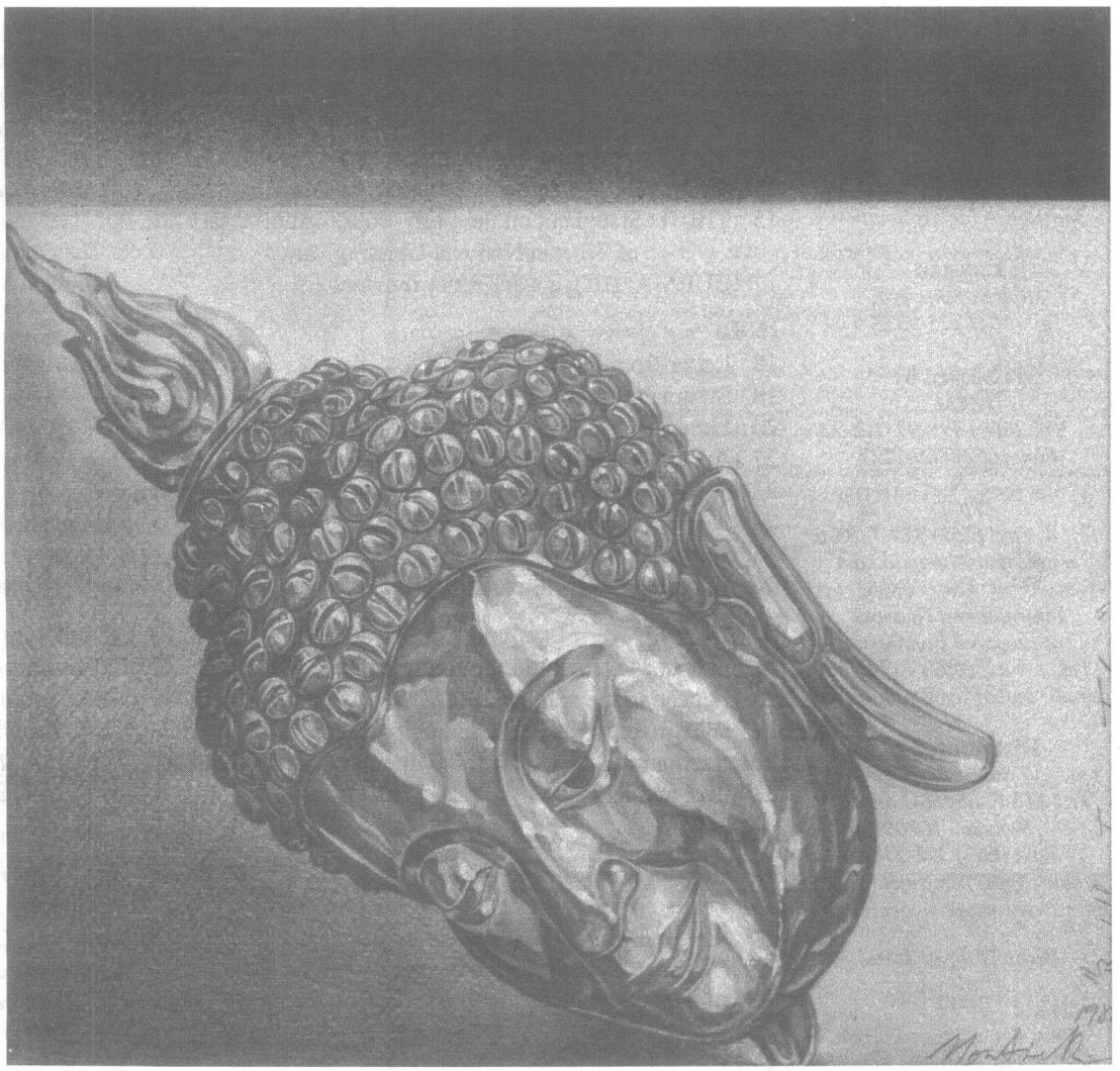
SEEDS OF PEACE

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Peace in Ourselves
Peace in the World



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SEEDS OF

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PEACE

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The goals of INEB are to:

1. Promote understanding and co-operation among Buddhist countries, different Buddhist sects, and socially conscious Buddhist groups.
2. Facilitate and carry out solutions to the many problems facing our communities, societies, and world.
3. Articulate the perspective of Engaged Buddhism regarding these problems and train Buddhist activists accordingly.
4. Serve as a clearing house of information on existing Engaged Buddhist groups.
5. Cooperate with activists from other spiritual traditions.

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March 24, 2003

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Dear Mr. Sulak,

Allow me to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you upon your Linus Pauling memorial lecture at Oregon State University scheduled to be given this April, as Mr. Sajja Ratanachomsri so kindly informed me. Having known Dr. Pauling as a friend, I am happy to hear that you will deliver such a lecture at the university. I wish you great success.

I also learned from Mr. Sajja's letter that you will turn 70 years old on March 27. I would also like to offer my most sincere congratulations on the auspicious occasion of your birthday.

The world-renowned writer, Victor Hugo, started writing a new novel, *Ninety-Three,* when he was 70. Leo Tolstoy was absorbed in creating his masterpiece, *Resurrection*, around the same age. I believe that the age of 70 is a significant focal point in life. I sincerely hope that you will take great care of your health, and continue to make your important contributions to the cause of peace.

I am grateful for the kind proposal to publish a Thai edition of the dialogue between Dr. Pauling and myself, *A Lifelong Quest for Peace*. As one of the authors, I am honored and filled with joy to hear that our dialogue will now be enjoyed by Thai readers. I am sure Dr. Pauling would be delighted to know this, too.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to reiterate my deep appreciation for your sincere efforts concerning the publication of 16 of my books in the Thai language by your company.

Please kindly convey my best regards to Mr. Sajja.

With my heartfelt prayers for your continued good health and the further success of all your endeavors,

Yours sincerely,



This year the Thai government submitted three names to UNESCO for its anniversaries of great personalities and historic events calendar: King Rama IV (for his bi-centenary), Direk Jayanama (for his centenary), and Kulap Saipradit (also for his centenary). The bust of Direk Jayanama stands at the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University. He was the faculty's first dean. Mr. Direk had also served as foreign minister and Thai ambassador to Tokyo, among other important positions. He was Mr. Pridi Banomyong's right hand. Mr. Pridi is reputedly the father of Thai democracy and was recognized by UNESCO as one of the world's great personalities in 2000. We hope to give a fuller account of Kulap Saipradit in our next issue.

Editorial Notes

The war against Iraq, dubbed "Operation Iraqi Freedom," is branded "the war to liberate Iraq" by US/UK officials and the mainstream mass media. This marks another high point in Orwellian Newspeak. Rather, we should see the war as an American invasion of Iraq, an act of international aggression in contravention of international law.

This isn't a just war. Just no war is a much better goal, as Sulak said.

"Liberate" Iraq? Aren't US and British troops going to "occupy" Iraq after the war. Hence some vital Iraqi infrastructures and facilities are being spared from destruction by US/UK war machines: they are needed for postwar occupation. Military occupation is called liberation? Investigative reporter Dilip Hiro has exposed the fact that US leaders plan to reshuffle the postwar Iraqi government structure, setting up 21 ministries. Each ministry will be led by an American and assisted by four Iraqis chosen by the American occupiers. As such liberation means to submit being "rescued" by the US but not self-determination.

Liberating Iraqis from Saddam Hussein's tyranny with "Shock and Awe"? How different is it from the twisted and murderous Vietnam War logic of 'We have to destroy this place in order to save it'? Is it just to shock and awe the Iraqi Republican Guards or also the whole world? That is, to show that the US is more than willing to resort to violence — the dimension of power it has in overabundance — in order to get its way.

And liberate Iraq after more than one decade of gruesome and crippling economic embargo driven by the US and UK, an embargo which cost the lives of approximately 500,000 Iraqi children due to malnutrition and easily preventable diseases? Denis Halliday, former assistant secretary general of the UN, who was sent to Iraq to manage the "oil for food programme," described the impacts of the embargo as "nothing less than genocide." His successor Hans Von Sponeck had made similar comments. Both men resigned in protest.

And liberating Iraqis from Saddam's tyranny so they could embrace democracy? How could the remnants of the Reagan administration be really interested in democratization? Weren't they the very same people who enthusiastically supported murderous authoritarian regimes in Central America and apartheid in South Africa during the 1980s? Weren't they the very people who were involved in the Iran-Contra scandal, and part of the very administration that supported state terrorism against Nicaragua in the 1980s according to the World Court? Did Bush listen to the millions of Americans and world citizens who are opposed to the war?

Surely, Iraqis must be waiting to garland the invading US/UK soldiers-cum-liberators with roses.

The front cover shows a painting by the Thai artist Montien Boonma whose work was displayed at the Asia Society, New York City, February 4-May 11, 2003. Then they will be displayed at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, February 25-May 23, 2004; at the National Gallery of Australia, July-September, 2004; and at the National Gallery of Art, Bangkok, 2004-2005.

INTERNATIONAL

No War on Iraq

A unique opportunity for NAM to chart a new course for the future



We the undersigned organisations whose members are drawn from all the major faith communities found within the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) hereby urge the thirteenth NAM summit to be held in Kuala Lumpur from 20 to 25 February 2003 to reject war as a solution to the crisis in Iraq, and in so doing to chart a new course for peace — regionally and globally.

The United Nations weapons inspectors had informed the UN Security Council on 14 February 2003 that there were encouraging signs that the Iraqi government was more cooperative than before and that some progress had been made. The majority of Security Council members and indeed almost the entire international community want the inspectors to finish their job — if indeed, the aim is to eliminate Iraq's biological and chemical weapons and to ensure that it does not develop a nuclear weapons programme in the future.

Eliminating Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) should be part of a more comprehensive effort to rid every state in the Middle East of its stock of WMD. In this respect global disarmament should be the urgent and immediate goal of the international community. The nation with the biggest nuclear arsenal and the world's most dangerous and most deadly weapons — namely the United States of America — should take the moral lead to disarm first.

Comprehensive disarmament in the Middle East should go hand in hand with an all embracing solution to the Arab Israeli conflict. A sovereign, independent, viable Palestinian state should emerge alongside a secure Israel. The Golan Heights should be restored to Syria and both Syria and Israel should ensure the territorial integrity of Lebanon. At the same time the twelve-year-old sanctions against the people of Iraq imposed by the UN at the behest of Washing-

ton and London, which have crippled and broken an entire generation, should be lifted. Far-reaching democratic reforms should take place in Iraq, but also in a number of other authoritarian states in the Middle East. The aim must be to curb the arbitrariness of repressive elites and enhance the power and authority of the people. As the people of the Middle East shape their own destinies, foreign military bases in the region should be dismantled as quickly as possible.

Finding solutions to conflicts and encouraging reforms in the region rather than going to war should be the primary concern of the international community, and therefore of the world's only superpower.

It is because the US administration, supported by the governments of Israel, Britain, and Australia, is in such a hurry to launch a war that people around the world have become increasingly sceptical and alarmed. The fear that Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction are just the excuse to enable Washington and its allies to reshape the politics and economics of the Middle East to suit their own interests. It is, in other words, an attempt to establish total control over Iraqi and Arab oil, to fortify the position of Israel and generally to ensure that Washington's hegemonic power remain in the region and the world.

We know, however, that Washington's enhanced hegemony and Israel's fortified position will not bring peace to the Middle East. So long as justice for the Palestinians and other regional problems are not adequately addressed, the situation can only get worse. A war against Iraq will simply prolong the anguish and suffering of the people of the Middle East, and make the world an even more insecure place that it already is.

Several points must be firmly kept in mind.

One, whether it is a brief or extended war, there are bound to be a great many casualties. For a people living under a harsh dictatorship, strangulated by sanctions and ravaged by two wars in twenty-three years, a brutal military attack would be catastrophic.

Two, since the Iraqi government maintains a tight grip upon the citizen a sudden collapse of state authority as a result of the war could lead to the rapid disintegration of the country. Given a Kurdish population in the northern part of Iraq and a Shia community in the south, there could be serious repercussions for Turkey and Iran respectively and for regional stability.

Three, in the event of a war the already widespread anger and disenchantment felt by Arab populations towards their governments for their subservience and servility to the United States could erupt into street violence and even threaten the power of certain rulers in the region.

Four, much of this popular anger will no doubt be directed against Israel, regarded by many as one of the prime movers behind the war against Iraq. The already yawning chasm between Arabs and Israelis risks becoming even wider. A negotiated peaceful settlement to their long standing conflict will be virtually out of reach.

Five, there is every likelihood that the war and the deaths and suffering it will entail will give rise to acts of violence and terror on the part of Arabs and Muslims outraged by this unjust exercise of imperial power. Global terrorism may well cast an even longer and darker shadow on the world stage.

Six, the poorly performing global economy will be confronted by even more serious difficulties. Impoverished societies in Sub-Saharan Africa in particular will be devastated by a dramatic increase in the price of oil.

Seven, a US military assault in a situation where no armed attack has occurred or is threatened, will set a frightening precedent in international law. The use of force as a preventive measure is illegal and could undermine the future functioning of the United Nations and the entire system of international relations. Illegal global intervention can only produce global anarchy.

Given the gravity of the situation, the Non-Aligned Movement has a unique opportunity at its forthcoming summit to act against war in Iraq and for peace in the Middle East. The time has come for non-alignment in today's world to be invested with new meaning and new life. NAM, which was established to further the cause of peace, is now challenged to reject war as an instrument of policy.

In opposing war in Iraq let NAM demonstrate to the rest of the human family that it remains faithful to the quest for a just and peaceful world.

Non-Aligned Movement



INTERNATIONAL

Voices against war

Anticipating war ... and wishing for a happy new year



With the dark clouds of a global conflict looming, how can sensible people celebrate the advent of 2003?

Have you ever wondered why we celebrate New Year? Do we expect something really "new" to happen after, or because of, our celebrations? Or is it because we always assume that something new implies something good or, better still, something better?

If we expect or hope for something better to happen in the coming year, this New Year really poses a complicated problem, simply because the media is telling us that the US is seriously preparing for an attack on Iraq in the next few months. How can we be merry and happy if we are anticipating global terror?

First of all, let us ponder how we have come to place a concept like "new" on the flow of time. The idea that time moves forward like an arrow is basically a creation of Judaeo-Christian traditions. As the Book of Genesis in the Bible tells us, God created time and since then human destiny has been interwoven with God's plan for his people, which could be realised through the history of salvation.

In the 17th century, philosophers in Europe began to rebel against the intellectual domination of the Catholic Church and posed "new" problems for philosophy while rejecting the authority of the Church. And yet the "modern" revolution somehow adopted the idea of Christian time as moving forward, secularised it, and gave it a new name — "progress."

In the past three centuries, it could be argued that other conceptions of time, as cyclical (Buddhist) or spiral (Chinese), have not played a major role on the world stage. The domination of different and competing centres of the West over vast regions of the world in past centuries have elevated one particular conception of time above all others. So, when we celebrate New Year, we are celebrating a particular conception of time, which implies progress, and therefore a better future.

But this idea of progress embedded in time and made concrete through "development" efforts throughout the world is in serious need of re-thinking. One could ask whether this particular concept of time has already exhausted its usefulness. Do we really need more progress in terms of consumption? Are people really happier in the First World?

According to a BBC documentary, people in the most industrialised societies in the West are actually less happy than people in many developing countries. The politics of categorising different countries in the world based on differing stages of "development" (underdeveloped, developing and developed) is in itself indicative of a uni-linear

conception of time and historical development. The hardships and poverty of far too many people in the world have been aggravated by "economic developments." Environmental degradation on a global scale has yet to create clear and present impacts on the way industries and businesses are conducted. The global awareness and moral sensitivity of the jetsetter "over-class" are totally out of proportion to their wealth and power. The concept of "progress" has been monopolised by the economic and the technological aspects of life, almost to the exclusion of all others.

The imminent danger of another global war has created an uneasy condition for "celebrating" New Year. This "uneasy condition" has made the simple act of wishing problematic.

When we send a loved one a New Year card, we often wish that person well. This "wishing well" usually involves a hope for good health, good fortune, children, prosperity, love, etc.

But when we are constantly reminded that a global war is imminent, how can we truly wish these wishes for our loved ones? Should we change the dedication on those cards to "Wishing you a safe haven from the upcoming war?" But then, again, there seems to be no safe haven anymore, since we have rigorously connected every part of the world through sea, ground and air transport links. Not to mention cyberspace, where virtual reality has effectively replaced physical space.

If a simple desire to wish our loved ones happiness at this time of the year becomes an oxymoron, how can we go on with our lives? Can we not then say that the end of the year 2002 is summed up by the fact that our hopes for a happy future are denied by the anticipation of a global war? When this simple well-wishing is denied, it means that our lives are being robbed of the possibility (not even a reality) of collective good will. A "realistic" anticipation of the future has made a simple hopeful projection difficult, if not impossible. We are not only being deprived of the present, we are having our collective future ripped off.

How could we sincerely hope for a "Happy New Year" when our imagination of a "better" future is already in serious doubt? In this sense, the happiness of the present is impoverished once the future is diminished. One could also ask: What constitutes happiness? In spite of the fruits of technological inventions which have produced products and services to provide a comfortable and convenient life for more and more people around the world, it remains difficult to claim that people in general are happier. In many cases, the more educated, the more sophisticated, the more urbanised a person is, the more lonely, the more anxious, the more stressed that person becomes. The more time-saving gadgets a person owns, the less time the person has.

The idea of progress as a promise of happiness has seduced us into believing in the magic of inventions. And yet, this same system, this technological way of life harnessed for the purpose of achieving various Utopias, has been the very cause and condition for the Holocaust, the two world wars and environmental degradation. The imminent planned attack on Iraq could be just another example of a long list of "achievements" in the technology of death.

The promise of progress has played out its plethora of possibilities in the human spheres of life and especially death. With these dark clouds of war hanging in the air, how could sensible people pretend not to see beyond their noses, light up the candles and celebrate the New Year?

Some people may react to the situation by saying that it's better not to think so much. (Another one of those age-old Thai sayings.) But then I would argue that the 17-year-old girl who lost her life trying to get rid of extra fat might not have had to face that fate so soon if only she'd been able to stop and think a little about the lack of wisdom in believing herself to be "fat." Even if we ensure safer medical procedures for cosmetic surgery, it is still beyond my understanding why a 17-year-old would need a "beauty-enhancing" operation. I bet that if we were to base our standard of what represents a good figure on the likes of Julia Roberts or Ally McBeal then 99 percent of women would feel that they were definitely overweight. But can we not "think" otherwise?

Much unnecessary suffering is the result of this kind of impoverishment of the mind. The wonders of progress in technological terms have conquered not only the Earth in the physical sense, but they have also conquered the mind as a sphere of meanings. When beauty can be easily created in a hospital and a country's security can be achieved by accumulating more weapons of destruction, the very success of technological progress turns it into a most serious threat to human well-being. This threat has become so powerful that we cannot remain sensible and wish our loved ones well.

So, can we still say "Happy New Year" to each other? To do so, I suggest that we first have to fight hard to get back the possibility of wishing our loved ones well.

Dr Suwanna Satha-Anand, associate professor and former head of the Department of Philosophy at Chulalongkorn University, has written several books and articles on philosophy and religion in contemporary society. Her works include *Truth over Convention: Feminist Interpretations of Buddhism, Buddhadasa's Philosophy and Mahayana Buddhism and, most recently, Faith and Wisdom : A Philosophical Dialogue on Religion.*

* * *

The Strength of America

All of my friends and disciples on the five continents join me to humbly ask the government of the U.S.A. not to start a war with Iraq. The war will bring destruction not only to the people of Iraq but also to the U.S.A. and to people all over the world.

Please look into your own past experience with war to recognize the vast devastation that war creates for all warring parties, in terms of loss of precious human lives, destruction of the natural environment, and destruction of diplomatic relationships and peace between nations in the world. Please use your powers of reflection and understanding of the past and present situations in order to prevent such destruction and devastation to the peoples of the United States and for the protection and safety of people all over the world.

