

Interview with PB

4/1/75

- I may become a householder someday
- Salt - is corrosive; people with heart problems often can't eat it; it causes hardening of the arteries; is fantastic for it is a mineral; don't need it in our climate; one of PB's first teachers knew of a Japanese guru who wouldn't take students whose systems were full of salt. They had to cleanse their bodies for 1 yr.
- Charismatics - these people are much better off than many so-called normal people. Their character is what is important. The psychic phenomena they experience is possible due to the intensity of their concentration. These phenomena will gradually pass.
- The Jewish practice of draining the blood from the animal is the first step to vegetarianism.
- Milk is taken from the cow in a much more natural way in the orient. The cow is lead from door to door along with her calf. If someone wants milk, the cow is milked at the door & then the calf is given the remainder. PB is allergic to milk products but also finds it to be a less desirable food although it is acceptable to most vegetarians. The fermenting process to make cheese is not so good especially if one eats a lot of it.
- Many unbalanced people are attracted to the quest but not the philosophic aspect - only the occult or mystical. They shouldn't be meditating but first get their feet on the ground. They want to get lost in their fantasies.
- PB suggested putting up curtains in loft to give each person more privacy.
- PB doesn't like prunes as much as figs, dates & dried bananas (unsulphured). Tree ripened fruit is the best. Regular bananas are much less digestible. Dried

bananas are first tree ripened & then sun-dried.

- PB saves everything that is possibly usable.
- Egoism is a malignant disease & is based on ignorance; when ignorance goes, the disease goes.
- PB is a researcher; he states the ancient doctrine in terms suited to the times.
- One should pay attention to their animal nature only as much as necessary.
- The body & mind are closely related, students of philosophy need to care for their diet.
- It is hard to follow eating with study as part of the mental energy must go to digest food
- Switzerland is a Virgo country - there is a great stress on detail but they don't see the whole
- Before the meals PB said grace which was about 2-3 minutes of silence. He said that verbal prayer was good for the religious level.
- PB revealed my shallowness & lack of true appreciation by his 'mere presence'. It seems to me that to really show my gratitude means to render myself empty of all my interferences.
- The group is not yet ready to write ^{philosophy} for publication; later when they have absorbed more they can do it; articles are so restricted & can't really be done in depth.
- PB said namaska (?) at the door when we left for the day.

4/2/75

- PB told a story of a group of people who used to meet in the Soho district of London. The group was rather informal, they met to exchange various ideas on the occult & other topics. There were artists & writers in the group. One time PB and a few of these people ~~went~~ ^{went} to Devonshire

to live outdoors and pursue their spiritual practices. They camped by a river there. After some time they had a bad storm and the river flooded the camp. Most of the people were discouraged by this and left. PB and another man (Fredrick Fletcher) went to the ocean near there and lived in separate caves. Fredrick F. was an expert on Blavatsky's Secret Doctrine & he used to read to PB. PB received a message informing him that this lady he knew had had a vision of him and was concerned about him. PB returned to London to see her but at that time he couldn't see any meaning for him in the lady's vision. A year later something bad did happen but PB is not sure if the incident was related to the vision or not. Fredrick F. returned shortly after as winter was coming and he didn't want to remain alone. He eventually became a Buddhist in Burma & was called 'the venerable' by the Buddhists there (as a sign of their respect for him). Kenneth Hurst visited him when he passed through there on business. F. Fletcher wanted his ashes given to the Buddhist Society in London. When he died also left were his glasses which had one lens missing - due to his poverty he hadn't been able to replace it. Kenneth had the ashes with him and he stopped to visit PB in Australia (Perth). However, the customs weren't allowing animals or plants to be imported so there was some question about the ashes because they were the remains of an animal body. After spending a while trying to persuade customs to let him take the ashes, Kenneth lost his temper (which he can do) & demanded that they check the laws. The laws didn't say anything about ashes & so they

had to allow Kenneth to take them. Then Kenneth went to the British Buddhist Society but Christmas Humphreys (who was the leader of the society) didn't want the ashes because he'd have to build a memorial. Kenneth insisted that because Frederick F. was one of the first westerners to become a Buddhist & also because he was venerated by the Buddhists Christmas H. should take the ashes. When C. Humphrey's again refused Kenneth threatened to blacken his name by writing articles on the incident, with that Christmas H. finally submitted.

