

## ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER REPORT

Students and teachers, both men and women, have been hard at work at Zen Mountain Center since late last winter when it became possible to purchase the buildings and land of Tassajara Hot Springs instead of the undeveloped mountain land nearby. We began immediately in order to fulfill our responsibility to our supporters who had made the first two payments on the land, and to the many students who already wanted and needed a place like this. Now, after the hopeful beginnings, many students are studying Zen Buddhism full time at Zen Mountain Center/Zenshinji (Zen Mind/Heart Temple), with the example of a Zen Master.

Much hard physical work has been done improving and taking care of the facilities and grounds. The few skilled students have trained and led the other students in this work. Hyakujo, the famous Zen Master who established the rules for Zen monasteries centuries ago in China, said, "a day of no work is a day of no eating." A construction company owner who visited Zen Mountain Center estimated that it would have cost more than \$50,000 to pay for the work the students did in the spring and summer, and more for the general clean-up and gardening. The whole plant was improved and gardens and landscaping begun.

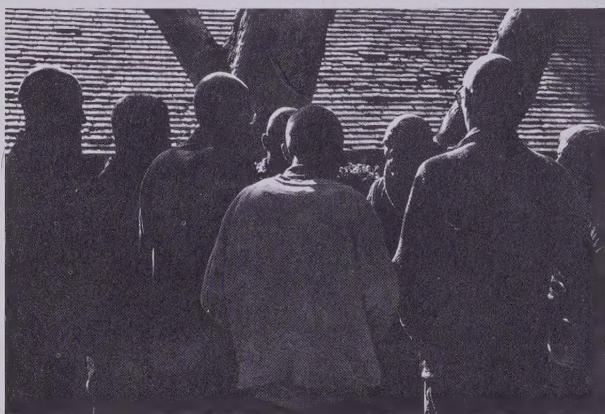
This was only the outside work. The inner work, the real reason for Zenshinji was to found and create the conditions for individual-group practice. It is difficult for each student to realize and continue his own Zen practice, to find ways to live and practice with others when the examples and tradition are so new to him and unexplored, and when the necessities of an American outlook seem sometimes incompatible with the essentials of an ancient Oriental tradition. But out of the determination of these students to make Zen Mountain Center work and with the accepting spirit and example of Suzuki Roshi, constantly renewing solutions were found for nurturing this 'baby monastery.'

But there is no guarantee of the continued existence of Zen Mountain Center if the upcoming December 15, 1967 payment of \$40,000 and the twice yearly pay-

ments of \$20,000 through 1972 are not met. We have spent most of the spring and summer trying to give flesh to the possibilities for a Zen meditation center in the United States; now we must come back to the independent necessity on which depends all else: completing the purchase of the property and buildings.

## WINTER AND SPRING

Turning this wild land and old resort buildings into an actual functioning practice center with a Zen Master, other teachers, and the right conditions for Zen practice, was a job that surpassed in time and effort any boundaries we imagined. In the winter and early spring there were only a few students there, along with the caretakers, Jim and Laurie Holmes and Bill and Kathy Parker, who were living at Tassajara when it became Zen Mountain Center. Jim and Bill taught us how to take care of Tassajara. Howard Campbell was the first regular Zen student to live there and he began the first zazen periods.



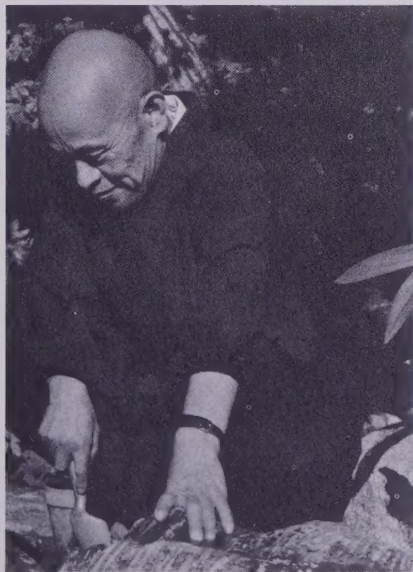
*The early morning sun slants into the valley on a spring work meeting led by Jim Holmes.*

By mid-spring the number of students living at Tassajara had increased to about thirty. A professor of philosophy from a New York university and a Jungian analyst joined the regular Zen Center students. Ed Brown, a Zen student who had been the assistant cook at Tassajara the previous year, returned this spring in the capacity of head cook. At this time Dick Baker and Silas Hoadley, President and Treasurer respectively of Zen Center, could only come down on weekends or for a few days each week because of the immediate pressures in San Francisco to work on business matters from that end: insurance, purchases, how to meet the payments, how to organize the practice period, etc. Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, the Abbot (Docho Roshi) of Zen Mountain Center and head of Zen Center, also had many responsibilities in San Francisco, both with Zen Center and with the Japanese congregation, and he was unable to be at Zenshinji more than every other week or so. As a result, much of the moment by moment responsibility for finding a way to live together, to complete the necessary work, and to develop a Zen practice, rested with the students themselves, some of whom had very little Zen experience. But with the help of Suzuki Roshi and the older students, and perhaps because of the balance and communal feelings inherent when people meditate together, things developed well.

Our biggest difficulty was getting essential supplies and people in through the springtime mud and snow. For a period of about three weeks in April, Zen Mountain Center was cut off entirely. The students could have walked in or out, but vehicles could not travel on the road. In San Francisco we raised \$3,600 to purchase a four-wheel drive Toyota station wagon, and one day we spent twelve hours battering the Toyota against hood-deep snow until we were stuck and had to be winched out by a Jeep which followed in our tracks. Finally Bob Watkin's truck, carrying men and shovels in its camper, made it out the sixteen-mile road in three days.

In late May and June Suzuki Roshi was able to be at Zenshinji more of the time. One of the most helpful experiences for the students was to work with him or just to watch him working. This was the first time most of the students had had the opportunity to be around him for more than a period or two of meditation a day in San Francisco. The need for such an opportunity was the main reason we began Zen Mountain Center.

Roshi has had considerable experience in Japan with stone masonry and the caprices of mountain streams because he has lived at two or more remote temples. But it was not just his skill in moving huge stones to direct the course of a stream, or in shaping stones to rebuild the large supporting wall under the bridge that affected the students so directly. It was the energy and attention with which he did his work. He seemed able to work without rest all day long, even when moving bigger stones than anyone else, and by mid-day to completely tire out the strapping students who were working with him. Everyone wondered what his secret was. One student who was helping him finally observed that Roshi was always at rest, unless he was directly pushing on a stone, and that even when he fell he was relaxed and found his balance naturally. Suzuki Roshi is very modest, even embarrassed about this and says that he is too attached to hard work; but to the students he is what they hoped a Zen Master would be like.



*Abbot Suzuki Roshi*

All the work in these two months was directed toward the opening of the summer practice period in July and August. Three jobs took priority over all others. Though urgently needed, the building of a new kitchen and other jobs had to wait. The first was putting in a new floor for a zendo on the ground floor of the dormitory building. This became a bigger job than was expected because the sixty-year-old building had slid toward the stream and everything was out of level. This first zendo seated thirty-six students and was not adequate for the overflow work crews who came down from Zen Center for the weekends. So the deck on the east side of the building which overlooked the intersection of the two streams was turned into an outside extension of the zendo that seated another thirty-five students. This was also used while the new floor was being laid. During the practice period this first zendo and deck were further rebuilt and modified and were used as the guest dining room during the fall guest season. This winter it will serve as the common room for the students.

The second job was turning the upstairs level of the same building into a dormitory for male students. This also we thought would be a small job, but the replastering and painting took several weeks. The third job was converting the former office, bar and lounge into the main zendo which would seat seventy people. This was completed the night before the opening ceremony. All of the construction on the zendo was being done while Suzuki Roshi was completing work on the caved-in bridge wall. Tassajara remained open to guests during the rebuilding and remodeling. The kitchen had to prepare three meals a day for the forty guests in addition to the vegetarian meals for the students.

At the same time in San Francisco we were trying to cope with the quantity of applications for the practice period that were coming in. More than two hundred applications were received—many more than we had expected—and daily, people came into the office at Zen Center or walked or drove into Tassajara over the trails and the precipitous road, asking if they could stay for the practice period. We required of the prospective students some experience in zazen, straight-forwardness, an ability to convince us of a serious interest in Zen, the balance to respond quickly and honestly to disconcerting questions, the willingness to sit first at Zen Center or with some other Zen group, and finally the determination necessary to sit through the three (now five) days of tangaryo (all day sitting, with breaks only for meals, to face oneself and one's reasons for wanting to practice Zen life). Out of all the applicants about 85 were chosen. Only 70 of these students were willing to enter the first tangaryo; about 55 stayed through it; by August there were 68 students and 4 priests.

#### SUZUKI ROSHI WRITES ON THE PRACTICE PERIOD

Through the practice period Buddha's way will be known in America. The practice period originated with Buddha's sangha (community of disciples) during the rainy season in India when the monks could not go wandering from village to village begging and teaching. In Japan only certain Zen temples are given the privilege of being able to hold practice periods. Now this indispensable practice has begun in America and it must not be discontinued. Each year we must have at least one practice period; it is indispensable for the students at Zenshinji and for the existence of Zenshinji itself. Strict observation of the practice period with qualified teachers and qualified students is one of the foundations of Zen Buddhism and is the most important reason we started Tassajara.



*Opening Ceremony. The Buddha has just been installed on the altar by Abbot Suzuki Roshi (in the center) and Bishop Sumi Roshi (in the light robe). Chino Sensei on the right is beating the large heart shaped mokugyo (wooden fish) leading the chanting of the Shingyo (Prajna Paramita or Heart Sutra). The sound of the mokugyo is like a deep heart beat beneath the chanting. In front of the mokugyo is the large bell which begins the chanting and bowing.*

There are not many teachers in this world, and there are many students. Of course teachers and students are not different, but we must begin with a teacher. The teacher works and practices under the same conditions as the students. But there is some difference. The student perceiving this difference is shown the way to the Buddha in himself and the Buddha in his teacher. This is the most fundamental way to help others. So direct contact with the teacher, listening to his lectures, working with him, receiving personal instruction, is very important. By this we can go beyond any physical, mental or emotional ideas we have about practice. It is possible to practice by yourself, but when we practice in a group we can help each other; and by practicing with people under the same conditions we can eliminate self-centered practice. When there are not many teachers, group practice is the only way possible to have direct contact with a teacher.

The purpose of group practice is not the observation of rules and rituals. Although the rules do allow you to focus on your practice, and to live according to the essentials needed to practice together, the purpose is to obtain freedom beyond rules and ceremony, to have naturalness, a natural order of body and mind.

To live in this world means to exist under some condition moment after moment. We should have the flexibility of mind to adjust our being to these conditions so that when we do change our attitude or circumstances, there will still be a fundamental imperturbability to our minds and bodies. This imperturbability gives us absolute freedom and we should practice our way until we obtain this. Group practice is the short cut to the imperturbable mind which is beyond concepts of personal or impersonal, formal or informal.

At first group practice seems restricting, but later you will find the freedom in it. At the same time, of course, it is easier to observe some rules rather than to practice your individual way or to practice in various ways. A person may be said to be a good Zen student if he knows his own way in its true sense; but it is very difficult

to know what your own way is. For finding what your own way is, group practice is best. For example, a woman will go to a store thinking that she knows exactly what she wants. But when she gets there and sees all those things, she may no longer know exactly what she wants. So she may buy many things, and end up wasting money. So we limit our life to find our true way. It may be how to know your way in the grocery store! Of course the best way is to use something when you have it; and if you buy things, at least you can use them until you know why you don't want them. Then you will have some sense of choosing things as your own.

So through group practice you find out how to know your own way. For example, Buddhist ceremonies are too complicated to do perfectly and so in our observance of them we can see our own way and not just the way of the ceremony. And in learning to accommodate ourselves to the practice of others and to our teachers, we will find out how to communicate with others and with all worlds and their various Buddhas. This is not just verbal communication. It is more direct than that. It is person to person and beyond any specific way. This is known as the Bodhisattva's way.

### THE FIRST PRACTICE PERIOD

In the evening before the practice period opened, the first ordination ceremony at Zenshinji took place when Dick Baker had his head shaved, was given the name Zentatsu Myoyu, and was appointed Shuso or head student for the first practice period. The next day at one o'clock, Bishop Sumi Roshi, Suzuki Roshi, Katagiri Sensei, Kato Sensei, and Maezumi Sensei opened the practice period and installed the Buddha in the zendo. This ceremony gave the students a sense of respect for the tradition which brought Buddhism and the teachers to them, and also an awareness that what is Japanese in Zen cannot be made American all at once. If the tree that has been transplanted at Tassajara is stripped of its branches and bark it will die, but if it is nourished and allowed to take root the new soil of America will subtly bring the tree into accord with its new life.



*Bishop Togen Sumi Roshi, Head of the Soto Zen School in America, with Suzuki Roshi and Chino Sensei preparing for the Opening Ceremony.*



*About 9 p.m. in the middle of evening zazen. The “flying saucers” above the students on the far left and right are reflections on the camera lens from the kerosene lanterns. The bright light on the altar is a candle. On the altar, center left and right, Roshi and Sensei; on the far left and right, Dick Baker and Phil Wilson.*

But the students also learned that they could not leave all the changes and adaptations up to Suzuki Roshi’s successors. These adaptations can only have life if they are guided by Suzuki Roshi’s sense of and insistence on keeping the essentials of Buddhism intact.

This sense of how Buddhism should exist in America was in sharp focus during the practice period when we were faced over and over again with details like: Do we wear robes or not, and what kind of robes? Shall this ceremony be simplified? How? Shall it be in English? Should we chant in English or Japanese? Japanese has more resonance but English we can understand. Should there be three, five, or seven days of tangaryo? How much zazen, study time, work time should there be? Should the organization and spirit of the practice be along the lines of original Buddhism, or present-day Buddhism in Japan, or what combination of these? How strict should the practice be made? Should we follow the Soto way completely, or should we apply the approaches of various schools according to the needs of the students? To what extent should the experience of zazen, koans, mantras, and the other techniques of Buddhism be used? These questions, many of which may seem superficial, actually helped to deepen our real experimental unknown practice (the student himself doesn’t know what will unfold next in his practice), suggested guidelines that pervaded our whole practice, and perhaps prepared some of the ground for Buddhism in America.

## TANGARYO

The practice period began with every student doing tangaryo. Previously we had debated whether tangaryo should be three days or the seven which is traditional in Japan. Since many students had insufficient experience in just sitting, three days was decided upon for entering the monastery during the practice period, and five days thereafter.

The students were not told what to expect from tangaryo. Suzuki Roshi liked it that the American students could come less prepared for tangaryo than their

Japanese counterparts, because they could come without preconceptions. All Roshi said was, "Be prepared to sit." And that we did, for three days straight from four in the morning until ten at night with no breaks except for eating.

If you go through tangaryo the value of this experience is apparent. It tested us to our utmost in a way most of us had never experienced before. And yet we knew the test was an encounter with ourselves in a way and in a situation which could only help us. Many experiences come out of a practice like this. After tangaryo there was a kind of alert joyful feeling at Tassajara that lasted throughout the practice period.

But if you have not been through tangaryo it is difficult to understand it. The advice to just "be prepared to sit" means that the student should be inwardly prepared to have an experience that, like most life experiences, there are no guidelines for, and that you must structure and solve for yourself. The student must decide for himself how long he is going to sit in one position, how long he will change his position, with what dignity and composure can he live during the time of tangaryo, and how he should react to his own confidence and discouragements. It is a kind of time/space experiment which the student freely enters into by himself, in which his own functionings become the unavoidable subject of his attention. It is here that he decides whether this practice which throws his self and being into such relief is what he can and wants to do.

## THE SCHEDULE

The daily schedule is the first problem the new American student faces. The usual attitude towards schedules is that they are trifling and irritating. But it is important that the schedule in a Zen monastery become second nature so that the student does not have to think about the details of time, but only in concentrating on what has to be done and how to do it. So Zen practice is limited to essentials so that things are done for themselves, in terms of the relationships within the situation, and not in terms of what your limited self, or small ego, thinks should be done.

For example, the wake-up bell is rung only 15 minutes before you should be in the zendo. This gives just enough time to dress and wash and get to the zendo during the second round of the han (wooden sounding board), and little time to consider how you feel about getting up. So what is hardest on the beginning student is dealing with the lack of personal time he has to think about things. You learn to have everything you need moment after moment without thinking about yourself, and so gain the awareness that at each moment you are perfect.

The daily schedule for students was: rise at 4 a.m., 50 minutes of zazen beginning at 4:20, breakfast, a three-hour work period, mid-day zazen, lunch, rest period, study period, a two-hour work period, bath time, supper, lecture, and one or two more periods of zazen before bed at 9:45.

We experimented with the schedule several times during the month of July trying to find out how tight the schedule should be and what combinations of zazen, work,



study and rest time were most satisfactory. A Japanese monastery schedule cannot be adopted without modifications since a schedule for American students must be related somehow to the life they had before coming to the monastery. It must make some sense to them and must be related to their own limitations and Zen experience, particularly during this first incubation period; otherwise they cannot follow the schedule at all. By the beginning of August we had a good working schedule that still followed the basic patterns of Chinese and Japanese monasteries enough that a professor who had been a long-time student of Zen both in this country and in Japan, and who was a student at Zen Mountain Center during this period, said, "Tassajara has everything Japan has and more."



*Chino Sensei hitting the han (wooden sounding board). Almost hidden behind the drum is the large bell.*

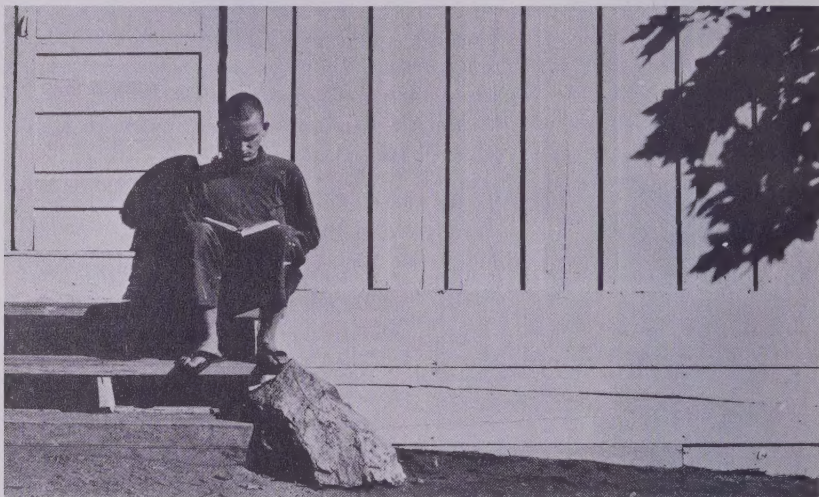
## TIME SOUNDS

In a Zen monastery the day begins just before sunrise with the sound of a hand bell and then a wooden board being struck by a mallet. Bedtime comes sometime after dark with the slower ringing of the same bell. The times and activities of the day are sounded throughout the monastery by a combination of either the han, a piece of ash planking 4 inches thick with a concave surface in the middle which is struck with a wooden mallet; the bronze bell which is made from a wooden mold carved especially for the bell and then discarded; or the drum, which is more than 3 feet in diameter and was made from a single tree trunk. These were paid for by a contribution from the Soto Zen Headquarters in Japan and were engraved or carved with Zen Mountain Center in Japanese and dated "In the time of Shunryu." Their design originated over 1000 years ago in China and has remained the same since, except for the drum support which was heightened for Americans.

The basic sound pattern lasts fifteen minutes and is composed of three rounds on either the han or bell, with each round having a different number of beats in it. But often the sound was a combination of several instruments. Lunch is announced by three such rounds on the han and the food is brought after three rolls on the drum (Buddha's thunder). The time is sounded in the early morning and late evening by hitting the drum once for each hour and the bell once, twice, or three times, depending on which third of the hour it is.

Several students were given the responsibility for hitting the instruments. The daily schedule was such that each sound or series of sounds had to begin and end on

time so that the students could pace themselves accordingly. At first the students found it difficult to be so in tune with time. The moment a sound began they had to immediately begin to change what they were doing so that they could be punctual for the next period and everyone could begin at the same time.



