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COVER PHOTO by Gregory Nakasuji of Los Angeles: Finale shot of the Global Family Festival held at the World Peace Ikeda Auditorium in Santa Monica. Some 600 youth from Los Angeles' five regions participated.



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FROM OUR READERS

Due to the volume of letters we receive, not all can be printed, and all letters are subject to condensation. Letters printed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the SGI-USA or *Living Buddhism*. Please include signature, mailing address and telephone number with all correspondence. Mail to: Letters, Living Buddhism, 525 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401 or e-mail: LivingB1@aol.com

APPRECIATE ARTICLES

I WANTED to let you know how much I like the newest reincarnation of our monthly magazine. Not just because it looks good, but because more and more, it's much easier to read and understand. It's less "high theory" and more basic Buddhism. Infinitely better!

I particularly appreciate three articles in the March/April issue. First, Mr. Zaitzu's article on "Untimely Death" hits home for us in New Orleans.

In the early morning hours of January 1, before most of us were getting ready for New Year's Gongyo, two of our long-time members were killed in a car crash. They were hit head on by an alleged drunk driver. Hal and Gloria also left a 14-year-old daughter.

We were all completely shocked on a day that was to be filled with happiness. I was thankful that my husband and I saw them for the last time just a

few days before, when we picked up our computer from them. The memorial service was standing-room only.

The second was on the Fuji School. I've never heard of the Fuji School. I had no idea that this temple issue has been going on as long as the Daishonin's time! Very interesting, very insightful. Thanks for keeping us up on this important issue.

Third, the article on Mr. Tommie Shaw was very good. The magazine is much better than it used to be. Thanks again for making it readable and interesting.

AMY O'DONNELL
Metairie, Louisiana

ABOUT THE SPIDER WORT

HI everyone! Did you see the beautiful flower on the cover of the March issue of *Living Buddhism*? I know that

Living Buddhism is the monthly journal of the SGI-USA, an American Buddhist movement that promotes peace and individual happiness based on the philosophy and practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. In association with the SGI, the SGI-USA works in tandem with members around the world. On an international scale, the SGI centers its activities on the human potentialities for individual happiness and global peace and prosperity. Rooted in the life-affirming philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin, SGI members share a profound commitment to the values of peace, culture and education.

These values are expressed in the SGI Charter, which embodies core beliefs in the ideal of world citizenship, the spirit of tolerance and the safeguarding of fundamental human rights.

The SGI-USA applies Buddhist principles through a nationwide network of grass-roots activities centering primarily on neighborhood discussion groups. Learn more about the SGI-USA, or find a discussion group in your area by calling our national office in Santa Monica, (310) 451-8811. Check out our Web page at: <http://www.sgi-usa.org>

the color of this flower was purple on your magazine, however, for those of us in South Carolina, it was pink!

Do you know why? This flower is a spider wort. When it is exposed to radiation, it mutates in color from purple to pink. This flower is used by many environmentalists to

detect radiation leaks from nuclear facilities throughout the world. In South Carolina we have so much high- and low-level nuclear waste in our state that even the flower on the cover of *Living Buddhism* alerted us!!!

Actually, I even planted many spider worts in my back-

yard and around the nuclear waste facility in our town as a monitor of any radiation leaks.

TOMO KAWAGUCHI
Eco-man
Charlotte, South Carolina

Glossary

Bodhisattvas of the Earth: Those who chant and propagate Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. *Earth* indicates the enlightened nature of all people, and *bodhisattva* is one who dedicates his or her life to helping others.

Buddha: One who perceives the true nature of all life and leads others to attain the same enlightenment. The Buddha nature exists in all beings and is characterized by the qualities of wisdom, courage, compassion and life force.

daimoku: Literally, *title*, it refers to the invocation or chanting of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, the title of the Lotus Sutra.

Gohonzon: It is the embodiment of the Law of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo and the life of Nichiren Daishonin in the form of a scroll, which SGI members enshrine in their homes. *Go* means *worthy of honor* and *honzon* means *object of fundamental respect*.

gongyo: Literally, it means *assiduous practice*. In Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, gongyo consists of reciting excerpts from the second and sixteenth chapters of the Lotus Sutra and chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.

karma: Sanskrit word meaning *action*. The life tendency or destiny each indi-

vidual creates through thoughts, words and deeds that exert an often unseen influence over one's future.

kosen-rufu: Literally, it means to *widely declare and spread* (Buddhism); to secure lasting peace and happiness for all humankind through the propagation of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

Lotus Sutra: The highest teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha, it reveals that all people can attain enlightenment and declares that his former teachings should be regarded as preparatory. Reciting excerpts from the Lotus Sutra is part of SGI members' daily Buddhist practice.

Nam-myoho-enge-kyo: The fundamental component of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, it expresses the true entity of life that allows people to directly tap their enlightened nature. Although the deepest meaning of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo is revealed only through its practice, the literal meaning is: *Nam* (devotion), the action of practicing Buddhism; *myoho* (Mystic Law), the entity of the universe and its phenomenal manifestations; *rengé* (lotus), the simultaneity of cause and effect; *kyo* (Buddha's teaching), all phenomena.

Nichiren Daishonin (1222–82): The founder of the Buddhism upon which the SGI bases its activities. He inscribed the true object of worship, the Gohonzon, for the observation of one's mind and established the invocation of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo as the universal practice to attain enlightenment. *Daishonin* is an honorific title that means *great sage*.

Shakyamuni: Also known as Siddhartha Gautama. Born in India (present day southern Nepal) about three thousand years ago, he is the first recorded Buddha and founder of Buddhism. For fifty years, he expounded various sutras (teachings) culminating in the Lotus Sutra, which he declared his ultimate teaching.

Soka Gakkai International (SGI): The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is a worldwide association with membership in 128 countries and territories. In the service of its members and of society at large, SGI centers its activities on human potentialities for individual happiness and for global peace and prosperity. The breadth and focus of its mission derive from the philosophy and practice of Nichiren Buddhism. Soka Gakkai means *value-creation society*. The SGI-USA is a member-organization of the SGI.

Frequently Cited Sources

For purposes of convenience, all citations from the following works will be given in the text and abbreviated as follows after the first listing:

- *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin:* MW, followed by the volume and page number.
- *Gosho Zenshu* (The Collected Writings of Nichiren Daishonin in Japanese): GZ, followed by the page number.
- *The Lotus Sutra:* LS, followed by the chapter and page number.

THE HEART OF THE MENTOR

AFTER an incredibly difficult winter season, spring is finally here. In May, nature shows off her treasure trove of magic. The chill winds we braced against just the other day are now warm, embracing breezes. May is also the month that celebrates mentor and disciple. Since the days of my youth, I have eagerly looked forward to this time. For me, May 3 is truly New Year's Day. It is the day I make a fresh determination to follow the way of mentor and disciple. This year I do so with a new insight and a deeper commitment than ever.

It has been thirty-eight years since SGI President Ikeda became the leader of the Soka movement. What I've been reflecting on as we approach this May 3 is how, for virtually all of these thirty-eight years, he has been assaulted with waves of criticism; how every imaginable accusation has been hurled in his direction. I've thought of how his name has been vilified in the Japanese tabloid press; how he has been schemed against and lied about and betrayed even by

Being close to the heart of the mentor and capturing his spirit is one thing, but to become the next president seemed nearly impossible until I realized that they are one and the same. The challenge is to expand the condition of our lives.

those he trusted. And how in all this time, just like the spring that appears no matter how harsh the winter, he has never retreated, not even an inch. What an awesome display of courage and conviction.

Yet, isn't the way of mentor and disciple one in which there is no difference between the two? Hasn't he always tried to inspire the same qualities in us? But we sometimes doubt we can reply. I think of how often I've heard a member say, "But he's in Japan and I'm here." Or, "We don't even speak the same language, how can I be close to his heart?" In

practical terms if people trusted by President Ikeda could betray him, then being close to him or speaking the same language is certainly not a prerequisite for understanding the mentor's heart—no more so than living next to the bank can make us rich. So I think one step we can take is to unburden ourselves from the idea that conditions or environment have anything to do with limiting or enhancing understanding.

But that's the first step. As you may have read

in a recent *World Tribune*, President Ikeda in a speech given this past March 16 challenged us all to succeed him as the next president of the SGI. Being close to the heart of the mentor and capturing his spirit is one thing, but to become the next president seemed nearly impossible until I realized that they are one and the same. The challenge is to expand the condition of our lives. Nichiren Daishonin tells us: "You must never seek any of Shakyamuni's teachings of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the universe outside yourself. Your mastery of the Buddhist teachings will not relieve you of the sufferings of birth and death in the least unless you perceive the nature of your own life" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 4).

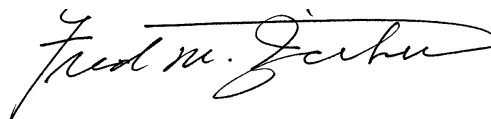
I BEGAN this article by saying I had a new insight this year. It is to take whatever action I can to blunt the force of persecutions hurled at President Ikeda. But what can I do? I can certainly do my best to behave in a humanistic manner. And I can put forth an even greater effort to understand his vision, his beliefs. How else but to read his speeches and guidance.

For instance, his 1998 Peace Proposal is in this issue of *Living Buddhism*. In previous years I've sometimes been intimidated by its length or by concepts I imagine to be over my head. But this year, in spite of all that, I've picked it up immediately and begun to read it. While I'm reading this or any of his other writings, if I can find a sentence or phrase or an idea that I can get excited about that makes my heart smile, it will find the smile in another person's heart. And when I talk about it with someone else, and that person can pick up on my excitement, it can become an inspiration for that person to take action in his or her life.

I'll finish by sharing an anecdote about the first time I met President Ikeda. It was in 1964 when I was appointed a student division leader. This was a position I really wanted badly. I think it was the first and last time I chanted for a position. You see, one had to be a student division leader to get invited to the lectures President Ikeda was giving once a month on the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings."

That January I was appointed and was able to attend. This was a remarkable experience for me. Then in March, it was graduation month. President Ikeda invited about thirty of us to join him for dinner after the lecture in the basement dining room of the headquarters building. I had seen President Ikeda on stage at large meetings, but this would be the first time I would actually be close to him. After dinner he walked among us and shook our hands. I was far in the back of the room, but he came up to me anyway. He looked me straight in the eye and asked me my name. When I told him, he thought for a moment and said, "I will not forget your name." I was moved that he would say such a thing to me, a poor, undistinguished student. Tears filled my eyes. I understood that he was treating me as an individual rather than just someone in the crowd. I instantly sensed that he cared so deeply. That is the essence of my relationship with President Ikeda. I had never in my life met a person like that.

President Ikeda is a man who understands the heart of others. It has always been his determination that people grow and develop. From that he has never wavered. I can't help but think of what Nichiren Daishonin told Shijo Kingo when he wrote "The Three Kinds of Treasure"—that "the real meaning of the Lord Shakyamuni Buddha's appearance in this world lay in his behavior as a human being."



Fred M. Zaitsev
SGI-USA General Director

Study Material for May • June

“Letter to Ko-ama Gozen”

(The following passage is taken from the book Learning From the Goshō: The Eternal Teachings of Nichiren Daishonin by SGI President Daisaku Ikeda, pp. 95–106, and can also be found in Goshō Zenshu, pp. 1324–25.)

Respecting As Buddhas Those Who Take Action for Kosen-rufu

What is the conclusion of the Lotus Sutra? That a person who upholds the Mystic Law should be treasured wholeheartedly. The sutra says, “If you see a person who accepts and upholds this sutra, you should rise and greet him from afar, showing him the same respect you would a Buddha” (LS28, 324).

IN the “Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings,” Nichiren Daishonin explains that this constitutes the “ultimate transmission” (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 781). These words bring Shakyamuni’s preaching of the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra to a close. They represent the sutra’s final conclusion.

“Letter to Ko-ama Gozen”¹ was sent to the wife of Ko Nyudo² of Sado Island. The “Ko” in both names is probably from the name of the place where they lived. The couple became devotees of the Daishonin while he was in exile on Sado. They were childless, and it appears they were advanced in age.

In a letter dated two months prior, Nichiren Daishonin tells the couple: “Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, must be a compassionate father to both of you. I, Nichiren, must be your child” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 7, p. 87). And, “Because you have no sons, please consider coming here [to Minobu] to live with me in your old age” (MW-7, 88). This reveals how

much the Daishonin thought of this couple who came to his aid when he was undergoing great persecution.

“When the Mongols come pouring into Japan,” he tells them, “please make your way here” (MW-7, 88). He is very specific. Treasuring people means taking tangible action on their behalf.

I have received three hundred mon³ of coins from the wife of Abutsu-bo.⁴ Since both of you are of the same mind, have someone read this letter to you and listen to it together.

I have also received the unlined summer robe you sent to me here in the recesses

of this mountain in Hakiri Village, Kai Province, all the way from the province of Sado where you live. (MW-4, 139)

THE year after the Daishonin went to live at Mount Minobu, Ko Nyudo came all the way from Sado to visit him, journeying hundreds of miles over both sea and rugged terrain. According to the modern calendar, he made this journey in July. The summer heat must have made the trip extremely arduous.

Ko Nyudo brought with him offerings of 300 *mon* of coins from Sennichi-ama, the wife of Abutsu-bo, and an unlined robe from Ko-ama.

Three hundred *mon* in the Daishonin's day would have equaled the price of a large sack of rice. Sennichi-ama must have scrimped and saved to make this offering. In Ko-ama's offering of an unlined robe, we can sense her spirit of consideration for the Daishonin. She was no doubt concerned for his comfort in the hot summer weather.

After staying for a time with the Daishonin, Ko Nyudo returned to Sado and was given this letter. Since it was entrusted to Ko Nyudo, it was addressed to Ko-ama. But the Daishonin indicates that because Sennichi-ama is "of the same mind," it is the same as if he had sent the letter to her. The Daishonin tells them that they should have someone read the letter aloud to the two of them. At the time, the majority of the population was illiterate.

He uses the expression of *the same mind*. We are friends and comrades practicing in the

unity of "many in body, one in mind." The joy of one is the joy of all; the suffering of one is the suffering of all. And the glory of one is the glory of all.

When we base ourselves on this spirit of "one in mind," there is neither envy nor backbiting. Nor is there shirking of responsibility. Instead, we can manifest strong, broad-minded faith, and our lives will overflow with benefit.

Josei Toda said time and again, "Unity is the basis of the guidance of the Soka Gakkai."

The Hosshi chapter in the fourth volume of the Lotus Sutra states: "If there is someone who seeks the Buddha Way and during a certain kalpa presses palms together in my presence and recites numberless verses of praise, because of these praises of the Buddha he will gain immeasurable blessings" (LS 10, 164). This means that the benefit of making offerings to a votary of the Lotus Sutra in the evil age of the Latter Day of the Law surpasses that of serving in all sincerity as noble a Buddha as Shakyamuni with one's body, mouth and mind for an entire medium kalpa.⁵ (MW-4, 139-40)

HERE the Daishonin, basing what he says on the sutra, explains to these two couples, from the standpoint of Buddhism, how wondrous is their sincerity.

The votary of the Lotus Sutra in the evil age of the Latter Day is Nichiren Daishonin. This passage is saying that the benefit of praising the

Daishonin is even greater than that of praising Shakyamuni for an extremely long period. This is in fact the secret of the Lotus Sutra.

For whom was the Lotus Sutra expounded? In "Essence of the Lotus Sutra," the Daishonin says, "The Latter Day is the focus of the Lotus Sutra, and Nichiren is the focus of the Latter Day" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 334). Fundamentally, the Lotus Sutra was expounded for the people of the Latter Day and explains Nichiren Daishonin's activities. The Lotus Sutra was expounded to predict the appearance of the original Buddha and the Gohonzon, and to prove their legitimacy.

The Lotus Sutra predicts that after the setting of the "moon" of the twenty-eight-chapter Lotus Sutra, the "sun" of Nammyoho-rence-kyo will rise in the Latter Day.

