

The Human Revolution Vol. XII By Ho Goku

The Human Revolution is a novel based on fact, written by SGI President Daisaku Ikeda under the pen name Ho Goku. It recounts the early days of the Soka Gakkai in Japan under the second president, Josei Toda, President Ikeda's mentor. The character of Shin'ichi Yamamoto represents Daisaku Ikeda. The theme of the novel is summed up in the foreword, as the author writes,

"A great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation and further, will enable a change in the destiny of all humankind." The following is an excerpt from "Tranquil Light" and "New Dawn" chapters, volume twelve.

Tranquil Light 31

NEXT, General Director Takeo Konishi, chairman of the funeral planning committee, rose to speak:

"I extend my deepest thanks to High Priest Nichijun, who is here from the head temple to attend this Soka Gakkai funeral for our late president, Josei Toda. On behalf of all the members of the Soka Gakkai, I would like to express my profound gratitude." After bowing to the high priest, Konishi continued as if making a personal pledge:

"Now that our mentor is gone, everything hinges on whether we maintain strong unity. We therefore vow to fight on, solidly united, even after we achieve a membership of 900,000, one million, or several million households, resolutely upholding our mentor's will until we achieve his greatest dream — kosen-rufu. Thank you all very much for attending today."

The funeral service proceeded smoothly, and soon the emcee, Shin'ichi Yamamoto, announced the final item on the program: "We will now close by singing 'A Star Falls in the Autumn Wind on Wuchang Plain!'"¹ With this, the brass band and fife and drum corps began a solemn accompaniment and everyone sang:

The autumn wind, with deepening sorrow,
Blows from Mt. Ch'i,
Gloomy clouds gather over the battleground
Of Wuchang Plain. . . .

Those gathered outside the funeral hall joined in with the singing that could be heard coming from within. Josei Toda had loved this song and often asked the youth to sing it. It had moved him to tears each time he heard it. But now Toda was gone.

The world's troubles, like raging swells on stormy seas,
Have yet to be quelled,
And the people suffer, while heaven weeps. . . .

Savoring each word and fighting back tears, the disciples pictured Toda as they sang.

Now, one thousand years later,
Chuko Liang's² renown has yet to fade.

The funeral service was over, but a long line of people still waiting to offer incense stretched outside. It was 3:00 p.m. before all of them had finished. More than 250,000 people had attended the ceremony. Shin'ichi Yamamoto, who had been in charge of running the event, felt great relief that this final farewell to his mentor had been carried off successfully, without a single accident or mishap. Yet the extreme tension that had gripped him since the day of Toda's death would not let up. After making one last round of the funeral hall and surrounding area to see that all was left in order, he was assailed by a sense of fatigue so overwhelming that his head began to reel. It was already dark by the time the final cleanup was complete and he had returned to the Gakkai Headquarters.

The Headquarters building was quiet. Shin'ichi went upstairs to the main hall and sat down before a framed photograph of President Toda. No longer would he be able to see his mentor's compassionate smile, or hear his stern, yet warm, admonishments. He felt infinitely alone. An intense wave of loneliness washed over him.

Tranquil Light 32

SHIN'ICHI Yamamoto quietly lost himself in his thoughts.

He had reached the limits of exhaustion, both mentally and physically. But a relentless tension — like that of a drawn bow — ran through him.

Since that fateful evening on April 2 when he received the phone call informing him of Toda's death, something had begun to change inside him. While many of the leaders close to Toda had been devastated by grief, Shin'ichi did not allow his sorrow to consume him but instead turned it into a determination to move forward.

As heir to Toda's legacy, Shin'ichi was painfully aware of his inescapable destiny to take full responsibility for the Soka Gakkai's future and advance along the noble path of oneness of mentor and disciple. Deeply fatigued as he was, he could not help but feel the heavy burden of responsibility now resting on his shoulders. It was an almost intolerable amount of pressure for a young man of 30.

