

## The New Human Revolution, Volume 7, Chapter 2, Parts 9–10

### 'Fresh growth'

By DAISAKU IKEDA, SGI President

***Shin'ichi Yamamoto changes the overly formal atmosphere at the Hawaii Conference, and Hawaii Chapter is born. A men's division member gets so mad when his friend is transferred into the young men's division that he rips his jacket and breaks his camera.***

Forty-seven people passed the exams in Hawaii — 37 qualifying as assistant teachers and 10 being promoted to the teacher rank.

After administering the exams, the leaders accompanying Shin'ichi Yamamoto split up and attended separate discussion meetings with the group leaders and unit leaders, as well as a youth division guidance meeting.

A youthful, vibrant seeking spirit pervaded each meeting. The participants' question topics were diverse — ranging from propagation to the running of the organization — many on issues of vital importance for the promotion of kosen-rufu. Members also eagerly shared their experiences of benefit and of overcoming problems through faith or related their determinations for the future.

In the little more than two years since Shin'ichi's first visit, the membership in Hawaii had risen to approximately 300 households, and each member had grown tremendously. Shin'ichi was overjoyed.

That night, the Hawaii Conference, which would double as the inaugural meeting of Hawaii Chapter, was held at the Kaewai Elementary School in Honolulu. About 400 people gathered in the school's multipurpose hall.

When Shin'ichi arrived, the members cheered and applauded. Waving, he greeted them in English: "Hello. Good evening!" Then, in Japanese, he said: "It's great to see you again after all this time. I'm delighted to find you all in such high spirits!"

There was a large stage at the front of the hall set with a speaker's table, draped in white cloth, and chairs for the top leaders. This created an atmosphere of rather austere formality. Shin'ichi went up on the stage, picked up a chair and moved it down to the floor level — he was level with the audience members.

"Today, let's do away with formality," he declared. "Since we're all equal before the Gohonzon, let's bring the speaker's table down to the floor as well. It would be another thing if there were many people, and those in the back could not see. But with this number of people, I don't think that there's any need for us to use a platform. We are all comrades, members of the Soka family, a global family. There are no distinctions among us."

Shin'ichi then asked the youth division event staff to bring the table, microphone and chairs down from the stage. Shin'ichi then took his seat and declared, "Let's begin the Hawaii Conference!"

The leaders traveling with Shin'ichi offered greetings, and then the formation of the Hawaii Chapter and the related leadership appointments were announced.

Mitsuru Kawakami was appointed chapter leader. Despite only having joined the Soka Gakkai a short while before Shin'ichi's first visit to Hawaii, he had been exerting himself earnestly in faith and had been made district leader when Honolulu District, the second district in Hawaii, was formed.

The 47-year-old Kawakami was proficient in both Japanese and English, and he commanded trust and respect in the community, having gained a good reputation through his work.

Title: Volume 7: Chapter 2 Fresh Growth (9-10)

Subject: World Tribune 11/27/98 n.3219 p.4 WT981127p04

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Chapter Fresh Growth History Human Kosen-rufu Revolution Tribune Volume World

Tatsuko Hirata was appointed the women's division leader of the new chapter. Hiroto Hirata, whom, on his first visit to Hawaii, Shin'ichi had given the nickname Riki, was her husband. He resembled the famous Japanese wrestler Rikidozan. Hawaii District had been formed on that occasion, and Hiroto had been named district leader. At that time, his wife had still been in Japan. After joining her husband in Hawaii, Tatsuko, formerly a district women's division leader, had undertaken activities as the effective central figure of the Gakkai organization in Hawaii. This was in part because the Hawaiian-born Hiroto, though fluent in English, could speak only limited Japanese; the majority of the members were Japanese women, who spoke nothing else. This presented problems when Hiroto tried to give them guidance or encouragement.

When Kiyoshi Jujo and other Gakkai leaders had visited the United States on a guidance trip in August 1961, Tatsuko was named Hawaii District leader and her husband, Hiroto, a district advisor. Now Tatsuko had become the Hawaii Chapter women's division leader, while Hiroto was given responsibility for heading up the Hawaii Chapter young men's division.

Japanese women were the main force among the Hawaiian members. And many of them had husbands or sons who could understand only English. From that standpoint, it made a lot of sense to place Hiroto in charge of the young men's division. But it seemed that there were members who were disappointed to hear of Hiroto Hirata's transfer from the men's division to the young men's division.

There was a man of about 30 named S. G. Rike, who was photographing the meeting. Rike, who had a large build, was dressed in a suit and drenched in sweat. An American serviceman, he had begun practicing about a year and a half earlier on the urging of his Japanese wife, Katsue. Since then, as one of the few men's division members, he had grown close to Hiroto and joined him in many activities. But when he suddenly heard about Hiroto's transfer to the young men's division, he felt terribly lonely, as though he had been abandoned.

He was straightforward and hot-tempered, and when the meeting was over, he called out in English, "Why can't I join the young men's division, too?!" And, with the camera still hanging from his shoulder, he tore off his jacket and angrily threw it on the floor, ripping his jacket and breaking his camera in the process.

Some days later, it was decided to allow him to participate as a young men's division member. This episode spoke eloquently of the trust members felt for Hiroto Hirata. The Hawaii young men's division under Hiroto's leadership became known as the Pineapple Corps, and its members distinguished themselves in their kosen-rufu activities.

At the conference, a Hawaii Chapter young women's division leader was also appointed. In addition, it was announced that the number of districts making up the Hawaii organization, which until then had been two — Hawaii District and Honolulu District — would now be expanded to eight, signifying a new start for the Hawaii members.

*To be continued*