

BURMA CAMPAIGN UK PUTS OUT ANTI-BUDDHIST STATEMENT BY BUDDHIST GROUP WITH LONG CULT AND SEXUAL ABUSE HISTORY

Some of you may have seen the recent statement, titled
‘Statement on Buddhist-led violence against Muslims in Burma 25 Oct 2013’
by senior members of the ‘Triratna Buddhist Order’.

You can see it here /on Burma Campaign UK: [Statement_by_Tiratna_Buddhists](#)

First, the statement is ridiculously ignorant of the reality of the conflict in Arakan, in western Burma. There is not even a hint of the violence and atrocities committed by the Bengali Muslims (Rohingya) as they continue to drive out or kill the Buddhists - who can live peacefully with all others except those who try to kill them.



How can the Triratna Buddhists ignore the many monks slaughtered, and monasteries and temples burned and destroyed, the Mujahideen armies training and fighting to eliminate the Buddhists, the history of vicious massacres of Buddhists, starting with the only real genocide in contemporary Burmese history in 1942 when 30,000 Buddhists were slaughtered in Maungdaw alone.



And, recently, Buddhist women collecting clams were attacked and murdered, dozens of Burmese workers in Malaysia and Indonesia ruthlessly killed (but zero killings of Indonesians and Malays killed in Burma), Buddhists villages set ablaze, scores of Buddhist girls and women kidnapped, raped, gang-raped, murdered, forced to

convert and marry their rapist.

(all is accounted for and verified in the links at the end).



This sadly reflects Burma Campaign UK’s rhetoric now. You cannot find anything on their website that says anything nice about the Rakhine Buddhist people. And quite difficult to find anything nice about the Burmese Buddhists, or even Buddhism. In fact Burma Campaign UK seems rather anti-Buddhist - EXCEPT they give space and honor to the Triratna Buddhist Order, because they also seem not to care that they are participating in the demonization of the Rakhine Buddhist people and culture - the most falsely accused people in the world.



BUT, WHO ARE THE TRIRATNA BUDDHISTS?

WHAT IS THEIR LEGACY?

WHY SHOULD THEY BE HELD HIGH?

If this group is what Burma Campaign UK considers a 'good' Buddhist order, then that confirms their absolute bias and marks them as supporting the eventual destruction of the real Buddhist culture, traditions, history and enchantment of Burma.

The Triratna Buddhist Order And Community was known as the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO) until a questionable name change in 2010. It was founded by an Englishman named Dennis Lingwood, who studied in India for 20 years after WWII, and changed his name to Sangharakshita. (His is the first signature on the recent statement).

During his time in India, he got kicked out of several viharas (monasteries) after luring young novices into sexual relations, and finally was expelled from India. Sangharakshita was then invited to Britain to take up the post of Incumbent Bhikkhu at the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara by the English Sangha Trust (EST). After many abusive sexual activities he was removed from his position of responsibility with the EST at the Vihara. (He later claimed that he left the EST because THEY had strayed from the true Buddhist path).

The night that he was given the termination notice, a young man who Sangharakshita had a 'friendship' with disappeared from the vihara. The next day, that young man was found floating face down in the Thames River. There was no evidence linking Sangharakshita, and he was not charged. Two years later, as a relationship with a student - who had been manipulated to break off his wedding plans with his fiancé - soured and ended, the student - depressed, humiliated, and grieving for his fiancé to accept him again - threw himself in front of train and ended his life. Sangharakshita took over the students' flat, and began to plan his next big self-glorifying endeavor - where he would be the one in charge. Of everything.

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order quickly became a personality cult, and Sangharakshita was the charismatic and persuasive leader, father-figure, authority, and domineering presence.

Defectors talked about brain-washing, sexual abuses, being told to break from families and spouses. While on the outside the FWBO seemed like it was an innovative western Buddhist group, it was actually very troubled and certainly not Buddhist in principal and conduct. His teachers from India spoke out against him, and criticized his delusion and arrogance, and his out-of-control sexual urges which he was manipulatively wrapping into his own twisted 'Buddhist' teachings.

In 1980 Sangharakshita wrote of his "conviction that the less the FWBO is involved with Buddhist groups, and with individuals affiliated with existing Buddhist traditions, the better."

In October 1997, the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order was publicly exposed by a report by The Guardian, which made wide-ranging allegations of sexual misconduct, dogmatism and misogyny within the movement during the 1970s and 1980s.

- One man who had been persuaded into a sexual relationship with the leader said, "The head of the community was a very powerful, intrusive personality and incredibly manipulative. He would intuitively become aware of people's vulnerabilities."
- Another victim committed suicide after a long period of sexual abuses by Sangharakshita. He left some letters where he had written, "I have felt manipulated all the way by people who have allowed themselves to be manipulated. I am now out of reach of all that ghastly sales talk ... [it was] a petty totalitarian state, an Orwellian Albania with its own Big Brother." In another letter he said, "I could never return to that ghastly concentration camp atmosphere with its force-fed dogma and drip-feed friendships ... where reason and individual experience are crushed by people who expect total submission before any real friendship or recognition is gained."
- Sangharakshita's right-hand man for many years, finally left, and said, "People got caught in a collective delusion, a group psychosis which was very interesting but distressing."
- Stephen Batchelor, a prominent Buddhist commentator and author said: "They operate as a self-enclosed system and their writings have the predictability of those who believe they have all the answers. They are structured in a rigid hierarchy and do not seem to question the teachings of their leader. As with many new religious movements, their enthusiasm and unconventional convictions have the potential to lead to problems associated with 'cults' and one centre in the eighties does appear to have tipped over into full-blown cultish behavior, which, to the FWBO's credit, they closed down."

[The FWBO files](#)

From The Guardian:

<http://www.ex-cult.org/fwbo/Guardian.htm>

From the BBC:

[BBC FWBO Triratna Buddhist](#)

Now, it may be fair to say that those times are over and that will not happen again, but then again, some of these victims only left the group in the last few years, around the time of the rebranding of the group by changing the name to the Triratna Buddhist Order, and then trying to bury the controversies without exposing it, accounting for it, or fully acknowledging it. Nor trying to bring the perpetrators to justice.

There are many people who can take a meditation or yoga class at one of the centers, and everything may be fine with that, but there is a dark side, a very very sick and twisted dark side to the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order / Triratna Buddhist Order.

And that dark side is the most polar opposite side to the real teachings, wisdom and compassion of Buddhism, and if this kind of group is the only representation of Buddhism that Mark Farmaner, Anna Roberts, and Burma Campaign UK will post on their website then we all know that they are not allies of Buddhists and Buddhism, and they will not do anything to help the Rakhine Buddhist culture, nor the Burmese Buddhists.

Rick Heizman, San Francisco, November 2013

PLEASE READ WHAT BURMA CAMPAIGN UK DOES NOT WANT YOU TO KNOW:

Please see the full 150 page report about the situation in Rakhine/Arakan State, Burma:

[CONFLICT_and_VIOLENCE_in_ARAKAN](#)

Buddhist girls raped:

[RAPES-ATTACKS-AND-MURDERS-OF-BUDDHISTS-](#)

[Burmese-Buddhist-Girl-Rescued](#)

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