To encourage and energize himself, he faced the Joju Gohonzon in the main hall and began to chant, his sonorous daimoku resounding in the empty room: "Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. . ."

As he chanted, the inscriptions down both sides of the Joju Gohonzon — "For the Fulfillment of the Great Desire for Kosen-rufu Through the Compassionate Propagation of the Great Law" on the right, and "To Be Eternally Enshrined at the Soka Gakkai" on the left — seemed to glow in the light of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.

More keenly than ever before, Shin'ichi felt the deep significance of the Soka Gakkai's mission, and of his own mission as Toda's disciple.

Shin'ichi reflected to himself that President Toda's most cherished ambition had undoubtedly been "the fulfillment of the great desire for kosen-rufu through the compassionate propagation of the great Law." The widespread propagation of the Mystic Law is both the wish of the original Buddha, Nichiren Daishonin, and the Soka Gakkai's profound mission. The original Buddha summoned and entrusted the Soka Gakkai, under the leadership of presidents Makiguchi and Toda, with this mission.

With a powerful determination welling up inside him, Shin'ichi clearly realized the path he must proceed along as Toda's disciple.

"I will dedicate my life to kosen-rufu," he vowed in his heart. "The torch that Sensei lit to illuminate the darkness and lead humanity toward happiness must never die out. I will fight on! I will keep advancing, moving ahead, always pressing forward!"

At that moment, he felt a surge of joy and courage. His first priority, he thought, would be to encourage and inspire his fellow members, many of whom were still forlorn and grief-stricken over Toda's death.

Shin'ichi wanted to put an arm around each person, squeeze their hand in reassurance, and dry their tears. He firmly vowed to support each member, to pave the way to a peaceful world and help all establish happiness that would endure eternally.

Toda's dignified expression in the photograph was stern, yet kindly; his gaze seemed firmly fixed on the future — on the struggles his disciples would wage for the sake of the Law.

It was around this time that all of Toda's disciples began to focus their attention on Shin'ichi Yamamoto and follow his actions with great interest. They seemed to have found in him a source of hope and reassurance that did much to dispel their anxiety over the organization's future.

(This concludes "Tranquil Light," Chapter 5 of volume 12 of The Human Revolution.)

(Chapter 6) **New Dawn 1**

THE sun of a new day was about to rise. But the night is never darker than before the dawn.

Now a single shaft of light penetrated that darkness, heralding the solemn arrival of a majestic new dawn.

Many members remained deeply saddened over the loss of their valiant leader for kosen-rufu, Josei Toda. Moreover, certain segments of the media began to launch blistering attacks on the Gakkai, seeming to take a vicious delight in ridiculing the members' grief. Day after day, derisive headlines appeared, such as: "Living Buddha Suddenly Ascends to Heaven"; "Leaves Soka Gakkai on Shaky Ground"; "Rival Religious Groups Rejoice"; "Soka Gakkai on the Verge of Collapse"; "A Miserable End for Errant Religious Group"; and "Demon Star Falls"; "Magical Powers Lost."

Articles by religious commentators predicted that the Gakkai would "split" or "disintegrate in mid-air." There was even one newspaper article that went so far as to deride Josei Toda's Soka Gakkai funeral, under the headline: "Religious Leader's Death Antagonizes Lovebirds"; "Commotion Over 'Buddha's Passing' Disturbs Sunday Peace of Outer Gardens"; "300,000 Kneeling, Chanting Followers Take Over Lawn."

Other religions eager to see the Gakkai's demise also took advantage of the situation to intensify their attacks.

After Toda's death, the overall administrative responsibility for the Soka Gakkai had fallen to General Director Takeo Konishi, but a sense of emptiness stemming from Toda's death prevailed within the organization, which began to lose some of its former explosive energy. The members had yet to find a ray of hope to light the way ahead, to dispel the clouds of anxiety and sorrow that hung over them.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto was gravely concerned about this; it was now imperative, he felt, to kindle a fresh flame of hope in the heart of each member. Hope would give rise to courage, energy and strength.

