

Jisei Nagasaka on terrorism

Jisei Nagasaka said in his February Oko ceremony (www.nstny.org/feboko2006.htm):

"For instance we can't remove all the terrorists in this world. But it is possible to change the terrorists into innocuous people by the correct practice of True Buddhism and make them attain enlightenment. "

Jisei's statement defies logic. Does he comprehend the seriousness of the problem of terrorism? Does he understand the depth of passionate hatred that terrorism reveals? The grasp of ideology that is so severe that people are driven to senseless and horrific acts of violence? Does he have any sense of the unthinkable acts that are being contemplated and perpetrated?

At the same time, does he understand the complex historical, sociological, political, and economic causes that have given rise to terrorism? Is he blind to the ruthless excesses of western civilization? Does he feel the pain of people throughout the world who have suffered so much at the hands of the present geopolitical power structure?

Clueless to these realities he makes such senseless comments as "change the terrorists into innocuous people" or "make them attain enlightenment."

Does Jisei have any sense of the degree of work that it will take to untangle the situation the world finds itself in now?

To heal the pain will take countless efforts to bridge the clash of civilizations that exists today. Millions of people will have to make efforts in their workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, and environment to build a world of tolerance and harmony. Millions of wonderful new leaders will have to be raised. They will need to make humanistic efforts that overpower the senseless depravity of terrorists.

What will fuel these humanistic actions? Who will do this hard work?

Jisei misleads his followers that his version of Buddhist practice has the power to magically charm evil forces throughout the world. No, this thinking is hokey pokey. Rather, a powerful humanistic philosophy is necessary to unleash the human potential to do good. Then people must move with enormous hearts, youth must arise, and dialogue must ring.

Jisei Nagasaka's weak thinking and misguided interpretation of Buddhist practice can never create this wave of humanism.