

# World Tribune

No. 3157

THE YEAR OF ADVANCEMENT TOWARD THE NEW CENTURY

SEPTEMBER 19, 1997

Photo by CAROL BARNSTEAD

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## U.N. AIDS Clock Backdrop to HIV/AIDS Forum

By **CLAUDIA WELLINGTON**  
CORRESPONDENT  
New York, Sept. 4

"Every 10 seconds one person is infected with the HIV virus." This is the solemn message conveyed by the AIDS Clock, an exhibit on loan from the U.N. Population Fund to the SGI-USA in New York for an upcoming HIV/AIDS forum.

As the second hand of the video clock sweeps around, it reveals four scenes of people affected by the disease. Each time it comes full circle, artwork created by an artist with HIV/AIDS appears. The AIDS Clock replays a 13-minute video montage of photographs and artwork arranged in its face. In addition, a bell sounds at 10-second intervals to indicate that another person has contracted the virus.

Marc Westhof, creator of the clock, said he wanted a simple way to show how the disease is affecting us all. When he first conceived the clock, only five people per minute were contracting the virus (thus the four photographs

and one piece of original artwork each minute). However, the numbers are steadily increasing — now six people per minute contract the deadly disease.

"I chose the symbol of a clock," Mr. Westhof says, "because everyone is affected by time and everyone has the potential to be infected with this virus...everyone is a target."

Prevention and education will be the focus of the HIV/AIDS forum, sponsored by the local Culture Department. "There's so much shame and misinformation about this virus that people are even afraid to hug," says Lenny Rosenbluff, forum co-chairperson. "We want to open up a dialogue with members who have contracted this virus...to help take care of them from the standpoint of faith."

Forum Chairperson Dolly Ramos, who is spearheading the event, has personal experience with AIDS: Her husband died of the disease last year after having

PLEASE SEE AIDS, 4



The AIDS Clock, on loan from the U.N. Population Fund, is on display in the New York Culture Center. At the bottom of the video screen is an HIV Odometer, which tallies those infected to date. The numbers mount as the bell tolls every 10 seconds. Now, more than 27.2 million men, women and children have been infected with the deadly virus that causes AIDS, and more than 6 million people have died of AIDS, according to the display.

## Indian School Dedicates New Building to SGI President

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

On Aug. 15, the 50th anniversary of India's independence, the Sethu Bhaskara Matriculation Higher Secondary School of Chennai (formerly Madras) inaugurated a new four-story building called the Dr. Ikeda Block.

The SGI leader's philosophy of education is highly prized by the students, teachers and administrators of the school, which has integrated study of Mr. Ikeda's poems into its curriculum. The Dr. Ikeda Block houses the Makiguchi Library, named in honor of the first Soka Gakkai president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, who devoted his life to education, peace and human rights. It also contains chemistry and physics laboratories, a computer room and other facilities. The purpose of the school, as stated in its handbook, is to pro-



Students of the Sethu Bhaskara School in India study SGI President Ikeda's poems and learn humanistic principles from them.

mote value-laden education and raise genuine world citizens.

The opening ceremony was attended by some 2,500 students and 2,000 parents. Special guests included Krishna Srinivas and Shanmughasundaram Mohan, the president and vice

president of the World Poetry Society, and Naveena Reddi, chief secretary of the Bharat (India) Soka Gakkai.

Sethu Kumanan, managing trustee of the school, who is himself a poet, described Mr. Ikeda as a world-renowned poet,

writer, philosopher, pacifist and educator without parallel. He went on to relate how, by studying Mr. Ikeda's poems, students have learned essential principles of humanism.

Dr. Mohan, a former justice of the India Supreme Court and a co-founder of the World Congress of Poets, declared that by dedicating the facility to Mr. Ikeda the school has created a new history. He praised the school for its commitment to fostering spirituality and developing creativity both in its approach to learning and in the arts.

He added that he was greatly encouraged by the SGI leader's efforts to carry on the philosophy of nonviolence of Shakyamuni, King Ashoka and Mahatma Gandhi. In conclusion, Dr. Mohan called upon the stu-

PLEASE SEE INDIA, 4

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA 90401  
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED  
Return To: SGI-USA Subscriptions  
525 Wilshire Blvd.  
Santa Monica, CA 90401-1467

DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE DELIVER BY ISSUE DATE

# VOICES

**'You are the SGI-USA, I am the SGI-USA, and we are all the SGI-USA.' What does this phrase mean to you?**

*Members from Midwest Joint Territory respond:*



I believe we reflect our organization through our words, actions and deeds. If we are humanistic, our organization will be seen by others as being humanistic. The responsibility to develop our organization rests on our shoulders. We can make SGI-USA the kind of organization that we want it to be. If we feel that a problem exists,

then we can take positive action and change the organization for the better.

— LINDA SIMMONS, Kansas City, Mo.



The future of this great organization is in all of our hands. Its direction is up to each of us. Since this is a global organization, this phrase is true not only of the SGI-USA, but the SGI as a whole. Where do we want the world to go in the future? How much can we each work and dream? What can I be responsible for? Realizing the answers to these questions, I believe, brings this phrase to life.

— BRUCE SHERWOOD, North Kansas City, Mo.



It's people caring about each other in the truest sense. Members are always there to encourage you whenever you're having an obstacle or problem, which teaches you to take responsibility for your life in that it in turn propels you toward your happiness.

— DEBBIE POWERS, St. Louis



As a new member, I am very impressed by the goals of the SGI. To achieve these goals I believe it will take each of us as individuals working on our human revolution. I also believe it requires us to work together allowing our Buddhahood to grow as we actualize our plans and make our dreams come true.

— FILIBERTO CHAIREZ, Roseville, Minn.



Whenever I go to an SGI activity, I am astounded and delighted to belong to this dynamic collection of capable people. Yes, the world is really suffering. But now people are starting to hear Buddhist concepts and envision solutions to vast problems. Now it is time to dialogue with everyone!

— TODD HARPER, St. Paul, Minn.



The SGI often becomes a target for our hopes, fears and childhood neuroses. However, the SGI is really just us, the members, and will respond to the energy we put into it. If we respect and nurture each other, the SGI will thrive. If we don't, it will wither.

