an identification document for each nun in order to eliminate false nuns. It has also published Buddhist prayer books and journals for nuns in order to propagate its work and the Buddha's teachings. These publications make nuns more knowledgeable of Buddhism and become self-reliant.

The activities of the Thai Nuns Institute are now progressing. The Institute, however, never asks for donations. Its financial support comes primarily from the Office of Religious

Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and partially from its publications, and so on. According to the article, "Boosting the Image of Buddhist Nuns," in *The Nation*, Thailand's English-language newspaper, 6 October 1986, "the nuns cope very well with the village women, an additional duty they perform is the role of a family counsellor". There are some family problems that women villagers would only talk about with the nuns; it is considered inappropriate to seek advice from monks on personal problems. Nun Arun (the secretary of the Foundation of the Thai Nuns Institute) said that "Dhamma teachings have been inserted in the counselling." The newspaper further reported that a volunteer nun could help many families earn extra income. "Many women have opened food shops and some men who learned flower-making are making

200 baht (approximately 9 dollars) per bouquet." Undoubtedly, the Institute is aiming mainly at training women to be able to support themselves rather than race with men for sexual equality.

The Institute has no interest in any movement for the ordination of a "female monk" (*bhikkhuni*). Its members are satisfied with their religious way of life. They believe that the attainment of the Buddhist goal, *nibbana*, depends on a person's spiritual purity rather than his/her religious status. And as long as the Institute continues to work for the betterment of Thai women, one can hope that Thai women will become self-reliant and live happily in their society in the near future.

Ms. Pataraporn Sirikanchana

BOOK REVIEWS

A Socially Engaged Buddhism

by S. Sivaraksa

Witnessing ever increasing world crisis, Albert Einstein once said "We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive". People with good intention around the world have picked up the 'New Thinking' and searched for its meaning and its whereabouts. They don't seem to have found it. New thinking is extremely difficult or impossible. For people have been programmed by and for old thinking which has led mankind into perpetual and increasing crises.

Actually 'New Thinking' is not new. Over 2500 years ago Lord Buddha taught new manner of thinking. New manner of thinking is possible only after the brain old programme is replaced by a new one. Usually people are programmed by selfishness through *avijja* or ignorance which leads to conflicts and violence. Buddhists are taught not only the theory but emphatically the practice to free oneself from the inherent ignorance. Through decreasing ignorance and increasing wisdom can real development and peace occur.

Through the ages Buddhism has been diluted, superficialized contaminated and distorted by other beliefs, local culture and politics. It must be admitted that the

Buddhists in general, including the monks, have been detached from and out of touch with the dynamicity of the societies. They have adopted a passive attitude toward social problems and thus do not seem to have vision and practical solution to present-day and future complex social problems.

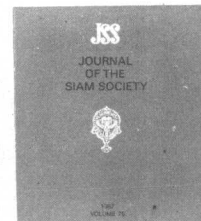
S. Sivaraksa—the author of this book is a Buddhist scholar and activist. He has tirelessly tried to mobilize the Buddhists to be engaged in social development. He must be credited for instigating the movement of 'Religions for Development'. In several articles in this book he has reviewed the Buddhist vision for development and provoked thoughts on a desirable society in the near future from a Buddhist perception.

It is time now for New Thinking in development. Religious values in the context of the new and ever changing societies should be critically reviewed. We have the confidence that Buddhism can offer New Thinking for development. It is hoped that this book—An Engaged Buddhism—will be stimulating to readers in search of wisdom for new development.

Prawase Wasi

Journal of the Siam Society (JSS)

The *Journal of the Siam Society (JSS)* is one of those unworldly publications beloved by professional scholars and erudite amateurs. The Journal's fortunes shift with



the winds of time and the varying degrees of energy and enthusiasm exhibited by the Honorary Editor and Editorial Board.

Volume 75 (1987) is a special issue, humbly and respectfully dedicated to the Society's royal patron, His Majesty the King, on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

Produced under the Honorary Editorship of Sulak Sivaraksa, one of Thailand's most authentic intellectuals and social critics, Volume 75 of the JSS is a veritable gold mine. Nearly 350 pages, of which 95 percent is in English, of scholarly texts and analyses shed light on such diverse topics as "Thai Spirituality" (S. Sivaraksa), "New Ethnic Names for the Tin of Nan Province" (David Filbeck), "An Attempt to Fly in the Face of the Ordinary Laws of Supply and Demand: The British and Siamese Rice 1945-7" (Nicholas Tarling) and "Potters marks and other writing on Northern Thai or Lan Na Ceramics" (J.C. Shaw and Hans Pentz). In addition, one finds over 20 reviews of books, many of which might have otherwise escaped people's notice.

Reading this special issue of the JSS one is encouraged by the interest and depth

of knowledge demonstrated by so many foreigners in diverse aspects of Siam's history and culture, and heartened to see significant contributions by a number of Siamese scholars.

Volume 75 will probably not receive as wide a readership as it deserves but it certainly stands well beside the many other publications dedicated to His Majesty the King on the occasion of his 60th birthday. Knowledge and understanding of our past is one of the most important legacies our children can inherit. JSS represents a major on-going effort in this direction.

from *Bangkok Post*
Sunday January 24, 1988

Volume 75 of the *Journal of the Siam Society* came out in December and maintains its usual high standard under the editorial guidance of S. Sivaraksa.

The prize article is probably "The United States and the Coming of the Coup of 1947 in Siam" by Thanet Aphorn-suvan. This explains how and why the intelligent and humane leaders of the Seri Thai (Free Thai) movement who had been active against the Axis Powers during the war and were in place to govern Siam in the post-war years, were crushed by our own little Fuehrer and his bunch of crooks. This is a story that needs to be told if we are to understand how Siam became "Thailand" and what is happening today.

This edition of the *Journal* is as usual well-balanced and contains something for everyone.

Also in December the Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development put out Vol.4 No.1 of *Seeds of Peace*. It contains thoughtful articles on questions of war and peace and how true development—a generous development that involves all and benefits all—may be achieved. There are also valuable contributions on ecology, economics and Buddhism.

Seeds of Peace is available at: Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development, GPO Box 1960, Bangkok 10510.

from *Art & Culture* February 1988

Some Traditions of the Thai



Just recently a very important book came out: *Some Traditions of the Thai*, and other translations of Phya Anuman Rajadhon's articles on Thai customs.

Phya Anuman, who died some time ago, was acknowledged by many Siamese and foreigners as their Guru in the culture and folklore of this region. He usually wrote in Thai, but his works were found to be so valuable that he never lacked for translators.

This collection contains articles on the khwan or spirit-calling ceremony, childbirth and child rearing, spirit mediums and folk tales.

This book is an invaluable aid for westerners who wish to know the workings of traditional Siamese society, of which so much has already been lost.

from *Art & Culture* March 1988

Recommended Reading

Religions and Ideologies in the Asian Struggle, Asia Regional Fellowship 4th Assembly, Chiangmai 19-24 May 1987.

Self-Help Promotion: A Challenge to the NGO Community by K. Verhagen (Cebemo/Royal Tropical Museum, the Netherlands) 1987.

Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation-State by Charles F. Keyes (Westview Press/Boulder Colorado) 1987.

