



GASSHO

December

2015

Issue No: 12-15

"Hands together in reverence & gratitude"



Season's Greetings!

Bodhi leaves from a Buddhist temple in Singapore. Photo courtesy Jnz! via Flickr.

"FRIENDLY FIRE" AND "COLLATERAL DAMAGE"

by rev. roland k. tatsuguchi

The recorded history of man has been one of fighting and killing each other to appropriate and confiscate what the other has. In the process, defenseless innocent children, women and the elderly have been disfigured, maimed, crippled or killed. Today, in our times, *Homo sapiens* are still killing each other based on who is one's "enemy" or one's "ally." Often, such distinctions are justified by religious verses that distinguish those who are "good" from those who are "evil." Such distinctions then come to justify the "obliterating" of one's enemies in the name of "justice" and "righteousness."

MONTH'S THOUGHT



"We must not let children think about war. War is what demons engage in, and is not suitable for human beings. That is what we must teach our children. We must teach them that mankind must discard egoistic attitudes and that everyone must get along with each other."

—Yoshitaka Tamai. *Ichinyo*. p. 91.



A "religion that is true, real and sincere" brings people into a relationship of Selflessness

REMINDERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2015

1st SUN Dec 6th

SKM services cancelled
Please attend
HAWAII BUDDHIST COUNCIL
BODHI DAY
10 A.M. service at
Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin

2ND SUN Dec 13th

SHINSHU KYOKAI
BODHI DAY
9 A.M. English service

3RD SUN Dec 20th

9 A.M. English service
Dharma Talk for Children & Adults
Rev. Tatsuguchi

With Deepest Sympathy

Mrs. Sally Inouye 92 yrs. Oct 19, 2015
Mr. Tadayoshi Mikasa 96 yrs. Nov. 4, 2015

2015 Memorial Service Schedule

2014	1 Year	2013	3 Year	2009	7 Year
2003	13 Year	1999	17 Year	1991	25 Year
1983	33 Year	1966	50 Year	1914	100 Year

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

KARAOKE SINGERS CLUB Mon 7 – 9 p.m.
Mr. Nelson Yoshioka

KARATE CLASSES Tues & Fri 6 – 8 p.m.
Int'l Karate League – Walter Nishioka

KARATE CLASSES Thurs 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Hawaii Shotokan Karate – Alan Sekiguchi

FUJINKAI LADIES' FELLOWSHIP GROUP
Tues 9 a.m. – noon

4TH SUN Dec 27th

MONTHLY FAMILY WORSHIP
9 A.M. English service
"Dharma Talk" with Rev. Tatsuguchi

THURSDAY Dec 31st

NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE
7 P.M. English service
Soba will be served after service

FRIDAY Jan 1st, 2016

NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE
10 A.M. English service

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and Togetherness in which all living and non-living things become seamless and inseparable, not at odds with each other such as in wars where one side utterly obliterates its adversaries. A person of "true and real faith" (*shinjin*) does not divide things and people into irreconcilable opposites of "good" and "evil," then to utterly destroy those who are "against them" by profiling them as "evil."

As of consequence, instead of coming together, the various less advanced nations are still caught in conflicts between super power nations, only now in terms of their brandishing even more lethal nuclear weapons.

Many *Sansei* and *Yonsei* are now of mixed racial backgrounds who are thoroughly Americanized. Many have become "consummate American consumers." They are not even aware that Prince Siddhartha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree on the eighth of December.

Local-born people brought up in the "Aloha Spirit" tend to be most generous and gracious in sharing things and their good will. As of consequence, local *Nisei*, their *Sansei* children and *Yonsei* grandchildren easily get in the mood of "giving" and "receiving" gifts during the Holiday Season. And, of course, all children are mesmerized by the bright glittering ornaments, Christmas trees, Santa Clauses and so on.