Please look deeply into the interconnections between the U.S.A. and all nations in the world to see that war in one place will contribute to war in many places, destruction in one direction will lead to destruction in many directions. We ask the U.S.A. to operate in harmony with the community of nations, making use of the collective wisdom and decision making capacities of that community. Please help strengthen the U.N. as an organization for peacekeeping, because that is the hope of the world. Please do not cause damage or destroy the authority and the role of the United Nations, instead support it wholeheartedly by listening to its recommendations. Please see the U.S.A. as an active member of the larger organization, of the United Nations, and seek to work together as an international community to ensure the safety and well-being for the people of the U.S.A. and for all people in the world. The United Nations, made up of many nations in the world, has the capacity to provide and support constructive settings to establish dialogue and to offer conditions for maintaining peace and security for all nations in the world.

Please reveal the great strength and wisdom of the U.S.A. by showing the world that it is possible to resolve conflict without the long lasting destruction and devastation caused by war. We will all be very grateful.

Thich Nhat Hanh and the Global Community of Mindful Living, Plum Village, France, 16 February 2003

* * *

If one must summarize Buddhism in one word, then it would be *ahimsa* or nonviolence. In order to act nonviolently, one must overcome the three poisons of the mind and sources of violence, namely greed, hatred, and delusion through mindfulness and loving kindness. Nonviolence does not mean inaction or omission. It requires continuous and active dialogue with others and overcoming dualisms that put "us" against "them", human against subhuman, etc. It is the recognition that, in Gandhi's wise words, "An eye for an eye just makes the whole world blind."

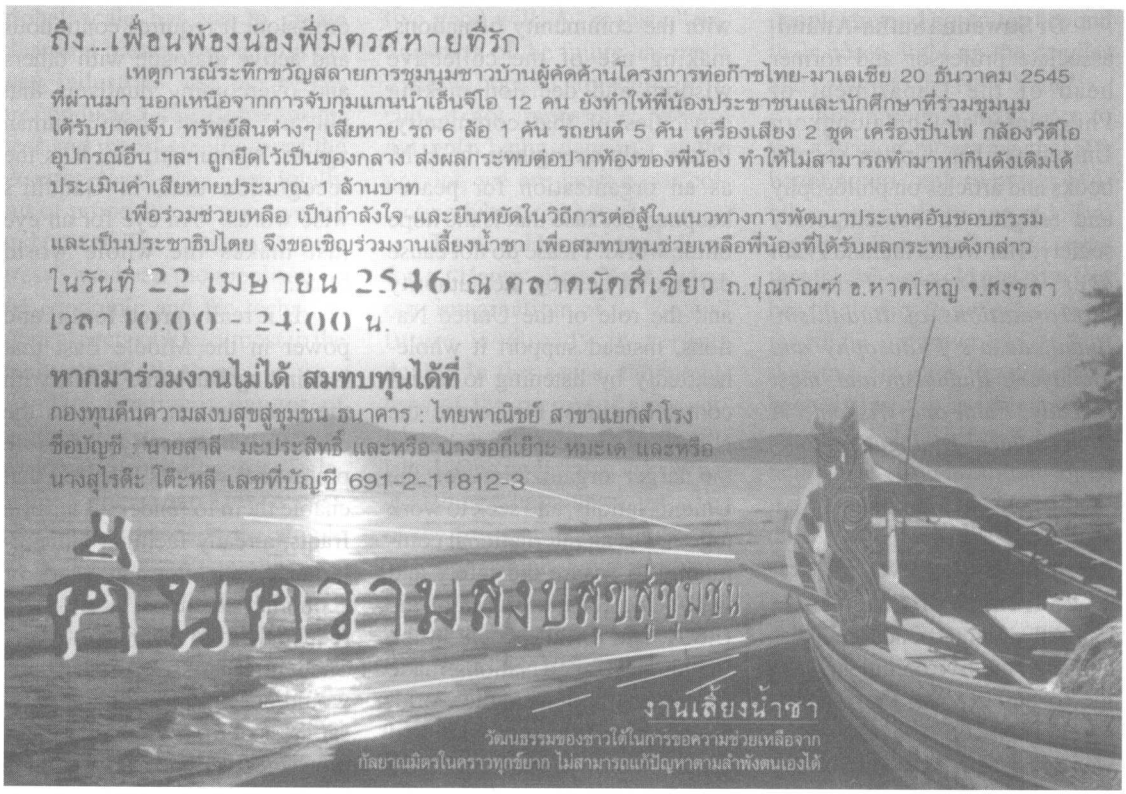
Is it really greed for oil and power in the Middle East that is blinding Bush and Blair, with the disarmament of Iraq as the deceitful but easily refutable pretext for war? Is it hatred that enable them to render 23 million Iraqis, already facing a humanitarian crisis after ten years of economic sanctions, faceless and reduce them to one hated figure, Saddam Hussein? Another war would not only lead to unnecessary loss of life — in hundreds of thousands — but also trigger a humanitarian disaster in Iraq. Is it the delusion of the lone superpower that makes it so impervious to the growing planetary sentiments against war on Iraq?

War on Iraq would be unjust, destructive, and illegal. It would also diminish the faculties for critical self reflection in the American and British governments, thus hindering wisdom which is necessary for peace. It is very important to understand that nonviolence is an effective and very powerful response to the present conflict.

Sulak Sivaraksa. Sulak contributed this article to *The Times Higher Education Supplement.*

Suwanna Satha-Anand,
Thich Nhat Hahn,
Sulak Sivaraksa

SIAM
Neutral on which side?



TV coverage of the recent police crackdown on anti-pipeline demonstrators in Songkhla exposed the media's problematic definition of non-partisan reporting for what it is, with one academic even accusing the Fourth Estate of ducking its responsibility to tell the whole truth by 'hiding behind the myth of neutrality'.

The protesters were waiting peacefully. All of a sudden, the sound of whistles pierced the air. Anti-riot police wielding batons and shields moved through the barricades and closed in on the protesters. The crowd was first stunned, then began to resist. The police pushed on. Then all hell broke loose. Video footage shot by an eyewitness of the violence in Songkhla on the night of December 20 shows that the police started it first. But why is it that viewers never get to see this on a single national TV channel?

What the public did see was footage, frequently repeated, of the free-for-all between police and people protesting the construction of the Thai-Malaysian gas pipeline. But they were left in the dark as to how it all began.

The same video shows protestors trying to ascertain where they will be permitted to assemble preparatory to handing a petition to Thai and Malaysian ministers meeting in the southern town. The protestors were caught off guard when the anti-riot police abruptly broke off negotiations. During the melee that ensued, the video shows a village leader atop a truck pleading in vain with police officers and protestors to stay calm. The wail of Muslim prayers can be heard in the background.

But the public saw neither the negotiations nor that man's pleas for people to stop fighting. Why? Was there political intervention from the top? Or was the omission due to deep structural problems in Thai TV journalism which makes it unrealistic to expect stations to carry the torch

of truth?

Ironically, the broadcaster which gave the most coverage to the Songkhla melee was also the main target of these questions. iTV — in which the Shinawatra family's Shin Corp owns a majority share — was the first to report the outbreak of violence, beating its rivals to it, and gave the most airtime to the incident. But the station was criticised for several reasons.

To begin with, iTV labelled the incident as a "clash" between two parties. Its on-site anchorman also stated from the outset that prior to the outbreak of violence the protestors had "broken their promises" to the authorities by carrying weapons. In addition, its coverage implied that an opposition party had conspired to stir up trouble. Like other local channels, iTV allowed the authorities to frame public opinion by blaming the protestors for provoking the violence.

All this, plus the failure to put the melee into a proper context, helped perpetuate state propaganda that the anti-pipeline activists are a violent lot, critics charged.

Another question needs to be asked. Does iTV — given that it had a five-camera crew on the spot — have footage similar to that video which showed the police fomenting the violence? If so, why did it not air it?

Reporters at work

These questions are unfair because they do not take into account deadlines, other broadcasting constraints and the principle of neutrality, said iTV's team of reporters in Songkhla.

Anchorman Cherngchai Wang-oon said he didn't know whether the station had any footage showing who started the melee. "You have to understand that working under the pressure of the moment we had no time to go through all the footage we had, to think about what happened before or after, or who started it. We had to work against time to select images that best explained the violence that broke out. We had to choose colourful scenes that would capture the audience's attention; that's normal news practice."

Cherngchai said that since he was the anchorman he didn't personally witness the clash that night because he had to stay in a mobile broadcasting unit to compile and screen the news coming in from reporters in the field. In common with the other journalists present, he said the iTV staffers were not expecting anything toward to happen because things looked calm in front of the JB Hotel where protestors were gathering.

"But a member of our team was alerted by a call from a NGO source and she rushed to the site because she'd been told there would be a clash in 10 minutes. How did they know this beforehand?" Cherngchai asked.

Another reporter, Ratchaneewan Duangkaew, shares the anchorman's doubts. "We rushed to the scene. Not too long afterwards I saw the police starting to move. The students shouted that they'd come in peace just to petition the joint Cabinet meeting. The police kept pushing the protestors back and that led to the clash. But how did the NGOs know in advance?"

Tapanee Iadsrichai, the iTV reporter who received the phone call, said her source in Bangkok, who has ties with the NGO network, told her that "something might happen in 10 minutes."

"I immediately rang my source among the protesters in front of the hotel to find out if something was brewing. He said 'no'; that they were waiting for Pi Poh to tell them where they could move to for their sit-in," she said, referring to Watcharapan Chantarakajorn, assistant secretary to the Prime Minister, who acted as a negotiator that night.

"As soon as I hung up, the police started to push the protesters back."

Tapanee said she called her source the following day to ask if he knew in advance that there would be a clash. "He said he didn't, that he was merely concerned about the unusually large number of police called to the site so he wanted us to be there just in case."

The iTV team insists it was fair in its coverage. The reporters say that when the violence broke out, they agreed to show the melee with the minimum of comment. "Because we wanted the public to judge for themselves from what they could see," said Ratchaneewan.

Their coverage presented the views of all parties, Cherngchai insisted.

"But we couldn't talk to the protestors first because they were dispersed," he explained. "When we finally located them, we gave them even more airtime. But it was late in the night and people just didn't watch it. You must understand the constraints we were under."

The team said their coverage was free from political interference.

"We talked among ourselves all the time about what to broadcast," said Ratchaneewan. "All decisions and the editing of the voices and the images were made by us, the team on the

ground. There was no outside intervention telling us what to do," she said.

Ratchaneewan and Tapanee, both eyewitnessed to the incident, maintain that they didn't report who had started the violence because that would have been tantamount to passing judgement, a breach of the journalistic code of ethics.

Explained Ratchaneewan: "We saw different things from different angles. I was standing behind the police so I saw them advancing on the protesters. But I didn't see what was going on in the back. How could I judge right there and then that the police had started it?"

Tapanee was of a similar mind. "Personally, I feel sorry for the villagers. But we reporters have no right to say who did it first. We couldn't play judges and pass a verdict on the event."

In her view, both sides were provocative, she said. "They are happy if our reports favour them. If not, they attack us, the media, for being unfair.

"It's not right to ask why we didn't screen the who-did-it footage [as if the omission was intentional]. The media is now being used to give legitimacy to one side in the conflict."

The missing picture

Peace advocate Dr Chaiwat Satha-Anand and media expert Dr Ubonrat Siriyuvasak think the who-did-it question is important, however.

"Reporters shouldn't just inform the public about the whats, but also about the whys and the hows," said Dr Ubonrat of Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Communication Arts.

Working under tight deadlines as they do, it is understandable that reporters can only touch on what actually transpired. "But when the urgency has passed, if they still don't ask how, or why, it happened then they are not doing their duty."

When field reporters have to work under time constraints, editors and other newsroom staff should fill in the gaps to provide the context of an event, as well as its meaning, said Ubolrat. "This can be done in separate programmes to provide background on or analysis of an event."

According to Wasant Paileeklee, director of iTV's news division, time constraints are such that the station has to concentrate on covering breaking news; personnel have no time to look back and review programming. "We welcome advice on how we can improve our work and iTV will co-operate with efforts to answer the question of who started the violence," he said.

Dr Chaiwat of Thammasat University denied that he was asking reporters to take sides. "I'm asking them to be aware of the complexity of the situation; to know the significance of the phenomenon they are reporting in the big picture of things.

"That means that they have to do their homework — which they often don't," he said.

What worries him, he continued, is that the failure to provide the contexts and meanings of events in the news is not exclusive to a particular news organisation; it is a problem prevalent in the media as a whole.

"Our society is brewing with conflicts waiting to explode," he said. "It will be quite dangerous if the media don't start rethinking the way they do their jobs, if they continue perpetuating prejudice and mistrust rather than helping the public understand the complexities involved."

As regards the police crackdown in Songkhla, he said the big picture was the government's efforts to silence dissent from NGOs after it had successfully tamed the military and the bureaucracy.

Meanwhile, the context of the pipeline protest is villagers' efforts to assert their constitutional rights as well as the strengthening of civic groups as a new player in new politics, Dr Ubonrat added.

The media must have their hearts in the right place, she insisted. "For their mission is not only to be truthful and fair but also to defend citizens' rights."

Unfortunately, she said, the media has ducked this responsibility by "hiding behind the myth of neutrality."

"They should stop fooling themselves. What they call neutrality is but the collective bias of the newsroom — which may vary from one news organisation to another," she said. "That's why one publication is known for being conservative and another as liberal."

One way the media has avoided their responsibility to cover the big picture is their tendency to narrowly define neutrality or fairness as the provision of equal space or airtime for conflicting views, said Dr Chaiwat. "Even if you give two minutes to the government and two to the protesters, it's still not a level playing field because you're not counting the many more minutes you give to state views elsewhere.

"I'm not asking for more airtime for the aggrieved. I'm only asking you to be aware of the context of the phenomenon you're reporting so that you can ask new questions within your

old time constraints.

"Remember, the questions you ask reflect where you are coming from," he said.

"Remember also that your so-called neutrality is often coloured by your views and this is reflected by the words you choose to describe various phenomena."

That is why the violence in Songkhla was labelled a "clash" instead of a "crackdown," noted Dr Ubonrat. To her, this so-called neutrality is merely an expression of the media's unwillingness to call a spade a spade. "They don't want to take risks. So they let others do the explaining for them. This is dangerous because the media have the tendency to seek the authorities' views first, thus allowing the powerful to justify their violence against the powerless.

"This is not being neutral. It is being middle-of-the-road," she said, adding that this problem is true of the news-gathering industry as a whole.

But like events in the news, the media operate within the context of state control, said Dr Ubonrat.

The print media may be relatively more outspoken but that is because it is not state owned. Meanwhile, TV stations, which depend on state concessions, have little room to give vent to a free voice.

"If we want to see change, we must help free them," she added. "That's why it's important to make TV and radio frequencies publicly owned and reallocate them in accordance with the constitutional mandate on media reform."

As they stand, things look gloomy, she said. State media agencies are rewriting the rules to retain their power over TV and radio stations, while the super-rich Thai Rak Thai administration wields much influence over the advertising revenues of the press.

Still, that is no reason for the news media to avoid the soul-searching necessary to ascertain what their mission as watchdogs entails.

If they don't change the way they work and how they define journalistic neutrality, the media will exacerbate the problem because they are helping to perpetuate prejudice and hatred, she said.

"And if they ignore the rights of small people then they are part of the oppression," she added. "They must ask themselves what they want to be."

Sanitsuda Ekachai
Bangkok Post,
January 8, 2003

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countries as not one between donors and recipients but between equal partners.

Another phrase often mentioned by TRT politicians to the electorate is "people-centred approach" or "people-centred development." This is also an old UN idea, first discussed in the UN also in the 1960s, but its time did not come until 1990, when the UN Development Programme published its first Human Development Report, which tried to measure development as not merely reflecting economic growth but multidimensional in character and, most importantly, measured from a human-centred development perspective. This report is published annually. Our National Economic and Social Development Board also embraced this idea in its Eighth Plan, quite a few years before people had even heard of the TRT.

Another famous phrase promoted by TRT politicians (and others) is sustainable development. The idea that it is possible to maintain a good environment without hurting development was finally agreed between developed and developing countries at the UN Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, although the phrase "sustainable development" was officially first used in the Brundtland Report in 1987.

These are some of the TRT's ideas which have UN "paternal" lineage, and the TRT should not be ashamed, for they are universal norms respected by civilised countries. There are other UN ideas too that are so important that this government decided to establish separate ministries for them, like the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Human Security, though I am not sure how serious or sincere this government is on human security, as our foreign minister has not once attended the human security network conferences, whereas former foreign minister Surin Pitsuwan attended them all the time.

At this most critical time for the UN, one cannot help but observe that PM Thaksin and President Bush have at least one belief in common: the UN is not their father. Nevertheless, Bush is still trying to obtain UN moral and political support for his Iraqi policy (a desire for paternal approval?), while our PM, admittedly in a fit of pique, brusquely dismissed any kind of paternal relationship. Perhaps we should forgive him, for he cannot have known important and extensive UN ideas and ideals are in his party's political platform.

Asda Jayanama is a former Thai permanent representative to the UN in New York. This article was first published in ***The Nation***, 11 March 2003.

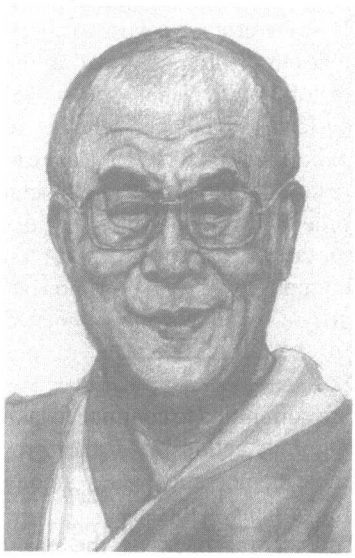


TIBET

Statement on the Forty-Fourth Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day

Our sincere greetings to fellow Tibetans in Tibet and in exile and to our friends and supporters all over the world on the occasion of the 44th anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising of 1959. While there were positive developments on the overall issue of Tibet, we remain concerned about the continuing marginalization of Tibetans in their own country and Chinese actions on the human rights and religious freedom of the Tibetan people in the past year.

The 16th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party ushered a new era in China by smoothly transferring the leadership from the third to the fourth generation. This is a sign of political maturity and adaptability. The reforms, initiated by Deng Xiaoping and continued under President Jiang Zemin, have brought about great changes in China, especially in the fields of economy, trade and in the conduct of international relations. I welcome this development since I have always drawn attention to the need to bring China into the mainstream of the world community and have spoken against any idea of isolating and containing China. Unfortunately, in sharp contrast to these positive aspects, such a pragmatic and flexible approach has been lacking when it comes to upholding the basic civil and political rights and freedoms of its citizens, especially with regard to those of the so-called minorities within the People's Republic of China.



We were encouraged by the release of several Tibetan and Chinese political prisoners of conscience during the past year. Among them Tibetan prisoners such as Takna Jigme Sangpo and Ani Ngawang Sangdrol who spent years in prison solely for daring to express their views on Chinese policies in Tibet and in particular on Tibetan history represent the courage and determination of the Tibetan people inside Tibet.

I was pleased that the Chinese government made it possible for my envoys to visit Beijing to re-establish direct contact with the Chinese leadership and to also visit Tibet to interact with the leading local Tibetan officials. The visit of my envoys last September to Beijing provided the opportunities to explain to the Chinese leadership our views on the issue of Tibet. I was encouraged that the exchanges of views were friendly and meaningful.

I had instructed my envoys to make every effort to pursue a course of dialogue with the leadership in Beijing and to seize every opportunity to dispel existing misunderstandings and misconceptions in Beijing about our views and positions. This is the only sensible, intelligent and human way to resolve differences and establish understanding. It will not be an easy task nor can it be accomplished within a short period of time. However, it provides the Tibetan and Chinese peoples a unique and crucial opportunity to put behind them decades of bitterness, distrust and resentment and to form a new relationship based on equality, friendship and mutual benefit.