A King of Siam Speaks translated with introduction from writing of King Mongkut, especially his last letter written in Pali on his deathbed, addressed to the Buddhist Brotherhood by M.Rs Seni & Kukrit Pramoj, 1st edition (the Siam Society) Bangkok, 1987.

Des Racines Pour Vivre: Sud-Nord: Identities Culturelles et Development par Thierry Verhelst (Duculot Perspectives) Paris-Gembloux (1987).

Bouddhisme et Socialisme par Buddhadasa Bhikkhu (les Deux Oceans)

Louis Gabaude, *Une Hermeneutique Bouddhique Contemporaine de Thaïlande: Buddhadasa Bhikkhu* Paris, 1987.

World Council of Churches, "Report and Background Papers Meeting of the Working Group, Glion, Switzerland, September 1987," *Church and Society*. Geneva, 1988.

Buddhist - Christian Studies Vol.6, 1986. David W. Chappell editor. East-West Religions Project, University of Hawaii.

Punishing The Poor: The International Isolation of Kumpuchea by Eva Mysliwicz (Oxfam) 1988.

The following are books which should be read, and are ideal, for giving to friends who love Siam or want to know Siamese Buddhism

1. *A Socially Engaged Buddhism* by S. Sivaraksa Bht. 250 (hard cover) Bht. 160 (paper back) locally (abroad US\$ 12 hard cover US\$ 8 paper back)

S. Sivaraksa's vision; in this series of papers, is of a Buddhism playing a direct and active part in national and world politics. He believes that Buddhist teaching, actively applied to everyday politics will lead the way to a good and just society. He considers this theme in historical, geographical, social and personal perspectives, and writes with clarity and insight.

2. *Looking to America to Solve Thailand's Problems* by Phra Rajavaramuni: translated by Grant A. Olson 94 pp. Bht. 90 locally (abroad US\$ 5 post free)

Phra Rajavaramuni is renowned for his challenging treatises on Buddhist philosophy and the practical application of Buddhist thought in this book, he focuses on the nature of change, and the need to ensure that development conforms to the Dhamma and leads towards the lessening of suffering.

Phra Rajavaramuni's argument is that only by the liberation of the intellect through reliance on the Dhamma can we choose the right path to development; not from fear but through commitment to correctness and the control of craving.

3. *A Buddhist Vision for Renewing Society* by S. Sivaraksa (paper back) Bht. 120 locally (abroad US\$ 6 post free)

Acharn Sulak may be unpopular in certain circles, but even a cursory reading of "A Buddhist Vision For Renewing Society" will make it abundantly clear that many of the criticisms levelled against him are without basis. He thinks, speaks and acts as a Buddhist whose "passionate moderation" represents traditional Theravadin themes, which have been strongly influenced by Mahayana, Zen Buddhism, and the imaginative "this worldly" ethic of Buddhadasa. His radical criticism of western patterns of development parallels Schumacher, and his advocacy of non-violence, is at once Buddhist and Gandhian.

4. *Siamese Resurgence* by S. Sivaraksa 492 pp. Bht. 260 (hard cover) Bht. 180 (paper back) locally (abroad US\$ 15 hard cover US\$ 7 paper back post free)

This book is a collection of over twenty lectures, speeches and articles which

provide an important contribution to the understanding of Buddhism and the past, present and future of Siam. There are new insights on Buddhism, and the exercise of authority in different periods of Thai history.

A series of appendices deal with Sulak's arrest on charges of lese majesté, reflecting contemporary Thai politics, the power struggles within the ruling circles and the role of the military. This book is essential reading for anyone concerned with development, justice and Buddhist ethics.

5. *Siamese for All Seasons* by Puey Ungphakorn 351 pp. Bht. 130 locally (abroad US\$ 5 post free).

Puey Ungphakorn's "A Siamese for all Seasons" is a collection of articles by and about Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, one of the outstanding leaders of modern Thailand. It takes the reader on an exciting journey through Dr. Puey's experiences in the Free Thai Movement during World War II, his struggles to help build a democratic Thailand with a strong and just economy, and his deeply personal views of the events that led up to and beyond the events of October, 1976.

Dr. Puey's clarity and welcome sense of humor make this book easy to read, yet powerful and thought-provoking.

6. *Buddhist Monuments in Siam* by H.R.H Prince Damrong Rajanubhab (Translated by A.B. Griswold & S. Sivaraksa) Bht. 70 locally (US\$ 3.50 abroad post free)

This well-produced introduction to Buddhist antiquities in Siam has two parts, the first being a historical account of Buddhism in this country. Four periods are covered by the author, from the original Theravada in India, through Mahayana and the 'Hinayana' of Pagan, to the Ceylon Order.

The second part covers the various periods of the Monuments of the Buddha in Siam. These periods are all of artistic significance, and, in fact, styles changed with political and cultural changes.

This book is well worth reading by anyone who wishes to know about the evolution of stupas and Buddha-images in this country. The twenty-seven pages of plates are very useful illustration to the text.

7. *Popular Buddhism in Siam and Other Essays on Thai Studies* by Phya Anuman Rajadhon 216 pp. Bht. 300 (hard cover) Bht. 200 (paper back) locally (abroad US\$ 15 hard cover US\$ 10 paper back post free)

Phya Anuman was the doyen of

Thai studies. He has been an invaluable guide to foreigners in understanding the many aspects of Thai culture. He died in 1969, but his writings in English are timeless. The Thai monkhood, Buddhist Lent, Evil Spirits, the Rice Mother, the Threat-Square for Charms, amulets, and many more subjects are all discussed with a wise and friendly erudition.

8. *Some Traditions of the Thai and other translations of Phya Anuman Rajadhon's articles on Thai customs* by Phya Anuman Rajadhon 196 pp. Bht. 200 locally (abroad US\$ 10 paper back post free)

Phya Anuman claimed only a humble share of knowledge, but he revealed in the course of his long and fruitful life a vast knowledge of Thai customs and folk-lore. Phya Anuman was universally recognized as the foremost scholar of Siamese studies.

The Thai inter-Religious Commission for Development and Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation are to be commended for bringing out this comprehensive translation of his work. It is the most authoritative and the most enjoyable of reference texts on the subject of Siamese culture and its preservation.

9. *Dhammic Socialism* by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu: translated, edited and introduced by Donald K. Swearer. 142 pp. Bht. 80 locally (abroad US\$ 4 post free)

Dr. Swearer, a Presbyterian, introduces Buddhadasa's concept of Dhammic Socialism. He has translated the Bhikkhu's 4 articles and pamphlets & edited them into chapters, which will help non Thai readers to understand Buddhist social activism. Dr. Swearer regards Buddhadasa as important as the Great Buddhaghosa of the Theravada tradition and the Great Nagarajuna of the Mahayana School. This book alone may not convince us of the claim, but those who seek Buddhist models of development will not fail to take Dhammic Socialism seriously.

10. *Angkarn Kalyanapong: A contemporary Siamese Poet*. Bht. 80 locally (abroad US\$ 4 post free)

People who "see" Angkarn Kalyanapong may think he is eccentric. Some who "know" him feel that he is inclined to be arrogant, while others who "know" him enjoy his discourse and sense of humour. But for those who "understand" him, Angkarn may be aggressive and perhaps self-righteous, but his heart is in the right place. And his work declares him to be a genius. He is, by general consent, the leading contemporary Thai poet, also a painter,

an artist and a social critic.