Doubtless such an idea had never occurred to these elderly couples on Sado Island. But they were fond of the Daishonin. They had been in close contact with him and had come to respect him from the depths of their lives. An unbreakable bond had formed between them, prompting them to make many trips to visit him at distant Mount Minobu.

Leaders of *kosen-rufu*, too, need to be liked by their fellow members. If a leader is hated by everyone, then his or her faith is meaningless.

Almost nowhere does Nichiren Daishonin indicate that he is the original Buddha. Had he come out and directly made such a claim, probably no one would have believed him. It might even

Benefit and loss are not imparted by someone else. When we act in accord with the Law, value is produced. When we go against the Law, we receive retribution.

have caused people to disbelieve and slander his teaching, and abandon their faith.

The Daishonin always spread the Mystic Law based on the sutra and through his own conduct. In this letter, for example, rather than adopting a prideful, self-aggrandizing attitude, he highly praises his followers. Then, out of the desire to further encourage them, he touches on the nobility of the Lotus Sutra's votary in the Latter Day.

This is the Daishonin's spirit. How the Daishonin must lament the arrogance of priests of later generations who order people to respect them! What indignation he must feel! How he must condemn them!

Moreover, such "befuddled priests" have even persecuted the SGI, whose members have made boundless offerings to the Gohonzon. This shows how completely their actions contradict the Daishonin's Buddhism.

This is truly a "befuddled age." Recent events increasingly bear out the reality of the Latter Day. In this letter, the Daishonin gives his assurance that the benefit for those who spread the Mystic Law in such a deluded age, who stand up for kosen-rufu at such a time, is immense and boundless.

Although this may seem unbelievable, you should not

doubt it, because such are the Buddha's golden words. (MW-4, 140)

"THIS might be difficult to believe," he is saying, "but I am not speaking arbitrarily. It is clearly stated in the sutra. You should have the greatest confidence in this."

This is guidance that strikes a chord in the heart. The basis of guidance is to help the other person stabilize his or her mind and gain conviction and self-confidence.

The Great Teacher Miao-lo further clarifies this passage from the sutra by saying, "If there is one who troubles [a preacher of the Dharma], then his head will be split into seven pieces; if there is one who makes offerings [to the preacher], his good fortune will surpass that of making offerings to a Buddha of the ten honorable titles."6 In other words, the benefit of making offerings to a votary of the Lotus Sutra in the Latter Day of the Law exceeds that of making offerings to a Buddha endowed with the ten honorable titles. On the other hand, one who persecutes a votary of the Lotus Sutra in the impure age will have his head broken into seven pieces. (MW-4, 140)

THESE famous lines are inscribed on either side of the Gohonzon. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi interpreted this passage as explaining the principles of benefit and loss. Benefit produces value in life, whereas loss produces antivalue.

Benefit and loss are not imparted by someone else. When we act in accord with the Law, value is produced. When we go against the Law, we receive retribution. To use a familiar example, if someone goes outside in the severe cold of winter without wearing warm clothes, he or she might experience the loss of becoming sick.

Buddhism deepens and expands our common sense regarding the affairs of daily life and the world. It reveals the Law of life that we need to follow in order to become happy.

In his treatise "The History and Belief of the Soka Gakkai" (1951), President Toda wrote:

Mr. Makiguchi, my mentor, would often say: "The Gohonzon has great power. This means that if you slander the Gohonzon, you will experience loss. If a father is not upstanding enough to scold his children, how can he help them to become happy? Pray to the Gohonzon sincerely. Can't you hear the Gohonzon

saying to you, 'If you slander this Law, you will have your head broken into seven pieces'? This statement, which we can read on the Gohonzon, indicates the loss one will actually experience if one commits slander." I think that Mr. Makiguchi was correct in this contention....

In the upper-left corner of the Gohonzon is an inscription that reads, "If there is one who makes offerings, his good fortune will surpass that of making offerings to a Buddha of ten honorable titles." Doesn't this signify the Gohonzon's promise to us that we will receive benefit when we revere it? Benefit, or value, and loss, or antivalue, constitute the reality of our daily lives. Some Nichiren Shoshu priests had forgotten that the power of the Gohonzon can be revealed in one's daily life—in both ways—until President Makiguchi discussed it. They were astonished at what he brought forth....

The head temple feared persecution if it supported Mr. Makiguchi's contention that unless a country, family or individual follows the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin and Nikko Shonin, it will experience loss. It seemed that the head temple was frightened of the possible persecution it would face from the military if believers did not obediently enshrine the Shinto object of worship.⁷

We should faithfully follow not the authorities but Nichiren Daishonin. This was President Makiguchi's great spirit.

Upholding the Mystic Law Brings Great Benefit

PRESIDENT Makiguchi cried out: "What grieves me is not just the downfall of our religion but having to stand by and watch the whole nation destroyed before my eyes.... I fear the grief it would cause Nichiren Daishonin."

Just as Mr. Makiguchi predicted, Japan was destroyed.

"His head will be split into seven pieces" indicates a state in which people lose the ability to distinguish between what is correct and what is mistaken, between what should and should not be done. It is a state where people become confused and can understand neither reason nor justice, gain nor loss.

This was the case in the Daishonin's age. And it was the state of Japan in the time of President Makiguchi. We cannot fail to recognize that, lamentably, this is increasingly the condition of Japanese society today.

An age in which people's values become distorted is a deluded age. In such a society, people encounter great persecution simply because they spread the Lotus Sutra, which teaches respect for human dignity. For precisely this reason, great benefit lies in store for those who endure this hardship and persist in spreading

1. "Ko-ama Gozen Goshō" (*Goshō Zenshu*, pp. 1324–25), written in June 1275 when the Daishonin was 54. Editor's note: The Goshō text here may differ in places from what appears in *The Major Writings* or other previously published translations. This is so that the wording of the English text will accord more smoothly with the modern Japanese translation of the original Japanese Goshō. (The author is using a modern Japanese rendering of the classical Japanese original as the basis of his lectures in this series.)
2. Nyudo: A lay priest, meaning one who is tonsured but continues to live as a layman.
3. Mon: A monetary unit in ancient Japan. One thousandth of a *kan*, which con-

- sisted of a thousand coins strung together on a cord.
4. Wife of Abutsu-bo: Sennichi-ama. While Nichiren Daishonin was in exile on Sado, Sennichi-ama and her husband, Abutsu-bo, converted to his teaching. The couple frequently visited him in his forlorn hut at Tsukahara, bringing him food, stationery and other daily necessities. After the Daishonin was pardoned, Sennichi-ama maintained devout faith and sent her husband to visit him at Mount Minobu three times.
5. Medium kalpa: 15,998,000 years, according to the *Kusha Ron*.
6. This is a rephrasing of the "Hokke Mongu Ki" (Annotations on the Hokke Mongu [Words and Phrases of the

- Lotus Sutra]). The ten honorable titles are: 1) "Thus Come One" (from the world of truth); 2) "Worthy of Offerings"; 3) "Right and Universal Knowledge"; 4) "Perfect Clarity and Conduct"; 5) "Well Gone" (to the world of enlightenment); 6) "Understanding of the World"; 7) "Unexcelled Worthy"; 8) "Leader of People"; 9) "Teacher of Gods and Humans"; and 10) "Buddha, the World-Honored One" (an awakened one, endowed with perfect wisdom and virtue, who can win the respect of all people).
7. *Toda Josei Zenshu* (Collected Works of Toda Josei), vol. 3, pp. 102–03, 106. For complete English text, see *Seikyo Times*, June 1991, pp. 29–31.

From previous page

the Mystic Law.

The fact that the priesthood in President Makiguchi's day had forgotten the doctrine of punishment and loss indicates that it had descended into abstract theory and formalism in which Buddhism has no relevance to people's lives. The Soka Gakkai revived Buddhism as a teaching for daily life. Buddhism is not abstract—it is a teaching for triumphing over the realities of life.

Daily life is a collection of both good things (value) and bad things (antivalue). If the value or benefit in someone's life outweighs the antivalue or loss, the person becomes happy. If the opposite is true, the person is unhappy.

Faith in the Mystic Law is the wellspring of value creation. It enables us to turn everything in our lives—both our joys and sufferings—into causes for accumulating the values of beauty, benefit and good in still greater measure. When we base ourselves on this kind of faith, everything that happens to us is a benefit.

"Thank you. Truly, thank you," the Daishonin says. "I fully understand your spirit. The Buddha praises you."

One can imagine these two elderly women of Sado closing their eyes and recalling the Daishonin and the sound of his voice as they listened to this letter being read.

What a caring world! What a world rich with human warmth!

This is the true world of Buddhism. And the SGI carries on this spirit. □

Sado Couple Had Great Respect and Affection for Their Teacher

AMONG those who took faith in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism during his exile on Sado Island were Ko-ama and her husband, Ko Nyudo. Not much of this elderly couple is known. No record exists regarding the years of their births and deaths or their family background. Since the wife and husband lived at Ko (present-day Mano), the seat of the provincial government of Sado, they were referred to as the *ama* (nun) and *nyudo* (lay priest) of Ko.

The Daishonin might have written numerous letters to the couple, but only two exist today. From the contents of these letters, we can tell that Ko-ama and her husband had genuine faith in the Daishonin's teachings and encouraged one another. It is also clear that the couple protected the Daishonin by providing food and clothing like another elderly couple, Abutsu-bo and Sen-nichi-ama. This was done at considerable risk since any support for an exile was punishable.

In October 1271, after the

failed execution attempt at Tatsunokuchi Beach in Kamakura, the Daishonin was exiled to Sado on false charges. In March 1274, he was pardoned and returned to Kamakura, the seat of the shogunate government. Ko-ama and Ko Nyudo continued to support the Daishonin and seek his guidance when he moved to Kamakura and then to Minobu. By the time the Daishonin left Sado, they had developed genuine respect and affection for their teacher. The Daishonin wrote of his feelings for the couple when he left the island—a place of indescribable hardships yet filled with the fond memories of his followers:

However, while I was in exile there, you and your husband Ko Nyudo, avoiding the eyes of others, brought my food by night. You were both ready to give your lives for my sake without fearing punishment from the provincial officials. Therefore, although life on Sado was harsh, I was loath to leave, feeling as if my heart were being

left behind, and I seemed to be pulled back with each step I took." (MW-4, 142)

Long after he left the island, the Daishonin continued his friendship with the couple. His letters show that he cared deeply for the couple who were facing their later years without children to rely on. For example, in "Reply to Ko Nyudo," which is thought to have written in April 1275, the Daishonin states:

Because the Lotus Sutra is difficult to believe, the Buddha assumes various forms, such as that of one's child, parent or wife, to enable one to take faith in it. However, you have no children, and live alone as husband and wife. The sutra states, "... the living beings in it [this threefold world] are all my children." If this is so, then Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, must be a compassionate father to both of you. I, Nichiren, must be your child, but, wishing to save the people of Japan, I am residing for the time being in the central part of the country. (MW-7, 87-8)

Having no children made the couple's life difficult not only emotionally but economically as well. In a letter to Sennichi-ama dated July 1278, the Daishonin describes the circumstances under which Ko Nyudo and Abutsu-bo set out to visit the Daishonin at Minobu but had to "turn around and go back home" because "the early rice was nearly ripe" and "he had no

sons to help him harvest it" (MW-6, 258).

While warmly embracing them, the Daishonin also instructed them on essential Buddhist principles. He concludes "Reply to Ko Nyudo" by stating: "No place is secure. Be convinced that Buddhahood is the final abode" (MW-7, 88). The Daishonin explains to the couple the most important thing of all is to reveal their innate Buddhahood through faith and practice so that they may enjoy ultimate happiness and freedom, no matter where they live or what the circumstances.

The Daishonin's letter to Ko-ama in June 1275 tells us that Ko Nyudo traveled the long distance from Sado Island to Minobu to visit his teacher, bringing an unlined summer robe from his wife and money from Sennichi-ama. In this letter, the Daishonin writes, addressing Ko-ama and Sennichi-ama: "Since both of you are of the same mind, have someone read this letter to you and listen to it together" (MW-4, 139). Ko-ama and Sennichi-ama were close friends who practiced together on a remote island among many hostile Nembutsu believers. At the end of this letter, the Daishonin encourages Ko-ama,

Buddhism teaches that practitioners should pay respect to those who act in accord with the Law because the Law, abstract by itself, is revealed in people's behavior.

who probably would not see him again, by reassuring her that their relationship transcends distance: "Whenever you yearn for me, Nichiren, look toward the sun which rises in the morning and the moon which appears in the evening. I will invariably be reflected in the sun and the moon" (MW-4, 143).

The relationship that Ko-ama and Ko Nyudo developed over the years with the Daishonin provides us with some important insights into the mentor-and-disciple relationship in Buddhism. This relationship is not based upon class or other artifices of society; rather, it is based upon faith and expressed through mutual love and respect. Buddhism teaches that practitioners should revere the Law or the Buddha's teaching and follow it, rather than people whose minds easily stray from the Law. But it also teaches that practitioners should pay respect to those who act in accord with the Law because the Law, abstract by itself, is revealed in people's behavior. The Daishonin's relationship with this elderly couple shows us that all the profound Buddhist doctrines would be of no value unless expressed in our everyday behavior, in our compassion for others. □

SYNOPSIS: 1998 PEACE PROPOSAL

ON January 26, in commemoration of the twenty-third anniversary of the SGI's founding, SGI President Daisaku Ikeda issued his 1998 peace proposal, entitled "Humanity and the New Millennium: From Chaos to Cosmos." In this year's proposal, Ikeda addresses the question of how to make the transition from a century of darkness, despair and killing to an era of brilliance, hope and coexistence:

He first asserts that in order to make this change, it is necessary to view history on a larger scale and from the perspective of a wider span of time. He introduces the Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdjajev's concept of "existential time," defined as "supertemporal time" or "time eternally in the present," as in essence the very force that makes history. This idea of time, which does not conform to any mathematical calculation and is only measured by the intensity of joy or suffering experienced at a given moment, has much in common with the Buddhist principle of the simultaneity of cause and effect, which expounds that future outcomes are contained in the intensity of a single moment of life. He acknowledges the great vision and conviction of Nichiren, the thirteenth-century Japanese Buddhist sage whose teachings inspire SGI members and whose compassion for humanity extended 10,000 years and more into the future.

Arnold J. Toynbee also held a similar view of history, Mr. Ikeda states, introducing the British historian's belief that it is the deep, slow undercurrents of history that ultimately create the future. In his 1947 essay "Civilization on Trial," Toynbee looks three millennia ahead and forecasts the inevitability of the social integration of humanity and the decisive role of religion in that process. Mr. Ikeda observes that such a far-reaching perspective on the history of humankind is indispensable to any world religion worthy of the name today. He further urges that amid the rapidly changing realms of politics, economics, science and military affairs, we must move forward unperturbed, with courage and conviction, our sights set on goals a thousand, two thousand years into the future.

Addressing the current problems of global warming and environmental degradation, Mr. Ikeda maintains that these issues compel us to view ourselves as neighbors in a world community, sharing a common future that transcends national and ethnic boundaries and, in

this way, to confront the challenge of globalization. He affirms that the ideal multicultural society is to be found not in a "universal world order" based on certain specific values, nor in a "mosaic world order" of cultures in conflict, but in a "constellation" of cultures brilliant in their diversity—a global civilization characterized by tolerance and coexistence. To that end, Mr. Ikeda states, it is crucial to identify the common values and principles that lie at the foundation of all cultures.

He points out that, in the 1903 treatise *Jinsei Chirigaku* (The Geography of Human Life), Soka Gakkai founding president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi asserts it is time for the world to shift its energies from military, political and economic competition to "humanitarian competition." In order to do so, in Makiguchi's view, we must work for the welfare of others, for "by benefiting others, we benefit ourselves." This is an amplification of the spirit of "to live and let live" advocated by Toynbee, which the late historian stressed as vital to the survival of humankind in this age when peoples with diverse traditions, faiths and ideals live as neighbors. Mr. Ikeda contends that a shift to humanitarianism which transcends national boundaries will be critical in the globalization of the twenty-first century.