*Above: Student Gary Hayes reading in front of his cabin.*



*Left: Second cook Mike Daft and helper Louise Welch making dinner on the old platform outside the kitchen.*

## FOOD AND MEALS

In the spring and summer we experimented with the basic diet at Tassajara. We had two styles of food, Japanese and American, and ideas, both Buddhist and our own. The first was that you should eat only what you need, and as simple as possible protecting your health; and second, that you should eat what is offered, without discrimination, but that a simple, non-meat diet is preferred. Working with these things, several combinations were tried out, and the final diet was chosen for its spiritual and nutritious qualities rather than its nationalistic. The food was vegetarian, but because of the great amount of outside work that was done, and because of the need to balance the transition from the previous diet of the students to the new monastery diet, such protein staples as eggs and cheese were added to the diet. The soup usually had miso, a paste made from fermented soy beans, in it, because of the high protein content of soy beans. On the other hand, brown rice was used instead of white because of the great nutrient value of the rice hull, despite the apathy with which Japanese usually greet brown rice at first.

Our desire for simplicity and to hold to Buddhist traditions where possible, determined what foods should be eaten at specific times. On alternate days breakfast consisted of either rice gruel, pickles and fruit, or hot cereal, a hard boiled egg and fruit. Lunch was soup, salad and bread, and fruit for dessert; dinner was brown rice, salad and another vegetable. Seconds were served on the grains, the soup at lunch, and the salad at dinner.

How the food was prepared was determined by tradition and by the experience of Ed Brown and Bill Kwong, the cooks. The gruel was made from rice cooked with leftover vegetables and soup, and has become the favorite meal of the students. The bread was both leavened and unleavened; the salad was made of various kinds of greens and had one of many kinds of dressing on it, ranging from garlic to honey and vinegar. Some of the guests who ate with us in the zendo were disappointed that we ate so well.

*Brown, the Head Cook, also helps serve. Here it is soup at lunch after the practice period was over.*



Ed was so involved in making the kitchen work and finding it necessary to make rules that he wrote:

A dull knife will not cut,  
Nor a cracked bowl hold water.  
Putting your mind and body in order,  
How useful everything becomes.

Looking for the knife  
Which is not there—  
How hard to find.

Washing rice, kneading bread,  
Chopping carrots, peeling oranges,  
Slicing pickles, saving crumbs,  
No time for living, no time to die.

These were the rules for his helpers. "That's what the kitchen does to you, you know," says Ed.



*Lunch during the practice period was outside in front of what are called the Pine Rooms. Breakfast and evening meals were in the zendo. The three bowls of the oryoki were used outside as well as in the zendo.*

The meals were eaten in silence using an oryoki, or set of bowls and utensils. The oryoki is comprised of three bowls that can be set into one another, chopsticks, a spoon, a setsu (utensil for scraping and washing bowls), a sheath that holds the utensils, a napkin, a dishtowel, and a large cloth in which to wrap all the bowls, utensils and cloths together. Each act in eating with an oryoki is prescribed: how to untie the wrapping cloth with certain fingers, folding the corners

so that a square is formed under the bowls, how the bowls and utensils are taken out and placed, how to hold the bowls while eating, how each bowl is washed with water that is poured into the largest bowl by a server and how the water is poured from bowl to bowl until each utensil and bowl is washed and dried except for the last which is emptied into a bucket the server returns with, and finally how the various pieces are reassembled into the oryoki and the ends of the wrapping cloth are retied in a half-bow.

But the use of the oryoki is more than Zen etiquette. When each act is accounted for you become aware of each moment and of the difference between one moment and the next. It is perhaps the simplest possible way to eat (no dishes to wash) and each motion is reduced to the absolute essentials. It requires concentration and attention—an alert clear mind—to eat this way. You no longer have to be bothered with what you *should* do moment after moment and are able to act perfectly in each moment without thought, to be able to just eat when you eat.

Eating with an oryoki becomes an important opportunity in our practice. At first the student's reactions were that they were being programmed, even though eating with an oryoki was a Buddhist tradition that originated with Buddha carrying his bowl in his sleeve. But many students left Tassajara with the feeling that perhaps the most important thing they'd learned there was how to eat in a satisfying and simple manner.

## SESSHIN

The practice period ended with an intensive seven-day sesshin; 40 to 50 minute periods of sitting meditation (zazen) alternated with 10 to 15 minutes of walking meditation (kinhin) from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. Interposed between the 18 hours of zazen and kinhin were three meals, a tea service, an hour work period, a half-hour for bathing, and two lectures. There was no talking except for the minimum necessary during work period, and of course, the student could speak to the Roshi during dokusan (sanzen, or personal instruction) or the discussion that followed the lectures.

The students looked forward to sesshin with anticipation and dread. Sesshin demands a great deal: the schedule is long and hard enough that each student is required to fully explore and make use of his sources of energy. But sesshin is not so hard once you are actually participating in it. You have to be attentive to only one thing, and there is much satisfaction in concentrating on your practice intensively with others.

Zazen should permeate one's life so that everything becomes practice. This is the point of sesshin. And sesshin also gives one the opportunity to focus, with a minimum of distraction, on the essence of one's life or life problems, or on a koan or mantram, and more particularly, to let the happenings of one's mind and body come and go without interference, until one knows his mind and body before it takes on any activity or knows any form, until one knows emptiness itself. We say, 'to know your original face.

Suzuki Roshi meditated with the students and lectured twice a day. The lectures were on the Prajna Paramita Sutra (which we chant several times daily), the Genjo Koan by Dogen Zenji, and the meaning of zazen and practice. They were often followed



*Students during the seven-day sesshin ending practice period.*

by questions and discussion. Part of the Genjo Koan and one of the sesshin lectures and discussion are printed in this *Wind Bell*.

When Suzuki Roshi was not in the zendo he was giving dokusan (personal instruction). Anything may happen in dokusan, from questions to complete silence, and what does happen is between the Roshi and the students and is not talked about with others.

Sesshin ended with a formal question and answer ceremony in which the students presented questions to Suzuki Roshi about Zen and their practice before all the other students. Students stood together on one side of the zendo and each in turn walked to the front, bowed to Roshi and presented his question in a strong voice. Each received an answer from the Roshi, thanked him and returned to make way for the next questioner.

Some of the questions and their answers were:

“For the big mind the bridge flows. If everything has such independence, how can we find our responsibility?” “Your responsibility is on your own, under your own feet.”

“If there is no beginning, no end, and no existence, what is the use of a question?”  
“To call back something which is unknown; to address Buddha.”

“Docho Roshi, do you have some question?” “Yes, I have a question. Why are you so serious?”

“Using the mantram you gave me I broke through one dam of spiritual tension. Should I continue to use this mantram to break through further dams?” “As long as you are directed single-heartedly to your attainment you can use that mantram. You cannot use it for other purposes.”

“In Zen we often hear of doing what one must do rather than what one wants to do. Is it possible to know what one must do before one has the desire to do it?”

“Your teacher will put you in those circumstances. Follow our way. At first you think you are following the way, but soon you will drive the way.”

“Why is it necessary to have some unusual experience in order to practice Buddhism?”

“To open up your mind wider and wider.”

## SHUSO CEREMONY

Traditionally in a Soto Zen monastery the Discussion Ceremony (Hossen Shiki) between the Shuso and students would take place at the end of the practice period sesshin, but because there were so many students, there was not time for both it and the Question and Answer Ceremony with Suzuki Roshi. There was also some delay after the end of practice period until Bishop Sumi could attend. On September 19 the Shuso Ceremony was held in the zendo at Tassajara with the students who had participated in the practice period.

Suzuki Roshi described the Shuso Ceremony in this way: “Each practice period we appoint a Shuso to be head of training and leader of the disciples. For the student the experience of being Shuso, head of the monks, and being tested by the other students in the Discussion Ceremony marks the second stage in priesthood. For this first practice period at Tassajara, Zentatsu Myoyu (Richard Baker) was appointed Shuso. He was the first priest appointed Shuso in America.”

The Discussion Ceremony is very old. It originated in China and still exists in Japan. However, in Japan it is often more of a formality than anything else—the Shuso is often a young student without the experience necessary to answer questions about Zen that presuppose some maturity. The young Shuso is given the answers to questions which have been given out to the students.

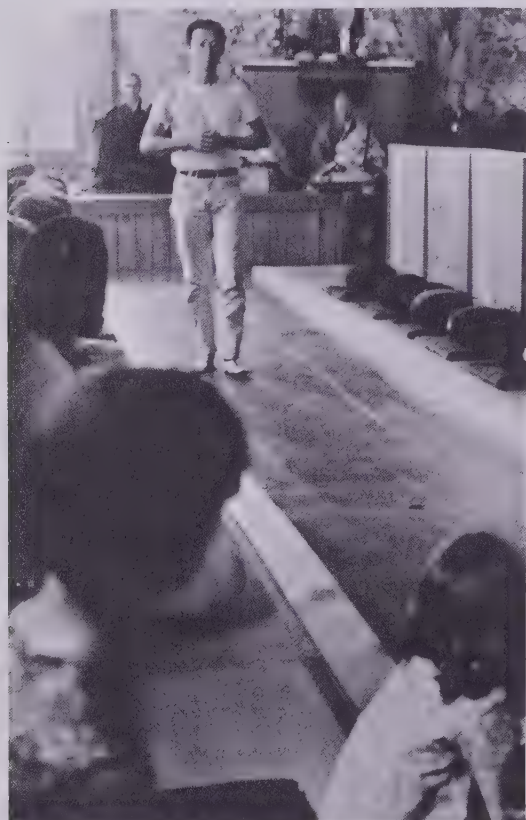
In America the ceremony has returned closer to its original content and feeling. Zentatsu, Richard Baker, is well into his practice and somewhat older than his Japanese counterpart. No questions were given out. Chino Sensei told the students to choose questions which demonstrated their own understanding of Zen and which probed the understanding of the Shuso. The question could be discussed until they felt the matter was resolved. Sensei described the ceremony as Zen ‘combat.’ Something was obviously expected from the Shuso and the zendo was charged with skeptical excitement—how can a student answer questions usually asked a Roshi—about to be resolved one way or another.

The priests sat together on the altar-platform in scarlet robes and ceremonial kesas. A strange bamboo root stick, called a Vajra (Diamond-Lightning) Staff, which had been made by Chino Sensei, rested on a low table in front of Suzuki Roshi. After chanting and offering incense, Dick walked slowly to face Docho (Abbot Suzuki), Roshi, bowed and received the Vajra Staff from his teacher. He returned to his seat on Docho Roshi’s right, pounded twice on the tatami with his staff and announced, “I am ready for your questions.”

The first student began a long stare at the Shuso, leaped to his feet, stamped and shouted *KWATZ!* Then he turned slowly and formally and walked toward the door. There was a tense pause and the Shuso asked, “Do you have anything else to say?”

The student turned, stamped, and walked back, bowed to the Shuso, and sat down.

Student after student brought forth his question to the Shuso. "What do you make of my transparency?" "What transparency," answered the Shuso, "You seem to be there to me. I can't see the wall through you." Or from another student, "Why did Suzuki Roshi come to San Francisco?" The Shuso answered, "Buddhism neither comes nor goes. Suzuki Roshi can study Zen as well here as in Japan. The question is, what is this 'you' that you think comes and goes?" Sometimes there was a debate: a student said, "I don't accept your 'if' in that answer." "You are right," said the Shuso, "No if." And the student, "Me asking, you answering—is that a comparison?" The Shuso answered, "No 'me', no 'you'—just questioning is all that exists here." The atmosphere lost none of its solemnity and power, but changed slowly to admiration for the Shuso and to gratitude for the pulsing life that has carried the ancient Zen traditions to Tassajara.



*After shouting "Kwatz!"  
Bill Kwong walks slowly  
up the aisle away from  
the Shuso on the altar  
with his Vajra Staff.*

When all the students had presented their questions, Chino Sensei said, "In a vale of these deep mountains a disciple of Buddha comes to teach. Let us hear congratulations." Congratulations came spontaneously from the students throughout the zen-do. Bishop Sumi Roshi gave a short moving talk. Docho Roshi concluded the ceremony with his congratulations, saying how he felt the ceremony was a beautiful expression of his faith in the Shuso and in Tassajara.



## OUR NEW PRIEST

We have known for years that we needed additional priests in America. There have always been many more students than teachers. But the problem was how do we find the right teacher for America. Kobun Chino Sensei is that right teacher. We knew it as soon as he arrived—a brilliant, twenty-nine year old priest with a deep sense of practice. We are fortunate to have Chino Sensei here to help Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Sensei.

Kobun-san, as he likes to be called by his friends, came to America in June at Suzuki Roshi's and Katagiri Sensei's request. We had heard good things about him from Philip Wilson and Grahame Petchey when they were in Japan. The second head of the Soto Zen sect agreed that Chino Sensei could come to America, even though Chino was to have been his personal attendant—a position of great honor and opportunity for learning. Chino Sensei had been studying in a special sodo (monk's hall) for teacher training to instruct other teachers. He was hesitant about coming because he doubted that anyone in America would sincerely wish to study Zen. Now he is head of monk training at Zen Mountain Center and is impressed with American students. He intends to stay in this country.

Kobun Chino was born at his father's temple, Kotaiji, and was in junior high school when his head was shaved. He joined the priesthood five years later. By then he was enrolled at Komazawa University where he studied Buddhist logic, languages (Kobun Sensei knows Sanscrit, Tibetan and Chinese, as well as English), and archery.



Later he transferred to Kyoto University and there continued his study of Buddhist thought from its early Indian sources to its intellectual peak in the ninth century. But Buddhist study, Kobun emphasizes, for all its importance, is secondary to zazen. While Kobun was still studying zazen at Kyoto he was recognized by his master as being a dharma teacher or one who is capable of transmitting the Buddha Mind. Upon completing his master's degree, Kobun returned to his father's temple for another year of practice and then went to Eiheiiji in early 1966. He is welcome in America.

*Kobun Chino Sensei. (We shave only every five days in a monastery.)*

## STUDENTS, MEN AND WOMEN

In Buddhism a student is anyone who follows Buddha's way. Even Suzuki Roshi is, for himself, still a student finding his way in each moment with his beginner's mind. So whether a man or woman is young or old, a new or experienced student of Zen, he or she is still a student. But the usual sense of a student as someone who is beginning his studies, applies as well to most of the members of Zen Center, because in a lifetime study like Zen, 3 or 4 or 7 years is a relatively short period.

This beginner's spirit pervades the practice and activity in San Francisco and Tassajara. Everything is done by students and there is little distinction between leaders and workers. We grow as much of our food as is possible, cook for and serve ourselves, repair, maintain and build the facilities, raise the money to purchase them, administer the monastery, and develop the practice there. We had learned how to find our own way by having experienced eight years of taking care of Zen Center in San Francisco. By not having many explanations from Suzuki Roshi on how many sesshins there should be, how often we should meditate each day, or as to why we bowed, chanted, or meditated in a certain way, we developed over the years an independence and an understanding of our own practice and how to take care of group practice. Thus we knew something of how to approach the development of Tassajara, and to come to our own determination about the need for strictness and freedom in Zen practice.



*Above left: Silas Hoadley*

*Above right: Tim Buckley*

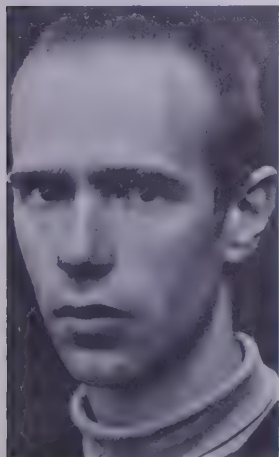
*Left: Dick Baker in his cabin office. The generator is not on very often and so for light two or three kerosene lanterns and one coleman gasoline lantern are used. Through the window is the far bank of the stream.*

Although Tassajara was developed by the group as a whole, there are certain individuals whose contributions deserve mention. Richard Baker, the President of Zen Center and Director of Zen Mountain Center, knowing that Suzuki Roshi would like land for a monastery, found that land, conceived and wrote about it in the first brochure, led the fund-raising and was the first Shuso. Silas Hoadley, the Treasurer of Zen Center and Associate Director of Zen Mountain Center, led the fund raising with Dick Baker, organized the guest season, and was able through the confidence he generated to get large contributions from friends and acquire loans during difficult periods. Peter Schneider, the Assistant Director, ran the guest season and directed the day by day operation of the monastery, and is now working on the *Wind Bell* and fund-raising. Ed Brown, the head cook, ran a family-sized kitchen and fed up to ninety students from it, or forty guests and forty students eating different meals. Tim Buckley, the Office Manager this summer, has assumed most of Peter Schneider's responsibilities and is now General Manager. Yvonne Rand carried on the day by day work at Zen Center better than it had ever been done before while most of the experienced students were at Tassajara. Paul Discoe, the construction foreman, with his exceptional carpentry and skills in almost every trade, made it possible for us to build without the help of outside contractors. Bob Watkins, the work foreman, led the work crews with such an unassuming spirit that no one knew he was leading. Clarke Mason kept our five vehicles operating better than the dealers had. Doug Anderson and E.L. Haselwood replaced section after section of root-infested pipe. Kathy Cook worked out with Suzuki Roshi the design for the student robes which she and the other women then made. Loring Palmer was second cook during the practice period. Fred Stoeber redid all of our outside electrical wiring. Dan Welch encouraged the other students with his imperturbable zazen.

The students came from all over the United States, and more from Texas and Minnesota, for some reason, than any other state except California. A few came from other countries for short stays. At present there is a permanent student from Denmark and another who was born in South America. Most of the students were between 18 and 35, but several were between 45 and 70. The occupations of the

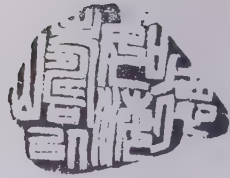
students varied from kindergarten teacher to gold miner. We had four or five college professors, a psychiatrist, a Jungian analyst, an importer, a bookstore owner, two technical writers, a naval commander, and many others including college students and housewives.

Zenshinji is unique because unlike most monasteries it has both men and women. We are surprised this is not more common because it works very well at Tassajara. Each married couple has a separate small cabin. The single men live in either quite small single rooms in a nine-room dormitory, or two to a room in four-room cabins. The single women live in similar four-room cabins. Both sexes seem to be equally a part of the development of Zen in America.



*Peter Schneider*

A sage's virtue is like the ocean,  
His character like the great mountain.



*Jane Westberg gave Zen Mountain Center an ancient stone seal which was dug up in Korea. It is a beautiful, orange-grained, smooth, alabaster stone, standing about three inches high and about four inches across. It is carved with trees and mountains winding along its sides and portrays Seki Heki, a famous place in China. It seems to belong in its new mountain-valley home so near the Pacific Ocean. An impression of the seal carved on its bottom surface is reproduced above. Its translation expresses something of how Zen students feel about their teacher.*

### STUDENT RESPONSES

Student reactions are hard to describe. For many students their life at Tassajara is the most real, difficult and satisfying experience they have had. They are always filled with a mixture of not being sure they want to stay, and of knowing they have to stay for the sake of their lives and practice. Of course no one can stay at Tassajara permanently; it is a special period during which they can hone in on their practice, i.e., on the central problems of their life, and of their death. It is a very serious time, and in the midst of the humor and good feeling you can see on the faces of the students probably the deepest feelings they have known.

A number of students gave us poems they had written during the practice periods. Here are lines from two of them: "There is no longer I/ but a new realm that moves in silence." "Free of all restrictions/ the barriers, the barriers, the barriers/ are down/ and yet it is in such movement/ here that I will give myself up/ to the conditions that prevail."

Usually Zen people do not talk about their experiences, but we mention them here because many readers of the *Wind Bell* have only read about Zen and may not know what to make of the long periods of zazen or the intensive daily schedule. Zen may seem a kind of asceticism or masochism to them because they have not experienced this simplifying and focusing practice which opens up daily life. And they may not know about the good feeling which permeates Zen practice.

Even people who know more about Zen or who have practiced Zen a little, often feel such experiences as satori, or kensho, or enlightenment, or a clearly focused practice with a group of students exist only in history books, or in Japan or China, and do not seem to be real possibilities existing in each of us. Some students do have satori experiences; the practice and sangha are real. This encourages us and expands our own potential and our feelings about the potentialities of others.

### GUEST SEASON AT TASSAJARA

This year Tassajara was open for guests during May and June, and September and October. Approximately two hundred persons, families or groups came, some

as many as four or five times. There were some problems in learning how to run a resort-like operation, but most guests seemed pleased.

However, they were anxious about whether Tassajara would be eventually closed to them. They were assured this was not the case, that we felt a commitment to them, since land, particularly this historical California hot springs of such great beauty, should be open as much as possible to those who want to use it and have been using it for years. It is also important that Zen Mountain Center not be isolated from the communities around it, as a monastery is where students are trained so that they can go back into such communities.