- Frederick Fletcher once tried to go to Lhasa in Tibet with gifts for the Dalai Lama. The Tibetans wouldn't allow foreigners in for fear of being dominated (especially those from G. Britain which was an empire then). They got as far as (the same town as PB) G? and were finally turned back even though they said they were Buddhists and should be allowed to go.

- PB had an affinity for China, Japan & India but not for Tibet. He didn't like the climate of Tibet.

- Mao Tse Tung is trying to wipe out Confucianism just like he wiped out Buddhism. Indian peasants who are poor have religion & to fall back on which the Chinese didn't have - as a justification for their poverty. The Chinese need economic reform but not through violence. The people are forced to serve the state, i.e., Mao (who is a mad man). The Buddhist monks were forced to marry & people who had been questers & so not used to hard labor were made to work strenuously so in the evenings they were exhausted & had no energy for study or meditation. Confucius would be known as a traitor and as having

supported the capitalists. The Chinese people are not told the truth about the outside world.

- PB visited Madame David-Neale in her 99th year (she died at 100). She still had a sharp mind but had to remain ^{reclined} on the couch. She took only liquid food-mainly soup. She was living on a mountain top in France which had similarities to Tibet. It was hard to get water there. PB noted that she had 3000 books - where are they now? She thought that China might revive because the people were so practical. But PB thinks she was over optimistic as the period we are in is a climactic one.

- PB remarked that he was a great student of Buddhism.

- PB showed me a small book (Upadesa Saram) made by Ramana-stitched & written in small Tamil figures. It was a memento for PB.

- In one of the Search books is mentioned a man who went into the desert for 40 days to fast. He had a revelation there & returned. In London one night PB ran into one of this man's students whose husband was away. PB asked her where she was going (10 PM) - she said to a meeting & that she went every night. PB looked at her under a street lamp & could tell by her eyes that she had been hypnotized. PB sent her home. PB mentioned to some of the people in the Scho group what had happened. The Brahmin (who is mentioned in the early chapters of Search in India) put a curse on this man while he was lecturing.

- There are no guesters in Mordreux but one in Causanne. This was perhaps for PB's protection.

- Nuts are fibrous & sometimes need grinding (can use coffee grinder). Food must be digestible. Pulse & seaweed have fishy overtones because of the association with the smell of rotting. They are a good source of iodine.
- Honey is the last of the dairy products; it is an animal by product. It is more natural to eat dried fruits in the winter and fresh fruit in the summer. Garlic, onion, leek, chives (in order of strength) are rajasic. Garlic odor is offensive. Garlic is a good medicine, good for colds - PB uses onions* for colds (this is strong enough for him). He also likes small red radishes for they are high in vitamins.
- once the body is purified it can respond to natural instincts as to what should be eaten. Each person's diet is different.
- rubarb & almond skin contain weak poison.
- The Advaitins give up everything & trust in the higher power. PB studied astrology for a while but he thought it was too binding - people rely on it too much, to the point of letting it determine their actions for the day. Grace can come at any time. Grace is hard to define. PB put astrology aside & lived his life according to principles. Now he thinks it was not balanced to have done this. He said he should have viewed the chart once a year unpersonally, in a calm and detached manner. The realized man maintains a trace of ego except when in Nirvikalpa samadhi. He has to work through the body & mind which are individual and different from one person to the next. They are like water pipes of different size & composition. Some people have a big pipe, some a small one, some a rusty one so the water takes like rust. This pipe is the channel by which the sage communicates. The ego is a circle within the larger circle.