This collection of Angkarn's poetry is rich in style and content, a traditional Thai literary forms and modern reality through which he speaks the truth about the modern world.

11. *Painted Sculpture on the Life of the Buddha: Folk Art at Wat Thongnopakun* Bht. 200 locally (abroad US\$ 8 post free)

This is a beautiful book of folk art superbly illustrated with photographs, and compiled in 1915 by a group of independent craftsmen at Ban Chang Lor in Thonburi, a community specializing in the making of Buddhist sculpture.

The English text attempts to re-create the Thai narration of the life of the Buddha in the archaic style of the early Bangkok period.

12. *Religion and Development* by Sulak Sivaraksa. 80 pp. Bht. 90 locally (abroad US\$ 5 post free)

Sulak Sivaraksa is widely known and highly respected as a Buddhist intellectual.

Sulak's main thesis is two fold: the rejection of western-style materialist "development"; and the profession of a Gandhian type of simple human development, rooted in religion, and with an emphasis on quality of life.

He is argumentative but his argument enlightens and convinces.

13. Karl Giellerup. *Pilgrim Kamanita: A Legendary Romance in Thai and English*. 464 pp. Bht. 200 locally (abroad US\$ 10 post free)

A fascinating picture of high life in Indian ancient times, convincing in its wealth of detail. Even Karl Giellerup's excursions into fantasy have the ring of truth.

Readers who enjoy a good story and who love the Dhamma will enjoy this book.

Please order through Mrs. Nilchawee Sivaraksa, Suksit Siam 1715 Rama IV Road, Samyan, Bangkok. There will be no postage charge to anywhere in the world. The shop is having a branch almost next door at 1705 Rama IV Road which is now SUBHAROS CAFE.



OBITUARIES



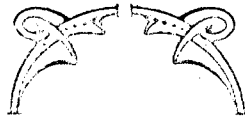
VIKASBHAI

During these days when we meet or write to one another we share our sense of loss at the death of Vikasbhai. I had met him first in Bangkok in 1975 when social activists had gathered from Asia and the Pacific to set up the Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD). It was difficult not to notice Vikasbhai at meetings. He was a big man. His large physical frame, clothed in the distinctive hand-woven, ample clothes, the mop of black hair and the vigorous beard, drew attention. He took an active part in all debates. His clear thinking, his grasp of the issues, his striking intelligence always made a deep impression. One could not fail to note the sincerity and integrity. He stood by what he held. There was a consistent concern for people and for human values and the promotion of justice.

As the years went on one learned his story—something of his family life, his education, his decision to work among the people and stand with the oppressed. I visited him in Varanasi and have the most vivid memories of my stay—challenging discussions, contacts with groups, exposure to the culture, times of friendship and joy. He knew how to celebrate life and enjoy it. He came to New Zealand and spoke at meetings and met all sorts of people. We all learned a lot from Vikasbhai. He remained an important leader in the ACFOD network, especially in the field of culture and religion in liberation struggles of the people. He helped us grow in understanding and he shared a confidence that we could do something about the issues.

So his death is a great loss. So many friends who respected and admired him now grieve his passing. In a way it is still difficult to believe that he has gone. His zest for life gave the impression that he would always be around. But death has taken him from us. We pay our tribute to his memory. We will try to hold on to the vision he shared with us of a new world where divisions would be overcome and people would live in peace and harmony.

John Curnow



FATHER JOSEPH WRESINSKI

Father Joseph Wresinski, founder and secretary general of ATD Fourth World, died on 14 February, following an operation on his heart. He was 71 years old. This sudden departure is a hard shock for all families, volunteers and friends of the Movement.

All his life, he fought for the dignity of the poorest families. He wanted them to have confidence in themselves, to know that mankind needs them in order to be able to achieve peace, justice, and fraternity.

With his strong faith in human beings, Father Joseph led everyone of us much further than we ever thought we could go. We met people in great misery and this totally unsettled our lives. Now we know that we cannot stop half way. Father Joseph made us understand that for the poorest people, it has to be all or nothing, that for them there are no partial solutions. He always led us in the rhythm of the poorest, showed us the irrationality of extreme poverty, the way it destroys people and the deep suffering of families. He taught us that human beings can only live and grow for and with other human beings.

Phya Anuman Rajadhon's Memorial Building Project

Phya Anuman Rajadhon is the most well-known person and scholar in Thai studies, who claimed only a humble share of knowledge, but revealed, in the course of his long and fruitful life, a vast knowledge of all that is Thai. Having never studied for a higher degree or travelled abroad, Phya Anuman earned unofficial but universally recognized status as a foremost scholar of Siamese studies. It would have been unthinkable to attempt at any authoritative writing on the language, literature or traditions of this country without consulting him. In most cases, his interpretations come to life not by virtue of photographs or the laborious mechanical style that had been employed to exhaustion by numerous past writers, but by recounting each respective ritual in simple narrative form. Only this initial, almost impartial description did he relieve the suspense with straight forward, detailed answers linking the most seemingly idiosyncratic Thai ritual action with belief.

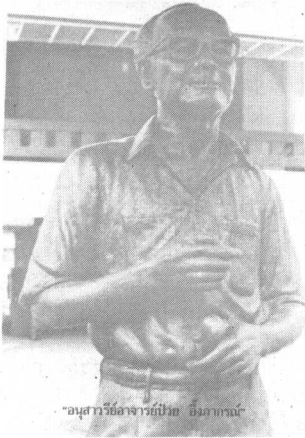
Phya Anuman Rajadhon was born on December 14, 1888 and therefore in 1988 it would be his centennial birthday. Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation, Wong Sanit's Ashram, (under the auspices of Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation) and other concerning organizations collaborate to build a memorial building for Phya Anuman Rajadhon.



Objectives

1. To mark the centenary anniversary of Phya Anuman.
2. To provide a conference hall for the exchange of Thai ideas and experiences in various field i.e. religion, culture as well as other contemporary problems such as peace, ecology and appropriate technology.
3. To be a centre for education and mediation as well as art and literary work.
4. To support and strengthen the collaboration among individuals and groups whose aims are similar to ours in order that they can work more efficiently.
5. To be a document resource centre to provide information pertaining to our activity.

Dr. Puey Ungphakorn



Dr. Puey's Statue at Rangsit Campus, Thammasat University

On 9th March, Thammasat University celebrated the sixth cycle or 72nd birthday anniversary of Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, its former Rector, by awarding him the first Dharma Shastra Cariya, or Professor of Righteousness.

At the university auditorium, in the morning, there was a lecture on Buddhist Economics by the Ven. Phra Devavedi, Payutto Bhikkhu. In the evening, there was a panel discussion on the past, present and future development of Thailand, politically, economically, socially, educationally by five leading personalities.

There were many books by and about Dr. Puey published on this occasion. The ones in English are *Best Wishes for Asia* and *A Siamese for all Seasons*. He is known as an honest and capable technocrat who served his country and people for peace, justice and democratic rights.

