

佛學論壇
TOPICS ON BUDDHISM

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, FELLOW BUDDHISTS OF THE COUNTRY UNITE TO STRENGTHEN PEACE

Our Master, the Buddha in India "2500 years ago in order to bring Peace and blessing to all, without any distinction for race, cast, nationality or ideologies.

I appeal to you to give the widest publicity in your country to the unique event which is associated with the founder of Buddhism, and if there is a possibility, to request every man, woman and child of your country to join in meditation for five minutes. This is sorely needed to re-establish peace and security in our modern world. It is a Buddhist view of life which is needed to establish the complete mental harmony and well-being. Today more than at any time, we need the light of the Dhamma. If people know the Dhamma well they will know good from bad. Abstaining from killing, laying aside cudgel and sword.

Did not Buddha say, "If you do not have love for each other nothing else will avail to you." It is this love the western mankind is lacking. 2000 years of war, persecution, and destruction speak for themselves. All these many prayers of Christianity be useless as the one precept of love teaching by the Buddha SAKYAMUNI has not been fulfilled. And it has not been fulfilled for 2000 years, because mankind has not been kept to do its duty in this respect continuously.

Let us live a life of innocence and mercy full of kindness and compassion for all things that breathe. Giving-up idle chatters, gossip and unprofitable conversation, let us speak words that are blameless, pleasant to the ear, loving heart moving courteous charming and delighting all who hear then and bring together those at variance, and encourage those already in union.

At this opportunity, I should hope that all Buddhists in the four quarters of Asia may arise in unison and work together for the development of a powerful movement for PEACE, an activity which is worthy of Buddhists and which is most important under the present

situation of the world. The way to Peace, however, would be long and difficult. If we look deeper, we know that our desire for Peace will never be weakened. The bitterer the calamity of war, the stronger the longing for lasting peace. Looking still deeper, we realize that the true mind of man is for no other than Peace. However strong the impulse of war may at times turn out to be.

Armed peace is not true Peace. True Peace is born from the great selfless love of the Buddha mind. Our Lord Buddha strongly rejected any adoption of unpeaceful means as a step to the realisation of Peace. The principle of non-violence should be permeated among people. To change from the self centred principle of fighting to the unprejudiced love of Brotherhood is by all means necessary. To-day we find that CEYLON, INDIA, BURMA, THAILAND, CHINA, TIBET, MONGOLIA, KOREA, JAPAN, VIET-NAM, CAMBODIA and MALAYA are Adherents of the Buddhist religion, while the influence of Buddhism has also been felt in almost all countries in the world.

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A Glimpse of the Development of BUDDHISM In NON-ASIA Countries

A. In Australia and New-Zealand.

There is a small group of Buddhists dispersed throughout the continent of Australia and Tasmania. The majority of them are Chinese who are Mahayanists. There is also a small group of THERAVADINS. Vesak (moon day) is celebrated in Sydney every year at the center of the Buddhist Association where the little groups of Buddhists hold regular retreats. There are thousands of Australians and New Zealanders interested in knowing the message of the Buddha.

B. BELGIUM.

There is now a group of Buddhists in Belgium which is an encouraging sign, considering that Belgium, is an "Ultra Catholic country" These members belong to various professions and are scattered in different parts of the country. Thus through them, the influence of the Buddha's teaching has penetrated into numerous fields of activity. The members who live in LIEGE meet together a month, when some article from a Buddhist journal or a passage from Buddhist sacred writings is read and discussed. For the special benefit of members who live elsewhere a bulletin is published "LE SENTIER BOUDDHIQUE" in French language, which

is greatly appreciated. It is edited by Mr. MAURICE KIERE of LIEGE. There is also a library of Buddhist books which are circulated among members. The movement is growing and its future looks bright.

C. ENGLAND.

The Buddhist Society London, was founded in 1923 by Mr. CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS, Who is still the President to-day, has had the satisfaction of developing an active Society with contacts in many parts of the world. The main object of the Society is to promote the study and knowledge and practice of Buddhism in all its forms, chiefly, THERAVADA, MAHAYANA, and ZEN. In the Buddhist Society pleasant promises, which are well situated in Central LONDON, a public lecture is given once a week, followed by a discussion, on one or other of these aspects of Buddhism. There is also a weekly meeting for members only, at which some more detailed study course or discussion takes place or at which meditation classes are held. The Society's headquarters contain an excellent library, consisting of a large number of volumes. There is also a shrine in the lecture room, recently enhanced by the gift of a beautiful Buddha-Rupa made to the Society on the occasion of its silver jubilee by SIAM. The organ of the society, the Middle Way is published four times a year and goes to subscribers in many parts of the world. It contains articles on the various forms of Buddhism, notes and news, correspondence and reviews of books. A large number of books and pamphlets have been published by the Society.

D. FINLAND

The short history of the society known as the friends of Buddhism in Finland dates back to the winter of 1944. The Society was legally registered on May 1947. The activities of the society have been largely directed towards translating books on Buddhism into Finnish. Already there is a considerable number of translations. The available Buddhist literature has been distributed to all states prisons, public and private hospitals and all sanatoria for tuberculosis as well as to some fifty workmen's associations all over the country. The Society has organised fortnightly study circles in Finnish and from fifteen to twenty five people attend them regularly.