Successive Chinese leaders have acknowledged and promised to respect with understanding and tolerance Tibet's distinct culture, history and identity. In reality, whenever Tibetans demonstrate allegiance and concern for their own people the Chinese authorities resort to their usual "policy of merciless repression", whereby they are labelled as "splittists" and as a result arrested and imprisoned. They have no opportunity to speak out the truth. The recent execution of Lobsang Dhondup and the death sentence given to Tulku Tenzin Delek without due process of law are clear examples of this policy, which cannot resolve the problem and therefore must be changed.

It is my sincere hope that the

Chinese leadership will find the courage, vision and wisdom for new openings to solve the Tibetan issue through dialogue. Looking around the world we cannot fail to notice how unattended conflicts with ethnic roots can erupt in ways that make them extremely difficult to solve. It is, therefore, in the interest of the People's Republic of China to address such issues. A new creative initiative to resolve the issue of Tibet would serve as a very convincing sign that China is changing, maturing and becoming more receptive to assuming a greater role on the global stage as a reliable and forward-looking power. A constructive approach to the issue of Tibet provides important opportunities to create a political climate of trust, confidence and openness, both domestically and internationally. Such an expression of Chinese leadership during this time of deep anxiety over international conflicts, terrorism and ethnic strife in the world will go a long way to impressing and reassuring the world.

It is necessary to recognize that the Tibetan freedom struggle is not about my personal position or well being. As early as in 1969 I made it clear that it is up to the Tibetan people to decide whether the centuries-old institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. In 1992 in a formal announcement I stated clearly that when we return to Tibet with a certain degree of freedom I would not hold any office in the Tibetan government nor any other political position. However, as I often state, till my last day I will remain committed to the promotion of human values and religious harmony. I also announced then that the Tibetan Administration-in-Exile should be dissolved and that the Tibetans in Tibet must shoulder the main responsibility of running the Tibetan government. I have always believed that in the future Tibet should follow a secular and democratic system of governance. It is, therefore, baseless to allege that our efforts are aimed at the restoration of Tibet's old social system. No Tibetan, whether in exile or in Tibet, has any desire to restore old Tibet's outdated social order. On the contrary, the democratisation of the Tibetan community started soon upon our arrival in exile. This culminated in the direct election of our political leadership in 2001. We are committed to continue to take vigorous actions to further promote democratic values among the ordinary Tibetans.

As far back as the early seventies in consultation with senior Tibetan officials I made a decision to seek a solution to the Tibetan problem through a "Middle Way Approach". This framework does not call for independence and separation of Tibet. At the same time it provides genuine autonomy for the six million men and women who consider themselves Tibetans to preserve their distinctive identity, to promote their religious and cultural heritage that is based on a centuries-old philosophy which is of benefit even in the 21st century, and to protect the delicate environment of the Tibetan plateau. This approach will contribute to the overall stability and unity of the People's Republic of China. I remain committed to this realistic and pragmatic approach and will continue to make every effort to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

The reality today is that we are all interdependent and we have to co-exist on this small planet. Therefore, the only sensible and intelligent way of resolving differences, whether between individuals, peoples or nations, is through a political culture of non-violence and dialogue. Since our struggle is based on truth, justice and non-violence and is not directed against China, we have been fortunate to receive increasing worldwide sympathy and support, including from amongst the Chinese. I express my appreciation and gratitude for this consistent solidarity. I would also like to express once again on behalf of the Tibetans our appreciation and immense gratitude to the people and the Government of India for their unwavering and unmatched generosity and support.

With my homage to the brave men and women of Tibet who have died for the cause of our freedom. I pray for an early end to the suffering of our people.

The Dalai Lama
Dharamshala, March 10, 2003

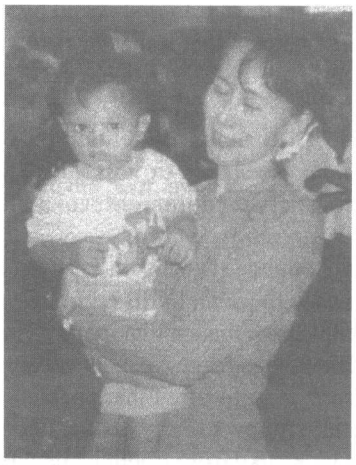


BURMA
All we want is our freedom

Traveling across Burma, I ask people why they want democracy. Very often the answer is, "We just want to be free." They do not have to elaborate. I understand what they mean. They want to be able to live their lives without the oppressive sense that their destiny is not theirs to shape. They do not want their daily existence to be ruled by the orders and whims of those whose authority is based on might of arms.

When I ask young people what they mean by freedom, they say that they want to be able to speak their minds. They want to be able to voice their discontent with an education system that does not challenge their intellect. They want to be able to discuss, criticize, argue; to be able to gather in the thousands or even hundreds of thousands to sing, to shout, to cheer. Burma's young people want to play out the vitality of their youth in its full spectrum of hope and wonder — its uncertainties, its arrogance, its fancies, its brilliance, its rebelliousness, its harshness, its tenderness.

What do the women of Burma want? They tell me that they want to be free from the tyranny of rising prices that make running a household an exhausting business. They want to be free from the anxiety that their husbands might be penalized for independent thinking — or that their children might not be given a fair chance in life. Many — too many — long to be free from having to sell their bodies to support their families.



The farmers and peasants I meet want to sow and plant as they wish, to be able to market their product at will, unhampered by the coercion to sell it to the state at cruelly low prices. They struggle daily with the land. They do not want unreasonable decrees and incomprehensible authority to add to their burden.

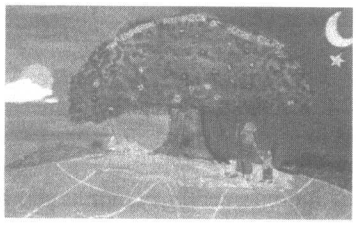
And what about those of us in the National League for Democracy? Why are we working so hard to free our country? It is not that we see democracy through a haze of optimism. We know that democracy is a jewel that must be polished constantly to maintain its luster. To prevent it from being damaged or stolen, democracy must be guarded with unremitting vigilance.

We are working so hard for freedom because only in a free Burma will we be able to build a nation that respects and cherishes human dignity.

As I travel through my country, people often ask me how it feels to have been imprisoned in my home — first for six years, then for 19 months. How could I stand the separation from family and friends? It is ironic, I say, that in an authoritarian state it is only the prisoner of conscience who is genuinely free. Yes, we have given up our right to a normal life. But we have stayed true to that most precious part of our humanity — our conscience.

Here is what I want most for my people: I want the security of genuine freedom and the freedom of genuine security. I would like to see the crippling fetters of fear removed, that the people of Burma may be able to hold their heads high as free human beings. I would like to see them striving in unity and joy to build a safer, happier society for us all. I would especially like to see our young people stride confidently into the future, their richness of spirit soaring to meet all challenges. I would like to be able to say: "This is a nation worthy of all those who loved it and lived and died for it — that we might be proud of our heritage." These are not dreams. These constitute the reality toward which we have been working for years, firm in our faith that the will of the people will ultimately triumph.

Aung San Suu Kyi
Boston Sunday Globe
March 9, 2003



Letter from INEB

Dear readers and INEB members,

In the morning of the day I am writing, the world is shocked by an invasion (not a war to my idea) of Iraq by the United States. People demonstrated the desire for peace in every corner of the globe during 15-16 February 2003. Only a few days after, the US president said something like he would never let the globalized people movements trespass the security of the USA. Furthermore, in the website of the UN, there was a warning that UN does not collect signatures for petition for peaceful resolution for this case (so, don't be fooled. It's just a hoax, eh?). People should express their concern to their government, and only government has a say in UN. Even people of the entire world voice altogether, it is still not loud enough to draw any attention.

Any way, I appreciate effort of all likeminded friends and peacemakers who vigorously involve in peace mission, some of them share their news with us via INEB e-group.

What does this mean to us? As people participatory democracy is a cliché in many countries, how come people's direct voice is turned down? For one thing, to me, we see a stronger connection between power and benefit. A marriage of hatred and greed is so fortified that people's voice hardly penetrate into. People organizations need to contemplate seriously how to carry out a collective action more effectively. We need to think of what a peo-ple movement looks like from Buddhist perspective, a people movement equipped with both compassion and wisdom in a time of violence and hatred. On one hand we need to point out structural violence that induces physical one, but feasible alternative ways of living together need to be addressed also.

Back to INEB, in this issue, you will find a summary of activities in the year 2002. For the coming months, in May, a group of monks and nuns from Plum Village, France, will introduce the Dharma of The Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh to Thailand. You might remember his role of a peace advocate during the Vietnam war. The event will consist of a public lecture, 3-day and 7-day retreat. In July, we will have an international conference on socially engaged Buddhism in Korea, hosted by a group of Korean Buddhist organizations and INEB. Both events provide chances to practice for individual fulfillment and to discuss about how to create a peaceful world. Form middle of July onward is Buddhist Lent in Thailand. It's a time of intensive learning and practise. I hope all of us take this chace to empower ourselves to be more confident in our mission of putting out fire of suffeings of our own and of all beings.

Yours in the Dharma,
Ms. Lapapan Supamanta
Executive Secretary

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nature of Ariyavinaya was promoted by the presence of Christians and Hindus. The objective is to explore together Buddhist perspective on various issues. The conference discussed issues such as youth, women and gender, structural violence, education, and economics.

Conference on International Insecurity in the 21st Century
10-13 February 2002
Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand

People from many countries in Asia, Europe, America and Australia came to discuss about the global situation which is jeopardized by war and violence, and also about peace keeping effort from people sectors. Peacemakers attended were from interfaith and secular backgrounds. The conference is regarded as another prelude to Spirit of Bandung II event that promotes alternatives to present global international geopolitical economic which is depriving the poor and generate violence and insecurity.

"Education for Alternative to Globalization"
25 June 2002 - 7 July 2002
CRS Farm, Colombo, Sri Lanka

The workshop was hosted by Center for Religion and Society (CSR) and CCFD (Catholic Committee for Food and Development). INEB participated as representative of Buddhists and presented paper on "Buddhist Response to Globalization"

Visit Dharmavedi Institute and Bhikkhuni Temples in Sri Lanka.
7–9 July 2002

Dharmavedi Institute is run by Raja Dhammapala who is INEB Executive Committee member. His office carries out empowerment program for local people at Yawapua based on Buddhist teachings. The current programs include the eradication of drug addiction among local farmers, the work of replanting – health – education for community building and non-violent conflict resolution, training on Buddhist ways of conflict resolution for monks – nuns and laity who are the leaders in the villages. He also involved in peace reconciliation for Sri Lanka.

"Interfaith Consultation on Religious Conflicts in Indonesia"
20–27 July 2002
Jakarta, Indonesia

INEB was invited as representative from Buddhist community to join an international and interfaith peace mission. It was organized by WARC (World Alliance of Reformed Churches based in Geneva, Switzerland). We witnessed socalled religious conflicts in Indonesia: Poso, Palu, Ambon and Bali. We had a chance to talk with local leaders, Christian, Muslim and Hindu, who are seeking peace against ethnic and religious conflicts in Indonesia. Buddhist community as a party who does not involve in any conflict is called upon to become active in peace building.

Millenium Interfaith Dialogue
29–30 July 2002
Jakarta, Indonesia

The Buddhist-Muslim dialogue was co-organized by INEB, The Union of Indonesian Buddhist Students, Museum of World Religions from Taiwan, International Movement for the Just World from Malaysia, Islamic Millennium Forum (IMFO), Asian Muslim Action, KALAM Youth Network from Indonesia. Representatives from both religious communities, particularly youth leaders had another chance to discuss interfaith cooperation and understanding. Focused also were issues of youth and protection of places of worship and sacred sites.

Super Training for Social Action Trainers in Asia
6-22 November 2002
Wongsanit Ashram, Thailand

INEB co-organized this international training. The objective is to strengthen the capacity of social activists and trainers who work in the Asian region through adventure-base learning process. Participants were from 17 ethnic groups altogether from Myanmar, Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand and East Timor. Course leaders are George Lakey, Ouyporn Khuankaew and Pracha Hutanuwatr.

"International Roundtable on Globalization and Spirituality"
25–27 November 2002
Genting Highland, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The roundtable was diverse as composed of Buddhists, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Jewish intellectual, social activists and clergy. This was an effort to analyze the effect of globalization in international political economics terms on people. Shared vision for alternative to present situation based on spirituality was discussed. As one of the meeting outcome, a proposal to UN to protect places of worship and sacred sites and to declare them as asylum during wartime is endorsed. Present there were The Venerable Samaneri Dhammananda (INEB's local support group member) and The Executive Secretary to share perspective from socially engaged Buddhism.

INTERBUDDY Youth Program
Interfaith Dialogue on Capitalism
30 November – 1 December 2002

A small group of Thai students and young activists from Buddhist and Christian background discussed together on effect of capitalism and consumerism on their youth lifestyle. Religious leader from Islam joined the discussion as resource person. However, Muslim youth were unable to attend since it was during a fast period of Muslim.

Workshop on Youth
Movement in Globalization
17–19 January 2003

The workshop invited Thai young people from diverse background to discuss on movement and social action of youth. Participating in the workshop were urban and rural university students, young activists in protesting areas, youth environmentalist groups and young monks. They learned the importance for youth to be active in social responsibility, to learn from each other despite diversity and to create a network for social change.

Letter from the road, 17

A Gesture

The feelings generated in us by this war are not easy to hold. For months so many of us worked to stop the war from happening, feeling a great communal determination and newfound solidarity, at the same time feeling dread of the imminent violence, and anxiety for the long-term hatred it will feed. And then all at once it was as if we slipped off a muddy river bank, down into the lethal reality of war. We felt waves of feelings then: anger, shock, disappointment with ourselves, and as if something precious to us had died, like the country we believed in or our faith in the moral progress of history.

Now the days of war keep turning like the pages of a newspaper. Yesterday's images are superseded by today's. First we watch the Baghdad night flashing with explosions and feel agony for whoever is caught underneath it, these feelings mixed with an uncomfortable fascination at the display of power. Then we watch the pictures of somebody's mother weeping over a contorted body in the rubble, and the armless child with his new stumps wrapped in white gauze, and the blood seeping from beneath some peasant's body lying by the side of a road. We shake our heads, feeling an old sorrow familiar to our species. We turn the page. Now we watch statues falling and people cheering, and feel relieved that maybe Saddam is history and the worst of the violence is over. Pro-war patriots gloat at us, and we feel like strangers in a strange land, unable to speak because no one is listening.

Our feelings are a mix of political convictions and raw human empathy. We can't forget the thousands of bloodied victims lying in dirty hospital rooms, while at the same time we hope for the end of the Iraqi dictatorship, while at the same time we distrust our government's long-term intentions, while at the same time we believe in the human capacity for nobility and kindness, and in the eventual coming of peace.

The pages keep turning.

Who's in charge of Iraq now who gets to decide? Arguments swirl even as US troops fight door-to-door. Rumsfeld threatens Syria may be next. We look at each other and realize we've failed, and then look again and realize we have succeeded. This is a long, long project we remind ourselves, a project that links us with peacemakers through all time. And so we prepare ourselves as wisely as we can for the continuing struggle.

Yet there is something missing. Something that feels a little betrayed in us, even denied, as we turn another page and ready ourselves for tomorrow. What is that? What haven't we done? What haven't we remembered?

I believe what we have missed has to do with grieving, and with the very human and mystical impulse in us to bless the dying and the dead.

Throughout the long months of protest and argument leading to this war, and through all the images of carnage we witnessed, we have tried to feel our solidarity with all the innocent victims of war: the Iraqi civilians and children, the Iraqi conscripts, and the US and British soldiers sent to liberate them. We believed there were wiser and more compassionate ways to address the dangers of Saddam's regime. But we were not listened to, and now the wounds and killings have been done, and continue.

In the process of all this our hearts stretched, and opened, and now are broken. These feelings of pain are our allies. They have helped us recognize in our souls what we knew before in our minds, that there is no "other". We are inside this human-ness, inside the soul of humanity in the same way everyone else is. There is nowhere to step back from it. Our customary sense of personal boundaries is not the whole truth.

I use the word "soul" on purpose. To me soul means that space in us in which we experience our connection to everything else, to every being. My soul bonds me to every other struggling soul in this drama of the Iraq war, from President Bush to the newly-made orphan falling from her mother's arms. We are not separate, we are family.

To feel this connection is a great gift. It makes our lives awake and in touch. But it also carries a price, the price of grief when members of our human family suffer and die. And so our hearts break as we see images of the dead and maimed. At a certain point we don't know how to hold this sadness and we turn away, or make ourselves numb. Soon we are troubled by our numbness and our turning away, yet we don't know what else to do. In an unconscious attempt to take on the suffering, some of us become vulnerable to illness, or depression.

I believe there is something we can do, though it may not appear to change anything outwardly. We can honor the suffering we witness by giving ourselves time to grieve. We can stop turning the pages for a moment, stop watching the next CNN report, stop attending to the next thing, and let there be silence in our house. Let the sadness in. Grieve. Grieve in whatever way we feel to. It may be for only a few moments, or it may be longer, but let us give it the time it takes, and as often as we feel the grief arise in us let us honor it.

And then we might try doing one more thing. Whether you are religious or not, it is very likely that if you were sitting with a family member who was dying you would want to soothe them in any way you could to help make their passing graceful and free from fear. Perhaps you would caress their forehead, or sing a quiet song, or repeat a prayer over and over. Whatever you would do, imagine what would be the quality of your heart during those moments as your loved one dies and you help them release in peace.

This quality of heart is, I believe, what we have to touch in ourselves and offer up to those children, women, and men in our common soul who have been wounded or died in a state of great distress during this war. They are here, inside us, with their confusion and fear and half-finished goodbyes as a missile hits their car or their house falls on them or flames sear their body. I think we need to go to them in our heart's imagination and offer our most sincere tenderness and love. Help them, by our tender presence, to let go in peace. If it's true we are all part of one soul, this gesture may be more than just a gesture. It may be the most relevant act for peace we can make at this moment, in our own soul as well as theirs. And then we will be peaceful enough and strong enough to turn to the path ahead.

Elias Amidon
Colorado,
11 April 2003



A Buddhist response to war on Iraq

The following is the summary of Phra Paisan Visalo's interview with the Sekiyadhamma Group on 29 March 2003 at the Komol Keemthong Foundation

SG: Please analyze the war from the Buddhist perspective and suggest ways to bring the war to an end.
PP: The problem is obviously with war. It affects people, society, economy, politics and mind. We should consider the causes of war. For Buddhists, the main causes are greed, hatred and delusion.

Greed is the American desire for oil and resources in Iraq and Middle East, hatred is the loathing of Saddam Hussein who is seen as a terrible man who must be eliminated. Hatred is linked to delusion: hatred and the desire to destroy because of the distortion of the truth. For example, the belief that the Iraqi people will revolt to overthrow Saddam Hussein is not true, delusion also includes rapture about reorganizing the Middle East... oil is not the only reason that led President Bush to war with Iraq. Another reason is the belief in religion, Bush believes in God and thought that he is the president of US because of God. He believes that war is the desire of God.

SG: Does this mean that this war also has something to do with religion?
PP: Actually. Bush has a negative attitude toward Islam. He feels like many Americans who believe that the US is the country chosen by God and has the special duty to put the world in order, Bush's belief in God is evident in the speeches he made to the American people and to the Congress.

SG: How can we help resolve the war?
PP: As mentioned earlier, the root causes of this war was greed, hatred and delusion. Hatred stands out now. Hatred makes war fan out. Hatred does not come from only the war makers but also from the supporters and opponents of war including the supporters of the US or Iraq.

Hatred makes people see each other as inhuman. Supporters and opponent of war have hatred; television watchers also have hatred, seeing dead people as an ordinary matter and not feeling sad.

What we should do is to prevent hatred from overpowering society. We should start from our minds. Actually, war is not far away. War is not only in Iraq, but it is also in our mind. Hatred is widespread in our minds, and it gradually destroys our humanity. If we have hatred in our minds, it will bring war to our country in the future.

