

## SGI President Discusses Life of Sun Yat-sen

### SUMMARY

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*The following is a summary of a speech by SGI President Ikeda at a monthly All-Japan Prefecture Chiefs Conference on Dec. 5, 1996.*

Heartfelt encouragement pervades Nichiren Daishonin's writings, SGI President Ikeda said to begin his speech. In a letter written to Nichigen-nyo, the wife of Shijo Kingo, the Daishonin in essence wrote: Although you may be slandered by others, in the long run you have nothing to fear or complain of, because an infinite number of Buddhas and Buddhist deities throughout the universe cherish and praise you.

With words like these, the Daishonin inspired his followers to develop a lofty state of mind and to ceaselessly advance filled with hope, Mr. Ikeda said.

He then quoted Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), widely recognized as the father of modern China, who observed that an intrinsic side of every failure is the opportunity to advance. With this in mind, the Chinese leader endlessly encouraged his fellow citizens to never succumb to failure. After all, Mr. Ikeda affirmed, one can only become stronger through experiencing hardship and difficulty.

Furthermore, Sun Yat-sen had the foresight to never act impetuously. He clearly understood the fleeting prosperity short-sighted individuals enjoy, the SGI leader explained, as opposed to the enduring legacy those who embody the resolve and will to persevere can pass along.

Stressing that we are still in the very earliest stages of the kosen-rufu movement — the eternal struggle for human revolution — the SGI president cited a poem by the first Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, which proclaimed that although our journey is long, we can impart immeasurable strength to others through encouragement. Mr. Ikeda hoped that all SGI members will make a fresh start toward the year 2000, the 70th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai's founding, wholeheartedly encouraging one another.

At the close of his speech, the SGI leader referred to a verse by the Chinese poet Bai Letian (772–846) describing the petty strife between two tribes as being as trivial as a war waged between the two tiny horns of a snail. Bai Letian further noted in this poem that, whether we are rich or poor, if we are to fully enjoy life, we must have the wisdom to eschew the trivial and develop greater depth of character.

In closing, President Ikeda called on those present to steadily advance toward the future, working tirelessly for the happiness of all humankind.

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