

**The Rinzai Zen Sangha** <zensho.martin.hara@gmail.com>

Reply-To: The Rinzai Zen Sangha <zensho.martin.hara@gmail.com>

To: The Sangha



*“He who knows  
does not speak  
He who speaks  
does not know”  
Lao Tsu*

*“Speech is silver.  
Silence is gold.”  
Ancient proverb*

*“Even if it is not true,  
if things are repeated  
many, many times,  
it may become ‘true’.”  
New Age belief*

**My Dearest Friends,**

**Knowing all these sayings, after thinking deeply, I thought that the time is ready for me to share my perspective with you.**

**My dictation was taken by Zensho and Hoen. Grammatical mistakes were corrected by them but contents are mine.**

**1. Sasaki Roshi’s funeral. I came back from Los Angeles last week after attending Sasaki Roshi’s funeral service. Because of their SHŪMEI SHIN (Spirit of Dharma Alliance) or Sasaki Roshi’s last will, about 15 Japanese Roshis and priests came from Japan and conducted authentic Rinzai style funeral service. As soon as the service was over, they went back.**

**As Sasaki Roshi and Soen Roshi were born the same year, 1910, I have karmic connection with him. Since 1963, I met him many times and visited his temple and monastery. He had strong SHUMEI SHIN and because of that when Shobo-ji was dedicated on September 15, 1968 and DBZ’s dedication which took place**

on July 4th, 1976 in the two important occasions of The Zen Studies Society (ZSS), he came from Los Angeles to congratulate and encourage us. No current board members of ZSS knew him in person nor did they attend those two important occasions.

After O-bon at DBZ, I met with Roko and the treasurer of the ZSS, explaining the fact that we owe Sasaki Roshi. Now time has come for us to express our gratitude for his SHUMEI SHIN. I told them that this has nothing to do with the litigation and was a completely separated matter. I must go to Los Angeles but that you, ZSS, should pay my travelling expenses and lodging. They agreed to do so. Two days later, however, they changed their minds. Alas, they have no idea of the value of the Spirit of Dharma Alliance!

At the funeral, I received a pamphlet from Rinzai-ji Los Angeles. One of the paragraphs said “Kyozan Joshu Sasaki Roshi was the last great teacher from Asia of this generation in the 20th Century transmission of Buddhism to the West.”

Also, I received an email from Fujin in Japan, one of the paragraphs said, “Take good care of your bodymind in this hot

**season. Drink a lot of water and exercise. Now that you are the only one left, you got to work still harder! Your bodymind is the only authentic Zen temple left in the US.”**

**These are two different expressions of one fact. Both Sasaki Roshi and I have tried our best to bring Rinzai Zen from Japan to America and stayed over 50 years. We are grateful that this rare chance was bestowed upon us in the name of Dharma. While in Los Angeles, I visited Nyogen Senzaki’s grave twice, thinking of his struggle and loneliness as a pioneer. Now, despite retirement, my concern is the legacy and the unclear future of ZSS. I still feel a deep sense of duty towards ZSS and its role in crystalizing Dharma in the West. I have thought of this again and again, but now after Sasaki Roshi’s departure, my concern has grown deeper and more urgent.**

**2. Litigation. From time to time, my students and friends ask how things are going with ZSS. It’s not easy to state it briefly but it is quite a frustrating process. In 1995, I signed and Aiho signed separately legal documents with ZSS regarding Deferred Compensation Agreement (DCA). We retired from ZSS in**

**2010 and then until August 2012, they paid our pension. Then, all of the sudden in September 2012, they stopped all payments without notice or explanation, not even any attempt to renegotiate the circumstances with us. We asked ZSS for a response to our inquiries without success, so after 4 months, we had no other choice but to ask our lawyer to file a lawsuit in January 2013.**

**In March, 2014, a non-binding arbitration was arranged with Judge Harris as the arbitrator. Judge Harris made a judgment in our favor saying that the DCA was valid. The ZSS lawyer, who said that the DCA was invalid, then left his function as lawyer of ZSS. Although I assume that no lawyer wants to lose a case, I feel that we cannot go on in this way, year after year, interrupting our lives and our mission to the Dharma. And now recently, my lawyer filed a motion for a summary judgment and according to my understanding the appointed Judge, my lawyer and the new lawyer of ZSS are going to meet some time very soon.**

**3. Swiss Sesshin and Ordination. During the second week of September, at the invitation of the European Sangha, I will conduct sesshin in Lasalle-Haus in Switzerland. On September the 8th, there**

**will be an ordination for Yugen Koen van Wijngaarden. He will officially become a Rinzaï Zen monk. He has been practicing with me for over 30 years. It was his strong wish to be ordained. Also, Kanji Jose Luiz Travessa of Brazil expressed his passion to be ordained. He has been practicing for nearly 30 years as well.**

**Somehow new buds are appearing now. When Dharma Summer comes, they will become large leaves to make shade under which truth seekers find refuge. Since both Yugen and Kanji are matured in their practice and devotion, they will continue the growth of Rinzaï Zen in the West.**

**Please keep well, until we meet again.  
All the best,  
Gassho,**

**Eido**

**Eido Shimano**

**Written by Zensho Martin Hara**

**As dictated by Eido Shimano**

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