He was Governor of the central bank for over twelve years, but because of his belief in democracy, he had to leave the country on 6th October 1976 when the most bloody coup took place in Thai history.

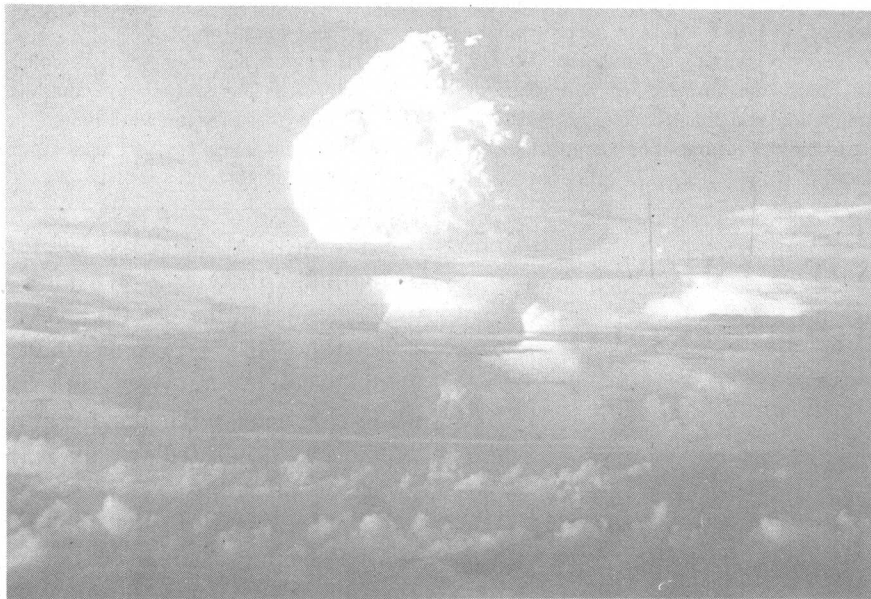
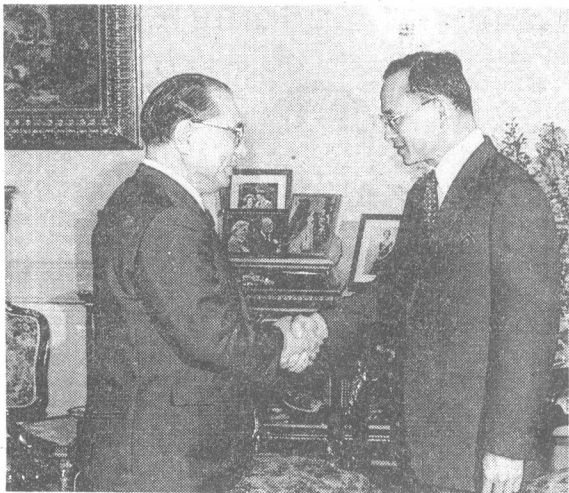
His well known motto is SANTI PRACHA DHAMMA (Peace, Righteousness and Public Participation). An institute of that name was also launched on his birthday, to fulfill his wishes and aspiration for social justice through non violence in this country.

President Ikeda Meets H.M. the King

In Thailand, on Feb. 3, Mr. Ikeda donated 1,100 books on various aspects of Japanese culture to Chulalongkorn University, with which Soka University has an educational exchange program. He also presented the entire 102 photographic and explanatory panels displayed at the exhibit "Nuclear Arms: Threat to Our World," organized by Soka Gakkai International and held at the university in January.

In their meeting at the palace in Bangkok of Feb. 3, King Bhumibol and Ikeda discussed the problems of peace, culture and art, during which the king rests with the awareness of each human being.

MAINICHI DAILY NEWS
Tuesday, Feb. 16, 1988, p.4



Anti-Nuclear Exhibition in Bangkok

BANGKOK—"Asia is a close and yet distant existence."

This is often said when thinking about the relations between Japan and Asian countries. These words apply directly also when the Japanese people make an "anti-nuclear" appeal to the people of Asian countries. Those who suffered at the hands of the Japanese military during World War II have not forgotten their suffering. Some say that "when I heard that atomic bombs had been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I asked why more bombs were not dropped — and on Tokyo also".

Even now, 43 years after the end of the war, the catchphrase "No More Hiroshimas" faces difficulty in being accepted.

In order to remove that thick "wall of the spirit," Soka Gakkai International, under joint sponsorship with the United Nations and others, held a "Nuclear Arms: — Threat to Our World Exhibition" in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, for 14 days from Jan. 11. The pitiable sight of atom-bombed victims and the nuclear danger that could be linked with the destruction of all mankind...

The full-scale "Nuclear Threat Exhibition," held for the first time in the Southeast Asia region, was successful in that it greatly shocked the Thai people. Hope for the total elimination of nuclear weapons entered the limelight.

The intent was to have "the people of Southeast Asia, who are Japan's close neighbors, know the

Japanese people's desire for the total elimination of nuclear weapons." It was with this thought that Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, which has close economic relations with Japan, was chosen. More than one year was devoted to the preparations which were carried out with the greatest care.

This was because in spite of the fact that Japan-Thailand relations, which celebrated last year the centenary of the start of diplomatic ties, are the most favorable among Southeast Asian countries, with an investment boom reaching its peak, the understanding of "atom-bombed Japan" is quite different from what most of the Japanese people believe it to be.

The fact that atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is included in high school and university textbooks but there is only a short account that "the United States and Britain decided to drop the atomic bombs in order to save the lives of several hundred million people." In most cases, the text written by an American historian has been adopted.

Public Response

The impressions that the Thai people received from this exhibition are indicated clearly by what they wrote in an album placed at the exhibition site.

"How cruel. How shocking. Since mankind has been granted wisdom by God, I would like to believe that this wisdom can be used to abolish nuclear weapons." (Student of Science College)

"A nuclear war would end in mankind's annihilation. Possession of these cruel weapons will not create anything beneficial. It is important for everyone to realize that nuclear weapons are cruel and dangerous, no matter whether the possessor is a world power or a developing country." (Monk).

"I keenly felt the stupidity of war. The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki should be made known to many more people." (Company employee).

"I would like to write an essay based on the exhibition. Such an anti-nuclear exhibition as this will play a big role through successive generations in educating students and the people about a big historical event." (University lecturer).

The exhibition was also taken up positively by Thailand's mass media. A special page was edited with the headline, "Mankind's Folly That Must Never Be Repeated." Together with photographs, it was stated that "this anti-nuclear exhibition is important not only because it forecasts the fate that awaits if a nuclear war were to break out in the future. It makes us think of the fact that while there are children who are hungry, with their rice bowls empty, how foolishly are we rushing along, placing importance on weapons alone."

A newspaper that is called "the conscience of Thailand" carried an editorial that said, "we pray that Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be the first and the last nuclear bombings in the history of mankind." It added that "although the United States and the Soviet Union have signed a treaty for the total elimination of the intermediate range nuclear force (INF), China, Britain and France possess nuclear arms. Moreover, the developing countries are attempting to follow the same road."

It thus turned its eyes to the Third World also and emphasized the need for a broad anti-nuclear movement.

Hiroshi Aramaki

Mainichi Correspondent

MAINICHI DAILY NEWS

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 1988, p.4

Networking and Coordinating

I was asked to comment whether it makes any difference if members of the network do not share common development philosophies and goals.

