

World Tribune

No. 3154

THE YEAR OF ADVANCEMENT TOWARD THE NEW CENTURY

AUGUST 29, 1997

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Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA 90401

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
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525 Wilshire Blvd.
Santa Monica, CA 90401-1467

DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE DELIVER BY ISSUE DATE



Two Oklahoma members (center) welcome Hitomi Hayashi (left) and Nobuko Hoshiyama (right) to Dallas. All four were part of the 4th U.S.-Japan youth peace exchange, which saw 88 Japanese youth travel to three U.S. cities.

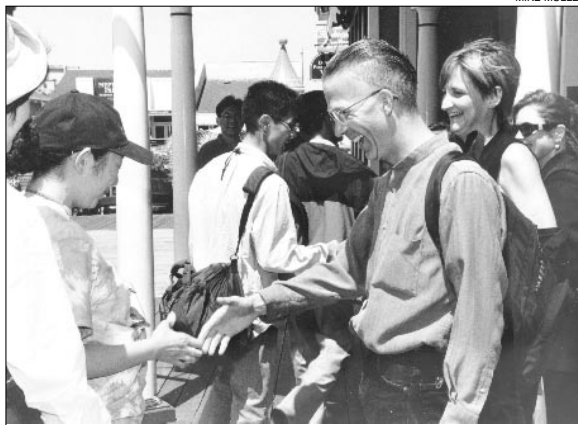
U.S., Japan Youth Stand Up for Peace in Friendship Exchange

By JEFF FARR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Santa Monica, Calif., Aug. 21

What many felt was the best U.S.-Japan youth exchange yet began Aug. 12 in San Francisco with youth from both countries signing an anti-war declaration. As this exchange among 88 youth from Japan and SGI-USA members, the fourth such exchange in the last four years, commemorated the 40th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai president Toda's Declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, standing up for peace became a theme for the



San Francisco members greet their Japanese guests.

PLEASE SEE EXCHANGE, 4

Disarmament Advocate Speaks at U.S.-Japan Exchange

By JEFF FARR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Santa Monica, Calif., Aug. 17

Youth from both sides of the Pacific, who gathered for the 4th U.S.-Japan Youth Peace General Meeting today, agreed that peace is possible. When Dr. David Krieger, a guest speaker from the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, asked if the participants thought so, at first there was a hesitant "Yes." But after he repeated the question a couple of times, that yes became stronger and louder.

"You know the answer, and I applaud you for the answer," Dr. Krieger said. "But the next question—and a very important question—is what are you willing to do to achieve peace?"

Dr. Krieger's speech, "Sowing Seeds of Peace," asked youth to take a stand on nuclear disarmament, the goal toward which he has dedicated his life. "Really I'm asking no more of you than to fulfill the goal set forth by Josei Toda 40 years ago and that has been steadfastly adhered to by the president of the SGI organization now, Mr. Ikeda," said Dr. Krieger.

Today's meeting commemorated the 40th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's Declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, on Sept. 8, 1957. Based on the Buddhist principle that we all have the right to live, Toda railed against

PLEASE SEE DISARMAMENT, 6

SGI President Donates 1,000 Books to Aliso Viejo Library

By DAVE McNEILL

MANAGING EDITOR

Santa Monica, Calif., Aug. 20

To support Soka University of America's efforts to be a resource for the community, SGI President Ikeda is donating 1,000 books to Aliso Viejo, Calif., home to the university's main campus, now being built. As founder of the university, Mr. Ikeda is personally donating \$10,000 a year for five years to the Friends of Aliso Viejo Library, which will disburse the

funds to the soon-to-be-completed library.

University officials presented a check on July 26 during the intermission of a public concert at one of the city's parks. In his message, Mr. Ikeda wrote:

"As a youth maturing during the horrendous war years in Japan, I took great consolation and satisfaction in my friendship with many people of good heart through their writings. As a young man, my development of character and understanding

of the world around me was greatly assisted and molded through the works of profound Western thinkers such as Hugo, Tolstoy, Emerson and Kant, together, of course, with the rich history of Eastern thought. With these thoughts in mind, and praying for the humanistic development of the youth in Aliso Viejo, I offer this gift."

This was the second check to be presented, the first being in May 1996. Each \$10,000 gift will cover the acquisition, ship-

ping and handling of 200 books.

The donation is somewhat unusual, according to Carin Sung, senior administrative librarian and branch manager, in that Mr. Ikeda left it up to Ms. Sung to personally choose those books that will, as Mr. Ikeda wrote, "most directly create value for you and your fellow community members."

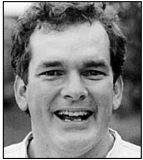
"We really appreciate the freedom this kind of gift gives

PLEASE SEE BOOKS, 6

VOICES

What can we do as men's division members to become better role models for the youth division?

Members from Chicago Joint Territory respond:



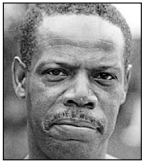
We need to follow through in our daily lives. No matter what we do, we need to do it to the best of our ability. This is true in our families and in the organization. The youth division will respect us only when we do what we say we are going to do.

— SEAN MURPHY, Chicago



We have to be good role models for youth everywhere, not just in our homes and in the organization. We are seen by our children's friends, and I believe that is an opportunity to show behavior that reflects our faith. I think it is harder to show actual proof of our practice to our children because they know us so well. With this in mind, we need to make extra effort around our children and their friends to behave in a way that they can respect.

— THOMAS DARRYL POLK, Cleveland, Ohio



We need to be eager to listen to the youth division all the time. We need to explain to them at every opportunity the importance of karma and the importance of having a mentor in life. Chanting daily for the youth division is the key.

— CHARLIE MITCHELL, Chicago



I think we need to lead by example, by having a consistent practice and by teaching gongyo. We need to be available for the youth division and participate in positive community activities. We also need to support the choices young people make.

— RICH STUHLER, Crittendan, Ky.



Pointing young people toward the Gohonzon, the Goshō and to SGI President Ikeda's guidance is the best way. How can we do any better than that? That was done for me when I was 20 years old.

— DARYL E. SHEWMAN, Grand Rapids, Mich.



First, if we take time to support the youth division, they will in turn naturally support the districts and chapters. Second, we need to be careful to be exemplary in our words and actions.

— JOHN BROOKS, Ypsilanti, Mich.

If you have suggested questions for our "Voices" or "Question of the Month" columns, please see our address in the box on this page at right.

Everything Is a Benefit

EDITORIAL

We've all done it...or heard of someone who has. You know, the parking space story. You're driving around and can't find one, so you chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo and one magically appears. Or doesn't. But the point is you chanted for it. Or you chanted at the precise moment you pulled the slot machine handle. Or when guessing on a final exam.

Of course, we can chant for anything. And telling such stories can be fun — and funny. The problem comes when we, or the people listening to these stories, think that that's all Buddhism is: a magic formula, a way to get conspicuous benefits.

If we concentrate merely on getting these outward effects, though, we'll wind up disillusioned, missing out on the real power of this practice. For the true benefits of our Buddhist practice lie in the inner changes we make, the transformations that allow us to be happy under any circumstance.

Take the guy who chants for a new job and gets one. The new job isn't really the benefit. People get jobs all the time — and buy houses, find the perfect partners and overcome illnesses. His real benefit is the internal changes he made in getting the job. Perhaps he could never hold a job because he couldn't get along with others very well. Or he was consistently late. Or did sloppy work. Maybe he couldn't take instruction well. The real story is that through faith he changed something about himself that empowered him to not only get this great new job but to flourish on it.

The real story is what goes on inside.

The Lotus Sutra explains 11 main benefits of faith. Only one, good surroundings, refers to such conspicuous benefits as a good job or a big house. The rest — things like wisdom, persistence, tolerance, sense of mission, confidence — deal with the inner universe of the human being.

So victory in life begins with victory in this inner realm. By making internal transformations we construct a foundation for real and, more important, lasting breakthroughs in life.

And our greatest benefit is faith itself — the con-

fidence that no matter what happens we will win. To develop a state of life in which we can enjoy every moment, even painful ones, is the ultimate reason we practice this Buddhism. "Fundamentally, for people with faith in the Gohonzon, everything that happens is a benefit," SGI President Ikeda writes. "This is the difference between those who believe in the Mystic Law and those who do not" (*Lectures on the "Expedient Means" and "Life Span" Chapters of the Lotus Sutra*, vol. 1, p. 152).

When we have this attitude, then even *not* getting the job is a benefit. Or we can make it into one, based on the wisdom we gain from the experience.

The true benefits of our Buddhist practice lie in the inner changes we make.

When it comes down to it, that's what people seek most from our religion — the wisdom to deal with all that life throws at them. And there's no escape from problems, even for the sincerest practitioner. "Never let life's hardships disturb you," Nichiren Daishonin reminds us. "After all, no one can avoid problems, not even saints or sages" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 162).

While it's important to proudly testify to the conspicuous benefits of faith in the Daishonin's Buddhism and practice within the SGI, it's equally important to always describe the inconspicuous, genuine benefit. The SGI-USA has been criticized by people who've considered the teachings we profess to be shallow, materialistic, even hedonistic. They didn't understand — or we didn't make it clear — that we consider our internal character changes to be of prime importance. Sometimes even our members have been confused about the real purpose of the practice.

Simple stories of parking spaces can have unwanted effects.

In any case, we'd do well to remember why we're really practicing — to develop wisdom. When we look back, we can all see how we've been doing this. Through our practice, everything that's happened to us, the good and the bad, has led to the development of our character.

Everything has indeed been a benefit. **W**

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Email to Editorial: SokaNews@aol.com or Subscriptions: SGI SUBS@aol.com

World Tribune

(ISSN-0049-8165)

The World Tribune (692-720) is published weekly by the SGI-USA, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 451-8811; FAX (310) 260-8910. E-mail: SokaNews@aol.com. Subscriptions Office: (800) 835-4558; FAX (310) 260-8970; E-mail: SGI SUBS@aol.com.

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA, and at additional mailing offices.

Subscription Rates (subject to state taxes) \$15 for Three Months; \$28 for Six Months; \$50 for One Year; \$85 for Two Years; \$110 for Three Years.

Printed on 100% recycled paper

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Photo by ROB HENDRY

**WORLD TRIBUNE
MAILBOX**

For Free Speech

In response to Fred Grimmnitz's "Mailbox" letter in the July 25 issue of the *World Tribune*, I am outraged to think that censorship is required to express one's view of Buddhism.

We live in America and I am thankful for the privilege of my freedom of speech. I don't believe it is a weakness or a shortcoming to use slang.... These words have been a part of American language for centuries, whether we like it or not, and they are not going away.

Therefore, it is the perspective of the reader who chooses to make these words bad or evil. In fact, it was quite refreshing to hear that these words were being published for the simple fact that [they conveyed] the true expression of the person's feelings.

We should not and cannot deny Americans their freedom of speech. We as Buddhists, more than anyone, should honor this amendment. Also, aside from being Buddhist, we mustn't forget we are human beings, each person very different and unique from the next....

— PHOEBE PNAIGH, Hollywood, Calif.

Another Look at NATO

Mark Anton's letter "NATO Not So Great" (Aug. 1 "Mailbox") is inaccurate and misleading. All three newly emerged democracies — the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland — are eager to join NATO and a solid majority of their people are in favor of this event. There is no understanding that they buy American armaments but NATO is a defensive military alliance and they will bring their military up to a generally acceptable NATO standard. The United States will probably sell some jet fighters, but the net cost will be somewhat negative as we absorb additional costs for training and integration of these countries in the NATO command.