He ruminated deeply over the idea of making the upcoming spring general meeting on May 3 — the celebration of which had now become a Gakkai tradition — a day of fresh departure, a day to turn toward a great new goal for their future development.

Prior to that, Shin'ichi would travel to Osaka for four days beginning on April 25 for the Kansai regional study department examination.

Given the intense succession of events over the past few weeks — the monthlong commemorative pilgrimage in March to mark the completion of the Grand Reception Hall, Toda's death and the ceremonies and services that followed — Shin'ichi was extraordinarily fatigued. Finally, on the morning of April 29, he was struck with a high fever that left him without enough strength to get out of bed. He was bitterly frustrated and ashamed at his own weak health — it was his mission, after all, to carry on his mentor's work and exert himself for kosen-rufu. As he lay in bed, his body leaden with exhaustion and burning with fever, he continued to think about what would be needed for the Gakkai to make a fresh start.

He vividly recalled the words his mentor had uttered just that past February 10, the day before his last birthday: "Shin'ichi, do you think you can accomplish a membership of three million households in the next seven years?"

These words, more than any others, constituted the goal Toda had set forth for the Gakkai's future. Seven years, Shin'ichi thought; President Toda had envisioned seven years as the time required for accomplishing their next goal. There had to be some unfathomably deep meaning behind this.

New Dawn 2

SHIN'ICHI knew that Toda had often mentioned that "the Gakkai should advance a major step every seven years." He also remembered Toda saying, "Let's sound a bell every seven years to mark our progress toward kosen-rufu. Let's aim to strike seven bells!"

Shin'ichi tried to recall what had happened in the Gakkai's history each seven years since its inception.

The organization had originally begun as the Soka Kyoiku Gakkai (Society for Value-Creating Education), founded by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda on November 18, 1930. Then, seven years later, in 1937, it had kicked off its activities in earnest with a formal inauguration ceremony being held to mark the occasion. Seven years further on, on November 18, 1944, President Makiguchi had died in prison. And seven years after that, on May 3, 1951, Josei Toda had become the Soka Gakkai's second president. Finally, after seven more years, having completely fulfilled all of his lifelong objectives, Toda had passed away.

This mysterious pattern moved Shin'ichi deeply and he pondered its significance:

If the Gakkai's first bell for kosen-rufu had tolled in 1930, with the organization's initial formation, then the ringing of the fourth bell — the fourth seven-year period — would now have come to an end. If this was the case, then the forthcoming spring general meeting should initiate the loud and clear sounding of the fifth bell.

Within the ensuing seven-year period, he would see to it that a membership of three million households was achieved without fail, as President Toda had envisioned. The goal

for the seven years following that — the period of the sixth bell's tolling — would in all likelihood be to achieve a membership of 6 million households. After that, they would have to realize the construction of the Sho-Hondo — the Grand Main Temple in which the Dai-Gohonzon would be enshrined — by 1972, the beginning of the seventh bell. This seventh bell, Shin'ichi mused, would finish tolling twenty-one years from now, in 1979, signaling the completion of a total of seven seven-year periods. By that time, he vowed, he would make kosen-rufu in Japan a tangible reality. This completion of seven bells would also mark the dawn of the full-fledged worldwide spread of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Shin'ichi would then be 51. If his health would just hold out, then a new century, with all of its grand possibilities, would be awaiting him.

Shin'ichi's hopes and dreams for kosen-rufu were infinite. As he envisaged the brilliant future ahead of them, Shin'ichi decided to share his ideas for the Gakkai's future goals, based on the concept of Seven Bells that Toda had so often spoken about, at the upcoming general meeting. He couldn't help sensing that his own lifetime mission lay in realizing these long-range goals.

Many Soka Gakkai leaders were senior to him. Nevertheless, he had been unable to find anyone among his comrades whom he could rely on as a solid pillar for the future of kosen-rufu.