— KIM JONES, Minneapolis

Please send us any suggestions you have for questions for our 'Voices' column. Thanks for your support.

# Expressions

## Head Over Heels



Children in Jersey City, N.J. Photo by Misa Crystal.

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH: *'What has been the biggest change in your beliefs since you started practicing?'*

Please be specific and limit your responses to 50 words or less. All responses are subject to editing. Please send your responses and a face photo of yourself to: "Question of the Month," World Tribune, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif., 90401, or e-mail us at: SokaNews@aol.com.

**Deadline: Sept. 22**

## 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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**WORLD TRIBUNE  
MAILBOX**

**Justice for Women**

This lunch time, starting with a sense of great exhaustion, I have just finished reading the experience in the Aug. 15 *World Tribune* of Sondy Niethammer titled "I Am a Winner."

I am a man, and she is a woman. Others would say we are poles apart. Yet transcending such superficialities, I felt I met her in the center of the earth of my being, and we were identical!

Sondy, nothing can keep you from reaching so many hearts, just as you touched mine. I am resolved to battle for justice for women.

Thank you, *World Tribune*, for sharing this experience. Thank you, Sondy, my sister!

— PHIL ANDERMANN, Edgewater, N.J.

**Not All Students Are Young**

I was really gratified to read in the Aug. 22 *World Tribune* ("Editorial") that [the organization is] encouraging the leaders to help students make school their no. 1 priority. That's really great!

I would, however, like to make a suggestion. The organization should make it a policy to encourage all the students. By that I mean the non-traditional (those who are over 30 years of age) as well as the students who are in their teens and 20s.

Not all students are young people. I, for instance, am 43 years old and have just returned to the University of Texas at Austin full time to pursue a bachelor's degree in biochemistry; and I would find it very encouraging to my faith to know that the organization will not just minister to the youth division.

Furthermore, I find it rather ironic that the student division has been designated exclusively for youth division members. After all, if we are going to bolster people's faith and academic pursuits, should we not make sure no one is left out of the process?

In my 22 years of practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism via SGI-USA, I have come to believe that we will not achieve kosen-rufu by assigning people to their respective cubby holes. We will only achieve this lofty goal by expanding our embrace to encompass all people. Even the weird ones like me!

— EDDIE RIOS, Austin, Texas

**For You TV Watchers**

Just thought *World Tribune* readers might like to know an oriental TV station may soon be on satellite. KTSF (Channel 26, San Francisco), which broadcasts Japanese, Chinese and Korean programs, may be carried on a new satellite if enough people indicate they are interested! Viewing throughout North and South America would be possible. Interested? Contact Disnet:

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— BILL WILKINS, Sacramento, Calif.

*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.*

**Diana's Death Can Spur Us To Act**

**PERSPECTIVE**

By DEBORAH GOODWIN  
LOS ANGELES

I watch, silently. Gruesome footage of a car wreck, the Mercedes crumpled against concrete like a cheap tin can. Princess Diana is dead, and in the moments that follow, timeless, borderless, the magnitude of this incident seeps into the cracks of all my armor—all the fallacies that encourage us to believe that youth and beauty, fame and fortune can somehow immunize us against death.

"Death is a condition of human life—no one can escape it," SGI President Ikeda writes. "A civilization that has forgotten death, therefore has forgotten human beings. And a civilization that has forgotten human beings will not bring people happiness" (*Learning From the Goshu: The Eternal Teachings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 186).

As a culture, sadly, we neither revere life nor respect death wholeheartedly, and find ourselves strangely numbed in the stark light of both. Yes, we have rituals in place to keep time—the baby and bridal showers, commencements and graduations. Weddings, anniversaries, birthdays and funerals, these times allotted to pay our dues. Yet life and death are one intrinsic ebb and flow, a tide that cannot be contained, bottled, trundled out at the "appropriate" moments. Collectively, as a culture, we ignore death until it cannot be ignored, and then we suffer its shock waves as though for the first time.

When we speak of the injustice of a life snatched from us too soon, mourn its brevity, rage at the fleeting instant where life is transformed into death, surely it is because we cling to the illusion that life and death are separated by a chasm, an abyss that is not fathomable, that is in some mysterious way waiting to snatch us into its shadows. Would we harbor these same notions if we accepted death as a "condition" of life and prepared ourselves for both life and death equally? Would we spend as much time as we do, in the

words of Shakespeare's Hamlet, "strutting and fretting" our "hour upon the stage"? If the inescapable truth of our mortality were as palpable to us as our friends, lovers, wives and husbands, children and parents? Would we choose something greater for ourselves, moment to moment, if we lived as though each breath were priceless, an extended gift?

As I watch Diana's life chronicled on television, I grow more and more convinced that *how* we live is everything. The significant difference lies in whether we are simply alive, or truly living. I watch, rapt, as the normally guarded and canny British public are thawed in the warmth of a woman's life that, whether they knew her or not, deeply touched their own. This is the power inherent in a truly brilliant life. One that radiates compassion, wisdom, humor and humility. One that embraces the spirit and well-being of the people.

An Israeli tourist comments, "They are crying, they are laughing, they are speaking..." referring to the outpouring of sentiment from Diana's countrymen. And I silently think, yes, they are living. "She moved the British people, by moving among them," adds Ted Koppel. And again I am moved by this life-affirming statement.

The people's princess, she is called, and the reason is apparent in the diverse masses of humanity thronging to pay their respects. There is no distinction here—all ages, ethnicities and social classes stand shoulder to shoulder. All the faces that the cameras pick up are fully keen on the moment, and there is no mistaking the rare and precious atmosphere this creates. How powerful. How noble is the condition of death when the condition of life has been embraced with integrity, with humanity.

Princess Diana rose to fairy-tale status upon wedding Prince Charles. Her wealth and beauty and newfound celebrity were lauded and dissected in every imaginable way. How easy it would have been, given the circumstances, to live a life of ease (at least on the surface) without raising an eyebrow in undue stress.

Yet Diana's life is a testament to a dynamic seeking spirit, a true wish for the happiness of others and sincere determination to do all in her power to create value and lend comfort wherever she could. Her brother, Earl Spencer, spoke, too, of the fact that "it was her innermost feelings of suffering that made it possible to connect." By pursuing happiness for herself and others she is eternal in spirit. She will continue to inspire and encourage others by her example.