There are some legitimate concerns here, though. Should the United States be guaranteeing the territorial integrity of these three countries from external invasion? Would we really go to war to defend them? Does it make sense for our foreign policy efforts to continue in such a Eurocentric vein? Last, if Russia is not currently a genuine military concern vis-a-vis Eastern Europe, then who is the enemy? What is the reason for eastern NATO expansion or could the situation change yet again?

All these questions must be seen against the backdrop of Stalin's Red Terror, which murdered more than 20 million people in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. I am not an expert on these issues, but do have a double major in political science and history from the University of Maryland and served in the U.S. Air Force in Europe.

I would strongly recommend the following three books as they will show the cause-and-effect relationship between historical events and the current situation. Mr. Anton should read them, too. I would like to talk with him afterward. Anyway, the first is *Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, which details the terror and workings of Stalin's death camps; *The Strange Death of the Soviet Empire* by David Pryce-Jones, which is interview-based (Russian politicians, KGB, military, economists, journalists, etc.); and, last, *Resurrection: The Struggle for a New Russia* by David Remnick.

— STEVEN G. SWANSON, St. Paul, Minn.

Letters printed here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SGI-USA or the World Tribune.

In the "Mailbox," we will publish members' comments, suggestions and questions as they pertain to the World Tribune. Because of volume, not all letters can be printed, but they are all read. All letters are subject to condensation.



Donna Feeheley's (l) new sense of appreciation for her mother started with chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.

**I Believe
the Borders Are Gone**

PERSPECTIVE

By **DONNA FEEHELEY**
MILLERSVILLE, MD.

Driven by my health problems, which escalated over a seven-month period, my Buddhist practice led me to close the gap with my mom.

The president of our lay organization, Daisaku Ikeda, frequently talks about our debt of gratitude to our parents. In 1992 I began chanting about the anger and resentment I felt toward mine. I realized this anger had made me a very arrogant, moody, miserable adult. Because of my sincere prayer to change, my parents came to my house and ended 20 years of not speaking to each another.

Although I knew intellectually that the causes I made created my circumstances, I was still angry and hurt over my parents' divorce, which was when I was in my teens. I blamed my mom, especially, for what happened.

Although she and my husband could see what a turkey my dad had been, I thought he could do no wrong. However, I continued to chant and pray for my mom. I chanted to remember and appreciate all the nights she stayed up sewing clothes for me or waiting for me to arrive home safely from a date. And to remember how she struggled to raise four kids on her own. I can't actually remember most of the things my mom has done for me over the years, but I know she's always been there — I just

didn't see it.

My mom's devotion became very apparent as she supported me through my recent health crisis. From the first time she took me to the emergency room, she was beside me every minute, if not physically then by phone or in spirit. If it wasn't for her love and wisdom, I would not be here today.

She skillfully approaches dialogue to keep my temper at a distance. She has the wisdom to know when and what to say — well, most of the time. She's been my protective force all along. For instance, once she said, "I don't think you're eating enough protein." A week later my blood work showed — you guessed it — I wasn't getting enough protein. Because of the enormous amount of daimoku I was chanting, I could appreciate her efforts.

My mom took off work many days, using her precious leave to run me to the doctor when I couldn't drive — even though driving through the harbor tunnel and on the beltway are terrifying experiences for her. She is also valiantly struggling to raise a challenging 11-year-old granddaughter. But still she makes time for each of her four grown children, all of whom have had recent life-threatening problems.

Prior to this experience, I called my mom once a week or every two weeks out of a sense of obligation. Sometimes I would even talk to her through my grandmother. Now, I call her and think of her almost daily, out of appreciation, respect, friendship and love. Amazingly,

I never realized how wise she is.

Wendy Clark, our SGI-USA women's division leader, has said: "Actively Closing the Gap" [the 1997 women's division theme] is about removing the borders that separate us from one another. To do that we must first remove the borders we have built around our hearts."

Through my mom's love and my chanting, my anger toward her melted away. I believe the borders are gone. Closing the gap with my Mom was possible only through this incredible practice of Nichiren Daisemonin's Buddhism. And for that I am truly grateful.

Now I will work on my relationships with my husband, my co-district leaders, my sisters and brother, my co-workers, neighbors — the list is endless!

I shared this experience at a meeting earlier this year — the first one my mother ever attended in my 10 years of practice. Two weeks later, she sent me this note: "I really enjoyed myself with you on Sunday. Great meeting — fast-paced, interesting, and you gave everyone a chance to participate.

"Your testimonial touched my heart. I think we both work hard to make our relationship loving and caring. When you were growing up, there were times when I thought we'd never even like each other. Now we couldn't love each other more! Let's always be like this."

I will treasure this note and this memory for the rest of my life.

WU

Photo by MARK MANNING

SGI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Only When You Fight Can You Become a Lion King

Congratulations on holding the 4th U.S.-Japan Youth Peace General Meeting! The solidarity of youth division members of the United States and Japan has been expanding year after year through your youthful friendship exchanges. I have been watching over your progress, which I find more reassuring than anything else.

I also express my heartfelt thanks to Dr. David Krieger, president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and a noted activist for the abolishment of nuclear weapons, for having travelled so far to attend today's meeting.

Youth embody hope and passion. There is no retreat for youth; they single-mindedly press forward.

So youth must not be afraid to make mistakes. Their hearts aflame with a sense of justice, youth should never fail to seize the moment, to stand up just as Nichiren Daishonin states: "I ask that my disciples be the lion king's cubs, so as not to be mocked by a pack of foxes" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1589).

The time of youth is a succession of worries — but do not avoid hardship. Youth's only treasure is having the heart to take full responsibility and challenge yourself with a cheerful spirit. The Greek poet Aeschylus once sang, "Suffering is the only way to learn." And a Japanese novelist once wrote, "Hardship, if accepted fully, makes a jewel out of man."

I ask each of you to not succumb to your weaknesses. Please win in your daily life and surmount your challenges at school or work, thus creating your own record of life, victorious and free of regret.

As Walt Whitman sings, "I live to be the ruler of life, not a slave, / To meet life as a powerful conqueror." I ask you, my trusted youth, to ride over the billows of hardship while singing with strength and cheer your own "Song of Joys."

For 50 years, I have lived to realize the grand ideal of kosen-rufu — that is, world peace as decreed by the Buddha. Embracing my mentor's

heart, I have exerted myself to the fullest, as befitting a youth. Not for even one day have I ceased to advance. I have always lived in the same spirit as President Toda, day in and day out continuing a dialogue with him in my heart. This is why I have no regrets.

After all, human revolution is a ceaseless struggle against our own devilish natures. We must not tolerate the demonic forces that try to destroy a human being's goodness. In this burning sense of justice, the spirit of Soka, from the times of first president Makiguchi and second president Toda, has lived. Their great spirit is our supreme pride. Please remember that in their spiritual legacy lie our true freedom and happiness.

The Daishonin has taught us the eternal guideline for the accomplishment of world peace and the happiness of all humanity as securing the peace of the land through the propagation of true Buddhism. To the youth division members of the United States and Japan, my valiant heroes of Soka, I present the following passage from the "Rissho Ankoku Ron," the Daishonin's admonition to the world: "Rather than offering up ten thousand prayers for remedy, it would be better simply to outlaw this one evil doctrine that is the source of all the trouble!" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 20).

Only when you fight this one evil doctrine can you become a lion king.

I envision you, youth division members, taking leading roles on the grand stage of kosen-rufu and society, while honing sharp swords of compassion and wisdom with which to protect your comrades — the sons and daughters of the Buddha. I entrust humanity in the 21st century to you. With this in mind, I conclude my congratulatory message.

May the young lions of Soka be healthy, glorious and victorious!

*SGI President Ikeda
Aug. 17*



Photo by MIKE MULLEN



Photo by MARK MANNING



(Top) Dallas members extend a hearty Texas welcome and entertain the exchange members in Western style (above). In San Francisco (left), the Christopher Columbus statue at Coit Tower gives the Japanese visitors a photo opportunity.

EXCHANGE, FROM PAGE 1

three-city visit.

After attending discussion meetings in the San Francisco area, the group was off to Dallas, where members were especially excited to welcome the group since it was the first time Dallas has participated in the exchange program. It was also the first time Dallas has had an event of this scale since President Ikeda's 1984 visit. Highlights included the Japanese members' presentation of 150 books to the Dallas City Hall and a visit to the Sixth Floor Museum, which has exhibits on John F. Kennedy's assassination.

In Los Angeles, the exchange members attended a mini-culture festival at Soka University of America's Calabasas campus and visited the World Culture Center and the Simon Wiesenthal Center. After this busy week, the Japanese members departed Los Angeles for Japan Aug. 19, exhausted but exhilarated with the feeling that youth of the United States and Japan have so much to learn from one another.

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



Japanese members arrive at Soka University of America's Calabasas campus for a mini-culture festival and study conference (see story, p. 5).

Photo by MIKE MULLEN



The famous Golden Gate Bridge is a highlight of the day as exchange group members enjoy an outing to see the sights in San Francisco (right). In Los Angeles (bottom right), American and Japanese youth toast their new friendships at a farewell dinner. Intimate conversations, like this one in Dallas (below), characterize the best part of the Japanese members' weeklong stay: the chance to share experiences and dreams and learn from youth like themselves from across the Pacific.

Photo by MARK MANNING



Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



Int'l Study Conference Focuses on Temple Issue

By JEFF FARR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Calabasas, Calif., Aug. 16

The temple issue was the hot topic at today's 1st U.S.-Japan Youth Study Conference. Thirty-two youth from the United States and Japan met at Soka University of America's Wisdom Hall to discuss propagation, youth study and the temple issue — but the temple issue seemed to be foremost on everyone's minds.

One question that kept coming up when the participants broke into discussion groups was "Why does SGI

President Ikeda emphasize the temple issue so much?"

There were a variety of answers, but the consensus pointed to the importance of educating members now about the true intent of the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood, so they will not be confused in the future — it's a way to protect the kosen-rufu movement.

Ed Feasel, SGI-USA youth division chief, summed up things in his closing remarks when he shared guidance from President Ikeda's "Dialogue on the Lotus Sutra," from which the study material for today's conference was culled. To forget


the seeking spirit necessary to be what the Lotus Sutra calls a teacher of the Law is to become arrogant, Mr. Feasel related, while to forget the spirit to save others is to become self-centered.

"In Nichiren Shoshu, there are no teachers of the Law," Mr. Feasel argued, "for they are no longer seeking or saving. The SGI is the only religious organization with true teachers of the Law."

This conference was sponsored by the seven-member SGI-USA Youth Division Study Committee, which worked closely with Soka Gakkai youth division study leader Masaaki Morinaka,

also the leader of the Japanese delegation, in the preparations.

Study committee members, national youth division leaders and local representatives participated from the U.S. side.

Based on the success of this year's conference and last year's preliminary study exchange at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, where participants studied "The Buddha" chapter of *The New Human Revolution*, vol. 3, the study committee hopes this conference will be a yearly event and that more members can participate in the future. 

Dallas Book Donation



Photo by MARK MANNING

Aug. 15 — General Director Zaitu explains to Dallas City Councilmember Lois Finkleman and Director of Libraries Ramiro Salazar about the 150 books SGI President Ikeda donated to the city. The presentation ceremony was held in conjunction with the visit to the city by 88 Japanese youth of the SGI's 4th U.S.-Japan youth peace exchange. The Japanese delegation also visited San Francisco and Los Angeles.