To encourage this shift, he proposes that the annual summits of industrial powers further expand to include China and India. He reasons that the population of these two nations together is expected to reach one-third of the entire population of the world in the near future, and indicates that both China and India have been societies of great ethnic diversity throughout their long histories. Expressing concern that unless the world's major countries start thinking not only of their own interests but of the well-being of humanity as a whole, global issues will never be resolved, Mr. Ikeda recommends that the summit be reorganized as a "Summit of Responsible Countries," where leaders can freely discuss common issues and where they must share responsibility for the future of humanity.

As we move closer to the construction of a global community, it is vital, he states, to build a society that respects what Toynbee termed "unity in diversity and diversity in unity." A "world of diversity" was also called for by former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, and the late Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi emphasized, too, that the achievement of various cultures living together harmoniously in his country was the greatest gift India could

give to the world. Drawing a parallel with the Buddhist image of cherry, plum and pear, an illustration of diversity that asserts that all living things possess their own unique characteristics, Mr. Ikeda stresses that in order to realize true diversity, we must create a world in which people respect and appreciate each other's differences. Education is the key to achieving such harmony, he holds, stating that a "culture of peace" can be realized by overcoming what second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda called "narrow nationalism and self-centeredness," and through each person changing on a fundamental level, achieving their individual "human revolution."

Noting that this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948, Mr. Ikeda acknowledges that the thirty-article document has set a global standard for human rights in international society and been the source of numerous human rights agreements and declarations. It is now time, he declares, to move beyond the stage of setting standards and on to the stage of implementation, for the fact remains that persecution and human tragedy continue to persist in many parts of the world. Deploring this state of affairs, he proposes the creation of a network of national human rights agencies that would strive to protect human rights in each country. He envisages these independent agencies working in cooperation with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and U.N. agencies toward fulfilling the standards set forth in human rights treaties. Mr. Ikeda also suggests that the training programs implemented by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights be fully utilized to promote active exchange among people and organizations promoting human rights, deepening their understanding of U.N. ideals and those enshrined in the Universal Declaration.

In addition to setting up a viable organizational framework, Mr. Ikeda adds, it is also necessary to establish a human rights culture—to cultivate among people an awareness that human rights are the norm, not something out of the ordinary. The SGI has actively endeavored over the years to pursue this ideal, he explains, based on the Buddhist concept of the bodhisattva way of life, in which one is motivated by a compassionate desire to see others attain true happiness and fulfillment. Mr. Ikeda maintains that societal norms detached from self-generated values are fragile, stating that only by inspiring within the individual the fervent wish to see others leading genuinely humane lives and the courage to take compassionate action, can human rights find footing in society and be enjoyed by

people the world over.

Observing that this year marks the 350th anniversary of the signing of the Westphalia Treaty that brought to an end the Thirty Years' Wars (1618–48) and laid the foundation for the contemporary international political order centered on nation-states, Mr. Ikeda notes that it has become evident that such a framework alone is inadequate to cope with global problems. Stating his support for current moves toward the establishment of an international criminal court, he urges that a new setting must be enacted whereby world issues are tackled on an international level, disseminating the power held by the nation-state and giving rise to an age where the role and responsibility of the individual as a member of the global family takes center stage. This new era, he contends, will only be realized with the support, wisdom and strength of the people themselves, and as represented by NGOs.

Confirming that NGO campaigns, such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), were crucial in the adoption in September 1997 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Mr. Ikeda proposes that the next step should be, once again through popular initiatives, to reduce the ever-increasing number of small arms, such as automatic rifles and small-caliber guns, that exacerbate regional and civil conflicts in the post-Cold War world. He also stresses the need for the adoption of a treaty demanding a total ban on nuclear weapons as early as possible and mentions the Abolition 2000 campaign currently under way, which is aimed at establishing such an agreement by the start of the new millennium. This movement is actively supported by the SGI, and he calls on all the nuclear weapon states to join in a commitment to end the era of nuclear arms by the year 2000.

During the three remaining years of the twentieth century, as we stand facing the threshold of the third millennium, we must do everything in our power to create a new global civilization of the people, by the people and for the people. Mr. Ikeda appeals for concrete steps to be taken toward creating a forum that will link NGOs with the General Assembly of the United Nations and welcomes the World NGO Conference and the Third Hague Peace Conference already slated for 1999. He proposes that a World Without War Declaration be adopted at the Hague Conference and further states his support for the People's Millennium Assembly, to be attended by representatives of NGOs and other citizens' groups and held in conjunction with the Millennium Assembly scheduled to take place at the United Nations in the year 2000. □

1998 Peace Proposal

Humanity and the New Millennium: From Chaos to Cosmos

By Daisaku Ikeda
President, Soka Gakkai International

WHEN the twentieth century began, there was a general belief that human progress was limitless. Now that century is drawing to a close. The lofty ideals and high purposes envisioned at the outset of this century have been belied by the extremist ideologies that have swept the world, leaving only conflict and slaughter in their wake. Perhaps no other century has been witness to such endless tragedy and human folly; the global environment has been grievously damaged, and the gap between rich and poor is greater than ever.

Three years ago today in a lecture at the East-West Center

in Hawaii, I shared my sense that the twentieth century has been stained by all-too-frequent slaughter at human hands.¹ The nearer we draw to the close of the century, the stronger grows an anguished sense of the futility and waste that has characterized this era of human history.

In earlier days when voices were raised in alarm at the prospect of full-scale nuclear war, we often heard the dreaded term *overkill*. Then, through the courageous efforts of former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and other world leaders, the structures of the Cold War conflict were dismantled, and today the nightmare of Armageddon seems to

have grown somewhat more remote. The term *overkill*, unfortunately, remains with us. Like the curse of Cain, it haunts the world.

It was the late Isaiah Berlin who wrote "no century has seen so much remorseless and continued slaughter of human beings by one another as our own."² This appraisal is shared by many intellectuals, including American historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

Concept of Time Reconsidered

WHAT is needed in order to advance human history, to move from darkness to light, from despair to hope,



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SGI President Daisaku Ikeda

from killing to coexistence? As the end of the century nears, various efforts are being made to probe and gain new understanding of these issues. Here, however, I would like to suggest the value of reexamining the history of humankind on a larger scale and over vaster spans of time.

With such a broad view, Buddhism speaks of three periods after the death of Shakyamuni Buddha [which modern scholarship locates around 500 B.C.E.]. These are the Former Day of the Law, when people embracing his teachings can attain enlightenment; the Middle Day of the Law, when Buddhism becomes formalized and less effective; and the Latter Day of the Law, when his teachings lose the power to lead peo-

ple to enlightenment. Each of the first two periods is said to last between five hundred and a thousand years. The Latter Day of the Law is believed to last ten thousand years.

When Nichiren, the thirteenth-century Japanese Buddhist sage whose teachings inspire the activities of the SGI, writes that "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo [identified by him as the fundamental Law of life] will spread for ten thousand years and more," he displays a long-term perspective from which he indicates that his teachings will have the power to awaken people and prevent suffering even in this corrupted "Latter Day of the Law," and that they will continue to contribute to the welfare of human society into the distant future even ten thousand

and more years hence. This is a far-reaching perspective, a great prospect for the future, derived from an extraordinarily profound conviction.

Nichiren's approach can be said to represent the essence of the Buddhist view of history. The three time periods should not be understood in formalistic or categorical terms. Nor should they be seen superficially as a successive, linear flow or advance of humanity's spiritual history.

It is evident to me that the above-cited passage reflects Nichiren's intense and unflinching struggle in the face of constant official persecution and gives voice to his clear grasp of the deepest undercurrents flowing through human history.

For those who practice Nichiren's Buddhism, his teachings should therefore be read with an attentive view to their deeper significance, and an attempt to develop the capacity to perceive these undercurrents that flow from past to future. With such a perspective it is possible to identify with his profound compassion for all humanity, and live lives of altruistic service as those Buddhism calls "Bodhi-sattvas of the Earth."

It is for this reason that we need to reexamine our understanding of the concept of time. We refer casually to "time" in daily conversation, without considering its implications carefully, or being aware of its profundity. Time was a subject of great interest to philosophers such as Martin Heidegger³, and Henri Bergson⁴. To facilitate my own exposition, I would like to draw on Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdjaev's (1874–1948) classification of time.

In his essay "History and Eschatology," Berdjaev delineates three classes of time: cosmic, historical and existential time.

Cosmic time, which can be thought of as physical time, is measurable by the calendar or clock: one day having twenty-four hours, one year 365 days, and so forth. It is time measured against the regular movements of the solar system.

Historical time is what we think of when we use such expressions as "the twentieth century," "100 B.C.E.," or "the second millennium," referring to junctures along the span of

physical time. Even more familiar examples are "today," vaguely considered to be an extension of yesterday, and "tomorrow" as an extension of today.

Berdjaev declares both cosmic and historical time to be "fallen time." This judgment may be easy to accept as far as physical time is concerned, for it is a purely theoretical entity, self-contained and isolated from our subjective involvement. But why historical time?

With regard to historical time, he alludes to a future that "eats up" the present, transforming it into past. This insight merits our careful attention.

In the course of our daily existence we tend idly to allow time to slide by, letting tomorrow come as a mere extension of today without purposeful exertion. Such days become expanses of inertia, and we lose sight of the critically important fact that a fruitful tomorrow comes only after a well-lived today.

What Berdjaev calls "existential time" is experienced when we break free of the "fallen time" of daily inertia. It is the experience of joy and sense of fulfillment that come from "seizing the moment" and fulfilling one's innate human mission.

Time Eternally in the Present

BERDJAEV writes that existential time is of such profundity that it cannot be expressed by any mathematical calculation. It is supertemporal time, or time eternally in the present. One moment of existential time can have more

meaning, fulfillment and even apparent duration than vast stretches of either of the other two types. It is measured by the intensity of joy or agony experienced in moments when time seems to stand still. One can feel the reality of such time when in the raptures of creative activity or at the moment of one's own death.

What is brought to mind by this dazzling leap of enlightenment and revelation in the move from cosmic and historical time to an appreciation of supertemporal, existential time is Tolstoy's novel, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*.

In this story, an ordinary government employee, whose "self-esteem was gratified by the discharge of his official duties; [his] vanity by mixing in good society,"⁵ lives an ordinary life without any particular vice. Following an accident, however, he is seized by a fatal illness, and in the course of an intense battle with the fear of death, he is able to discover within himself the light of eternity and true happiness.

With consummate skill, the great novelist portrays the dramatic leap from "fallen time" to "supertemporal time." Ivan Ilyich glimpses the profundity of existential time in the moment of his death, exactly as Berdjaev postulated.

While the cultural milieu which shaped the ideas of both Berdjaev and Tolstoy is within the Christian tradition, these insights can shed important light on the Buddhist understanding of time and history. In his treatise "The Opening of the Eyes," Nichiren quotes a

passage from the *Shinjikan Sutra*:

If you want to understand the causes that existed in the past, look at the results as they are manifested in the present. And if you want to understand what results will be manifested in the future, look at the causes that exist in the present.⁶

This passage, too, does not refer to cosmic-time causality, such as the formation of water resulting from the combination of hydrogen and oxygen; or historical-time causality, such as the purported inevitability of the move from capitalism to socialism. Buddhism uses the term *inga iji*, or the “non-simultaneity of cause and effect,” to refer to such linear progressions of causality.

Of most interest to us as human beings, however, are the results that will be manifested in the future. More than any other factor, these are shaped by inner causes in the present moment, that is, by the intensity of our conviction in the plane of what Berdjaev calls the profundity of existential time. This is central to the Buddhist view of time in which the present moment is pivotal—in a sense, is everything—and it stands in contrast to a historical conceptualization of time in which the future “eats up” the present. Without this pivotal “now,” past and future are empty and illusory. Our proper focus must be on ourselves at the present moment. Our actions now should be carried out with intensity, with the realization that the depth of this inner determination is the deci-

sive factor that creates the future and makes history. This view of time and causality is referred to in Buddhism as *inga guji*, or the “simultaneity of cause and effect.”

What Berdjaev described as time eternally in the present or supertemporal time resonates with the Buddhist view, which I chose to describe with the expression “life-time”⁷ in an ongoing dialogue I am conducting on the Lotus Sutra.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are characterized by rampant historicism, periods during which humankind turned away, in the name of science, from time eternally in the present or “life-time.” In the obsessive pursuit of a blueprint for utopia, nineteenth- and twentieth-century historicism gave itself over to the future that eats up the present, with tragic results. The former Soviet Union became the testing ground for the iron talons of Bolshevism, historicism’s most nightmarish manifestation. In my dialogues with former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian novelist Chingiz Aitmatov, both men spoke of their deep anguish about those times.

The perspectives of either physical or historical time are also inadequate for a full understanding of Nichiren’s confidence that an inner state of vast compassion provides the key to helping people to manifest their true, magnificent potential over the next ten thousand years and through all eternity.

Often it is bitter experiences that lead us to awaken to the

most profound spiritual truths. The awakening of Soka Gakkai second president Josei Toda, while in jail for his beliefs, also needs to be understood from the viewpoint of existential time. His realization was that he was a participant, in an eternally present moment, at the ceremony in which the essence of the Buddha’s teachings was entrusted to those who would share it with others in the Latter Day of the Law. He realized that this allegorical ceremony, in which ordinary people (as “Bodhisattvas of the Earth”) pledge to share their understanding of enlightenment to the Mystic Law contained within the Lotus Sutra with others, continues eternally.

Without Toda’s experience—the starting point in the post-World War II period of the Soka Gakkai’s Buddhist movement of “value creation” (*soka*)—Nichiren’s reference to “the assembly on Eagle Peak which continues in solemn state without disbanding”⁸ might have been ignored or dismissed.

Deeper, Slower Movements Make History

THOSE words are resonant only when we seek to grasp them at the deep level of existential time or “life-time” that both encompasses and cuts through the surface flow of history, reaching into its very depths. Buddhism calls for participation in the profound spiritual history of humankind, which is possible only through undergoing great hardship and struggle; as Berdjaev suggests, by the intensity of joy or agony

British historian Arnold J. Toynbee confers with the author in London, in May 1973.

experienced. It is also a message sent from the depths of history to all cosmic life, the “summons of heroes” that Bergson said is found in a “complete and perfect morality.”⁹

Earlier I stressed the necessity of grasping history in larger scales and spans of time. This is because we stand today at an unprecedented turning point in human history. To overcome the crisis facing us we have to cope not only with the immediate pressing issues, sometimes referred to as the global *problématique*, but we also need to probe the depths of time and history in order to obtain a far-reaching vision of the future—centuries or even millennia hence.

Without such a perspective we may be defeated by the daunting array of challenges that characterize the world at the century’s end. As the late Konrad Lorenz, Nobel laureate in physiology and medicine, warned, the Earth has already passed the “point of no return.”¹⁰

The late Arnold J. Toynbee, one of the greatest historians of this century, took up the challenge of recording the history of humankind in one vast panorama. He was able to pioneer new ranges of research and leave a highly distinguished legacy. I am aware that a number of historians have criticized, from a specialist perspective, Toynbee’s panoramic view of history, finding fault in matters of detail. However,



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through lengthy talks with him over a period of ten days in 1973 (the results of which are recorded in the book *Choose Life*), my lasting impression of him is of a man devoted to probing the deepest layers of history, rather than verifying its minutiae. He possessed the kind of penetrating insight that can analyze and organize historical phenomena and envision the future from the most profound dimensions of history, unperturbed by the undue influence of contemporary events. His view was truly that of a world historian.

Toynbee did not embrace any specific religious faith, but even a quick perusal of his works shows that he was intensely interested in the role

religion plays in directing these deeper currents of human history. It is clear that he was urging us to resist being swayed by the superficial events of human affairs, and to focus on the essentials, by consistently maintaining the broadest possible perspective. This demonstrates his belief that the religious impulse is a fundamental condition for humanity to be worthy of the name, and for human civilization to exist.