SG: Is the trend in resorting to violence linked to capitalism and consumerism?
PP: Violence is hatred, while consumerism is greed. The causes are different but they are linked together. Consumerism is linked to the endeavor to control oil fields in the Middle East and is thus linked to the war in Iraq. Supporters of war also come from the people who watch television because of the desire to be stimulated, while the media respond to this desire by providing only war news to attract rating and advertisement. The result is that the people support war and see it as a game.

SG: How should Buddhist respond concretely to this situation?
PP: Firstly, we should not support war. Secondly, peace should be supported instead. We can create a peaceful atmosphere by starting from ourselves. We should have compassion in our minds and not allow hatred to dominate our minds. After that we can spread this idea to other people and help our friends and families to cultivate a peaceful atmosphere by recommending them to see this situation in the correct way; that is, not feel good with the murders and excited by the military or strategic analysis. Then, we should expand the peaceful atmosphere to our society, asking the media to create a peaceful atmosphere by providing peace news: letting people know that war is not enjoyable but tragic.

Although we cannot stop war ourselves, we can create a peaceful atmosphere in place of a hateful atmosphere. So, we should try to do as mentioned. At least, it affects us by sustaining our conscience. When we do something with compassion and conscience, it helps us to maintain our humanity amidst a war that gradually destroys our humanity.

SG: What stance should Buddhist monks take?
PP: They should not support the war. Moreover, they should make people realize the horror of war and have compassion for every group, including Bush and Saddam Hussein. The most important thing is to create a peaceful atmosphere instead of hateful atmosphere.

SG: Does this event create an opportunity for cooperation between the world's religions?
PP: It's possible. The good side of this war is that every religion opposes this war. There is thus an opportunity for the world's religions to cooperate with each other against the war.

Translated by
Roongtipa Krasachat

A Note from on Consultaion of Inter-religious Cooperation in Asia

Conflicts between different religious communities are still persistent phenomena in many parts of Asia for avery long time. India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Indonesia are some examples. For decades governments in these countries have failed to bring long lasting peace. People are killed, properties are destroyed, and many places of worship were burnt down. As a consequence there are numerous actions by local people and religious organizations to solve the problems, but of course in different ways.

An international gathering "Consultation of Inter-religious Cooperation in Asia" during 5-10 April 2003 is one of such efforts in a constructive manner. Three Christian organizations — Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), Asia & Pacific Alliance of YMCAs and Church Development Service, (EED) — invited people from 14 countries mainly from Asia to come to Parapat, North Sumatra, Indonesia to discuss about the problems and seek inter-religious actions. Participants included activists, spiritual leaders and scholars from Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Hindu backgrounds. INEB also participated together with fellow Buddhists from Vietnam, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.

After sharing experiences of grassroot people from different religious communities, we catch that in fact it is not a conflict of religions per se. It is more a politicization of religions that is causing problem. To a great extent, religions are manipulated by powers that be to serve their own interest, while unable to establish justice and prosperity to people. Many problems point to disparity in political and economic share among grassroot people as a legacy of coloniztion in the past and an adverse effect of globalization today. Religious illiteracy and intolerance only make the situation worse. Fundamentalism can be seen as a retaliation against development. When people realized that the secular development pattern imposed by the west has failed to give the majority of people any good, they would seek other sources, but some go so far to extremes and resort to violence.

It is important, however, to note that, although the problems lie in other areas, interfaith cooperation still has a critical role to play. We need to bear in mind that what is in front of us is not inter-religious conflicts, but a crisis of spirituality and ethics. We are facing a problem that cannot be solved merely with intellect or might, nor with political or social efforts alone, but also with sympathy. There are three signs of problems showing that a cure from inter-religious efforts is needed; (1) Increasing of "might is right", (2) Selfish, meanness and indifferences to the sufferings of others, and (3) Political and religious leadership that lead people to violence.

It is not that we do not have enough information, knowledge, or technology to tackle the problem. We do. Only the willingness to share, willingness to do for other's benefit, willingness to really solve these problem, are missing. Religions must act in such a way that brings people to be true to and to go deep into the essence of their faiths rather than the rituals. Then, we can restore our sympathy necessary for interfaith coexistence.

The analytical sessions are accompanied by several encouraging initiatives from friends. For example, Muslim-Christian communities' cooperation in the cases of Moro-Christian Peo-

ple's Alliance in Mindanao, the Philippines and in Ambon, Poso, Maluku, Indonesia, and cooperation among Buddhists, Christian and Hindu to restore peace in Sri Lanka, etc.

Lapapan Supamanta
Executive Secretary INEB

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make it very clear to them that all religious leaders and people's organization will get together and will launch anti-war programs on an unprecedented scale.", Nayaka Thera said.

"The unfortunate incidents that have occurred recently rekindled fear in the whole country that war might break out once again. If the war breaks out by any chance, people should get together and voice their opinions since it is our responsibility to safeguard peace. Steadfast dedication of both parties with the Norwegian Government should establish clear signs of honesty and genuine effort to overcome all obstacles places and clear the path for peace", he said.

"In this country people have experienced war and they must now get together to stop it. We do not want war anymore, our leaders should understand that we are against war.

"We must get together and fight for peace. It is very essential for our country, we should have positive thoughts towards the peace process. This country belongs to all communities and therefore all of us should coexist in harmony and we do not want to pester ourselves to start a war", he said. The recent unwanted and malicious acts should not be a hindrance or stumbling block to foster national unity and lasting peace. After all we have had enough experience of vast devastation of people and materials during this agonizing war. It is only through peace that one can gain liberation and salvation. Peace cannot be achieved overnight, tangible peace is not only a ceasefire or laying down of arms. Peace will take root only when justice and fairplay are provided and when equality among all people is ensured, Let's all hope that this one-year of serenity will lead to everlasting peace.

Kushani Ratnayake
Daily News,
March 29, 2003

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The Venerable Sammaneri Dhammananda is now a Bhikkhuni

On 28 February 2003 the Venerable Sammaneri Dhammananda received a full ordination in Sri Lanka and became a Bhikkhuni. After 2-year preparation as Sikkhamana and Samaneri, the former Dr. Chatsuman Kabilsingh went to an international ordination at Tapodhanaramaya, Mt. Lavinia, Colombo, Sri Lanka where twelve senior bhikkhus and ten senior bhikkhunis performed an ordination ceremony for her and three other samaneris, one American and two Burmeses. In this event, Ms. Natthaporn Padmanirankul was ordained as a samaneri. From now on she is "The Venerable Bhikkhuni Dhammananda".

From Yasodhara Newsletter on International Buddhist Women's Activities vol. 20 no. 75 April - June BE 2546 (2003)

"The Simplicity of Joy"
Plum Village Retreat in Thailand by teachers from Thich Nhat Hanh's Sangha
May 6, 2003 Dharma talk **"Embracing Anger with Love and Wisdom."**
4.30-7.30 pm. Small Auditorium, Thammasart University. (Donation)
May 9-11, 2003 Three-day retreat. **"The Art of Mindful Living"**
Ho Chan, Buddhamondhol, Nakorn Pathom (500 baht)
May 14-20, 2003 Seven-day retreat **"Peace in Ourselves, Peace in the World"**
Mr. Boonlue Boonmayont Farm, Noang Sarai, Pak Chong, Nakorn Ratchasima (1,500 baht)
For more information, please contact Friends for Mindful Living and Peace Tel. 02-314-7385-6

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Muslims and Indonesian Muslims. Also present was the President of the Basel Mission of Switzerland, Dr. Wolfgang Schmidt and Dr. David Chappel from California.

The Buddhist - Muslim Dialogue meetings initiated by Sulak Sivaraksa of Thailand and Dr. Chandra Muzzafar from Malaysia underscored the importance of the need for the non Muslim civilizations, cultures and religions to engage the Muslim World. This early Southeast Asian initiative was largely ignored by the mainstream Western World. Only after September 11th 2001, did the West feel the need to engage the Moslem World seriously. Unfortunately, the Western engagement was strongly colored by Prof. Samuel Huntington's prediction of a "clash of civilizations," and the anger over the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Huntington predicted that the Western Democracies are in for a head to head military collision with the Muslim World.

What is needed is to continue the tradition of engaging the Muslim World in a positive way,. in the manner prescribed by the Buddhist - Muslim Dialogues, which have been taking place in Southeast Asia. The forthcoming Buddhist - Muslim Dialogue in Paris in May 5-7th 2003, is intended to propagate this tradition of positive engagement. It is hoped that the interfaith concerns represented at the meeting would be broadened to address the urgent issues of military and human security in the wake of the US led international military initiatives to enforce regime change in Iraq.

Jeffery Sng

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Educating the spirit

Now, after years of doing short courses, the SEM is about to offer people a semi-fulltime higher education option.

"Mainstream education streamlines people to work in the 'capitalist market'," said social critic and thinker Sulak Sivaraksa.

"The knowledge they learn from formal education disconnects them from their environment, culture and other human beings. It's an education that makes people feel inadequate. They're never contented. After finishing a bachelor's degree, they want a master's and then a doctorate, without having a clear life-goal.

"In this competitive world, they are taught to pursue their personal interests and to have little social and environmental conscience or understanding of others' suffering." SEM's goal with its new programme is to help students find meaning in their lives, as well as to understand and transcend the social and political structures which shape their relations with others in society.

Since SEM believes that the mainstream "knowledge market" mainly benefits the middle class and the rich, its higher education programme is targetting grassroots people, community leaders, monks and nuns.

"I believe that we will have a better society when the grassroots are empowered and aware of exploitative social structures, and when more middle class people are aware that they are dependent on grassroots people," said Sulak. By empowering grassroots leaders, so that they can use use the knowledge to



develop their communities in a sustainable way, people who live in big cities will also benefit, he said.

The programme will take place over four years. There will be two six-week semesters a year, as well as a month's meditation per year at a retreat centre of each participants' choice.

The fee is 10,000 baht per semester, or 20,000 baht per year.

Sulak hopes to get public support to help pay some participants' course fees, including boarding costs. The SEM will provide a number of scholarships for grassroots participants who otherwise would not be able to afford the cost.

The first semester, set to begin on May 20, is limited to monks and male students and most of the learning will take place at the Children's Village in Kanchanaburi and at Wong Sanit Ashram in Nakhon Nayok. There will be another six-week semester for nuns and other women at the end of the year.

In the first two years, everyone will take a set menu of basic courses, including Understanding Life, Buddhist Ways of Living, Buddhism-related Psychology, Holistic Health, Teamwork and Interrelationships, Spiritual Ecology and Aesthetics, Understanding Social Structures, Methodology in the Pursuit of Knowledge, Writing and Speaking Skills.

Students will specialise in the last two years of the course. It is expected that the options will include dhamma studies, sustainable agriculture, traditional medicine and treatment, local craftsmanship, and community businesses.

To understand these topics in depth, students will have to take a holistic approach to learning, said Preeda Ruangwichatorn, SEM's higher education coordinator.

"Students will learn to see the interconnectedness of all things. When they learn about economics, for example, they will see how it relates to aspects of politics, religion, environment and culture. Above all, they will see how knowledge connects to them. Today in mainstream education, students are not taught to see those connections," he said.

Meditation will be a crucial part of the learning process. All course discussions will be preceded by a meditation session. Students will be required to do a month's meditation retreat at any temple or meditation centre of their choice.

"As we see it, meditation isn't just about students developing their individual spirituality. It's also about gaining an understanding of how suffering in society stems from exploitative social structures, and thinking of ways to redress this," said Sulak.

Students will be encouraged to engage in dialogue and share views and feelings with each other, with a minimum of guidance from instructors.

Karnjariya Sukrung
***Bangkok Post*,**
April 8, 2003

Globalisation versus Community

Society today is faced with a choice between two diverging paths. The path endorsed by government and industry leads towards an ever more globalised economy, one in which the distance between producers and consumers will continue to grow. The other path is being built from the grassroots, and leads towards strong local economies in which producer-consumer links are shortened. Moving in the latter direction may be one of the best ways of solving a whole range of serious social and environmental problems, from rising rates of crime and violence to the greenhouse effect. This may sound simplistic, but it is a conviction based on long-term observations in societies at very different levels of dependence on the global economy — including heavily-industrialised America, socialist Sweden, rural Spain, and most importantly, Ladakh, a traditional culture on the Tibetan Plateau.

When I first came to Ladakh the Global Market Economy had not yet arrived, and the local economy was still rooted in its own soils. Producers and consumers were closely linked in a community-based economy. Two decades of development in Ladakh, however, have led to a number of fundamental changes, perhaps the most important of which is the fact that people are now dependent on food and energy from thousands of miles away. The effects of this increasing distance between producers and consumers are worth looking at as we consider our own future.

The path towards globalisation is dependent upon continuous government investments. It requires the building-up of a large-scale industrial infrastructure, including roads, mass communications facilities, energy installations, and schools for specialised education. Among other things, this heavily subsidised infrastructure allows goods produced on a large scale and transported long distances to be sold at artificially low prices - in many cases at lower prices than goods produced locally. In Ladakh, the Indian government is not only subsidising roads, schools and energy installations, but is also bringing in subsidised food from industrial farms located in Punjab, on the other side of the Himalayas. This undermines Ladakh's local economy, which has provided enough food for its people for 2000 years. The food arriving in lorries by the tonne is cheaper in the local bazaar than food grown five minutes walk away. For many Ladakhis, it is no longer worthwhile to continue farming.

This same process is affecting not just food, but a whole range of goods, from clothes to household utensils to building materials. Imports from distant parts of India can often be produced and distributed at lower prices than goods produced locally-again, because of a heavily subsidised industrial infrastructure. The end result of this long-distance transport of subsidised goods is that Ladakh's local economy is being steadily dismantled, and with it the local community that was once tied together by bonds of interdependence.

This trend is exacerbated by other changes that have accompanied economic development. Traditionally, children learned how to farm from relatives and neighbours; now they are put into Western-style schools that prepare them for specialised jobs in an industrial economy. In Ladakh, these jobs are very few and far between. As more and more people are pulled off the land, the number of unemployed Ladakhis competing with each other for these scarce jobs is growing exponentially. What's more, the course of the economy, once controlled locally, is increasingly dominated by distant market forces and anonymous bureaucracies. The result has been a growing insecurity and competitivenes - even leading to ethnic conflict - amongst a once secure and cooperative people. A range of related social problems has appeared almost overnight, including crime, family breakup and homelessness. And as the Ladakhis have become separated from the land, their awareness of the limits of local resources has dimmed. Pollution is on the increase, and the population is growing at unsustainable rates.

Economists, of course, would dismiss these negative impacts, which are not as easily quantifiable as the monetary transactions that are the goal of economic development. They would also say that regions like the Punjab enjoy a comparative advantage over Ladakh in food production, and that it makes economic sense for the Punjab to specialise in growing food while Ladakh specialises in some other product, and that each trade with the other. But when distantly produced goods are heavily subsidised, often in hidden ways,

one cannot really talk about comparative advantage, or for that matter 'free markets', 'open competition in the setting of prices', or any of the other principles by which economists and planners rationalise the changes they advocate. In fact, we should instead be talking about the *unfair* advantage that industrial producers enjoy, thanks to a heavily subsidised infrastructure geared toward large-scale, centralised production.

The changes in this remote region in the Himalayas are part of the same process that has been affecting us here in the West as well for a lot longer. It is a trend that I have witnessed in Europe over the years with the expansion of the Common Market, and in America, where 'bigger' has long been assumed to be 'better'. Trillions of dollars have been spent all over the industrialised world creating bypasses and communications infrastructures that facilitate long-distance transport. Still more is being spent on highly specialised education that makes possible and promotes industrial technologies -from satellite communications to chemical- and energy-intensive agriculture. In the last decade, vast sums of taxpayers' money have been spent on research for biotechnology with the aim of allowing food to be transported even greater distances, survive even greater doses of pesticides, and ultimately to be produced without the troublesome need for farmers. The 'unfair advantage' these many subsidies give to large-scale producers and marketers is making it all but impossible for family farmers to compete with industrial agribusinesses, for the small shopkeeper to compete with huge supermarkets, or for any small producer to compete with corporations that can be located wherever production costs are lowest.

Large corporate producers are given further advantages by policies that promote 'free trade'. The premise underlying trade agreements like Maastricht, GATT, and NAFTA is that we will all be better off if we continue to increase the distance between producers and consumers. As a consequence, Spanish markets sell Danish butter, while Danish stores sell butter produced in France; England exports roughly as much wheat as it imports and the average pound of food in America travels 1,200 miles before it reaches the kitchen table. Researchers discovered that the total transport distances of the ingredients in a pot of German yogurt totaled over 6,000 miles-even though all the ingredients were available within 50 miles. Governments around the world, without exception, are promoting these trends in the belief that their ailing economies will be cured by throwing themselves open to economic globalisation. Ironically, these policies undermine the economies not only of local and regional communities, but even of the nation-states that so zealously promote them. The mobility of capital today means that the comparative advantage once enjoyed by states or regions has been usurped by transnational corporations, which are in the best position to take 'unfair advantage' of free trade and the many hidden subsidies implicit in a publicly financed industrial infrastructure. The result has been the further centralisation of political and economic power in huge transnational corporations, global joblessness, the erosion of community, the rapid depletion of natural resources and the further breakdown of the environment.

But as I said at the outset, there is an alternative path, a significant counter trend that, despite a lack of support from government or industry, continues to flourish. Throughout the world, particularly in the industrialised countries, increasing numbers of people are recognising the importance of supporting the local economy. And within this countercurrent, attempts to link farmers and consumers are of the greatest significance. Something called Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is sweeping the world-from Switzerland, where it first started 25 years ago, to Japan where the movement affects many thousands of people. Without support from above, people at the grassroots are taking the CSA idea and succeeding. In North America, where all but 2% of the population has already been pulled off the land, the number of CSAs has climbed from only two in 1986 to 200 in 1992, and is closer to 1,000 today. Significantly, in a country where small farmers linked to the industrial system continue to fail every year at an alarming rate, not a single CSA in North America has failed for economic reasons.

Bringing producers and consumers closer together has an amazing number of positive implications. Perhaps the most significant of these is that it helps to rebuild real community. Community is based on close connections between people, and an understanding of their dependence on one another. As we can see when we visit a small shop in a village, people know each other and talk to one another. Nearby farmers that sell to the shop-and

know the people who will be buying their produce-are far less likely to put toxic chemicals on their crops. Conversely, people who know the person who grows their food are more apt to help him out in difficult times, as did the CSA group in Kentucky that helped their farmer get his harvest in before an early frost.

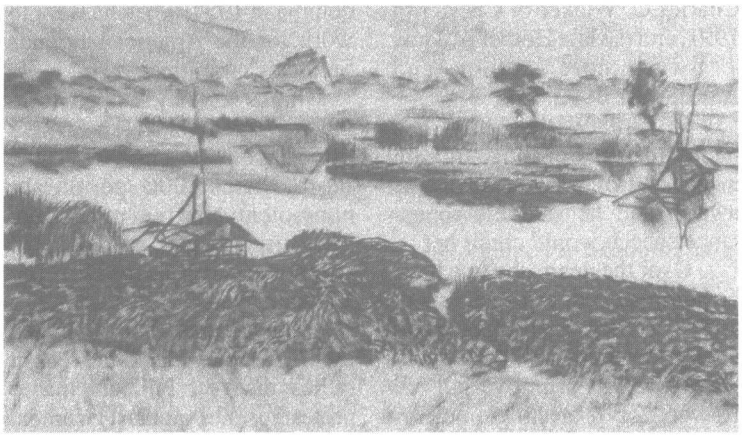
The stronger sense of community that stems from shorter producer-consumer links in turn has important psychological benefits. My own experience in Ladakh, as well as research here in the West, makes it clear that the rise in crime, violence, depression, even divorce, is to a very great extent a consequence of the breakdown of community. Conversely, children growing up with a sense of connection to their place on the earth and to others around them — in other words, children who are imbedded in a community-grow up with a stronger sense of self-esteem and healthier identities.