The average person, especially a child, is not interested with befuddling theological or metaphysical questions such as whether Jesus was born of virgin birth or whether Buddha was born out of the "right side" of his mother as she

was standing. For "X-mas" is a time to become a "consummate American consumerist" and a "gourmand" enjoying all the delicacies and beverages of the Holiday Season that are soon to be repeated on New Year's Eve and Day.

Early in the 1900s C.S. Lewis wrote a satire entitled "*Xmas and Christmas: A Lost Chapter from Herodotus.*" In this satire, Lewis tells us that the term "Ex-mas" describes a flurry of compulsory commercial activity and expensive indulgence in alcoholic beverages. Then tells us that "*Criss-mass*" is the religious observance of Jesus' birth in temples and churches on the same day that "Ex-mas" is a secular one in which Christ has been "crissed" and "crossed" out with an "X." Both forms of Christmas, said Lewis, are "rackets."

So, when I read about Major General Smedley Darlington Butler's criticism of what he called "the military gang" as being a "racket," it was an eye-opener for me. As a veteran of WWI Butler noted:

"There isn't a trick in the racketeering bag that the military gang is blind to, it has its 'finger men' (to point out enemies), its 'muscle men' (to destroy enemies). Its 'brain men' (to plan war preparations), and a 'Big Boss' (super nationalistic capitalism)." *Common Sense*. 1935.

Butler also believed that "wars were profitable business only for the few who comprised the 'military gang' at the expense of thousands of lives."

For warfare, he said, "is the only one in which the profits are made in dollars and the losses in lives." He noted that "out of war only a few people make huge fortunes." He also pointed out that "the sons of the powerful and wealthy usually do not go to war and hold a rifle and lie in rat-infested trenches" ("*War is a Racket*").

In January 1961, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, in his farewell presidential speech, also warned the nation of this "military gang."

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He called it the "military industrial complex." Butler and Eisenhower as military men were pointing out a connection between the military establishment and the armaments industry. Their lobbies were influencing congressmen with big money. So it was a surprise to discover that even President Thomas Jefferson, despite the negatives about him, had also warned the nation about a "military gang" taking over the country.

Now, to understand why Japan came to attack Pearl Harbor, we need to go back to the times of Western expansionism and imperialism when Spain and Portugal first began to navigate, explore, conquer, colonize and appropriate foreign lands in the name of country and of Almighty God (Iberian Expansion). They then began to exploit the native peoples and their natural resources as early in the 1400s.

Then by the 1700s, 1800s and up to the early 1900s, driven by visions of Manifest Destiny and Noblesse Oblige, the United States began expanding from the East coast to the West coast by displacing and/or decimating hundreds of Native American tribal nations. Then President Andrew Jackson (1767-1847) began venturing out into the Pacific. Americans began establishing a chain of forward military bases backed by permanent support bases. Now in our times, the U.S. Navy has its various fleets strategically positioned all over the globe.

The expansion of America into the Pacific began with the purchase of Alaska in 1867. By the century's end, overseas territories such as Guam, Samoa, Hawaii and other Pacific islands such as Wake and Palmyra became trust territories of the U.S. In the 1930s up to 1941, the U.S. had and was yet working to form a string of strategic military forward bases such as in Hawaii and American Samoa that were annexed in 1889. The Johnston Atoll was already annexed in 1858. These facts clearly show that the U.S. Navy was already familiar with several of the Pacific islands well before the 1800s. In 1898 the U.S. was victorious in the Spanish-American War. In that very year, with the annexation of the Philippines, the U.S. established itself as a dominant imperial naval

power in both the Caribbean and the Pacific regions. The U.S. had strategically positioned itself to profit from the lucrative Asian trade and commerce.

The closed doors of Japan were opened to regular trade by Commodore Matthew Perry on July 8, 1853. With this opening up of Japan, the Japanese quickly began to see and learn how other European nations like France, Britain, Holland and Germany had and were still acquiring colonies and appropriating their natural resources and exploiting the peoples as sources of cheap labor. Colonies so established supplied European nations with raw materials such as oil, coal, iron, tin, rubber, precious stones, minerals, metals, and other luxuries such as spices and fine merchandise. These European nations also were marketing their own finished products in the very lands they had colonized.