- of Self & this must not be forgotten. Live your life according to principles but also consider astrology as it has its place but don't rely on it, don't get hung up in it. Ramakrishna saw he had to have a little of the lower self. When Totapuri came Ramakrishna saw he still had something to learn.
- The flag at the center is a good idea; PB thought the name Golden Rod wasn't overly suggestive.
 - Chanting & hatha yoga are elementary. Bhakti is emotional & ∴ fluctuates a lot whereas philosophy is more stable.
 - Han Shan - The happy sweeper.

4/3/75

- PB was flying on an Australian airlines. The stewardess was walking down the aisle & talking to each person in order to make them more comfortable. When she came to PB, she asked what he did - he reluctantly said he was a writer (now he can say he's retired). He hoped she would drop the subject but she persisted with questions. He said he was a travel writer. She then asked what places he wrote about & he said India. She said she hadn't seen any of his books on India - what did he write on? He finally said yoga. She immediately took a superior attitude & said that the Australians were humanitarians & were practical people. Not escapists like the Indians. PB didn't fly an Australian airlines again.
- Savikalpa samadhi is the highest state of bliss (ananda). Beyond ananda is Nirvikalpa. But when you are not meditating & going about your activities it is Sahaja. Animals are in sahaja for that is their natural state. They are everything they can be as an animal. Man is usually

not in his natural state.

- If you want to be a pure Advaitist you shouldn't talk or teach. You should live in the bottom of a cave & have your food sent down. PB thinks the Indian culture was older & its teaching touched the highest point earlier, although the Chinese civilization was as old, they were more practical. The Indian mind was in general more inclined to metaphysics. Man is more than a metaphysician - unfortunately man also has an emotional self, a physical self, an intellectual self & a metaphysical-spiritual self. Metaphysically there is only the One but few can make it in one leap without much preparation. To go from non-entity to entity is difficult in one leap. Suzuki thought Zen was superior because it was more direct. PB said that the Indians also had the more direct esoteric teaching but that it was well hidden.

- PB - 10/21/1898 ; 10:00 AM ASC 30° ♈, MC 30° ♌ (needs correcting)

- Compilation of discussions on long & short paths from 4/3 & 4/8 :

PB has written about 20 unpublished essays - some are old. Before, in the books he had to introduce people to the Quest & the preparations for the two paths - now we are ready to hear about the two paths - the short & the long.

St. Bernard expressed the long path thus :

Despise the world - (for it is unsatisfactory)

Despise yourself - (for it is also unsatisfactory)

Despise yourself because you despise yourself - (for even to despise yourself is to give the ego undue attention & concern)

This is the end of the long path. At this point one must turn around to

the positive way which is the short path:

Glorify the world - (for it is an emanation of Brahman)

Glorify yourself

Glorify yourself because you glorify yourself.

Rather than concerning oneself with the ego and its developments, its ups & downs, you should turn 180° around & face the sun which is the Overself. The ego is like a whirlpool, a vortex of thoughts, and it is the strength of our clinging that holds it together. The ego is perpetuated on the long path which will not take you to enlightenment. On the long path you are always measuring your own progress. The long path is endless for new circumstances bring new temptations, new problems to deal with & no matter how spiritual the ego becomes it does not enter the light but remains in the grey. On the long path the surges of interference arising from the lower self & the negativity which enters from the environment must be dealt with. This requires development of character. On the short path one ignores negativity, and turns 180° away from the ego to the Overself - things will become brighter & brighter. The short path will establish you in peace more & more. The work of the long path eventually brings the grace which then puts you on the short path. The short path is shorter in time for you turn & face your goal directly. Because of the pressures of these times, it is recommended that both paths be done together (rather than just the long) in order to help circumvent obstacles.

The parable of the cave in Plato is analogous to the short & long path. On the long path you back out of the cave but continue to look into the cave, into the darkness of the ego. On the short path you walk forwards towards the

opening of the cave where the light is, the Overself.