Environmentally, the benefits of CSAs are enormous. The forces within the industrial system that pressure farmers to practice monocropping are reversed, since CSA farms need to grow a wide variety of produce to meet the needs of their members. In other words, CSAs lead to an increase in biodiversity since consumers-now dependent on a local market-need a range of products, unlike the large-scale food distributors that demand large supplies of one crop. And almost all consumers that have the opportunity to communicate directly with the farmers that produce their food make it clear that they prefer a reduction in the amount of chemicals in their food-again turning market pressures towards practices that benefit rather than harm the environment. Vegetable varieties can also be chosen for their suitability to local conditions and for their taste and nutritional value, rather than their ability to withstand the rigours of long distance transport or their conformity to supermarket standards. The cucumbers need not be perfectly straight, nor the apples perfectly round. Less packaging means a reduction in the huge amount of non-reusable, non-biodegradable waste that is daily thrown into waste dumps all over the world. Meanwhile, the shorter transport distance means a reduction in the use of fossil fuels, less pollution, and lowered amounts of greenhouse gases released to the atmosphere.

The Community Supported Agriculture movement has provided real grassroots momentum for shorter producer-consumer links. But lasting progress will require changes at the policy level as well. The unfair advantages now given to large-scale producers and marketers continue to threaten the success of all kinds of enterprises and initiatives—including CSAs. For national economies and local communities to flourish we need to rethink 'free trade' policies that favour transnational corporate producers, and instead aim at a better balance between long-distance trade and local, regional and national production. Most importantly we need to lobby for energy taxation on the production and transportation of goods. We should also critically question further direct and indirect subsidies for transport infrastructures and large-scale corporate production. We need to oppose government support of biotechnology and other environmentally risky, job-destroying technologies. Finally, we have to actively promote shorter links between producers and consumers-a process we can start today by publicising the incredible social and environmental benefits of CSAs. We can honestly tell people that eating fresh, delicious food may be one of the most effective ways of saving the world!

Helena Norberg-Hodge is Director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC), and co- author of Bringing the Food Economy Home: Local Alternatives to Global Agribusiness *(Kumarian Press, 2002).*

"Globalisation vs. Community" originally appeared in *The Future of Progress: Reflections on Environment and Development,* rev. edition (Green Books, 1995).



International honor for following in Gandhi's footsteps

When George W. Willoughby boarded a plane for India on Oct. 20 to receive a prestigious international award, his wife wasn't there to see him off. She was tending to the family business — so to speak.

Lillian Willoughby was at the Pentagon with other Quaker women conducting a peace vigil.

For their entire married life, the Willoughby's, both 87, of Deptford, have been immersed in working for peace and other social causes.

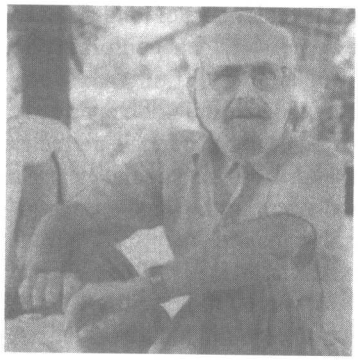
Lillian Willoughby plans to board a plane Tuesday with two of the couple's four children to see her husband receive the Jamnalai Bajaj Foundation award on Saturday in Mumbai, formerly Bombay.

The award recognizes those who promote the ideas of Mohandas K. Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1948, leaving a legacy of nonviolent protest and religious tolerance. It is named for an Indian industrialist who was a confidant and disciple of Gandhi's. India's vice president, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, will present the award to Willoughby.

Recent winners include Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, honored in 2000, and two Philadelphia-area men, Charles C. Walker of Chester in 1991, and the late Homer A. Jack, a Swarthmore author and educator, in 1992.

Lillian Willoughby has been beside her husband on every step of his journey to the award, and he said his acceptance speech would credit her.

Over the years, the two have been threatened, arrested, jailed, and verbally and physically abused for their views. He spent six weeks "in primitive jail" in Hawaii for protesting nuclear-



bomb testing. She was arrested for trying to stop munitions shipments to Pakistan.

They shrug it off as part of the business.

Recently, they have joined protests against a threatened US invasion of Iraq. George Willoughby said that those who propose sending troops, "and that isn't just Bush but others," are playing "a very dangerous game in which the result could be horrendous for this country."

The Willoughbys have been devoted to peace since they met on the University of Iowa campus in the 1940s. He resigned his commission as a major in the Army and, with the resignation, turned down an assignment in Washington. He served as a conscientious objector during World War II.

The two arrived in Philadelphia in 1954, when he went to work for the American Friends Service Committee.

In 1971, they helped form the Movement for a New Society in Philadelphia, and he trained more than 2,000 people in nonviolent conflict resolution. They used canoes to block US ships carrying arms for the Vietnam War.

The couple also organized the first Take Back the Night rallies in West Philadelphia to protest crimes against women. They demonstrated at nuclear plants in Limerick and Seabrook, N.H. They formed the Philadelphia Life Center, through which they set up 20 communes in the city, as well as a food co-op center.

Willoughby's specialty is teaching the Gandhian techniques of nonviolent social change.

In addition to the United States, he has taught in India, Taiwan, Cambodia, China, Burma, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka — where his students were Buddhist monks.

Although opposition to war with Iraq has not reached the level it did during the Vietnam War, "it is significant and definitely building," Willoughby said. "The peace movement is very much alive today."

During World War II, he knew everyone involved in the peace movement. "Today," he said, "there are literally hundreds of groups involved in active protest."

The Willoughbys are pleased with their life's work.

"We had a great impact on the peace and social justice movement in the United States," said Lillian Willoughby, who wears her commitment for all to see.

She has a head of lovely white, wavy hear, which is a little lopsided these days. It was cut on one side, along with the locks of other Quaker women, as part of a war protest at Independence Hall.

Just one more sacrifice for the cause.

Rubbing his bald head, George Willoughby said: "I can't help with that one."

Phil Joyce
The Philadelphia Inquirer,
November 3, 2002

Live and let live

Noi had been having sleepless nights over a period of several months, so much so that she wound up taking sleeping pills and anti-depressants. She worked at a highly-stressful job at a finance company.

She was on the verge of a nervous breakdown, ready to explode over the most trivial of matters. She wanted to find peace of mind.

A glimpse of one possible solution came during a short music relaxation session, one of several activities she took part in at a recent three-day workshop on deep and mindful relaxation, organised by the Spirit in Education Movement at Wongsanit Ashram in Nakhon Nayok.

During the session, she was told to lie down and allow her mind to follow a soothing voice accompanied by New Age instrumental music. She fell into a deep sleep.

"I felt like I had slept for seven or eight hours, but in fact it was only 45 minutes," she said. "It was so refreshing."

The 14 other participants in the workshop agreed — the music had soothed their minds.

Session leader Nuttarote Wangwinyoo explained that the essence of relaxation was not about the quantity of bodily rest but the quality of the mind at rest.

"Mental relaxation is vital and intimately connected to physical well being. If one goes to sleep feeling stressed or negative, the sleep will not be good. Chances are that the person will wake up still feeling tired despite long hours of sleep. It's the resting of the mind that counts. When the mind is fully relaxed, the body will relax, too," said Nuttarote, who has a graduate degree from the Buddhist-inspired Naropa University in Colorado, and is deputy director of the Kwan Muang Institute in Chiang Rai.

Stress can be both physical and mental, he said. Physical stress comes from muscle strain or tension brought on by repetitive actions or behaviours. This stress can be relieved by changing postures, lying down, resting, and the like.

Mental stress, however, was more detrimental, as it affected both body and mind. It required more time and effort to ease it.

He said the root of mental and physical suffering was what Buddhists call avija, which is ignorance manifested in such things as craving, illusion, desires. The mind, he said, feeds on these cravings and desires, creating unhappiness and stress.

"Expectations and the fear of not being able to fulfil them are the two biggest reasons for stress. Many are not happy with their lives. We strive to have more as we judge our own value in terms of money, fame or career success.

"The structure of a consumer and capitalistic society inevitably leads to feelings of stress and inadequacy. This system drives us to compare ourselves to each other and to compete against one another, against time and the environment.

Examples: driving a car in the city, or working against a deadline, both of which breed stress."

One can reduce the intensity of the stress, he said. Meditation was the key. It can calm the mind and help us to live more happily and peacefully. Yet for novices or those who are very stressed, meditating for extended periods of time can increase agitation, rather than bring peace. Therefore, Nuttarote suggested that people mediate while listening to instrumental New Age music. This is an effective way to lead one's mind to peace more quickly and easily.

In addition to music, absorbing oneself in other activities such as arts and crafts, cooking or sports can also be helpful.

"Find an activity you feel good about and do it with a peaceful mind. Learn to enjoy the activity while you're doing it, rather than just anticipating the outcome. With this in mind, you'll feel relaxed no matter what you're doing, even when you're working. You can work and relax at the same time. This will make your work even better."

Most tend to separate work from relaxation. Worse still, we unknowingly spend our leisure time on stress-inducing activities like shopping, talking on the phone or watching television or violent movies.

"Genuine relaxation takes very little time or money. We can sit in the park or at home and enjoy the natural environment or concentrate on our breathing. Once we stop thinking or striving for more, we rest our mind," said Nuttarote.

Walking, for example, is a simple activity that calms the mind. During one workshop activity, Nuttarote led participants in a walk at the crack of dawn along a tranquil trail. All took

slow, deliberate steps along the earth and stone path that was surrounded by lush green trees and violet-coloured lotus ponds.

"Be mindful of each step you take and each breath," he told participants. "Embrace nature, the energy of the rising sun, the sound of singing birds."

Like all participants, 45-year-old Somkiat Lomratanachai found this hour-long early morning ritual soothing.

"Walking in this calm wilderness lifted my spirits. I felt very relaxed," he said, adding that such tranquillity was difficult to find at home or in his office in downtown Bangkok. "How can I feel at ease in the midst of the roar of engines or the squabbling noise of people in my crowded neighbourhood?"

The environment we live in influences our state of mind, said Nuttarote. "Nature possesses healing power, so retreating into a natural environment can help recharge your energy and your mind. One's personal environment is also important for mental and spiritual well being. Sadly, in urban society, the collapse of social networks and increased isolation makes us more vulnerable to stress.

"People increasingly feel alienated from others. They feel lonely. Many don't have friends they can relate to. They become weighed down with problems, wallowing in their own misery."

Feelings of isolation increase stress levels. Because of this, much of the workshop's focus was on making connections among participants. They learned how to open themselves up to others as well as to listen to others. They were encouraged to share their inner feelings, and to talk about things like habits they've tried to overcome, family problems, issues of self-esteem and their life goals.

As each participant spoke, the rest gave their full attention. Often the emotion of the speaker touched the group.

"One should learn to be a good listener. Having an open mind and listening to people without judgement or criticism helps people to feel at ease and be more willing to share their innermost feelings. This naturally helps sooth their anguish and can lead to its remedy," said Nuttarote.

"To end stress, we need to change our mindset, thinking and ultimately our lifestyle. A stress-free life is founded upon balance and compassion. Music, meditation and support networks may help reduce stress, but the effects are only temporary."

Take, for example, a group of elderly people with mild to severe heart conditions in Chiang Rai, with whom Nuttarote worked. They have changed their behaviour and changed their lives.

"They came to the workshop feeling hopeless and helpless after their doctors said they would not live for long. But after they went through several relaxation techniques over a period of three months, they showed progress. Some of them took one pill a week or one every two weeks, instead of their previous daily intake of such pills," Nuttarote said.

"This is because they have changed their lifestyles and most importantly their attitudes towards life. These people were stressful — they were striving to have and to be. Now, they've learned peace within. They can be happy by and with themselves."

One technique that is used to help participants is to contemplate death. Along with New Age music, Nuttarote recited a death contemplation written by Phra Paisal Visalo. His words led participants through the imaginary last moments of their life.

The reactions were diverse, but most seemed to share a sense of deep sadness or fear, and many gained a bit of wisdom from imagining what their own death would actually be like.

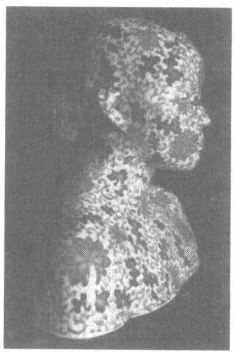
"Those feelings help one to set priorities, overcome some problems and live a more meaningful life," explained Nuttarote.

One participant said he felt great fear at having to leave his family, so much so that he planned to spend more time with them in the future. Another said she was touched by a sense of unconditional love and the interconnectedness of all living things.

"I felt the greatest love for everyone. Looking back on life [while contemplating her own death], there was no need to get angry, or to hate or hurt anyone at all," she said.

"I now know what is or what is not important in life. Stress? I don't see why should I be stressed now. Life is too short for that."

Karnjariya Sukrung
The Bangkok Post,
March 30, 2003



He comes in peace

A world on the brink of war. Terrorism. Murder. Brutal dictatorships. Who's to blame. For most people, it's "them." We believe we'd have a more just and peaceful world if only "they" would change and be more like "us." But how do we change others or an unjust society? Sulak Sivaraksa, a Buddhist peace activist who will speak in Rochester, believes he knows what it takes to affect change. "Radical transformation of society," he says, "requires personal and spiritual change first or at least simultaneously." In other words, a better, more compassionate world begins with working on yourself; you can't change them until you change yourself.

Sivaraksa, who's from Thailand, is a proponent of "socially engaged spirituality." For him, spiritual person doesn't hide from the world. "To be truly religious," he writes, "is not to



reject society but to work for social justice and change." This is a different view of Buddhism especially for people who think Buddhists stay in monasteries, rejecting the world. That, says Sulak, can happen but shouldn't. He believes that people sometimes have to withdraw from the world for a time but they must stay engaged with the world and its problems. If not, he says, "that withdrawal becomes an escape."

Although a Buddhist, Sivaraksa's message and talk isn't solely for Buddhists. Sivaraksa and his organization, the Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation (SNF) have worked with a number of different religious groups, including Quakers and Sufis in this country and Muslims in Southeast Asia. "It will offer a Buddhist perspective," says Donna Kowal, one of the people helping to bring him to Rochester, "but the talk will more broadly address engaged spirituality." There are, obviously, many religions and, says Sivaraksa, "... many descriptions of the religious experience. But all come back to becoming less and less selfish."

Joseph Sorrentino
City, Rochester N.Y.
March 19-25, 2003

Thai activist brings new perspective to Harvard

Sulak Sivaraksa opens the door to his two-bedroom flat, wearing hand-woven garbs entirely incongruent with the jeans-and-t-shirt population shuffling down Porter Square's sidewalks outside.

"Don't take off your shoes, just come in — and would you like some tea?" asks Sulak as he walks towards his sparsely furnished living room in his brown Thai sandals.

Wrapped in a traditional, woven vest cinched at the waist by a colorful silk sash, Sulak looks like a combination of a character in a Thai painting and any kind grandfather — but he is also a prominent Thai social critic, author and activist who has made headlines worldwide by his involvement in everything from peace marches to court hearings and counts the Dalai Lama among his friends.

Compared to his usual activist schedule, his itinerary for the past week has been quiet. When not talking about his views and ideals at a public lecture in Cambridge or a speech at the Harvard Divinity School, the 69-year-old claims to enjoy his free time in a "pre-modern world" — one without TV, the Internet or PINE.

"I meditate," Sulak says with a merry twinkle in his eye

as he draws his hands together, palms facing up and resting lightly on top of each other, striking a contemplative pose. "I also read and take many walks. The campus here is so beautiful." This way of living — a blend of classic Buddhist introspection and contemporary social activism—is actually the essence of what Sulak, who goes by his first name in private as well as public, has tried to share with his compatriots and others around the globe in more than four decades of writing and public speaking.

Meditating on Harvard

Sulak has been a Visiting Research Scholar at the Harvard-Yenching Institute since January and will depart Cambridge tomorrow. He was invited because of his status as a public intellectual from Asia, according to a press release from the Yenching Institute.

This detour into academia is certainly not Sulak's first. Well-known as a proponent of socially engaged Buddhism, he has taught previously at numerous U.S. institutions, including Swarthmore College, University of California at Berkeley and Cornell University. In fact, two of his former students at Swarthmore came to Cambridge last week to hear him speak.

"I was very touched to see them. Professors and students form wonderful relationships at Swarthmore," Sulak says.

But he speaks more equivocally about Harvard, saying that his times here have left him with both "positive and negative" impressions. In particular, Sulak is struck by students' hectic schedules, observing that "everyone at Harvard is too busy."

"One needs time to breathe properly, read properly, enjoy the Charles, enjoy the trees, the blue sky. It's fundamentally wrong to rush through things," he says.

But for Sulak, a slower pace does not lead to less productivity—just more deliberation. A prolific writer, he has authored dozens of books and contributes to numerous magazines and newspapers. He sees Harvard's brand of work ethic as something that strays from its goal and conforms to what he calls the "mainstream McWorld syndrome."

"I think 'Veritas' is just a motto. Many don't pursue the truth: they just pursue their own advancement," Sulak says, adding that "the hidden syllabus here is that you must be successful, you must be great."

But Sulak is also quick to point out Harvard's positive aspects. Among the most memorable people that he says he has met at Harvard is Christopher Green, a lecturer on religion and dean of students at the Division of Continuing Education. Green teaches socially engaged Buddhism to a "growing minority" of "idealistic students," Sulak says.

He says that he has also been especially impressed by the students at the Kennedy School of Government responsible for organizing "Bridge-Builders: 21st Century International Leadership Development," a series of four events that will be held around the world to foster connections linking the business community to existing efforts to fight the AIDS epidemic. The first of these conferences was held at Harvard last month.

"They invite oppressed people to speak at this school in order to understand the truth. They want to learn from the poor and understand their suffering — this is the most wonderful thing," he says. "Things always start with a small number, but I hope the students will make a big impact."

Sulak has made quite an impact himself, over the course of his life.

Born in 1932 in Siam — his preferred name for his homeland — Sulak graduated from the University of Wales. Upon returning home, he founded the *Social Science Review* as part of his own attempt to understand the issues facing his country and its poor. The publication became Thailand's leading intellectual journal in the 1960s and 1970s.

Since then, Sulak has been an outspoken social critic — and not just of his own homeland, though his voice becomes energetic and urgent as he talks about what he thinks must be changed about his native country.

"We claim to be a democracy, but press freedom must be real by allowing the dissent to voice their opinions," Sulak says.

His persistent voice in promoting the rights of assembly and expression antagonized the government; anti-state charges forced him into exile overseas in 1976 and again in 1991. During that time, he continued to write so that his views could drift back home, he says.

But opinions were changing. When he returned to his homeland in 1995 to face trial for criticizing the government, he not only won the case but was praised by the judge as a "defender of the crown."

"My voice in the last 40 years is now being taken seriously," says Sulak, "perhaps not by the present government, but the establishment relies on me,

because they see that there is a lot of value to what I have to say."

A Buddhist's diagnosis of the world

More than specific rights, Sulak says he believes that "the government must have moral legitimacy." In other words, the Thai government must look to its cultural roots and prioritize the interests of its people.

"I'm against multiculturalism dominated by American consumerism, or what I call the 'Coca-Cola–and-jean syndrome,'" says Sulak.

But he says that being true to Thai roots is not equivalent to turning away from technological and economic progress. According to Sulak, "as long as the support is there, the transparency is there, the accountability is there and the compassion is there," legitimacy in government actions will follow.

"The word 'development' is an imperialistic term; the more we are American, the more we are 'developed,'" says Sulak. He points to the gas pipeline being laid throughout Thailand as an example of an investment that, in the name of "development," is really just generating paybacks to high governmental officials and a company linked to U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney.

"Villages 700 to 800 years old will be uprooted," Sulak says. "Most people don't even know what's going on, and the government does not care. This is just sad."

And yet, he says that he is optimistic about social changes already underway and believes that activists like himself can make a difference.