Toynbee’s great interest in religion is shown by the fact that he warmly welcomed me, a young and relatively unknown practitioner of Buddhism from the Far East, listening to what I had to say with sincerity and humility. I still have a vivid memory of his warmhearted

expression, and believe that his uniqueness as a historian lay in the centrality he accorded an understanding of humanity and human nature in our efforts to grasp the essence of history and civilization.

Nor am I alone in holding this view. Historian Kentaro Hayashi, for instance, observing Toynbee's engaged discussions with many Japanese scholars during his visit to Japan in 1956, wrote as follows:

What matters most to Dr. Toynbee is not so much the number of civilizations and their rise and fall, as the essential quality of human spirit that builds a civilization and the inner determination required of us if we are to rescue contemporary civilization from catastrophe.¹¹

To understand Toynbee better, let us look at his essay "Civilization on Trial," which offers a succinct summary of his view of history. In it Toynbee considers the time frame that is necessary in order to grasp the deep currents of history, and to place in perspective the many shocking incidents and ceaseless changes that have marked our own era. He sets himself the task of describing how future historians will look back upon our age:

The things that make good headlines attract our attention because they are on the surface of the stream of life, and they distract our attention from the slower, impalpable, imponderable movements that work below the surface and penetrate to the depths. But of

course it is really these deeper, slower movements that, in the end, make history, and it is they that stand out huge in retrospect, when the sensational passing events have dwindled, in perspective, to their true proportions.¹²

Reading this passage, I am especially struck by Toynbee's insight that it is the "deeper, slower movements" beneath the surface that make history.

The expression "deeper, slower movements" is a subtle and perhaps ambiguous but certainly skillful turn of phrase that was maybe the only one available to him as a historian. I feel strongly, however, that what Toynbee sought to indicate by that phrase is closely aligned with the concept of existential time or "life-time."

I feel further that somewhere deep in his being, Toynbee's ear must have been carefully attuned to the "summons of heroes" at each juncture of history. In my view, the words of any religion that cannot respond to and complement the insights of such a superlative historian betray the tradition of deductive reasoning; they are mere dogma.

I recall a memorable remark made by Toynbee during our dialogue in London. A TV news program had just reported, with much pomp and circumstance, the visit to England of a certain country's prime minister. "That event is but a passing phenomenon," he said to me with detachment, "but our dialogue, while a simple affair, seeks to profit future generations of humanity. For

the sake of their future, let us speak, sharing our thoughts."

Impact of Western Civilization

IN this essay, published in 1947, Toynbee takes a long-term perspective, first of one hundred years on, and then finally of three thousand years into the future:

Future historians will say, I think, that the great event of the twentieth century was the impact of the Western civilization upon all the other living societies of the world of that day.¹³

Following this indisputable statement, he writes from the point of view of historians one century later, in the year 2047:

They will say of this impact that it was so powerful and so pervasive that it turned the lives of all its victims upside down and inside out.¹⁴

Today we stand at the halfway point between the year 1947 and 2047, and we see much in the world around us that confirms his view, written half a century ago. Compared with the order which prevailed within the communal societies of premodern peoples (and suspending any judgment as to the quality of that order), the state of our postmodern world is far from orderly—it has indeed literally been turned "upside down and inside out."

Then, Toynbee's hypothesis moves suddenly to the perspective of one thousand years

in the future. The historians of the year 3047, he declares, will “be chiefly interested in the tremendous counter-effects”:

By A.D. 3047, our Western civilization, as we and our Western predecessors have known it, say, for the last twelve or thirteen hundred years, since its emergence out of the Dark Ages, may have been transformed, almost out of all recognition, by a counter-radiation of influences from the foreign worlds which we, in our day, are in the act of engulfing in ours—influences from Orthodox Christendom, from Islam, from Hinduism, from the Far East.¹⁵

And then after another one thousand years pass by, he says:

The historians of A.D. 4047 will say that the impact of the Western civilization on its contemporaries, in the second half of the second millennium of the Christian era, was the epoch-making event of that age because it was the first step towards the unification of mankind into one single society. By their time, the unity of mankind will perhaps have come to seem one of the fundamental conditions of human life—just part of the order of nature....¹⁶

In Toynbee’s view, therefore, it will take that long before the globalism or globalization of which we speak today, principally in terms of global economic integration, will be

based on an unforced awareness among global citizens that we share a common destiny as passengers on what has been termed “spaceship Earth.” Then another one thousand years elapse:

The historians of A.D. 5047 will say, I fancy, that the importance of this social unification of mankind was not to be found in the field of technics and economics, and not in the field of war and politics, but in the field of religion.¹⁷

This is a truly sweeping perspective, grand and far-reaching, as befits one of the twentieth century’s greatest historians.

Yet 1947, when it was written, was the year the United States adopted the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as part of its efforts to contain the Soviet Union. At the same time, the Soviet Union set up the Cominform in response, and began hinting at the production of nuclear weapons. Amid the continuing turmoil in the wake of World War II, the dark clouds of the East-West confrontation were already gathering.

We cannot overlook the significance of Toynbee’s vision, enunciated at a time when people were far more preoccupied with immediate concerns and influenced by short-sighted interests. His vision is of so grand a scale that it may easily be dismissed as fantasy, insufficiently corroborated in fact. Indeed, his macroscopic view has been attacked as the product not of a historian but of a fatalistic visionary.

Certainly, when Toynbee wrote this essay, the threat of apocalypse by nuclear war or collapse of the global environment, which has put into question the very survival of humankind into the twenty-first century—much less a thousand or two thousand years beyond that—was far smaller than it is today.

Yet the vision of the future offered by this great historian and critic of civilization stands on a totally different plane from the prophecies of such mystics or self-styled prophets as Nostradamus. Toynbee’s selection of the year 1947 as his starting point and his use of units of one thousand years are rough approximations that may be considered chiefly rhetorical. His substantive statements, however, represent conclusions based on an in-depth study of actual historical instances of inter-civilizational confrontation.

According to his view, articulated at a time when the Cold War was beginning to intensify, “this Russian counter-discharge in the form of Communism may come to seem a small affair when the probably far more potent civilizations of India and China respond in their turn to our Western challenge.”¹⁸ Today, fifty years later, most of us would agree that his appraisal was not that far off the mark.

Four-Dimensional World Citizens

I WOULD also like to briefly introduce the insights of another individual for whom I

have immense respect: Lord Yehudi Menuhin, perhaps this century's premier violinist.

When I met Lord Menuhin six years ago in Tokyo, I was moved by the sense of his resonant humanism, his profound learning and his pan-civilizational outlook that transcends the conventional definition of an artist. In a 1962 essay entitled "World Citizen," he makes this rather unusual suggestion: "Let us look into the future first, and see what the world citizen of the year 5000 may be. And then we shall see in what ways we can begin to take the various stages that lead to that ultimate."¹⁹

It is interesting that, paralleling Toynbee, he chooses the year 5000 as his point of departure. From that perspective, he argues that world citizens should be "four-dimensional" and ascribes to them four essential qualities. First is a sense of responsibility for history, seeing themselves as "responsible for the links of the past as well as for those of the future." Second is an awareness of geographical space that has nothing to do with national boundaries. Third is awareness "of all creation, of all the manifestations of life." Fourth is belief in and respect for their own humanity.²⁰

Menuhin's mode of expression is somewhat different from Toynbee's, and his thoughtful phrasing reflects the refined sensibilities of an artist. I will not go into this further here, except to say that his disinclination to pin things down with specific labels is reminiscent of the idea of *shusseken* (transcending the defi-

nitions and constraints of words) in Buddhism.

Be that as it may, I feel that there is great value in the kinds of vast scales and spans of time in which thinkers such as Toynbee or Menuhin view history. They can help us, unused to considering things without and beyond the constraints of words, to grasp the meaning of Nichiren's promise that his teachings "will spread for ten thousand years and more, for all eternity."

From now on, any system of beliefs that is to thrive as a world religion must take this kind of long-term outlook on the history of humankind. At the same time, it must bring into sharp focus those concrete steps that need to be taken at this moment. In other words, knowing that the causes that exist in the present will bear fruit in the future, we have to know where to devote our present efforts, and religion must provide a guide in this.

What matters then is that we move forward with courage and conviction, our sights set calmly on the future millennia hence, looking past the constantly changing surface, the short-term tides of praise and censure in the realms of politics, economy, science or military affairs. Only when we take this kind of perspective can genuine optimism prevail.

Toward New Modes of Competition

IN June 1997, the U.N. General Assembly Special Session on the Environment and Development was held in New York,

with the aim of reviewing progress made since the 1992 "Earth Summit" held in Rio de Janeiro, and in December the Third Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) was convened in Kyoto. Although some progress was made, both conferences achieved less than had been hoped. Even so, I believe that the COP3 meeting on global warming and similar events have succeeded in the important task of attracting increasing attention to these issues. They provide the opportunity to bring into focus and question the core modalities of contemporary civilization through the lens of our efforts to manage the earth's ecosystem.

The continued existence of environmental and other global threats pushes us to start regarding ourselves as neighbors in an emerging global community who indeed will share a "common future," irrespective of national or ethnic differences. At the same time, we are forced to give serious thought to the many challenges posed by globalization, a process without precedent in human history.

As many observers have noted, present modes of globalization lack the crucial quality of reciprocity, of free and mutual exchange among all societies. Rather, globalization appears to be a one-way radiation of influence from the leading industrialized countries out to the rest of the world. While we see waves of democratization and market economics spreading worldwide, these have been accompa-

United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED)

Also known as the Global Summit on the Environment—and, more popularly, The Earth Summit—the conference was held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. It took steps to reverse environmental deterioration and establish the basis of a sustainable way of life into the next century. Five agreements were adopted there: Agenda 21, an action plan that includes measures for protecting the atmosphere and managing toxic waste; the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development; the Declaration on Principles of Management and Sustainable Development for All Types of Forests; the Convention on Climate Change; and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

A Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly, in June 1997, convened to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21. Although further political commitment to the future of a program of implementation was not made there, the Assembly had recognized, previously in December 1996, the need for NGO involvement.

Third Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3)

The Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted in June 1992, lays out principles aiming to prevent harmful actions that bring about climate change, including global warming. At the Kyoto Conference, held in December 1997, which marked the third session, the focus was on instituting a binding numerical target for the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide. The outcome of the conference left many problems unresolved and the end results were not satisfactory: the reduction rate required of developed countries was no higher than five percent, the issue of the involvement of developing countries was postponed and the introduction of tradable emission rights was much disputed.

nied by an uprooting of the culture and values that have long supported different communities and societies, thus sowing new seeds of instability. At the

heart of the problem, in my view, is the lack of an effective international framework of rules or standards to guide the process of globalization.

If present patterns of globalization continue, we will see advancing information technologies promoting a form of political and economic standardization and unification. On the other hand, the many countries and peoples who fail to adapt successfully to these waves of technological innovation and competition face the prospect of permanent marginalization. A growing population of the marginalized victims of discrimination and alienation will contribute to increased strife and terror, giving rise to new movements of refugees and displaced people. Such cycles of alienation and violence are undeniably possible outcomes of globalization. The adverse aspects of globalization obviously become more pronounced in the face of the threat of global recession.

In my view, the deeper roots of our contemporary crisis are to be found in an arbitrary and one-dimensional value system that measures every endeavor of humankind against the yardstick of “progress.” At a symposium held in January 1997 on challenges of the third millennium, Italian philosopher Umberto Eco offered important insights on this issue.

Constellation of Cultures

THE symbol of the last two millennia, he said, was an arrow. The concept of time that originated in Judeo-Christian monotheism has been marked by a clear directionality, of which “progress” is one expression. The symbol for the third millennium, he declared,

should rather be that of a constellation—a society based on respect for the value of cultural pluralism.²¹

The image of a constellation is an apt one. It evokes the brilliance of many individual stars. Their grouping together creates a beautiful constellation, and yet each star's beauty is not impaired; on the contrary, the splendor of the night sky lies in the combination of their diversity. This image is much like the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination, as symbolized by a vast net sparkling with countless jewels suspended above the palace of Indra.²² Applying this metaphor to human society, the stars represent individual human beings, the constellation is the culture which they collectively produce, and the vast expanse of the sky represents a global community of flourishing diversity.

It should be noted that a society of respect for diverse cultures does not imply the unconditional acceptance of all cultures and cultural practices. Such an approach might succeed in protecting specific groups from the forces of cultural homogenization. If, however, inhuman acts and practices are condoned in the name of culture, the price of preserving such "culture," in terms of suffering, will be paid by real human beings.

On the other hand, to give a position of centrality to a particular culture, considering its values absolute and universal, is to create an artificial and unhealthy ranking or hierarchy of cultures. What we should pursue, therefore, is not a world order based

on the universalization of certain specific values (as in Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History?"²³) or one which sees cultures in ceaseless conflict (as in Samuel P. Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations?"²⁴). Rather, we must seek the "third path," a global civilization whose core values are tolerance and coexistence. To reach this difficult goal, I believe that we must first attempt to identify those values and norms that inform the deepest layers of every culture and which, I am confident, are in their essence more similar than different.

Czech President Vaclav Havel spoke of this need in an article that appeared in the Japanese press a year ago.²⁵ After discussing various aspects of the crisis of the present age, he declares, "A single, all-embracing global civilization has arisen." The only meaningful way to lift humankind out of the recurrent conflict and strife caused by the forces of homogenization is, he argues, "to set upon changing our civilization into one that is multicultural in the real sense of the word, which would enable all to be what they want to be, and which would not only try to seek ways toward a tolerant, multicultural coexistence, but also lead to a more articulate definition of what relates all people and what will allow, through a shared set of values and norms, their coexistence to be creative." He declares that an urgent task is "the resuscitation of fundamental ethics."

Even as we pursue the ideal of cultural pluralism, we cannot overlook the existence of



Tsunesaburo Makiguchi,
first Soka Gakkai president

those values that are truly universal and which must be protected against the encroachments of relativism. These are not, however, externally imposed norms, but values that reside in and are inherent to the lives of all people. Religious faith can provide the impetus for the clarification and strengthening of such values, and the capacity to do this is, in my view, the most essential criterion for any world religion of the future.

Humanitarian Competition

THIS discussion brings to mind the future set out by Soka Gakkai's founding president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi in his *Jinsei Chirigaku* (The Geography of Human Life), written in 1903. At that time, the Great Powers were all pursuing policies of expanding industrial and military might in a worldwide

competition for hegemony; the impact of imperialism and colonialism was being felt throughout the world.

It is against this background that he classified the struggles for survival among nations into four types of competition—military, political, economic and humanitarian—and argued that the world could no longer afford military, political, or economic rivalries but should shift its energies to competing on a humanitarian plane.

I am drawn to Makiguchi's vision in that he does more than predict a shift in the modes and locus of competition; he foresees and requires a transformation in the very nature of competition, from that whose essence is confrontation to that whose baseline is cooperation.

At the heart of humanitarian competition is the extension of the spiritual influence—of cultural achievement and moral persuasion—that a country or people exerts on the world. In today's terms this might be described as expansion of our "soft-power" competitiveness. He writes:

Military and political power—sometimes under the cloak of economic strength—that pursues territorial expansion, seeking to place as many people as possible under its influence, should be supplanted by those intangible forces that naturally inspire people's respect... Rather than responding to the force of threat, people will offer their support willingly and without reserve.

He continues:

There is no simple formula for this humanitarianism. Rather, all activities, whether in the realm of politics or of economics, should be conducted in conformity with the principles of humanitarianism. What is important is to eschew egotistical actions, striving to protect and improve not only your own life but others' as well. One should do things for the sake of others, for by benefiting others, we benefit ourselves. This means, in other words, to engage consciously in collective life.²⁶

He thus suggests that humanitarian competition will influence other forms of competition, which will in turn bring about a shift in people's consciousness from competition to coexistence and cooperation.