SGI President Donates Books to Aliso Viejo

BOOKS, FROM PAGE 1

us," Ms. Sung says. "And, on behalf of the community, I want to thank Mr. Ikeda for thinking of us."

Eric Hauber, Soka University's vice president of academic affairs, says the donation fits with the message he wants to share with all Aliso Viejo residents: that Soka University is their university. "Soka University is not just located in Aliso Viejo," Mr. Hauber says. "It is part of Aliso Viejo."

Considering the SGI's promotion of values and peace, many of the books Ms. Sung plans to acquire with the gift

deal with philosophy, social science, religion, history and literature. One item in the planned purchase is the six-volume *Reader's Advisor* — the "librarian's bible," Ms. Sung says — which is a standard reference on the best books in print.

Also included are a set of *Great Books* and many titles for children, such as *Peace Begins With You*, *My Wish for Tomorrow: Words and Pictures From Around the World* and *The Oxford Book of Children's Verse in America*.

The 15,000-square-foot library will have an initial collection of 80,000 volumes, growing eventually to 120,000. The col-

lection will be determined in part by demographics. "Whenever I go to Aliso Viejo I see parents with young children, so much of the library's collection will be devoted to those people," Ms. Sung says. Leisure World, a senior community, is also nearby, she notes, so the library will carry many large-print books. "And since many Aliso Viejo citizens are commuters, we will also have books on tape," she adds.

The library's grand opening will be Dec. 13, and the books purchased with Mr. Ikeda's donation will then be on display.

With reporting by Diane Stiles.

Disarmament Advocate Speaks at U.S.-Japan Exchange

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI

DISARMAMENT, FROM PAGE 1

nuclear weapons, which he called the ultimate destructive force. Dr. Krieger praised Toda's foresight in demanding the abolition of nuclear weapons, not just a halt to testing, saying that Toda's was "an early call, a clarion call, the call of a prophet."

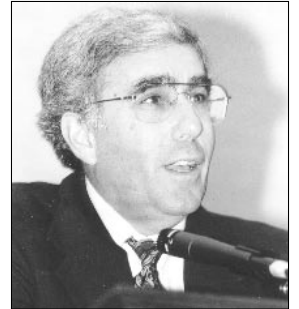
Forty years later, Dr. Krieger pointed out, the United Nations has endorsed the International Court of Justice's decision that nuclear weapons are illegal. Dr. Krieger found it significant that in issuing this opinion, the president of the court, Mohammed Bedjaoui, echoed Toda's view that nuclear weapons are devilish functions, calling them the ultimate evil.

After his talk, Dr. Krieger said in an interview that he also respects President Toda for sticking with his convictions, no matter the consequences. "I really admire [first Soka Gakkai president] Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda for speaking out against militarism, against their own nationalism," he said, "for not being willing to 'go along with it.' And for paying the price of going to jail for their convictions. That is an example that deserves the highest respect in my opinion."

Based on his own strong conviction, Dr. Krieger in 1982 formed the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, which has become one of the leading anti-nuclear organizations in America. The Santa Barbara, Calif.-based foundation, which has sponsored the World Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and a Magna Carta for the Nuclear Age, is now part of Abolition 2000, a worldwide network of more than 700 citizen action groups working for a treaty prohibiting and eliminating all nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

Dr. Krieger's group has built alliances with many peace scholars and human rights activists and includes on its advisory board people like Helen Caldicott, Jean-Michel Cousteau, Johan Galtung, Lord Yehudi Menuhin and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Recently the organization announced it is preparing a statement to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Toda's declaration and honor SGI President Ikeda's dedication to that legacy. Dr. Krieger himself will present the statement to President Ikeda next month in Japan.

In closing today, Dr. Krieger gave the SGI youth division members specific action points



Dr. David Krieger of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

they can implement to "carry forward the message of peace":

- 1) Increase your awareness. Inform yourself on disarmament and other peace issues.
- 2) Exercise your citizenship. Speak out about peace issues.
- 3) Sow seeds of peace. Show compassion toward others in your environment.
- 4) Support Abolition 2000. Sign the Abolition 2000 International Petition and help circulate it. (You can sign an e-mail version of the petition and find out more about it at the foundation's website, www.wagingpeace.org.)
- 5) Grow to your full stature as a human being. Think not only of your rights, but of your responsibilities as a human being.

These points were food for thought for the 800 participants today, 88 with the exchange group from Japan and 82 visiting from Soka Women's Junior College. The exchange group members were at the end of a one-week visit to the United States that took them to San Francisco and Dallas as well (see p. 1).

This series of U.S.-Japan youth meetings began in 1994 in Los Angeles, when the 10th anniversary of the 1984 U.S.-Japan culture festival in San Diego was celebrated.

Youth peace general meetings have since been held in New York (1995) and at the Florida Nature and Culture Center (1996). In addition, youth exchange members have visited several other cities over the last four years, including San Diego, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta. With this fourth exchange, organizers from both countries feel the series is now well-established, and plans are already under way for next year's exchange. WT

We Want Your FNCC Impressions!

Have You Been to the Florida Nature and Culture Center Yet? Share Your Experience With the World!

What was your visit to the FNCC like? Did you make any new friends? Did you learn something new about your practice? Did the FNCC change your view of the SGI? Was there a leader there who impressed you? What did you bring home to your family, work or local organization?

The *World Tribune* is about to start a new series of "FNCC Impressions" and we need your help. Please send a photo of yourself and your 200-word FNCC story (or poem) to the *World Tribune*, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

The Soka Gakkai was like a lion king, staunchly defending the cause of the people. And the lion king had won.

Countless people who had joined the Soka Gakkai were beginning to move forward in their lives with fresh vitality and hope. As they advanced together, holding aloft a brilliant banner of victory, their triumphant cheers resounded like great crashing waves. It was a proud, majestic spectacle, unprecedented in human history.

Jealous and resentful of the Soka Gakkai's impressive success in widely disseminating the Mystic Law, legions of negative forces launched a vengeful assault to destroy this noble lion king. Such persecution accorded perfectly with the teachings of the sutras.

In the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings," Nichiren Daishonin discusses the meaning of the phrase "to roar the lion's roar," which appears in the "Encouraging Devotion" chapter of the Lotus Sutra:

"The lion's roar" indicates the preaching of the Buddha. The Buddha's preaching refers to the Lotus Sutra and, in a specific sense, to Nam-myoho-renge-kyo [the word *lion* (Jpn *shishi*) is written with the Chinese characters for *teacher* and *child*]. The first Chinese character, meaning teacher, represents the Mystic Law as it is passed on by the mentor. The second Chinese character, meaning child, indicates the Mystic Law as it is received by the disciples. "Roar" [of the lion], meanwhile, is the sound of mentor and disciples chanting in unison. This, in the Latter Day of the Law, means vocalizing Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 748)

The Soka Gakkai alone has "received" the Mystic Law expounded by the Buddha, Nichiren Daishonin, and worked to achieve kosen-rufu in the Latter Day of the Law through the unflinching commitment of its successive presidents. It radiates the light of Buddhism, the light of human rights, of happiness and peace.

Destroying this great organization would be tantamount to toppling the pillar and conscience of the nation, of the entire world. In addition, it would mean the obliteration of the correct teaching — the way of humanism so vital to the world's future — and the ruin of Japanese society. The Daishonin writes, "Dogs that bark at the lion king split their own bellies" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1525). These words allude to the strict law of cause and effect.

Shin'ichi Yamamoto was extremely worried about his country's future. This was one reason why he called on his fellow members at this Hokkaido meeting to actively combat the uninformed, misguided criticism directed at the Gakkai.

The New Human Revolution

By HO GOKU — ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA

Volume 6, Chapter 3

Acceleration

Translation of parts 24–26 of the 'Acceleration' chapter, as printed in the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper. Ho Goku is the pen name of Daisaku Ikeda, who appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1962.

Later that day, Shin'ichi gave a lecture on "Letter to Hojo Tokimune" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 169) before a gathering of district chiefs from throughout the region at the Hokkaido Headquarters. This *Gosho* was written by the Daishonin in Kamakura on Oct. 11, 1268, and addressed to the regent Hojo Tokimune, to whom it was delivered through the good offices of a high-ranking government minister named Yadoya Nyudo.

The year Nichiren Daishonin wrote this letter, the Mongols had delivered an ultimatum demanding Japan's submission. And the Kamakura government faced the terrifying and very real prospect of an imminent invasion by Mongol forces.

In this *Gosho*, the Daishonin declares that the Mongols' missive fulfills a prophecy he made in his treatise "Rissho Ankoku Ron" (Securing the Peace of the Land Through the Propagation of True Buddhism). He strongly urges the government to immediately desist from making further offerings to Buddhist schools that expound erroneous teachings and that the veracity or error of different teachings be clarified through public discussion and debate.

In an environment where religious figures of other schools carried favor with the authorities to safeguard their survival, the Daishonin directly challenged the highest ruling official of the day with a letter of remonstrance. The purpose of this petition was to clarify what was true and correct — and what was erroneous — in terms of Buddhism.

The Daishonin knew that it would inevitably invite persecution. Fully prepared to face the consequences, he continued to elucidate the truth. His actions derived from his absolute confidence in the true teachings of Buddhism and his compassionate resolve to save Japan's people from suffering and protect the nation from ruin.

In his lecture, Shin'ichi related how presidents Makiguchi and Toda had inherited this spirit of remonstrating with misguided authority and had fought against oppression under militarism. This, he said, was the brilliant, immortal legacy of the Soka Gakkai. He then discussed the passage "The security of

the land is determined by the rectitude of its government. The veracity of the Buddha's teaching is revealed in the clear mirror of the sutras" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 170).

"Here, the Daishonin indicates that whether a country enjoys security or is endangered depends on whether it is correctly governed," Shin'ichi explained. "Whether the Buddhist teachings are true or not becomes apparent when viewed in the mirror of the sutras. The quality of government is vitally important to the people's lives and happiness. If a government forgets the people, if it is torn this way and that by the personal ambitions and thirst for power of political leaders, or racked by political infighting, then its manner of governing will be devoid of ideals and compassion. When such is the case, the people suffer. I once told a certain leading political figure:

We are not fielding candidates for public office from among our membership for the sake of gaining control over the government. The Gakkai's aim is and always will be people's happiness and world peace.

We are racking our brains and taking action every day to achieve these goals. There is no religious organization more serious or committed than the Soka Gakkai. Love of country, a solemn commitment to working on the people's side, for their welfare, a passionate wish to contribute to Japan and the international community, and a great life philosophy for realizing human happiness and world peace — we of the Gakkai possess all these. If society can correctly recognize this fact, it will be unable to help saluting the Gakkai as an invaluable asset for Japan and affording the Gakkai its highest respect.

Shin'ichi's voice resounded with conviction and determination as he spoke: "I further told him:

All we ask is that those regarded as leaders in society gain an accurate understanding of the Soka Gakkai. Unfortunately, however, those very people, misled by wild rumors, harbor prejudice

toward the Gakkai, slander it, try to repress it and at times scheme to disband it. Should there be an increase in the number of political leaders intent on repressing the tremendous positive power of honest citizens, then Japan's ruin is guaranteed. To prevent that from happening, we must resolutely combat such undesirable tendencies in the government.