On this day, Shin'ichi made an entry in his diary, his heart pounding with excitement:

May 3, that significant day, is just around the corner. Will this be the day on which I effectively take leadership of the Gakkai? My heart is heavy — a pressing weight. I will powerfully strike the Fifth Bell. I will fight — to prove my mentor's greatness to the world. I will advance straight ahead. Resolved to exert my all, overcoming onslaughts of obstacles and hindrances. I am now beginning the most essential period of my youth.

New Dawn 3

THE 18th Spring General Meeting was held on May 3, 1958, at the old Ryogoku National Sports Arena, which later became the Nihon University Auditorium. Above the royal box hung a large photograph of President Toda and calligraphy for the word *unity*. On either side hung long banners bearing poems written by Toda, reproduced in large, bold brush strokes:

With the roar of the lion king
A life dedicated
Over seven years,
To saving the masses —
How wondrous!

And:

As you make your ascent
Of a still steeper mountain,
Set your mind firmly
On the journey for kosen-rufu.

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After opening words, the meeting continued with an announcement of new leadership appointments: Tokie Tani was named young women's division chief, replacing Hideyo Morikawa.

The formation of ten new corps for the young men's division and twelve new corps for the YWD was also announced. This news testified eloquently to the fresh progress being made by the youthful heirs who had struggled so diligently alongside Shin'ichi Yamamoto under Toda's tutelage.

The vibrant spirit generated by the youth seemed to send a fragrant breeze of hope into the participants' hearts still clouded with a tinge of sadness over Toda's death. After words from several Gakkai directors and some representatives sharing their experience in faith, Shin'ichi Yamamoto rose to the rostrum. Embracing with his gaze the tens of thousands of Bodhisattvas of the Earth assembled before him, he began to speak powerfully:

"It was Nichiren Daishonin's advent that gave credence to Shakyamuni Buddha's prophecies. And it is not going too far to say that Nichiren Daishonin's will and intent have been actualized by the appearance of President Toda, by the Soka Gakkai.

"President Toda devoted his entire life to making kosen-rufu a reality. He fought and continued to proclaim this ideal until he had fulfilled every one of his cherished objectives and returned to the treasure land of Tranquil Light. President Toda's sole intent and purpose was accomplishing kosen-rufu, and this, too, is the eternal spirit of the Soka Gakkai.

"It is now up to all of us, as President Toda's disciples, to unite solidly behind General Director Konishi and boldly redouble our efforts to spread the Daishonin's Buddhism. We have taken faith in the Gohonzon and been taught and trained by President Toda, the great leader of propagation in the Latter Day of the Law. If we move ahead together, pooling our strength and energy, then I am confident that we can absolutely accomplish the religious reformation known as kosen-rufu.

"In his writings the Daishonin states: 'This sutra [the Lotus Sutra] is superior to all other sutras. It is like the lion king, the monarch of all creatures that run on the ground, and like the eagle, the king of all creatures that fly in the sky' (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, p. 249). Then let us also, as individuals dedicated to spreading the True Law, advance like courageous lion kings!"

Shin'ichi's appeal to the tens of thousands of assembled members expressed the boiling passion and monumental conviction for kosen-rufu that were coursing through his being.

Next, he touched on Toda's vision of Seven Bells and traced the Gakkai's history of having made a substantial leap forward every seven years since its founding in 1930. The participants listened with rapt attention to what Shin'ichi was saying:

"Then, in 1951, Mr. Toda was inaugurated as the second president, and over the next seven years revealed to us everything we need to know to achieve kosen-rufu, while building for us a firm foundation upon which to accomplish that goal."

New Dawn 4

SHIN'ICHI continued with even greater intensity:

"Starting today, the curtain finally opens on the fifth bell—our fifth seven-year period of development. After that, two more seven-year periods will remain before

completing the seventh bell in 1979, 21 years from today. Let us make it our goal to firmly solidify the foundation and overall structure of the our kosen-rufu movement by the time these seven bells finish tolling.