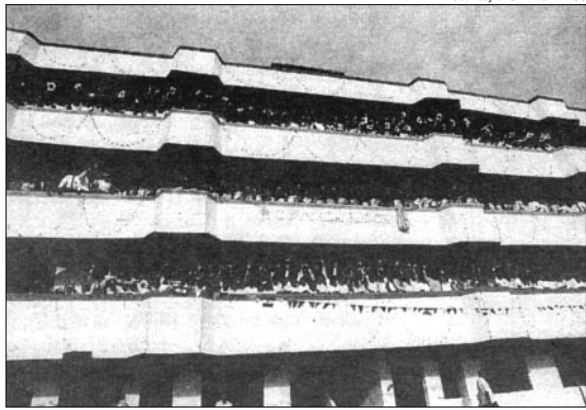
In the televised memorial service, Diana's brother, makes a straightforward, heart-rending eulogy. With simplicity, he touches on a prime point in describing his sister's bafflement at why the media so often seemed intent on causing her harm: "Genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum." I am very moved by this observation, so clearly does it reflect the Latter Day of the Law where, as SGI President Ikeda states, what is false will be revered as true, and what is true will be denigrated as false. Therefore, to uplift the banner of truth in one's life, to live true to one's principles, will be met with persecution in every imaginable form. From the insidious and subtle to the vehement and even violent.

Our age embodies this seemingly impenetrable cloud of delusion, dulling and obscuring the light of humanity. Princess Diana's passing will mark this period in world history as did the deaths of John F. Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, Mohandas K. Gandhi and other remarkable humanitarians.

In the parable of the good physician, the father must send word of his own death before his children will take the efficacious medicine. Only in their grief over his loss can they see their way to believing in the medicine's great healing properties. Diana's loss will spur us into action in the same way. Toward peaceful causes, toward adopting the spirit of openness that she championed, toward taking steps to illuminate our encounters with others, leaving anyone we meet the better for having known us. I believe this. WTT

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Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS



Some 2,500 students attend the opening of a four-story building, Dr. Ikeda Block, at Sethu Bhaskara School in southeastern India.

INDIA, FROM PAGE 1

dents to strive to broaden their perspective and develop a spirit of universal compassion.

In a message, Mr. Ikeda expressed gratitude for the honor given him by the school, and stated his determination to do his utmost to support the school's activities.

As founder of the Soka schools system, he affirmed his belief that the future of humankind depends on the education of youth. He added that he felt the Sethu Bhaskara School motto, "Develop yourself by serving others, serve others by

developing yourself," perfectly accords with the ideals of Soka education. Mr. Ikeda said he hoped that the students would uphold this noble motto throughout their lives while steadfastly working to contribute to society.

Afterward, a culture festival featured Indian folk songs and dances, in which representatives of the Bharat Soka Gakkai participated. In conjunction with the opening of the new building, the India and World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition was held at the new facility. The exhibition included 1,000 paintings by children from India and 100 by students of the school. **WT**

AIDS, FROM PAGE 1

been diagnosed with HIV 10 years earlier. He contracted the disease through IV drug use. Ms. Ramos didn't tell anyone about his condition for more than eight years, because she felt people would push her away and fear her.

SGI President Ikeda's 1993 speech at Harvard University inspired her to finally speak out about her personal struggles. At that time, Ms. Ramos resolved to do something to educate the members. "We're not telling people not to have sex," she says. "We're not trying to prevent drug abuse. We want to inform people and help them understand that HIV/AIDS can be prevented with knowledge and responsible action."

The theme of the forum will be "Embracing Hope and Possibilities." According to Ms. Ramos, this focus was chosen because "there are so many possibilities to prevent HIV/AIDS — you just have to learn about them. For those who already have the virus, we want to offer encouragement. For family and friends of those with HIV/AIDS, we want to help them understand it's not how you die, it's how you live before you die." **WT**

The clock will offer a dramatic backdrop for the event. Commissioned by the United Nations in 1995 to dramatize the spread of AIDS, the clock took Mr. Westhof two months and almost \$30,000 to complete. The United Nations had only one requirement for the project: that the exhibit be self-contained. The clock has since traveled to many countries — most recently to the Vancouver AIDS Conference.

The middle portion of the seven-foot clock tower features a large STOP sign, softly lit from the inside. On the tower's translucent side panels, in both French and English, are statistics relating the spread of the disease.

Etched around the outside of the bottom block are the names of the various artists who contributed to the clock, along with the names of the U.N. organizations involved in the international fight against the fatal disease. And behind the tower hangs a colorful banner depicting people involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS, as well as those who have contracted it.

The HIV/AIDS forum will be held Sept. 27, from 10:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m., at the New York Culture Center. **WT**

# A Portland Renaissance

Photos by LARRY MARGOLIS

By LEAH STENSON

CORRESPONDENT

Portland, Ore., Aug. 22-23

Oregon Territory held its sixth Renaissance Faire at the community center here this weekend. Conceived in response to the idea of Soka Renaissance, the annual fair features the artwork and musical performances of members as well as friends of the SGI.

Don Spears, the territory chief, aptly expressed the spirit of the event: "The fair is a great way to share the SGI spirit of peace, culture and education with our community. It is wonderful to have so many new artists participating each year."

Gwendolyn Martia Watley, an SGI member who sang some sentimental and sultry jazz numbers, said: "We are letting people come to us and learn about Buddhism through art and music. We are showing them that we are people first and Buddhists later."

Ms. Watley was very thankful for the opportunity to perform, especially because she hadn't done any singing in public since a thyroid operation a year ago. She said her fears of singing poorly were overridden by her desire to express her thanks to the members who had supported her during her illness.

Bob Mohler, a cartoonist

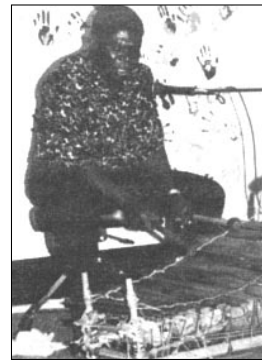


Band members get everyone in a rock 'n' roll rhythm.

and fine artist who displayed 65 of his colorful, computerized cartoons, waited a year to show his art at the fair — even though he had offers for showings elsewhere.