So Japan, being limited in natural resources, wanted to do the same. She began seeing other lands like Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria as being ripe for exploitation. Japan also saw the United States to be in collusion with European nations establishing treaties to their own overwhelming one-sided political and economic advantage. Japan had a skilled labor force, a tradition of the sea, and a powerful military. They began to do the same.

Now, on the so-called "Day of Infamy" when the Japanese bombed, torpedoed and strafed Pearl Harbor and other military facilities, several civilians were inadvertently killed by "friendly fire" well beyond the perimeters of Pearl Harbor. Inadequately fused and timed anti-aircraft shells were falling and exploding in places such as in the McCully neighborhood.

McCully is an area sandwiched between the Moiliili and Pawaa neighborhood districts. To the Ewa side of Pawaa lies the Sheridan and Kakaako neighborhoods that meld into the Honolulu business district. Sand Island can be clearly seen from the docks of Honolulu harbor. Then beyond are Keehi Lagoon, Hickam Air Force Base, Barber's Point and Pearl Harbor. The Waianae Mountains in the far-off distance

can be seen. An aerial map of the downtown Honolulu area shows several other military facilities such as Red Hill, Fort Shafter and Camp Smith and so on.

When "surfing" the Internet concerning misfired anti-aircraft shells on December 7, 1941, I found out that a number of innocent local people were killed from so-called "friendly fire." Depending on the source, the total number of casualties varies from 48 to 58. Nevertheless, according to the laws of gravity, "what goes up must come down." In the chaos, even our own fighter planes that had managed to take off to battle enemy planes were mistaken for Japanese planes and shot down. Nearly 2,400 American sailors, soldiers and civilians died that morning (146,000 were instantly killed in the atom bombing of Hiroshima).

Machine gun bullets and shrapnel from anti-aircraft shells were falling all over the Pearl Harbor Peninsula. An official report said, "Most of the property damage and civilian lives lost in Pearl Harbor proper itself were the result of misfired anti-aircraft fire." This report tells of the chaotic response of our military personnel caught by utter surprise on that idyllic Sunday morning. The Japanese were bombing the ships anchored next to each other. The resulting chaos and pandemonium, understandably, caused much erratic "knee-jerk" reactions on the part of our military who were caught off guard. After the second wave of planes, fears of a third wave followed by a possible land invasion that added even more panic to an already chaotic situation.

On the Internet I found numerous postings about Senator Daniel Inouye on that Sunday morning. Inouye was a 17-year-old senior in McKinley High School. I myself had just turned eleven in November. Call it serendipity if you will, Inouye then was also one of my father's pupils at McCully Nihongo Gakko diagonally right across Lunalilo Elementary School.

My father, after Sunday morning service, without our knowledge, had gone there to help out. Whether he ran into Inouye or not, I do

WORDS OF SHINRAN

"If a person, justifying himself by saying he is a foolish being, can do anything he wants, then is he also to steal or to murder? Even that person has been inclined to steal will naturally undergo a change of heart if he comes to say the nembutsu aspiring for the Buddha Land. Yet people who show no such sign are being told that it is permissible to do wrong; this should never occur under any circumstances." SBT-Series. *Letters of Shinran*. No. 16. pp. 51-52.

not know. From what I can recall, my father had taken all the rice offerings from the temple sanctuary and was cooking at McCully Nihongo Gak'ko until dusk to help feed people. In the meanwhile, young Inouye, a first-aid volunteer, was called to report to the First Aid Center at Lunalilo School.

That Sunday morning Inouye was preparing to go to church. After hearing the radio broadcast that the Japanese were bombing Pearl Harbor, he and his father went out to look toward Pearl Harbor. He said they clearly saw the plumes of smoke from the burning American battleships in the skies above Pearl Harbor. Then suddenly, they heard a deep rumble from above. Three aircraft flew right over their home. They were "pearl grey with bright red dots painted beneath each wing." Inouye recalled that his father cursed the Japanese. Years later, as a Senator being interviewed by Diane Sawyer, Inouye said he himself raised his fist and cursed the planes, saying "those damn Japs." This interview, of course, has been deleted.