"A government that lacks compassion, that is indifferent to the people's needs, is unlikely to contribute anything positive to people's happiness or well-being. But simply complaining about this state of affairs isn't going to change anything. That is why we have formed the Komei Political Federation and sent members into the political arena — so that they might bring a spirit of compassion to the job of governing.

"If today's political leaders governed with genuine concern for the people's welfare and reflected the will of ordinary citizens in their policies, then perhaps there would be no need for us to field candidates for public office. But since those in power clearly aren't doing that, then someone has to. This is our prime motivation.

"Next, the Daishonin says that we should judge the validity of the teachings of different Buddhist schools by considering the scriptures from which they derive — in other words, by examining their teachings in light of the sutras. The Great Teacher T'ien-T'ai of China clarified the relative superiority and depth of each of the sutras in the Buddhist canon, indicating the Lotus Sutra as highest of all the Buddha's teachings.

"On what do we of the Soka Gakkai base ourselves? On the *Gosho*, the collection of writings that embody the teachings of the original Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law, Nichiren Daishonin — the original Buddha who practiced the Lotus Sutra with his life. We certainly do not rely on the irresponsible claims of self-appointed critics or disparaging articles in sensationalist weeklies. Our fundamental guide in life and faith is, and always will be, the *Gosho's* teachings. I proclaim that the *Gosho* is the eternal foundation of the Soka Gakkai and of our Buddhist practice."

Many of the Hokkaido district leaders had never before attended a *Gosho* lecture by President Yamamoto. Everyone was moved by his unshakable conviction. Through his lecture, the Daishonin's words no longer seemed an account of the past — they came to life in a way that had relevance, pertinent lessons, for all, and deeply touched their lives.

(To be continued)

A NEW CENTURY OF HEALTH

Buddhism and the Art of Medicine



Enrique Cano DIGITAL PRESS

Skin Disorders [25]

Participants include SGI President Ikeda and dermatologists Chiaki Nishiyama and Kimiko Sato, both Soka Gakkai doctors division vice chiefs.

Ikeda: Dr. Sato, Dr. Nishiyama, why did you choose the field of dermatology?

Sato: I came down with nephritis while I was a medical student. I was so sick that I was told I couldn't withstand the demands of being a doctor. I tried to think of a specialization that didn't require great physical stamina, and that was how I chose dermatology.

Nishiyama: When I was a medical student, I broke out in a rash from a chemical called *formalin* used in anatomy class. My father was a doctor, too, but unfortunately not a dermatologist! I must have been in pain for about a year and a half. Then I went to a dermatologist, and I was cured in just two weeks. That's when I decided that I wanted to become a dermatologist.

Ikeda: Once when I was a child, I had a large boil under my chin. It swelled tremendously and was beginning to affect the bone. I tried various medicines, but nothing worked. There were no dermatologists nearby. Finally, I had to go to a regional hospital and have it incised, but it took a very long time to heal. It hurt, it was swollen, and I didn't want to go to school, where everyone would notice it.

In the old days, children often suffered from boils, but we don't see that so frequently anymore.

Nishiyama: Nutrition has improved, for one thing, and we have many new drugs. Today there is a dramatic decrease in such skin disorders.

Ikeda: I've heard it said the body's largest organ is not the lungs



The skin blocks out bacteria, ultraviolet rays and chemicals such as soap. Different types of skin and pigmentation need different protection for sunbathing. Check with your dermatologist.

or the liver but, in fact, the skin!

Sato: Yes, that's true. An average adult has approximately 17 square feet of skin. And while the average adult heart weighs about 10 ounces and the liver about 3 pounds, 3 ounces, the skin weighs as much as 8 pounds, 12 ounces.

Ikeda: We talk about someone being thick-skinned, meaning insensitive, but is there actually a difference in skin thickness from individual to individual?

Nishiyama: Medically speaking, there is no relationship between the thickness of a person's skin and his or her character! A thick-skinned person and a thin-skinned person alike have skin about 1 millimeter thick on the face, while on the rest of the body, it averages about 2 millimeters.

Ikeda: What are the functions of the skin?

Sato: Protection, secretion and excretion, heat regulation and sensation.

Ikeda: My, that's a hard-working 2 millimeters!

Sato: It is indeed. The skin's

first function is to protect the body. It acts like a cushion that absorbs force when we bump into, scrape against or are impacted by an object. Though the skin may be damaged in the process, it can repair itself.

Nishiyama: The skin also blocks out bacteria, ultraviolet rays and chemicals such as soap. It's a protective barrier.

Ikeda: When you say secretion and excretion, are you referring to perspiration?

Sato: Yes. Perspiration contains not only water and salt but waste products. On average, we perspire about 3 pints a day — about the same as the average amount of waste products we urinate each day.

Nishiyama: The skin also eliminates toxic materials from the body, in addition to perspiration. In 1968, there was a food-poisoning incident in which rice-bran oil was contaminated with a toxic substance¹ [the Kanemi oil-poisoning incident in Japan]. All the victims, regardless of age, broke out in pimple-like pustules. An examination of the pustules by dermatologists at a local university hospital revealed that the

body was excreting the toxin from the pores, which caused the pustules to form.

Ikeda: Yes, that was a famous incident. It worried us all a great deal at the time. Perspiration is also a way of lowering the body temperature, isn't it?

Sato: Yes, it is. A perspiring person may appear to be hot, but actually the opposite is true. When we perspire, the evaporation of the perspiration from our skin's surface cools us, lowering the body temperature. This is how the skin helps regulate body temperature. When it is cold, the blood vessels in our skin contract to allow only a small amount of blood through them, promoting conservation of body heat. When it is hot, the blood vessels expand to permit blood to flow freely, facilitating evaporation of perspiration.

Ikeda: All these things take place without our being aware of them — how wondrous are the workings inherent in life!

Sato: Another function of the skin is to sense pain, heat, cold and other phenomena.

Ikeda: Apparently, the human

race has suffered from skin diseases since ancient times. Egyptian papyri record skin cancer, eczema, carbuncles and other disorders. About how many different kinds of skin disease are there?

Sato: More than 900 types are recognized.

Ikeda: What kinds of skin diseases are on the increase lately?

Sato: Allergies, atopic eczema and other diseases related to the immune system.

Ikeda: We have already discussed atopic eczema in this series [see Sept. 27, 1996, *World Tribune*]. That particular installment drew a great response from our [*Seikyo Shimbun*] readers. What other skin diseases are prevalent?

Nishiyama: Most frequently encountered are eczema-type disorders, such as contact dermatitis, especially hand dermatitis, and various kinds of rashes. They account for nearly a third of all skin diseases.

Sato: Rashes are generally caused by contact with some irritant. Common irritants are metal jewelry such as necklaces or watch bands, or plants such as poison sumac, ginkgo and primrose, as well as certain industrial chemicals. Skin that comes into contact with the irritant turns red and swells up, becoming extremely itchy at the same time. In some cases, a single contact causes no reaction, but repeated contact can produce a rash. Perspiration can also worsen the symptoms.

Ikeda: What precisely causes eczema on the hands?

Nishiyama: Eczema on the hands occurs most frequently among people who regularly handle soaps, detergents and other chemical solvents in their work. The skin of the palm and fingers becomes rough, and

PLEASE SEE SKIN, 9

SKIN, FROM PAGE 8

sometimes the fingerprints even disappear. In some cases, the back of the hand and the area around the fingernails becomes red and extremely itchy.

Ikeda: How is eczema different from hives?

Sato: In both cases, the skin is itchy and red, but in the case of hives the symptoms disappear in just a few hours. Middle-aged and elderly people often suffer from pruritus, which is characterized by an itchiness all over the body, but it is not accompanied by any rash.

Nishiyama: Some skin diseases are caused by viruses. Shingles [herpes zoster] is a good example. It usually occurs in people who have had chicken pox as children. The virus remains dormant in their bodies, and when they reach middle age or older and their resistance naturally lowers, the virus becomes active again, causing a rash to break out. A characteristic feature of shingles is that it is accompanied by intense neuralgic pain.

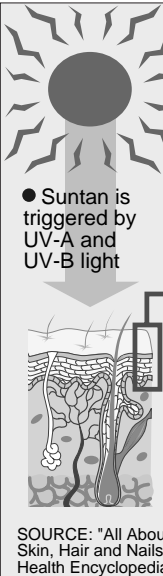
Sato: Most warts on the hands and feet are also caused by viruses. Warts in elderly people, however, are often part of the natural aging process.

Ikeda: Scabies is another common skin disease, isn't it?

Sato: Scabies is caused by a parasitic insect, the scabies mite [*Sarcoptes scabiei*].

Ikeda: Napoleon suffered badly from scabies, which he caught from his soldiers. There is a well-known episode about him and this disorder. Scabies, also called the itch, was rampant in Europe at the time, but its cause was unknown. Many doctors, when confronted with a disease that they could find no cause for, simply blamed it on scabies. One day, Napoleon caught a cold while on the battlefield. His symptoms were atypical, so the military doctor, puzzled, adopted the common excuse and told Napoleon that his internal organs had been attacked by scabies.

What the doctor didn't realize was that Napoleon actually did suffer from scabies. Napoleon evidently saw through the doctor's temporizing. He smiled cynically and said, "You are indeed a great doctor, since without knowing that I actually suffer from scabies, you diag-

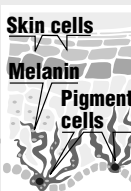


● Suntan is triggered by UV-A and UV-B light

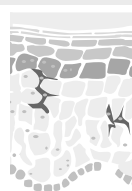
SOURCE: "All About Skin, Hair and Nails", Health Encyclopedia

The suntan cycle

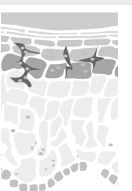
The sun's ultraviolet rays give us a nice suntan. At the same time, the suntan is our body's protection against dangerous ultraviolet rays that causes skin cancer. How we get tanned:




1. Pigment cells release brown-colored melanin to surrounding cells over 4 to 6 days



2. Skin cells with increased melanin move upward as new cells are produced



3. Maximum tan after three weeks, when cells with increased melanin reach the outer skin



4. Reduced tan after four weeks, when dead skin cells containing increased melanin are rejected

nosed my trouble with such great dispatch!"

Nishiyama: The great doctor was great at "doctoring," it seems!

Ikeda: In any situation, knowledge and correct information are very important. Without them, we can be easily led astray. How much more important this is in matters of health, which can mean the difference between life and death.

We have said this on many occasions during this series, but truly it is important to take charge of one's health, not to leave it up to others. We must become doctor, nurse and patient all rolled into one and work wisely to protect our health. To do that, we need to be informed properly about health issues and to make certain we always receive a thorough explanation from our doctors. What can we do to keep our skin healthy?

Sato: The basics are the same in preventing every disease: to have a balanced diet and keep a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

Ikeda: What practical steps can we take to care for our skin?

Sato: Regular cleansing is most important. It's a good idea to get into the habit of washing your hands and face when you come home at the end of the day.

Nishiyama: And not just with water but with soap. Some say that soap is drying and harsh on the skin, but if you rinse it away thoroughly, it rarely causes problems.

Ikeda: I've heard, however, that elderly people should go

easy on using soap.

Nishiyama: Yes, that's right. Actually, our skin begins to age from around our early 30s, so this advice doesn't necessarily apply just to senior citizens.

Sato: In healthy skin, the outer layers of the epidermis, rich in lipids, help protect against the evaporation of fluid from within and keep the skin moist and supple. As the skin ages, however, oil secretion decreases and the skin dries out easily. The overuse of soaps and vigorous rubbing only further deplete the skin's natural oils and exacerbate the dryness.