He felt that by showing his work at the community center first he would be making a cause for the success of a children's cartoon he is creating for public television. "I appreciate the opportunity to participate," he said. "It is difficult for some artists to show their work, but I feel very comfortable about showing mine here."

Members always enjoy the fair, but people came away feeling this year's was extra special. Jazz band member



Obo Addy brings the spirit of Africa to the fair.

Jim Cheek summed it up: "People came and stayed for hours. There was lots of good energy." **WT**

## The Student Files

**Name:** Nicole Walter

**School:** College of Visual Arts

**Major:** Painting

**City:** Minneapolis



I'm about to start my fourth year of school this fall. But sometimes it's difficult to remember why I'm going to school. When I lose my sense of purpose, all motivation is lost as well. My Buddhist practice helps me to reflect on my life and gain perspective about why I'm doing what I'm doing.

I'm learning why it's important to push myself and advance. There are many times that I've wanted to quit school because it's so difficult, but then I remember that if I

give in to my weaknesses I can never become strong and truly happy.

A lot of my classmates are open-minded about religion and unfamiliar philosophies, so I try to tell them that I'm Buddhist whenever I can. The main way that I try to expose people to Buddhism is by incorporating it into my schoolwork. That way, when we explain our projects to each other it's very natural to mention how my spiritual practice influences my artwork. **WT**

When news of the Mikawashima train crash reached Shin'ichi Yamamoto, he lost no time inquiring whether any Soka Gakkai members or their close relatives had been among the casualties.

As the figures of the dead and injured reported on radio and television steadily climbed, and the full scope of the accident became clear, Shin'ichi felt profound sadness and indignation. While doing everything he could to offer words of comfort and support to members affected, in his mind he kept turning over the question of what could have caused such a catastrophe.

At the time, the state-owned Japan National Railways (privatized in 1987 as Japan Railways) was embroiled in a protracted labor-management dispute, with its employees frequently going on strike or occupying signal stations to disrupt operations. Some critics claimed that these circumstances led to looser discipline among the workers — that this was ultimately to blame for the accident.

Shin'ichi reflected that the direct cause of the three-train pileup at Mikawashima was the freight train driver's failure to notice the red light. In evidence both here and at the earlier Koga crash was extreme dereliction of duty that could not be merely excused as inattentiveness. Both, it is clear, were due to negligence on the drivers' part.

Another troubling question with the Mikawashima accident was why, even in the few minutes that passed between the first collision with the outbound passenger train and the second with the inbound one for Ueno, no one had lit a flare, changed the signal to red or done anything to stop the approaching train. If the railway employees had taken such measures, the tragic loss of life could have been avoided. The fact that no one had done so suggested that they were insufficiently concerned with protecting passengers' lives, that they had not been thoroughly trained to do so. Their emergency safety measures were totally inadequate. In that respect, the management also had to share a large portion of the blame.

Certainly, despite the most vigilant care and caution, lapses and slip-ups still occur from time to time. To err, after all, is human. But this is precisely why it is important to implement measures to prevent mistakes from happening in the first place. Or measures which, if a mistake is made, will prevent a mistake from leading to a major accident.

For example, to guard against the possibility of a train driver falling asleep at the controls, a warning device might be

## The New Human Revolution

BY HO GOKU — ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA

Volume 6, Chapter 3

# Acceleration

Translation of parts 36–38 of the 'Acceleration' chapter and parts 1–2 of the 'Rough Seas' 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.

installed; there could be an automatic braking system that would be activated in the event a train went through a red signal light. Financially, it would be quite a burden to equip all train lines with automatic braking systems, but in view of the loss of life that could result from a single mishap it seemed only natural that this should be a high priority.

With the volume of rail traffic growing steadily, the responsibility and obligation that rested with the railway authority to step up its safety measures and prevent accidents also grew.

Around this time, Japan National Railways was beginning construction of the line for the new Tokaido Bullet Train, which had been dubbed the Dream Super Express. Once open, this line would significantly reduce travel time between distant points, making for much greater convenience. As wonderful as that would be, safety and protecting people's lives would still have to be the first priority.

With the 1964 Tokyo Olympics only two years away, construction of new roads and buildings was proceeding at a

When people value economic wealth above all and become obsessed with making money, the result is nothing more than an illusory prosperity, a castle built on sand. It is a far cry from genuine happiness. Shin'ichi feared the nation would fall into moral and spiritual decline, that it would be sacrificed on the altar of materialism and money-worship, that a hard, cutthroat society would emerge.

A society's prosperity or cultural maturity cannot be judged on the basis of material or economic development alone. The most fundamental measure of these things is the extent of concern and practical efforts directed toward safeguarding people's lives and basic rights. A philosophy that teaches the sanctity of life is an absolute requisite for building a country and society dedicated to this most elementary of goals.

At the general meeting, Shin'ichi had mentioned that Japan's greatest misfortune was the absence of a sound philosophy or ideals to guide society toward true happiness and peace. The Mikawashima train crash was an obvious manifestation of that deficiency. Shin'ichi clearly sensed that in their present spiritual void, most Japanese were completely at a loss when it came to what to base their lives on and what to set as their highest priority. If things were allowed to continue this way, the results would be catastrophic. He felt certain the train disaster was a warning for the future.

To contain the turbid waters of an age and society out of control, the building of a solid spiritual embankment was essential. If the human spirit were to triumph, Shin'ichi felt it imperative to widely disseminate Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, a humanistic philosophy in the truest sense, without the slightest delay. He sensed the need to pick up the pace of the Soka Gakkai's advance toward that goal.

In the aftermath of the Mikawashima train crash, many Soka Gakkai members shared Shin'ichi's sentiments. Had the life philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism been more firmly rooted in society, they thought painfully, such a situation might never have occurred. This realization deepened still more their sense of mission and responsibility to work for kosen-rufu.

Shin'ichi's third year as president was off and running. And as the month of May progressed, the members' propagation efforts gained further momentum.