“As the Daishonin said, ‘Life is limited, and we must not begrudge it. What we should aspire to, after all, is the Buddha land’ (MW-5, 132). In this spirit, why don’t we make today’s meeting our first step in a new period of powerful progress and begin a fresh advance toward kosen-rufu, filled with hope, courage and confidence!”

With the lion king now departed, Shin’ichi’s speech constituted the powerful roar of the young lion destined to succeed him. The entire auditorium shook with thunderous applause. Every face was beaming. Shin’ichi’s cry had cleared any remaining clouds of sorrow from people’s hearts, illuminating them with the bright light of hope.

They now stood on the threshold of a new dawn that would dispel the darkness of grief and sorrow that had engulfed them.

As the participants listened to Shin’ichi’s words, it was as if a new path to kosen-rufu had suddenly become visible to them; in the distance that represented their future, they could see majestic golden and silver peaks glistening in the morning light.

At the meeting that day, High Priest Nichijun lauded Toda’s magnificent accomplishments:

“President Toda dedicated himself to propagating the Daishonin’s Buddhism with the aim of accomplishing a membership of 750,000 households. I think that the number 750,000 has profound significance. By this, I mean, of course, my conviction that it corresponds to the five or seven characters of Myoho-enge-kyo³....

“As you know, in the assembly on Eagle Peak described in the Lotus Sutra, the four great bodhisattvas,⁴ with Bodhisattva Jogyo in the vanguard, arrived one after another. They, in turn, were followed by great bodhisattvas as numerous as the sands of sixty thousand Ganges Rivers, who also gathered at Eagle Peak. There, they made a resolute vow to propagate Myoho-enge-kyo in the Latter Day of the Law....

“I believe that the Soka Gakkai, with President Toda in the vanguard, summoned them forth. In other words, I believe President Toda called forth these people in the number of 750,000, representing the seven or five characters of Myoho-enge-kyo.

“There is not the slightest doubt that, if every single one of these 750,000 men and women throughout Japan earnestly dedicates themselves to spreading the Law of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, we will see the accomplishment of kosen-rufu in the Latter Day of the Law just as Shakyamuni prophesied long ago....

“I believe the fact that you have just renewed your pledge toward the future in perfect unison can only signify that the assembly at Eagle Peak has not yet dispersed⁵ — or put another way, that the Soka Gakkai represents the true pure land of Eagle Peak and an incomparable assembly of Buddhas. As such you have my deepest respect.”

Just as the high priest implied, it was as if the assembly at Eagle Peak had moved to this age and its participants were pledging together anew to achieve kosen-rufu. Now these sons and daughters of the Buddha were rising to the call of the intrepid young general who was heir to this task and preparing to embark together on a fresh new advance.

Illustrations by Teikichi Miyoshi

(To be continued)

1. "A Star Falls in the Autumn Wind on Wuchang Plain": (Abbr. "Wuchang Plain.") A song about the death of the great Chinese minister Chuko K'ung-ming, the hero of the epic saga, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.
2. Chuko Liang: Another name for Chuko K'ung-ming.
3. The five or seven characters of Myoho-renge-kyo: This refers to the fact that Myoho-renge-kyo is written with five Chinese characters: *myo-ho-ren-ge-kyo*; and Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, with seven: *nam-mu-myo-ho-ren-ge-kyo*.
4. The four bodhisattvas: Jogyo (Superior Practices), Muhengyo (Boundless Practices), Jyogyo (Pure Practices) and Anryugyo (Firmly Established Practices). They are the four leaders of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth described in the "Emerging from the Earth" (fifteenth) chapter of the Lotus Sutra.
5. "The assembly on Eagle Peak has not yet dispersed": Words of Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai. Also discussed by Daishonin in the "Ongi Kuden" (Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings), *Gosho Zenshu*, p. 757.