

No Time For Standing Still

SGI President Ikeda delivered the following address on the conferral of the title of honorary professor by China's Inner Mongolia University and the distinction of honorary advisor to the Chinese Association of Mongolian Literature, conducted at the 2nd Student Division Leaders Meeting, Oct. 6, at the Soka International Friendship Hall, Sendagaya, Tokyo.

Honorable President Shorgan, esteemed professors and faculty of Inner Mongolia University:

Inner Mongolia University stands amid endless green plains in an ancient land under boundless blue skies, committed to fostering people of academic and human excellence. It is thus with deepest humility and gratitude that I accept the title of honorary professor you have conferred upon me today. Thank you very much. My deep appreciation, too, for the honor of being named honorary advisor to the Chinese Association of Mongolian Literature.

Student division representatives from 136 universities, successors to the SGI's peace movement, are gathered here today. It was also at a student division meeting, in 1968, that I first advocated the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan. Now, with these bright young students, I would like to open more new horizons for harmonious China-Japan relations and world peace.

Inner Mongolia University was founded in 1957, the same year the Soka Gakkai's student division was formed. Just last month, the university celebrated its 40th anniversary. In his speech at those festivities, President Shorgan voiced his gratitude to his predecessors who had pioneered the way for the university's development. Your fine institution's first president, Dr. Ulanfu, in particular, is renowned as a hero who fought intrepidly against Japanese militarism. I have the greatest respect and admiration for your university's far-reaching vision and its tradition of profound love and compassion for the people.

The direct and close involvement of Premier Zhou Enlai in the establishment of Inner Mongolia University is also well known. He arranged for 130 professors and lecturers from 12 existing Chinese universities, including Peking University, to teach at the new facility. He also stocked its library with more than 200,000 books and secured a generous supply of teaching equipment, furnishings and other essential items. This is because he knew that seeds sown in the soil of education would grow and flourish until they produced a rich harvest of golden fruit that would sustain the nation's future. I, too, believe that education is the most sacred of life's endeavors.

Zhou Enlai's niece, Zhou Bingjian, studied at Inner Mongolia University. After graduating from secondary school, she decided to go to Inner Mongolia and contribute to its development. Zhou Enlai and his wife, Deng Yingchao, were overjoyed at her decision and warmly encouraged her. They stressed to her the importance of seeing her commitment through to the end, urging her to sink her roots alongside the people of Inner Mongolia and become an upstanding citizen of that region.

Zhou Bingjian entered Inner Mongolia University in October 1975, just three months before her uncle's death. From his sickbed, Premier Zhou offered her his final words of love and encouragement: "Your whole future is yet ahead of you."

Youth is a period of ceaseless growth and progress; there is no time for standing still, no time for complacency or resignation. To keep challenging toward a lofty ideal is the pride

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of youth and the life of a student. When youth have a noble sense of purpose to improve themselves, society and the world, their potential will flower and develop limitlessly.

In 1975, Soka University was the first Japanese university to officially receive exchange students from the People's Republic of China. I will never forget the faces of those first six young students nor the eager light that sparkled in their eyes, communicating a passion for learning and a fervent desire to contribute to their country.

I am also reminded of the inspiring story of President Shorgan, an internationally respected biologist, who studied in Japan for two years. The attitude of many Japanese in those days was very condescending and arrogant toward Chinese. But Dr. Shorgan responded to those ridiculous, narrow-minded prejudices by vowing to produce research that would make everyone stand up and take notice. Night and day, he devoted himself single-mindedly to his work, eventually making history by achieving the first successful in vitro fertilization of a goat. Viewing time as his most precious resource, Dr. Shorgan pursued his research in great earnestness, careful never to waste a single moment. As a result of his tireless efforts, born of incredible perseverance and resolve, he won over prejudice and discrimination. I applaud his resounding victory.

The greater the baseless discrimination or criticism directed against us, the greater the inner resources and strength we must summon to conquer and triumph over it. I hope that all the students here today will forge boldly ahead with this spirit to score a brilliant victory in their youth. No matter what changes the times may bring, the key to unmistakable victory always lies in taking personal initiative to study, to gain greater capability, to develop self-confidence and fortitude.

Eventually, turning down ardent entreaties that he stay on and continue his research in Japan, Dr. Shorgan returned to his beloved homeland of Inner Mongolia. He was inspired by a lofty desire to serve his compatriots. But going home meant starting from scratch, with none of the advanced research facilities he had enjoyed in Japan. Nevertheless, with unshakable faith that he would succeed, he devoted all his energies to his research, and in 1989, five years after his return, accomplished in vitro fertilization of both sheep and cows in Inner Mongolia.

History is changed by the presence of such individuals — courageous people unconcerned by short-term setbacks, who are not afraid of hardship, who press bravely forward, whatever obstacles they may confront.

Strong are those who profoundly recognize the true purpose of learning. A life dedicated to benefiting one's fellow human beings knows no deadlock.

Ten years ago, when I first spoke with Dr. Linus Pauling (1901–94), one of the greatest scientists of this century, he spoke to me of a meeting he once had with Albert Einstein (1879–1955) that deeply impressed him. The renowned physicist, whose research had been instrumental in the development of the atomic bomb, confessed to Dr. Pauling that he feared he may have perpetrated a terrible wrong against human life. Albert Einstein later used that painful self-awareness as a springboard for his passionate and widespread activities for world peace. Dr. Pauling also believed that science must devote itself to securing peace and happiness for all humanity, and he remained a staunch antinuclear activist in the face of harsh opposition and oppression over the years.

In any age, those who take up the challenge of trying to create something of fresh, positive value to ensure a brighter future for humanity always confront a raging storm of obstacles. That is the greatest honor and tribute for a leader who is committed to the people and who works for their welfare wholeheartedly.

It is my hope that the Soka Gakkai student division members assembled here today will join in that admirable challenge and work to usher in a wonderful new era of human

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history. Let us all strive together to bring the sun of human revolution — a profound inner reformation in the hearts and minds of individuals — to illuminate the coming century of life with its radiant light.

In closing, I offer my sincere prayers that Inner Mongolia's beautiful "Green City," the capital, Hohhot, will flourish forever, and that the brilliance of Inner Mongolia University, shining jewel of the steppes, will endure for all eternity.

Thank you.

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