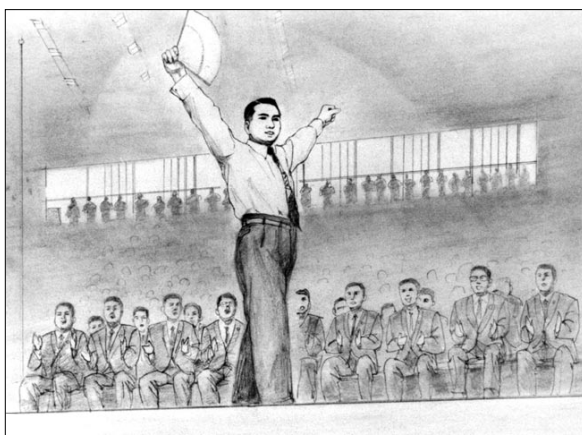
Shin'ichi put all his energy into strengthening the organization in Tokyo — the Gakkai's main force, on which victory in kosen-rufu would ultimately depend — attending leaders meetings for each of the metropolitan headquarters that month. In addition, he attended the Tohoku Headquarters Leaders Meeting, May 8; the Saitama General Chapter Leaders Meeting, May 10; the opening of the Hamamatsu Community Center, May 12; a Kyushu Headquarters Leaders Meeting, May 20; a leaders meeting for Kanagawa No. 1 and No. 2 general chapters, May 22; and a joint leaders meeting for Chiba, Gumma and Ibaraki general chapters, May 23. He worked nonstop, energetically devoting himself to giving guidance and encouragement to the members.

Wherever he went, so far as time permitted, he would also hold guidance meetings and give Goshō lectures for district leaders and others on the forefront of activities. Among Nichiren Daishonin's writings he spoke on were "Kyo'o Gozen Goshō" and "Remonstrance With Bodhisattva Hachiman" in Tohoku, "The Izu Exile" in Hamamatsu and "Reply to Soya Nyudo" in Kyushu. Shin'ichi had decided to spend May and June, the beginning of his third year as president, traveling around the country, making a fresh start together with the members in each area.

To really inspire others, a leader must first make his or her life burn with passion and conviction. To inspire others to take action, one has to first thoroughly engage oneself. The Daishonin writes, "If the general loses heart, his soldiers will become cowards" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 3, p. 196). The organization, ultimately, is a reflection of its leaders' determination.

Leaders have to constantly ask themselves: "Am I really determined to win?" "Am I praying strongly enough?" "Am I brimming with joy?" "Am I satisfied with everything I did today?" This was the art of leadership that Shin'ichi had learned from President Toda.

Shin'ichi and the members exerted their maximum effort as summer began to unfold, the trees gleaming with fresh



fever pitch. And the Japanese economy was booming. But Shin'ichi was deeply concerned that people were becoming so preoccupied with economic success that they were beginning to lose sight of the most essential concern: protecting human life.

ACCELERATION, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

foliage. At the Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting at the Tokyo Gymnasium on May 27, it was announced that more than 108,000 households had joined the Soka Gakkai that month. The total membership goal for 1962, the Year of Victory, had been set at 2.7 million households — they had easily exceeded this target and in just five months! They were in the midst of an exhilarating, lightning advance. The pace of the kosen-rufu movement had accelerated. A membership of 3 million households was now within sight.

The participants' spirits soared. Everyone truly sensed the tide of kosen-rufu steadily rising, restoring life and vitality to the parched spiritual soil of Japan. And they savored the ineffable joy and excitement of playing a leading role in building a new society.

At the meeting's end, Shin'ichi led the participants in a chorus of "Song of the New Century." With a ceremonial fan in one hand, he moved with solemn dignity to the music, symbolic of his bold, majestic flight through the skies of kosen-rufu.

(This concludes "Acceleration," chapter 3 of vol. 6 of The New Human Revolution.)

### 'Acceleration' Chapter Discussion Question:

1. In part 30 (Sept. 12 *World Tribune*), Shin'ichi is "constantly preoccupied with the thought of what would become of kosen-rufu if he were no longer on the scene." It behooves us to do the same. What do you think the future will look like after the time of SGI President Ikeda?

2. In part 31 (Sept. 12 *World Tribune*), High Priest Nittatsu refutes a commonly held interpretation in Japanese society of attaining enlightenment. What distinctions are drawn here?

3. In part 34 (Sept. 12 *World Tribune*), Shin'ichi states that "Japan's greatest misfortune today is that it lacks solid ideals or a sound philosophy that can contribute to people's happiness and create lasting peace. The country is deficient in a philosophy that upholds the sanctity of life and nurtures a spirit of compassion." President Ikeda expressed very similar thoughts in a speech delivered in San Diego in 1984. Not only Japan has suffered from these maladies. What are the consequences to the world when it is bereft of these things?

4. In part 12 (Aug. 8 *World Tribune*), Japanese author, social activist and critic Mimpei Suguiira comments on the SGI's role in empowering people. How does your experience of the practice compare with these impressions? What comments about the SGI from contemporary public figures have you heard that interested you?

Volume 6, Chapter 4

## Rough Seas

Translation of parts 1-2

**S**hin'ichi Yamamoto's intense struggle continued without a moment's respite, like a river rushing powerfully to the sea.

On June 2, he was scheduled to attend the Shikoku Headquarters Leaders Meeting. The night before, the Soka Gakkai Headquarters in Tokyo received an anonymous phone call. A gruff male voice said: "I hear your president, Shin'ichi Yamamoto, is coming to Shikoku. If he knows what's good for him, he'll stay away. But if he doesn't, then you'll have to suffer the consequences...." The caller then hung up abruptly.

The Gakkai was being threatened. The atmosphere at the Headquarters grew tense.

As the Upper House elections slated for July 1 approached, the Soka Gakkai, in supporting candidates from the Komei Political Federation, became the target of malicious harassment. It had received a spate of threatening phone calls with abusive demands that the Gakkai stop endorsing candidates or violent tactics would be employed.

Shin'ichi had already left for Shikoku when this latest threat was received and didn't learn of it until after arriving at the Shikoku Headquarters Building the evening of June 1. General Director Koichi Harayama, who was traveling with him, took the call from the Gakkai Headquarters and briefly related the details to Shin'ichi, adding: "Though I'm sure it's nothing more than a crank call in connection with the elections, perhaps we should take the precaution of canceling the meeting just to be on the safe side?"

Shin'ichi glared indignantly at him. "Absolutely not!" he answered. "Everyone has spent days preparing this meeting, fully expecting that I will attend. Are you going to tell the Shikoku members to cancel the meeting because you're afraid of one crank call?!"