Ikeda: I know many elderly people enjoy taking baths daily. Perhaps they would be wise to take note of this point.

Nishiyama: Yes, hot water in particular strips the skin of its natural oils. It is better if the elderly bathe in tepid, not hot, water, and stay in the bath only for a short time.

Ikeda: By the way, do you have any advice for those who suffer from eczema on the hands, an affliction we spoke about a little earlier.

Nishiyama: Yes. It's a good idea to wear rubber gloves when using detergents or chemical solvents. It's even more effective when you wear thin cotton gloves underneath the rubber gloves, since many people are prone to rashes from latex.

Ikeda: Ultraviolet sunlight is also harmful to our skin, isn't it?

Sato: Yes. It accelerates the skin's aging process. Overexpo-

sure to the damaging rays of the sun can cause not only wrinkles and freckles but make our skin more susceptible to warts and skin cancer.

Ikeda: How can we protect ourselves against ultraviolet rays?

Sato: Basically, by avoiding long exposure to direct sunlight. It's a good idea to wear a hat or use a parasol when the sun

is at its strongest. And I also recommend applying sunscreen or wearing a long-sleeved shirt or jacket when spending any length of time outdoors, to protect oneself against UV radiation.

Ikeda: Sunbathing once had a reputation as healthful.

Nishiyama: Moderate exposure to the sun can indeed be beneficial, having a germicidal effect. But overexposure only damages the skin. When swimming in an outdoor pool or at the beach, about 30 minutes in the sun is the maximum safe exposure.

Ikeda: In Japan, we often say that people from regions noted for pure water have beautiful skin.

Sato: Yes, hence the reputation of the great beauties of Akita and Kyoto. These regions are also famous for their excellent sake, the core ingredient of which is said to be pure, good-quality water. The best water for sake is that which promotes healthy metabolic function; that is thought to be the reason that such water promotes good skin as well.

Ikeda: I see. Does stress have any effect on our skin?

Sato: Yes. It doesn't have the same effect on everyone, but it is true that of two people with the same basic skin type, the person subjected to significant stress is more likely to have skin problems. I think we can say, as a result, that a balanced, anxiety-free lifestyle is beneficial to the good health of our skin.

Ikeda: When you have a skin problem, should you go to a der-

matologist or an internist first?

Nishiyama: In general terms, we can divide skin disorders into two types: those caused by external irritants and those caused by internal problems. I think the best procedure is to have a dermatologist look at the problem first. He or she will then refer you to another department if that's what's called for.

Ikeda: Our skin is not only an exterior covering but also a mirror that reflects our inner health. Can a person's overall health be evaluated by looking at his or her skin?

Sato: Well, some people wear so much makeup nowadays that they can masterfully camouflage a less than healthy complexion! But seriously, the condition of our skin is a barometer of our general health. It's a very good idea to look closely at our skin every day.

Ikeda: I think many of us tend not to pay too much attention to skin problems, thinking they'll just go away on their own. But really — without being neurotic about it of course — we should keep a close watch on our skin, shouldn't we?

Shariputra, as you may know, was a famous disciple of Shakyamuni, hailed as foremost in wisdom. In a general sense, Shariputra represents all who correctly practice Buddhism.² The three Chinese characters of Shariputra's name in Japanese, Sharihotsu, have been interpreted respectively to mean skin (*sha*), flesh (*ri*) and bone (*hotsu*), thus representing life in its entirety.

The transformation of our lives that we achieve through Buddhist practice affects our bodies and our minds. Our bodies and minds are transformed right to their very essence. The life force of the Mystic Law pervades and vitalizes our flesh, bones and skin.

I hope all our readers will spend each day cheerfully and vibrantly, brimming with the dynamic energy of the rising sun, their faces radiant with good health. Pursuing the wise path of faith equals daily life is surely the greatest proof of being foremost in wisdom. ■■■

1. Polychlorinated biphenals (PCBs).
2. In the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings" (Ongi Kuden), Nichiren Daishonin says, "Now Nichiren and his followers who chant Nam-myohorenge-kyo are all Shariputras" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 722).

My Recollections



Fidel V. Ramos, President of the Republic of the Philippines

AFP/MIGUELITO PARCERO

By SGI President Ikeda

It was 5:30 a.m. In spite of the early hour, the Philippine people were crowded around their radio sets, from which issued the impassioned plea: "I call out to all who love the Philippines — now is the time to stand up! Tomorrow will be too late!"

This broadcast took place Feb. 23, 1986. It was the prelude to the "people power" revolution of the Philippines that shook the world.

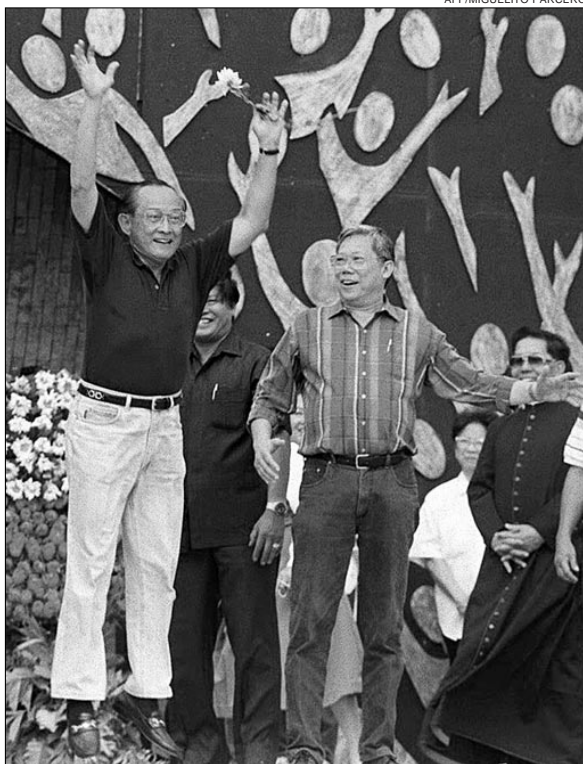
The voice delivering that rousing plea belonged to General Fidel Ramos, vice chief of staff of the Philippines Armed Forces. The previous day, Feb. 22, he and Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile had barricaded themselves in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, along with a small force of supporters. The time had come for a decisive battle against the corrupt Marcos regime, which had ruled the nation for two decades.

Ramos had had enough. He wanted to work for the Philippine people, not Marcos and his cronies. And he was prepared to die fighting. He was determined to restore justice and democracy to his homeland.

The urgency in Ramos' voice stirred his listeners. Another presidential election had just been held, where the people had elected Mrs. Corazon Aquino, but Marcos refused to concede defeat. He resorted to the most shameless poll-tampering to fake victory and, in spite of the people's protests, announced his inauguration on the morning of Feb. 25. He also continued his violent attacks on Mrs. Aquino and her family.

Would the "people power" that had taken the Philippine people this far now succumb to lies and oppression? No. The people had reached the limits of their endurance of Marcos' abuses.

But what could they do? That's when Ramos stood up, declaring an end to lies and deception. In response to his call, people took to the streets. In the churches, the priests urged the people to lend Ramos their support. Mrs. Aquino's supporters



On Feb. 25, 1995, Philippines President Fidel Ramos (l) jumps up as he celebrates the ninth anniversary of the downfall of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. About 8,000 people attended the celebration outside the Philippines Armed Forces headquarters where the civilian-backed military revolt began on Feb. 22, 1986. Ramos was one of the leaders of the revolt.

also announced their backing.

Though Ramos was ensconced in a military camp, he had only 500 soldiers with him. Both his allies and enemies knew he faced overwhelming odds against the powerful force Marcos commanded. But soon the compound was surrounded by another force: the human barricade of Philippine civilians. The troops Marcos dispatched to quell the rebellion could not pass.

When the government soldiers aimed their guns at this human wall, the people cried out: "Don't shoot! Your mothers are here among us!" To Filipinos, mothers are symbols of conscience. Unafraid of the guns pointed at them, the people came forward to hand the soldiers flowers, symbols of love and hope. The people gave sandwiches to the soldiers, saying they must be hungry, and struck up conversations. Everywhere, the people prayed and sang.

Once the people began to

voice their repressed cries for freedom and justice, nothing could stop them. Though Marcos warned them to stay at home, they did not obey. They heard the stirrings of history; they answered the call.

After the dictator had been driven into exile, Ramos supported Aquino and her government for six years. His remarkable abilities were demonstrated in crisis after crisis — from quashing a series of attempted military coups to coordinating relief efforts after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, the most violent volcanic explosion this century.

After Aquino stepped down, he was elected president. I met President Ramos about a year after his election, in May 1993. Praising his contribution to the bloodless revolution in his country, I quoted a poem by the American poet Edgar A. Guest (1881–1959):

The only happy time of rest

*is that which follows
strife
And sees some contribution
made unto the joy of life.
And he who has oppression
felt and conquered it is
he
Who really knows the
happiness and peace of
being free.¹*

President Ramos' mother was a teacher. She loved poetry, and had given her young son the nickname Eddie after the poet. The president expressed his appreciation and delight that I should quote from a poet who held such fond memories for him.

Ramos' voice was vigorous. On every subject, he was clear and unambiguous. When speaking of Japan's role in the Pacific, for instance, he said that China had the potential to become Japan's economic rival, and for that reason the Philippine people hoped that the two countries would continue to have friendly relations and contribute to the peace and development of Asia and the Pacific.

Full of energy, Ramos works from 6:00 or 7:00 a.m. until late at night. His staff wonders when he sleeps! His joy and excitement at having restored democracy and launched efforts for the future prosperity of his homeland are apparent. It is wonderful to behold.

The Philippines' prosperity is not something that the Japanese can afford to ignore. We must remember the terrible cruelties we inflicted upon the Philippines during the Pacific War. So closely is the Japanese military associated with oppression and inhumanity in the minds of the Philippine people that even during the Marcos years Filipinos referred to their own country's soldiers as *Japon*, or Japanese, when they harmed the people.

Sadly, however, there are Japanese university students today who don't even know that Japan invaded the Philippines! Such ignorance is frightening. How can a true human alliance be established under such conditions? We can talk all we want about the age of Asia and the Pa-

cific, but under these circumstances it can have no true meaning.

"I believe in your country's future," I told Ramos. "I respect the 'people power' of the Filipinos, who through their own efforts scored a historic victory. I urge people around the world, especially in Japan, to learn from your example."

What attributes must one possess to make a positive contribution to history?

In response to an interviewer asking about the qualities he admired in a person, Ramos listed two: "One is the determination to accomplish the mission for the welfare of the majority.... Secondly, and this is connected with it, is stability under pressure."² On another occasion, speaking of his stand against the Marcos regime, Ramos explained that he was determined to simply fulfill his duty to the Philippine people as a soldier. It was a sense of mission that led him to rise up and call out directly to the people, initiating the struggle for freedom and justice.

The human barricade was another manifestation of a powerful sense of mission, as roused in the hearts of the common people when the time had come to act. The government forces, in contrast, merely awaited orders from above. This was the crucial difference. It was the key to the people's eventual victory.

In March 1996, the 5th Pacific Basin Symposium, sponsored by Soka University, was held in Manila in the Philippines. Scholars from 17 nations and regions assembled to discuss the theme "Technology and Culture." Ramos kindly wrote the keynote address, which was read by a representative. His speech, "Technology in the Service of Humanity," stressed that the time has come to redefine the concept of national interests in a way more compatible with global imperatives and world peace based on humane values.