The Group of Lisbon, an international council which presents policy recommendations, includes the noteworthy observation in its recent publication, *Limits to Competition*, that although competition originally meant "seeking together," it has come to denote defeating or triumphing over others. As this example indicates, we hear more and more voices calling for a reexamination of the meaning of competition.

In a message sent to a correspondent in Japan, Toynbee made a statement similar to that of Makiguchi. At a time in the world's history when peoples with very different traditions, faiths and ideals have come into sudden and close contact with one another, wrote

Toynbee, the survival of humankind requires that people be willing to live with one another and to accept that there is more than one path to truth and salvation.²⁷

This willingness to live and let live is reinforced if we adopt Makiguchi's more proactive stance, that "by benefiting others, we benefit ourselves." This point is the touchstone for the formation of twenty-first-century globalism, and is also the tough challenge that no world religion can avoid if it is to be worthy of the name and if it is to fulfill what I see as the true role of faith—providing the profound spiritual flows that will support a mutually beneficial globalism.

Toynbee stressed the importance of an acceptance that there is more than one path to truth and salvation. Indeed, it is abundantly clear that a stubborn adherence to religious dogma will only exacerbate confrontation and rivalry among people and peoples, perpetuating humankind's long and bloody history of religious strife and persecution.

Toynbee did not, of course, mean by this that people should not assert their own views of the world, of the universe, or of their religious faith. We are free to assert our views, but only as far as this is compatible with the spirit of living and letting live, the spirit of tolerance and nonviolence that we of the SGI consider the very heart of humanism. Even as Toynbee held out the possibility that humankind may one day be united in the same faith, he laid down strict guidelines

for the propagation of religion, declaring that acceptance of any new faith could only be the result of the free choice of countless individuals.²⁸ This idea coincides with what Makiguchi referred to as compliance given “willingly and without reserve.”

Winners and Losers

THE global gap between rich and poor was once discussed in terms of the rich North versus the poor South. Today, however, against a backdrop of increasingly fierce global economic competition, we find strains between strong and weak, winners and losers, within both North and South, as well as within individual countries in both hemispheres. The stark realities of an “eat or be eaten” world draw into question the very meaning and intent of a civilization whose acknowledged commitment has always been to “progress.” Certainly, in this regard, Makiguchi’s admonition, that it is time to vie with each other not for power or money, but for achievement of humanitarian goals, offers the kind of far-sighted vision around which we may successfully order humankind’s affairs in the coming millennium.

Professor Hugh de Santis of the National Defense Academy in Washington writes:

Just how conflictual the passage from progress to mutualism will be is likely to be a function of three concurrent conditions: the capability of revisionist states to wage war;

the tolerance, generosity, and security vigilance of rich states and influential institutions; and the predisposition of poor states to evaluate their interests in inclusivist rather than exclusivist terms.²⁹

Setting aside the first condition, the last two eloquently show that the future depends upon whether both rich and poor countries can, in their own way, possess the spirit of “what benefits others can benefit ourselves” and “live and let live.”

The building of a world community, a global civilization of justice, compassion and hope must begin by turning away from the “eat or be eaten” ethos of competition and cultivating in its place a shared ethos of cooperation and interdependence—which is in fact closer to the original sense of the word competition.

In this regard, I would like to propose the concept of shared or mutual value-creation as a behavioral norm for the new era. In concrete terms, I would like to suggest that we review and renew the summit meetings of the major industrial democracies (the G-7).

Summit of Responsible States

AT the Lyon Summit in June 1996, under a thematic banner of “globalization for the benefit of all,”³⁰ the G-7 leaders for the first time gave serious attention to both the positive and the negative aspects of globalization. The following June, at the Denver Summit, they announced the “G-7

Statement on Economic and Financial Issues,” in which they declared: “Our goal is to realize the full benefits of globalization for all while meeting the challenges it presents.”³¹ I cannot help feeling that the Denver gathering, at which the Russian Federation participated virtually as a full member, has brought the summit meetings to an important turning point.

From the first meeting in 1975, the summits were held with a view to strengthening and underscoring the unity of the leading Western states within the context of the ongoing Cold War conflict. Following the end of the Cold War, Russia was granted limited participation, but the basic purpose—displaying G-7 solidarity—remained unchanged. This history adds to the significance of recent changes. Some observers see the shift from G-7 to G-8 made at the Denver meeting as the first step toward making the summits a genuinely global affair. To encourage these nascent positive trends, I would like to propose that the meetings be expanded to include such countries as China and India, and that the group make a new departure as the “Summit of Responsible States.”

The new summit would be a place where the leaders of these states might discuss without reserve issues of common concern, and where they could develop a sense of shared responsibility. I propose including China and India for two reasons. The first is that their combined population is expected to reach one-third of the entire population of the

world in the near future, a development which in itself merits our attention. The second reason is that, over the course of their extremely long histories, both countries have been made up of numerous ethnic groups and have had to deal with the challenges of highly diverse populations.

I feel that the term “responsible states” should be included in the name of the summit, because I am convinced that global issues will never be resolved until the world’s leading states begin thinking not only of their own national interests, but demonstrate a concern for the benefit of humankind as a whole. As some have pointed out, the greatest deficiency in the current system of nation-states is that there are too few voices that speak for the global public interest.

Unity in Diversity, Diversity in Unity

IN the face of the seemingly irreversible tide of globalization, we must meet the urgent task of creating a civilization that will embody what Toynbee called “unity in diversity and diversity in unity.”³² This is a need stressed not only by Toynbee but by many world leaders, including former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and the late Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

In his epilogue to the book that will record our recent discussions, Gorbachev stressed the importance of a world of diversity, urging that we not permit the post-Cold War

world to be painted solely in the shades of economic liberalism and Americanism.³³ Rajiv Gandhi likewise emphasized that the vibrant reality of unity in diversity is India’s greatest single contribution to world civilization.³⁴

It is my belief that education, in the broadest sense of the word, holds the key to meeting the challenges of global responsibility and fostering the spirit of tolerance.

Education does not mean coercing people to fit one rigid and unvaried mold; this is mere ideological indoctrination. Rather, it represents the most effective means of fostering the positive potential inherent in all people—self-restraint, empathy for others and the unique personality and character of each person. To do this, education must be a personal, even spiritual encounter and interaction between human beings, between teacher and learner.

The teachings of Buddhism employ the analogy of flowering fruit trees—cherry, plum, pear, etc.—each blossoming and bearing fruit in its own unique way, to express the value of diversity. Each living thing, in other words, has a distinct character, individuality, and purpose in this world. Accordingly, people should develop their own unique capabilities as they work to build a world of cooperation where all people acknowledge both their differences and their fundamental equality, a world where a rich diversity of peoples and cultures is nourished, each enjoying respect and harmony.

A related Buddhist principle is *jitai kensho*, which means to give full and creative expression to the intrinsic individuality of the self, without clashing with or preying on the individuality of others. It teaches that the true way of living is found in compassion, learning from each other’s differences how to grow and improve ourselves and thereby creating a realm of happiness woven of harmony and coexistence.

The late Dr. David L. Norton, the respected American philosopher who was well versed in the educational philosophy of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, shared his view of the Buddhist model of diversity in a 1991 address:

For the reorganized world that must come, our responsibility as educators is to cultivate in our students a sensibility of respect and appreciation of cultures, beliefs, and practices that differ from their own. This can only be done on the basis of the recognition that other cultures, beliefs, and practices embody aspects of truth and goodness, as the blossoms of the cherry tree, the sour plum, the sweet plum, and the pear tree each embody beauty in a distinctive aspect. To achieve this means that our students must abandon the supposition that the beliefs and practices with which they are most familiar have a monopoly on truth and goodness. This supposition is called parochialism, or narrow-mindedness when it is the innocent result of ignorance, but it breeds the aggressive absolutism of the “closed society” mentality.³⁵

All children have the right to receive education, including this girl in a Sri Lanka refugee camp.

Soon after World War II, as the East–West ideological confrontation escalated, second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda spoke of the underlying unity of the human race, calling for the realization of a “global family.” His appeal grew from the same roots as what today is called “world citizenship” and sought to transcend the constraints of self-centered and bigoted nationalism. There are, of course, those who believe a clash of civilizations to be unavoidable. My view is that such a clash would not occur between civilizations, but between the savage elements that lurk within each civilization. If people from different cultural traditions are willing to work over time to build tolerant and enduring links, rather than indulging in the temptation to dominate and forcibly influence others, the very nature of culture is such that humanity will be enriched by their interaction, and their differences will give birth to new values.

Human Development

THE role of religion must be to provide the wisdom which can propel the effort toward mutual development and improvement. In this connection, Buddhism teaches that one meaning of *myo* (mystic) is “to



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open.”³⁶ The constant seeking after improvement and growth, the desire to open up latent potentialities is a special characteristic of human life. What is urgently sought today is religion that responds to this desire for growth and fulfillment.

The sad historical reality, however, is one of endless strife, bloodshed and tragedy originating from religion and religious differences. As Nichi-

ren wrote, “The true path of life lies in the affairs of this world.”³⁷ I interpret this as meaning that if we are to avoid repeating the errors of the past, religions must give first priority to serving the needs of real people in their daily lives and finding solutions to the problems facing human society. In this way, they must provide the spiritual basis for peaceful competition.

A hopeful future can be opened up by overcoming what Toda criticized as narrow self-centeredness and by promoting the humanitarian competition that Makiguchi advocated, the shared work of value-creation among people committed to living together as global neighbors. Indeed, this is the core objective of the SGI's movement of what we call "human revolution."

While the trend toward globalization appears to be firmly established, what must concern us even more is the kind of world that will be the result of this reordering. Directing the processes of globalization toward a new era of respect for the sanctity of life and of the human being—the vision embraced by Makiguchi and Toda, which is currently pursued by SGI—requires a revolution at the deepest core of each human life. In this sense, our efforts must be focused on the "deeper, slower movements" that Toynbee saw as fundamental to the making of history.

Last year the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution proclaiming the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace. It is time that we return to the question of humanity—the starting point of every endeavor—as we seek to formulate a set of clear, basic principles on which to build a culture of peace. I am fully confident that if people everywhere engage in sincere dialogue in order to identify a common basis for belief and action, and if all people join as equal partners

in the endeavor to create a culture of peace, we will witness the dawn of humankind's third millennium as an era in which happiness can be enjoyed by all.

I was moved by such sentiments when I urged support last year for the adoption of an Earth Charter.³⁸ Such a document will give voice to the general will of humankind and offer eloquent proof of our courage, wisdom and solidarity in the face of the challenges that confront us. In support of the efforts of the Earth Charter Commission, the SGI-affiliated Boston Research Center for the 21st Century is working to deepen and broaden discussions toward the finalization of the language of the Earth Charter. I have high expectations for this process, as I believe that the Earth Charter can provide an important stepping-stone toward a future global civilization.

Human Rights and the Role of NGOs

THIS year marks the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Adopted in December 1948, this historic document proclaims in its Preamble that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."

This Declaration, which contains so much in a mere thirty articles, is considered "soft law," a resolution without binding force. Nonetheless it has, over the last fifty years,

served as the international community's effective standard on questions of human rights. It has also given birth to numerous international human rights conventions, including the International Covenants on Human Rights. As of September 1997, no fewer than twenty-three multilateral human rights treaties had been drafted and adopted under UN auspices. The number of resolutions, statements and declarations dealing with human rights issues, of course, exceeds that number many times over.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has come to occupy a unique place in international society, to the extent that it is said to carry the weight of international customary law. The extraordinary significance of this document in human history is a topic I discussed with Austregésilo de Athayde,³⁹ late president of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, who played an important role in its drafting.

International human rights treaties can be said to differ in a fundamental sense from other international law. The principle of reciprocity—the principle that one country's observance of treaty conditions requires other signatory countries' reciprocal observance—is said not to apply in the case of human rights conventions.⁴⁰ In other words, since human rights conventions are aimed at securing universal human rights, they contain elements that transcend some of the limitations of agreements undertaken between states, including the generally sacrosanct principle

I am fully confident that if people everywhere engage in sincere dialogue in order to identify a common basis for belief and action, and if all people join as equal partners in the endeavor to create a culture of peace, we will witness the dawn of humankind's third millennium as an era in which happiness can be enjoyed by all.

of nonintervention in the domestic affairs of another state. In this sense, international human rights law represents a limitation and tempering of traditional concepts of national sovereignty.

Likewise, many of the concrete measures that have been adopted—from the establishment of international tribunals, various committees and commissions responsible for overseeing the implementation of treaties, to systems for reporting human rights abuses—represent important, if limited, steps toward the establishment of a supranational system of human rights protection and promotion.

However, international accords and the resulting structure of human rights law are not in themselves sufficient to bring about any tangible improvements in the lives of individuals whose rights are being infringed. The tragic reality of human rights violations and abuses can be found everywhere; the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has yet to become a reality for people around the world in equal measure.

For many years, there has been agreement that the human rights agenda must move beyond standard setting; true implementation must begin. Needless to say, the path to universal implementation of

human rights standards is strewn with difficulties. As one possible means of overcoming these obstacles, I would propose a network of human rights agencies, present in each national setting yet with a status independent of the national government, charged with implementing the human rights agreements which that state has signed.

The work of these agencies would include compiling reports on national efforts to implement international human rights treaties, fostering public awareness of human rights, and working to secure redress in specific cases. The essence of this plan is to create a new framework of transnational cooperation, involving national human rights agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and competent UN bodies, in order to make existing human rights agreements most effective.

The idea of national human rights agencies has had advocates within the United Nations for some time now, and in some countries institutions independent of the national judiciary have been established in the form of ombudspersons or human rights commissions. As a means of reinforcing and accelerating this trend, I would like to take up the idea of "transgovernmentalism" advocated by Harvard Law School

professor Anne-Marie Slaughter as a new form of international cooperation. To this idea, I would like to add some suggestions which might enhance its participatory aspects. In essence, transgovernmentalism as proposed by Slaughter is a system that transcends individual states but which differs from traditional multilateral arrangements in that it involves lateral, functional linkages between the similarly charged agencies in different states.

Slaughter writes, "Disaggregating the state permits the disaggregation of sovereignty as well, ensuring that specific state institutions derive strength and status from participation in a transgovernmental order."⁴¹ The idea of disaggregated national sovereignty holds the promise of providing what would be the critical element required for the effective functioning of the network of agencies I am proposing—namely their independence and impartiality.

I do not completely agree with every aspect of Slaughter's idea, however. I am concerned that she posits transgovernmentalism as the only alternative to either liberal internationalism or neo-medievalism. In my view, in developing a new global order, we should feel free to choose from a range of visions, incorporating their useful aspects in a mutually supportive manner.

Still, she sets forth a number of important ideas, emphasizing, for example, the centrality of such qualities as efficacy and accountability in any international framework for the resolution of global issues.

While these may be the necessary conditions for establishing human rights agencies, they are not in themselves sufficient to assure success. The Resolution adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights states in its principles that they should be established in a way that ensures pluralist representation of civil society, through the participation and cooperation of NGOs. As this shows, the work of NGOs, which have played a vitally important role in the area of human rights, should not be undervalued. It would be imperative for the national human rights agencies I am proposing to develop constructive partnerships with NGOs. These relationships would help assure the accountability of the agencies while enhancing their legitimacy.

It is clearly time to advance the relationship between NGOs and governments beyond the adversarial one that presently pertains, in which governments regard NGOs with disfavor and occasionally with open hostility. The time has come for mutual recognition of the respective roles of NGOs and governments and for them to work together—ideally in a relationship of creative tension—to promote human rights. However, care must be

exercised to ensure that such cooperation does not leave NGOs in the position of “sub-contractors,” carrying out the work that governments would rather, for whatever reason, not do themselves.

I would also like to propose that the technical training programs currently conducted by the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) for government employees be expanded to include the participation of those responsible for national human rights agencies and the staff of the NGOs alongside whom they will be working. This would not only provide a regular venue for ongoing exchange between the three groups but would also encourage a deeper understanding of the ideals and goals of the United Nations and facilitate policy coordination with U.N. agencies.