Daniel Inouye enlisted, fought in the war and finally become a U.S. senator. Other Nisei veterans under the leadership of Governor John A. Burns entered the political arena like Spark Matsunaga, George Ariyoshi and others.

By the evening of that "Day of Infamy," my father with other Japanese ministers and

community leaders were arrested and incarcerated as suspect Japanese aliens who were possible spies and saboteurs. Even well before December 7th they were already on the FBI's lists of suspect aliens. Everyone in Hawaii suddenly came under martial law. Local-born Japanese Americans were classified 4-C because they were of Japanese ancestry. They too were suspect and not to be trusted.

Japanese Americans on the Mainland were incarcerated along with their Issei parents. The Nisei here in Hawaii were not. For if they were, the labor force in Hawaii would have been crippled and the war effort stifled. For many White families fearful of an invasion had sold their homes and returned to the Mainland.

That fatal Sunday morning, a misfired anti-aircraft shell fell in McCully. Inouye said seeing "dead civilians sprawled all over the place" was a great shock for him. He is said to have spent the next five sleepless days patching up wounded military personnel at Pearl Harbor. Immediately after his marathon bout of tourniquet applications, Inouye is said to have gone down to enlist in the army. Unfortunately, because he was of Japanese descent, he was classified 4-C, meaning not to be drafted because he could be a spy or saboteur. So were hundreds of local Nisei youth rejected who wanted to prove their loyalty as Americans.

The generation of Nisei veterans who fought in WWII are dwindling. So, we must inform the incoming Yonsei and Gosei of the dangers of igniting a World War III based on profiling others as "the axis of evil" to justify their obliteration. For it is as Einstein said, surviving mankind then will revert to the age of primitive existence. Man would then be fighting each other with sticks and stones.

Despite this caveat, ever since the atom bombing of Hiroshima, there continues to be an escalation of superpower nations openly and secretly developing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) even more massive and lethal. All the while the very air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat and the very earth we stand on are being polluted and compromised

as temperatures and ocean waters all over the world keep rising due to the doings and activities of man.

Now several local-born people were killed by so-called "friendly fire" on that "Day of Infamy." The attack began at 7:53 A.M. and was all over by 9:55. The few who saw it from places like the heights of Alewa and Pearl City thought it was just another routine military exercise. During the two-hour attack, unknown to the general populace, mis-timed and mis-fused anti-aircraft shells were not only being fired from Pearl Harbor proper. They were also being fired from Coast Guard ships in Honolulu Harbor and from naval ships anchored offshore. It is said several of these misfired shells fell in Honolulu proper.

One, two or more misfired anti-aircraft shells fell as far away as in the McCully neighborhood. Lunalilo Elementary School was hit. A woman eating breakfast in her home died immediately when a piece of shrapnel pierced her skull. Residents trapped in a wall of flames perished in their homes. An inferno also had broken out on the makai Ewa corner of McCully and King streets. The shops and tenements on that corner were a blazing inferno. Firemen not only were putting out the fire, they were also gathering fragments of human flesh and body parts. On this particular Ewa-makai corner were family run stores and a two-story tenement house.

Chuo Gakuen was a Japanese language school on the corner of Nuuanu Avenue and Vineyard Boulevard. That Sunday morning an improperly fused anti-aircraft shell fell across the street and exploded. Just a few seconds later another shell exploded in the school yard. Shrapnel flew into the auditorium and a boy was seriously injured. His arm had to be amputated. A mother had come to the school to take her children back to her restaurant just a block down on Kukui Street. They and the customers huddled in the restaurant for safety were killed instantly when another shell fell right on the restaurant.

