

Announcing the Forthcoming Newspaper:

THE PROPER DHARMA SEAL

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WISDOM OF WONDERFUL CONTEMPLATION

by Bhikshu Heng Kuan

edited by Bhikshu Heng Ch'i

With every breath we exhale, we change the universe. With every breath we inhale, the universe changes us. Many of us believe that we do ourselves no harm when we exhale a foul breath into the atmosphere: few of us remember that it becomes a part of the air that we breathe back in again. Few of us have the self-awareness to discriminate the quality of our exhalations clearly; many of us are already habituated to the pollution we inhale, and rarely recognize it.

Little by little, without our even being aware of it, the breath of life has become poisoned. And now, suddenly, we gasp in surprise to find ourselves poised on the edge of extinction. Many of us rage out at those we believe to have led us to such an Armageddon, as if incapable of taking responsibility even for our own breathing.

Not to speak of our actions, our words, and our thoughts. How much greater their effect on the world around us! And how pervasive is the influence of the world's actions, words, and thoughts on our bodies, beliefs, and minds.

To be responsible citizens of the world today, we must quickly wake up and recognize that the universe is a single whole substance, and we are its parts. To poison a part is to poison the whole. No longer do we have unlimited frontiers and wildernesses; our learning and experience over the ages should have led us far beyond that childish preoccupation with our own personal interests. Our civilization has developed too far for us to continue grabbing what we please and letting the spoils, waste, and pollution fall where they may. What of the rest of humanity? What of our children's children?

As technology advances, have we as individuals grown equally in our psychological maturity, character, and spiritual understanding? That we have found so few solutions to the problems we have created, and continue to poison ourselves and others, indicates that we have not. One of the important qualities of maturity, be it worldly or transcendental, is wisdom--the wisdom to be able to discriminate what is ultimate from what is not ultimate, what is right from what is wrong, what is good from what is evil, what is harmful from what is safe, and what is destructive from what is beneficial. Often we find, to our great pain and sadness, that what may have seemed to us to be good, right, and true, actually was not. Whenever our vision is based on self-interest, greed, and selfishness, and whenever we have to fight for something, we only lose in the long run, even if we win, for the universe has been stained by so much more poison.

Issue 154 of VAJRA BODHI SEA announced the forthcoming publication of the new newspaper THE PROPER DHARMA SEAL. One of the objectives of this periodical is to foster the development in all people of a clear understanding of what is proper and what is improper, what is harmful and what is constructive, for the purpose of assisting humanity to turn back from the brink of disaster. To fulfill this objective, we must clearly discern the past causes of our present circumstances, and likewise the future results of our present actions. We must employ a Contemplative and Investigative Wisdom that is detached, objective, and far reaching, and free from personal self-interest. If there is even the slightest idea of self-benefit, even if it is not for one's own self, but for one's religious ideology, one's group, party, or clique, then the perception of truth will be clouded, and we will only add to the suffering and difficulty that the world faces today.

The Buddha achieved the Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation and Investigation by purifying and transforming his intellectual mind, the thinking mind that ordinary people use every day. This is the mind by which we interpret the sensory data that enter through the five senses, and the mind which dreams throughout the day and night, which schemes, manipulates, and indulges the desires for wealth, fame, sex, food, and sleep. This is the mind in which language and meaning function to create the flowers of civilization, and which ironically is also the mind in which neuroses and insanity appear. In ordinary people, this mind is polluted by uncontrollable thoughts and desires. Thus our words, and deeds as well, are tainted with self-interest and desire for gain.

The Buddha, too, uses this mind, but he has purified it of all defiling thoughts, and transformed it into wisdom. This wisdom functions in a wonderful and miraculous way, clearly perceiving all causes and effects throughout the universe, and clearly seeing the desires, thoughts, capacities, and karma of all living creatures. That is why the Buddha never makes a mistake in cause and effect, never does anything that would harm any living being. Nothing the Buddha does creates poisonous by-products, and so he never pollutes, wastes, or spoils anything. On the contrary, the Buddha employs the Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation and investigation to rescue people from their own delusion and help them out of the trap of karma. He teaches them to cultivate themselves in order to end the fascinations of the intellect which constantly gallops like a wild horse, or jumps about like a monkey.

Taking this second of the Buddha's Four Wisdoms as its light, the Editorial Committee of the Buddha's Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation and Investigation will use the combined wisdom of the entire editorial committee as a "Dharma Selecting Eye" to insure that every principle, every meaning, and every idea in THE PROPER DHARMA SEAL is based on what is proper and factual, what is trustworthy and stable, what is ultimately true and not false, and what will lead to the future benefit of humankind, and not its demise.

This editorial committee will insure that each article actually gets to the root of the topic that it discusses, and reveals the true principles contained therein. This committee will insure that articles are not motivated by self-interest or greed, and that the articles are not merely vain intellectual exercises. The committee will be especially watchful so that no articles confuse,

manipulate, cheat, or mislead the readers, so that they can develop their own "Dharma Selecting Eyes."

The Staff of the Editorial Committee of the Buddha's Wisdom of Wonderful Contemplation and Investigation includes:

EDITOR.....Bhikshu Heng Kuan

ASSISTANT EDITORS.....Bhikshu Heng Ch'i
Upasaka Ronald B. Epstein, Ph.D.

EDITORIAL STAFF.....Bhikshu Heng Lai
Bhikshu Heng Shun
Bhikshu Heng Tso
Bhikshu Heng Gung
Bhikshu Heng Wu
Bhikshu Heng Jau
Bhikshu Heng Chang
Bhikshu Kuo Erh
Shramanera Kuo Hye
Upasaka William Dickerson
Upasaka Wang Jy-An