Human Rights Culture

ALONGSIDE the need for an improved institutional framework, there must be a parallel effort to create a robust culture of human rights. Simply put, this means cultivating the awareness that human rights are not something special, but norms of behavior that should be accepted and adhered to everywhere. While such an effort will take time, in the end it will be the most effective way of closing the gap between the ideal of human rights and the reality.

There are distinct signs that such an effort is finally under way. As one outcome of the

World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993, the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2004, was established. Likewise, human rights education is one of the important objectives of the UNHCHR, which was also established in the wake of the World Conference. Thus we see the creation of a human rights culture emerging as a common theme and concern of the international community.

In order to support this endeavor, the SGI has actively sought to promote human rights education. The exhibition “Toward a Century of Humanity—An Overview of Human Rights in Today’s World,” for example, was first shown at the United Nations University in Tokyo in April 1993. It has since been shown in twenty-one cities in seven countries, including Geneva in December 1993, as one of the events commemorating the forty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The SGI has also sponsored exhibitions on children’s rights, the Holocaust and other human rights issues.

We also see renewed recognition of the overarching importance of human rights within the United Nations itself. This is encouraging, as the United Nations is the natural focal point for humanity’s shared efforts to secure human rights. A report released by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in July 1997, “Renewing the United Nations: A Program for Reform,” states that, “Hu-

Human rights will only become truly universal and
indivisible when they span the most basic, existential division
—that of self and other.

of a “Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities”⁴² by the United Nations as a document complementing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and as an aid in our efforts to create a better world.

Article 1 of the proposed declaration states, “Every person, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, social status, political opinion, language, age, nationality, or religion, has a responsibility to treat all people in a humane way.” Running through all nineteen articles of the declaration is a determination to balance the notions of freedom and responsibility. One especially striking clause calls on us to “move away from the freedom of indifference towards the freedom of involvement.”

I find much to agree with in the Inter Action Council’s proposal. The challenge that faces us is that of establishing the kind of ethics it proposes in the midst of society’s complex realities.

Altruism in Practice

IN this regard, I recall a response made by the late Linus Pauling following a talk I gave at Claremont McKenna College in January 1993. At that time, he expressed his sense of

the importance to humankind of attaining and acting in accordance with what Buddhism calls the bodhisattva life-state, to which I had referred in my talk.

University of Hawaii professor David W. Chappell has also noted the bodhisattva way of life taught in the Buddhist tradition, and extensively discusses its significance to the contemporary world in an essay titled “The Public Role of the Bodhisattva.”⁴³

What then is this concept of the bodhisattva, which has attracted the attention of such distinguished thinkers? The bodhisattva, in short, exemplifies the state of compassion, or altruistic life, and a person in this state aspires to help all people gain happiness, seeking, in Nichiren’s words, “to attain enlightenment only after having first saved others from suffering.”⁴⁴

The qualities that make a bodhisattva can be described from various perspectives, but here I would mention one that is of particular relevance to human rights. The bodhisattva undertakes a vow to save others and bases all action upon this vow, which is a spontaneous and unforced expression of altruism. Nor is the vow a mere expression of determina-

tion or desire, but a defining commitment to whose realization the bodhisattva devotes her or his entire being. The bodhisattva refuses to be dissuaded or discouraged by the difficulties posed by this challenge. The Lotus Sutra speaks of the pure white lotus rising from the waters of a muddy pond. This analogy illustrates the attainment of a pure and empowered state of life in the midst of the sometimes degrading realities of human society. In this way, the bodhisattva never tries to escape from reality, never leaves suffering people unsaved and plunges into the turbulent waters of life in the effort to help each person drowning in suffering onto the great vessel of happiness.

Another Buddhist scripture describes the vow of Shrimala, the daughter of King Prasenajit and a contemporary of Shakyamuni Buddha:

If I see lonely people, people who have been jailed unjustly and have lost their freedom, people who are suffering from illness, disaster or poverty, I will not abandon them. I will bring them spiritual and material comfort.⁴⁵

True to her vow, she worked throughout her life for the benefit of others, striving always to bring forth the inner goodness that exists in all people.

My point in introducing the concept of the bodhisattva is this: Human rights will only become truly universal and indivisible when they span the most basic, existential division—that of self and other. And this can only occur when both the right to and duty of humane treatment are observed, not in response to externally imposed norms, but through spontaneous action stemming from the naturally powerful desire to assist our fellows whose ability to live in a humane manner is under threat.

In this regard, I would like to introduce the words of Upendra Baxi, an Indian law scholar, in his “Human Rights Education: The Promise of the Third Millennium?”:

The single most critical source of human rights is the consciousness of peoples of the world who have waged the most persistent struggles for decolonization and self-determination, against racial discrimination, gender-based aggression and discrimination, denial of access to basic minimum needs, environmental degradation and destruction, systematic “benign neglect” of the disarticulated, disadvantaged and dispossessed (including the indigenous peoples of the Earth).⁴⁶

The similarity of the concerns expressed in this remark

and Shrimala’s bodhisattva vow is striking indeed.

Inner Motivation

BUDDHISM stresses the quality of our motivation, valuing that which issues spontaneously from within, as expressed in the simple phrase, “Our heart is what matters most.”⁴⁷ It teaches that the ultimate objective of Shakyamuni’s life was revealed in the humanity he manifested in his behavior and actions. Thus the cultivation and perfection of a person’s character is considered in the Buddhist tradition to be the true goal of religious training. Norms that are not inner-generated and do not encourage the development of individual character are ultimately weak and ineffective. Only when external norms and inner values function in a mutually supportive manner can they enable people to resist evil and live as genuine advocates and champions of human rights.

Over half a century ago, at the height of Japanese militarism, Soka Gakkai’s founding president Makiguchi declared, “Rejecting evil and embracing good are two actions born of the same impulse.” He also said, “Only a person courageous enough to fight against evil can be a true friend of the good,” and, “It is not enough to indulge passively in goodness; we must have the moral courage actively to pursue good.” In this way Makiguchi launched a critique of the militarist regime which trampled human rights as it carried out its wars of invasion. In the face of

constant persecution, he never yielded an inch, holding firm to his beliefs up to the moment of his death in prison. I derive profound personal inspiration from the struggles that culminated in his martyrdom; I feel that it is here that we can find the spiritual wellsprings of the SGI’s current activities to promote human rights.

Just twenty-three years ago I appealed to members of the newly formed SGI, saying, “Let us not seek praise or glory for ourselves, but instead dedicate our lives to sowing the seeds of the Mystic Law for peace everywhere in the world.” Just as unhappiness is not something only others suffer, neither can happiness be for ourselves only. In this sense, my appeal was a cry from the depths of my heart that we should live the bodhisattva way of life: overcoming the ego, developing an extended, more inclusive sense of self—seeing ourselves in others and feeling others to be part of ourselves.

As responsible citizens of their respective societies, the members of the SGI are working to advance a movement for peace, culture and education. In the immediate context of their daily lives, they act with the bodhisattva spirit, refusing to ignore or abandon those who suffer. They initiate and carry out countless acts for the benefit of others, striving to encourage this person, to relieve the anguish of that person, and to help those around them. I am proud of them and believe theirs are the kind of quiet, grass-roots endeavors that will certainly help to create

Peace of Westphalia

This was the general settlement in 1648 that brought an end to the "Thirty Years' War" in Europe and became the basis of the modern European state system. It gave the individual state the right to absolute sovereignty over its own territories and set forth principles of nonintervention by one state in the internal or domestic affairs of another. It also recognized no obligation of a state without its consent to an international law. In general, the settlement required mutual recognition of state sovereignty, and recognition of the state, not religious authority, as the supreme ruler. The later principles of *raison d'état*, the balance of power, and power politics grew out of this pattern of international political order born in 1648.

the human rights culture that our times demand.

It is my belief that if we can foster, in the depths of each individual human life, the kind of active, independent basis for altruistic behavior exemplified in the bodhisattva's vow, we can establish the fundamental basis for an ethic of responsibility and commitment, upon which a genuine culture of human rights can flourish. This is because the inner motivation that spurs people to act in the face of threats to human dignity is, for human rights, the most crucial supporting and sustaining force.

As was evident in the sharp division of views at the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, the issue of the universality of human rights is not fully resolved and requires careful and sensitive treatment. As I have tried to describe through my discussion of the bodhisattva ideal, I believe that when people spontaneously undertake to live by those norms which they find most desirable,

and to the extent to which they bring their actual behavior in line with those norms, human rights can transcend the limitations of an externally imposed regime and, as internalized values, become a force for the transformation of reality. In that sense, it is vitally important that dialogue be undertaken to promote a new synthesis between the views of those who argue for the universality of rights and those who consider them embedded in cultural relativism. It is only through such dialogue that a genuinely universal understanding of human rights can be reached and the conditions created by which human rights can be implemented equally and without distinction among all the Earth's inhabitants.

End the Era of Nuclear Arms!

THREE hundred and fifty years have passed since the Peace of Westphalia, which laid the foundations for the contem-

porary international political order centered on the nation-state. By now it is clear that such a framework alone is inadequate to cope with problems of a global scale.

As one example, despite long-standing calls for a permanent court capable of trying individuals who violate international laws against genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, no such body has been established. In recognition of the pervasive sense that the international community's response to the situation in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and elsewhere was woefully inadequate, steps have been taken leading to an international conference in Rome this June, where it is expected that an international criminal court will be created.

This court will be a judicial body that will not only hold individuals accountable for crimes against international humanitarian and human rights law, but will also provide legal redress to the victims of such crimes. I myself have been eager to see such a court established as a pillar around which the "international law of peace" can be enhanced and elaborated.⁴⁸

Humanitarian issues are not restricted to the scope of any single country, and the awareness is finally emerging that they must be dealt with through coordinated international efforts. Attempts to create the new systems and bodies capable of responding effectively to this need have tended to be viewed by states as attempts to limit and relativize

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)

This campaign was launched at the end of 1991, and its membership now includes around 1,000 NGOs supporting the target of “a comprehensive ban on anti-personnel landmines.” It has attracted wide-ranging public support through NGO appeals to governments and publication of the list of countries that opposed the ban. The efforts led to the conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction in September last year. In awarding the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize to the campaign and its coordinator, the Nobel Committee commended the ICBL’s achievements, stating that “it can become a precedent for international efforts toward accomplishing disarmament and peace.”

Ottawa Process

A new procedure was proposed in October 1996, with Canada playing a leading role, involving the countries that approved the principle of “a ban treaty with no exceptions, no reservations, no loopholes.” It pushed for an innovative international framework for the Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines to break the deadlock over a “unanimous consent” requirement in previous negotiations at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

the prerogatives of national sovereignty—which to some extent they inevitably are—and it is this that has prompted states’ protracted resistance to the idea of an international criminal court.

However halting our progress toward a world less centered on nation-states may be, what is entirely clear is that a world in which states count for less is a world in which individual people will count for more. The role and responsibility of individuals, as the protagonists who shape history, is destined to grow; it thus

becomes all the more critical that we each learn to live as creative and active global citizens, recognizing and working to fulfill our respective responsibilities toward the coming millennium. The redoubled wisdom and energy of ordinary citizens is absolutely essential to the work of forging a better future; in this sense NGOs have an invaluable role to play in providing a voice and a focus for people.

In recent years, we have seen movements in which NGOs have brought the energized efforts of citizens to bear not

only on areas of traditional concern, such as human rights and humanitarian issues. The scope of their activities has expanded to include issues of what might be termed in the broadest sense “human security.” This has meant effective NGO activism and advocacy on issues related to arms and security—areas traditionally the exclusive province of the state.

One such achievement is the World Court Project that in June 1997 succeeded in having the legality of nuclear arms reviewed by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Similarly, the campaign waged by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and other NGOs was highly influential throughout the process of drafting and adoption of the Anti-Personnel Mines Convention in September 1997. These initiatives give great hope and confidence to people who love peace around the world.

Building on the momentum of these successes, I would like to propose that the next step taken, once more through popular initiative, should be to reduce the ever-increasing number of small arms—such as automatic rifles and small-caliber guns—that so often fan the flames of the regional conflicts that are a tragic feature of the post-Cold War world. Effective measures must be taken to prevent their further proliferation, and in this regard I believe that we can learn much from the lessons of the Ottawa Process by which language in the Anti-Personnel Mines Convention was saved from the loopholes and ambiguities that are the



Nuclear Age Peace Foundation President, Dr. David Krieger, receives more than 13 million signatures collected by Soka Gakkai Youth Division for the Abolition 2000 Campaign in February 1998 in Hiroshima.

almost inevitable result of a plenary drafting process operating by consensus.

Parallel with efforts to restrict and eventually eliminate weapons of mass destruction, the introduction of controls on the conventional weapons used to kill, maim, and terrorize people in armed conflicts worldwide is an essential step toward creating the institutional framework for peace.

Resolution of these difficult problems should not be left up to governments alone. All people should actively strive to confront the issues that threaten the survival of humankind and the sanctity of human life, as I have urged repeatedly over the years. The recent developments to which I have referred offer hope that the world is indeed

moving in that direction.

The Soka Gakkai in Japan has been an active supporter of Abolition 2000, a worldwide movement initiated by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and other NGOs demanding that governments commit themselves to abolishing nuclear weapons. Inspired by a strong sense of responsibility for the future, the youth membership of the Soka Gakkai took the lead in a national campaign to collect signatures in support of the goals of Abolition 2000.⁴⁹

The ICJ advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons includes the unanimous view that: "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its

aspects under strict and effective international control." Despite this opinion from the ICJ, the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in September 1996 has been followed by virtually no substantive progress toward the goal of nuclear disarmament. We must rally international public opinion, urging the nuclear weapons states to commence immediate negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear weapons ban treaty.

It is encouraging that the World Court Project, which led to the ICJ advisory opinion, has been succeeded by the Abolition 2000, embracing as it does the larger goal of abolishing all nuclear arms. The campaign calls on all the nuclear weapons states to conclude by the year 2000 a treaty establishing a

COUNTDOWN TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

World Summit for Children (The Children's Summit)
September 1990, New York

United Nations Conference on Environment and
Development (The Earth Summit)
June 1992, Rio de Janeiro

World Conference on Human Rights
June 1993, Vienna

International Conference on Population and Development
September 1994, Cairo

World Summit for Social Development
March 1995, Copenhagen

Fourth World Conference on Women
September 1995, Beijing

Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements
(Habitat II)
September 1996, Istanbul

United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the
Establishment of an International Criminal Court
June 1998, Rome

World NGO Conference
1999

Third Hague Peace Conference
1999

People's Millennium Assembly
2000

Millennium Assembly of the United Nations
2000, New York

commitment to ending the era of nuclear arms before the century's end.

A New Civil Society

IN order not only to end the nuclear threat but to build a society where people can lead genuinely human lives, it is imperative that we construct a new civil society rooted in popular initiative. We must use the remaining three years of the twentieth century to take concrete steps toward laying the foundation of a new global civilization that will be, in those famous words, "of the people, by the people and for the people." There are a number of events already scheduled that offer opportunities to advance this endeavor.

Firstly, through deliberations such as those to be held this year in preparation for the World NGO Conference, (scheduled for 1999), concrete proposals will be advanced to create a forum that will link NGOs with the General Assembly of the United Nations. The "Global Forum" I described in my peace proposal last year provides one possible model.

Then, in 1999, the Third Hague Peace Conference will be held under the auspices of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, of which the SGI is a member. There, an action plan for a world without war is expected to be adopted by representatives of NGOs and other organizations. The conference will convene to celebrate the Centennial of the 1899 Hague Peace Conference, and it has much in common

timetable for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

I have long been convinced that we should not allow this century to end without resolving—or at least bringing resolution into sight on—the issue

of nuclear weapons, which were developed in this century and which represent the greatest threat to human survival ever known. I earnestly call on all the nuclear weapons states to express to the world their

I have long been convinced that we should not allow this century to end without resolving—or at least bringing resolution into sight on—the issue of nuclear weapons, which were developed in this century and which represent the greatest threat to human survival ever known.

with the idea of a conference for a world without war which I have advocated for some years. I would like to propose that the Third Hague Peace Conference seek to adopt a World Without War Declaration that is rooted in the sovereignty of humankind, and that this will open the way for a World Without War Covenant.