Many guests expressed a desire to help us; some by giving clothes to the students, by taking pictures for our publications, by giving money for the payments, or offering to help in fund raising. One guest is planning to give a benefit party in Monterey. A local doctor offered free medical care to any student who could not afford it, or would refer him to a colleague if he couldn't help. A lawyer in Carmel gave several mailing lists and much advice on how to raise funds locally. A dentist said, "You have an obligation not to close Tassajara. We are learning from you."



*Left: A guest room. Through the door is the bathroom overlooking the stream. To the left in an adjoining room is a fireplace and beyond that a kitchen.*

*Right: A guest swimming and a student's wife.*

## RESTORING TASSAJARA

Tassajara Hot Springs is at the end of a long dirt mountain road which is nearly impassable a good part of the year. The buildings are forty to ninety years old and are interlaced with ancient wiring and root-filled plumbing. Maintaining this 160 acre site and its facilities with supplies brought in over the long road requires year-round work from a large crew of men. Maintaining the ten miles of Tassajara-owned telephone line alone means that periodically a crew of four to six men must go out camping for several days, following along the line as it wanders through the trees and over mountains and canyons until it connects with the Bell System. Branches must be cut away, grounds located, insulators replaced that have worn out or been shot away by hunters, and sections replaced that have been downed in storms.



*The big four-wheel drive station wagon was bought new to assure bringing in supplies and people over the muddy or snowed-in road. Behind it is the Volkswagen bus that had been cut away to make a truck. It came with the purchase of Tassajara. The Dodge Power Wagon dump truck, also four-wheel drive, was purchased for a bargain \$250 and is indispensable for the heavy work we do every day. Not shown is the rebuilt pick-up truck with a camper we bought from a student, the only vehicle with a large enough enclosure to bring all our laundry out and food in. Above right is student Clarke Mason, an excellent auto mechanic, who keeps all the new and old vehicles in service. Below left is the shop and two men who brought in a gift of ten hives of Italian honey bees.*

It is a wonder that previous owners have been able to maintain the Hot Springs at all, let alone improve or renovate the facilities considering that the resort income was small. Yet somehow Bob and Anna Beck, mostly by their own efforts, were able to maintain and improve Tassajara each year. We have tried to continue their efforts and with the large crew of students living there all year have been able to complete work that Bob and Anna have wanted to do for years.

Within the past half-year the appearance of Tassajara has changed considerably. The stone and stucco building, built in 1906 and used intermittently as a dormitory for the Chinese cooks, as a barbershop, a bar, an antique store, and as living quarters for the owners, was entirely rebuilt. The nine rooms upstairs were painted and made into rooms for male students; the porch overlooking the intersection of two creeks was redesigned to fit the natural curves of the 19th century stone-scaping; the partitions downstairs were removed, a hardwood floor laid, the walls replastered, unnecessary door openings closed and walled in, windows replaced with full panes, handmade redwood lamps put in the ceiling, and the interior furnished with tables with legs carved from old fence posts and a unique, freestanding fireplace welded from two oil drums.

The oldest building, a slate stone dining room dating from the late 1870's, was converted into a zendo by removing the old bar and the office behind it, covering the open hearth at the opposite end with an altar, and running four rows of tatami down both walls and the center. The office was moved to what had been the storage and then the conference room. The multicolored but faded cabins were painted in either white, green or grey, and partially or completely reshingled. To conform to the health code, the cold water and hot springs reservoirs and the springs themselves were reroofed, and the old bath house by the pool was torn down. To follow



*The Guest Dining Room. A new floor was put in while this was the first zendo. Then walls were plastered, tables built, single panes of glass put in overlooking the stream. Today a handsome fireplace sits between the two windows. The room becomes the students' common room during the colder months. A broad deck overlooks the streams.*

the fire regulations, thirty-foot areas around each building were cleared of grass and brush, all the scrap lumber was restacked, hoses were hooked up so that every building could be reached with water immediately, and about a dozen fire extinguishers were hung. The local rangers were so delighted they gave us fire-fighting tools and are now trying to find trees for us to reforest with.

At the same time these major projects were going on, maintenance and cleaning work was being done throughout Tassajara. A vegetable garden was planted, landscaping started, including rock gardens and a stone patio. It took two persons most of each day just to keep up with the watering. Stone walls were dug out from under weeds. All the outside electrical wiring was replaced, and much other work was done that has been mentioned elsewhere in this issue.



*Smaller cabins on the left. Large student cabins on the right. These cabins were painted and in many cases reshingled. Karen Pomeroy is doing maintenance chores.*



*The main zendo and altar being built for the practice period. In the new zendo shown in the architectural plans elsewhere in this issue, this room will be enlarged a little and will become one wing of the 'L' shaped zendo. This room was originally the resort lounge and bar. The altar platform was built over the original stone hearth.*

*Chino Sensei standing in the rock garden and terrace being designed and planted by Suzuki Roshi. The Guest Dining Room is through the doors and above is the student dormitory for men.*







*This platform is used for washing dishes and other outside-the-kitchen jobs. It was the site of the main resort kitchen which had to be torn down. Our present kitchen is under the roof to the right. The mountain behind is called Flag Rock and stretches more than a thousand feet above the valley.*

## NEW ZENDO AND KITCHEN

Architect Joe Drosihn (of Reed, Drosihn and Stevens) volunteered his exceptional skills to Zen Mountain Center and has just completed plans for extending the present zendo and combining it with a new kitchen. The present zendo can seat from 50 to 70 students for zazen, lectures and meals, but the lack of space prohibits using the zendo for sleeping, as is traditional in Zen monasteries. With the expanded zendo, 60 students will be able to live entirely in it, with each student assigned to a separate tatami. The extension also includes an upper room overlooking the zendo, where the kitchen help can eat and where guests and students in tangaryo can sit. This loft will seat approximately 25. The present kitchen is located in what was once the staff kitchen and the proposed unit is more than twice as large. The students have already begun working on it and it must be finished by next May if Tassajara is to be reopened to guests, according to county health department requirements. Then construction will start on the new zendo.

Flat stones have been gathered from the creek bed to lay an all rock patio and garden between the dining room, the new kitchen/zendo and the creek. This done, the entrance to the zendo will be on the creek side, turning back into front what Joe Drosihn calls his contribution to the spirit of Tassajara.

While Joe is volunteering all but the direct expenses of his work, we would like to pay him if possible. His bill would be already well over a \$1000. If anyone would like to contribute directly to the designing and construction of this new kitchen and zendo, we would be able to pay Joe a fair amount for all the work he has done, and we would be able to move ahead more quickly with our plans.

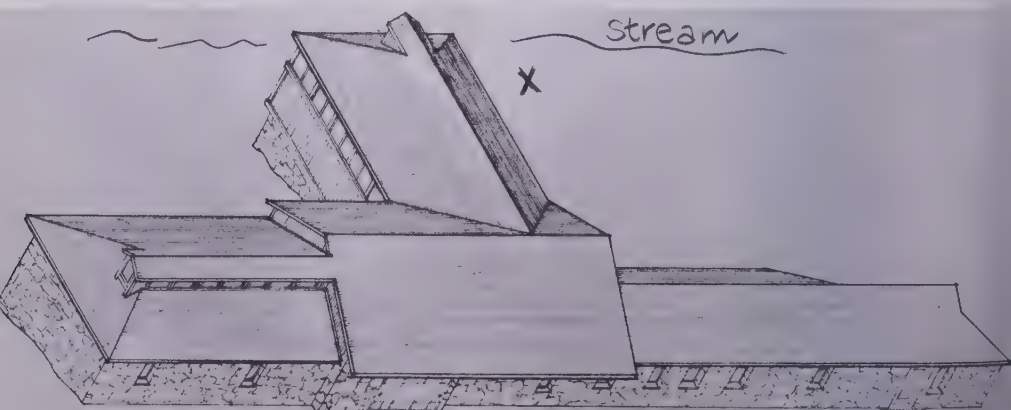
## FUTURE PLANS

The success of Zen Mountain Center the past nine months has been encouraging. There is a nucleus of students willing to concentrate their lives on building a Zen community in this undisturbed natural site. And there is a readiness among persons throughout the United States to study Zen. And so with a teacher all the ingredients are present. We do not know what will happen in the future; all we can say is that the facilities will be developed so that full-time students can study Zen there, and so that others—scholars, businessmen, housewives, etc.—can also participate in the practice. Specifically what buildings will be built and what new teachers will be trained or will come to Tassajara is not dependent entirely on our own plans, it will also depend on what people in this country want and how they express it to us.

Of course there are many immediate plans. The new kitchen and zendo and other plans have been discussed elsewhere in this issue. We are also planning to put in a new sewer system and an improved water system; to terrace some places for fruit and nut trees; to plant some conifers and broadleaf trees among the buildings; and to develop the soil for a large vegetable garden. The second story of the building over the hot bath pools will be torn down. An outside hot bath and a deck will be built along the stream. The planning of these physical changes and additions are considered carefully, with concern not only for creating a satisfying human environment, but also for preserving the natural ecology and beauty of the area.

There is what we might call a human ecology at Tassajara too, as well as a natural ecology. This human ecology includes the resort guests who have been coming there for years as well as the new Zen students. The balance also includes both an Oriental tradition and American conditions. This symbiosis will be reflected in the architecture because among the new and old western buildings we will build one traditional Oriental building. A Japanese architect and master carpenter will be brought over to help us, and one of our students is going to Japan because he wants to learn the traditional techniques of Japanese carpentry. The mutuality of our

*This is the architect's rendering to show the probable relationships between the volumes and a possible way it will look when finished. Between the arrows is the present main zendo. To the right of the far arrow is the present office. To the left of the left arrow is where the kitchen addition will be built on the existing foundation. Above the new kitchen will be a skylight and a loft-zendo, seating 26, for students who are working in the kitchen and for visitors who wish to do zazen. This loft zendo will be open to the main zendo so that the bells and mokugyo can be heard.*



Western/Eastern relationship in this early stage of our growth is also seen in that we are receiving the help of an excellent English gardener with our fruit trees and vegetable garden; and the help of a Japanese gardener with Suzuki Roshi to design our rock garden, terraces, paths, and landscaping.

### STUDENT AND GUEST COSTS

We try to keep the cost for students to stay at Tassajara at an absolute minimum. Students pay \$2 a day for the practice period and for stays under a month. For stays longer than a month, except for a practice period, students pay \$1.25 a day. We do not want to turn anyone away because of a lack of money, but there is a real relationship between eating, the production of food, trucks to haul food and supplies in, etc., and money. And this reality should be a part of the students' practice. The amount is small enough so that most students can earn enough at a job in several weeks to cover a stay of several months at Zen Mountain Center.

The guest operation should be self-supporting. In previous years when Tassajara was run as a resort with a bar and more guests than we accommodate, it was not making money. If the students who work for the guests were paid even low wages, the guest operation would at best probably just break even. But since we do not pay wages, what the students would be paid in wages becomes a contribution to maintaining Zen Mountain Center, i.e., buying building and maintenance supplies, and making the purchase payments.

The rates for guests are somewhat less than in previous years. Guest Members receive a reduced rate. The rates are \$9 to \$18 a day per person depending on whether one is a Guest Member or not, based on accommodations which include three excellent meals a day of traditional Western cooking and use of the natural hot baths, vapor rooms, swimming pool, and of course access to the area surrounding Tassajara.

*Until we can afford the materials and have the manpower freed from the kitchen building and other jobs, we must continue to use the present zendo. The new 'L' shaped zendo as shown in these plans for the future seats about the same number of students as the present zendo. However, it will be possible to arrange the tatami mats parallel to each other. In such a more traditional arrangement, each student may be assigned a tatami on which he meditates and sleeps (during sesshin and perhaps during practice period). Against the wall by each tatami will be a cabinet for each student's limited possessions and a bedroll. When rebuilt, the front of the building will open onto a deck facing a garden and the stream. It is an ideal solution which also makes the best use of the existing building and foundations.*



## ENCOURAGING LETTERS

When we sent out the first brochure we did not know what to expect. A great deal of money came back in the mail, for which we are very grateful. Many encouraging letters came back in the mail too, and these letters gave us a sense of how much people supported our interest in developing Zen Mountain Center.

The following are quotations from some of the letters:

“Am enclosing \$1 for Zen Center. This is a tiny drop but it is all I can afford. The need is so great for a place like this that perhaps even my tiny drop will help fill the bucket.” *Tucson.*

“I wish you the best of luck in this venture. What you are doing is perhaps one of the greatest events in the religious life of America since the Transcendental movement.” *Detroit.*

“I am very interested in the preservation of wilderness and park areas, as well as in Zen. Your project combines both. I have asked Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner, & Smith to send you 50 shares . . .” *Pasadena.*

“I can’t express how I felt when I ran into your brochure. I feel that this is a great project that needs any support I can give to it. Being a high school student I have little money to spare; but if you will supply me with ten or fifteen of your brochures, I may be able to raise a little money for you.” *Laguna Beach.*

“I have not attained enlightenment; however, after buying my food and shelter this month, I found I had \$5 free. Well, I said to myself, there’s that old Zen Center in San Francisco needing money like crazy. And for a good thing too! Give ‘em that drop of water you might waste.”

“It is far more important to sit in the shade of a tree and watch a deer feeding than to build bombs, make money, or start peace movements. I would rather gaze at one blade of grass and somehow come to know its secret than fight all the wars in the world. Maybe I will have the chance someday at the mountain center. Thank you for letting me help in something like this.” *Vietnam.*

“I would like to see more meditation among artists and young Americans whose primary aim is religion—no matter what religion. Then there would be the possibility that our religious life would take a fresh, new form, inspiring to all.”

“I only wish I might be able to contribute the entire amount for the purchase of your Meditation Center. In any case, please accept the enclosed offering.” *Hollywood.*

“Congratulations on your courage and good judgment in this venture which means so much in the meeting of East and West. You are bringing us what we sorely need.” *Los Altos.*

## MYTHS

People find myths about things that move them, and a number of stories are told about Tassajara more for their mythic and enhancing qualities than for their

accuracy. The most common stories are about the American Indians who some Americans feel are more their spiritual ancestors than the Europeans. The fact that Indians and their medicine men used Tassajara's hot springs for spiritual regeneration and that coyotes, a magical animal for Indians, are seen around Tassajara, enhances the whole area for many people. Another story told us is that the Dalai Lama's brother said there are three great centers of spiritual vibrations in the world today, and one of them is the Coastal Range in the Big Sur-Tassajara area. Another more scientific story was circulated because of its connection with the Himalayas, the home of Tibetan Buddhism, and the belief that high mountains are spiritual centers. This is that according to geologists the relatively young (thirty million years) Coastal Range of California is still growing, crumpling and pushing in and upward a little higher each year over lighter rock deep underneath which the growth is trying to balance. They predict that the coastal range may one day be higher than the Tibetan Himalayas. (This kind of mountain growth may also explain why there are so many steep, accordion-like ranges around Tassajara. It perhaps also explains the hot springs' source which may be primary water being released from rocks heated and crystalizing from the great pressure of the mountain growth. The hot springs also may come from ground water collecting and being heated by volcanic gases near the surface.)

## WHY TASSAJARA

There is more to the religious value of practicing in a place like Tassajara than the awe before natural beauty that some anthropologists say may be the basic religious impulse. The tens of thousands of acres surrounding Tassajara are one of the last areas in California with an undisturbed ecology, an environment much more complicated than a city environment which is limited to what man can think up and create. An undisturbed ecology is characterized by a richness and variety in its plant and animal life. The deer are few and healthy with enough food because mountain lions keep their numbers in check. Foxes, coyotes, wild boar, raccoons, snakes, gophers, and other ground animals go unobtrusively about their lives. On the mountainsides the pattern of the trees and plants is varied and gives one a satisfying feeling. Over the centuries many ecological niches have been created and filled—plants and animals create possibilities for other plants and animals which create possibilities, new environments, for others, etc. Tassajara Creek and the other streams in the area are clear, for the grasses, trees, and other plants on the hillsides prevent the soil from washing away. The night sky is clear and black without smog to diffuse the atmosphere. The natural ecological balance of an environment like this has a feeling of wholeness which is integrating for the persons living in it. Here is a sympathetic response with Zen practice which discloses an undisturbed balance and clarity in our own inner nature. The valley itself with its waterfalls at each end, the hot waters bubbling up from inside the earth, the old trees and buildings give us an ancient and pure feeling close to our basic nature.

For the beginner, particularly, it is very helpful to practice for some time in a place conducive to finding oneself. In Zen we should not be dependent on some particular environment for our wholeness. We should have this inherently as our own and be able to communicate it to the environment around us.

Dr. Albert Stunkard, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, was at Zen Mountain Center this summer. He wrote us, "At times in our busy lives the teachings of Buddhism can seem remote and even Zen practice may provide only a respite from our trivial and fond concerns. But at Tassajara it is different. There is the physical beauty, the considerateness of its monks, its thoughtfully ordered life, and the example of its teacher. Above all there is the quiet. Here Buddhism can be lived, and Zen practice seems the most natural thing in the world." And Joseph Campbell, the great Oriental scholar, wrote us, "The opening of the Gateless Gate through nature to our own nature is the great Zen gift to our age. I see in the founding of this Center such a disclosure of America as home." It is hard to believe sometimes when you drive at night up the road out of Tassajara after hearing the traditional Buddhist drum and bell sound the time, that back in that wilderness of mountains disappearing into a gigantic shadowiness, there is a community of Americans seriously studying Zen. The student believes it because he finds himself returning to the city in some way a new person.

#### WHY ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER

Zen Mountain Center has grown out of the years of Buddhist practice by small groups and individuals in the United States. It has benefited from the writings and translations of D. T. Suzuki, Ruth Sasaki, Alan Watts, Nancy Wilson Ross, Paul Reps, Joseph Campbell, John Blofeld, Evans Wentz, and others. We are not an independent occurrence. Robert Aitken, Chairman of the Diamond Sangha in Hawaii, wrote, "The development of the Tassajara Zen Mountain Center in a deep American forest marks the transition of expatriate Buddhism to a native religious discipline—the fulfillment of eighty years of Western Buddhist history. Members of the San Francisco Zen Center are freely giving their life-energy to this project, and we can assure its success if we offer contributions in proportion to their trust and hard work." At the present time all the Zen groups in America—in New York City, Rochester, Hawaii, Northampton, Gardena, Philadelphia—are trying to find better places for zazen. The success of any one of these groups encourages the others.

One of the reasons for the great interest in practicing Buddhism in recent years may be that there is a basic change going on in the way people perceive things—perhaps as a result of the impingement on the consciousness of man of science, television, and the bureaucracies of a too populous society. But whatever the basic reason, or whether the appeal is to young people who are bored or opened up by drugs, many people today are dissatisfied with much of modern life, particularly its spiritual possibilities, and are turning to Zen for guidance, for some example of how to live their lives. Zen Mountain Center is assisting in making Zen Buddhism a viable alternative for Americans. The Center is a real experiment in finding out how an ancient tradition of Oriental wisdom can enrich the possibilities of modern life and help America find its own way in this confusing time.

Since taking possession of Tassajara Hot Springs in January 1967, we have directed every effort toward creating the conditions which would permit Americans to practice Zen together in a group. To practice together in this way, full-time without the relief of a job and ordinary American life, is more difficult than to practice in the city where the student's whole life is not with other students and is not fo-

cused solely on practice. But it is working very well. We have had many reports that it seems to be the most successful and inherently stable of any similar community effort in the United States. If this is so, it must be credited to zazen and the balance afforded by an old tradition, instead of trying to start everything new.

#### PLEASE HELP

Please help us continue these efforts. We have raised \$18,000 so far for this payment and need \$22,000 more by the end of December 1967 if we are to continue. We also have a \$10,000 loan that is due and need several thousand dollars to build the new kitchen. If we do not make the \$40,000 payment which is due December 15, everything we accomplished this year will be lost. Small contributions are as important as large ones. It is the small contributions which provided the largest proportion of our first two payments. We urge you to help if you want to see Zen Mountain Center continue.

Please let others who might be interested in helping know about Zen Mountain Center. If you send us their names and addresses we will send them a *Wind Bell* and a brochure; or we will send extra copies to you as you request them. Some of you may be able to raise more than you can contribute yourself by telling others about Zen Mountain Center.

#### FINANCIAL DETAILS

The specific schedule of payments for the 160 acres of land and buildings of Tassajara Hot Springs is:

\$32,500 already paid on December 15, 1966  
\$45,000 already paid on March 15, 1967  
\$40,000 to be paid by December 15, 1967  
\$20,000 to be paid by March 15, 1968  
\$20,000 to be paid by December 15, 1968

and six more \$20,000 payments on the same schedule up to March, 1972, when the final payment is \$22,500.

