

ZEN CENTER

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Minutes of the Business Meeting of Sept. 7, 1963

Trustees Present: Reverend Suzuki, Grahame Petchey, Richard Baker, Phillip Wilson, Betty Warren, Al Levinson, Ernie Davin, Jean Ross.

Members Present: Norman Stiegelmeier, Bill Kwong, Margaret Ikeda, Trudy and Mike Dixon.

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 9:45 A.M.
- 2) The minutes of the past meeting of August 3rd, 1963, were read by Trudy Dixon.
- 3) The president, Grahame Petchey, read aloud a letter sent by the Zen Center to the U.S.A. Government in support of the Vietnamese Buddhists now undergoing persecution.
- 4) Because of the resignation of Jan Hailey from the post of secretary, Trudy Dixon was made acting- secretary for this month by a vote of assembly.
- 5) A discussion followed concerning the proceeds of the money collected for the week's sesshin of August 26th through September 1st.
- 6) The next issue considered was whether or not to charge money for future sesshins, and if so how much. Some people evidently did not come to the last one because they could not afford it, despite assurances from several trustees that anyone who wants to should come even if they could not pay.

Reverend Suzuki felt that everyone should offer at least some money, that is, that there should be some standard minimum charge (of, say, one or two dollars). In addition there should be a bulletin board notice explaining the entire cost of the sesshin and indicating amounts to be paid by those who can afford to do so, in order to help towards covering the sesshin expenses.

The three main alternatives to the problem of sesshin charge

seem to be:

- 1) welcoming all to the sesshin with no mention of any set fee, but requesting contributions of any amount the individual participant would like to give.
- 2) Secondly, welcoming all, but specifying some low minimum fee, such as Reverend Suzuki suggested above, with an added note, explicitly exempting from payment those unable to afford it.
- 3) Thirdly, welcoming all, but specifying the full amount necessary for each person to pay in order adequately to cover sesshin - costs, with an added note to the effect that those unable to afford the full amount should pay what they were able, and that it was not obligatory to pay anything should a person be unable to do so.

A further suggestion was made by Margaret Ikeda that the bulletin board notice should simply direct each participant personally to contact one of the three head officers of Zen Center who would then explain to each the financial situation.

It was agreed that the issue would be further discussed and decided upon at the next meeting.

- 7) Betty Warren agreed to help Dick ^{Baker} Warren with the Wind Bell announcements during the absence of the president, Grahame Petchey.
- 8) Mr. Petchey said that Dr. Kato was going to Japan next summer for three months and has offered to take anyone interested in going along with him and show them around.
- 9) Zen Center is in the new phone book: in the white pages listed under "Zen Center" in the yellow pages under "Sokoji".
- 10) Richard Baker suggested that a much-needed phone in the kitchen be installed for Mrs. Suzuki, and agreed to make further arrangements towards this end.

II) Ernie Davin suggested that perhaps tea ceremony studies could be instituted - say every Friday night. It was felt that this would be a good idea to keep in mind for the future, but that the time was not now ripe, what with the probability of vacating the present building in the near future. Reverend Suzuki said that when he gets an assistant priest here to help him, he will perhaps be able to develop more areas such as the tea ceremony practice and calligraphy.

Reverend Suzuki said that there would be no Sunday services in English on Sept. 15th and 22th. On the former date we all should come at 9 am to participate in a general hall - cleaning initiated by Rev. Suzuki with prime regard to the edification and instruction of a group of young boys connected with the temple, but not as yet active participants. Afterwards there will be a meeting to discuss the problem of the Sokoji Temple Building. We are going to have to move as the city would require extensive repair - work to the present structure which would be very expensive. The new location would be at the corner of Laguna and ~~Sutter~~^{Sutter} and would have 3 floors: 1st: office; 2nd - general hall; 3rd: meditation room.

I2) Betty Warren suggested thank-you notes to be sent to the Katsuyamas, who performed the tea ceremony for us on Saturday, August 31st, during sesshin, and for the Kuwaharas, who sent us crates of vegetables. The acting secretary agreed to write and send them. Betty further suggested that gifts of food rather than money be acceptable for sesshin; the suggestion met with general acclaim, but no formal decision was made at this time.

I3) Jean Ross gave an account of the general Soto Meeting in L. A. last month. She also reported that a second meeting of all in the United States interested in Soto is being planned for the summer of 1964 in Monterey. Also, for the summer of 1965 a chartered plane trip to Japan for a two - week visit is being planned. Jean said that the Soto Zen people in L. A. are interested in forming an organized group like ours; and that the two groups should work closely together. (The planned monastery at Middlebar may be a common meeting ground in the future). She pointed out several of the particular problems facing the L.A. Soto group. They are:

I) Poor location of the temple there

- 2) the long distance many people have to travel
- 3) The lack of organization in the group
- 4) The lack of a separate meditation group hall undisturbed by the needs of the regular church activities; as it is at present, scheduled zazen must often be cancelled.

We should make every effort to help them. Perhaps some could attend their fall sesshin.

I4) Grahame Petchey will leave for Japan Saturday, Sept. 14 at 10 A M Pan American flight, where he will spend three months at Eihei-ji, to return on Dec. 15th.

I5) Jean Ross suggested that it might be a good idea for the Zen Center to take out a membership in the International House in Tokyo. The cost is \$50.00 for a life - time membership, and it would enable any of us to stay there while in Tokyo for ~~only~~ ^{only} \$5.00, a night which is less it seems than many Tokyo hotels. The accommodations are excellent and the atmosphere ~~is~~ culturally most interesting.

I6) The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.