

February 23, 1995



New York Zendo · Shobo-Ji The Zen Studies Society
Eido T. Shimano Roshi Abbot

Dear Seigan,

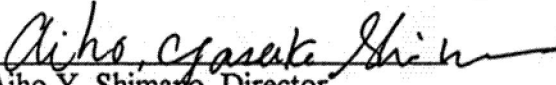
The acknowledgement of your "*One Thousand Days*" training is not only your private matter. It is the acknowledgement of a Buddhist monk's training, and thus, it is primarily a monastery matter. It is the occasion which reveals the kind of "monk" a person has evolved into, and the quality of his/her training is manifest. So, what kind of a "monk" have you become after 1000 days at Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji?

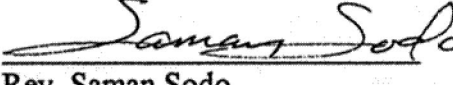
You asked no permission from the Abbot to mark the occasion with a private celebration. Did you presume that your position as Shikaryo gives you special privileges above others, and exempts you, allowing you to use Dai Bosatsu as though it were your mother's house? And having selectively invited chosen friends to celebrate what is obviously a special achievement to you, what kind of a statement are you making as a "monk?" Your "by-invitation-only" choice shows you are either ignorant of the most basic of Buddhist attitudes towards the Sangha, or you have a poor understanding of what the Third Jewel is all about to Buddhists. Putting these aside, what about "respect?" What about "gratitude?" Respect to your teacher, and by extension, to his wife? Respect to the ordained members of our order, namely, Shobo-ji? And gratitude: who prepared and made offerings of the complete set of black robes for your ordination? Who supported and was there for you back when you first came to Shobo-ji? And have you so carelessly forgotten all the Friday night beginners' classes of Saman's you attended, year after year till your departure for Dai Bosatsu?

Invitation cards to a mere Thousand Days are an egoistic ostentation which does no honor to a monk, and a slap in the face to the uninvited Sangha, especially the Board, the Director of NYZ, and the ordained of Shobo-ji. Using the monastery for your own purpose, and without permission, is also an arrogance most inappropriate to any monk, not to speak of a novice. Dai Bosatsu Zendo was not built for your personal celebrations.

As you think things over, I hope you will consider starting all over again and rethink what it truly means to be a Rinzai "monk." May you go forth carefully and actualize Buddha's Way.

Gassho


Aiho Y. Shimano, Director
New York Zendo Shobo-ji


Rev. Saman Sodo
New York Zendo Shobo-ji

cc: Eido T. Shimano, Roshi/Abbot, DBZ
The Staff, DBZ