This December 15, 1967 payment is the last major payment, and then the advantageous default arrangement goes fully into effect. If we default before making this December payment, all of the first payment of \$32,500 would be lost and a portion of all other monies paid. After making the December 15 payment, all payments up to that time would be covered equally by the default agreement which requires that all or no less than two thirds of the total paid be returned, based on its resale price or returned within ten years in case the property is not resold. If it is possible by April 15, 1967 to raise the \$222,500 left to complete the purchase, the price on the land will be reduced by \$15,000.

Zen Center is a non-profit corporation under California and U. S. federal laws. Contributions are tax deductible. Checks should be made out to Zen Center.

\* \* \*

For many people there are financial advantages to giving, and for your convenience we list some of these possibilities.

The Federal Government encourages you to support non-profit institutions by offering substantial income tax savings to both individuals and corporations.

*How may contributions be made?* Individual contributions may be made. Subscriptions are also being sought because the purchase payments for Tassajara are scheduled in March and December of each year through 1972. Subscriptions are payable over these years on terms set up by the subscriber.

*Individual contributions and subscriptions may be designated for specific projects.* Zen Center will apply contributions or subscriptions toward any specific aspect of the development of Zen Mountain Center which is of special interest to the contributor. For example, the completion of the kitchen or the zendo, paying the architect, the installation of a new Buddha, bringing another teacher from Japan. Of course, the majority of contributions must go toward making the purchase payments.

*Memorial opportunities are available.* Zen Center will be happy to discuss the opportunities for named gifts in memory or honor of individuals and families.

*Your personal contribution* to Zen Mountain Center qualifies as a deductible contribution in computing your federal income tax, subject only to a limitation that, for tax purposes, your total contribution deductions may not exceed 30 percent of your adjusted gross income in any one year.

*A corporate contribution* to the Center entitles the firm to a deduction of up to 5 percent of its taxable income. Under a recent change in the law, both individuals and corporations are given a five-year "carry-over" for charitable contributions which exceed the applicable ceiling in any one year. Here is how it works:

*For individuals:* Your adjusted gross income is \$20,000. You make a contribution of \$7,500 to Zen Mountain Center. You may deduct \$6,000 (30 percent of \$20,000) as a contribution in computing your Federal income tax for this year and may "carry over" and deduct the remaining \$1,500 in the succeeding five years until \$1,500 is used.

*For corporations:* If a corporation's contributions exceed 5 percent of its taxable income in one year, the amount in excess of 5 percent can be "carried over" and deducted in the five succeeding years until the excess amount is used.

*Giving appreciated securities* has two advantages: You pay no capital gains tax on the appreciation, and the full amount of the market value of the securities qualifies as a charitable contribution. (It is important that the securities themselves be transferred. If they are sold and the cash is given, the capital gains tax must be paid.)

In the case of securities which have decreased in value, the reverse is true. The securities should be sold—giving you a tax loss—and the proceeds given to the Center.

A deduction for your subscription to the Mountain Center is allowed for each year in which payments are made—and only for the amount paid during that year. Merely signing a subscription card does not entitle you to a deduction for the entire amount; your income tax deductions are determined by the amount you pay each year toward your total subscription.

For detailed information concerning your particular tax advantages, we recommend that you consult your attorney, banker, or accountant.



## CONTRIBUTORS TO ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER

More than one thousand persons have contributed to the purchase and support of Zen Mountain Center. Although there is not space to list all the contributors here, this list acknowledges our gratitude to all the contributors who are making Zen Mountain Center possible. Names of contributors will also be listed at the Main Entrance Gate of Zen Mountain Center.

\*Active members of Zen Center

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None

## LOANS

These persons loaned without interest amounts ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 or stock worth \$14,000 to \$18,000 as security for loans.

Ron Browning\*  
George Daly  
Marian Derby\*  
Michael and Trudy Dixon\*  
Dr. Joen Fagan  
Eugene C. Graham\*  
John and Elsie Mitchell

## CONTRIBUTORS IN KIND

These persons have made major contributions of their professional services to Zen Mountain Center:

Peter Bailey, Designer  
Robert S. Boni,\* Photographer  
Joseph Drosihn, Architect  
Henry S. Louie, East Wind Printers  
Graham Mackintosh, Designer and Printer  
Richard Werthimer, Attorney

## BENEFIT CONTRIBUTORS

These persons have donated lectures, poetry readings, paintings, sculpture, seminars on meditation and tea ceremony, concerts and dances:

American Society for Eastern Arts and their Artists:	Peter DiGesso*	Mahalila Society
Kodo Araki	Michael Dixon*	Fred Martin
Nikhil Banerjee	Walter Dusenbery	Charles McDermed
Kayoko Hashimoto	Betty Ferguson	James Melchert
Ali Akbar Khan	Harold Fore*	Daniel Moore
Ashish Kumar Khan	Jack Foss	William Morehouse
Mahapurish Misra	William Geis III	Bruce Nauman
Keiji Yagi	Lynn Good*	Peter Plamondon
Edward Avedisian	Robert Gove*	Gilbert Precivale
Morley Baer	Richard Graf	Quicksilver Messenger Service
Thomas Baird	Bill Graham	John Rampley
Ruth Bernhard	Grateful Dead	T. Sakurai
Big Brother and the Holding Company	Kay Hammann	Dieter Schubach
Bill Best	Robert Hawk	Samuel and Luise Scripps
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Sister Mary Corita	Shelby Kennedy	Michael Wood
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	James Koller	
	Jacques Levy	

## BENEFITS

Ever since we first started this project people have offered to help us with benefit lectures, poetry readings, seminars, dances, concerts, and art exhibitions. In March the well-known poet and long time student of Zen, Gary Snyder, gave a benefit poetry reading to help support Zen Mountain Center. This reading was unique—it was the first time the new art of the light show and media mixing had been used to graphically illuminate a poetry reading. They called it mandalagraphy, from the word mandala meaning two-dimensional patterns which heighten and deepen spiritual awareness.

A group of Gary's friends calling themselves the Mahalila Society (maha=great, lila=joy or play) worked many months photographing, selecting, and finally scoring all the images to the poem in endless rehearsals. It was very successful. The following is an account of the reading and mandalagraphy written by the Mahalila Society.

### GARY SNYDER READING AT THE FILLMORE AUDITORIUM

Rainy Wednesday night. The Fillmore like it's never been before. The stage bare except for a prayer rug, a microphone, lamp, wood clappers, and candle. Flowers here and there. Smell of incense in the air. And in the center of the floor a paisley pavilion trimmed with blinking lights. Rugs between the pavilion and the stage and on the rugs oranges with sticks of incense stuck in them. Ashtrays. From the mirrored ball above spots of whirling light filled the room. In a corner Henry Jacobs at his sitar. Entering the room, holding flowers they'd been given at the door, people settled where they would—on the floor or on chairs arranged in an arc behind the open space. Gifts of food and flowers from Bill Graham and the Zen Center. A feel of comfort and warmth. Friends greeting friends. Sound of rain on the skylights. It was good to be inside. Where is coyote? An evening of poetry. Nine sections from *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. Gary reading his own poem for Tassajara Zen Mountain Center. He came on stage barefoot dressed in thin cotton clothes Hindu-style, beads, ear and finger rings. He sat half-lotus at the microphone. In the pavilion the Mahalila Mandalagraphers stood by their magic light machines. The house lights went down and Gary opened with a few words about the origin and structure of the



*Karen DePena stuffing zazen pillows with kapok.*

poem. Two sharp claps from the wood clappers and the reading began—"I was a girl standing by the roadside" . . . a girl's face five-prism-fold appeared on the screen behind him. And on with the show, through the American Northwest, Hindu and Buddhistic places, Kyoto, barbershops and Goodwills, Katmandu, San Francisco, Benares, South China Sea, Mt. Tamalpais, ships, bars, temples, mountains and rivers, in company with Shiva and Parvati, ship-mates, girls, poets, monks, Bodhisattvas, loggers, mountain men, truck drivers, lions, coyotes, deer, birds, dreams and visions, Heavens and Hells and this floating world. A trip. And images flash on the screen behind him or mandalas slowly churn in and out. Two hours pass like nothing. — March 15, 1967.

## POETRY READING

Jim Koller, a young and very good poet, gave us a benefit reading in June. His poetry resonates with the *actuality* of the animal-plant-and-human world as it slips and grows by us in our attempt to make it ours. His poetry opens up a richness by giving a sense of the incompleteness in which we perceive things.

## ZEN BONES

A benefit lecture by Alan Watts

Alan Watts is skilled beyond words and concepts. Perhaps the most emphatic point in his benefit lecture for Zen Mountain Center was the sharp crack of his fan against his hand. He has the ability through words to literally give an audience a sense of transcendental experience, or the experience of nothingness.

"Zen Bones" was given Wednesday evening, March 29, in San Francisco at the Avalon Ballroom (again through the generosity of Chet Helms). Alan began chanting a beautiful Hinayana sutra. Then there were five minutes of sitting quietly—500 people. This was followed by the Prajnaparamita Sutra being chanted by a large percentage of the audience. This sutra in translation carries the basic conviction that form is emptiness and emptiness is form.



*This bridge crossing to the other shore,  
hot baths and vapor rooms replaces  
one that washed out last spring.*

Alan spoke of the "bones" of Zen as the discipline which is necessary to tap, contain, and direct the immense, powerful energy of Enlightenment. And the "flesh" of Zen as the awakening to the truth of "suchness" (Tathagata) that reality, energy in ceaseless flow, is fully expressed in each existence. It is

expressed in the Vedic scriptures as “that thou art” or in our expression as “you are it.”

In the strict discipline of a monastery, it is often the highest masters who have the most common or generally considered low tasks like cleaning the toilets. It took Dogen Zenji, the founder of the Japanese Soto Zen school, many years of practice and search in Japan and China to answer the question: why if you are already “it,” if everyone already possesses Buddha Nature, is it necessary to practice?

Alan ended the lecture by conjuring the whole audience through his voice and hands describing mandalas and energy flow into a sense of the vision in which all reality in its depth and infinity is seen as Zen Flesh and Zen Bones, just as you are right now IT.

## MEDITATION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Charlotte Selver and Charles Brooks teamed up with Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Sensei to give a benefit weekend in May for Zen Mountain Center called Meditation in Everyday Life. It was extremely successful. The two approaches go together very well, both pointing through the six senses at a deeper imperturbable reality. While Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Sensei demonstrated zazen, formal sitting meditation, and talked about the practice of Zen, Charlotte and Charles talked and demonstrated their more mobile practice under the light of such ideas as ‘Entering Experience in Depth’ and ‘Quiet and Reactiveness in Everyday Actions.’ The seminar ended with the hundred and fifty participants attending to their breathing, standing, sitting, and lying in silence.

Everyone felt very good about the seminar. Suzuki Roshi thought we should know more about their work. Many Zen students want to study with Charlotte and Charles when they are in California again. And some of their students became interested enough in Zen to become students at the training period this summer at Zen Mountain Center.

## A JAPANESE-INDIAN MUSIC BENEFIT WITH ALI AKBAR KHAN

On June 25th, Zen Center and the American Society for Eastern Arts jointly sponsored an all day benefit concert for Zen Mountain Center and the School of the American Society for Eastern Arts. Ali Akbar Khan and the entire ASEA faculty, which includes some of the most famous musical artists in India and Japan, appeared on the program.

The concert began in the morning with sitarist Nikhil Banerjee and tablaist Mahapurish Misra in a moving, slow Alap and continued in the afternoon with Japanese music by kotoists Keiji Yagi and his student Kayoko Hashimoto and shakuhachi (bamboo flute) player Kodo Araki. The evening began with Ali Akbar Khan and his son Allauidin Khan performing a “light” raga on their sarods. In the final piece they were joined by Nikhil Banerjee and Mahapurish Misra. The virtuoso inter-

play between the instruments in this raga—answer following answer following answer—reached an almost astounding crescendo at the climax, with the audience that had been there throughout the day and evening on its feet with a standing ovation.

Robert Commanday said in his review in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, that “Misra, on the hand drums, has fingers like a hundred live locusts,” that shakuhachi player Araki “communicated the profoundest sense of condolence with sharp tangs of dissonance,” and that Ali Akbar Khan’s “sarod sounded as if bursting to become a voice.”

It was an interesting experience for Zen Center because we had to plan and supervise the entire program, arranging for the Masonic Auditorium, making the posters, finding gold screens for the Japanese musicians and a large Oriental rug for the Indian musicians, arranging the sound stage and system, selling tickets, ushering, providing all kinds of tea for the musicians, and finally working the whole day while we listened. This sort of total involvement was mirrored by Suzuki Roshi’s lecture that afternoon on the practice of Japanese music. He described how the music student in Japan, like the Zen student, lives and works, doing the dishes, mopping, etc., for years before he begins to receive any direct instruction on his instrument. Special thanks for this benefit are due Samuel and Luise Scripps who are founders of the American Society for Eastern Arts.

## NEWS

### MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

At a Board of Trustees meeting this year it was decided that two classes of membership would be re-established: Practicing Members and Members. Several years ago we abolished similar categories because nearly all our members practiced regularly at Zen Center. As in the past, all those people who make a minimum pledge of \$10 a year are Members of Zen Center. This membership includes a subscription to the *Wind Bell*. Practicing Membership is dependent on the approval of the Zen Master and requires a pledge of at least \$4 a month for an individual and \$5 a month for a married couple. Practicing membership includes a subscription to the *Wind Bell* and the privilege of voting after having been an active member for six months. We have kept the cost of membership low for we do not want to exclude anyone because of money; but of course the minimum pledge from all members would not support the Center and its priests.

### ELECTIONS AND OFFICERS

At the same board meeting it was decided that Trustees (as in the past) will be elected annually to fill the expired positions on the board. Practicing Members will vote by mail this year since not everyone can attend a meeting. To reflect the growth of Zen Center the Board of Trustees will be increased by three members, and officers will be Trustees for the duration of their office if they were not Trustees at the time of appointment. The membership of the Board will consist of four members with a one year term, four members with a two year term, four members with a three year term, and the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary if they were not already Trustees.

The officers will no longer be elected, but will be appointed by the Zen Master after consultation with and the approval of the Board of Trustees. (Previously officers were elected at an annual meeting of the general membership.) The new method of selecting officers was decided upon because the annual meetings were poorly attended and because the selection of officers now takes much more consideration of skills and experience than was necessary when Zen Center was a simpler organization.

### KATAGIRI SENSEI

Because Suzuki Roshi has been at Zen Mountain Center a good part of this year, Katagiri Sensei has been leading the practice in San Francisco. He has continued Suzuki Roshi's leadership and added a special quality of his own. In the past when Roshi has been away, attendance at zazen and lectures decreased; but during this last year attendance has continued to increase. Often at Katagiri Sensei's lectures there are 70 to 80 students and at morning and evening zazen between 40 and 60 students. He conducted the annual week sesshin in San Francisco this summer, with Bishop Sumi Roshi and Abbot Suzuki Roshi there for two of the days. Two of Katagiri Sensei's lectures are included in this issue.

### SPACE PROBLEMS

As in the past our main problem (and resource) is too many students. We feel we cannot turn students away who come to sit with us or attend a lecture. We feel our responsibility is to find more teachers and more space. But everything cannot be done at once—Tassajara takes all the energy we have at the present time. Yet it is clear that a 16-seat zendo stretched to seat 40, even with the additional 40 seats in another room, is not adequate either for zazen or lectures. The solution we are thinking of is to buy an old warehouse, a beautiful brick one of good construction, and make one floor a zendo; one floor a library, study rooms, and office; and another floor living quarters for the priests and a number of students. Of course this plan will have to wait until we complete the purchase of Tassajara. An additional solution (which we are always working on) is to train American teachers here and to bring more Japanese priests and young monks to America for short stays or permanently.

Our immediate space problem is finding a bigger office than the downstairs kindergarten and study room of Sokoji. We are looking into renting an apartment for use as an office across the street from Zen Center.

### OFFICE WORK AND NEW TELEPHONE

Yvonne Rand is doing a beautiful job as office manager at Zen Center assisted by John Steiner, Barry Eisenberg, Bill Lane and others. There is still too much work for them, and anyone who wants to help is encouraged to. For the sake of continuity and making the best use of time, volunteer help on a regular basis is best—for example, every afternoon, three mornings a week, etc. Zen Center has a new telephone number 346-0442 and a 24-hour answering service to help us keep up with the work. Please use the answering service by leaving messages etc. any time day or night when no one is answering at the office.



## LIVING GROUPS

A number of students around the city are trying to help each other continue Zen practice by joining together to rent buildings or large apartments. Particularly several buildings across the street from Zen Center in San Francisco have become residences for Zen students. While these residences are not microcosms of Zen Mountain Center, they are managed in a way influenced by Tassajara. New students from out of town can often find places to stay there temporarily. For the regular students who live there, attendance at zazen is easier and they are also able to help with the office and other work more often.

## GUEST MEMBERSHIP

Silas Hoadley had the idea of bringing the many people who had been guests at Tassajara Hot Springs, Monterey's oldest resort, into Zen Center as Guest Members—giving them preferred rates and keeping them informed of developments at Zen Center. This way they were able to participate in establishing Zen Mountain Center and not feel estranged from the new situation. It worked very well. On the whole the guests have become warm supporters of Zen Mountain Center and enjoy coming there as much or more than when it was a resort.

The Guest Membership also permits people who would like to visit the monastery occasionally to learn more about Zen to do so with their families in a relaxed atmosphere, without taking on the full program of meditation, meals, work, and study. We learn a great deal from them. It permits outside interests to come into Tassajara, keeping it from being totally isolated. For the most part the guests prefer the late spring, summer, and early fall months because they are warmer and the road is easily passable. This is a good arrangement for the students prefer the cooler, quieter months of the late fall, winter, and early spring for the practice periods during which time few visitors are allowed. Tassajara thus is an opportunity for many different people to learn about Zen Buddhism and its practice.

## HAIKU ZENDO IN LOS ALTOS

A benefit party and picnic for Zen Mountain Center was held at the home of Norman and Barbara Hiestand in Los Altos on October 7th. About 150 students and donors from San Francisco and the Peninsula area attended.

Two periods of zazen are now held at the Haiku Zendo at 746 University Avenue from 5:45 to 7:30 every morning except Sunday and those dates containing a 4 or 9. On Saturday there are three periods and breakfast is served in the zendo. For information, call Marion Derby at 948-5020.

## BERKELEY ZENDO

For those who live in the East Bay, the Berkeley Zendo is open for zazen from 5:45 a.m. until 6:45 a.m. Monday through Friday mornings. As is customary, on those dates containing a 4 or 9 there is no zazen, except Mondays when there is always zazen, because that morning Katagiri Sensei or Suzuki Roshi leads zazen and gives a lecture, after which breakfast is served. For information call Mel Weitsman, 845-2403.

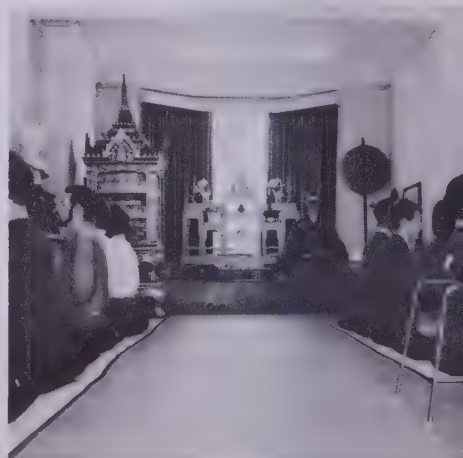
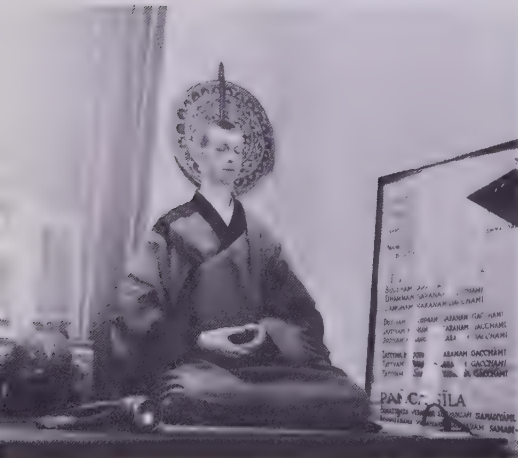
## NEW MARIN ZENDO

For some time there has been interest in Marin County (across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco) in having a Zen meditation center of its own. For most people, especially beginning students, getting up early every day to meditate at 5:45 a.m. is enough without the added difficulties of commuting half an hour to a zendo, going back home for breakfast, paying two bridge tolls, and then perhaps a third toll on the way to work. Several students who have been studying with Suzuki Roshi for some time do make this trip; but for the many others who live in Marin County who would like to have a place to do zazen nearer home, these students, led by Bill Kwong have found a beautiful zendo site in the Almonte Improvement Club at the intersection of Wisteria Way and Almonte Boulevard in Mill Valley. Here they rent space at an hour when few other groups wish to use it, for zazen on weekdays from 5:45 a.m. until 6:45 a.m., except on dates containing a 4 or 9.