"I hope to empower the people — already half a million Thai people have gotten together to form a nonviolent assembly, and the government has to listen," says Sulak.

And Sulak says that instances of government abuse are not exclusive to developing countries. He also lists the U.S. government, corporations and mainstream media as offenders and accuses the upper class of committing what he calls "structural violence."

"If I have too much and you have too little, and still I suck off your money, that's structural violence," says Sulak. "It is when the big corporations release workers by the thousands but still pay the top CEOs millions in bonuses." But his most timely criticism goes to President Bush's policies on Iraq. He says that Bush has a vested interest in a war against Iraq.

"He obviously collaborates with big defense corporations, and he doesn't listen to anyone," Sulak says. "This does not look like a democracy to me." Sulak drew parallels between Bush and top Thai government officials, and accused both of neglecting the interests of the people.

"Our president stole the election, just like yours, and our prime minister recognizes the oppressive Burmese government because he only wants to build five-star hotels and sell his satellites," says Sulak. "He doesn't care about the Burmese people."

He also challenges the realistic amount of press freedom in mainstream media in the U.S.

"Noam Chomsky is a very good man and he says true things about America, but you don't hear him," says Sulak. "Critics of America are silenced by mainstream media."

Bringing Buddhists into the real world

In contrast to the current U.S. attitude toward Iraq and terrorism, Sulak encourages an alternative approach inspired by his Buddhist ideals.

"The response to the 9-11 tragedy should be more compassionate—not just 'an eye for an eye,'" Sulak says. "If you look at those countries, they have nothing."

He says that a fundamental change is in order if the U.S. hopes to curb terrorism.

"The biggest enemy is within — from the Buddhist point of view, they are fear, anger and insecurity," Sulak says.

He says he hopes that people will try to "see everyone as friends and should have compassion for Bush, too."

This kind of socially engaged Buddhism — in which the Buddhist ideals of compassion and justice are not only internalized but also actively extended to the outside world — is a movement Sulak has strongly and consistently supported.

He says that although Buddhism's increasing popularity among Westerners is an encouraging sign, Buddhists should not limit themselves to personal fulfillment.

"What do they do once they become Buddhists? They become calm and find peace by meditating. But they are often the upper middle class, and they don't realize that by being calm and peaceful, they are not questioning their lifestyle — or the fact that they unknowingly exploit the poor," he says.

Sulak says his dual role as both a Buddhist and an activist reconcile naturally.

"One day of serving is better than one hundred days of ex-

ploiting," he says.

For now, Sulak says he hopes that he has more right views than when he was young and less traveling in store for the future.

"I'm not young anymore, and I believe that flying business class is wrong because it fattens the airlines, but you can't move in those economy seats," he says, compacting his frame to a rigid seating position to demonstrate his point, his eyes sparkling with a playfulness that defies his age. But he says he does look forward to flying home to Bangkok for the summer to celebrate his 70th birthday, which he says will be a small family affair.

And looking around at his temporary residence provided by the Yenching Institute, he smiles contentedly at the prospect of jetting to yet another destination tomorrow.

"Places have secondary importance to me — having so many friends in so many countries is the most important thing," he says, sweeping his arm vaguely outward. "Soon, I will leave this country, too, to be reborn elsewhere."

The Harvard Crimson,
March 18, 2003

'Engaged Buddhists' take on world

To some, "engaged Buddhism" may seem like a contradiction in terms. Traditionally, Buddhists have sought to avoid suffering by disengaging from desire, training themselves through meditation to look past the world of illusion to the spiritual reality beneath.

But during the past few decades Buddhists have been re-examining the teachings of their religion and finding a basis for social action, for confronting war, racism, exploitation, commercialism, and the destruction of the environment. One of the world's leading engaged Buddhists, Sulak Sivaraksa, currently a fellow of the Harvard Yenching Institute, spoke on March 14 in a symposium called "Buddhism, Globalization, and Social Change." Also on the panel were Venerable Yifa, a Taiwanese Buddhist nun and director of the Greater Boston Buddhist Cultural Center; Charles Hallisey, associate professor of Buddhist studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison; and Janet Gyatso, the Hershey Professor of Buddhist Studies at Harvard. Christopher Queen, lecturer on the Study of Religion, was moderator.

"There's been a sea-change in the Buddhist tradition," said Queen, who has edited several books on engaged Buddhism. "Buddhists have gotten up off their cushions, recognizing that collective sources of suffering in the world must be addressed by collective action."

Engaged Buddhism is a global phenomenon, taking many different forms, said Queen. Prominent members of the movement include B.R. Ambedkkar, who brought Buddhism to the "untouchables" of India; Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Zen master, known for his activism against the war in Vietnam; and A.T. Ariyaratne, founder of the Sarvodaya Shramadana rural development movement in Sri Lanka.

Sulak, the founder of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, is Thailand's leading dissident and public intellectual. The author of many books and articles, he has been jailed and exiled several times by Thai authorities for speaking out about state policies on environmental justice and human rights. He has been twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and in 1995 received the Right Livelihood Prize from the Swedish Parliament.

In his talk, Sulak spoke about nonviolence as the master precept of Buddhism and discussed the ways in which Buddhism's other precepts are related to this master teaching.

For example, he said, Buddhism forbids stealing. "But if you let a few collect wealth at the expense of the poor, that is worse than stealing."

Similarly, Buddhist teachings condemn sexual misconduct. Yet in Thailand today, where many young women are forced or tricked into lives of prostitution from which they find it difficult to escape, the responsibility for this activity falls on those who organize and profit from the sex trade, not on its powerless victims.

"We must interpret the precepts in a modern way," Sulak said.

Yifa, who earned a law degree from the National Taiwan University and a Ph.D. in religious studies from Yale Uni-

versity, has been a nun at Fo Guang Shan Monastery in Taiwan since 1979. She has been an administrator at Fo Guang Shan Buddhist College and at Hsi Lai University, Rosemead, Calif., a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley, and a faculty member at National Sun Yat-Sen University.

In her talk, she discussed the establishment and subsequent decline of women's monastic orders in Buddhism. Only in China did these orders persist, and today only in Taiwan can they be said to flourish.

Yifa faced opposition from her middle-class family when she announced her intention to enter Fo Guang Shan Monastery in Taiwan. Her current research focuses on women in Buddhism. Her book on monastic rules and institutions, *The Origin of Buddhist Monastic Codes in China* (Hawaii University Press, 2002), discusses all aspects of life in Buddhist monasteries during the Song Dynasty (960-1279 A.D.).

Hallisey described his students' adverse reaction when Sulak came as a guest lecturer to one of his classes and spoke on the Buddhist view of democracy. Westerners, and especially Americans, believe they invented democracy, and find it difficult to hear a person from a different culture criticize their beliefs and practices, he said.

The Western view of democracy emphasizes the freedom to acquire — the right of citizens to obtain justice under the law, economic opportunity, the ability to speak freely, etc. But Buddhists are more likely to stress the freedom to give, characterized by "generosity on one person's part toward another, the ability to give others the freedom to be themselves."

From this viewpoint, introspection is of paramount importance in a democratic society. "We must look into ourselves and see if there is democracy in our hearts," Hallisey said.

Gyatso's talk focused on the question of women's monastic orders in Buddhism, taking up the issues that Yifa had raised, but from a more scholarly perspective. She discussed Buddha's acceptance of women in monastic orders, but only if they were governed by "the Eight Heavy Rules," which make the most senior nun subordinate to the most junior monk.

"That is the situation Buddhism faces today — how to handle challenges to authority brought by the feminist critique. Just as we haven't attained full democracy, we also have not attained gender equality," she said.

The Harvard University Gazette
March 20, 2003

Dr. Sulak Sivaraksa speaks about a simple miracle

On February 14th, Nobel Peace Prize Nominee and Thai social activist, Dr. Sulak Sivaraksa, warmed the hearts and minds of about 60 people attending Dinner With Dharma. He was invited to GBBCC (the Greater Boston Buddhist Cultural Center) by Abbess Yifa as a guest lecturer in an evening of meditation, dinner, discussion, and dana (giving). He spoke about "A Simple Miracle in Contemporary Society."

Sulak Sivaraksa is a world leader of socially engaged Buddhism. He has traveled to over 30 countries, written 60 books, and taught at UC Berkeley, Swarthmore College, and Harvard University. Wherever he travels, he carries the message that "you and I are 'inter-are' or interconnected. He explains that in us we have non-human elements. "We are the sun, earth, ocean, trees, and rivers. Without these non-human elements, we cannot exist." According to Buddhism, the miracle of life is "to walk on the earth mindfully" noticing the "magic of a flower." When we really look into the flower, we can see the Second Noble Truth, the cause of our suffering, for the flower blooms, decays, dies, goes into the compost heap, and "rebirth takes place miraculously."

One of the most fundamental ways to overcome the ills of contemporary society greed, hatred, and ignorance — is by breathing mindfully. Sulak says that Buddhism teaches us the "simple magic of breathing." The Buddha said, "I breathe; therefore, I am." In fact, breathing is the miracle of life. It helps us

calm ourselves, our emotions and deluded thoughts, and develop critical awareness of self. With this awareness or insight into our own nature we can overcome our selfishness. By linking our head to our heart and seeing I as you and you as I, selfishness dissipates, tolerance to other cultures develops, and social justice and world peace become possible.

In his lecture, Sulak points out that by promoting consumerism, the large corporations and advertising industry feed our greed. Deluded, we live to consume, and we buy things to "fill the gaps in our lives." He attributes this condition of ignorance in contemporary society to our educational system which fosters "compartmentalized thinking" where we are not viewing the world holistically. Our mind is not connected to our heart, and we see the world from our narrow perspective.

Sulak sees hope for the future of contemporary society through Buddhism which embodies equality. It involves "the practice of living in the here and now and ridding oneself of hatred, greed, and delusion." He reminded us that "every being embodies a Buddha nature." Furthermore, Buddhism "gives us a sense of inter-belonging, friends in common suffering."

In closing, Dr. Sulak Sivaraksa urges us to practice meditation as a way to know ourselves. Through this understanding, we can "understand our community, society, nation, and ultimately the world." He warns us that "social activists must take care of themselves as well as society." They should not regard others as an enemy but instead should "engage and embrace them." People need to enter into dialogue and not attack each other. Whatever we do, we must do it "with compassion" and mindfully. We must forgive those who try to harm us by "breathing deeply."

Marjorie Jacobs
Merit Times,
February 24, 2003

Buddhism, Globalization and Social Change

Buddhism helps us to be aware of the three universal characteristics of all phenomena, namely *dukkha* (suffering, insufficiency, or sense of lack), *aniccā* (change, impermanence), and *anattā* (selflessness).

Buddhists are recommended to confront *dukkha* — not to hide from it — and, equally important, to contemplate on its causes, which are linked directly or indirectly with greed (*lobha*) and/or lust (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*) or ignorance (*avijjā*). All these root causes of evil, the good Buddhist would argue, could be eradicated, if we educate ourselves properly in morality (*sila*) mindfulness (*smādhi*) and understanding or wisdom (*paññā*).

In brief, Buddhism offers useful resources for us to reinvent our thought processes and transform greed, hatred, and delusion into generosity, compassion and wisdom.

Globalization, on the other had, claims that *dukkha* could be overcome by ignoring it, or avoiding it by mindlessly and ceaselessly indulging in sensual pleasures. To be is less important than to have — hence the pervasiveness of the consumer culture.

In the logic of this globalizing world, both *dukkha* and *aniccā* could be overcome by scientific discovery and technology. Every illness could be cured by the latest medical approach, never mind the side effects, physically and mentally — not to mention spiritually as modern man and woman does not on the whole believe in spirituality or have little time for it. Besides, transnational drugs companies are really in control of the mainstream medical profession, directly or indirectly.

The latest medical discovery claims that eventually life could be extended indefinitely, and experts could even create life artificially or scientifically by cloning and the like — not to mention physical organs which are being transplanted from the bodies of the poor at a certain price so that the rich can live much longer or forever. Of course medical experiment is always conducted at the expense of the less fortunate, whether they be guinea pigs, monkeys, gibbons or members of the inferior races. Here no morality is involved in overcoming *dukkha* and *aniccā*. How could some human beings believe they could

really achieve this wishful thinking? Because modernization and globalization stress on individualism? *Cogito ergo sum* or I think therefore I am. The "I" is so domineering that the self must be asserted very strongly. Hence the sense of humility and interconnectedness disappear.

For some of us modern industrial civilization has been a subject of much agonized debate since its emergence in the early years of the 19th century. It is characterized by such features as rationalism, secularization, industrialization, the scientific culture, individualism, technological mastery of nature, the drive towards globalization, and liberal democracy. Few writers are entirely happy or unhappy with all of these. The only question was whether they thought that on balance modern civilization was a force of good or evil. The answer depends on their criteria of evaluation, the way in which they relate its desirable and undesirable features, and whether in their view the latter are contingent or embedded in and hence inseparable from the overall structure.

For Gandhi, every civilization is inspired and energized by a distinct conception of human beings. If that conception is mistaken, it will corrupt the entire civilization and make it a force of evil. In his view, this is the case of modern civilization. Although it has many achievements to its credit, it is fundamentally flawed. It has been aggressive, imperialistic, violent, exploitative, brutal, unhappy, restless, and devoid of a sense of direction and purpose. Gandhi thought that this is because modern civilization has neglected the soul, privileged the body, misunderstood the nature and limits of reason, and has had no appreciation for the individual *swabhāva*. As a practicing Buddhist, I by and large agree with Gandhi.

Ken Jones mentions in *The New Social Face of Buddhism* that "In high modernity change is so rapid and successive innovations so radical that all phenomena become increasingly disembedded, not only from place but from a sense of historical continuity. What is traditional never has time to solidify as such, and now grows ever more distant, preserved only as 'heritage'. With the global advance of modernity more and more people feel themselves disembedded."

He quotes Robert Bellah who writes in *Beyond Beliefs: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* that "The image of one's self, the answer to who I am, and who I want to be, has become blurred and fractured. Questions like to whom or to whom to be loyal, after whom to model oneself, which pattern of behavior to adopt or adjust to, have all lost their obvious answers, and no new satisfactory ones are readily available."

Ken Jones goes on to quote Peter and Brigitte Berger and Hansfried Kellner in *The Homeless Mind* thus: "Individualism, as freedom from all that obstructs our personal search for something to fill our sense of lack, has surely run into a cul-de-sac, like so much else in high modernity. We have already seen how postmodernism deconstructs the world into elusive fragments that "decontextualize" the self. What next? How far will we go into the shrinking and in-turning of our self-identity? In high modernity how much potential does the person have to cultivate an authentic inner liberation, thereby enabling the outer liberative project to be resumed in a very different way?"

I find Ken Jones' *The New Social Face of Buddhism* simply fascinating. Let me quote him again, "In addition to postmodernism's view of the self as fragmented and constructed, there is in the culture of high modernity another influential perspective of the self, which focuses on narcissism .... [which] means a total self absorption and self-preoccupation. The whole experience of the world is interpreted in terms of self-need, to the extent that valid boundaries between the self and the external world become indistinguishable. Self-need becomes no longer objectionable. The person is their self-need... Today, impersonal experience seems meaningless and social complexity is an unmanageable threat. By contrast, experience that seems to tell about the self, to help define it, develop it, or change it , has become an overwhelming concern."

"...This is reflected in much of contemporary culture. Public figures become media personalities and media personalities become public figures."

In his latest book, Ken Jones has helped us to understand some fundamental predicaments of globalization or high modernity, which the Thai scholar Vira Somboon calls "the age of extreme modernism" in his long essay, "Ariyavinaya." Vira spells out 8 main characteristics of the age we are in and propose that Buddhists could use the method of *ariyavinaya* to overcome them or work for positive social changes:

1. Science
2. Industrial technology
3. Capitalism
4. State power

5. Nuclear-age conflicts
6. Mass info-communications systems
7. Education
8. The status and roles of women

The public no longer cares about a sage, a person with moral courage or an exemplar in morality. Rather it worships film stars or sportsmen who won gold medals from the Olympics and the like. The public is on the whole at the mercy of the mainstream mass media; for instance, when President Bush announced after 9/11 that "America is envied... because we're the brightest beacon of freedom and opportunity in the world." *The New York Times* parroted this line of argument, stating that the terrorists acted out of "hatred for the values cherished in the west such as freedom, tolerance, prosperity, religious pluralism and universal suffrage." Glaringly missing from the US media's coverage is a full and realistic account of US foreign policy and its negative or violent impacts worldwide. As Noam Chomsky noted right after 9/11, "We can express justified horror, or we can seek to understand what may have led to the crimes. If we refuse to do the latter, we will be contributing to the likelihood that much worse lies ahead."

John Ralston Saul has written a book warning us to be aware of *Voltaire's Bastard*, and his latest book *On Equlibrium* really helps us to travel on the path of moderation, trying to overcome our prejudicial ideas.

How then could Buddhism help people to understand reality without prejudicial assumptions?

I agree with Venerable Rewatta Dhamma of Burma, who is now residing in England, when he says that Buddhism needs not draw attention to itself, in a missionary way, to offer another *ism*, as there is already a plurality of ideologies, political beliefs, and religions.

Buddhists could help in promoting positive social changes in the age of globalization by offering a culture of awakening to all believers or non-believers. We should work ecumenically with others to bring about non-dualistic spirituality and a sense of the interconnectedness of all beings in order to overcome individualism and the sense of lack.

Our traditional approach to the threefold training of *sila*, *smādhi*, and *paññā* must undergo reinterpretation in such a way that is acceptable to all schools of Buddhism. In fact we could even avoid using Buddhist terminology. The role of morality is not only to make a person learn to confront or overcome direct forms of violence (e.g., physical assault, destruction of property, sexual abuse, heinous lies, etc. and also including the intoxication of the mind from drugs, alcohol, ideologies and religions as stated in the five precepts). Modern Buddhists must be aware of structural violence as well as cultural violence, which was and is still practiced in our traditions of "capital B" Buddhism.

Should we carry on spending a fortune in building great stupas and Buddha images, made of gold and jewelry, on high pedestals in very large and decorous buildings while the majority of people are starving or lacking access to the most rudimentary health care — not to mention suffering from human rights abuses?

Mindfulness should be practiced beyond the meditation hall so that we could bring out the seeds of peace and critical self-awareness cultivated within ourselves and engage with the world through nonviolent social action and networking. However much we have achieved wisdom or proper understanding of the world and ourselves, we should always take good care of our hearts in order to overcome greed, hatred and delusion — not only in ourselves but also in society.

Greed is now dominated by capitalism and consumerism. Hatred is now dominated by politics and the mainstream mass media. Delusion is the combination of the two, plus modern education which encourages only material success, without engendering awareness of social ills, environmental destruction and the lack of spirituality.

Buddhists should not be divided into scholars versus practitioners, or meditaters versus activists. Although we should adhere to our traditional *yana*, in the age of globalization, we should learn from the spiritual teachers of other traditions — Buddhists or otherwise, with respect and humility in order to grow spiritually.

I myself was brought up in the Theravada tradition of Siam, which had blended some forms of popular Hinduism and indigenous Siamese beliefs of shamanism and the like. I have to look at my own tradition with critical gratitude. Otherwise, I will easily mix up the teachings of the Buddha with nationalism and capitalism or consumerism. Yet I need not deny the so-called 'superstition' or shamanism of popular Buddhism. I must however skillfully adopt (and adapt)

ancient wisdom appropriate for the contemporary period.

Since I have been able to learn so much from Mahayana and Vajarayana spiritual teachers, especially H.H. the Dalai Lama and the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, my Buddhist practice has become deeper and broader. I am loyal to these two great teachers yet I also maintain my dissenting voice in our relationship: I believe in the concept of *Kalyanamitta*, i.e., as a good friend one must always try to speak truthfully to the one you admire, especially on matters or subjects that the admired does not wish to hear. I don't only mean these two teachers of mine but I feel that Buddhist leaders in general should raise their voices more often in speaking the truth to power, which is so corrupted, so that we could use our words of wisdom and compassion to transform society in meaningful ways.