"No.... I see what you mean. We can't cancel the meeting. But do you think everything will be all right?"

"A leader has no time for speculation. He must be firmly resolved to win over all obstacles and negative forces without the slightest shadow of a doubt. If President Toda could hear you, he would be furious."

"Er, yes...." Harayama mumbled awkwardly, looking self-conscious as he wiped perspiration from his brow.

From the time Shin'ichi had gone to work for Josei Toda, more than a decade before, he had been ready to lay down his life. For that reason, he feared nothing. He had resolved that if anyone ever launched an attack on the Gakkai, he would personally stand in the forefront — he would be a shield to protect the members, not letting anyone harm them in the slightest. Shin'ichi was frustrated and disappointed that a top Gakkai leader, someone who should have shared this resolve, so obviously lacked the necessary passion or commitment to do so.

**T**he Shikoku Headquarters Leaders Meeting was held at the prefectural athletics stadium in Yashima, Kagawa Prefecture.<sup>1</sup>

Yashima was the site of a famous battle between the Minamoto and Taira clans. It was here that Minamoto no Yoshitsune,<sup>2</sup> following his victory at the

ered and waiting, Shin'ichi asked that the meeting begin ahead of schedule.

He had no way of knowing whether the previous day's threatening call was merely a hoax or a genuine threat to sabotage the meeting. Consequently, he thought it a good idea to commence the meeting as soon as everyone had gathered and bring it to a close before its originally slated starting time.

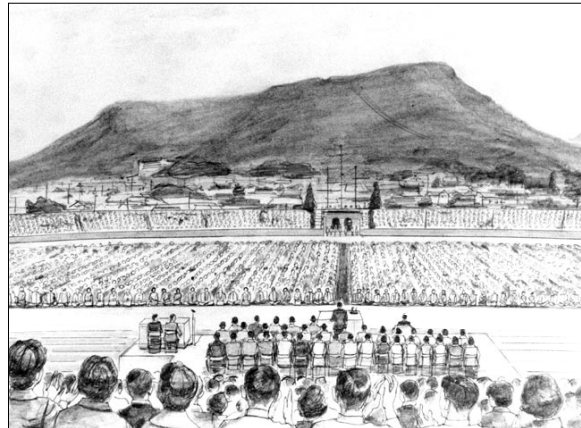
The entire schedule was moved up approximately two hours. Shin'ichi made his entrance at 12:15, and the meeting was declared open. Having anticipated a long wait, the participants were delighted by the early start. The program flowed without a hitch: experiences in faith, determinations by divisional representatives, greetings by directors, and so forth.

Apart from a handful of individuals responsible for organizing the event, none of the participants knew about the threatening call. It had been decided not to inform them so as not to cause unnecessary worry.

Happy and excited, the participants warmly applauded the speeches of the leaders at the podium. It was like any other Gakkai leaders meeting, overflowing with a vibrant seeking spirit toward Buddhism and a lively joy and enthusiasm.

Shin'ichi's normally gentle eyes glinted with a razor-like sharpness. Nothing would escape that keen gaze. He vowed that, even from the platform, he would protect the members no matter what. While chanting daimoku continuously in his heart, he carefully scanned every corner of the stadium.

(To be continued)



1. Kagawa Prefecture: in the northeastern part of Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands.

2. Minamoto no Yoshitsune (1159-89): a principal figure in the Taira-Minamoto War. He defeated the Taira forces in a decisive battle at Dannoura in March 1185, leaving the Minamoto clan the rulers of Japan.

Battle of Ichinotani (present-day Kobe) in 1184, defeated the Taira forces for a second time in February 1185, routing them westward all the way to Dannoura (present-day Shimonoseki at the western tip of Japan's main island).

For Shikoku Headquarters, this leaders meeting, the kickoff toward the third anniversary of Shin'ichi's inauguration as Soka Gakkai president, with more than 30,000 members in attendance, was a landmark event that would determine the future course of kosen-rufu in this region. Consequently, Shin'ichi applied himself to this meeting with the spirit of Yoshitsune, resolved to inspire all those present to advance with fresh enthusiasm, to open the way forward to victory for Shikoku.

June 2 dawned with overcast skies and the distinct prospect of rain. But around noon, faint rays of sunshine filtered through the cloud cover. The weather turned out to be just right for an outdoor event.

Participants started entering the stadium early that morning, and before noon some 30,000 packed the stands and stadium field. Hearing that all those expected to participate were already gath-

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# ESTUDIO DE LOS ESCRITOS DE NICHIREN DAISHONIN

(SEPTIEMBRE Y OCTUBRE)

## Antecedentes

*La oposición del padre fortalece la fe de los hermanos*

Nichiren Daishonin escribió esta carta a la edad de 58 años, mientras vivía en el Monte Minobu, en el año 1279, aproximadamente tres años antes de su muerte.

El título, "Esta Persona Practicará junto al Pueblo," esta basado en una cita del Sutra del Loto.

El recipiente era Ikegami Munenaka, quien se había convertido a la fe en 1256, tres años después del establecimiento del Budismo de Nichiren Daishonin. Al cabo de un corto tiempo, su hermano menor, Munenaga también se había convertido a la fe.

El padre de los hermanos, Ikegami Saemon-no-tayu Yasumitsu, era director de la oficina de construcción y reparos del gobierno Shogunate en Kamakura. Un firme partidario del sacerdote Ryokan del Temple Gokuraku-ji, el padre conspiró con oficiales del gobierno para instigar numerosas persecuciones infligidas al Daishonin y a sus seguidores. El se opuso firmemente a la práctica budista de sus hijos por más de 20 años.

Cuando el hermano mayor, Munenaka rehusó a abandonar su práctica, él fue desheredado por su padre una vez en el año 1275 y otra vez en 1277. Las intrigas de Ryokan eran las que instigaban las acciones del padre. El Daishonin le escribe a los hermanos: "Ryokan y otros sacerdotes, inspirado por los demonios, engañaron a su padre Saemon-no-tayu e intentaron destruirlos a ustedes dos..." (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, pág. 239). En el siglo décimo-tercero en el Japón, si uno era desheredado, sufriría devastadoras consecuencias, tanto económicas como sociales, perdiendo no solo los derechos a los bienes de familia, pero esencialmente convirtiéndose en una persona menospreciada, sin ningún derecho social o civil.