E. FRANCE.

France has always been the home and

the refuge of free thinkers, fearless writers and champions of Peace. And Paris the central seat of the governmental power and at the same time, the social stronghold of the French working class. The Buddhist Society of Paris "LES AMIS DU BOUDDHISME" was founded in 1929 by the celebrated Chinese monk TAI HSU with the assistance of miss CONSTANT LOUNSBERRY. The society has an international character. Since 1939 the society has published a review called "Buddhist Thought". It also offers all students a free public reading room, monthly lectures by accredited Buddhists and regular weekly meditation classes. It is stressed that a great need exist for frequent visits from learned monks. La PENSEE Bouddhique, "THE BUDDHIST THOUGHT" founded in 1939 by Miss LOUNSBERRY and madam LAFUENTE, publishes articles by distinguished bhikkhus. It is the only Buddhist review published in the French language and it has a wide and increasing circulation in INDO-CHINA. During the war the magazine went underground but succeeded in circulating widely and regularly published a reduced edition. Yearly some essential books of the teaching are being published example the work by the MAHATHERA NYANANTYLOKA and the MAHATHERA KASSIPA of the BENARES University (INDIA). These books have been widely circulating and sell as fast as they appear. In this way the society combats strongly the false impression produced by many books written by those of a hostile religion as the Christians catholic missions for instance. And by this way too they shows clearly that Buddhism rejects all Christians theories and dogmas, and wishes everybody to understand night is night and day is day and that night is not day and day is not night.

There has been hostility from learned Buddhologists who, well versed in the letter of the Buddhist scriptures, say the Europe could only be interested in the literature of Buddhism but could never accept Buddhism as a religion. This has been proved to be wrong. For the first time it is asked that a fund (or subsidy) for the publication of Buddhist books be created to help to disseminate Buddhist books widely that all who have had little dust on their eyes may read, and learn and see the truth of the DHAMMA. The different Oriental Museums in PARIS give regular exhibitions on Buddhist religious art and iconography, which attract large crowds of interested people.

F. GERMANY

When, after the defeat of the Nazi regime, Buddhist activity was again permitted, many old and new groups started to function. After the miseries of the war and the difficulties in the time after the war, many came to understand by their own experience the TRUTH OF SUFFERING and felt a deep need for liberation from all the suffering of existence. The most important Buddhist groups, besides many minor groups are the following (I) THE BUDDHIST COMMUNITY IN MUNICH. Who is a branch organisation of the MAHA BODDHI Society of CEYLON under the leadership of Dr. VON MENG. It publishes a monthly magazine "Buddhist monthly review". (II) THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY HAMBURG. under the leadership of Dr. HEIMUT PALMIE the editor of the "PALI BUDDHIST STUDY" a duplicated magazine. (III) In WESTERN AND EASTERN GERMANY there are further Buddhist groups in KOLN, HANNOVER, NURNBERG, KIEL, BREMEN, UTTINE, LEIPZIG, BERLIN and DRESDEN. There are great prospects of a flourishing Buddhist movement in GERMANY.

G. ITALY

There is actually a very active group in TORINO (TURIN) called BUDDHIST GROUP THERAVADIN. This group meets weekly and studies Buddhist scriptures. There is also another group recently established in BERGAMO.

A great part of the TRIPITAKA has already been translated into Italian by Italian scholars among whom are also world famed savants like professor TUCCI. Italian Buddhists hope to have their own temple in the near future.

H. SWITZERLAND

The country is inhabited by three nations Frenchmen in the West, Germans in the North and the middle, and Italians in the south. In each of these parts there are active Buddhists organisations. Regular study classes and daily meditation meetings are held and are well attended. Their review "THE INSIGHT" is one of the best European publications, and has a wide circulation in Germany and many others countries. Members of the Society meet also on the full moon day (UPOSATHA DAYS) for religious observances.

In the Italian parts, at LUNGANO there is the NEW EUROPEAN BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION whose leader is Dr. KLAAS. This association has close connection with Ceylon.

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THIS IS AN APPEAL TO ALL BUDDHISTS OF THE COUNTRY FOR WHAT WE NEED TO-DAY

I. That, the Buddhist Association must give whole hearted co-operation to any organisations in such schemes as are aimed at the amelioration of conditions of living of the masses.

II. That, wherever and whenever Buddhists become victims of distress immediate arrangements must be made by the regional organizations concerned to alleviate their sufferings.

III. That, in all towns or villages where Buddhist predominate in numbers, all existings acts and rules contrary to the principles of Buddhism be repealed and stopped.

IV. That, all reflections offending any particular ideology, class, creed or country must be avoided in all references in utterances or publications by Buddhists.

V. That, in order to secure perpetual peace with this present speech I urge upon all peoples of the country the strict observance of the following principles.

To do unto others, as you would wish others do unto you

To remove unjust cravings

All living things are born of the great life of universe, we human beings, without exception, are brothers and sisters born of and brought up by this same universe Parent. Firmly resorting to peaceful means, we should strive to clear away all violence from society, if we desire to bring about true peace.

By violence I mean force of any kind that pushes on unjustness, arms, influence, money, or the power of majority are to be termed violence. It is much to be regretted that to day all these kinds of violence are rampant everywhere. Peace on the mouth and quarrel in practice would be just planting the seeds of war. Buddhism, judged by the number of human beings under its direct or indirect influence, is to day by far the greatest force in the world. Peace, so very dear to every one, is the very spirit of Buddhism, the shrines of which have remained unpolluted by even a single drop of blood, human or animal during the last 25 centuries, a fact which makes Buddhism the centre of genuine inspiration and the fountain hope of peace in the world.

ANANDA French Buddhist Monk.
TAIWAN.