From my own limited experience within Siam and Asia, my simple answer would be yes. Even when you perform a relief work, if you have a fundamentally different belief from other NGOs, or even your own Government, it is very difficult for you to coordinate with them, when the refugees are pouring into your country, or so much famine taking place in your region, it may seem imperative that you do something immediately in the name of charity or humanity. I am afraid that news of big

disasters, become quite fashionable for the rich to ease their consciences and many NGOs benefit from a vast sum of money, which usually become their peril.

In fact, malnutrition and infant mortality as well as lack of job opportunities in the Third World is to me as serious as occasional big flood, earthquake or drought. Yet not much attention is given to get rid of the root cause of this unjust system. Not to mention that arm factories are mostly carried out profitably in the North and a great percentage of these are sold to the South, at the expense of poor tax payers, who have no say in the matter.

In my country, we started the Thai Volunteer Service a few years ago just to train young volunteers to work for various Thai NGOs so that those NGOs could become more effective for social transformation towards a just, peaceful and democratic society. Yet, with each NGO's different philosophy and background, we find it difficult to coordinate them. The

TVS still perform a useful function of course. Even so, we had to start a smaller networking, called Thai Development Support Committee, so that NGOs on a similar political ideology would be linked together more effectively. But then, the Government in most Third World Countries would regard this networking as a communist threat. So we have to link them with more right wing organisations, for survival and unless one is not careful in this venture, it wastes a lot of one's time and energy and could easily be coopted.

At the regional level, Asian Culture Forum On Development, claim to work on the development philosophy of bottom-up, which is bound to be different from the national policy of material and social development of most countries in the region. Since most of our members are peasants and landless, small fishermen and working women, and we try to express their vision of alternative development models as well as making the elites realize the importance of indigenous culture and religion, which could be very effective for liberation, socially and individually. It is easier to coordinate within our small network, even we cover a wide area of South, South-East and East Asia as well as some part of the Pacific—providing that we can still raise enough money from outside the region to do this networking. For development projects in each area, these small people could look after themselves meaningfully using their own local resources.

Although it is difficult to make our impact felt outside our network, indeed often most governments regard our small people as subversive and often we are being punished lawfully or unlawfully, with patience and nonviolent approach, I am confident that social change will be possible positively, if more educated elites would listen to the small men and women at the grassroots.

I personally feel the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) is a useful network, so is Centre for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (CENDHRRA) etc. But ACFOD and ANGOC should not be networking together, since we have a different history and ideology, although rhetoric may be similar. Yet, if need be, we should learn from each other and share

some of our useful experiences as well as our frustration and failures. The one good thing of different regional NGOs in Asia is that we are equal and we do not get money from each other. Regrettably, our regional NGOs in Asia do not have much relationship with our counterparts in Africa and Latin America. If we do we should learn much from them.

As for the northern hemisphere, we have much relationship, but not on equal terms. Quite a number donate money to ACFOD, TVS and the like—often generously and with good intention. But somehow it is very difficult to become our real friends and partners. Quite a number of them try — one even change the name from Fund to Partnership. But institutional constraint on their part or being alien culturally in the Asian or Thai context, they never feel at home with us i.e. unless we think like them, act like them, or develop in their fashion or philosophical framework.

I agree with Tim Broadhead in his opening address that money should not be the main criteria for NGOs, especially when one looks towards development alternatives. But it still is, which not only divides North and South, sometimes it makes networking in our own national and regional organizations difficult too.

I propose that if we are serious in looking for development alternatives, we should tackle the money problems in a more meaningful way, allowing funds to be spent more imaginatively, that decision and evaluation ought to be participatory by all concerned with social transformation, whether these people are rich or poor.

For those of us who are not so poor, and who think we are fairly well educated, we should speak less and listen more to the indigenous people.

It is indeed difficult to listen to those who do not speak our language or who do not articulate in our way of thinking. Often we listen, but we do not hear.

We should not be too attached to our own prevailing outlook and life style. Trying to be good to the poor is just not good enough, if we allow our system to exploit them.

We should not only look for a neat proposal and a well written report, which we can

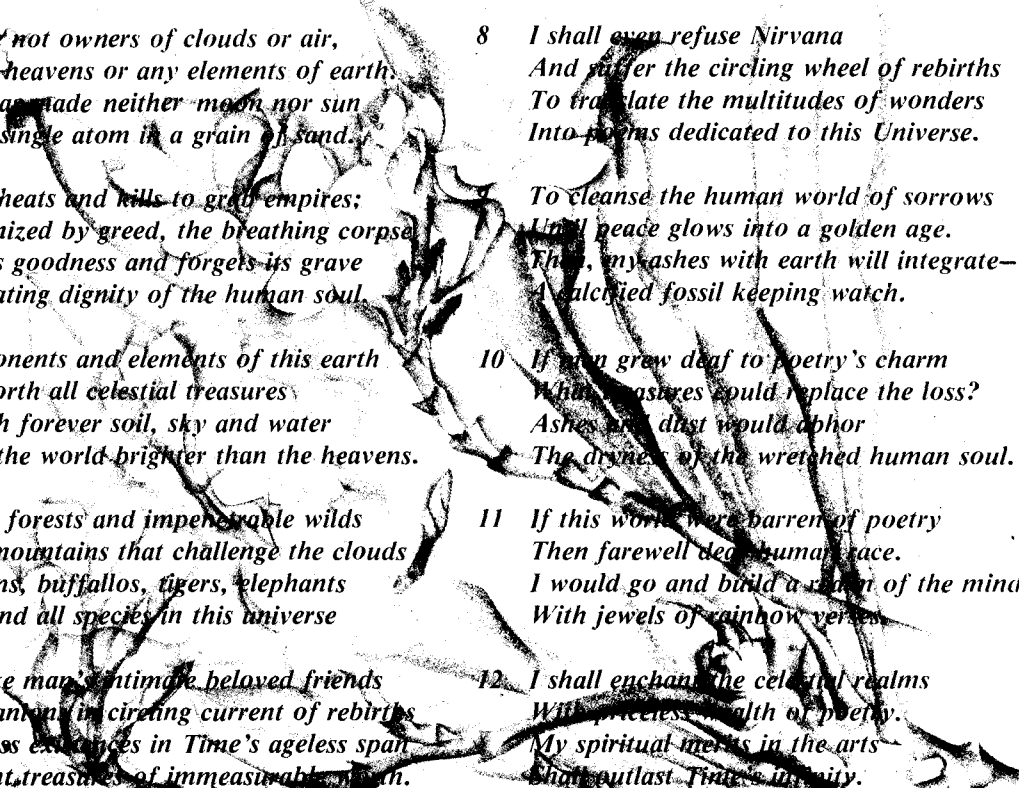
sell to our constituencies, but we should try to see things as they really are, especially in those areas which we find difficult to comprehend.

With deep critical awareness of ourselves and an unbiased view on development processes of smaller people, we may get to the point that the Buddhists call the Right View. Then we may become a little humbler, and are able to trust, respect and admire those small people who are entirely different from us but who are

trying hard to survive meaningfully in their own culture and environment. If real friendship and partnership is possible, then we are perhaps on the right path towards development alternatives for the poor and the oppressed.

