



THE ZEN STUDIES SOCIETY

August 18, 1995

Robert Aitken, Roshi
2747 Waiomao Road
Honolulu, HI 96816

Dear Aitken Roshi:

Thank you for your letter which we read with interest. You may not be aware that the Board of Directors of The Zen Studies Society takes these matters seriously. Unfortunately, our ability to respond to you is limited, because the person (or persons) who we believe brought this matter to you, apparently also instigated a criminal investigation and threatened civil suit.

Additionally, Eido Shimano Roshi thus far has consistently refrained from responding to rumors and accusations made against him or from participating in public disputes about other controversies involved in the transmission of Zen to the United States. I'm sure you appreciate this strong silence and the teachings it involves.

Despite the legal limitations, we can inform you of certain matters of public record. In 1993, the Board of The Zen Studies Society adopted a set of Ethical Guidelines and a procedure to be used by anyone who felt that those guidelines had been violated. A copy is enclosed for your information. They were published in our newsletter and posted at our Zendos. We also entered into written employment contracts with our senior staff making them responsible for observing and complying with those guidelines, and specifically providing that they could be disciplined or discharged for failure to do so. These were meant to serve as a vehicle for discussion, healing and resolution. They were adopted voluntarily and with no threat of legal action. No one has suggested to us that any violations of those guidelines have occurred since they were first enacted.

It is also a matter of record that Ms. [REDACTED] was on the committee that drafted those guidelines, served on the Board of Directors at the time they were adopted and was a member of the committee that would receive complaints under the guideline procedures. If she has not informed you of the guidelines or the Board's actions, you might ask, why.

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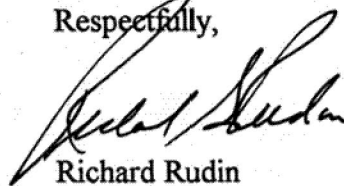
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It is also true that when she made unofficial complaints about events that transpired before the guidelines became effective, the Secretary of our Board, on more than one occasion, attempted to schedule meetings to have her complaints heard as set out in the guidelines that she had helped draft. She refused to agree to any date for a meeting. Is it possible that she did not inform you of these facts?

All this may suggest to you that in fact you have heard no more than half the story, and perhaps you really have heard even less than that. We would welcome your response to thus let us know if further dialogue would be useful. Please direct it to me at 1018 Imperial Place, Hayward, CA 94501.

We request that you keep this reply among your signers so as to avoid even further conflicts with the precepts.

Respectfully,



Richard Rudin
President

cc: Jan Bays
Helen Harkaspi
Bodhin Kjolhede
Philip Kapleau, Roshi
Susan Postal
Yvonne Rand
Alan Senauke