Yes, that is the true meaning of the age of Asia and the Pacific — the age when the oppressed rise up to demand their freedom; the age when the people strike back against the tyranny of na-

PLEASE SEE RAMOS, 13

THE GOHONZON

Treasure Map of Life

SIGN POSTS
APPLYING
NICHIREN
DAISHONIN'S
WRITINGS TO
DAILY LIFETry Your
Own Power

By SHIN YATOMI

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE


Abutsu-bo is the Treasure Tower itself, and the Treasure Tower is Abutsu-bo himself. No other knowledge is purposeful. (The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 30)

"Assay [try] the power you have."
"My power? Alas, I doubt."
"Our doubts are traitors,
And makes us lose the good we oft
might win,
By fearing to attempt."
(*Measure for Measure*, 1.4.76-79)

If the worst slander in the Judeo-Christian faith is disbelief in God, the worst slander in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is disbelief in our innate power — the power derived from our Buddhahood. Shakespeare here echoes an internal dialogue I sometimes have when facing a difficulty. "Can I overcome this problem?" "No, I don't think so."

It's easier for me to have faith in the Gohonzon (as something outside me) than in myself. I sometimes imagine myself as a meek, insignificant man kneeling before the Gohonzon up on the pedestal. Many of us, especially those with a strong Judeo-Christian background, may have difficulties believing in our own power, in switching to the Buddhist perspective.

Some people may say that they have God inside, but few, if any, claim that they *are* God. Saying so is blasphemous. But the Daishonin, in the above passage, tells Abutsu-bo, an elderly believer on Sado Island, that he *is* the Gohonzon and that he *is* the Buddha. This self-knowledge, the Daishonin says, is the single most important knowledge of all. To think of ourselves as something less than the Gohonzon or the Buddha, therefore, is slanderous to ourselves and to all others, who share the same potential. In a sense, we must elevate our view of ourselves to the level of the Gohonzon (i.e. our Buddha nature).

"What's the good in even trying?" Whenever I overcome my internal voice of self-doubt through resolute prayer and try my own Buddhahood, I am glad that I did. In the Daishonin's Buddhism, faith means the courage to try your own power. 

By TED MORINO

SGI-USA STUDY DEPARTMENT CHIEF

The Gohonzon, in a sense, can be compared to a map pointing to the location of the supreme treasure of life and the universe — the Mystic Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. This treasure map tells us that the treasure is found within our lives. To those who can understand the map, it is not just a piece of paper but an invaluable object equal in value to the "treasure," that is, life's supreme condition and potential itself. To those who fail to grasp its message, however, the map's worth will be reduced to that of a mere scroll.

As Nichiren Daishonin says: "As for the characters of the Lotus Sutra [the Gohonzon], a blind person cannot see them at all. A person with the eyes of a common mortal sees them as black in color. Persons in the two vehicles see them as void. Bodhisattvas see various different colors in them, while a person whose seeds of Buddhahood have reached full maturity see them as Buddhas. So the sutra states: 'If one can uphold this [sutra], he will be upholding the Buddha's body'" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 7, p. 112).

How then can we correctly understand this map and locate the treasure it leads to? The Daishonin encourages us, "When you chant the Mystic Law and recite the Lotus Sutra, you must summon up deep conviction that Myoho-renge-kyo is your life itself" (MW-1, 4). Nichiren Daishonin teaches us, in other words, that one's life is the greatest treasure itself. Hence he also writes: "Never seek this Gohonzon outside yourself. The Gohonzon exists only within the mortal flesh of us ordinary people who embrace the Lotus Sutra and chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo" (MW-1, 213). This realization is what Buddhism calls the condition of enlightenment.

To convey his message, the Daishonin used the theory of a life-moment possessing 3,000 realms, especially the mutual possession of the ten worlds, as a basis for the Gohonzon's graphic image. Down the center of the Gohonzon is written "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo — Nichiren" (Nos. 1 and 2 respectively on the chart, p. 12). This illustrates the oneness of the person and the law, or that the Daishonin's life itself embodies the Mystic Law, as he writes, "The soul of Nichiren is nothing other than Nam-myoho-renge-kyo" (MW-1, 120). It also indicates that our lives are fundamentally one and the same with the law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, as the Daishonin demonstrated through his life.

Put another way, the inscription of "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo — Nichiren" tells us that we have the identical qualities of the original Buddha's life. To the degree we strive for kosen-rufu and pray with the same desire as the Daishonin, we will manifest the same courage, hope and wisdom. This is what the Daishonin meant when he wrote: "You, yourself, are a true

Buddha who possesses the three enlightened properties. You should chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo with this conviction" (MW-1, 30).

To the left and right of "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo — Nichiren" are various Buddhist figures that represent the ten worlds in the life of Nichiren Daishonin. The Daishonin included them on the Gohonzon to indicate that even the Buddha's life inherently contains the lower nine worlds.

By writing "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo — Nichiren" prominently down the center with the other, smaller characters around it, the Daishonin graphically indicated that the figures representing the lower nine worlds are illuminated by the Mystic Law, as the Daishonin writes: "Illuminated by the five characters of the Mystic Law, they display the enlightened nature they inherently possess. This is the true object of worship" (MW-1, 212). In other words, these figures signify the nine worlds when they are based upon Buddhahood.

How the ten worlds are represented on the Gohonzon varies. On some Gohonzon each of the ten worlds is represented by a separate character or characters found in the Buddhist scriptures. On other Gohonzon, however, the ten worlds are represented as groups, like the four noble worlds. The Daishonin used both styles, as did later high priests.

The Nichikan-transcribed
Gohonzon

On the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon, the ten worlds are represented in two groups: the four noble worlds (Buddhahood, Bodhisattva, Realization and Learning) and the six lower paths (Heaven, Humanity, Anger, Animality, Hunger and Hell).

On the Nichikan Gohonzon, the four noble worlds are indicated by Shakyamuni Buddha (No. 8) and Many Treasures Thus Come One (No. 9), who both represent Buddhahood, and the four leaders of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth — Bodhisattva Superior Practices (No. 10), Bodhisattva Boundless Practices (No. 11), Bodhisattva Firmly Established Practices (No. 6), and Bodhisattva Pure Practices (No. 7).

The lower six worlds are represented by figures indicating Heaven, Animality and Hunger. Heaven is indicated, for instance, by the Four Great Heavenly Kings — Great Heavenly King Hearer of Many Teachings (No. 4), Great Heavenly King Upholder of the Nation (No. 13), Great Heavenly King Increase and Growth (No. 27), and Great Heavenly King Wide-Eyed (No. 33) — and Great Heavenly King Sun (No. 20), Great Heavenly King Moon (No. 16), Great Heavenly King Stars (No. 15) and the Devil King of the Sixth Heaven (No. 19).

Animality is indicated by Eight Great Dragon Kings (No. 22), and Hunger is indicated by Mother of Demon Children (No. 25) and Ten Demon Daughters (No. 24).

Other Characters

T'ien-t'ai (No. 26) and Dengyo (No. 23) represent those who transmitted the true lineage of Buddhism in the past.

The native gods of India, Great Heavenly King Indra (No. 17) and Great Heavenly King Brahma (No. 18), are incorporated into the Gohonzon as Buddhist gods. So, too, are the gods native to Japan, Sun Goddess (No. 31) and Great Bodhisattva Hachiman (No. 28).

Two names are written in medieval Sanskrit, or Siddham. They are the Buddhist deity Ragaraja (No. 14), which represents the principle of earthly desires are enlightenment, and the Buddhist deity Achala (No. 21), which represents the principle that the sufferings of birth and death are nirvana.

Also inscribed on the Gohonzon is a declaration by the Daishonin that reads, "Never in the 2,230 years since the passing of the Buddha has this great mandala appeared in the world" (No. 32).

Demonstrating the law of causality on the Gohonzon are the two Buddhist promises — "Those who make offerings will gain good fortune surpassing the ten honorable titles [of the Buddha]" (No. 5) and "Those who vex and trouble [the practitioners of the Law] will have their heads split into seven pieces" (No. 12).

Arrangement of the Gohonzon

The graphic arrangement of the Gohonzon is based on the concept of the Ceremony in the Air depicted in the Lotus Sutra. The 11th or "Emergence of the Treasure Tower" chapter depicts the appearance of a magnificent tower: "At that time in the Buddha's presence there was a tower adorned with the seven treasures, five hundred *yojana* in height and two hundred and fifty *yojana* in width and depth, that rose up out of the earth and stood suspended in the air" (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 170).

One *yojana* is said to be the distance the royal army could march in a day. According to one interpretation, 500 *yojana* would be equal to the radius of the earth. The Treasure Tower was closed when it first emerged, but Shakyamuni opened it when he was invited by Many Treasures Thus Come One, who appeared to validate Shakyamuni's teachings, to sit with him in it. This is how the Ceremony in the Air begins.

Regarding the Treasure Tower, the second Soka Gakkai president, Josei Toda, says: "Within our lives exists the magnificent state of life beyond our comprehension called Buddhahood. This state of life or its power defies our imagination; nor can our words express it. However, we can concretely manifest this state in our lives. To explain that our lives can manifest the latent Buddha nature as a concrete reality is the ceremony depicted in 'The Emergence of the Treasure Tower' chapter."

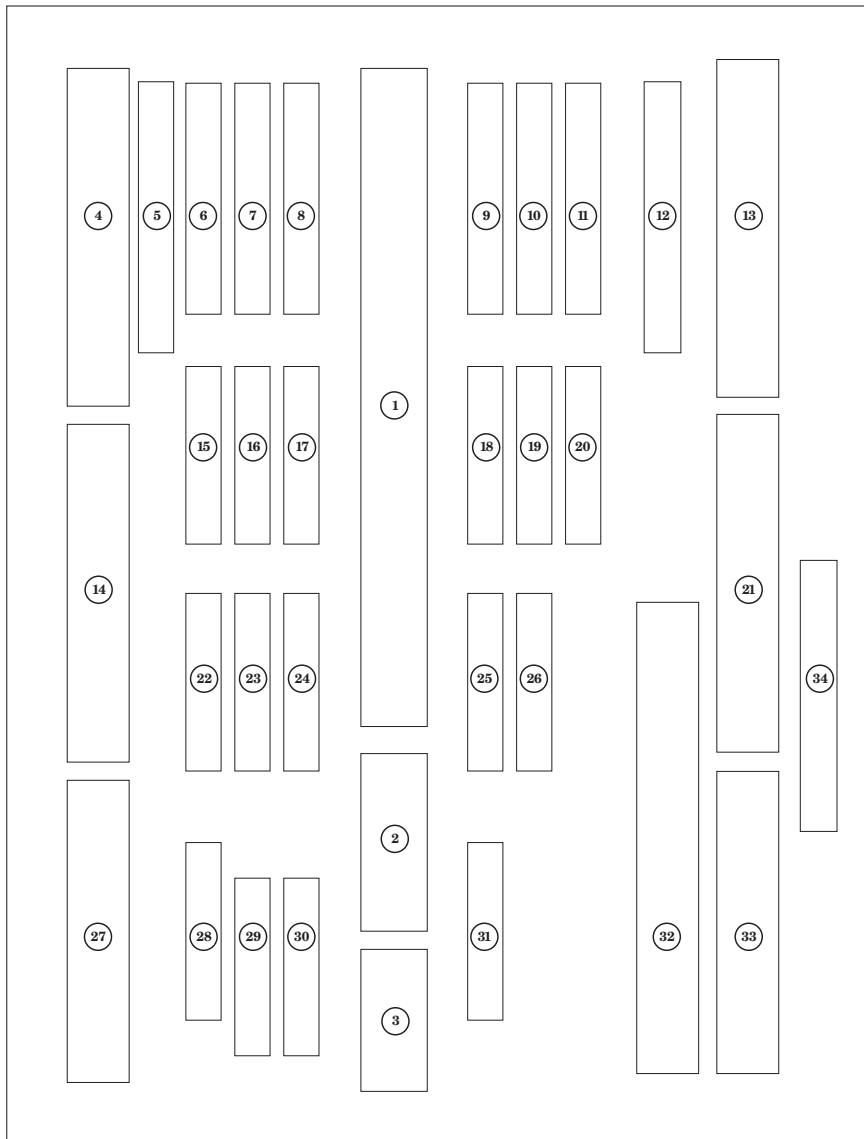
PLEASE SEE GOHONZON, NEXT PAGE

Diagram of the Nichikan-Transcribed Gohonzon

The following is the key to the accompanying diagram. The key gives the phoneticized original and English translation of characters on the Gohonzon transcribed by Nichikan.

