

Writing to Move the World
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On Aug. 6 it was five years since I began writing *The New Human Revolution*. The eighth volume of the serialized version appearing in the *Seikyo Shimbun* will soon be finished. How quickly those five years have passed!

Time flies. That is precisely why I cannot allow myself to waste even a single moment.

President Abraham Lincoln wrote his famous Gettysburg Address — which contains those well-known words, “government of the people, by the people, for the people” — on the train on his way to that city. I, too, am always writing on the run, in the midst of my hectic schedule. The *Seikyo Shimbun* editor who edits the installments of *The New Human Revolution* once said to me, “Usually, editors are chasing after their authors for the manuscript, but in your case, President Ikeda, I am the one being chased!”

I always try to submit each batch of manuscripts at least one month in advance of publication. The sooner I can finish them, the sooner I can move on to other tasks. At the same time, I am always concerned that haste will result in careless writing.



Speaking of writing, I am reminded of an experience I had when I was working at a printers in Tokyo’s Shimbashi area just after the war ended. Once, when I was pulling out the type from the trays, I had a profound insight. Each piece of type was only a blob of lead, but when those lead fragments were combined into sentences and printed, they acquired enormous power. Words are living things, I realized. They are brimming with immense vitality and life.

One day I shared that insight with the principal of the night school I was attending. His face broke into a warm smile, and he said to me:

“That’s a wonderful observation. You’re right. Look at Tolstoy. Look at Hugo. Literature not only moves individuals, it moves society and the world.”

His words made a deep impression on me. I decided that someday I, too, would reach out to people across the globe through the power of words. That wish, somewhere in my mind, was behind my decision to pick up my pen and write *The Human Revolution* and *The New Human Revolution*.



The father of popular Japanese literature, Eiji Yoshikawa (1892–1962), once wrote, “Those on the very front lines of human existence, those who are striving in the real world, are living and breathing true literature; they are the true protagonists of our age.”

He further continued that a writer whose work is truly vibrant and alive is one who learns from and labors to give expression to people’s real-life experiences.

If that is the case, the members of the SGI are the true protagonists of our age who embody a living literature, because amid the realities of society they teach those who are in pain and anguish that the Daishonin’s Buddhism offers a practical way to improve one’s life, and they are proof of the happiness that can be thus attained through their own examples.

The history of kosen-rufu has been filled with the moving, painstaking struggles of many

comrades. Countless noble, courageous individuals have devoted their lives to the sacred task of kosen-rufu alongside me.

I am keenly aware that kosen-rufu only advances because of the efforts of such staunch individuals. And it is my truest wish to search out these heroes and to pay enduring tribute to their commendable efforts.



Times change, and the environment surrounding the Soka Gakkai has changed with them. But there is one thing that must never change: our spirit.

When a religious organization allows its founding spirit to die, it invariably succumbs to formalism and authoritarianism, turning into a soulless shell. For a religion, this is the kiss of death.

Why did the Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) school of Buddhism in Japan, which established an ordination platform of the theoretical teaching of the Lotus Sutra on Mount Hiei, incorporate alien, esoteric teachings into its doctrine?

Why did Nichiren Shoshu trample the spirit of its founder, Nichiren Daishonin, and turn into the slanderous Nikken sect?

The reason for the corruption and degeneracy in both cases was a failure to understand the original teacher's intent, a loss of the true spirit of faith.

The Soka Gakkai must forever carry on the spirit of its first and second presidents — of Mr. Makiguchi, who was unafraid of martyrdom and steadfastly upheld the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin until the last moment of his life, and of Mr. Toda who in the aftermath of war embarked alone on his journey to make the dream of kosen-rufu a reality.

The same goes for the unflinching commitment demonstrated by pioneering members who braved opposition and persecution in their efforts to introduce others to the Daishonin's teachings; and also for the sincere devotion of all who, with deep pride in their mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth, have worked tirelessly for the sake of Buddhism, for their friends and for society at large, without seeking personal fame or fortune.

My purpose in writing *The New Human Revolution* is to transmit and pass on this noble Soka Gakkai spirit to future generations.



The second volume of *The New Human Revolution* (in Japanese) will soon be published in book form. I want to pass the Soka Gakkai spirit on to the 21st century. I see it as conveying the way to a new humanism.

Writing a serialized novel is extremely demanding work, but since I regard it as my mission, I am determined to give it everything I have. I write again today, with all the earnestness and concentration as if I were composing my last will and testament.

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