La primera vez que Munenaka fue desheredado, el Daishonin envió "Carta a los Hermanos," alentándolos a persistir

## 'Esta Persona Practicará Junto al Pueblo'

*La carta que sigue de los escritos principales de Nichiren Daishonin es el material de estudio para las reuniones de estudio de la SGI-USA en septiembre y octubre.*

Su carta llegó, después de no haber oído de usted por un tiempo. Además, he recibido el manto acolchado con un forro azul, un sombrero, un cinturón, un *kan*<sup>1</sup> de monedas y una canasta de frutas de castañas.

El tiempo presente corresponde a los primeros quinientos años del Ultimo Día de la Ley.<sup>2</sup> El texto del Sutra claramente denota que en este tiempo, el Bodhisattva Jogyo<sup>3</sup> hará su advenimiento y otorgará los cinco caracteres de Nam-myoho-renge-kyo<sup>4</sup> a toda la gente del Japón. También aclara que él se enfrentará al exilio y a la ejecución. Yo, Nichiren, soy como el emisario del Bodhisattva Jogyo porque estoy propagando esta doctrina. Los "Poderes Super naturales del Que Así Llega" capítulo (21avo) del Sutra del Loto<sup>5</sup> declara: "Así como la luz del sol y la luna ilumina toda la oscuridad, esta persona practicará junto al pueblo y dispersará la oscuridad de todos los seres." En este pasaje, en la frase, "Esta persona practicará junto al pueblo." ¿A quién cree usted que "esta persona" se refiere? yo creo que tiene que indicar a la persona que es la reincarnación de Bodhisattva Jogyo. El sutra declara: "Después que yo haya pasado a la extinción, [una persona con sabiduría] debe de aceptar y sostener este sutra. Tal persona seguramente, sin duda logrará el Estado de Buda." Usted, también, esta sin duda apoyando los esfuerzos de propagación del Bodhisattva Jogyo.

Nichiren

El tercer día del duodécimo mes en el segundo año de Koan (1279), signo *tsuchimoto-u* cíclico<sup>6</sup>.

(*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, pág. 285-86)  
(*Gosho Zenshu*, pág. 1102)



Foto por LEIOLA REEDER

en su fe apoyándose mutuamente. Aproximadamente en el año 1276, Munenaka fue perdonado, sólo para otra vez ser desheredado un año más tarde. Apesar de que él se enfrentó a esto valientemente, el hermano menor Munenaga vaciló por un tiempo. Al su hermano ser desheredado, Munenaga heredaría el

Estado de la familia, así como la posición prominente de su padre en el gobierno. Esta situación preocupaba al Daishonin y fue la razón que lo instó a escribirle a Munenaga frecuentemente.

Continuamente apoyados con los alientos del Daishonin. Los hermanos Ikegami y sus esposas desarrollaron una fe más fuerte

durante estas penurias. Y como resultado, su padre no sólo perdonó al hermano mayor, sino que también antes de su muerte en el año 1278, se convirtió a la fe en las enseñanzas del Daishonin.

Munenaka ya había experimentado muchas dificultades cuando el recibió esta carta en el año 1279, a través de las cuales

él se mantuvo un firme discípulo del Daishonin, así como también fue testigo una y otra vez de las persecuciones infligidas a su mentor por la alianza de los poderes políticos y religiosos.

Munenaka debe de haber percibido un profundo significado en esta carta, en la cual el Daishonin menciona "Exilio y persecución," y cita al Sutra del Loto: "Esta persona practicará junto al pueblo." Y sin duda la alabanza del Daishonin, "usted, también, esta sin duda apoyando los esfuerzos de propagación del Bodhisattva Jogyo." Dió a Munenaka, como su discípulo, un gran sentimiento de orgullo y regocijo.

*Antecedentes por el Depto. de Estudio de la SGI-USA. Traducción del Gosho y Antecedentes, Living Buddhism, septiembre 1997, págs. 6-8. Por Cesarina Caro, Nueva York*

1. *kan*: Una antigua unidad de monedas que tenían un hoyo en el medio. Un *kan* consistía de 1,000 monedas hilvanadas juntas con un cordón. Durante el tiempo del Daishonin, un *kan* de monedas podía comprar aproximadamente cinco toneladas de arroz, lo suficiente para alimentar a un adulto por un año.
2. Los primeros quinientos años del Ultimo Día de la Ley: De acuerdo con el Sutra de la Gran Asamblea, este período es de disputa y rivalidad en el cual el poder del Budismo de Shakyamuni se debilitará.
3. Bodhisattva Jogyo: El líder de los bodhisattvas de la Tierra, quienes aparecen "surgiendo de la tierra" capítulo 15avo del Sutra del Loto y se compromete a propagar el sutra junto a los Bodhisattvas de la Tierra en el Ultimo Día de la Ley.
4. Los cinco caracteres de Nam-myoho-renge-kyo: En los escritos de Nichiren Daishonin, Myoho-renge-kyo es a menudo usado como sinónimo de Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, el cual consiste de siete caracteres.
5. Sutra del Loto. Capítulo 21. Por favor anote que esta cita del Sutra del Loto es de la traducción de Burton Watson (*The Lotus Sutra*, pág. 276), la cual difiere de una traducción hecha anteriormente a ésta en el *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6.
6. Signo cíclico: Uno de los sesenta signos del calendario, los cuales estan basados en los doce animales del zodiaco Chino y los diez elementos de la naturaleza según las tradiciones antiguas Chinas.

LA FECHA DE LA MUERTE DE SHAKYAMUNI

# ¿Cuándo Comenzó el Último Día de la Ley?

En “Esta Persona Practicará Junto al Pueblo,” Nichiren Daishonin afirma, “El tiempo presente corresponde a los primeros quinientos años del Último día de la Ley” (MW-6, 285). Él se refiere al concepto de los tres períodos de tiempo en Budismo — El Primer Día, el Día Medio y el Último Día de la Ley (o enseñanzas de Shakyamuni). Éstas son tres etapas consecutivas en las cuales se divide el tiempo después de la muerte de Shakyamuni.