Apart from voicing our concern publicly and truthfully, we should also have dialogues with powers that be. I myself belong to the World Faith and Development Dialogue, which meet regularly with the President of the World Bank and other leading personalities in mainstream economic development. Through dialogues we have learned to respect one another and have tried to change our views to be more holistic and to really listen to voices of the poor.

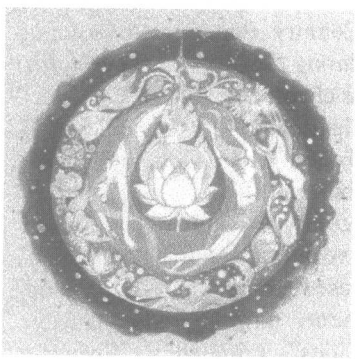
Thanks to the Mind and Life Institute which sponsors cross-cultural dialogues that bring together the Dalai Lama and other Buddhist scholars with Western scientists and philosophers, quite a number of leading scientists have become humbler and have started to see the limits of materialism and to appreciate the spiritual path beyond life and death. Many cognitive scientists have concluded that there is simply no one inside the brain, no one there to make decisions and experiences. However, Francisco Vareh, one of the most distinguished among them, remarked in an interview in *Inquiring Mind* that, while many cognitive scientists have come to understand the egolessness of self, few apply this understanding to themselves personally. They shut their lab doors and go right back to their normal, self-absorbed lives. In general, it appears that the scholars and scientists of high modernity now widely accept Buddhist egolessness, but have been unable to come to terms with it on a personal, emotional plane. Ken Jones asks whether or not this is the final step to be taken from high modernity or the age of globalization to *Dharmic modernity*?

I fear that not only scientists, but also scholars of Buddhism face similar predicaments. Many of them have no time to cultivate mindfulness and have no compassion for Buddhist activists. Their expertise in various classical Buddhist languages is much appreciated, but they need skillful means to overcome scholarly narrowness and to appreciate various approaches to Dharmic modernity, which is the modern path to positive social changes.

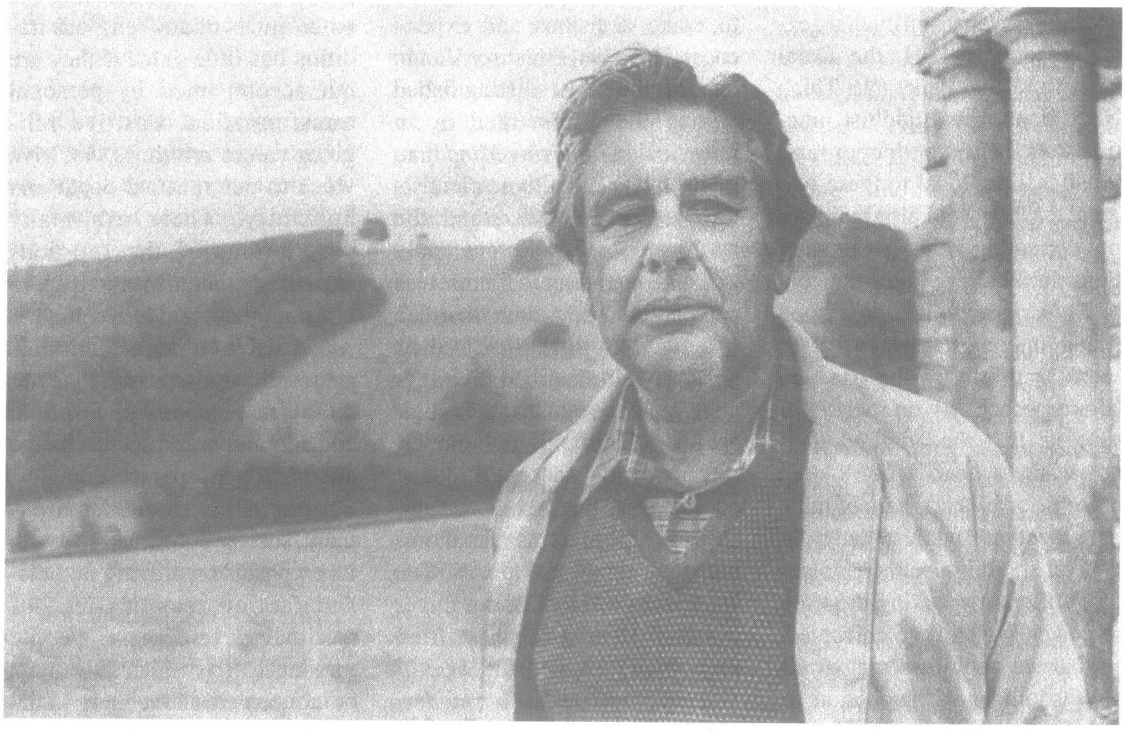
Radical transformation of society requires personal and spiritual change first or at least simultaneously — this has been accepted by Buddhists and many other religious adherents for more than 2,500 years. In the age of globalization, we need more efforts and useful means to understand modern predicaments. Those who want to change society must understand it as well as the inner dimension of change. It is this sense of personal transformation that true spirituality can provide. Simply performing the outer rituals of any religious tradition has little value if they are not accompanied by personal transformation. Positive religious values are those that give voice to our spiritual depth and humanity. There are many descriptions of the religious experience, but all come back to becoming less and less selfish.

As this transformation is achieved, we also acquire greater moral responsibility. Spiritual considerations and social change are not two separate domains. Forces in our social environment, such as consumerism, with its emphasis on craving and dissatisfaction, can hinder our spiritual development. People seeking to live spiritually must be concerned about their social and physical environment. To be truly religious is not to reject society but to work for social justice and change. Religion is at the heart of social change, and social change is the essence of religion. It can go by the name of Engaged Buddhism or any other labels.

Expanded from a speech delivered at a symposium on "Buddhism, Globalization, and Social Change," at the Harvard Divinity School on 14 March 2003.



Maurice Ash



Maurice Anthony Ash was born in Hazaribagh, India. He was the grandson of Gilbert Ash, founder of the vast construction company of that name. His father was a civil engineer running massive contracts in Calcutta and elsewhere. He was sent back to England at an early age for his education.

Maurice Ash had immensely contributed to his motherland, in particular to rural England. He was involved with the Town and Country Planning Association during 1969-1983 and 1983-1987 as chairman of the executive and chairman of the council, respectively. The Association was founded at the turn of the last century to support the innovative new alternative urbanization based on sustainable development, namely, the "Garden Cities". Initiated by Ebenezor Howard, the program aimed to rebuild the new English suburb, which sustained itself through the use of its own renewable and recyclable resources. Howard wanted people from overcrowded city centers to move into his new "Garden Cities", which were planned to be moderately sized, self-contained and capable of all the functions of an urban community. Having their own employment, the cities would also be supported by the farm belt that provided food. TCPA under the chairmanship of Ash rendered enormous support behind Ebenezor's "Garden Cities" suburban development. Ebenezor had very much inspired Ash.

After his military service in the Second World War, he became initially involved with the Dartington Hall Trust, an innovative effort to reconstruct rural England. The Dartington estate was founded by Leonard K. Elmhirst and his wife. The youthful Leonard Elmhirst, then, was very inspired by Rabindranath Tagore, a great Indian poet and educator. After the decline of the infamous Santiniketan, Tagore felt the urge to found the Institute of Rural Reconstruction, alias "Sriniketan" ("The Abode of Grace") to perpetuate his cause for combining the education of the head, heart and hand. Fresh from Cornell University in 1921, the young Elmhirst sailed across the Atlantic and joined Sriniketan as head of the institute. Learning from and living with ordinary villagers in rural India was the main mission of both the staff and students at Sriniketan. After that Leonard Elmhirst brought this invaluable experience back to England,

where he was married to Dorothy Whitney Straight, a vastly wealthy American heiress, and both of them founded the Dartington 1920's as an experiment of rural reconstruction. Many projects including arts, industries and educational institutions were developed.

Despite being married to Ruth Elmherst, daughter of the Dartington's founders in 1947, Ash's real contribution to the prosperity of the Dartington was not rendered until the decline of the estate in the early 1960's. After his marriage, his wife and him moved to till the land as farmers in Essex, where he became interested and got actively involved with town planning later on.

In 1964, he became a trustee of Dartington Hall, and after Dorothy Elmhirst died and her husband returned to the US in 1972, Ash became chairman. Ash began the enterprises of Dartington Glass in Torrington and the Beaford Arts Center 70 miles away in North Devon. Both proved highly successful and were eventually hived off. Craft and small businesses became very much the core of the work at the Dartington along with the resurgence of rural conviviality.

Not satisfied with that success, he also founded the Sharpham Trust to propagate his interest in Buddhist teaching and practice, which he became interested in after the deep enchantment he had had with Wittgenstein. A Buddhist-oriented community to bridge the East and West, the Sharpham College has been offering courses in Buddhist studies and practice, short and residential, for more than a decade. Led by Stephen and Martine Batchelor, the College has drawn practitioners from all walks of life to this estate near the picturesque River Dart.

As the 20th century drew to a close, seeing the shift in thinking in science and environmentalism toward a new paradigm, Ash lent support to the establishment and running of one of the leading alternative educational institutions in new science, the Schumacher College in Devon. The college has played a major role in exploring and promoting new paradigms in science and environmentalism offering short and long courses on various alternative subjects including deep ecology, sustainable development, green business, etc.

In order to extend his help toward the propagation of alternative education in other places, in 1995, he was the first person to bestow full support on the establishment of Spirit in Education Movement (SEM) founded in Siam by Sulak Sivaraksa upon his receiving of the 1995 Right Livelihood Award. The first meeting to develop SEM's concepts and missions took place at the Sharpham House that year. Up to the present, SEM has offered numerous courses on alternative disciplines including community building, deep ecology, alternative education, etc., to audiences here, as well as in neighboring countries including Burma, Laos and Cambodia.

Maurice Ash, farmer, writer and planner, was born on October 31, 1917. He died on January 27, 2003, aged 85.

Pipob Udomittipong



28 March 2003

Dear Sulak

Only today I realized that the great day was already yesterday ! But what is one day in 70 years ?!

Together with Inge we come and bring you our best wishes for the next year and the next decade of your life, be it health, physical strength, powerful thought, good friends, success and what ever you may have in mind.

You have reached the golden 70 two months ahead of us. We will follow you! Meanwhile we want to say thank you for all what we have received from you during the years of friendship.

Hopefully the most bad, unnecessary and uncontrollable war will have come to an formal end by that time in May. But even so, there will be nothing to celebrate. We were very much ahead of history when we started to implement a second Bandung.Today it is more needed than ever ! How can we use our Paris Muslim-Buddhist Summit ?

Anyhow, I should not bother you with that kind of thoughts. Even with the age of 70 and so on you rather may concentrate creatively on the future which is open and challenging to us as long as we breathe !

Deeply felt greetings, yours
Inge and Wolfgang Schmidt
Germany

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I am planning to review the new books by Ken Jones, David Loy, and George Bond (on Sarvodaya) this summer (George's won't be out for a while). I will send you something for Seeds of Peace. Action Dharma will be out in the summer too, I am told.

I am sending you the pictures that were taken at Yifa's temple when we visited there, for your album. Praying for peace in Iraq and around the world. . .

Chris Queen
Harvard University

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Eco-Economy: Building an Economy for the Earth
by Lester Brown
WW Norton & Company,
New York and London, 2001

The dominant worldview today is one where the environment is merely a subset of the economy. Data such as GDP, inflation and corporate profits are eagerly reported by the world's media, and stock markets react swiftly to it. Other data like rising global temperatures, the collapse of major fisheries and falling water tables, even when reported by the media, elicit little reaction. Hence the need for a Copernican shift in worldview where the economy is seen as part of the environment.

In *Eco-Economy* Lester Brown forcefully argues the case for a new worldview; the need for an eco-economy. The opening chapters of *Eco-Economy* make a sombre reading. Lester Brown draws on his vast knowledge and experience to explain that nearly every area of human activity is at or above ecologically sustainable limits. Many of the statistics come from China. With its large population and area combined with a rapidly industrialising economy it holds up a magnifying glass to the rest of the world. The view through that magnifying glass is frightening. If China were to consume as much fish per capita as Japan it would consume the world's entire catch. If every Chinese home had one or two cars in the garage like the US China would need more oil than the world currently produces.

Of course these are future projections but the present reality is little better. In order to meet the expanding demand for food China has ploughed and overgrazed areas in its northwest creating some of the largest dust storms ever recorded. The water table under the North China Plain, which produces 25 percent of China's grain, is falling at a rate of 1.5 metres per year. However, the problem of overpumping aquifiers is not confined to China. This problem is also impacting on agricultural production in India, the US and elsewhere.

The bad news continues: the world's forests are shrinking by 9 million hectares per year (an area the size of Portugal); two thirds of oceanic fisheries are being fished at or above their sustainable yield; and increasing atmospheric CO2 levels are driving an increase in global temperatures.

If the opening chapters of this book cannot convince the reader of the need for an eco-economy nothing will. Thankfully the news is not all bad, and Lester Brown uses the rest of the book to identify the characteristics of an eco-economy and detail a path for getting there.

Some countries have already adopted elements of an eco-economy. Many European countries and Japan have stabilised their populations and China is moving toward population stability. Denmark generates 15 percent of its electricity from wind power. More than 30 percent of trips in Copenhagen and Amsterdam are made by bicycle.

The eco-economy that Lester Brown envisages runs on hydrogen instead of oil and its cities are designed for people (and bicycles) not cars. Wind turbine engineers, bicycle mechanics and family planning midwives will be the growth areas of employment in the new economy.

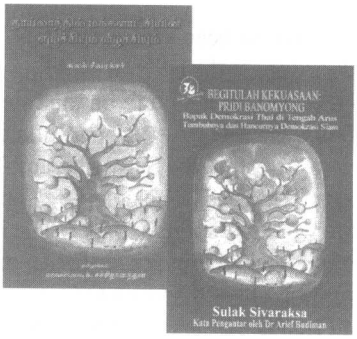
The main elements of the path to an eco-economy are stabilising population, restructuring the economy — mainly via subsidies and tax shifting (to eco-taxes), and greater leadership and responsibility from the UN, government, the media, corporations and NGOs. The final question Lester Brown asks is "Is there enough time?" It is already too late to save the Aral Sea, but there is still time if we move quickly. What is needed is a "war effort" where understanding the magnitude of the threat faced leads to rapid action being taken. What is needed is a world that reacts as swiftly to rising CO2 emissions as it does to rising interest rates.

Lester Brown's vision for an eco-economy is not so much a radical one as a necessary one. Anything less than the action he proposes will result in future disaster on a global scale. It is something that can be achieved within the existing political frameworks creating a potentially wide audience for this book. As such it makes important reading.

David Reid

NOTE: The entire contents of this book can be downloaded for free online at www.earth-policy.org

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POWERS THAT BE: Pridi Banomyong through the rise and fall of Thai democracy.
in Tamil and Indonesian
(See page 53)

Bringing the Food Economy Home: Local Alternatives to Global Agribusiness
By Helena Norberg-Hodge, Todd Merrifield and Steven Gorelick
Zed Books for the International Society for Ecology and Culture, 2002

Bringing the Food Economy Home is an introduction to the destructive economic, social, and ecological consequences of today's global food system, and an invitation for the reader to join in healing our world by localising our eating.

The book shows how the global food system is a primary contributor to many of the problems which we face today, from global warming to the decline of rural economies, from extinction of species to loss of democracy, from water scarcity to unsafe food. It explains, both with common sense and with facts and figures, that economic and environmental havoc are a necessary consequence of the global food system.

The book's fundamental argument is that, because of the widespread impact of the global food system, local food is one of the most effective entry points for solving our problems. Localisation would benefit the farmer and the consumer, urban communities and rural communities, the economy and the environment. The book offers a smorgasbord of "ideas that work," from farmers' markets and community supported agriculture schemes to a Vermont business which provides delicious restaurant food waste to happy chickens to produce compost and eggs.

In its conclusion, the book points out that localisation of our food systems will require changes at the international, national, and local levels. It offers an overview of what those changes should be, including renegotiation of international trade treaties, the elimination of national government subsidies for the global food system, and buy-local campaigns to strengthen local economies.

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that "even if Iraq is disarmed, economic sanctions would not be lifted as long as Saddam Hussein remained in power," in contravention of Paragraph 22 of UN Security Council Resolution 687. Then it helped destroy UNSCOM "by infiltrating it with spies, using it to gain intelligence on Iraq's leadership, and coordinating at least one UNSCOM inspection to facilitate a high-level coup attempt in Iraq." The US further manipulated UNSCOM chief Richard Butler to withdraw the agency from Iraq in 1998, dubiously citing the lack of progress in weapons inspection. Scott Ritter as well as Rolf Ekeus, the head of UNSCOM between 1991 and 1997, among other UNSCOM old hands, can testify to the American manipulation of this inspection agency.

Thus Rai cogently concludes, "By using UNSCOM for intelligence purposes, Washington placed its own intelligence and foreign policy goals above the integrity and survival of UNSCOM. Spying on the leader of Iraq — presumably in order to organise his assassination — was more important to the US than securing the disarmament of Iraq."

The US had also done much to block and undermine the re-entry of UNMOVIC into Iraq. According to Washington, war and the issue of inspection are really two separate things. As Colin Powell, allegedly the administration's dove, clearly stated, "US policy is that, regardless of what the inspectors do, the people of Iraq and the people of the region would be better off with a different regime in Baghdad. The United States reserves its option to do whatever it believes might be appropriate to see if there can be a regime change." Given the American attitude, Iraq's decision to re-admit the inspection team reflects its desire to avert confrontation and war. In this context, the US may be hoping for UNMOVIC to find the slightest pretext for the invasion of Iraq — and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

Two, unfortunately for the Bush administration's hawks, "Despite the best efforts by US intelligence services, no link between Iraq and international terrorism has been discovered." Even if there is a link, vengeance cannot justify war as many family members of September Eleventh victims have recognized. They have founded the organization Peaceful Tomorrows, whose mission includes advocacy for nonviolence and justice as peaceful responses to terrorism. (See www.peacefultomorrows.org for further detail.)

Three, Rai asserts, the US seeks leadership change as opposed to regime change in Iraq. This has been the American policy since 1991. Washington looks for "another Sunni Muslim general" that "will rule Iraq in the traditional style" — that is with an iron fist. Brigadier-General Najib al-Salhi, the leader of the Free Officers Movement has been tipped as Washington's man on the white horse. Here Washington is haunted by the specter of the 1991 uprisings in Iraq in which it had helped instigate. In 1991 mass uprisings and revolts swept through Iraq, and within days Saddam Hussein lost control of fourteen of Iraq's eighteen provinces. Fearing the breakup of the country would lead to the tilting of the power balance in the Middle East, Washington allowed occupied Iraq to crush these mass movements, especially in Iraqi Kurdistan. Equally important, as Rai points out, "the rise of democratic politics in Iraq would not be looked on with favour by Saudi Arabia, or any of the Gulf's petty kingdoms, and would promote what they regard as 'instability.'"

Four, Iraq is already facing a humanitarian crisis, resulting from the 1991 war and the subsequent economic sanctions. "The shock of war on the fragile support systems that exist in Iraq would turn a humanitarian crisis into a humanitarian disaster for 23 million people. If vital elements of the public health infrastructure were damaged, including the electricity sector [e.g., vital for water treatment], the disaster would be deepened." Rai reminds us that a nation of 23 million cannot be rendered faceless and "reduced to a single hated figure." Perhaps this is why photographs of the Iraqi people, in particular children, are interspersed throughout his book.

Five, the Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan, already "surrounded and outgunned by Iraqi forces", would be the first to bear the brunt of Saddam Hussein's retribution and lose the vital gains they have earned since the end of the Persian Gulf War. Rai observes, "In the event of a US assault, 'Saddam would have every incentive to crush the Kurds.' Iraqi Kurdistan has been protected in part by the threat of the US and British aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone above the 36th parallel."

