

MODERN BUDDHISM

BUIKKHU. ANANDA

Buddhists should always cherish a feeling of gratitude. Our object of gratitude is not God, but it is Men. We are grateful to Men and to the lands in which they live.

Therefore in our morning and evening services, we Buddhists of all nationalities vow to repay the benefaction of the lands in which men live and of all living beings.

As a French citizen and a French Buddhist, I should of course be grateful to my country and my people. Simultaneously I am grateful to China and the Chinese, to India and the Indians, to the western regions and the various southeast Asian countries and the peoples of these countries from whom I accepted the faith of Buddhism and absorbed Buddhist cultures.

Buddhism is really a way of life that permits a scientific mind-training so that each man becomes truly a master of his own nature. A FREE AGENT controlling his own acts, a comforter and protector of those who need to be uplifted, a guide to the fallen, the weak, the down trodden. Such a man must have learned to be selfless.

Above and beyond all other teachings, the observation, the comprehension of the human personality as a process of becoming would lessen the egoism, the pride, of place, which is the blind cause of selfish cruelty of man to man and race to race. The theory of competition and the western ideal of "survival of the fittest" have resulted in the creation of an environment of strife, anger and jealousy in which individuals as well as nations particularly those in highly industrialized and so-called developed areas can have no lasting comfort or peace.

Most of the areas in south east Asia have set a pattern of human dignity and pacific ideals which nations of the world, that are generally interested in furtherance of peace and good will to mankind, can follow and further develop in a common endeavour to improve and uplift the human race.

If the materialism of the west pursues its relentless course ignoring all spiritual values and regardless of the untold suffering that follows in the wake of ruthless competition for trade markets and profit, then the truth of the formula that action and reaction are equal and opposite will be driven home in no uncertain manner to millions of peo-

ples the world over may be in a year or a decade, perhaps sooner rather than later. For what nation seeking to destroy another in the struggle for supremacy will wait till the opponent is fully armed before it attacks?

The path to peace and happiness is as clear as the noon-day sun. Whether it be prince or pauper, the answer to all life's problems is 'there in the way of Life propounded by the Buddha "2,500 years ago".'

To a world groping in total darkness his message rings out clear and true. That the world is full of suffering and when one understands its origin, its extinction, and the path that leads to its extinction, there will be perfect peace. There is nothing in that way which offends the morals, practices or intelligence of human beings the world over.

It is up to the intellectuals of the west to give this Noble way of life a trial in the hope and earnest belief that mankind may yet be saved from the impending cataclysm of Atomic Power.

I take the opportunity to point out this famous sentence from Mahatma GANDHI: "You should even deal with an enemy in such a way as not to leave the door open for friendship and reconciliation".

THE ESTABLISHING OF INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP.

Cultural exchange is in itself an important means for promoting International friendship. We Buddhists should be proud of our predecessors

They have made invaluable contributions not only to the cause of Buddhism, but also to the civilization of mankind and to the establishment of friendly relations among nations.

They have not only translated several thousands volumes of Buddhist scriptures and have written a great deal of important works, which are the common heritage of CHINA, INDIA and other nations, but have also devoted themselves to the transplanting of the flowers of the labour and wisdom of their own peoples, which have greatly enriched the cultures of these nations. Though they lived well over a thousand years ago, their names never fail to inspire the sincere and warm feelings in the hearts of the peoples of these countries. Especially to-day when the friendly cooperation among the Asian countries is being strengthened and