- 1) *Nam-myoho-rence-kyo*
- 2) *Nichiren*
- 3) *Zai gohan* – Here is Nichiren Daishonin's personal seal.
- 4) *Dai Bishamon-tenno* – Great Heavenly King Vaishnavana (Skt), also called Tamon-ten (Hearer of Many Teachings).
- 5) *U kuyo sha fuku ka jugo* – Those who make offerings will gain good fortune surpassing the ten honorable titles [of the Buddha]. Note: In Buddhism, *make offerings* has a broad meaning; here it means to respect and praise.
- 6) *Namu Anryugyo Bosatsu* – Bodhisattva Firmly Established Practices (Skt Supratishthitaritra). Note: The word *namu* is added to some names in the Gohonzon as a sign of great respect.
- 7) *Namu Jyogyo Bosatsu* – Bodhisattva Pure Practices (Skt Vishuddhacharitra).
- 8) *Namu Shakamuni-butsu* – Shakyamuni Buddha.
- 9) *Namu Taho Nyorai* – Many Treasures Thus Come One (Skt Prabhutaratna Tathagata).
- 10) *Namu Jogyo Bosatsu* – Bodhisattva Superior Practices (Skt Vishishtacharitra).
- 11) *Namu Muhengyo Bosatsu* – Bodhisattva Boundless Practices (Skt Anantacharitra).
- 12) *Nyaku noran sha zu ha shichibun* – Those who vex and trouble [the practitioners of the Law] will have their heads split into seven pieces.
- 13) *Dai Jikoku-tenno* – Great

- Heavenly King Upholder of the Nation (Skt Dhritarashtra).
- 14) *Aizen-myo'o* – Wisdom King Craving-Filled (Skt Ragaraja). Note: The name is written in Siddham, a medieval Sanskrit orthography.
- 15) *Dai Myojo-tenno* – Great Heavenly King Stars, or the god of the stars.
- 16) *Dai Gattenno* – Great Heavenly King Moon, or the god of the moon.
- 17) *Taishaku-tenno* – Heavenly King Shakra (also known as Heavenly King Indra).
- 18) *Dai Bontenno* – Great Heavenly King Brahma.
- 19) *Dai Rokuten no Mao* – Devil King of the Sixth Heaven.
- 20) *Dai Nittenno* – Great Heavenly King Sun, or the god of the sun.
- 21) *Fudo-myo'o* – Wisdom King Immovable (Skt Achala). Note: The name is written in Siddham, a medieval Sanskrit orthography.
- 22) *Hachi Dairyuo* – Eight Great Dragon Kings.
- 23) *Dengyo Daishi* – Great Teacher Dengyo.
- 24) *Jurasetsunyo* – Ten Demon Daughters (Skt Rakshasi).
- 25) *Kishimojin* – Mother of Demon Children (Skt Hariti).
- 26) *Tendai Daishi* – Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai.
- 27) *Dai Zojo-tenno* – Great Heavenly King Increase and Growth (Skt Virudhaka).
- 28) *Hachiman Dai Bosatsu* – Great Bodhisattva Hachiman.
- 29) *Kore o shosha shi tatemasuru* – I respectfully transcribed this.
- 30) *Nichikan, personal seal* – Signature of the high priest who transcribed this Gohonzon, in this case, Nichikan, consisting of his name and personal handwritten seal.
- 31) *Tensho-daijin* – Sun Goddess.



32) *Butsumetsugo ni-sen ni-hyaku san-ju yo nen no aida ichienbudai no uchi mizou no dai-mandara nari* – Never in 2,230-some years since the pass-

ing of the Buddha has this great mandala appeared in the world.
33) *Dai Komoku-tenno* – Great Heavenly King Wide-Eyed (Skt Virupaksha).

34) *Kyoho go-nen roku-gatsu jusan-nichi* – The 13th day of the sixth month in the fifth year of Kyoho [1720], cyclical sign *kano-ne*.

GOHONZON, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

In other words, the appearance of the Treasure Tower is a metaphor for the magnificent Buddha nature in our lives. In the Lotus Sutra, the opening of the closed doors of the Treasure Tower represents the transition from a theoretical explanation of Buddhahood as a potential state to the actual manifestation of the Buddha nature in each person.

On the Gohonzon, "Nam-myoho-rence-kyo — Nichiren" corresponds to the Treasure Tower. Shakyamuni Buddha and

Many Treasures Thus Come One are seated in the tower facing the audience. The rest of the bodhisattvas, deities and various beings are facing these two Buddhas. In India, important persons are usually seated to the right. That Shakyamuni is placed to the left of "Nam-myoho-rence-kyo" as we face the Gohonzon and Bodhisattva Superior Practices (the leader of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth) to the right means that Shakyamuni is facing out from within the Treasure Tower and Bodhisattva Superior Practices is facing him.

The Gohonzon diagram published along with this article will help you see the position and meaning of each inscription on the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon. It is hoped that explaining the graphic components of the Gohonzon will make it easier for you to sense the meaning of Nichiren Daishonin's message to all humanity — that every individual is potentially a Buddha, that everyone can attain Buddhahood by practicing to the Gohonzon.

We can compare the graphic image of the Gohonzon to each of our lives. Living in such a defiled

age as the Latter Day of the Law, our lives can be easily dominated by the lower life-conditions, such as Anger or Animality — when this happens it is just like putting those worlds in the center rather than Nam-myoho-rence-kyo.

Our lives are just like the Treasure Tower, but they may be closed and buried deep in the earth of delusion. Our challenge, therefore, is to bring the hidden Treasure Tower up from within the soil of our fundamental darkness and open it, establishing Nam-myoho-rence-kyo in the center of our lives and illuminating our lower life-

conditions — putting them in their proper places.

What makes this possible is the power of faith and practice for oneself and others. It is our challenge to continue to practice to the Gohonzon with firm faith in its message that we are innately endowed with the supreme treasure. In this way, we can solidify Buddhahood as the basis of our life-condition, as exemplified by the arrangement of the Gohonzon.

A version of this article appeared in the May 12, 1995, World Tribune and was compiled with the help of Linda Marcus.

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Today we don't have the drama as if a nuclear war could erupt any day. The sense of urgency has receded, but the necessity for nuclear disarmament is still present. We've got to deal with these issues very persistently.

In any conflict, resorting to war and violence can never produce good results. You may achieve your objective in the end, but you may lose a great deal in getting there. The process of education is absolutely necessary.

”

INTERVIEW

Education, Diligence Keys to Disarmament



Prvoslav Davinic, U.N. Centre for Disarmament Affairs.

During the recent U.N.-sponsored conference on disarmament in Sapporo, Japan, Seikyo Shimbun reporter Hiroaki Noyama and the SGI's Congdon Saita Smith interviewed Prvoslav Davinic, director of the U.N. Centre for Disarmament Affairs. The following are some excerpts:

SGI: The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has been signed by all but three states required to do so [44 of them], but its becoming effective is contingent on the ratification by all of them. What are your thoughts on the proposal made by Ambassador Chusei Yamada to have signatories to the CTBT adopt a protocol enabling the agreement to enter into force even without the ratification of the three remaining States [North Korea, India and Pakistan]?

Davinic: Ambassador Yamada's idea is very thought-provoking and was supported by many participants. This type of conference is useful precisely because such new ideas can be put forward informally, and, if they gain support, can be followed up in formal meetings. So it's a good opportunity and a good place to launch such ideas.

SGI: Secretary General Kofi Annan indicated in his reform proposals announced on July 16 that your office would be upgraded from the Centre for Dis-

armament Affairs to become the Department for Disarmament and Arms Regulation.

Davinic: Yes. The secretary-general made an important political statement in that he recognized the growing role of disarmament in view of the increasing number of conflicts and the remaining stockpile of nuclear weapons. Actually, our office has always been the Department for Disarmament Affairs, so we're back to our original status. In his press conference he stated that the decision to downgrade the department was a mistake. I fully agree with this view.

SGI: How has the situation surrounding disarmament changed internationally?

Davinic: The situation has changed in many ways. First of all, the nuclear weapons states are no longer at odds with each other. Therefore it's highly unlikely that they would start a nuclear confrontation. This doesn't mean that issues related to nuclear weapons are no longer important. The important change is that we do not feel threatened with nuclear annihilation by design.

At the same time, however, there are still many nuclear weapons left in the stockpiles, and we feel that there is great need to proceed. Today we don't have the drama as if a nuclear war could

erupt any day. The sense of urgency has receded. But the necessity for nuclear disarmament is still present. We've got to deal with these issues very persistently.

At the same time, on the other front of conventional weapons, the situation has also changed. In past conflicts, such as in Vietnam and Cambodia, heavy weapons were used like fighters, bombers, tanks and so on. Most present-day conflicts are carried out with small weapons. Small weapons are proliferating because they're easy to acquire, inexpensive and don't require a great deal of training to use. So it is a new feature. These types of weapons that have come to the forefront of international concern are more difficult to control than those in use during the Cold War era.

SGI: The SGI has proposed a world disarmament education campaign. What do you think of this idea?

Davinic: It's a very commendable project which we certainly support. Wars start for many reasons. There are sometimes causes that are deeply rooted in the minds of people — certain controversial issues, animosities, and disagreements. In any conflict, resorting to war and violence can never produce good results. You may achieve your objective in the end, but you may lose a great deal in getting there.

The process of education is

absolutely necessary. The more you educate people, the more successful you might be in preventing war. Educating people about the consequences of wars and the advantages of resolving conflict through peaceful means, as well as the necessity of disarmament, is an essential part of our present-day environment.

SGI: What are your impressions of SGI Representative Kazuo Ishiwatari's statement at the conference regarding the responsibility of nuclear states to work for disarmament? [Please see Aug. 8 *World Tribune*, p. 1.]

Davinic: I think it was a very powerful statement which re-

flected the feelings of many people in the world about this matter. The responsibility is mutual. It is not only for those who don't have nuclear weapons not to acquire them, but also for those who do have them to get rid of them.

From that point of view, there is agreement even on the part of nuclear weapons states. Disagreement, as it became all so clear during our conference, is over how to do it and how fast. Nuclear states feel it must be done incrementally over a period of time. Others favor a more rapid timetable. So, in that sense, the statement of your representative reflected the sentiment of an overwhelming majority of the world population. ❧

RAMOS, FROM PAGE 10

tionalism, imperialism, militarism and materialism that they have endured for so long, replacing it with humanism; the age when people the world over throw off their chains and come together with the shared desire to lead happy lives. The "people power" of the Philippines was a dramatic beginning for this new age.