Six, war on Iraq would be illegal. As Rai correctly comments, "any further violations of the inspection regime would be dealt with the Security Council itself. There was no phrase that could be interpreted as delegating the use of force to any individual state. Moreover, neither UN

Security Council Resolutions 678 nor 687 authorizes leadership change in Iraq. "An invasion directed to the overthrow of a political leader cannot be justified by Resolutions which are concerned with reversing an illegal occupation [678] or maintaining an internationally-validated disarmament process [687]."

Seven, the citizens and ruling elites of Iraq's neighbors seem to fear US President Bush more than Saddam Hussein. It is interesting to observe that according to a poll in March 2002, more than 40 percent of Kuwaiti citizens oppose American policies. Syria and Iran are also wary that an American attack on Iraq would jeopardize their own security. And even the prime minister of Turkey, a staunch American ally, has labeled the threat of an American war on Iraq a "nightmare." Rai writes, "There is deep scepticism about the alleged Iraqi 'threat,' and there is great fear of the consequences of US violence. There is a ring of anger around Iraq, but it is burning against Washington, not Baghdad."

Eight, it seems that generals on either side of the Atlantic oppose the war. It seems that their civilian superiors are more gung-ho about the war, forcing the generals to draw up war plans they do not believe in. But they may lack moral courage to express their dissent publicly.

Nine, the majority of UK citizens opposes the war. Support for ground invasion of Iraq in the US has fallen by more than 20 percent between November 2001 and August 2002, standing at approximately 53 percent. To swing public opinion, Bush needs to show that he has overwhelming international support behind his war plan. So far only Mr. Blair is unequivocally with him. "Mr. Blair is essential to War Plan Iraq, but he may also prove the weakest link," Rai contends. 58 percent of the UK public opposes the war. "The British Government as a whole appears extremely reluctant to follow Tony Blair into war. The Cabinet may suffer high-level resignations in the event of war. The Labour backbenches have signalled determined opposition on a scale not seen since Tony Blair came to power. The British military is also an unwilling partner...."

And **ten**, the war could trigger a surge of inflation followed by global recession—as in 1973 and in 1990. Junior like his daddy could win the war but lose the re-election. However the real issue at stake is far more important: "The effects of an unnecessary world recession on the employment, real incomes, and simple survival of people all around the world could be enormous."

S.J.

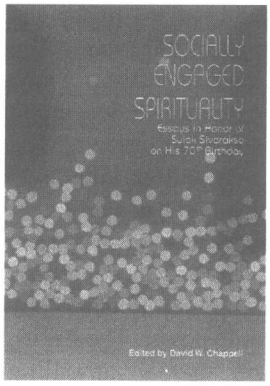
Activists honored during Komol Keemthong Annual Speech

On 28 March 2003, a few Thai activists were recognized for their efforts to fight for people's and the environmental rights. Komol Keemthong, a brave young teacher, who died more than two decades ago as a result of his venturing to teach poor children in a rural area where the communist insurgency was rampant, has been remembered every year ever since by social activists, in particular the young ones. The Komol Keemthong annual speech draws together social activists throughout the country.

This year, the keynote speaker is Mr. Banjong Nasae, a veteran non-governmental organization worker, who has spent more than half of his life to help small-scale fisher folks against the threats of industrial fishing trawlers. Lately, as a Southerner himself, he has become involved with the campaign against the project to construct a gas pipeline and the entailing industrial complex. He, and other 12 protesters, were released with arrest warrants, having been charged for instigating public unrest and other felonies. Like the Thai-Burma gas pipeline, he argued, this energy project is economically unnecessary and will lead to the uprooting of the local and peaceful Muslim fishing villages.

Other activists honored include those fighting against the Potash mining in Udorn Dhani, the land rights movement in Lampoon, the Assembly of the Poor and another activist working for the rights of slum dwellers in the urban area.

The youthful Komol once wrote to his friend comparing himself to the first brick painfully laid down to pave the way for others to progress. These social activists and many others are taking his step and are laying themselves down for the cause of people.



Socially Engaged Spirituality

Edited by David Chappell
2003

This sizeable tome, which could be infinitely longer, compiled and edited by David Chappell, celebrates Sulak Sivaraksa's 70th birthday anniversary and honors his vast contributions and accomplishments.

Ken Kraft's witty and warm poem entitled "Lovely" offers valuable glimpses into Sulak's life and highlights his vision of socially engaged Buddhism and commitment to truth, justice, and beauty — all of this in 16 stanzas. It sets the tone for the rest of this festschrift.

Clear about his task,
he takes each moment as it comes.
A sixteen-hour flight?
"Lovely."

Sulak is a tireless globe-trotter, giving lectures or talks in every corner of the world, and in that process, expanding his boundless circle of virtuous companions, his *kalyanamitta*.

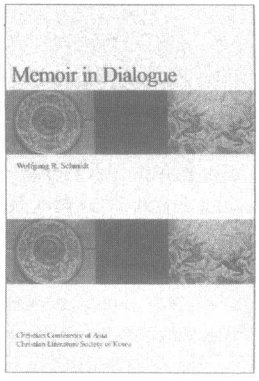
He divulges a secret:
"All conferences are flops.
But if you make a friend it's worth it."

This book is thus a by-product of Sulak's socially engaged Buddhism and lifelong activism. The scores of contributors to this volume are his friends, colleagues, and acquaintances. "Kalyanamitta means pal in Pali," Kraft reminds us. They include, and this is quite random: John Rals-ton Saul, Donald Swearer, John Seed, Johan Galtung, Christopher Queen, David Korten, Hans Kung, the late Maurice Ash, John Butt, Elise Boulding, Sallie King, David Loy, and James Wolfensohn.

The festschrift in divided into three main parts: Proposals for Action, Light for Understanding, and Values and Friendship. The first two parts are scholarly while the last part is personal. An appendix on the life and work of Sulak is attached at the end of the book.

S.J.

Memoir in Dialogue



Wolfgang R. Schmidt
Christian Conference of Asia,
Christian Literature Society of Korea Seoul, 2002

Memoir in Dialogue contains the lengthy personal reflections of Dr. Wolfgang R. Schmidt. Dr. Wolfgang R. Schmidt is many things to many people reflecting his personal development as an idealistic pastor, a former missionary to Indonesia, who later became Asia Director of Bread for the World, in Germany, then served as senior executive in the World Council of Churches and eventually President of the Basel Mission until his retirement.

Memoir in Dialogue is about Asia. It is an account of Dr. Schmidt's engagement with Asian history, religion, politics and culture. Dr. Schmidt's odyssey takes the reader through Communist Indochina, capitalist South Korea, the People's Republic of China, Buddhist Thailand and multi-racial, multi-religious Malaysia.

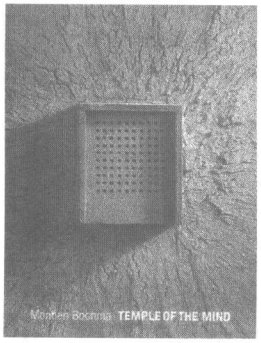
At another level the book represents an intellectual dialogue between Dr. Schmidt and prominent Asian leaders. Dr. Schmidt's work, perceptions and activities are commended, appreciated and challenged by thoughtful Asian leaders including Dr. U Kyaw Than, Tran Ngoc Bau, Prof. Kim Yong Bok, Philip L. Wickeri, Prof. Amnuay Tapingkae, Sulak Sivaraksa and S. M. Mohammad Idris.

Memoir in Dialogue is about attempts by Western mission organizations to engage church groups and peoples organizations in Asian countries. Dr. Schmidt's personal experiences and observations address the issue of what works and what doesn't work in the approach of Western mission organizations towards different Asian countries. His account of his own personal engagement with Asian church counterparts and leaders of peoples organizations provide rich insights for the student of history, political science, Christian

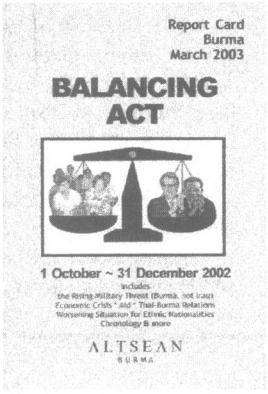
scholars, as well as, Christian mission organizations engaged in development assistance, covering the 30 year period from 1970-1990. Some of the country chapters including the chapter on Thailand provide fascinating reading and commentary of a very significant period in the modern political development of Thailand.

Dr. Schmidt enjoys the confidence and trust of his Asian friends and counterparts in every place that he has worked. He has performed a great service to the region through his unique approach of building ecumenical solidarity and trust with Asian church groups, Buddhist, Muslim and peoples organizations. Very often he has taken personal risks because of his commitment and solidarity with participating Asian leaders. His modesty precludes his recounting all that he had done to help his Asian friends especially in South Korea and Thailand. His memoirs give a good inkling of the courageous risks that a man who places trust above most things must be prepared to take.

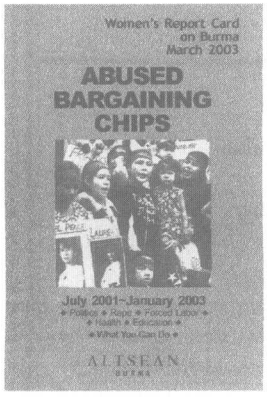
Jeffery Sng



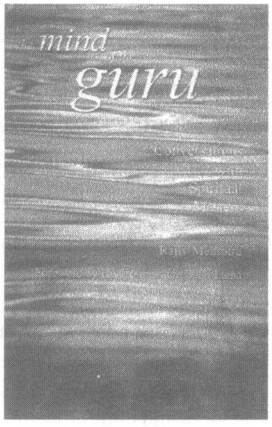
Montien Boonma: Temple of The Mind
Edited by Apinan Poshyananda
Published by Sherry Buchanan,
Asia Tnk, London, 2003.



Balancing Act
(1 October - 31 December 2002)
Report card Burma, March 2003
Printed in Bangkok, March 2003.



Abused Bargaining Chips
(July 2001 - January 2003)
Women's report card on Burma, March 2003
Printed in Bangkok, February 2003.



The Mind of the Guru
Conversations with Spiritual Masters
Rajiv Mehrotra

In The Mind of The Guru Rajiv Mehrotra brings together twenty contemporary sages and masters. He elicits from them their deepest concerns and beliefs and the different ways in which they have helped people find a way to happiness.

POWERS THAT BE: Pridi Banomyong through the rise and fall of Thai democracy. (Tamil translation)
Maravanpulavu K. Sachithananthan
published in commemoration of the 70th Birthday of Sulak Sivaraksa.

POWERS THAT BE: Pridi Banomyong through the rise and fall of Thai democracy.
(Indonesian translation)
Ken Ken and Daniel Johan W. of Himpunan Mahasiswa Buddhis Indonesia (HIKMAHBUDHI)

A Lifelong Quest for Peace
A dialogue between Daisaku Ikeda, President of Soka Gakkai International, and Dr. Linus Pauling, who was the only one who received two Nobel Prizes: one in chemistry and another in peace.

WORKSHOP ON "BUDDHIST ECONOMICS"
17 – 20 SEPTEMBER 2003
WITH SULAK SIVARAKSA AND VANDANA SHIVA BIJA VIDYAPEETH, COLLEGE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING
DEHRA DUN, INDIA

Buddhist Economics can be understood in a strict sense. The book "Buddhist Economics" of Ven. Payuttho is a very good example of the application of Therevada teachings towards economic life. Seen from a broader perspective E.F. Schumacher's "Small is Beautiful" has been the eye opener for many towards the notion that economics can be Buddhist. More recently H.H. the Dalai Lama inspired business leaders to rethink their approaches. The broader understanding of "Buddhist Economics" includes interaction with other worldviews like Hinduism (Mahatma Gandhi), Islam, Christianity and the Tao. Also smaller, alternative spiritual streams like Quakers, Sufism, Humanism and Anthroposophy are contributing to a common ~ cross-cultural ~ effort to feed 'holistic development' with a new vision on economics. This new vision on economics is based on people's movements (like community business and farmers movements) in the first place, but also addresses meso- and macro-economic challenges.

The objective of the workshop on "Buddhist Economics" conducted by Sulak Sivaraksa and Vandana Shiva - both recipients of the Right Livelihood Award - is to bring business leaders, entrepreneurs and NGO workers from India, the Tibetan community and Thailand together in an international context (participants from Europe and USA are encouraged to register) in order to reflect on opportunities for cooperation in the future. Can "Buddhist Economics" contribute to global transformation? What does it mean for a community or enterprise to explore this direction?

The start of a permanent research & development network on "Buddhist Economics" could result from the workshop.

Please contact Bija Vidyapeeth (Ruchika) BijaVidyapeeth@vsnl.net or Suan Nguen Mee Ma (Wallapa and Hans) suanco@ksc.th.com for more information and registration.

Social Venture Network Asia Conference:
9 – 11 November 2003, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Rethinking Corporate Social Responsibility. Living Economies in Asia.

Corporate Social Responsibility ~ "CSR" ~ in business practice is gaining momentum worldwide. And it is an issue for profound debate. Contemporary progressive CEO's not only live up to new standards enforced by authorities. They innovate creative modes to cooperate with the diversity of their stakeholders: clients, the company personnel, shareholders, suppliers, governments. At the dawn of the 21st century new dimensions of doing business in the global arena are explored and experimented step-by-step. This includes: serious considerations on the destiny of local communities, cultural minorities, groups without purchasing power, and the environment as the source of all life.

Living economies in Asia will secure the future of the continent.

Social Venture Network Asia (Thailand) ~ *the business network for social and environmental responsibility* ~ offers this 2/3-days conference as a platform for exchanges in an inspiring and creative setting: Asian business leaders and entrepreneurs, and their colleagues worldwide can meet a diversity of groups ~ including local and international NGO's ~ and individuals and celebrate communication. Partnerships for development can be strengthened, evaluated and initiated. Conference participants are invited to ***rethink*** CSR before it dissipates in routine. Can CSR become the core of business practice in the 21st century?

Please send an E-mail to get included in our mailing list and receive more information, a brochure (in May) and a registration form to: the ***SVN Asia Conference Management*** *suanco@ksc.th.com or fax 66–2–622 0955 in Bangkok.*

Conference participants may combine their SVN Asia Conference attendance with the ***IFOAM Organic Trade conference 5 – 8 November****; and the* ***Spirit in Business (Asia) meeting Wednesday 12 November****; all in Bangkok, Thailand.*

The 2003 INEB-Korea International Conference

18-22 July 2003
Seoul, South Korea

International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) and Jung To Association will organize an annual conference of INEB for the year 2003 during 18-22 July. The Venerable Pomnyun Sunim of Jung To Association, a Magsaysay Award laureate last year for his longstanding advocacy of peace, together with several Korean Buddhist organizations, acts as our hosts in Seoul, South Korea.

The conference which consists of keynote speeches, roundtable discussion and exposure visit will be under two themes plus some sub themes as under mentioned.

1. "Buddhism and Modern World" and 4 thematic roundtables
   - Buddhist identity in the modern world
   - Inter-Buddhist dialogue
   - Buddhist perspective on Women
   - Buddhist perspective on Youth
2. "Socially Engaged Buddhism" and 4 thematic roundtables
   - Environment and consumerism
   - Peace and conflict transformation
   - Human rights and marginalized people
   - Poverty eradication

For more information, please contact <ineboffice@yahoo.com>

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International and Interfaith academic conference on Religion and Globalization

July 27 - August 2, 2003
Chiang Mai, Thailand

Payap University's Institute for the Study of Religion and Culture and the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies together with other co-sponsors invite you to attend an international and interfaith academic conference on Religion and Globalization to be held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, July 27 - August 2, 2003. Interfaith dialogue among Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, and members of other religious communities will occur through plenary speeches, panels and papers based on five broad themes:

1. Religious Diversity and Interfaith Relations in a Global Age: Individual topics include religious pluralism, missions, religious conflict and reconciliation, and interreligious dialogue.

2. Religion in a Global Society: Individual topics include social and economic justice, ecological concerns, human rights, structural violence, gender, tourism, prostitution, AIDS/HIV, media, technology, arts, culture and other facets of life in our contemporary world viewed from religious perspectives.

3. Religious Reform and Reformulation for a Global Age: Individual topics include tasks and issues focusing on the transformation of religious doctrines, rituals, practices, and institutions in an age of globalization.

4. Historical Perspectives in Interreligious Interaction: Case studies.

5. Methodological and Philosophical Issues in Intercultural and Interreligious Communication and Exchanges

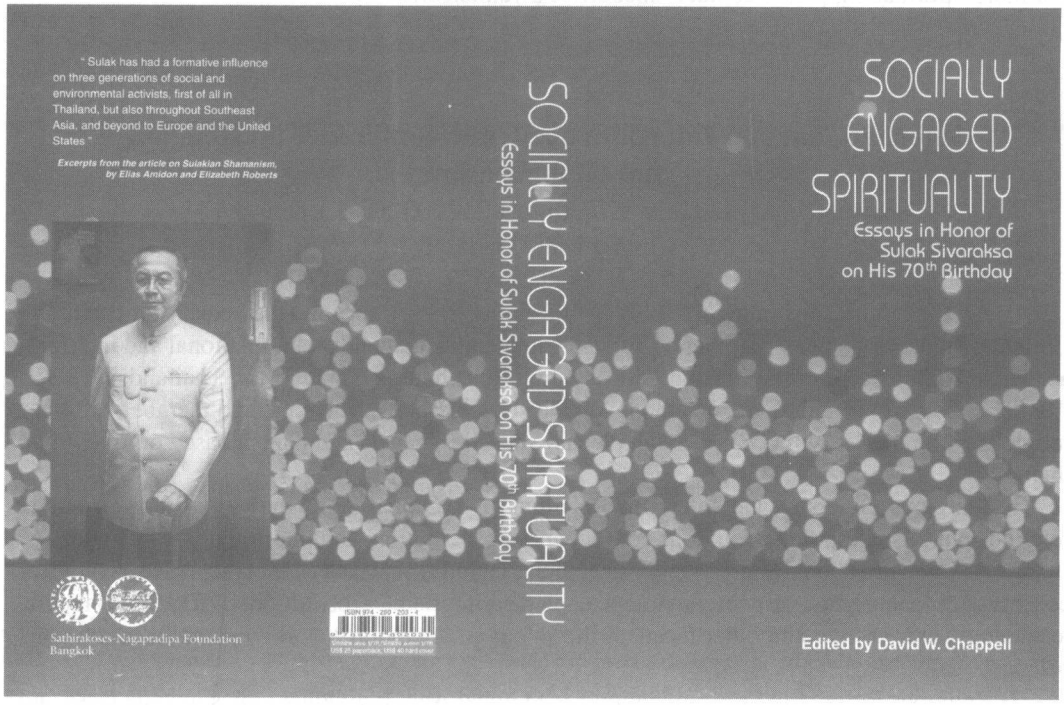
For more information please contact
Telephone/fax 66-053-217-271 / 400-192 or by email at isrc@cm.ksc.co.th.

Socially Engage Spirituality
Essays in Honor of Sulak Sivaraksa on His 70th Birthday
Edited by David W. Chappell

This collection of articles is both a tribute to some of Sulak Sivaraksa's achievements, and also a blue print for a way forward for Siam and for much of the rest of the world. In this age of globalization, an alternative Buddhist economic strategy is important. As conflicts multiply and countries no longer respect the sovereignty of their neighbors, the search for non-violent alternatives is crucial. In this period when consumerism is shining ever less brightly, a spiritual revival is most timely and necessary.

In this collection, more than 80 friends of Sulak wish him happy birthday by contribute to this collection. From the son of the first president of post-colonial Burma to the President of the World Bank, and in between are John Cobb, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Sallie B. King, Aung San Suu Kyi, Dhammachari Lokamitra, David Korten, Majid Tehranian, Sjalom Awraham Soetendorp, etc.

The collection is available now.
Only USD25.00 paperback or USD40.00 hard cover



To order, contact:
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