Then, in the year 2000, a People's Millennium Assembly, attended by representatives of NGOs and other groups representing the world's citizens, will be held in parallel with the Millennium Assembly scheduled to take place at the United Nations. This People's Assembly was referred to in U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's document on "Renewing the United Nations." I propose that, when the People's Millennium Assembly convenes, the free movement of people be secured—for instance by allowing attendance without a visa—after the model of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice which will enable people to move freely within the European Union.

It is my belief that progressive, bold initiatives of this kind made during the remaining three years of the twentieth century will pave the way for a breakthrough toward the construction of a new global civil society.

The state of the environment, another global issue, was actively debated last year. At the Rio + 5 Forum held in Brazil in March 1997 under the leadership of NGOs, the theme was "From Agenda to Action," and vigorous discussion took place under the slogan "Let's stop saying 'someone should.'"

I quite agree with this sentiment. We must never lose sight of the fact that a third millennium imbued with respect for the sanctity of life, free from nuclear arms and war, and rich with the rainbow hues of diversity, will only come into being through the efforts of empowered and responsible citizens who don't wait for someone else to take the initiative.

As the ominous clouds of World War II were drawing low, Czech novelist Karel Capek (1890–1938) severely condemned the phrases "someone should" and "things are not so simple" as illustrative of the spiritual poverty that passively accepts the status quo.

He appealed to people:

When someone is drowning, it is not enough to stand aside and express the reasonable opinion that "Someone should jump in and save him." History needs those who act rather than those who only say what someone else should do.

We could say that almost all the useful or important things that have happened in the last thousand years were not exactly simple. If people were to convince themselves that nothing can be done only because "things are not simple," the world would not have much of what is called human endeavor.⁵⁰

We should heed this admonition as bearing directly on our own responsibility. What is needed most now is the courage to confront the realities that face us, and concrete actions to transform them.

We have a shared responsibility to advance step-by-step amidst these crushing realities. It is only through such an effort that we can prevent any repetition of the nightmarish tragedies that have marred this century and pass on the fruits of human endeavor to future generations.

Let us arise and act now, firm in the conviction that we are the world citizens who can shape and author future history. Let us embrace the kind of profound optimism that no fear or difficulty can conquer. The members of the SGI are committed to a movement, inspired by the principles of Buddhism, that promotes the values of peace, culture and

education. Through these efforts we will continue the work of forging a broad-based network of solidarity among people of goodwill throughout the world.

Finally, let us have the confidence that someday historians will remark, from the kind of distant future that Toynbee envisaged, that the final years of the twentieth century were indeed the turning point in human history; for it was then that the seeds were sown that have since blossomed into the vibrant global civilization of peace they now enjoy.

January 26, 1998

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The Untold History of the Fuji School: The Origins of the Temple Issue (3)

This series is based on The Dark History of the Fuji School: Revealing the Origin of the Nikken Sect (Ankoku no Fuji Shumonshi: Nikken Shu no Engen o Kiru) by Hajime Kawai, a vice senior advisor of the Soka Gakkai Study Department.

Chapter 3: The Schism After the Death of Nichimoku



(1) The seventy-two-year land dispute over Taiseki-ji

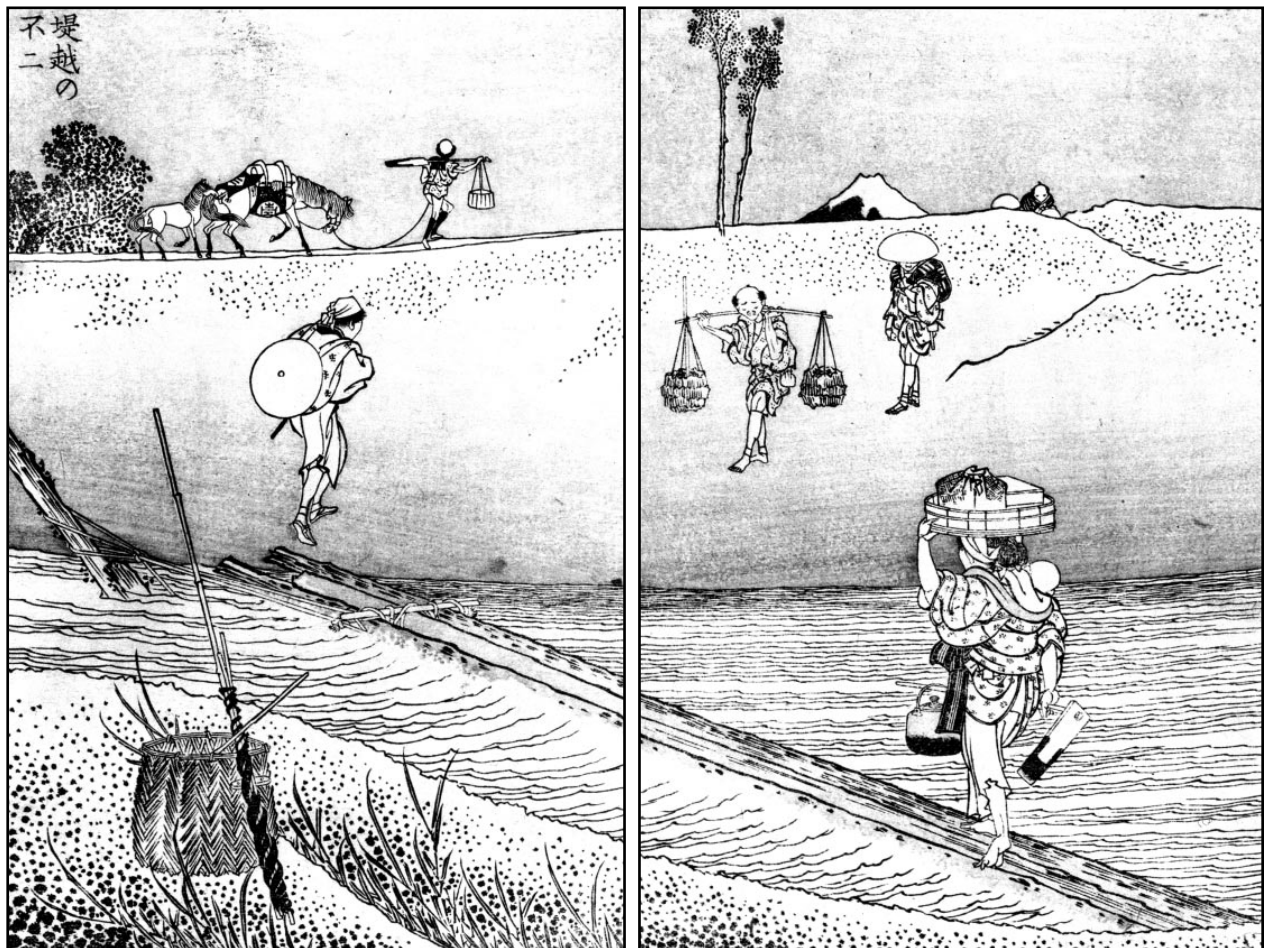
ON May 22, 1333, several months after Nikko Shonin's passing, the army of Nitta Yoshisada defeated the ruling Hojo clan, bringing an end to the Kamakura shogunate government. When Emperor Godaigo reestablished the imperial government in Kyoto, Nikko's successor, Nichimoku, felt that it was an opportune time to remonstrate with the sovereign and proclaim the validity of the Daishonin's Buddhism. So, at the beginning of November of the same year, Nichimoku, accompanied by two of his disciples—Nichizon and Nichigo—went to Kyoto to remonstrate with the imperial court.

On his way to the nation's new political center, however, Nichimoku col-

lapsed—probably due to both exhaustion from cold weather and old age—at Tarui, Mino Province¹. On November 15, he died at 74, bringing closure to a life dedicated to the spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Nichigo returned to Fuji with Nichimoku's ashes. Nichizon went on to Kyoto and waited for an opportunity to remonstrate with the government. Regarding Nichimoku's lifelong commitment to Buddhism, SGI President Ikeda states:

Not content to live quietly at Taiseki-ji, Nichimoku decided to go to Kyoto to remonstrate with the emperor of Japan.... Nichimoku carried with him the Daishonin's "Rissho Ankoku Ron" (a treatise titled "On the Pacification of the Land through the Propagation of True Buddhism) and a letter of petition that had been written by his teacher, the sec-



A nineteenth-century print of Mount Fuji and the area around the head temple, Taiseki-ji.

ond high priest and founder of Taiseki-ji, Nikko Shonin.

Following the spirit of his teacher, Nichimoku refused to stay idly in a temple. As long as he lived, he actively devoted himself to propagating the Daishonin's teachings, journeying far and wide to do so.

Who today has inherited the dedicated commitment to realize the ideal of *rissho ankoku* as demonstrated by the Daishonin, Nikko Shonin and Nichimoku? Who are their heirs? When we consider this question from a historical and objective standpoint, they are none other than our first and second presidents, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda, respectively, and the SGI as a whole—all of whom have emerged in the recent past. (*Seikyo Times*, February 1994, p. 9)

Before his passing, Nichimoku designated Nichigo as the chief priest of Renzo-bo, a lodging temple on the grounds of Taiseki-ji. But later Nichigo had a dispute over doctrine with Nichido, the fourth high priest (*Essential Writings of the Fuji School*, vol. 9, p. 36). Eventually his arguments were rejected by the majority of priests at Taiseki-ji and he was forced to leave for Awa Province where he had once been sent to propagate the Daishonin's teaching.

Nichigo felt a strong sense of rivalry with Nichido. It is said that when Nichimoku left for Kyoto to remonstrate with the imperial government, he unofficially designated Nichido as his successor (*Detailed Accounts of Nikko Shonin of the Fuji School*, p. 478). Since

Nichimoku had to retain his position as high priest to represent the Fuji school in remonstrating with the imperial government, his transfer of the office of high priest to Nichido was conducted privately. After the private appointment, Nichido moved into Dai-bo, the lodging temple for the high priest, and assumed administrative responsibilities for Taiseki-ji.

To attain superiority over Nichido, Nichigo schemed to obtain the right to the property around Renzo-bo of Taiseki-ji from Nanjo Tokitsuna, the steward of the area and head of the Nanjo family. Tokitsuna had great influence over the management of Taiseki-ji as the fifth son of Nanjo Tokimitsu, the donor of Taiseki-ji's property. Concerned with status and wealth, Nichigo asserted his property right against Nichido and, in so doing, violated the intent of Nikko Shonin, who declared: "Those of insufficient learning who are bent on obtaining fame and fortune are not qualified to call themselves my followers" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1618).

All the property of Taiseki-ji had been already donated by Nanjo Tokimitsu to Nikko Shonin. Nanjo Tokitsuna, however, wrote up a new deed for the east side of Taiseki-ji's property and transferred it to Nichigo on the condition that Tokitsuna's second son, Go'omaru, who was still a young child at that time, become Nichigo's successor. The son would later be known as Nichiden.

Based on the deed he obtained from Nanjo Tokitsuna, Nichigo lodged a complaint with the governor of Suruga Province. The provincial government acknowledged Nichigo's right for the time being, and he returned to Renzo-bo at Taiseki-ji and built a hall nearby to enshrine the Daishonin's image. Nichigo also schemed to gain the support of the priests at the Omosu Seminary, vigorously asserting his authority over Nichido.

Nichigo, however, met with strong resistance from many priests and was once again forced to leave Taiseki-ji. When Nichigo left, he took a statue of the Daishonin and a Gohonzon inscribed by the Daishonin. He moved to Awa Province and established Myohon-ji at Hota². He also built a seminary at Koizumi near Ueno³ where Taiseki-ji was located. This seminary later became known as Kuon-ji.

Nichigo died in 1353, but his followers continued to claim their right over the eastern part of Taiseki-ji. This land dispute went on for more than seventy years. Nanjo Tokitsuna's son Nichiden, who succeeded Nichigo, filed a suit with the Imagawa family, the ruling clan of Suruga Province, and regained the property claim.

Taiseki-ji, headed by Nichiji, the sixth high priest, appealed the case to the more powerful Uesugi family of the Kanto region, which included Suruga Province, in order to reclaim its property. At last, the governor of the Kanto region ordered the governor of Suruga Province to transfer the deed of the eastern part of Taiseki-ji to its original owner. Later when Nichiden, the second chief priest of Myohon-ji, died in 1416 at 77, this long dispute effectively ended. Nichiden's entire life was spent on this land dispute.

The seventy-two-yearlong land dispute, born out of Nichigo's greed for status and wealth, resulted in Taiseki-ji's considerable decline and prevented the further spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism.

(2) Nichizon establishes Shakyamuni's statue as an object of worship



AFTER Nichimoku's passing in 1333, Nichizon continued his trip to Kyoto. It is said that in the following year, he had an interview with the

imperial government and received a piece of property in the nation's capital where he established the temple Jogyo-in. Nichizon is known for having been expelled from Omosu Seminary by Nikko Shonin for vacantly staring at falling leaves during a sermon. Nichizon took faith in the Daishonin's Buddhism under the tutelage of Nichimoku. Once a Tendai priest, however, he could not correctly grasp the Daishonin's teaching that people's disregard of the Lotus Sutra and their faith in lesser teachings cause the Buddhist gods (the positive workings of life and the universe) to abandon the land, thus inviting disasters. There are reports that he performed an "eye-opening ceremony" on a statue of Amida Buddha as well as of Bodhisattva Jizo (Skt. Kshitigarbha). Nichizon also enshrined Shakyamuni's statue and the statues of his ten major disciples as objects of worship. This demonstrates that Nichizon misunderstood the Daishonin's Buddhism and went against the intent of Nikko Shonin. Because the branch school derived from Nichizon advocated the recitation of the entire Lotus Sutra and the worship of Shakyamuni's statue, it gradually distanced itself from Taiseki-ji.

Nichidai, one of Nichizon's disciples, founded Juhon-ji in Kyoto. When Juhon-ji and Jogyo-in were burned down by the priests of Enryaku-ji in 1550, chief priest Nisshin of Juhon-ji, combined the two temples and established Yobo-ji (also pronounced as Yoho-ji).

Nichigo and Nichizon, who accompanied Nichimoku on his last trip to remonstrate with the government, went astray from the Daishonin's Buddhism because of their desire for status and wealth and their shallow knowledge of Buddhism. Soon after the deaths of Nikko Shonin and Nichimoku in 1333, little more than fifty years after the Daishonin's death, the Fuji school

already gave rise to two unorthodox offshoots—one from Nichigo and another from Nichizon. Because of their distortion of the Daishonin's Buddhism, the Fuji school declined significantly and lost its momentum in spreading the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Furthermore, on January 7, 1334, at Joren-bo (also known as Hyakkan-bo) on the grounds of Taiseki-ji, Nissen, one of Nikko Shonin's six main disciples, and Nichidai, one of Nikko Shonin's six new disciples, had a debate over whether or not a practitioner should recite the "Expedient Means" or second chapter of the Lotus Sutra as a part of the Buddhist practice.

Nichidai, who was a nephew of Nikko Shonin, studied at Omosu Seminary. Nikko Shonin appointed him chief priest of the seminary although he was young. In his debate with Nissen, Nichidai asserted that one could benefit from the "Expedient Means" chapter, which is from the theoretical first half of the Lotus Sutra. But the priests at the seminary criticized Nichidai for his position, and the steward of the area also did not support him. So, although he was the chief priest, he was forced to leave Omosu Seminary (which later became known as Kitayama Honmon-ji) and move to Nishiyama⁴. There he established Hokke-do (which later became known as Nishiyama Honmon-ji). With the expulsion of Nichidai, Nishiyama Honmon-ji and Kitayama Honmon-ji vigorously fought each other over the orthodoxy inherited from Nikko Shonin.