(A speech by S. Sivaraksa at Development Alternatives: The Challenge for NGOs. 11-13 March 1987, Regent's College London.)

A POET'S PLEDGE

- 
- 1 *Who would dare trade skies and oceans?
Wondrous creation is this world of ours.
These corporeal parts shall be laid.
Betwix earth and sky in the final hours.*
- 2 *We are not owners of clouds or air,
Or the heavens or any elements of earth.
Man has made neither moon nor sun
Nor a single atom in a grain of sand.*
- 3 *Man cheats and kills to grab empires;
Galvanized by greed, the breathing corpse
Spurns goodness and forgets its grave
Abdicating dignity of the human soul.*
- 4 *Components and elements of this earth
Are worth all celestial treasures
Cherish forever soil, sky and water
Make the world brighter than the heavens.*
- 5 *Fields, forests and impenetrable wilds
High mountains that challenge the clouds
Gibbons, buffaloes, tigers, elephants
Ants and all species in this universe*
- 6 *Are like man's intimate beloved friends
Companion in the circling current of rebirths
Priceless exchanges in Time's ageless span
Radiant treasures of immeasurable worth.*
- 7 *Let others soar beyond the infinite skies
Or tread cosmic paths of moons and stars;
But to this living world my heart is pledged
To Earth bonded in all my lives and deaths.*
- 8 *I shall even refuse Nirvana
And suffer the circling wheel of rebirths
To translate the multitudes of wonders
Into poems dedicated to this Universe.*
- 9 *To cleanse the human world of sorrows
Until peace glows into a golden age.
Then, my ashes with earth will integrate—
A calcified fossil keeping watch.*
- 10 *If man grew deaf to poetry's charm
What pleasures could replace the loss?
Ashes and dust would abhor
The dryness of the wretched human soul.*
- 11 *If this world were barren of poetry
Then farewell dear human race.
I would go and build a realm of the mind
With jewels of rainbow virtues.*
- 12 *I shall enchant the celestial realms
With priceless wealth of poetry.
My spiritual treasures in the arts
Shall outlast Time's infinity.*

POET: ANKARN KALAYANAPONG
TRANSLATOR: CHAMNONGSRI L. RUTNIN

Letter

Peace Brigades International, Guatemala

21 MAR 1988

Sulak,

Greetings, George Willoughby has asked me to make contact with you. I am a member of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in the US. Joe Gorin (sends his regards) and I are both serving on PBI's Central America Project in Guatemala. As far as we know, the only western buddhists involved in PBI's work here. This is my second time with PBI in Guatemala, my first visit being 1986. I am a practitioner of *vipassana*, and take retreat at Insight Meditation Society every autumn for 2-3 months of intensive meditation time. Most of the rest of my year I spend working on social justice issues on the east coast of the US, or in Europe. I balance working on issues of Human Rights, Nuclear Disarmament, and worldwide intervention by my government (I'm American). Do a lot of informal networking and citizen diplomacy.

I find the principles of PBI's actions to be in great harmony with the Dharma, and have sown seeds for a bridge between PBI and BPF, more on that later. I often find myself encouraging activist friends to take time to sit still for awhile (It's Hard), there are so many good workers for social change who burn themselves out because they don't know how to take space from the work, one of the big offerings I feel that Buddhists can make to the social change movement. On the other hand I find myself attempting to move many of our western Buddhist friends to social action.

Personally I feel much more of an affinity with Asia than I do with Central America and have been wanting to return for awhile. I will be coming to SE Asia next winter for perhaps 6 months, I will be in Thailand and would like to meet you and learn about your work, of which I know little except your training of some Sinhalese monks in non-violence techniques. I am interested in the conflict in the Chittagong area of Bangladesh, and see possibilities for a project similar to PBI's in Guatemala there. So I will be spending considerable time in Bangladesh talking with as many people as I can trying to get an accurate assessment of the situation. As BPF has had ongoing interest in this situation, I see the possibility of some joint venture, last year I approached both organizations about the idea and received positive responses of further interest, more information is needed. BPF has been trying to bring a Chakmal monk who has been active with the refugees there to the US for some quiet diplomacy, but have been unable to get him out. I had arranged for him to visit the Philadelphia office last year had he come. I will send you a letter closer to the time of my arrival with my itinerary and we will see if our schedules mesh. I'll close for now.

May All Beings Be Happy

Yeshua Moser

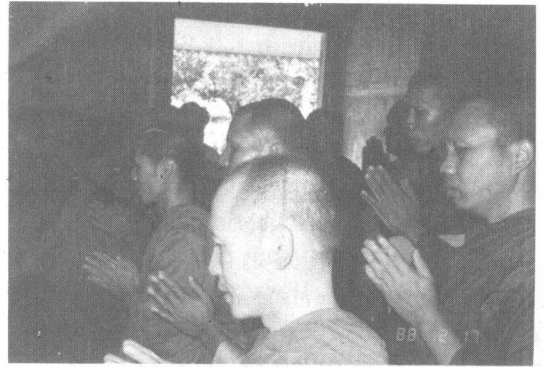
my mailing address: Rt 1 Box 95
Amesville, Ohio 45711 USA

Three weeks of Thai Buddhists in Sri Lanka

Last year an international symposium on "Buddhism and Peace; Seeking a Peaceful Solution to the Present Conflict in Sri Lanka" was held in Bangkok. It was the first time both Sinhalese and Thai Buddhists have come together for this matter. All delegates agreed that the current conflict in Sri Lanka, albeit an internal matter of Sri Lankan people, needed the serious attention from international community. Since the symposium had its focus on Buddhism and the Buddhists, the world community was called to participate in the peaceful settlement of the conflict. One resolution from the symposium, therefore, expressed the willingness of the delegates to invite a group of Thai monks and laity to visit Sri Lanka, and thereafter to invite the international Buddhist community to take the necessary steps toward the setting up of a fact-finding commission to study the conflict first-hand.

It was almost one year after the symposium that the Thai Buddhist delegation to Sri Lanka was possible. Despite the delay, contacts and dialogues between the Sri Lankan and Thai people on the matter had gone on without interruption. During that period Mr. Sulak Sivaraksa, the organizer of the Bangkok symposium, went to Sri Lanka to follow up its resolutions. One month later, Mr. Pracha Hutenuvatra, a Thai Buddhist, was assigned to study the situation after the peace accord and met people from all walks of life, both Sinhalese and Tamils, throughout the country, including trips to Jaffna and Trincomalee. His two month study during August and October laid the groundwork for the next visit of Thai Buddhist monks and laity to Sri Lanka between February 15 and March 3, 1988.

The group which consisted of 5 monks and 3 laypersons and headed by Phra Maha Narong Cittasobhano, Vice-Rector of Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University, was entrusted two main tasks. First, to study the



situation and give assistance to reconciliation and peace in Sri Lanka. Secondly, to study the development work and give support to monks involved in community development.

