

c/- Snyder (to Sept. 2)
18442 MacNab Cypress Rd.
Nevada City CA 95858 USA
August 17, 1984

Shumano
Similar letter sent
Dear Sōchu Rōshi

I send you midsummer greetings, hoping that you are in the best of health. I imagine Ryūtakuji with the semi seasoning the heat and the zazen. Anne and I are well--I am here in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains leading a month-long training period with two five-day sesshins. I return to Honolulu September 8.

I have written to Yamada Rōshi about public statements that Eido Rōshi is making about Sōen Rōshi, and sent him copies of those statements. He suggests that I write to you about this matter. I have replied to him, asking him to send you the copies of Four Seasons (Eido Rōshi's newsletter) and the letter of appeal for funds to pay for Sōen Rōshi's tombstone, in which the statements appear.

In brief, these statements are to the effect that in his last years Sōen Rōshi was an alcoholic and not in his right mind; also that Sōen Rōshi requested on his last visit to the United States that a portion of his ashes rest at Daibosatsu, and that Sōen Rōshi's Dharma heirs approved this plan at the time of the funeral.

There is a pervasive rumour that Sōen Rōshi withdrew Eido Rōshi's Inka Shōmei shortly before he died, but I have not been able to verify this. If this rumour is correct, then it would be clear why Eido Rōshi is making these statements, for it would show that Sōen Rōshi's action in withdrawing the Inka could be disregarded. The statements also would be designed to show that Sōen Rōshi supported Eido Rōshi to the extent that he wanted his ashes to rest at Daibosatsu, and also to show that he has the support of the other Dharma heirs.

As you know, Zen Buddhism has fallen into disrepute in the United States, with many scandals at various centers, beginning at the New York Zen Studies Society. Many people have been deeply affected, some of them even suffering mental collapse. People as far away as Europe and Australia are troubled, and everywhere, students have left the practice.

It is not my intention to campaign against Eido Rōshi. Long ago, I dismissed from my mind his disgraceful behavior in Honolulu in connection with his work at Koko An. However, as a Zen leader, it is my responsibility to know the facts in such an important matter as withdrawal of an Inka Shōmei, so that I will be better able to deal with the upsets.

I would be very grateful if you could convey to me your understanding of the facts in this case. I regret very much the necessity to trouble you about it. I have also written to our old friend and your Dharma brother, Kyūdo Rōshi to see if he has information.

I will handle all information discretely, and will not use your name if you prefer. Ordinarily, we should observe

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