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September 17, 1982

Dear Friend —

We are writing to you to explain why we have resigned from New York Zendo, Sho Bo Ji, and Zen Studies Society. After approximately ten years each of affiliation, we are sure you understand the decision to leave was not an easy one. Nor is it easy to write this letter. As you read it, you may have many thoughts. Good. But please remember that the most important part of our practice is strong, faithful zazen. Please be careful.

For many years now, Eido Roshi has engaged in sexual activities with some of his female students. To others he has made unsuccessful, and sometimes repugnant, advances. It has not been uncommon for him to make passes in dokusan. Though he has persistently denied or evaded responding to straight-forward questions, on four occasions these activities have burst into the open: in 1962, 1975, 1979, and now again in 1982. A cover-up was implemented in 1962. In 1975, Eido Roshi promised the Zen Studies Society Board of Trustees that he would desist. In 1979, there was another cover-up. And now, in 1982, there has not yet been any need for a cover-up since few know of the most recent incident. Fortunately, this incident, together with the incidents that preceded it, are likely to be discussed specifically in a forthcoming magazine article.

This year's situation involved a free-lance writer who works for ABC-TV. During Holy Days Sesshin, Eido Roshi led her to believe that she had had a kensho experience. Later, after consulting with other Zen teachers, she came to the conclusion that the experience she had was not really kensho. She now believes Eido Roshi certified her experience merely as a means of inducing her to come to Sho Bo Ji where Eido Roshi made direct sexual advances.

This situation was partly responsible for the resignation of Board President Jochi George Zournas, a man with 16 years of faithful practice, and one of those responsible for the 1979 cover-up.

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Asked to comment on the continuing situation, Soen Roshi, Eido Roshi's teacher, said: "I do not hate Eido Roshi. I do hate falsehood and lying. I love Eido Roshi and Aiho very intensely and I have pity for them."

Built into, but not limited to, these sexual situations, has been a consistent pattern of manipulation, deception, evasiveness, discourtesy,³ and sometimes downright abuse. A good example of evasiveness (at the least) is the fact that no one outside of Eido Roshi and Aiho knows the true financial picture of Zen Studies Society. This despite the fact that various board members have repeatedly protested.

There is no denying that Eido Roshi has been a significant force in the creation and continuation of practice at Dai Bosatsu and Sho Bo Ji. So has the Sangha.

There are those who say that the Dharma is mysterious indeed and that all activity is Dharma activity. This is undeniably so. What is also so is that to realize this requires some discipline. Ascribing this realization to others before we ourselves have attained it is a mistake—understandable, perhaps, but a mistake nonetheless. This mistake is clarified through our practice. Through our practice too we learn compassion (for ourselves and others) and we learn the ability to say a clear, unequivocal "no!" No, it is not all right to do anything you want even though anything-you-want is certainly mysterious Dharma activity. This is not a moral judgment. It is a practical fact.

Based on the seemingly endless specifics of the situations mentioned above, we no longer feel we can support Eido Roshi. In expressing this opinion, we do not urge you to do anything other than what your clearest understanding indicates. Please continue your strong zazen. Pay attention. Take good care of yourselves.

NAMU DAI BOSAI!

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P.S. If you would like more specific information or would like to discuss these matters in any way, please feel free to call.