As for reconciliation and peace activity, we met and discussed with various groups of Buddhist monks, in Colombo and upcountry, about the previous role of monks in ethnic conflict and the way to settle the problem peacefully. Two seminars were arranged for us to exchange ideas with two different groups of Buddhist monks. The seminar on "Role of Buddhist Monks in Developing Countries" was held on February 17 at Vidyalandara Perivena, a famous college for monks and novices, which has an outstanding record of political struggle at the national level during the latter half of the century, and has recently been the starting point of peaceful mass demonstration in the protest against the peace accord, resulting in the killing and arrest of many monks on the streets of Colombo last July.

The second seminar focusing on "Elements of a Buddhist Response to Violence" was held on February 23 in a temple near Colombo. It was attended not only by Buddhist monks, but also by Catholic priests and Protestants.

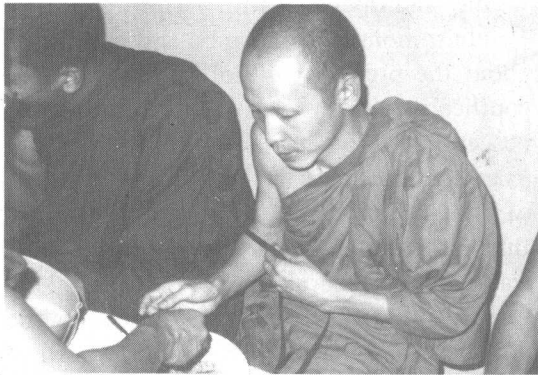
Apart from the seminar, we had interesting discussions with many monks actively engaged in reconciliation and creating good understanding between Sinhalese and Tamils. Although the monks we met had different opinions

concerning the cause, the origin and the nature of the present conflict in Sri Lanka, all of them expressed the same wish to live peacefully with Tamils as their ancestors had done in the past. They believed that most Tamils also share this feeling.

The present conflict, though being against the will of Sri Lankan majority, has been prolonged and exacerbated by extremists of both sides who do not win support from the mass at all. These Buddhist monks had the conviction that there is no other way to settle the conflict but by peaceful means, political not military. It was emphasized that the majority of Buddhist monks want peace and adhere to peaceful activities. It was a regret to them that the mass media, both local and international, did not give adequate attention to this fact. Further, they complained that the fact had been distorted while the misbehaviour and violent activities of a few portion of monks

were highlighted in the mass media to the extent that, to the Sri Lankan public, they were understood as representing Sri Lankan Buddhist monks as a whole. Buddhist monks become identified with violence and repression. Indeed there are a lot of monks working quietly and successfully in bridging the gap between Sinhalese and Tamils in various localities. Two of them whom we met were Ven. Padumasiri Thero and Ven. Vimalasara Thero. The former was highly respected by Tamils in Jaffna where he stayed almost for fifteen years. The latter is now working in Vavuniya, a district in Northern province which was a part of Tamil-claimed Elam, and wins the trust of all Tamil militant organizations and government's security force as well.

One of our tasks is to help put forth one resolution from Bangkok symposium: to arrange a meeting between prominent Sri Lankan Buddhist monks and Tamil leaders in a third



Phra Phaisan Visalo, since the time when he was a boy and then a man whose previous name was Phaisan Vongvoravisit, has been involved in the social affairs with a spirit which challenges the generally-accepted values by turning towards spirituality. The literary forum for him has been *Pacarayasara* Journal, which has come to take the place of the *Social Science Review*, and where he used to be a member of the editorial staff. During the period in which he handled *Pacarayasara*, Buddhism, non-violence and indigenous cultures seemed to play the lead, accompanied with a high regard and concern for the lessons that can be drawn from the neighbouring countries.

While he was a student of Thammasat University, the Buddhist club, of which he was a member, was revitalized by taking a more active social role while not departing from the deeper dimension of spirituality. Particularly during the period of the October 6, 1976 event, it is to be noted that this group of young intellectuals played a very important role in applying the religious principles with

social concern to the contemporaneous situations in a manner that is full of moral courage. With such spirit, immediately after that bloody event, the so-called Coordinating Group for Religion in Society emerged and bravely posed challenges of all forms even to the wickednesses of the dictatorial government. But the actions of this group were peaceful along the line of compassion. This group of Buddhists and Christians joined hands for reconciliation in the country and for fundamental human rights that are essential for human development in the context of greater social justice.

As a key person of this group, he served as a good religious believer, who gave respect to other religions as well as their leaders, whose values he considered vital and significant to individual and social development.

Since his ordination, not only has he engaged in meditation for his own sake, but has also involved with the Coordinating Group for Religion in Society and the Thai Inter-religious Commission for Development in organizing training courses of Buddhism for activists. In the future, it is expected to have Buddhists and Christians contemplate together.

Phra Phaisan, besides his prestigious position as the Vice-abbot of Phu Khong monastery in Northeastern Thailand, is currently a committee member of various religious and development groups and organizations, including the research subcommittee of Rural and Development Institute, Khon Kaen University, and CGRS. Among his many papers and Publications are *The Age of Violence* (1978), *Non-violence and the Future of Thailand* (1979), *Searching for the Foundation of Life in the World of Action* (1984), *Buddhism and the Contemporary Value* (1986), and *Weapons of the Unarmed* (1987).



neutral country to discuss a peaceful resolution to the current conflict. Despite the positive signs from Sri Lankan Buddhist monks, we have found that such meeting can hardly materialize in the near future. The situation has changed significantly to the extent that the meeting, as perceived by prominent Sri Lankan Buddhist monks, will not contribute much to peace in Sri Lanka.

The recent change was largely due to the peace accord which involved India to undertake intensive military operation in Sri Lankan soil in crashing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) which does not accept the accord and refuses to be disarmed. In their view, the situation becomes worse because the military operations of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) inflict great damage and casualties to large amount of civilians, both Sinhalese and Tamils, in Northern and Eastern provinces. Sinhalese and Tamil refugees we met in Anuradhapura and Vavuniya respectively confirmed this fact. We have also been informed by a Hindu priest in Jaffna who came to seek help from Ven. Padumasiri who is living near Colombo that the situation in Jaffna was deteriorating as well.

IPKF is considered by increasing number of Sri Lankan people detrimental to peace in their own country. At the same time, in the south, the extremist JVP (Janatha Vimukhti Peremuna) which is against the peace accord has increased its terrorist activities against government officials, security forces, and government MPs. The object of its assassination and violent threat now includes politicians and social workers who support peace accord.

Since violence is now widely employed by Sri Lankan extremists of both sides, together with the huge army of IPKF, which tends to serve Indian hegemony rather than securing peace in Sri Lanka, prominent Sri Lankan Buddhist monks think that no meaningful outcome would be borne from the meeting between them and Tamil leaders. Some monks even stated that IPKF was the greatest hindrance to peace in Sri Lanka. Unless it is pushed out of Sri Lankan soil, there is no hope for peace in that country.

Despite the deteriorated situation, Buddhist monks can play vital roles in creating peace and unity in Sri Lanka. Their peace and reconciliation activities should be strengthened from within and without. The world Buddhist community is thus called to give attention and render their helping hands to promote peace in Sri Lanka. The Thai Buddhist delegation and its Sri Lankan counterpart see that the visit to Sri Lanka by an international Buddhist delegation is still necessary for the present situation. It was also agreed that the invitation will be officially initiated by Thai Buddhists with collaboration from the Sri Lankan side.