Ramos believes in dialogue. He witnessed the Korean and Vietnam wars, and from them learned to avoid bloodshed. The incredible efforts he exerted to settle the Muslim uprisings in Mindanao bore fruit in September 1996 with the conclusion of

a peace treaty with the Moro National Liberation Front. It signaled an end to a bitter conflict that spanned almost three decades and claimed the lives of more than 100,000 people.

At that peace ceremony, Ramos declared that not only were we witnessing a historical moment but creating one. His voice reverberated with emotion, with the joy of victory. His voice rang out from the new Philippines to the farthest corners of the world. ❧

1. Edgar A. Guest, "Improvement" in *Just Folks* (Chicago: The Reilly & Britton Co., 1917), pp. 115-16.
2. From the Nov. 16, 1996, *The Philippine Star*.

所願滿足

我叫林貞君，今年是我入信第十五週年。在短短的十五年中，我得到許多功德，今天我只挑選三個主要的功德和大家分享。

第一個是如何在異鄉面對現實生活，接受工作困難的挑戰。我以單親的身份帶著四個小孩和滿腔的抱負與理想來到美國：到了美國才知道這如此大而先進的國家。每個人都很忙碌，誰也沒有多餘的時間照顧別人，因此事都得靠自己。

我只受過初中教育，而且早婚，因此既無學歷又無工作經驗，找一分糊口的工作都不容易，只好同時打三份工。白天七點到四點在電子公司上班，四點半到九點半在餐廳打工，週末白天在7-Eleven，晚上回到餐廳工作，每天都為了生活像個陀螺般在打轉。

一九八二年，周折於我。入信之後，接受前輩指導，每天早上五點起床學作動和唱題，我誠懇地向御本尊祈求：「我要突破這種生活的痛苦，我要過正常的生活，並且要有時間參加學習的活動，負起廣布的責任。」這是我第一個願望。一個月後，工作上出現了變化，我的主管要我學習新的技術，因此我必須加班。加班費是工資的一倍半，比餐廳的待遇好，而且比較輕鬆，於是我就辭掉了餐廳的工作。如此一來，我就可以在每個星期五晚上參加地區的活動。才入信就在生活上有如此大的轉變，竟定了我的信心基礎，讓我在往後的日子里接受種種挑戰。

由於孩子們都在北加州，一九八四年，透過我的上司的介紹，我在聖荷西找到一份工作，至今已十三年了。每天一小時的題目讓我工作順利，步步高升，前後共晉升三次。目前我的頭銜是資深工程師，薪水是當初的五倍。

一九九〇年我經由同事的介紹，再度結婚。我先生在婚前就已入信，是我廣布的助手。生活正常而且富裕，如今兩個女兒都已成家，各有兩個小孩，大兒子大學畢業了，小兒子尚在求學。

我第二個心願是為地區小組提供活動場所，並在聖荷西組成華人的聚會。一九八八年，我買了一間 Loft Home，客廳約能容二十人左右，我非常高興，因為我達成了第二個心願。幾年後，由於會員人數增加，我總覺得客廳不夠大，而且停車不方便，於是開始祈求換個獨立屋，客廳要寬敞，停車要方便，同時還許願要買個電動門的大佛壇，做為我入信十三年的紀念。一九九五年四月我回台灣時就買了日本製的佛壇，空運回來，暫時放在車庫裡，等候買房子。三個月後，我搬入新家。目前地區和支部的活動都在我家舉行。

這時媽媽的身體漸漸衰老，而且罹患糖尿病，我推著輪椅把她帶到美國養老。我既不知如何面對生死問題，也無處理後事的經驗，只好題題祈求。正巧朱先生和幾位幹部來美國，六月一日到機場迎接他們，三日開始準備媽媽的後事，三天後，媽媽安詳地離開了，享年八十四。媽媽沒有受苦，這是我們母女兩人的功德。我的眼淚是為母女情深和御本尊的偉大而流。



▲林貞君在研修會上分享她的體驗

第三個大功德是我以唱題改變了宿命。一九八四年搬到北加州，我作了生平第一



▲精彩生動的御書講習

次身體檢查。我一向很健康，而且活的現證據我入信十五週年，這是我十五年中我突破超越了種種困難，並果竟然發現我有糖尿病，雖然我並無任何徵候。我知道這是我家人的宿命，因此我向御本尊祈求，把我的五週年的紀念日，一星期後我入信十的事變為可能，讓我改變這個宿命，顯示血糖正常。我很感激御本尊的偉大，真是有求必應，沒有任何事情是會友和前輩給我這個寶貴的機會，和謝大家。

我絕不以藥物控制血糖，我要以這樣不可能的。憑著信心和題目，在短短大家分享我的體驗，同時我也為洛杉磯的會友感到驕傲，洛杉磯的精神是美國廣布的支柱，不管到那裡都有人問我何時何處入信，一聽是洛杉磯，對方都會說：「怪不得！」可見洛杉磯的精神是大家確認的。最後祝各位身體健康，有求必應，心想事成，謝謝大家。

第四屆夏季研修會

充實·輕鬆·愉快

十三是許多西方人忌諱的數字，但七月的這一天卻成為美國創價學會美華友誼會一個歷史性的紀念日。四百多位華人聚集在南加州核桃市的聖安東尼奧山學院，渡過充實愉快的一天。

美華友誼會成立於一九九二年，目的是提供華人會友以華語互相砥礪信心的活動。在這五年中，通訊組每月挑選一篇池田先生的指導，郵寄給全美各地的華人會友。此外，還舉辦了四次夏季研修會，三次春節聯歡會等大型活動。一九九五年第三屆研修會後，美國創價學會採納台灣幹部的建議，每月固定在洛杉磯十個不同的地點舉行華語教學。這些活動為許多華人奠定了堅固的信心基礎。

第四屆研修會的籌備工作在六月中旬正式展開，由洪健地、陳美華、黃子惠三人統籌負責。在短短的一箇月中，以題目為後盾，大家同心協力。

初夏的早晨，沈靜的藍天上，太陽緩緩地高昇起來，燦爛的陽光照得大地一片明明。花木散發著早晨特有的淡雅的芳香，徐徐清風兀自透著些微涼意。

會友九時許陸續抵達會場。美國幅員遼闊，朋友們平時難得一聚，一旦相聚，喜悅之情洋溢於臉上。走廊上，三三五五盈盈地共飲寒溫。輕快的笑語，盪漾在清新的空氣裡，落入耳中，在心底激起一股溫馨的感覺。

十點晨課開始，和諧有力的動行和唱題是這群地涌菩薩致力廣布的誓言，接著由負責人之一的洪健地致詞，李春喜朗讀池田先生的賀詞。隨後會友們便興致勃勃地步入教室。這次研讀的御書包括：三種財寶御書、轉重經受法門、地獄即寂光、祈禱抄和煩惱即菩提御書。其中祈禱抄是以廣東語講解，三種財寶御書分成國語和英語兩班，其餘四組都是國語，每位會友在報到時挑選一篇御書。英文班是特別為培育不諳中文的年輕的一代開設的。

御書由本地教學組員主講，來訪的台灣幹部補充說明、總結或分享體驗。他們紮實的教學基礎和感人的體驗，不但使得御書講習更有深度，本地的教學組員也從中學習到講解御書的方式和應有的精神。

課後，會友們散坐在室外樹蔭下面吃午餐，一面開懷暢談。同時，繪畫、攝影和工藝品展示間陳列了許多會友和子女的精心得作。與會會的每個人都能在飯後欣賞他們的創作才華。

下午一點半所有的會友聚集在禮堂做晚課，開始下半天的活動。第一個節目是美國創價學會蘇格蘭風笛隊的表演。傳統的蘇格蘭打拍對來自台灣和亞洲其他地區的華人，或許是個新鮮的經驗。接著，四位女子部員表演了民族舞蹈「彩帶舞」，健美的身段舞出了傳統的典雅。林貞君特地

台灣的幹部欣賞藝術及手工藝作品

從北加州趕來和大家分享她入信十五年中在工作、婚姻、健康各方面的功德。

台灣幹部訪問團團長吳大河在致詞時，指出宗門已「潰不成軍」，而學會卻「氣勢如虹」。幹事林麗真鼓勵會友認真投入學習活動，以法華經的兵法，也就是具體誠懇的祈求加上實際的努力，鞏固幸福的基石。她強調調教學的重要，並說明廣布人生應有的形象。

最後由美國創價學會副理事長林正宏總結說明華人會友和諧相處、團結一致，以及徹底了解宗門問題的重要性。接著，他為所有與會者頒發結業證書，圓滿結束這個歷史性的第四屆夏季研修會。

在此要特別一提的是，台灣幹部訪問團在洛杉磯停留一星期間，除了參加十三日的研修會外，並在十六日晚上分別到四個不同的地點講解八月份的御書「覆經王殿之信」。其餘的時間不是家訪，就是個別指導或參加座談會，更在臨行前向財津理事長和中林副理事長提供許多寶貴的意見。美華友誼會謹此代表所有華人會友向他們十二位以及朱先生、林副理事長、陳美華婦人部長致最深的謝意。



▲台灣幹部欣賞藝術及手工藝作品

No Limits



Marsha Ivins is a veteran of four space flights as a mission specialist. This photo, by Carolyn Russo, is part of a current exhibit on women pilots at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

By ROSALYE SETTLES

WASHINGTON, D.C., CORRESPONDENT

Never give up — no matter what. That's the spirit infusing "Women and Flight," a traveling exhibition now at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum. "Women and Flight" presents profiles on 37 female aviators and astronauts whose determination is expanding the presence of women in the sky and in space.

Carolyn J. Russo, museum staff photographer, undertook the project "to provide role models for young women and to show the diversity of careers available in aviation and space exploration," she says. She traveled the country to interview and photograph the women.

Currently only 6 percent of all pilots are women. Once considered second-rate aviators, women now fly equipment ranging from gliders to the NASA space shuttle. Some of the women profiled entered aviation by choice and others by accident. All of them, however, share the same goal — to fly.

A photograph of Amelia Earhart serves as a prelude to Russo's vivid portraits, which use each pilot's work-setting as a backdrop. This type of background provides a seamless quality to the portraits, showing the interrelatedness of each pilot and her environment. Accompanied by quotations and biographical sketches, each photograph reveals the inner person as well as the exterior persona captured by the camera.

As you look at one photograph, you can almost feel the frustration of 87-year-old Doris Lockness, who says that "back in 1939 it was always a toss up whether to drop quarters into the meter which ran [my] refrigerator or use the money to fly."

Viewing the image of Marsha Ivins, NASA mission specialist, it is not difficult to imagine the sense of accomplishment she must have felt when she was finally admitted to the U.S. space program. She applied three times before she was accepted, and she is now the veteran of four space flights. We can only be impressed by the confident spirit of women such as Ida Van Smith-Dunn, who knew that "somewhere along the line, if she continued to be interested, she would learn to fly," Russo writes. And she did — at age 50.

Through the lives of the women Russo has profiled, we see that we can make the seemingly impossible a reality. It's the strength and depth of our determination that matter. The only limitations are those we impose on ourselves. The sky is no longer the limit.

The exhibit, with its companion book by Russo, begins a five-year, 30-city tour this fall after the Smithsonian exhibit closes in September. WJ