There are two exercises suggested for the short path, one called the remembrance exercise and the other, the 'as if' exercise. The short path begins with the effort of remembering the Overself. The remembrance exercise overlaps the 'as if' exercise and is a necessary preparatory exercise before the 'as if' can be learned. The remembrance exercise is mentioned near the end of the Wisdom. It is like a mother who has lost her baby & no matter what she is doing she can't forget about the child. When you are active the remembrance should be held in the rear of the mind & when you have free time, it should come to the fore. In the beginning, it requires effort like any other practice but eventually it will continue of its own accord. One danger of the remembrance exercise is that it can become automatic too soon & thus be merely mechanical & hollow. The remembrance must be a warm, felt, living thing if the spirit of the exercise is not to be lost. By tuning towards the Overself grace can operate more readily, in all matters.

The 'as if' exercise requires that one should feel and act and think everything as he imagines the Overself would. It is not just a mental exercise but involves the feelings, physical activity, and imagination. The Overself contacts you primarily through intuitive feeling but also through intuitive thoughts & action. Actions which are done uncalculatingly and which later prove to have been correct are actions which spring from a source other than the ego. In the beginning, the exercise is an imaginative one but every so often one will get short glimpses which will gradually be prolonged and which are not imaginative but

The real thing. As these glimpses of the Overself come one must open up to them, be passive and receptive to them, you must surrender yourself to them & prolong them. This exercise should be accompanied with study on the nature of the Overself - so you can know something of what the Overself is like & what it is that you are trying to do. However, the Overself is truly ineffable and can never be grasped through any secondary means.

- The way PB writes - He makes a synopsis & a skeleton of what he wants to say. Then he fills it in with ideas & tid bits he's always collecting. Then he stylises it & gives it the literary touch.
- Guru & God: Ramana, Sri Aurobindo, Krishnamurti never had gurus. PB's opinion is that they are not absolutely necessary. The Indians & in particular the bhaktis thought it was absolutely necessary. He went to see Atmananda & Roger Rao was there. Roger was overly enthusiastic in terms of devotion to the guru. After a talk by Atmananda (who was an Advaitist) some disciples were speaking aloud to one another. Roger Rao said that if the guru said that something (which was black) was white, you should believe the Guru even if God said it was black. To rely too much on the Guru is a hindrance sometimes. Balance is necessary. The real authority is within you - Thou art That - it doesn't much matter if the Guru is That, you have to be That. That is the short path, to look within for God & not outward. You must understand for yourself, do the work yourself.
- St. Bernard had no visions & ecstasies - this depends on karma & will pass. To know, feel, see the truth by insight, this doesn't pass.

- Epilogue from Search in Egypt; on Bob's request PB gave these meanings which Jeff wrote as complete as possible as they were spoken:

Many Houses - In temples there are chapels, shrines, crypts, auditoriums & each serves one purpose. The many houses are to get a rounded experience, to fulfill you as a man, to build up the different sides of your nature. You must harmonize them. Each house is one side of your being - also what is outside (society is the house of others).

Track into the Desert - The hermit withdraws to find peace (in nature) after turning from the world (first outwardly & then inwardly) from finding satisfaction in human things (society & human nature).

Street that Grows Red Flowers - The astral, the passions which beset a person who has to attain self purification. The flowers of passion are inherited from the animal nature, but we are not animals alone so we must control them. This Street is our ~~inherited~~ heritage from the animal - we must claim our manhood, by controlling the animal.

Ascent of High Mtns. - Aspiration is essential to lift you from the level where you are. This is the longing for the higher being. You need courage to do it. Because you are lifting yourself out of the herd who are satisfied with small satisfactions, you climb alone.

Descent of Dark Caves - These are phases where you don't see your way at all - you are groping & surrounded by darkness. The darkness is the uncertainty - i.e., whether you are going forwards or backwards. When this becomes acute, it is the dark night of the soul, where there is great spiritual dryness, deadness. You are inwardly dead & your aspirations calm down & is quite still. This darkness must be borne (as it too will pass).

Path of Everwandering - This is the path of inability in being satisfied with what has been achieved. Must go on seeking - the thirst for knowledge. May go through different teachings & assimilate something from each. During this time you are a wandering scholar & seeker.

Way of Sitting Still - In the end you must drop all aspiration, the visiting of centers & gurus. Must be still & let the God within lead & deliver grace. You must rely on the God within.