Suzuki Roshi and Katagiri Sensei will visit the Marin Zendo occasionally but not on a regular basis. They have too much to do already with once or twice a week visits to Los Altos and Berkeley, and the full responsibility for San Francisco and Tassajara. But with the leadership of the older students, Bill Kwong, Norman Stieglmeyer, and Mike and Trudy Dixon, and with the excellent site Bill found for the zendo, Marin County now has a good place to practice zazen. Suzuki Roshi opened the Marin Zendo on October 17. For information call Bill or Laura Kwong, 388-5835.

## LONDON ZEN

Grahame Petchey, another one of Suzuki Roshi's oldest students, who has also studied in Japan for about a year and a half, much of that time at Eiheiiji and Antaiji, has been living in London for the past year and leads a zazen group of about 15 or 20 students in London. From San Francisco the London Buddhist scene seems far away, but it is one of the most active Buddhist centers outside of the Orient, although the focus is more toward Indian and Theravada Buddhism.



Grahame is English and returned to see his family whom he had not seen for seven years, and to continue Buddhist practice in England. His wife, Pauline, also a student of Zen has started a tea ceremony group in London. Grahame has held at least two sesshins in London, and these pictures are of the first sesshin held, through the courtesy of one of the Buddhist Vihars, in their temple.

Grahame may return to this country next year and we are encouraging him to do so. We need the kind of strong practice and encouragement he can give us at Zen Mountain Center. He has not decided definitely yet whether or when his return to America will be possible. Tassajara was started while he was in Japan and on the way to London. He writes: "We are so far away in London that it is difficult to picture the project. It sounds at once so incredibly wonderful but such an impossibly large undertaking for Zen Center. It seems incredible that now you talk in terms of a quarter of a million dollars when only two years back a single hundred was considered a large sum. I pray that you will be successful. You are making what was once a dream into a reality at a speed that my poor mind can scarcely adjust to. I am enclosing a contribution to help you."

Grahame helped us on our way, for it was his imagination and ability that finally put together the legal work forming Zen Center years ago. And it was his own early realization that Zen was his lifetime practice that made it possible for others to realize that Zen in America could be a lifetime practice for themselves.

#### NORTHAMPTON ZEN CENTER

In May the Zen group in Northampton, Massachusetts, was incorporated as Northampton Zen Center. The officers are: President, Mrs. Dorothy Schalk; Clerk, Mrs. Helen Walker; and Treasurer, Mrs. Janice (J.J.) Wilson (Philip Wilson's Wife). The Center meets weekly on Thursday night at Smith College's Helen Hills Chapel. For information contact Mrs. Helen Walker, 76 Elm Street, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060.

On February 24 and 25, Suzuki Roshi led a two-day sesshin in Northampton. The sesshin was held in the basement of the chapel at Smith College and between twelve and fifteen people attended. The evening before the sesshin Suzuki Roshi had given an informal talk on campus.

Mrs. Dorothy Schalk, the founder of the Northampton Zen Center, left to study in Japan early this fall and in her absence the Center is being led by Mrs. Helen Walker. On her way to Japan, Mrs. Schalk spent several days at Tassajara.

#### SUZUKI ROSHI SPEAKS IN NEW YORK

On March 8th, Suzuki Roshi gave a public lecture entitled "The Practice of Zen" which was attended by about 600 persons at the Community Church (Unitarian) in New York City. The lecture was organized by Peter Schneider and sponsored by the Young Adults of the Community Church.

The lecture was scheduled to begin at 8:00 but the audience, which was the biggest Suzuki Roshi had ever spoken to, was not seated until 8:30. Following the lecture Suzuki Roshi and Dick Baker answered questions for another hour and a half. Several students who are now at Zen Mountain Center first heard about it then.

## SUZUKI ROSHI'S TRIP EAST AND OTHER ZEN GROUPS

Last Washington's Birthday Suzuki Roshi flew East accompanied by Richard Baker. Roshi went to conduct a sesshin for the Northampton, Massachusetts, Zen group (see Northampton Zendo news), and to conduct zazen and lecture at the Cambridge Buddhist Society. They had a fine visit with Elsie and John Mitchell and the Cambridge group.

A number of people in the Boston and particularly in the New York area had written and asked to find out more about Zen Mountain Center. Suzuki Roshi felt it would be a good idea to visit these people if possible and also to visit the other Zen groups in the East to find out more about Zen in America and to encourage more communication among them. They also visited a number of people that Alan Watts and others had suggested they should meet.

Suzuki Roshi was very impressed with the Zen group in Rochester led by Philip Kapleau. Roshi meditated with them and then talked briefly about the value of having a good teacher. Richard answered questions about Zen Mountain Center. Throughout the practice period this summer at Zen Mountain Center it was clear what a revolutionary effect Philip's book, *The Three Pillars of Zen*, has made on the entire Zen scene in America. Seldom was a question asked, particularly from the younger students, which did not include an understanding gained from that book. Students had a much better understanding of what a Roshi is, what koans are, what the place of satori in Buddhism is, and what Zen practice is, than they had a year or two ago before the book really took effect, and perhaps more accurately, before the paperback of it was published. In Dick's copy of *The Three Pillars of Zen*, Philip wrote, "On top of a flagpole a cow gives birth to a calf." This summer we saw that a birth is occurring on top of his book. There is a new spirit in the Zen scene in America and a large part of it is the result of this fine book.

Suzuki Roshi and Dick were also able to join the meditation of the Zen Studies Society in New York City. This is an excellent place to study Zen where there is a visible commitment to Zen practice. Eido Tai Shimano (Tai-san), their resident teacher, was visiting Japan at the time and so unfortunately we were unable to meet him. A number of students from the Zen Studies Society have been among our best students at Zen Mountain Center this spring and summer.

At the first Zen Institute in New York City we met Mary Farkas and a few members of their group, but we were not able to be there during meditation. They have a beautiful building, zendo, and library, and are the oldest Zen group in America.

## WYOMING VISIT

During the last week in October, Roshi and Mrs. Suzuki visited Mike and Trudy Dixon at Trudy's family's ranch. It is the HF Bar Ranch, a working cattle and dude ranch in Saddlestring, Wyoming (just outside Buffalo). It must be one of the most beautiful ranches in the west. Its 12,000 acres stretch up to the granite and firs of the Big Horn Mountains. The ranch abounds with elk, deer, antelope, as well as some 140 horses and many head of cattle. It was the first experience of the cowboy

west for Roshi and his wife. Mrs. Suzuki performed the tea ceremony for the household, surely the first in the history of Wyoming. They both rode horses for the first time, and Roshi kept his seat like a samurai, Trudy said.

## BABIES

On June 11, Katagiri Sensei's wife, Tomoe, gave birth to a boy, Ejyo, their second child. Norman Stieglmeyer left the week sesshin at Tassajara to be with his wife, Rita, when their first child, Christina, was born on August 20.

## NEW PRACTICE PERIOD

The next two-month practice period will begin Monday, February 26 and end Friday, April 26. We will accept 50 students for this period. Probably 30 of the 40 students currently at Tassajara will stay through the practice period, which leaves about 20 openings, many of which are already spoken for by regular Zen Center students and students who were at Zen Mountain Center this summer. If you are interested in participating in this practice period, please let us know immediately.



*Trudy Dixon carrying her oryoki and zazen cushion.*

*Student Rob Gove building the altar platform for the present zendo.*

On Tuesday, October 24, the great Mrs. Ruth Fuller Sasaki died in Kyoto, shortly after returning from America. As the first American woman Zen priest and the founder of the American Zen temple in Kyoto, she had befriended and taught nearly all the American Zen students who passed through or lived in Kyoto for the past twenty years. The Prajna Paramita Sutra was chanted in her memory at the morning services at Zen Center and Zen Mountain Center on November 3rd.

She and Suzuki Roshi met for the first time the evening before she returned to Japan. They talked of the fundamental similarities between Rinzai and Soto Zen, and of his Zen teacher whom she had met at the teacher's temple in Yaizu, Japan, when she was in quest of a valuable commentary on a sutra. This delighted Suzuki Roshi. The temple later became Suzuki's own temple and his teacher's library is still preserved there. At his next lecture he spoke of how impressed he was by the clarity of her thinking and her freedom from unnecessary discrimination.

The following article appeared in Japan the day after her death. We print it in tribute to this remarkable American Zen Buddhist and because facts about her life are not generally known.

*LIFE OF LATE RUTH SASAKI DEDICATED TO ZEN PURSUIT*

By Masahide Honda, *The Mainichi Daily News*, October 27, 1967.

“. . . Zen is a religion, . . . Zen is a kind of existentialism; Zen is a kind of mental therapy; Zen is a discipline in which blows and conundrums are used as teaching devices; Zen advocates a humble, retired mode of life, the main activity of which is the practice of meditation; Zen aims at the attainment of *satori* and with *satori* comes total knowledge and understanding; Zen is everyday life; Zen is complete freedom; the man who has attained the aim of Zen, that is, *satori*, is beyond law, beyond the regulations laid down for human society.” —from *Zen, A Religion* by Ruth Fuller Sasaki.

The life of Mrs. Sasaki, who died Tuesday in Kyoto at the age of 74, was dedicated to the pursuit of Zen. As the chief priest of the Ryosen-an Temple within the precincts of Daitokuji, one of the seven headquarter temples of the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism in Kyoto, she helped Westerners who visited the sanctuary in the study and practice of the Oriental religion.

Her death is a great loss and is deplored by Japanese and foreign followers of Zen alike. Her funeral services will be observed at the Ryosen-an Friday at three p.m. with Priest Isei Fukutomi, general secretary of Daitokuji, acting as the chief mourner.

During her 50-year-long study of Zen since her student days at Chicago University and Harvard where she majored in Sanskrit, Mrs. Sasaki distinguished herself as an outstanding Buddhist scholar. She wrote several books which are now considered as basic reading materials of those foreigners who study Zen.

Professor Yoshitaka Iriya, dean of the Chinese literature department of Nagoya University, praised Mrs. Sasaki's inexhaustible efforts in the translation of esoteric Zen texts into English, reminiscing of the sixteen years he worked

with her. "She never compromised in the quest of truth. Our work is now confronted with insurmountable difficulties with the passing of Priest Jokei," he said.

As the resident priest of the Ryosen-an, Mrs. Sasaki lived a quiet and secluded life, which was strictly governed by the precepts of Zen. She did not seek publicity, which was something foreign to her.

Born to the family of a wealthy Chicago businessman, she turned her attention to Rinzai Zen when she met the late Dr. Daisetz Suzuki in Japan in 1930. Two years later, she again visited this country to receive Zen training at Nanzenji Sodo (monastery) in Kyoto under the guidance of Master Priest Nanshinken.

After returning to New York, she continued her studies under Master Sokeian, alias Shigetsu Sasaki from 1938 until his death in June 1944. Priest Shigetsu was in the United States to spread the teachings of Rinzai Buddhism. He opened the Sokei-an Temple at East 65th Street in New York City on December 6, 1941, the eve of World War II. With the outbreak of the war, he was sent to a concentration camp.

Ruth married him to take him out of the camp. Suffering from failing health, her husband died at the age of 64 only two months before the termination of the Pacific War.

Shortly before his death, Priest Shigetsu left a will to his American wife, directing her (1) to go to Japan and build a center for American students of Zen Buddhism, (2) to invite a Japanese Zen master to the United States and (3) to translate Zen texts into English.

Mrs. Sasaki came to Japan as soon as circumstances allowed her to, and stayed at the Daitokuji. She made her residence at the site of the defunct Ryosen-an. In 1956, the First Zen Institute of America decided to establish a branch in Kyoto. With permission from the Daitokuji authorities, a library and meditation hall for foreigners were constructed in the compound of the Ryosen-an. Their construction was mostly financed by Mrs. Sasaki.

Meanwhile, the first American woman Zen "Anshu" (chief priest of a temple) was created when Mrs. Sasaki was ordained Anshu of the Ryosen-an by Chief Abbot Daiki Tachibana of the Daitokuji. He gave her the priest name of Jokei.

The Kyoto institute for foreign Zen students at the Ryosen-an has the dual purpose of aiding Western men and women in undertaking the study and practice of Rinzai Zen under Japanese masters and of publishing in English translation the major Chinese and Japanese texts.

The publications issued by the institute so far include: *A Dictionary of Zen Terms*, *An Index of Zen Biographies*, *Cat's Yawn—A Zen Miscellany*, and *The Development of Chinese Zen*.

The greatest project now being undertaken is the translation of Rinzai-roku, or Linchi lu, the most important textbook of Rinzai Zen. It is now 90 per cent finished. Professor Iriya says that he and his colleagues will forge ahead with its completion, but the death of Mrs. Sasaki has deprived the staff of the Kyoto Zen institute of an indispensable collaborator.

## EARLY HISTORY OF TASSAJARA

In 1843, a hunter hiking up the Carmel Valley met a party of Indians on their way into the mountains. Their leader, who spoke Spanish well and so must have been a Mission Indian, told the hunter that they were going to the hot springs to cure a skin disease which had broken out among them. They planned to “build a sweat hut of mud and branches over the place where the hot water flowed from the ground [the site of the present-day vapor rooms] and then remain there until they got so weak the medicine man would have to carry them out. After that they would scrape their bodies with the ribs of deer or some other wild animal.”

When the Indians stopped using the springs is not known, but by 1868 Frank Rust had opened a camp there, and by the early 1870’s “Doc” Chambers and “Rocky” Beasley were hunting out of the caves five miles upstream. These caves had been inhabited for at least a thousand years by Indians, who had left white prints of their hands on the walls. Often the springs were occupied by several tribes at once, perhaps by the Costanoans of Monterey and Soledad who could have come down the Church Creek from the Caves, and the Salinans from the Jolon/San Antonio Mission area who could have come upstream from the Arroyo Seco. There was reputedly so much game at the springs that there was never much quarreling among the tribes. When they did fight elsewhere—which was seldom—the moment the first person on either side fell, everyone retreated.

Because the way into the springs was so inaccessible, particularly to those who sought to be cured by them, the squatters who succeeded Frank Rust after he vacated his camp the winter of ‘69, usually stayed less than a year, despite the still great quantities of game, ‘from quail to grizzly bear, which abounded there.’ “Rocky” Beasley claimed to have killed 132 such bear.

The first settler with entrepreneuring aspirations was Jack Borden and the name he gave the springs was Tassajara, i.e., a place where meat is dried and jerked, even though meat had most likely never been cured there. Until then the springs had been called Agua Caliente (Hot Water), a name the Spaniards had given to all the hot springs in California. The following is a description of Tassajara under Borden’s proprietorship, as it appeared in a Government Office Travel Guide, *A Handbook to Monterey and Vicinity* (1875):

“. . . about forty-five miles from Monterey. There are some dozen hot mineral springs—reported to be very effective remedial agents. ‘All the flesh is heir to,’ barring consumption, may find here alleviation or cure. The late C. A. Canfield, our Monterey savant, forwarded some of the waters to the Smithsonian Institute to be analyzed; and it was reported the richest spring then known in the United States. Thirty-two ingredients were found herein. The water reaches the surface of the earth at 140 to 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Mr. Jack Borden, the present proprietor, reports some remarkable cures.”

The paragraph following this states Mr. Borden’s intention to form a “joint stock company” to develop Tassajara, but he didn’t do either. The first buildings were raised by the next owner, William Hart, in the late ‘70’s. This included a two or



three room log "hotel," a shale dining room (the present zendo), a few cabins, and a shale bath house (the stone rooms) with a plunge and wooden tubs that resembled horse troughs.

The road was begun by Charles Quilty, Jr., who purchased Tassajara from Hart in 1884. His partner, John McPhail, was crew boss. The first section, from the James Ranch up to and along Chew's Ridge, was built with local laborers using plows mainly. Then Chinese laborers were brought in from San Jose to live at China Camp and to cut with pick and shovel the eight mile downgrade around Black Butte. The road was opened in 1890, but by 1888 a wagon could make it down by dragging a large tree behind it. After that a four horse all-day stage from Salinas came in three times a week. But it was not until the early 1950's that the road was made two-way by the county. Previous to that an incoming motorist had to telephone down to the Springs from Chew's Ridge to see if anyone was coming up.



*Early view of hotel.*

The road built, Mr. Quilty then began on the 40-room sandstone hotel which was completed in 1893 but was burned down in 1949. Both the sandstone and limestone used for mortar were quarried in the canyon. Guests in it were fed corn, melons, onions, red peppers and tomatoes which were irrigated with water from the springs; trout caught each early morning from the creek, deer, quail and occasional goat; and for a beverage sometimes, hot spring water with salt and pepper and butter, which one guest claimed, "tasted just like chicken soup."

## NEWSPAPER STORIES

There has been much interest in Zen Mountain Center, both in this country and elsewhere. Japanese and American television stations visited us, a number of newspapers, a Japanese weekly magazine, several photographers, and a few people writing books which would include descriptions of Zen Mountain. This outside interest makes us aware that we may be practicing Zen for more than just ourselves. Most of the reporters have had a genuine curiosity about and respect for Zen. And surprisingly most of them showed a real interest in wanting to come back and practice Zen.

One of the first stories that was thorough and well-researched was by Jack Goddard in the *Village Voice*, Thursday, July 6, 1967. Jack, the West Coast

writer for the *Voice*, has a real sense of what is happening at Zen Mountain Center. His story grew out of two several-day stays at Tassajara. He most recently came in considering a follow-up story, by hiking the twenty-five miles over the very rugged mountains from his house on the coast in eight hours. He arrived exhausted, unable to talk, but ready to write.

We are reprinting the story below because it is a good description of what Zen Mountain Center was like before the training period opened in July. Many of the students who were there at the time this story was written did not stay through the training period. The ones who left were relative beginners in Zen (a few months) and did not have enough real mental and physical experience of Zen to cope with the facing of oneself brought about in tangaryo (described earlier), and the greater discipline of the training period—mainly a lack of time for anything except Zen practice. We learned we must encourage students to spend time practicing with Zen groups in the city first—San Francisco, New York, Rochester, Gardena—where the practice is less intensive and helps prepare them for Zen Mountain Center. But these first students in the spring did break the ground—they accomplished an enormous amount of work, and their Zen practice established the spirit of Tassajara.

Although the central metaphors of religion are often tough ones (note the use of the *kyosaku* stick to help students in Jack's story), like Christ's crucifixion or Bodhidharma's nine year sitting, still the beginner must be able to find a way in religion to develop his own possibilities. For this reason, beginning next year the summer will be left open to beginning students and visitors, with the fall, winter, and spring reserved for more experienced sitters.

*If we are truly involved with the development of our way,  
there will be no idea of development,  
of religious or worldly, of Japanese or American,  
of man or woman, or even of Zen.  
Such true activity will start  
when distinctions are forgotten  
and hindrances become the opportunity for practice.  
Thus you will know your own way.  
It is the time to put these seven hundred year old  
teachings of Dogen Zenji into practice.*

Shunryu Suzuki Roshi

*Sumi circle by Suzuki Roshi.*

ZEN RETREAT IN CALIFORNIA: NOT FOR THE FRIVOLOUS

By J. R. Goddard, *Village Voice*, Thursday, July 6, 1967.

TASSAJARA, CALIFORNIA—In the heat of late afternoon, in a creek bed below the stone buildings of Tassajara Hot Springs, men work with the cold mountain water swirling around their legs. Prying at boulders to rechannel the creek, rebuilding almost stone by stone the old walls, buttressing its steep banks, they are stopping erosion that for years has undermined a nearby bridge.

One is an elderly Japanese in plain white robes, his head smooth shaven. Around him are Americans in blue jeans or worn Army fatigues, a few with heads as smooth as his. He points to some snagged opening in the wall. "Maybe to put two rocks please—small and flat." They do it without question, in respect to him not only as a priest but as a craftsman. He has often done stone work in his monastery in Japan.

