

Koko An  
2119 Kaloa Way  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
96822, USA  
January 1, 1965

Dear Yasutani Roshi Sama:

On this bright warm Hawaiian New Years Day, our thoughts turn to you and to our many friends in Japan. We hope that you are having a most enjoyable celebration, and that your birthday party will draw its usual large group of well-wishers.

Tai San appeared at Koko An after I wrote my last letter to you, and we worked out the story to be carried in the next Diamond Sangha. It is entirely matter-of-fact, and I hope it meets with your approval.

Tai San mentioned your plans to pass through Hawaii on your way to New York late in June 1965, and your hopes to have sesshin here. By then we hope to have an English-speaking monk to replace Tai San, a man from Ryutakuji whom Soen Roshi is recommending. So you would have an interpreter. We would like to make it specific that we extend to you our cordial invitation to hold sesshin here at Koko An at that time.

Tai San said something about a separation of old-timers from new-comers here at Koko An. While it is true that, without a teacher, we have always had a lot of coming and going, a number of old-timers remain as regular attenders at the present time. Perhaps Kai San showed you the picture of a group of attenders here, taken last fall. Of the twelve people in the photo, six sit zazen with Tai San, and six were new. Of the six old-timers, three have had Japan sesshin experience, and one more is an old-timer with one of the Los Angeles groups and sits very well. Of course, that was just a picture of one meeting, other new and old members are also current. I am sure that your June, 1965 sesshin at Koko An will be very rewarding for you and for all of us.

Tai San expressed concern that misunderstanding arising from your change of plans be kept to the minimum. Anne and I agree, and we are confident that you do also. It would surely be unfortunate if the Honolulu sesshin were held somewhere other than at Koko An. We would, of course, have our usual open door for all who might wish to attend. If the monk from Ryutakuji is not here by then, perhaps we could bring Kubota San or one of your other fine assistants from Japan to help you with translating, or perhaps you would rather have us bring Tai San from New York. Sesshin is sesshin, after all. Anne and I and all your other friends here hope that this can be worked out.

Tai San explained that you no longer desire to have a permanent visa, and that you hope to work out some other kind of visa with another sponsor. If this is indeed the case, and you are firm in your decision, then of course I will cooperate every way I can. I have an idea that you have already turned in your DSP forms to the American Embassy. If this is the case, then you will have to effect the cancellation there. When you do so, please advise me that you have taken this action so that I can take the necessary steps here.

Best wishes, ...

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
Library — Archives

Dear Soen Roshi Sama: I have written the above because it was quite clear to me from Tai San's remarks to me that he intends to arrange the June 1965 sesshin in Honolulu with Yasu-

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tani Roshi somewhere other than at Koko Ln. He said, "Of course, you and Anne would be welcome to attend." And of course we would attend, wherever it was held.

, in an effort to salvage what we can of Sangha unity, but it would be only a gesture in the face of a most unfortunate division

We learn from Seike San that she is moving to Thailand, following the difficulties of her stay at Kokuseiji, and her falling out with Yasutani Roshi. She wrote us that she lost faith in Yasutani Roshi after the things he said about us in Hawaii. I don't know what she meant by this. I really don't care what anybody says about Anne or me, but for the sake of the American Dharma, I hope he is using a little discretion. I hope Seike will be happy in Thailand. A difficult case.

I am still very grieved over the death of my teacher, R.H. Blyth.

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For all his faults, he was a wonderful human being, and he has left a great heritage of writings on Zen and Haiku. His secretary has written me two letters, the second on apparently on the point of suicide. I wrote giving her what comfort I could.

We are very grateful for your concern about Koko An. Sekida San wrote me and I wrote to him; our letters crossed, but both of us agreed that we should plan on his coming. He will be good for us, I am sure. We still hope that you will visit us once a year or so.

Anne joins me in wishing you a most happy new year. With gassho