Another task of the Thai Buddhist group in Sri Lanka is to give support to Sri Lankan Buddhist monks involved in the programme of the Bhikkhu Peace Foundation. Apart from encouraging monks in community development and working for peace in the nation, the Foundation, also attempted to revitalize elements of Buddhist tradition, so as to help strengthen close relationship between monks and laity. Unfortunately, BPF has recently stopped its activities temporarily since it was threatened by JVP. The monks in



the programme, however, were determined to continue their activities on individual basis. One activity is to revitalize the Pintapata (to go for alms) tradition in their own villages. In support of this activity, we brought a number of alms bowls and robes which were delivered to them on the day of the second seminar.

Besides, we had discussions with NGO's involved in development in different fields, viz., Lawyers for Human Rights and Development, Devasaranaramaya, Sarvodaya movement and ACFOD national group whose activities involve peasants, workers, fisherman, women and monks. Talking with them enabled us to come across the overall picture of Sri Lanka and had better understanding about the struggle for justice of each segment of Sri Lankan people. We also learned a lot about Ayurvedic medicine which has been developed extensively in Sri Lanka. Visiting an Ayurvedic reserch institute and talking with Ayurvedic doctors, both monks and laity, encouraged us to develop indigenou medicine in our own country.

Although three weeks is perhaps not enough for us to have a thorough grasp of the complicate situation in Sri Lanka, direct experience and dialogues we had should be regarded as the first step toward solidarity between Sri Lankan and Thai people which is to be strengthened in the years to come. Hopefully this solidarity will be no less than the close relationship of our ancestors many centuries ago as cleary evidenced by our trips to ancient cities of Anuradhapura and Pulonnaruwa, the great cities which reminded us of the Buddhist spirit: the spirit of peace and reconciliation.



An Interview with Sulak Sivaraksa

Is Foreign Money Good for Thailand?

Outsiders are very keen to buy into Thailand, despite laws that forbid non-Thais to own land or hold more than 49% of equity in joint ventures. Foreign investment reached unprecedented levels in 1987. The number of Japanese companies applying to invest has increased almost fourfold in the last two years. In the first week of this year alone, vigorous trading on the stock exchange's foreign board helped push share values up by 15%. Yet some Thais see foreign investment as a threat to the country's sovereignty and cultural integrity.

Is there any use for foreign investment in Thailand?

I don't rule it out entirely but I don't see much need, personally. My basic philosophy differs from that of the present government. They feel the more exports, the better for the country, and that we must catch up with the Newly Industrialised Countries — become like South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. I don't see the need and don't think it's possible, either. The present policy is export-oriented. We may still sell more rice, but our farmers become poorer and poorer, and our environment suffers. I think we need more self-sustenance and self-reliance.

Which countries do you regard with suspicion for their investment policies here?

Japan is obvious, but it is not so much countries as multinational corporations. They are more dangerous. They seem to have a kind of universal culture.

Would you condone more investment going into agriculture?

In principle I have no objection, but I would be cautious. Money comes from rich nations who don't understand our aspirations. I would prefer to have investment among the Third World — poor countries coming together and helping each other. People accuse me of being too idealistic, but it has to be on that level.

Can Thailand develop fast enough without this kind of investment?

Developing fast means rich people have more money but the poor suffer more and more. Development means firstly human development, global development, national pride and respect for neighbours. If we poorer countries developed medicines together, for example, we could then reject the Western kind of medicine which we spend so much money on.

Does foreign investment lead to foreign domination?

Yes, if you're not careful. Our leaders are still dreaming. On the one hand, they claim to be very nationalistic; on the other, they let foreign investment and experts in at every level — running everything, including Thai-owned firms. Obviously, you can have some foreigners working in your company, but key positions should be held by your own people.

Is Thailand being sold off cheaply?

Very much so. It will get much worse. People say we should reduce the population, but that's not the issue. The main issue is that we just want to catch up with the Joneses, and only the top 10% can. People suffer more and more.

Thai Resistance to Military Stockpiling

The Coalition for Peace and Development in Bangkok is leading a group of organizations in resistance to a recent agreement between the US and Thai governments establishing a stockpile of weapons in Thailand. Both governments agreed to provide \$10 million worth of materials to the stockpile yearly, for a period of 5 years. The alleged purpose of the stockpile is to make ammunition available to the Thai military in case of foreign attack, as well as to provide weapons and ammunition to US troops if they should need to carry out military activities in the region.

Opposition leaders claim the stockpile will exacerbate tensions in the region and make peaceful solutions less likely. Activists say

that in a country where almost 11 million farmers are struggling for survival and more than one million people live in Bangkok's slums, participation in the stockpile would waste badly-needed resources. The agreement is also criticized as a re-introduction of a US military presence, and a move to re-open US military bases shut down after the Vietnam War.

The Coalition asks peace groups in the US to lobby their Congressional representatives to oppose the agreement, which has not yet been ratified by the US Congress. (Coalition for Peace and Development, 4753/5 Soi Wat Thongnopakun, Klongsarn, Bangkok 10600, Thailand.)

from **Reconciliation International**

February 1988

This Kingdom was known as Siam until 1939, when its name was changed to Thailand. Then it reverted to the original name again in 1946. Two years after the coup d'état of 1947 it was decreed that the country would be called Thailand, and it remains so officially. Ironically, the kingdom has since been ruled by one dictator after another, with very brief liberal democratic intervals. The name, Thailand, signifies the crisis of traditional Siamese Buddhist values.

The Siamese, Cambodian and Laotian Buddhist Era seems to be one year later than that of Burma, Sri Lanka and India. In fact, this is not so. The difference is that while the latter regards the year of the Maha Parinibbana as B.E.1, the former takes it to be the first anniversary after Lord Buddha's Passing away. For example, this year is B.E. 2531 according to the Siamese, Cambodian and Laotian calendar, but it is B.E. 2532 according to the Burmese, Sri Lankan and Indian Calendar.

TICD

Commissioners

Dr. Prawase Wasi, President of the Commission.
Mrs. Prakai Nandawasi, Vice President
Mr. Sulak Sivaraksa, Chairman of the Administrative Committee
Mr. Seri Phongpit, Vice Chairman and Hon. Treasurer
Mr. Anant Wiriyaphinit, Executive Secretary

Mr. Chaiwat Sath-Anand
Mr. Ruang Suksawat
Mr. Lerkiat Wongsanphikul
Miss Laddawan Taniwittayaphitak
Ms. Chatsumarn Kapilsingh
Ms. Ananya Bhuchongkul
Mr. Daycha Siripatra
Mr. Jitkasem Sangsingkeo
Miss Padraporn Sirikanchana



THAI INTER - RELIGIOUS
COMMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT
G.P.O. BOX 1960 BANGKOK 10501
THAILAND

AKE, 74 Solonos Street
Athens 134
GREECE

SURFACE MAIL

SURFACE MAIL

ΕΠΙΣΤΕΥΟΜΕΝΟ
Αρκετός
Inconnu
Ανεύθυνος
Adresse insuffisante
Εσείς χωρίς να αφήσει
Parti sans laisser
d'adresse
Ταχυδρομικός
Κάβινος
Υποκατάστημα
Αποστολή

1977



PRINTED MATTER