Then, there was the sad case of Rowena

Kamohaulani Foster, age 3, whose family lived on the Pearl City Peninsula. The attack on Pearl Harbor was taking place right before their eyes. Rowena was hit in the chest by a piece of shrapnel.

Emma Gonsalves, age 25, also was mortally wounded on Kinau Street near Piikoi Street and died the next day. Then, there was the 7-month-old daughter of Eunice Wilson and Patrick Kahamokupuni Chong. All three were in a house in Punchbowl when a shell exploded nearby and killed the father and daughter. There were several other incidents of local people being killed or injured by "friendly fire." But lack of space stops me here.

A true human being is a person of genuine sincerity with feelings of gratitude, humility as well as a sadness and sorrow concerning the reality of human greed, animosity and misplaced pride. Such deep sensitivities are not a matter of one's skin color, race, ethnicity or nationality or one's loyalty to a given religion. We are all mortal beings that need to eat, sleep, move about, go to the toilet and procreate, lest the human species become extinct. We each also have a conscience!

This is why, said Tamai sensei:

"Buddha-dharma teaches the law of cause and effect that penetrates the three worlds. This is the special characteristic of Buddha-dharma that we must never forget. Buddha-dharma is not a teaching only for this world of the present, it is a teaching for the past, present, and future." Loc. cit. p. 11.

The "three worlds" (or "three planes of existence") are: the sphere of "raw desires," the sphere of "substantive forms and shapes" and the sphere of "formlessness" (or ideals). These three are concentric, seamless spheres revolving around a common vertical axis that is one's conscience or the center of one's very person, self and being.

Nevertheless, as General Butler and President Eisenhower have pointed out, "there

SHINRAN'S WASAN

When beings in this corrupt world
trust in the Ineffable,
Inexplicable,
Inconceivable Primal Vow,
Its virtues will fill the seeker's
total person and being.

Shozomatsu Wasan No. 31.
rkt translation.

are some of our leaders who set aside and work around the Constitution to join those in control of the banking systems who make enormous profits off of the endless wars they instigate behind the scenes." Meanwhile, the

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Donations

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Due to limited space due to Postal restrictions, if your donation is not listed in this GASSHO, it will be listed in a following edition. For any inadvertent misspelling of names, please accept our apologies.

BUDDHIST STORY OR PASSAGE

"All things must pass. Nothing stays forever. Few believe this, even if someone teaches and exhorts them. And so the stream of birth-and-death continues everlastingly." *Larger Sutra.* Hisao Inagaki. *The Three Pure Land Sutras.* p. 286.

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middle classes and the destitute become even more impoverished and devastated.

So, Walpola Rahula in explaining Right Livelihood admonished:

"one should abstain from making one's living through a profession that brings harm to others, such as trading in arms and lethal weapons, intoxicating drinks, such as killing animals cheating, etc., and should live by a profession which is honorable, blameless and innocent of harm to others...." *What The Buddha Taught.* p. 41.

Rahula makes it quite clear that the Buddha was strongly opposed to any kind of violence.

I would like once again to close this final issue of GASSHO for 2015 with the following words of Reverend Yoshitaka Tamai. They are:

"We must not let children think about war. War is what demons engage in, and is not suitable for human beings." *Ichinyo.* p. 91.

According to Tamai sensei, "Without controlling the inner, it is a mistake to try and protect the outer." The reason is because "We become the very thoughts we hold in our minds."

*SEASON'S GREETINGS
WITH BEST WISHES TO YOU ALL
FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

QUESTION & ANSWER KORNER

QUESTION: What is the Buddhist position on war?

ANSWER: After WWII I asked my dad the same question. He replied: "if someone places a red-hot coal on the top of your head, you have the perfect right to brush it off. But you do not have the right to put it back on his or anyone else's head."

The Buddha said: "In times of war give rise in yourself the Heart of Compassion and help others give up the will to fight." In other words, the Buddhist code of nonviolence forbids killing in retaliation, even in self-defense.