Elsewhere more men are putting a new roof on the property's main building. Or cutting firebreaks at the bottom of steep, brushy hills that enclose Tassajara into its narrow canyon. Over in the kitchen, the women of the group are helping ready dinner.

But all this activity does not cease with dinnertime. It only distills itself. At eight in the evening the group will assemble as they did at six that morning for their second hour of silent meditation—meditation so strict in its cross-legged, straight-backed rigidity it is really hard work of another kind.

These are students of Zen Buddhism. Most are young—early 20's to mid 30's—though a few are older. Some are professional people, or college students. Others include a carpenter. Or an ex-GI who until recently dispatched scenery trucks at a major Hollywood studio. Still others have come in off the trails of hippydom.

Their Zen master is Shunryu Suzuki. Under his direction they've been reshaping a battered California mountain resort into a national Zen center, which officially opens for meditative traffic in July.

The mountain center is the result of a steadily growing Zen interest in America over the past fifteen years or so. More specifically, it is the outgrowth of what has gone on in that city which nurtures so many new phases of our cultural life, San Francisco.

Ten years ago Shunryu Suzuki—or Suzuki Roshi, "Roshi" meaning Zen Master—came to San Francisco to lead a congregation of Japanese-Americans. Soon he found many non-Orientals coming to learn about Zen. This led to the opening of Zen Center, which promptly became so active an assistant had to be brought from Japan to help out.

Yet city distractions made it difficult for students to concentrate for long periods on Zen training. A quiet retreat was needed, not only for San Franciscans but any other Americans wanting to learn meditation. Richard Baker, a young Oriental Studies scholar who organizes national conferences for the University of California while also serving as President of the Zen Center, heard of the ideal place. An undeveloped section of the Tassajara Hot Springs resort deep in the rugged Santa Lucia Mountains of coastal Monterey County was for sale.

Hundreds of Zen followers contributed money. Allen Ginsberg and Zen popularizer Alan Watts aided other fund drives. Rock 'n' roll "Zenefits" drew more cash, as did sales of painting and sculpture. Then as the substantial down payment sum was reached, it was learned that actual buildings and mineral baths at Tassajara could be had. The Zenists took possession this spring.

### *Advance Guard*

During the months since, the advance guard working and studying at Tassajara has slowly swelled to well over 30. Come to know some of them and you'll probably get a fair idea of the kinds of people drawn to Zen anywhere in America. You'll also find out more exactly what sitting in meditation, or "zazen," really is.

Peter Schneider, Tassajara's general manager, is one of the most articulate of the pioneering group. An affable, good-looking man in his late 20's, he has several years of graduate school behind him as well as desultory teaching of English and math. Throughout local Zendom though he is known as the man who sat zazen alone for two years—something of a solo flight record, considering one usually sits with others, or with priestly guidance.

"When you begin to sit, your mind suspends for a while," he explains. "Then things that have been pressing in on you start coming up. Something you've been worrying about, or even a rock 'n' roll song banging inside your head. You realize how tightly wound-up you are. And how out of contact with yourself." Gradually all this stuff empties out," he continues. "You become aware of your breathing, then of your whole body. More gradually, you come into a kind of clarity of mind—like walking down a corridor of mirrors. Everything is beautifully reflected. At that stage, whatever transpires during your day is somehow more understandable. More ready to be dealt with."

Many others at Tassajara come from the same educated, professional class as Schneider. Mike, for instance, is a bearded philosophy professor on leave from both his university and his Greenwich Village life. A Jungian analyst from Florida is stopping off briefly to deepen his knowledge of Zen. And a former missionary who's brought his wife and children along to Tassajara will teach meditation to Mexican farm workers when he returns to Texas.

### *Farmer Dan*

Then along comes a young man named Dan. He offers quite a contrast to the others. Both he and his attractive wife dress in such rural roughness—he in faded overalls, she in long, plain dresses—they seem to be walking right off the remotest of west Kansas farms. Both have a farmland kind of taciturnity too. Yet Dan wears the flowing, near shoulder-length hair that would never blossom atop any Kansas farmer. He's also spent two years in a Japanese monastery, and has gone farther with meditation than many of his fellow Tassajarans.

"Loss of ego is the initial important thing in meditation," he says thoughtfully. "You lose your sense of self, find your mind and body coming closer together. Things around you grow in importance. Even a tree gives you a new sense of its being, its own history. From there on you find everything assuming its place in the order of things—including yourself, your own place. It's an in-

tuitive process that can eventually reach out into the whole universe.”

Which of course is what many an acid head today tries to achieve on rocket-ship trips into space, though in far shorter time.

Like the young lad from Los Angeles. “I dropped out of high school right before finishing,” he recounts. “Started using acid regularly and then dealing it. All at once the whole scene got too much for me. I got scared. Took off up the coast, sleeping under bridges, eating off other peoples’ plates to keep from starving. Man, when I made San Francisco I was in bad shape.” The Zen Center took him in. Once he began meditation training he left acid behind.

“Many people coming to Zen nowadays have used or use acid,” Peter Schneider says. “Once they become really involved in Zen though—say by the time they’re ready to come down here—they’ve stopped. Acid can’t help you reach truth the way meditation can. Meditation takes you far beyond, if you’re willing to accept the discipline.”

### *Tough Regime*

At Tassajara, that discipline is concentrated in the meditation room, or “zendo.” Occupying the lower level of a dormitory, its immaculate hardwood flooring, its simple shrine and plain sitting mats, give it a very spare feeling. Twice a day about thirty people sit cross-legged on black pillows facing the the bare walls for at least an hour. And there’s no back-sliding either. If Suzuki Roshi sees students slump into the bad posture that hinders meditation, he quickly corrects them by pressing at shoulders and back. Students can also request more drastic measures. The Zen master will pad up behind, give them a warning touch—then *Whacko!*, hit them loudly on each shoulder with a stick.

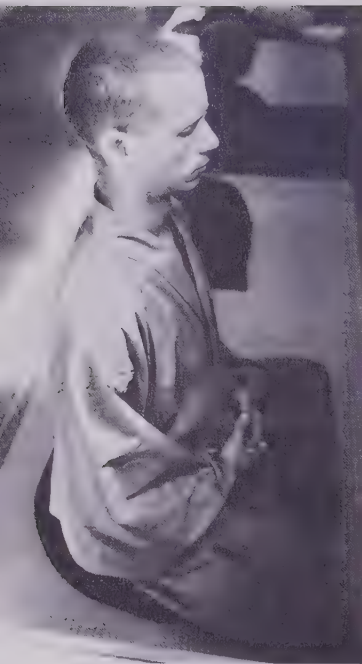
This strict observation of form in the zendo is not limited to meditation hours, either. All three meals—much brown rice, cereal, and bread, masses of vegetables and salads—are also taken there. That same relentless sitting position prevails. And the only time silence is broken is when prayers or sutras are chanted in Japanese . . .

With July and official opening almost upon them, the pressure is really on these hard working people to get as much done as possible. The first of Tassajara’s projected two-month training sessions will open then, swelling the population to sixty or seventy. (All places for this session have been filled.)

Yet what is accomplished both in spiritual and material ways this summer will only be a bare start. Already applications for training or residencies are coming in from all over America, as well as England and Japan. To meet these needs,



*Student Sandy Watkins  
working with Chino Sensei.*



programs of training and lectures will have to be expanded. And to house them a new zendo will be erected along the magnificent creek traversing the place. Moreover, the building sheltering the extensive mineral baths (they will be open to the public this fall) must be repaired.

Back up in the cold-facts world of San Francisco, \$225,000 must be raised by 1972 to complete the full \$300,000 payment on the property. Future plans also call for acquiring all the remaining private land around the springs (it is a 500 acre island completely surrounded by national forest), which will require another dollar or two.

But the start this spring has been auspicious. And as one middle-aged man who has been sitting zazen for years further commented, "Tassajara has all the right vibrations. Zen belongs here."

*Student Dan Welch doing zazen in the zendo. He is referred to as "Farmer Dan" in the news story.*

## THE BERKELEY BARB

Another of the better researched stories was in the *Berkeley Barb*, one of the best of the national underground newspapers, dated September 29. This story gives a feeling for several of the aspects of Zen Mountain Center and for what it was like later in the summer.

### THE WAY OF THE GATELESS GATE

By Ernie Barry, *Berkeley Barb*, September 29 – October 5, 1967.

To get the story on the now legendary new Zen retreat in the mountains south of the Carmel Valley, I hitchhiked up there last week. Zen Mountain Center is a monastery located at the old Tassajara Hot Springs resort in Los Padres National Forest. Getting there is in some ways as difficult as reaching satori.

The steep winding road up to Tassajara is one of the most breathtaking rides in this country. The huge mountains dramatically dwarf man. They serve as an ideal preparation for the deep mountain isolation of the hidden valley site of Tassajara. This writer was scared out of his wits by every minute of it on the way down in bright sunshine. At certain points you can see 3,000 feet straight down just from the edge of the dirt road.

Beautiful valleys and canyons stretch for vistas of ten, twenty miles. One's eyes embrace a good part of the last untouched land in Central California . . .

### *Moon Valley*

I rode up at night and discovered what a valley of the moon really was. There was a full moon that night and up in the mountains it looked amazingly clear and full. It lit up long, deep valleys, miles long.

Originally, San Francisco's Zen Center had planned to purchase a parcel of horse pasture just above the Tassajara resort. Both are little parcels of private land in the middle of the wilderness of the huge Los Padres National Forest near the coast below the Carmel Valley area. The horse pasture was flat, undeveloped land, and it would be a matter of years, it appeared, before a full-fledged monastery could be physically assembled. At the beginning of this year the resort itself suddenly became available for \$300,000. Zen Center snapped it up with a Zen unconcern for the immense difficulties it will have raising huge installment payments twice a year until 1972.

Almost immediately the Center had a complete physical plant for a mountain monastery which would "help to put down real roots for Zen in America."

The people at Zen Mountain feel, "It will never be urbanized or within the sound of traffic." The only access to the land now is that sixteen mile dirt road which is cleared by the county once a year.

### *Number One Phone*

Zen Mountain's phone number is Tassajara Hot Springs Number One. There isn't any number two or three. There isn't another phone for literally miles. The site is so remote that Pacific Telephone Company years ago refused to run lines up the mountains for just one number. A compromise was reached. Tassajara Hot Springs Resort set up its own phone company and paid for the lines and their maintenance, and Pacific Telephone hooked them into their system.

. . . Life at Zen Mountain is quite rigorous for all but hot springs guests and people who come for non-Zen meditation. Both of the latter pay resort rates and are housed in small cottages and served four course meals of tasteful and healthful American-type food, in an airy straight dining room.

The others, Zen teachers and students, also live in small cottages, two to a room, or singly in very small dormitory rooms. Their meals are eaten in the zendo (a monastery room for meditation) and are blandly simple, though probably more varied than in Japanese monasteries.

### *Gruel*

Breakfast usually consists of gruel and fruit, lunch of soup, salad, and bread. Supper is a simple salad and a bowl of rice and a cooked vegetable. The meals are eaten in a highly formalized way with everybody squatting on cushions in the zendo. It is pretty weird as one eats between the solemn chanting of sutras (Buddhist sermons) such as this one:

"First, seventy-two labors brought us this rice; we should know  
how it comes to us.

Second, as we receive this offering, we should consider whether our  
virtue and practice deserve it.

Third, as we desire the natural order of mind, to be free from  
clinging we must be free from greed.  
Fourth, to support our life, we take this food.  
Fifth, to attain our Way we take this food.”

#### *Hot Bath*

. . . The hot baths at Tassajara are real natural hot baths. The water flows up bubbling hot from underground mountain springs. It has a high sulphur content with a sharp odor.

When I went in, the water was 109 degrees F., cool to David Chadwick, a friendly, talkative hip Texan who has been studying Zen for a year. His Zen self-discipline seemed responsible for his quick entry into the water and subsequent underwater swimming in it.

. . . The San Francisco Zen Center purchased the cluster of resort buildings at Tassajara and began operation of the Zen Mountain monastery in them while at the same time continuing to operate the resort. While I was there they were handling six other guests: one was a quiet, heavily black bearded husky man who looked anything but the Los Angeles liquor store owner he supposedly was; a soft-spoken sensitive veteran of the Jack Kerouac days who had hiked in via the twenty-five miles of mountain trails from Big Sur on the Pacific; and two elderly retired couples who had come for the hot springs and were friendly but seemed to this reporter unaware of the existence of the monastery in their midst . . .

#### *Zen Rites*

Dick Baker, who has been studying Zen for seven years, was raised to monk/teacher status in a formal Zen ceremony while I was there. For the occasion Zen

*Deep in this valley you can see the buildings of Zenshinji.*





leaders came down from San Francisco and up from Los Angeles. The local Monterey daily newspaper, the *Monterey Herald*, even sent a reporter up the sixteen mile twisting mountain road to cover the story.

The solemn Zen rites included Dick's answering of koans, traditional Zen riddles for opening and redeeming the mind. He answered this one posed by Peter Schneider, a student, who jumped to his feet and said:

"Does the man have the finger, or does the finger have the man?"

"Buddha nature has the man."

"What is Buddha nature?"

"You can't lift it with ten men."

### LSD

. . . When I interviewed Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki, the spiritual leader of San Francisco's Zen Center last week I questioned him for about five minutes on LSD but came away completely bewildered by his Zen answers to me. The only thing clear was Suzuki's regarding LSD as completely irrelevant to anything.

It was even more irrelevant to young monk Kobun Chino. He had never heard of it and didn't seem to be aware that drug taking was commonplace among young Americans.

. . . I asked him what he thought of America's first actual Zen monastery. "This place is perhaps called Zen Village," he responded. "I sometimes call it Zen Children Village . . . It is a very rare type of monastery. It is a Baby Village and also a Children's Village, and it needs unimpeded growth like most things young."

"Ours is one of the only successfully functioning utopian-type communities in the United States," David Chadwick says of Tassajara. "Suzuki Roshi's spiritual presence provides inner harmony to keep the community operating."

The community will function all year around now. During July and August they had eighty students but they are now averaging between twenty-five and fifty.

### With Suzuki

I interviewed him in his cabin at Tassajara. He is a short, gentle man with an air of tremendous serenity about him. . . Suzuki seems strangely un-Japanese and a bit American in his support for a basically unregulated approach to Zen enlightenment. He says he is not at all concerned about hair length but prefers shaved heads. "The shaved head is the ultimate in hair styles."

. . . He summed up Zen's response to the increasing violence and conflict on the planet thus: "Zen seeks accommodation between, not conflict. We struggle for accommodation."

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### THE MERCURY

The following story was in the *San Jose Mercury*, Friday, August 25, 1967. It gives a picture of Tassajara during the training period and how a metropolitan newspaper for the general public reacts to Zen Mountain Center.

## OLD RESORT NOW A ZEN CENTER

By Mac Bowe, *The San Jose Mercury*, Friday Morning, August 25, 1967.

TASSAJARA HOT SPRINGS— The occasional clink of dishware was the only sound from the more than seventy people as they ate silently under the trees at this former resort. They were students and Zen Buddhist priests undergoing rigorous training at Zenshinji—the Center for Meditation of the Heart and Mind. Meditation is one of the keystones of Zen training—walking meditation and sitting meditation. The Zen Mountain Center involves some of the most strenuous mental and physical training known to Western man. The center is comparable, in a sense, to a Christian retreat—an opportunity for students of Zen to meditate and study the philosophy.

“I don’t think many who are insincere make it,” Richard Baker, 31, of San Francisco, a Zen priest and director of the center, said. “We had about two hundred applications for our first two month training period. Of those we accepted eighty-five, either people we knew or those who were selected through interviews to determine their sincerity.”

Then came tangaryo, a three-day session of meditation in a sitting position from four a.m. to ten p.m. with breaks for meals only. “It doesn’t sound too hard, but for most people it is one of the hardest things they have ever done,” Baker said. Sixty of the hand-picked students made it through tangaryo.

Life is simple in this hidden valley fifty miles southeast of Monterey. The students and priests alike breakfast on simple food such as cereal and fruit. Lunch and dinner may be soup and vegetables or brown rice. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited, although smoking at certain periods during the day is permitted. Men and women’s living and bathing quarters, except for married couples, are segregated.

The day starts at four a.m. with the sound of the dawn bell, a specially cast bell presented to the center by a Zen monastery in Japan. The days are spent in sitting and walking meditation, interspersed with meals and work periods. The students are repairing and rehabilitating the facilities formerly used by the public when they travelled over the mountain roads to steam in the hot mineral baths. Less than an hour a day is spent in formal instruction, usually a lecture by Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, the Zen Master.

Suzuki Roshi—the Roshi stands for master—gave up a temple of his own in Japan eight years ago to come to the United States to teach Zen . . . Roshi sees a great opportunity for Zen in the Western world. “You are not filled with age-old conceptions about Buddhism,” he said. “You have no prejudices or traditions about one school or another as we have in the Orient.”

Most of the students are Caucasian. Most of them will return to outside life after the two or three months of training in the mountains. A few may go on to train for the priesthood. There is an Oriental flavor about the center, but, according to Baker, there is no attempt to turn it into a transplanted Japan. . .

Many of the students shave their heads and long hair on men is forbidden in all but a few cases. Like the East Indian who appeared at the gates recently and asked to be admitted to training. . .

Rules are flexible. Baker, a vegetarian because of the Buddhist prohibitions against killing, will eat meat if it is served at a friend's home. "Rules are guides," Suzuki Roshi said. "They must give way when they conflict with reality."

The hot mineral baths have no particular place in the center's training although they are frequently used by both students and priests. "We want to keep them open to the public," Baker said. "We don't feel it would be proper to close them to people who have been using them for years in the past." Operation of the baths, however, is not expected to bring in any profits. "We'll be quite happy if we break even," he said.

The center itself is far from self-supporting. The two dollar per day charge and twenty-five dollar registration fee doesn't begin to cover costs, according to Baker. Contributions form the major financial support—from the Zen Center in San Francisco, which owns the property, from students or just from interested people . . . .

It's not an easy life, however. Communication with the outside world is kept to an absolute minimum and conversation during meditation is prohibited. Twice a week someone goes into town for groceries, and the telephone, except in emergencies, is manned only for one hour a day.

Suzuki Roshi says he tries to be harder on his Caucasian students than he was on his students in his temple in Japan. Students involved in sesshin, the final seven days of silent meditation which is broken only for meals, services and a brief work period, probably would agree.

*A quiet place in the Tassajara Stream.*



## TRANSLATION

### GENJO KOAN, REALIZATION OF TRUTH

A portion of the *Shobogenzo*, by Dogen Zenji

When all things are Buddhist phenomena, we have enlightenment and ignorance, studies, life and death, buddhas and people. When all things are without self, we have no ignorance, no enlightenment, no buddhas, no people, no life and no death. The Buddhist way is beyond being and non-being, therefore we have life and death, ignorance and enlightenment, people and buddhas.<sup>1</sup> However, flowers fall with our attachment, and weeds grow with our detachment.<sup>2</sup>

That we move ourselves and understand all things is ignorance. That things advance and understand themselves is enlightenment. It is buddhas who understand ignorance. It is people who are ignorant of enlightenment. Further, there are those who are enlightened above enlightenment, and those who are ignorant of ignorance. When buddhas are truly buddhas, they are not necessarily aware of themselves as buddhas. But they are enlightened ones. They advance in enlightenment.

When we see things and hear things with our whole body and mind, our understanding is not like a mirror with reflections, nor like water under the moon, If we understand one side, the other side is dark.

To study Buddhism is to study ourselves. To study ourselves is to go beyond ourselves. To go beyond ourselves is to be enlightened by all things. To be enlightened by all things is to free our body and mind, and to free the bodies and minds of others. No trace of enlightenment remains, and this no-trace continues endlessly.

When first we seek the truth, we are far away from its environs. When we discover that the truth has already been correctly transmitted to us, we are ourselves at that moment. If we watch the shore from a boat, it seems that the shore is moving. But when we watch the boat directly, we know that it is the boat that moves. If we examine all things with a confused body and mind, we will suppose that our self is permanent. But if we practice closely and return to our present place, it will be clear that nothing at all is permanent.

Firewood turns into ash, and it does not turn into firewood again. But do not suppose that the ash is after and the firewood before. We must understand that firewood is at the stage of firewood, and there we find its before and after. And yet with this past and future, its present is independent of them.<sup>3</sup> Ash is at the stage of ash, and there we find its before and after. Just as firewood does not become firewood again after it is ash, so man does not return to life after his death.<sup>4</sup>

Now it is specifically taught in Buddhism that life does not become death. For this reason, life is called "no-life." It is specifically taught in Buddhism that death does not become life. Therefore, death is called "no-death."