- Depending on your past history you must travel these paths more or less.

Tears - We must all go through suffering to show us that the world is not what it seems to be, i.e., a pleasureable place.

Prayer - Pray for guidance & help.

Work - You must work on yourself to make yourself better.

Rest - Now the balance is turned & you have reached the middle point, the end of the long path & the beginning of the short. You rest from your efforts on the long path (the disciplines). Sum up what you have gained. Now you can rest from those efforts, this gives peace. You're now on the short path.

Death - The death of the ego is revealed on the short path. The life that is developed in the Overself is causing the ego to die without your efforts.

Life - The stage where you get the conscious union with the life, mind, and power - the conscious being behind the universe (Īśvara). There is harmony with Īśvara & his will.

Pity - After the harmony & oneness with Īśvara you have the insight & inner peace. Now comes the feeling that you are all right but what

about the others who are not finding ~~them~~ or looking. Compassion or pity awakens. This is the last step because you then have to retrace your steps & place yourself in other's shoes & lift them to that which they can do next. This is done in various ways - publically, secretly, through lectures, writing, institutions. Some remain unknown, others known.

7 lessons:

Pleasure - Is the easiest to learn; There is temporary joy but is always followed by pain. Having expanded from pleasure there follows the contraction by pain.

Pain - gives valuable counterpart to the lessons of pleasure.

Hate - Hatred breeds only more hatred, it never ends. We must learn about karma & that hate boomeranges. Must learn to take the opposite of hate which is compassion or love. The effects of hate afflict others as well as yourself. Nations also suffer in this way.

Illusion - Wake up to the illusory nature of the world & your personal life, this is the short path. We have metaphysics to understand it intellectually and enough experiences to see it in life & to begin to see through it. Now you are moving into the consciousness of the Overself. You see how the illusion is so little in comparison with the real.

Truth - This is the hardest to bear. It needs to be faced for oneself about oneself, the truth that the personal life has in the end to go (for there is no immortality for the personality). This has to be faced and accepted & is the truth of the whole universe - all is doomed to disintegrate. But it goes by merger by being lost in the great ocean

of Being, so it is not a total loss.

Love - The great harmony, the music of the spheres, the cosmic harmony. The tremendous meaning in the intent of God which may not always appeal to man. This is the loving relation between men and between man & God.

Peace - Here no further demands or desires are made & you are satisfied with the being that you are within you. There is no more forced reincarnation (for we bring ourselves back through our desires). When freed from these you have the peace. This is not appreciated until the experience is had. Older souls have had it all & ∴ appreciate the peace - it is a matter of age or maturity of the soul.

- at the end of the Epilogue the "Governor" is Išvara; corresponds with the insight - i.e., to see the world as the work of his hands.

4

4/8/75

• Philosophy includes all paths; you have to come from both sides (jnana & bhakti). Bhakti is preliminary & won't give you knowledge of God. The mature bhakti will by the descent of grace be made desirous to know about the God he worships.

• The WM has a soul & thus has limitations too.

- When you're beyond even ignoring negativity then you're at what Plato calls the Good.

• Black magic should not be tolerated. The evil cults come also with the spiritual. But when the doctrine is falsified, it should not be tolerated.

• Tantra - C. Trugpa is a red hat & red hats marry whereas yellow hats

don't. Red hats can drink, etc. The idea is to hold on to the higher consc. even while indulging in sensual pleasure. It is said that - That by which some men fall, other men rise. Most fail on this path & when they do they are worse off. The same with kundalini - if it doesn't hit the thousand petaled lotus it goes back down & can get stuck in the lower 3 centers. The results of this are the opposite of what was desired.

- Ramakrishna said all paths lead to the same goal. When the intellect gets dry then it turns to bhakti for refreshment.
- Most people don't study philosophy because it would point out their errors to them.
- The ego is a circle within the larger circle of Self. The sage knows everything is Brahman but that doesn't mean that ~~he~~^{he} doesn't see the world, through the smaller circle of ego.