To be continued

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1. Present-day Tarui-cho, Fuwa County, Gifu Prefecture.
 2. Present-day Hota, Kyonan-machi, Awa County, Chiba Prefecture.
 3. Present-day Koizumi, Fujinomiya City, Shizuoka Prefecture.
 4. Present-day Nishiyama, Shibakawa-cho, Fuji County, Shizuoka Prefecture.

FRIENDSHIPS FOR PEACE: YOUTH

Youth gatherings were held nationwide to celebrate March 16, Kosen-rufu Day, a day of celebration of youth for the SGI organization. On this day in 1958, Josei Toda, the second president of the Soka Gakkai, held a meeting with 6,000 youth in Japan, passing to them the responsibility for securing lasting peace through the sharing of Buddhism. Over the last forty years, our organization has maintained its commitment to supporting youth in their Buddhist practice and awakening their sense of mission. Here, youth share their visions for the future.



Anita Ampadu, 16, Columbus, Ohio: “My Buddhist activities help me a lot in my everyday life. I can usually take something that I learned at a meeting and apply what I’ve learned to school, work and other aspects of my life. If I’m doing a project at school I can usually look at something in the *World Tribune* and find something that relates to what I’m learning in school. I find this very often and I can usually better understand what I’m studying and also apply it when I have an obstacle.”



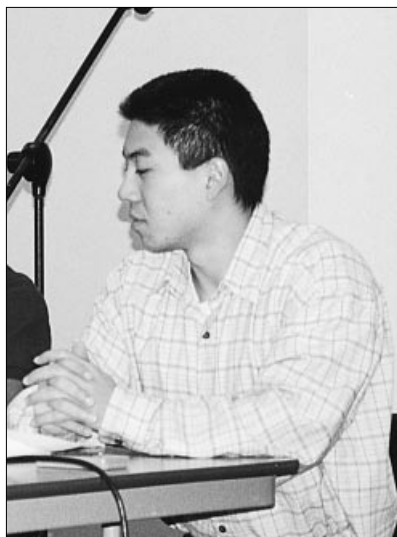
T.J. Johnson, 19, Pasadena, California: “Through the confidence that I gain from chanting, I am able to overcome all obstacles because of a valuable lesson I learned through my practice—always view obstacles not as deterrents but as opportunities to move forward and make even greater achievements. Success does not happen overnight. Plan your goals with consistent effort and be willing to sacrifice to achieve them.”

People don’t plan to fail, they fail to plan. People usually give up too quickly, just about at the time when things start to get difficult. I have learned to stick with things to the end.”



Patricia Donze, 26, Columbia, Missouri: “What the youth of America value depends upon how they were raised. Many value material and monetary items because of their parents’ need to provide them with these items in order to pacify

them. There seems to be a lack of value of individual feelings and respect. I feel that the values have changed over the years to be more of a materialistic nature. There are even times when they do not value their parents. The youth of today are unable to equate value to many items because they were handed the items without any struggle and therefore feel that everything should come this easily. They tend to take for granted the simple things in life, like the sun, the clean air or even their own families."



Bryson Kido, 21, Cambridge, Massachusetts: "For me, the key has always been to make good on your word. To be respected, you must respect others. To be trusted, you must show that you are worthy of trust. For example, while in college, I have been working part time doing some computer work. Although the people around me are all very much older, they have never treated

me like a kid. No one looks over my shoulder or checks to see that I'm working. Although I am paid far less than the going rate for this kind of work (computer-related consulting), I have been so fortunate to be in a supportive, nurturing environment. My superiors have very high expectations of my work. I am taking President Ikeda's guidance to heart, where he says you have to become an indispensable person at work."



Helena Miller, 14, Kaimuki, Hawaii: "When I was younger, I had a hard time expressing my thoughts and opinions. This lowered my self-esteem extremely. Then I was introduced to a satisfying change for the first time. I came to live with my grandmother, who has been a member of the SGI for over twenty-five years. She helped me with my communication skills. She also taught me how to express myself in an acceptable manner. I have learned how to build my confidence."



Dana Williamson, 25, Oakland, California: "My prayer to the Gohonzon is for East Bay Junior High division. What is important is for the members to make a connection to the Gohonzon so they become members of society and are no longer with their parents, they can have a victory. I would also like to develop junior high school members who are well versed in the Daishonin's Buddhism so they will be able to distinguish right from wrong."



Ulisse Gallo, 28, Chicago: "My vision for the youth division and SGI in the twenty-first century is one where the youth sponsor dialogues and seminars, based on Nichiren

Daishonin's Buddhism, on pertinent issues such as social justice, capital punishment, ethics and morality. I'd like to see scholarships created for youth who become staff members so that the organization can continue to attract capable, dedicated leaders. I see organized sporting activities and events such as basketball and softball where we participate with other youth in our communities. My conviction is that each leader learns to listen to each person's heart and truly supports each person's goals and dreams without bias."



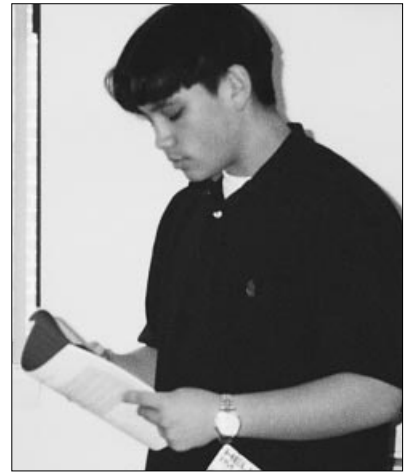
Claudia Heiman, 27, Cambridge, Massachusetts: "President Ikeda talks about the heart as a skilled painter, that we should have a clear vision of our dreams in our hearts when we chant. When I paint my future, I see myself as a strong and happy person and great writer and filmmaker. My deepest desire is to create films that celebrate the joys and sorrows we all experience, which reach and inspire hope in the hearts of millions of people. I want to express my creative voice and develop

into a humanistic artist. It's hard to keep this vision in the face of so many doubts and obstacles. Being young can be a bit overwhelming. I struggle in particular with a lack of confidence, but this is precisely why I chant and why I will never ever give up my Buddhist practice."



Jennifer Smith, 26, Goldsboro, North Carolina: "In the twenty-first century, the youth division will conquer irresponsibility and selfishness and realize why we are in this world. Presently we are educating ourselves, learning to become leaders who will teach others the value of human life and world peace. Education is our catalyst for overcoming negative evils that may hinder us from obtaining our mission. Each individual makes a difference in the world; however, as a whole we can achieve great progress toward kosen-rufu. With strong determination, perseverance and confidence, we can lead everyone to peace and enlightenment for all eternity."

Tony Geisler, 16, Wheaton, Maryland: "Toward the twenty-



first century, I envision myself as a leader of the SGI taking on the responsibility toward creating a better organization and a better world. My leadership roles will develop me to be dependable and capable of defeating all obstacles in my daily life. I will bloom like the cherry blossom in the spring, and show through determination and hard work all goals may be accomplished. Through my toils I will build character and in the end, I will shine like the sun on a bright summer day."



Sara Martin, 28, West Palm Beach, Florida: "Being a new member of only a few months, I was very impressed with the

youth meeting. The part of the meeting that has stuck in my mind was a skit in which a talk show host interviewed two 'babies' who were born to parents practicing Buddhism. Of course, they were older in the skit, but they had such a confidence and hope you could tell that this philosophy is a great part of their lives. I really want that kind of confidence in my life. Since then, I feel inspired to chant more and capture the sense of mission for world peace in my own life. It's encouraging me to become happier, and now I have a desire to strengthen my life. I took my boyfriend who doesn't chant to the meeting, and he really liked it. I believe the goal of world peace can be accomplished not only through chanting but through the action of dialogue."

Eva Folsom, 21, Kirkland, Washington: "Recently I began chanting more daimoku and doing gongyo more consistently. As I did so, the great lack of confidence I had in myself became more and more apparent to me. I could clearly see how much my hesitating manner was interfering with my ability to communicate and to make a difference in the lives of others. I began earnestly chanting to overcome my lack of confidence. An excerpt from a dialogue President Ikeda conducted with youth division leaders has been a great source of encouragement to me in this struggle. President Ikeda says: 'You are just fine the way you are. You should let people get to know the real you, warts and all.'"



Marcia Weston, 34, Philadelphia: "President Ikeda is my role model. I'm most encouraged by his compassion for humanity and his 'forge ahead to victory' spirit. I experienced his compassion while attending a conference at the Florida Nature and Culture Center in March '97. During one of our seminars, the facilitator received a request from President Ikeda for all in attendance to receive cake and juice after the meeting. I was moved that although miles away, he took the time to show his concern for us. Furthermore, when I'm overwhelmed by daily life or feeling as though I lack the resolve to challenge my obstacles, I can always pick up a *World Tribune* or *Living Buddhism* and find some guidance from President Ikeda that inspires me to forge ahead to victory."



Justin Edge, 28, Kansas City, Missouri: "I've had to recon-

struct my internal concept of what kosen-rufu is and how it will come about. Rather than some abstract concept, or noun, which will occur in the future by the hands of some ideal group or than being a state of being, it must become a state of action. For myself, this state of action stems from me and my practice in the NOW. As an organization, I feel that the SGI-USA is reiterating the value of individual action as the tool for achieving this end. There can be no collective 'we' without a revolutionized me."



Michelle McClelland, 22, Lawrence, Kansas: "I believe youth division members must be able to speak out and express themselves as a way to show their happiness. They must feel comfortable at meetings and feel that they can relate to what is being said by the presenters. An interactive family-oriented meeting with adults and children studying Buddhism together and not separately will motivate children to want to attend, and participate in meetings and develop strong ties with friends. Activities such as reading the Goshō and articles about Buddhism must be presented at their level of understanding and in such a way that they can connect with the

Gohonzon through their eyes and own personal experiences.”



Courtney Starr, 17, Raytown, Missouri: “What disturbs me the most in the world is time. It seems that the older you get, the more fragile time becomes. Time is a very delicate item and should be used, not wasted. People need to take advantage of the time they have now because someday it will be too late. If I could, I would add a couple more days to the weekends. These days would be for people to catch up on work and to spend more time with their families. People need to figure out the true meaning of time and how they can improve themselves by spending their time a little more wisely.”



Sheila McNerny, 28, Seattle (with mother, Diana, of San Francisco): “President Ikeda’s

guidance to the youth division during the 1990s has made me take my own value and significance very seriously. As a young person, and a representative of the SGI, I have done my best in my work place and in school to fight injustice, and to create value in my daily life. I would not deny that I am young, often passionate or even too quick to respond emotionally to a difficult situation, but I would also argue that my Buddha nature is not associated with those aspects of my personality. Wisdom does not result directly from growing older. I have met deluded grandmothers and wise 5 year olds. President Ikeda observes that ‘The greatest wisdom in the Latter Day of the Law is Nammyoho-renge-kyo, the ultimate Law of the universe, revealed by Nichiren Daisho-nin.’ The compassion of this Buddhism is that one does not have to wait to become wise, just as one does not have to wait to become happy!”



Sarah Armor, 16, Reynoldsburg, Ohio: “As a youth, I do feel trusted, respected and valued because I feel that our elders look up to us to help better the world in the future. I feel that the youth of America value freedom and

knowledge. I am making a difference in my family and at school by never giving up in what I believe in and by having strong faith in my practice. I always try to be the positive, uplifting person that everyone likes to be around and that everyone likes to look up to. I fight injustice in my life by chanting daimoku and doing gongyo every morning and evening and by having a positive, open mind toward situations in my life.”



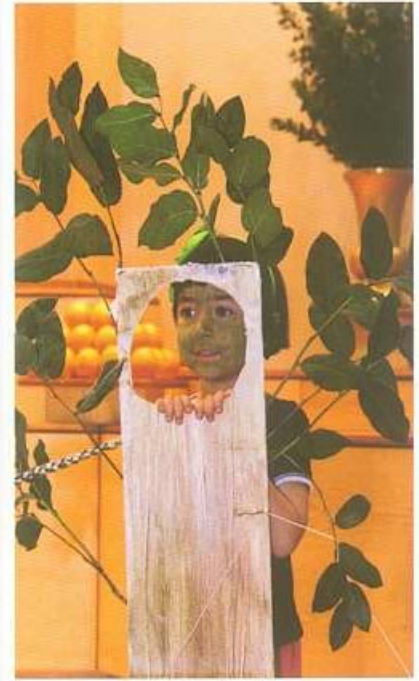
Hideaki Alex Kawano, 16, Palo Alto, California: “As a youth in the ‘90s and who is also gay, I go through lots of obstacles every day. However, this practice gives me hope and courage when I go into the public. I can always be myself regardless of what people say, or what clique I’m around. I have no peer pressure anymore since I have been chanting for self-confidence almost all my life. I try to get along with all kinds of people and their styles. We are all somehow connected in this great circle of life we live in. We have beautiful abilities to create happiness with everyone. We as the youth are the ones to shape the future for generations to come.” □



CHERRY LITTLE



ECCO YAMANE



LLOYD CARLSON

(Top, left) Andrea Chant, a guest of Erica Gutelius (middle), and Amy Starr, all of Kansas City, Missouri.

(Top, right) Akhen Wilson, 19, of Philadelphia, says: "I want to make positive contributions in society. I will create music based on Buddhist faith and concepts and help bring about the realization of peace. I understand my mission, and I will win."

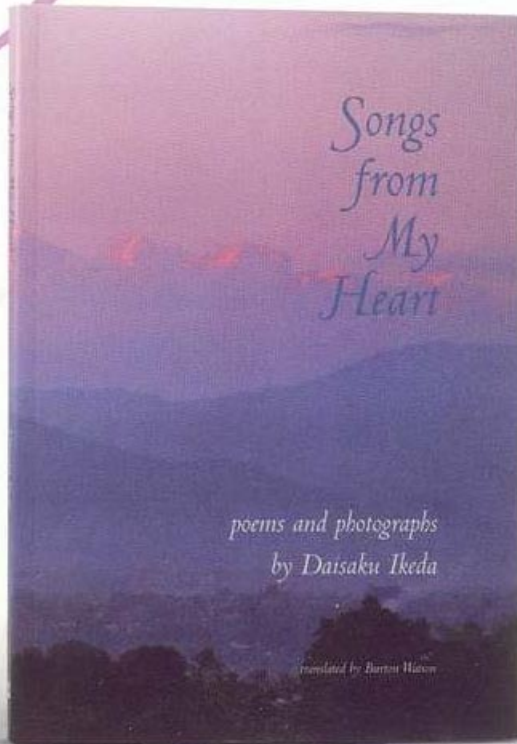
(Middle, left) Boston youth celebrate the occasion of March 16 at their community center.

(Middle, right) San Francisco Boys and Girls dramatize life in the jungle through a skit.

(Bottom) Pittsburgh youth present a skit, the "Ricardo" show, at their meeting; panelists (l-r) Mr. Just Right, Mr. Clueless, Mr. Econ and Mr. Hardline discuss the follies of war.



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MAY 1998



SGI PRESIDENT'S 1998 PEACE PROPOSAL:
"Humanity and the New Millennium: From Chaos to Cosmos"

RIO DE JANEIRO CULTURE CENTER

THE Rio de Janeiro Culture Center, a two-story, ferro-concrete building, was completed in July 1989 and consists of a 1,000-seat auditorium and three large conference rooms. In celebration of the center's opening, SGI President Ikeda urged each member of Brazil "to protect the castle of the Law which they built with their own hands, while sending out waves of happiness into society and throughout the world."

The center hosts various organizational activities as well as exhibits devoted to the betterment of society and the environment, such as "Toward a Century of Life—An Exhibit on the Environment." This ecological exhibition was sponsored in conjunction with the historic Earth Summit in 1992.

While visiting in February 1993, President Ikeda was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro—former recipients include John F. Kennedy and Dr. Arnold Toynbee—and was appointed a nonresident member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, one of South America's most prestigious literary associations. □



Brazil members at Copacabana Beach in the southeastern part of Rio de Janeiro.