- 
1. When we deepen our practice of Buddhism, we value differences with their background of sameness.
  2. Enlightenment is lost with attachment to it, and ignorance will grow when we hate it.
  3. The present is our entire experience, and it is inclusive of our past and future.
  4. Life is inclusive of all—it is not the antonym of death.

Life is a period of itself; death is a period of itself. They are like winter and spring. We do not call winter the future spring, nor spring the future summer.

We gain enlightenment like the moon reflecting in the water. The moon does not get wet, nor is the water broken.<sup>5</sup> Although its light is wide and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide. The whole moon and the whole sky are reflected in a drop of dew in the grass.

Enlightenment does not destroy the man, just as the moon does not break the water. Man does not hinder enlightenment, just as a drop of dew does not hinder the moon in the sky. The depth of the drop is the height of the moon. The period of the reflection, long or short, will prove the vastness of the dewdrop, and the vastness of the moonlit sky.<sup>6</sup>

When the truth does not fill our body and mind, we think that we have enough. When the truth fills our body and mind, we know that something is missing. For example, when we view the world from a boat on the ocean, it looks circular and nothing else. But the ocean is neither round nor square, and its features are infinite in variety. It is like a palace. It is like a jewel. It seems circular as far as our eyes can reach at the time. All things are so. Though there are many features in the dusty life and the pure life, we only understand what our study can reach. And in our study of all things we must appreciate that although they may look round or square, the other features of oceans or mountains are infinite in variety, and universes lie in all quarters. It is so not only around ourselves, but also directly here—even in a drop of water.

When a fish swims in the ocean, there is no end to the water, no matter how far it swims. When a bird flies in the sky, there is no end to the air, no matter how far it flies.<sup>7</sup> However, the fish and bird do not leave their elements. When the use is large, it is used largely. When the use is small, it is used in a small way.<sup>8</sup> Though it flies everywhere, if the bird leaves the air, it will die at once. Water makes life and air makes life. The bird makes life and the fish makes life. Life makes the bird and life makes the fish. There are further analogies possible to illustrate, in this way, practice, enlightenment, mortality and eternity.

Now if a bird or a fish tries to reach the end of its element before moving in it, this bird or this fish will not find its way or its place.<sup>9</sup> When we find our place at this moment, then practice follows and this is the realization of truth. For the place and the way are neither large nor small, neither subject nor object. They have not existed from the beginning, and they are not in process of realization.<sup>10</sup>

Thus in our practice of Buddhism, when we gain one truth, we master that one truth; and if we encounter one activity, we complete that activity. Here is the place,

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5. (The same analogy of reflection as in paragraph 3, with reference to how enlightenment occurs, rather than to enlightenment itself.)

6. "Even a moment of zazen by a beginner enlightens the whole world." *Bendowa, Shobogenzo.*

7. Man practices in the truth and there is no end to it.

8. The more we practice, the more we deepen our understanding.

9. It is essential to practice Buddhism from moment to moment, rather than to be a master.

10. The truth is not fixed—it is just realized in present-time practice.

and here leads the way. Therefore, understanding is not easy, because it is simultaneous with the complete attainment of the Buddha's teaching. Do not suppose what we realize is knowledge in terms of concepts. Though we have already attained supreme enlightenment, we may not necessarily see it. Some may, and some may not.<sup>11</sup>

Priest Hotetsu of Mt. Mayoku was fanning himself. A monk approached and said, "Sir, the nature of wind is permanent and there is no place it does not reach. Why, then, must you fan yourself?"<sup>12</sup>

"Although you understand that the nature of the wind is permanent," the master replied, "you do not understand the meaning of its reaching everywhere."

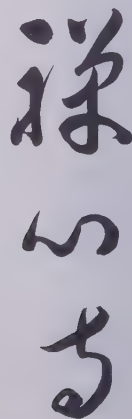
"What is the meaning?" asked the monk. The master just fanned himself. The monk bowed with deep respect.

This is an experience of proving Buddhism and its correct transmission. Those who say we should not use a fan because there is a wind know neither permanency nor the nature of wind. The nature of wind is permanent—the wind of Buddhism actualized the gold of the earth, and ripened the cheese of the Long River.<sup>13</sup>

*Written in mid-autumn of the first year of the Tempuku Era (1233 A.D.) and given to my lay student Yo-koshu of Kyushu.*

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11. "The truth is possessed by every man but it is not realized when it is not practiced, and it is not gained when it is not proved."
  12. If Buddha-nature is permanent, and everyone has it, why must we practice?
  13. (A quotation from the Bandavyuha Sutra.)
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Translated by Kazuaki Tanahashi with Robert Aitken, Chairman of the Honolulu Diamond Sangha, and reprinted with kind permission from the *Diamond Sangha*.

The calligraphy consists of three vertical columns of characters. The top column contains the character '禪' (Zen), the middle column contains '心' (Heart), and the bottom column contains '寺' (Temple). Together, they read '禪心寺' (Zen Mind-Heart Temple).

*This calligraphy by Suzuki Roshi is the Japanese name he chose for Tassajara—Zenshinji meaning Zen Mind-Heart Temple.*

## LECTURES

### BEGINNER'S MIND

*Suzuki Roshi lectures and meditates with the Los Altos branch of Zen Center every Thursday morning and evening. The group meets at the beautiful Haiku Zendo which was built in the two car garage of Marion Derby. She collected his Thursday lectures on tape and tentatively entitles them Beginner's Mind because Suzuki Roshi started by giving them as short lectures for beginners. Marion and Peter Schneider are editing the lectures for publication as a small book which we hope will be ready for the publisher the first of the year. The following are excerpts from those lectures.*

It is said that practicing Zen is difficult. There is a misunderstanding as to why. The most difficult thing—much more so than sitting in the cross-legged position, or even than attaining enlightenment—is to keep your beginner's mind always, that is, to resume our original or inmost mind. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind there are few. Even if you have read much Zen literature, you must read each sentence of it with a fresh mind. Do not think that it is necessary to have a deep understanding of Zen. You should not say, "I know what Zen is," or "I have attained enlightenment." Always be a beginner. Be very, very careful about this point. This is the secret of Zen practice.

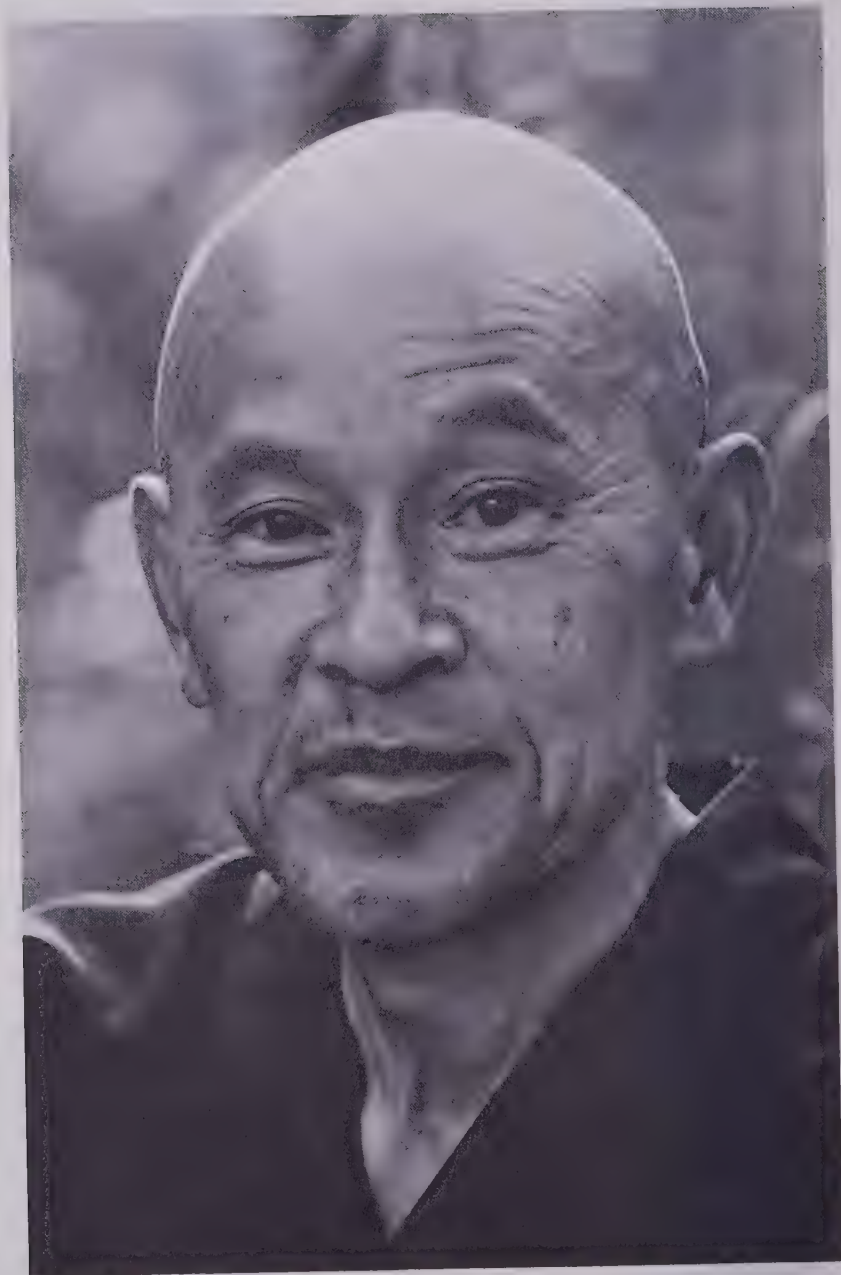
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Instead of gathering knowledge or unfamiliar information you should accept them as if you were hearing something which you already know. This is called emptiness, or knowing everything. Sometimes lightning will flash in a dark sky. It is very beautiful but when it passes there is nothing left but the dark sky. When we have emptiness we are always prepared for watching the flashing when it comes, and then forgetting all about it.

Rozan in China is famous for its misty scenery. A Chinese poem says, "Rozan is famous for its hazy rainy days. Seko (the great river) is famous for its tide, coming and going. That's all." Yes, that's all, but it is splendid. This is how we appreciate things.

"Rozan is famous for its misty scenery" does not mean we should appreciate the mountains by recollecting some scenery we have seen before. Do not say, "It is not so wonderful. I have seen sights like that before," or "I can paint better than that. Rozan is nothing." This is not our way. We appreciate everything with new feeling.

If you accept various pieces of information only as if you were collecting something familiar to you, then you yourself are learning nothing even though the collection may be very good. We should not try to surprise people with our wonderful treasures. Nor should we be interested in something special. If you want to appreciate something fully, you should forget yourself and accept it like you may sometimes accept the lightning in the utter darkness of the sky. So it is possible to accept unfamiliar information as long as we can exist in the utter darkness.



*Abbot Suzuki Roshi*



Tozan Zenji said, "Even though it is midnight, dawn is here; even though dawn comes, it is nighttime." This is the kind of understanding transmitted from Buddha to the patriarchs, from the patriarchs to Dogen, and from Dogen to us. We call nighttime daytime; daytime nighttime. They are not different. The same thing is sometimes called nighttime, sometimes called daytime. Nighttime and daytime are one thing.

Zazen practice and everyday activity are one thing. We call zazen everyday life; everyday life zazen. But usually we think, "Now zazen is over, and we can go about our everyday activity." This is not the right understanding. They are the same thing. In activity there should be calmness, and in calmness there should be activity. We have nowhere to escape.

Each existence depends on something else. And, strictly speaking, there is no particular existence. There are just many names for one existence. Sometimes people put the stress on oneness. This is not enough. We do not emphasize any point particularly. Oneness is valuable, and variety is also. Sometimes people ignore the variety and emphasize the one absolute existence, but this is one-sided understanding. There is no gap between variety and oneness. Oneness should be appreciated in each existence. That is why we emphasize everyday life rather than some particular state of mind. We find the reality in each moment, and in each phenomenon. This is a very important point.

Dogen Zenji said, "Although everything has Buddha Nature we love flowers, which do not last long, and we do not care for weeds, which grow quickly." That we do not care for weeds and are attached to beauty, is also Buddha's activity. If you know that, you may be attached to something. Don't criticize yourself for being unfair to your surroundings. However, there is a very subtle difference between the usual way of accepting things and our way of accepting things. They look exactly the same, but there is a subtle difference. For us there is no gap between nighttime and daytime and between you and me. This means oneness, but we do not emphasize even oneness. If it is one, there is no need to emphasize one.

Dogen said, "To study Buddhism is to study yourself." That you learn something does not mean that you acquire something you did not know before. There is no gap between "I" before we know something and "I" after we know something. There is no gap between the ignorant and the wise. An ignorant person is a wise person; a wise person is an ignorant person. Sometimes I am ignorant, and sometimes I am wise. How can we be wise if we are ignorant? Because there is no difference between the ignorant man and the wise man, none at all. This is the understanding transmitted from Buddha to us. It is so, but if I say this people may think that I am emphasizing oneness. This is not so. We do not emphasize anything. We want to know things just as they are. If we do, there is nowhere to point at; there is no way to grasp anything; we cannot pick up anything; we cannot put emphasis on any point. Because we point out something there are problems. But actually it is not possible to point out some particular thing. But still, Dogen said, "A flower falls even though we love (are attached to) it; a weed which we do not care for (are detached from) still comes up."

In this way our life should be understood. Because we put emphasis on some particular point, we always have trouble. We should accept things just as they are. This kind of experience is something beyond our thinking. In the thinking realm there is a difference between oneness and variety, but in actual experience, variety and unity (oneness) are the same.

Our practice is somewhat different from usual religious practices in that we do not worship any special object. Joshu said, "Clay Buddha cannot cross water; bronze Buddha cannot get through furnace; wooden Buddha cannot get through fire." He meant that whatever particular object you have, if your practice is directed towards it, that practice will not work. As long as you have a particular goal in your practice, your practice will not help you completely. It may help as long as you are directed towards that goal, but when you resume your everyday life, it will not work.

The way to practice without having any goal is to limit your activity, to be concentrated on what you are doing at the moment and on nothing else. When you are wandering about you have no chance to express yourself. But limit your activity to what you can do just now, and you can express fully the universal nature, the universal truth. This is our way. Instead of having some object of worship we just concentrate on zazen practice itself, or on the everyday activity we are doing each moment we are doing it. So when we practice zazen we limit your activity to only essentials. When you bow you should just bow; when you sit just sit; when you eat just eat. Then you are Buddha. We call it "one-act samadhi," or in Japanese, "ishigyo-sanmai." Sanmai, or samadhi, is concentration; ishigyo is one practice.

Joshu's statement also means that one kind of Buddha will not serve your purpose completely. You will have to throw it away sometime, or ignore it. But if you understand the secret of our practice, wherever you go you will be "boss" and so you cannot neglect Buddha because you are then Buddha yourself and Buddha will help you completely.

I think some of you who practice zazen here may believe in some other religion, but I don't mind. Our practice has nothing to do with particular religious beliefs. If you know why we practice the things we do, even though we practice in some particular way, you will not be bound by that practice. So there is no need for you to hesitate to practice our way, because it has nothing to do with Christianity or Shintoism or Hinduism. Our practice is for everyone. Usually when a person believes in some religion, his thought and attitude become, more and more, a sharp angle pointing away from himself. In our way the point is towards, not away from yourself. So there is no need to worry about the differences between Buddhism and other religions.

One of my friends said that he didn't like to attend Buddhist ceremonies because he believed in Shintoism and whenever he attended Buddhist ceremonies almost all the priests treated him as if he were a Buddhist. So he had to bow exactly as they did. He said to me, "It is not fair for the Buddhists to force their way on me." I understand what he meant, but it had nothing to do with me. Even though you don't bow it is all right. But if you do practice with us, if you know why we practice in a particular way, you will not be bound by that practice.

I used to say that you must be very patient if you want to understand Buddhism, but I have been looking for a better word. I think it is better to say you must have constancy. You must force yourself to be patient, but in constancy there is no particular effort involved, only the constant ability to accept things. For people who have no idea of emptiness, this ability may appear to be the same as having patience. But people who know, if only intuitively, the state of emptiness, will be able in everything they do, even though it is very difficult, to dissolve their problems by constancy.

This is what we mean by “nin” in Japanese. It is our way of continuous practice. Even after we have attained enlightenment, it is necessary for us to have another enlightenment, if possible, moment after moment. That is being enlightened before you attain enlightenment, and after you attain enlightenment.

## LECTURES BY KATAGIRI SENSEI

### *Recorded in Los Altos*

In Zen Buddhism training is the same as enlightenment; in other words, training itself is enlightenment. Training does not exist apart from enlightenment. This is the main point of Zen Buddhism. Not only our practice, but whenever you do something, each action, each conduct is itself, without discrimination between amateurism and skillfulness. When you want to cross a river from this shore to the other shore, you will probably walk step by step. One step is not merely one step. One step should possess the goal of the other shore. That is why we can make our effort to walk step by step. So one step should be . . . the quality of one step should be the same quality of the other shore. Our conduct should be so . . . each of our actions should be so. I have often taken a spinning top for an example. When the top is spinning it is very difficult to say whether it is spinning or not . . . spinning or at rest. When a top is spinning exactly, the top itself possesses the function of moving and of resting. So it possesses two sides to its function. So when we see the top in the fullness of its function, we call this full-function. When the top possesses full-function, the top itself is the top, the complete top. When the top is stopped, we cannot say, this is top. But you can say, we call it a top, even when it is stopped. But here we already have the idea, the anticipation that the top spins. The true meaning of top is its full-function. So it has both sides—spinning and being at rest, not spinning and yet ready to spin. The same applies to our conduct, to our effort. When we do something, and make our effort in order to carry it out, even as a beginner, we should possess full-function in itself. That is why we can make an effort to do something. One step is not merely one step; one step is the goal. So our training is not merely our training. Our training moment after moment is enlightenment. This is very important for students of Zen Buddhism.

It is often pointed out that everybody possesses Buddha Nature within himself, and that zazen itself is identical with the expression of Buddha Nature. This is called kike onza in Japanese, which means to return to one's original home and to sit with massive composure. Kike means to return to one's home; onza means to sit with massive composure. This doesn't mean we should try to regain something that we have lost. Our Original Home already exists by nature.

Because he ate something prohibited man lost paradise and fell down to hell. So in this world man has to make every effort to regain paradise. This is the usual understanding of returning to one's original home. But kike onza does not have this meaning. We have Buddha Nature in ourselves, so to practice zazen is to sit in our Original Home with massive composure.

From this point we cannot practice zazen as an ordinary person opposite to Buddha. Buddha himself practices zazen, so here there can be no dualism for discrimination. If we try to make a religious effort as an ordinary person, opposite to Buddha, it will be impossible to gain Buddha Nature. We would have to stay an ordinary person forever. So it is important for students of Buddhism to settle down in the world that we already possess, the Buddha Nature in ourselves. Our every practice, or religious effort should start from this point. This is very important. If the idea of dualism creating discrimination is the first consideration in our lives, the self must be killed somehow or other, even on the cross, or even by shooting.

The other day I saw a very strange article in a newspaper. One of the legislators in Texas will try to bring a bill before the general assembly in Texas as follows: If a married man and woman misconduct themselves with another man and woman they can have the right to kill them by shooting. This is very strange. This way of thinking is based on the dualism which creates discrimination, which has become the first consideration in our lives. From this point of view we must try to kill the ego by shooting, or some other way. But in Buddhism there is no self, or no ego in this world to kill.

From this point of view everything should be identical with the self. For example, you think you will go to heaven and you will be able to gain everything that you want. At that time, if you gain everything that you want in paradise even the desire to gain is useless; even the existence of heaven is useless. So, if there is no self, or no ego to kill, the ego is useless for our actual life. So from this point, everything is the self; everything is the teacher for the self. So kike onza means to sit in our own Original Home with massive composure. It doesn't mean to regain paradise, or the heaven that we lost before. There is no idea or judgment about whether we lost it or not. From the beginning we carry paradise with both hands in our daily life. So it is not necessary to seek Buddha Nature or ordinary person. When you go to hell carrying paradise in both hands, you will find the true meaning of paradise, or Buddha Nature, or truth. So when you sit in meditation it is not necessary to know where Buddha Nature is, or where truth is. You should exert yourself in right understanding to sit in meditation, that's all.



## LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

SESSHIN LECTURE By Shunryu Suzuki, Roshi

*During the seven-day sesshin that ended Tassajara's first two-month training period, Suzuki Roshi gave lectures almost every mid-day and evening on the Prajna Paramita Sutra, which focuses on the idea that 'Form is emptiness; emptiness is form. All things which are form are emptiness; all things which are emptiness are form.' This lecture and the discussion which followed it between the Roshi and the students took place on Thursday, August 24th.*

We have come pretty far from our starting point that form is emptiness and emptiness is form, form is form, and emptiness is emptiness. It is necessary now to reflect on what we have been studying.

In dokusan (sanzen or personal training) one student expressed her feelings about seeing an animal devouring another animal. She became very angry with the animal which was devouring the weaker one. If you did not see this, or do not see that side of things, it does not matter. It is someone else's problem. But once you do see it,



*Fran Keller, who ordinarily sits beautifully in full lotus, injured her back and chose to sit in a chair.*

it is your problem, not just the animal's problem, or just a problem of the animal world. As I listened to her I thought that there is her world as well as the animal's world, and that in each world there is a Buddha. For us there is Shakyamuni Buddha; for animals I don't know, but actually they practice so hard in their own way.

You may say it would be a great blessing if the weak animal could be killed at once and eaten quickly, rather than having to remain for a long time in pain and suffering. But suppose that the small animal is a Bodhisattva who is practicing his own way. What does he say? "Don't watch me. I am very serious. I am practicing my way with my whole mind and body. Go away. Don't watch me. This is my world. I have a teacher called So-and-so Buddha."

That will be what he will say, I think. So, you know, when you understand how to practice your way with your whole body and mind, you will understand various practices and many Buddhas. Not only the 77,000 Buddhas under which Shakyamuni studied according to some scriptures, but innumerable Buddhas will be in your world. That is very true. Shakyamuni Buddha practiced through many lives as a Bodhisattva. That is not just a story. It is what we are seeing right now in our world.

Someone actually saw it and told me about it—seeing a stronger animal eating a weaker. Only when we understand our own way will each animal world, each world, be seen all at once, including our own world with Shakyamuni Buddha. This understanding is that form is emptiness and emptiness is form. The animal is the form. You may say, "Form—that is only an animal, only a cat." But when you understand what a cat is through and through, that is the emptiness from which various teachings come and from which our practice follows.

So the teaching that form is emptiness and emptiness is form is not just a verbal teaching of Buddha. It is more than that. If you are thinking of the time before the historical Buddha, born about 2500 years ago, you may say the teaching is something told by Buddha. But after Buddha attained enlightenment, practice and enlightenment were one within him. Where there is practice there is enlightenment.

This Dharma of Prajna Paramita is the mother of Shakyamuni Buddha, and not only Shakyamuni but many Buddhas and worlds come out from this teaching. If the various forms are emptiness, from emptiness various teachings will appear; emptiness is the mother of everything, so the teaching of Buddha comes out of emptiness. You could say that emptiness is first and Buddha is second.\*

The usual understanding of the teaching as something told by Buddha is not direct enough. When you understand that Shakyamuni Buddha is emptiness, then you will find that innumerable worlds come out from emptiness, and that emptiness actually exists in each world or each moment, that each world and each moment exists in emptiness. When you practice zazen, this emptiness is there, and when you reach this understanding, you will find out the meaning of the teaching and you will practice in quite a different way.

\*Editor's note: It might be clarifying to explain that practice is so thoroughly based on enlightenment, is the life of enlightenment, that practice and enlightenment are one; and to explain that the understanding and acceptance of practice depends so completely on enlightenment, is the practice of enlightenment, that practice and enlightenment are one. But these mechanical kinds of explanation deny the deep truth that all beings are enlightened already, that all beings in leading their lives are practicing enlightenment, that all beings are intrinsically Buddha Nature, that emptiness is the actuality of all things, that all things are only emptiness. Awareness of these truths should be the substance, the light of one's everyday practice, even though that everyday practice seems to be without enlightenment, or at best only leading to enlightenment. Without these truths your practice will not be deep enough to fully realize enlightenment beyond any mental, emotional or physical attainment, or to understand all beings practicing in their worlds moment after moment. Enlightenment is to be free in each moment. If this moment is bound by some possible enlightenment in the future, how can you be free now?

*He was found in a tree  
when we first came to Tassajara  
and we have left him there.*



Practice is the mother of all Buddhas; your practice is the mother of all beings and all worlds and all the people who live in those worlds. That is why we say if one attains enlightenment he understands that all sentient beings are enlightened. Do you understand? I'm not involved in some mystical thought. These are actual facts. In your practice, enlightenment and practice should be one, not two. It is not after you practice our way that you attain enlightenment. That is a wrong understanding.

Have you seen the picture by the famous Zen master Sengai? He shows a frog looking just like he was sitting in zazen, as we are sitting in this lecture. How can a frog attain enlightenment? It is very interesting the more you think about it. A frog is faced by many things.

If zazen makes you a Buddha, the frog may say, "I am practicing zazen. Why is it impossible for me to attain enlightenment? I have been practicing since I was born, and even before I was born; through many former years and incarnations I have been practicing." If just sitting is so important, we were practicing in our mother's womb for nine months in almost perfect form. So we must have been embryo Buddhas. And actually it is so; you may understand it in this way—you are an embryo Buddha.

Another interpretation could be that zazen is just a cross-legged way of killing time. You may feel your zazen is not the same as mine, will not work like my zazen. But, you know, my understanding is yes, you have attained it, you have attained enlightenment. You are practicing so hard. And you will practice your way in various places. Now you are sitting on a stone like a frog, but suddenly you will have a big, big practice when a snake comes to you. You will be swallowed by the snake but you won't know it. To let the snake devour you, that is your practice. And you will have your teacher in your world. I understand it in that way.

You may say, "When I am lazy, ignoring our practice which I should not do, then I am ashamed of myself. Even a frog studies his way very hard." So we human beings are mostly ashamed of ourselves, always seeking some good experience like enlightenment, or avoiding some bad experience. This is not real practice, not the Bodhi-sattva's way.

Even Shakyamuni Buddha cannot fool us about our real practice, because our practice is independent. We live in our own kingdom. And continuing this kind of practice moment after moment, we will someday meet with Shakyamuni Buddha who attained perfect enlightenment. Even if we do not meet him we should be grateful to him for directing our true study here at Zen Mountain Center. As long as we know who is our real mother there is nothing to be afraid of, nothing to worry about. This is our belief in emptiness. Did you understand?

During this practice period and sesshin I think you have been making a very good effort and that what you have attained is great. There is no wondering about this point. You came here, so far from your home, and you are right now listening to something quite different from anything you have heard before. I have been encouraged by your sincere effort. My understanding of our Buddha's way has been improved a lot by the feeling you have expressed for me, whether you are aware of it or not.



When I practice with you my understanding of our way becomes deeper and deeper, more natural and active than ever. This is possible because we are practicing in this country, where people have few preconceived ideas about Buddhism. So your response to what you see and hear is quite genuine, and I can see Buddha's Way in your reactions to the teaching, in your relations to what you see and hear at Tassajara. This is my great privilege.



*Student Bob Schuman  
eating from his  
large oryoki bowl.*

The main point of my lecture this afternoon is that the usual understanding of practice as the guide to enlightenment is limited in our world and is not the true practice handed down to us from Buddha. It is not just a teaching told by someone. Even before Buddha our teaching was true. It is immortal and exists everywhere. So we call it original enlightenment or emptiness.

This comprehension of teaching is wider and deeper than the teaching which is for guiding practice. Of course that guidance is teaching, but the enlightenment that you think you will attain after practice, the meaning of that enlightenment you think you see coming from practice, is quite different from the true understanding of enlightenment and practice. This much must be intellectually understood if you are to practice Buddhism in its true sense.

Our practice is for ourselves, and for others too. Understanding our practice will lead us to understand an animal's practice also. It is not a matter of eggs first or hens first, enlightenment first or practice first. It is a matter of depth and directness of understanding, a directness which goes beyond intellectual, emotional, or physical attainment.

As you are listening to me you may feel you have understood, but when you leave Tassajara you may become confused. So be careful. Do not be involved in a stupid understanding of life. Someone said the kindness here at Zen Mountain Center is quite different from the kindness in the city. I think this is very true. The ways of understanding are quite different. We do not say anything which we do not firmly believe in—sometimes we do not say anything. So you feel as if you have understood because we only say things we believe in and you confuse believing with understanding.

Why may you not have understood? The reason is quite simple: because you look around. Our way is to see something directly and not to look around, that is all! We do not say this is good or bad. If you are interested in what is best, perhaps it is better for you to go to lectures somewhere else. We have no idea of good or bad, no idea of whether you are sleeping or listening to me. I don't mind at all! I am always encouraging myself at the same time I am encouraging you. When I am talking to you, there is nothing in my mind. I don't look around. Here there is the complete world. This is the world, the real world, at the same time every other world can become real. It is not a matter of what kinds of worlds exist somewhere besides this world—like the cat's or the frog's. The point is whether this world is real or not, whether our practice is real or not. When our practice is real practice, this is our world. There is Shakyamuni Buddha who is taking care of us. This is the complete world moment after moment.

We must have a complete world; that is form. Because it is complete it is empty. But it actually exists right here and now. That is form. Do you understand?

Until we come to this understanding, how much practice is necessary? How many practices? And since this is not just your practice, the practice of how many sentient beings is necessary? When we come to this understanding, each sentient being is striving with full mind and body for the Bodhisattva's way, and even a frog is studying hard in his world. How many people there are and how hard they strive for this teaching of emptiness from which all Buddhas come!

In Japan they say the willow is not green, and in this sense of "not" we are not Buddha when we practice our way with our mind and body fully, like a frog does. When we are not ashamed of our way, or our practice in front of a frog, then we can understand the frog and what he faces, and we can even eat him. The point is whether your practice is done with *your whole body and mind*. That is the key point. *Don't look around!* Fortunately we have one more day in this sesshin; don't be ashamed of your practice or a frog will laugh at you. What are you doing?

Thank you very much.

#### DISCUSSION BETWEEN SUZUKI ROSHI AND STUDENTS

Student A: You always say that form is emptiness and emptiness is form. I think I have a feeling of understanding form being emptiness, but I feel lost when emptiness is form. I think once in your lectures on the Heart Sutra (Prajna Paramita Sutra) you gave a very neat explanation of it that helped.

Roshi: Form is emptiness is understandable . . . ?

Student A: But not the other way around.

Roshi: But emptiness is form, how about that? You are always watching form, so when we talk about it you understand. But emptiness is form may be a little difficult to understand. It looks like whatever you do, that is emptiness. We say, whatever you do, do it. But that "do" is not "do" in the usual sense. Here practice is involved.

Student A: Do you mean that all emptiness assumes form? Is that part of the idea?

Roshi: I am feeling out what you mean.

Student A: I want to know: if there is an unconditioned, if everything is Buddha Nature and there is this absolute existing sort of center of everything, then is there any center in something that takes on form?

Another Student: I think she partly means, does any emptiness remain emptiness and not become form?

Roshi: Oh no. Emptiness is always taking form. Do you understand? There is no emptiness which has no form.

Student A: And no form without emptiness. Oh that is beautiful!

Student B: I read about a koan: 'Birds fly in the ocean, fish swim in the sky.' Does this have to do with the nature of form? They said in the book that if you don't understand this in this life you will understand it in the next. This koan or whatever it is about fish flying in the air and birds swimming in the sea . . . I can never tell where I am.

*Students gathering  
and screening mortar  
gravel for the stone  
walls of the  
new kitchen*



Roshi: People think fish swim in the ocean and birds fly in the sky. That is the usual understanding. But when I say the opposite you may think I am crazy. But really, 'am I crazy or not?' is the point. When Dogen Zenji saw Eisai Zenji, he asked him what is Buddha Nature; why, when we have Buddha Nature, is it necessary to practice? Eisai Zenji answered, "All the Buddhas in the three worlds do not know what Buddha Nature is, but the fox and badger know what is Buddha Nature." Here, "know" means at the same time "does not know." When you know completely you do not know—maybe in the sense that you do not know your eyes, do not see your eyes. But it does not mean that you have no eyes. The same story is that the bridge flows but the water remains still, the same as fish fly.

Student B: I don't understand it.

Roshi: You don't understand . . . ?

Student B: I understand what you say about eyes.

Roshi: Because you have eyes. You are too familiar with your eyes, that is why you do not see. Sometimes the usual understanding is too familiar to you and so it does not make any sense. But when you study something beyond your understanding it makes sense to you. So when you are here you should extend your practice to where your usual understanding cannot reach. This kind of practice is necessary. How is this possible? by basing your practice on the teaching that form is emptiness and emptiness is form. This kind of shift should be possible in our practice.

I told you about the animal devouring the tiny bird. That seems unacceptable. But when your practice reaches beyond your familiar understanding, you can understand the situation of the bird and what you would do if you were in the same situation. Would you escape from it, or ask someone for help? And would someone's help work? What is the way? If your practice reaches this extent, you will understand why birds swim and fish fly.

Student B: Would it help to identify with the animals? Is it part of our practice to put ourselves in their places?

Roshi: No. I don't mean you should identify your understanding of life with the situation of the bird. I don't mean imagination. I mean through the practice you have right now. Do you understand? Extended practice, not identification. Identification takes place in your head or emotions; by practice I mean with your whole mind and body.

Student C: When you said, 'If you practice hard and don't attain Buddhahood in this life, you will attain it in the next,' what did you mean?

Roshi: I am joking. What I meant was, even though you try hard, if your understanding of your practice is not perfect, it doesn't work.

Student C: Well, is there such a thing as a next life, is what I want to know. Or what is meant by that?

Roshi: There is a clear difference between intellectual understanding and understanding through your practice. Through our practice we can fly without an airplane. It covers this much. We can understand about the various worlds in the same way. This is not magic, you know.

Student D: As much as possible in a short time, could you continue the discussion of the ego as you were doing before. Just your discussion which you said would normally take an hour or more— just possibly highlight or point out. Give us an outline, a synopsis.

Roshi: Ego?

Student D: Tell us the difference between the ego in Buddhism, what it means to extinguish that, and what psychiatry talks about as ego strength.

Roshi: Ego. Strictly speaking, ego does not exist. By stressing it you put emphasis on some point, on a stream of successive activity of *yourself*. But it is not just a continuous ego; it is changing moment after moment. Here, here, here. That is why we say the ego does not exist. No such thing as ego, you see. Firewood does not become ash. Here is firewood this moment; here is ash the next. So there is no firewood and no ash. No ego. But still something exists moment after moment. You

can understand the same thing in two ways. One is successive ego; the other is discontinuous ego which changes.

Even the smallest particle of time imaginable exists because it appears. So something which does not disappear actually does not exist. Whatever it is, what appears should disappear. This is true. So ego is something which should disappear and which should appear. Ego has two meanings. Sometimes we say ego exists and to strengthen your ego is to have your own world, to have your own practice. That is to stress your ego. But if you attach to some particular state of mind, that is delusion because it does not actually exist. So the ego exists because it disappears, isn't that true?

When we talk about ego, the concept of time is involved and time is continuous and discontinuous. We say time is continuous; but when I say nine o'clock, that is the idea of discontinuity. So even time is continuous and discontinuous. So is the self; it is continuous and discontinuous, it appears and disappears. And yet it continues in some way. But it changes. And as long as it changes, the same ego does not exist. Did you understand? So to strengthen your ego means to have your own practice, to live in your own world and let everything live in its own world, and let everything have its own position. That is true mercy. To keep a dog in your house is not always to love the dog. Do you see?

Student E: In my zazen many illusions come to mind which interfere with my concentration on sitting, on just sitting, if I become involved in them. Is there . . . what should I do? What does this mean?

Roshi: Many ideas come . . .

Student E: Images like what will happen or what has happened, and I forget about where I am.

Roshi: If you understand that many images that look like they come from outside your practice really exist inside also, that is also a part of your practice. Nothing comes from outside. Whatever you hear or see, that is within yourself, that is your own world. Why are you disturbed by that? If you have pain in your legs do you cut them off and then practice zazen? No, you don't. This is the same thing, you know. Your practice is not strong enough, or dualistic, or limited. How can you understand that the fish flies? Your practice should be extended that much.

Student E: Well, what I meant was that it seems I am so involved in them, it doesn't seem like I was practicing.

Roshi: Yes, I understand how you feel and what you mean. We just say, let them come in, let them go out, without being disturbed by them. Don't entertain them.

Student E: What does it mean that everything comes from inside yourself? I admit that sometimes in concentrating, it is almost as if I give up my concentration and deliberately start trying to daydream. And this really makes me mad. I don't know if there is anything I can do about it or if I'll be able someday to concentrate instead of conjuring up ways not to. It's almost as if my ego says, OK, you've concentrated long enough, now it's my turn.

Roshi: Technically, concentration is important in zazen. Without concentration there is no zazen. But that is not the only important thing. Big Mind is necessary.

Student E: I understand that but don't see how it relates. It seems like these thoughts that come in keep me from Big Mind, you know, as if a wall has been set up between me and everything else.

Roshi: Always realize this point: your practice, your world is your own practice. Some others will practice in some other way; that is practice also. When we devote ourselves completely with mind and body, this is the important force, the most important point. When you concentrate on your practice, the practice itself is the most important point. Concentration is a part of practice but not all of it. So if you think that just to be concentrated on something is Zen, that is not true understanding. You have to accept your practice and at the same time the practice of others. Then you will not be so attached to your own practice. Here you will have true freedom from your practice, and will accept many worlds in the same way and develop your practice to the innumerable worlds until you can sit in your own position in your own way with your whole mind and body. There is your true zazen. When we are discussing zazen, we are discussing our zazen only, without accepting the frog's zazen, or tile-polishing zazen, or jewel maker's zazen.

Student F: I have a question I think a lot of people have worried about. They feel they have gained something here at Tassajara and they don't want to see it vanish when they go back to the city. In the city there are so many questions we are involved in that we don't have to handle here, and there doesn't seem to be any right or wrong answer to them, no right or wrong thing to do.

Roshi: That is very true. The city is too mixed up and complicated and is difficult to live in. You can't find your own home even in the city. But this does not mean there is no life in the city. If you understand our way you can establish your life in the city too. The river is running but the bridge will stay.

Student F: What can . . . what is the right thing to do then? I mean, there doesn't seem to be any way to live, any right or wrong answer. What is the best way to behave? . . . to live?

Roshi: The only way (laughing) . . . you need a lot of training, back and forth. That is, you know, rather our way.

Student F: Pardon? Will you say that again?

Roshi: You should practice our way. Back and forth. Our way is pretty complicated as you know. Someone pointed out about the oryoki. But the city is more complicated and busy, and in some sense it is more formal. There is not much freedom. It looks like there is freedom there, but not actually. Anyway, it is mixed up, but you have to accept it, realize it. That is what the city is like. But try not to understand it completely. It is impossible! Just enjoy it!

Student G: The concept of saving others before saving yourself. What does it mean to save others?

Roshi: Saving others does not mean just alms-giving or kind words. To give strength or to make someone's life strong or, you may say, to make his ego stronger is actually to save him.

Student G: And when you say save others before you save yourself, do you mean in the process of or by saving yourself?

Roshi: Save others, we say these words many times. Before or after? As long as you use words, one of the two should be first. The other should be next. This is actually two ways of explaining things, and we think one is first and one after. But actually it is the same thing. Your understanding should reach this point.

Student H: What is meant by effortless effort?

Roshi: When you are making an effort by following something, putting something as an example, or according to rules, that is effort, just effort. Effortless effort comes from your true understanding which comes before the teaching or rules. Do you understand? So whatever you do, that is your world, your practice, and when your practice becomes your practice, that is effortless effort.

Whatever effort you make, that is your effort. When the effort is yours, when the world is yours, there is no restriction. It goes as you want to go; because you want to do it you do it. That is effortless effort.

Student I: Here we are practicing limiting our activity, and I was wondering if you thought it would be good, when we get back to our regular life, say in the city, if we should try to practice any limitation on our activity.

Roshi: That is very good but very difficult to do, you know. It is almost impossible, I think. You will need an excellent teacher. I cannot be that, cannot be responsible for that. Someday you can do it, but as I said, city life is complicated and the bigger the city the more complicated it is. If there are one hundred people, there are one hundred ways of city life. It is very difficult to figure out what is going on in the city. If you live in Tokyo or New York, for instance, you are alone. Only one person is working; no one is working with you actually. So fundamental practice should be done in this kind of place (Tassajara). Then you can extend this spirit to city life. That is how I understand it.

Thank you very much for your meaningful discussion.

*Roshi and Philip Wilson working on the garden near Roshi's cabin.*



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