Durante el Primer Día de la Ley, el espíritu puro del Budismo permaneció intacto y las personas podían alcanzar la iluminación a través de esa práctica. Durante el Día Medio de la Ley, el Budismo se estableció firmemente en la sociedad. Sin embargo, el énfasis estaba en las formalidades y menos personas se podían beneficiar. En el Último Día de la Ley — la época presente — los tres venenos de la avaricia, la ira y la insensatez manchan las vidas de las personas, y el Budismo de Shakyamuni ha perdido el poder de conducirlos hacia la felicidad.

Existen varias opiniones en cuanto a la duración de los tres períodos. El Daishonin adoptó la explicación que se encuentra en el Sutra de la Gran Asamblea (en japonés, Sutra Daishutsu), que describe cinco períodos consecutivos de 500 años después de la muerte del Buda. Los primeros dos períodos de 500 años se consideran el Primer Día de la Ley, y los dos períodos de 500 años que siguen se consideran el Día Medio de la Ley. El quinto período de 500 años se considera el comienzo del Último Día de la Ley, que continúa indefinidamente. El concepto de tres períodos de tiempo explica que, con el transcurrir del tiempo, las condiciones y la capacidad de las personas cambian también y que una enseñanza apropiada debe propagarse para cada uno de los tres períodos.

Hay varias interpretaciones y

puntos de vista sobre la fecha de la muerte de Shakyamuni y el comienzo del Último Día de la Ley. Leyendas y teoría antiguas la ubican en algún punto entre el siglo 11 A.E.C. y el siglo 6 A.E.C. Los historiadores chinos adoptaron el 609 A.E.C. Recientemente, algunos estudiosos de la materia han estimado que la muerte de Shakyamuni ocurrió alrededor del 609 A.C.E. o del 380 A.C.E. Este estimado se basa en el descubrimiento de un monumento al Rey Ashoka en la India. Las inscripciones en el monumento indican el año en que el Rey Ashoka ascendió al trono. Ya que se cree que el Rey Ashoka ocupó el trono entre 100 o 200 años después de la muerte de Shakyamuni, existe una variante de 100 años en este estimado. Generalmente, se acepta al presente que Shakyamuni vivió en el cuarto o quinto siglo A.E.C.

Nichiren Daishonin adoptó la opinión generalizada en su día — el 949 A.E.C. — y estimó que su época, el siglo 13, transcurría 2,200 años después de la muerte de Shakyamuni. Esto significaba haber transcurrido algunos 200 años desde el comienzo del Último Día de la Ley. Pero si basamos nuestros cálculos en hallazgos recientes, la época del Daishonin sería solamente 1,600 o 1,700 años después del fallecimiento de Shakyamuni.

Cuando examinamos esta discrepancia, es importante señalar que el Daishonin examinó de cerca las condiciones de la religión y la sociedad a la luz de aseveraciones contenidas en varios sutras. Este hecho es más significativo que la mera aritmética. Por tanto, se podría decir que el Daishonin vivía en medio de condiciones que podrían ser mejor descritas como condiciones del Último Día de la Ley. El Japón del siglo 13 presentaba muchas características del Último Día tal y como se describían en los sutras — una época de conflictos cuando la esencia del Budismo se pierde y los sacer-



Foto por MIKE MULLEN

dotes budistas se corrompen. El Sutra de la Gran Asamblea afirma que será en una “era de conflictos” cuando los monjes harán caso omiso de los preceptos y se pelearán constantemente entre ellos, prevalecerán las opiniones herejes y el Budismo de Shakyamuni perecerá.

Fue bajo estas circunstancias que el Daishonin propagó la Ley en el Sutra del Loto — Nam-myoho-rengue-kyo — y confrontó numerosas persecuciones, tal y como se predijo en el sutra. Él propagó la Ley Mística en una época de corrupción y confusión, siguiendo el mandato de Shakyamuni en el Sutra del Loto: “Después que yo haya pasado a la extinción, en el último periodo de 500 años, deben propagarla ampliamente y ¡jamás permitir que sea cercenada, ni permitir que diablos maléficos, que las personas de los diablos...asuman la ventaja!” (LS23, 288). En contraste con otros sutras, el Sutra del Loto considera el Último Día de la Ley como el tiempo cuando la esencia del Sutra del Loto, transferido al Bodhisattva Jogyo en la Ceremonia del Aire, será propagado.

Es importante tener en mente que no importa la hipótesis que adoptemos sobre la fecha del fallecimiento de Shakyamuni, el periodo de tiempo en que vivió el Daishonin fue un reflejo de las predicciones que caracterizan al Último Día. Fue bajo condiciones horribles que el Daishonin propagó la Ley Mística

y estableció el verdadero objeto de veneración, el Gohonzon. En 1273, él escribió, “Ahora es que aparecerán en este país los Bodhisattvas de la Tierra y establecerán el objeto supremo de veneración en la tierra” (MW-1, 81).

La interpretación del Daishonin de los días Primero y Medio no se basa simplemente en la cantidad de años consecutivos después de la muerte de Shakyamuni, sino mas bien en la migración del Budismo a través de India, China y Japón.

En “La Selección del Tiempo”, el Daishonin explica que el primer Día de la Ley es el periodo en que el Budismo de Shakyamuni es propagado por los 24 sucesores en la India — aquellos que heredaron el linaje de sus enseñanzas (MW-3, 94-96). Fue una época en que el Budismo floreció en la India — una opinión que concuerda con récords históricos. Se cree que Aryasimha, el último de los 24 sucesores, vivió en la región central de la India durante el siglo 6. Desde más o menos el siglo 7, el Budismo se tornó más esotérico y comenzó a deteriorarse en ese país.

En su discusión sobre la migración del Budismo hacia la China en “La Selección del Tiempo”, el Daishonin explica que, en el décimoquinto (15) año del Día Medio de la Ley, el Budismo fue llevado a la China y que por los siguientes mil años, se propagó en la China y el Japón (MW-3, 96). El Bud-

Según el Daishonin, el Último Día de la Ley es cuando Nam-myoho-rengue-kyo se propagará desde el Japón hacia el resto del mundo.

ismo fue importado a la China el 2 A.E.C. o el 65 E.C. Así que, el comienzo del Día Medio, según el Daishonin, cae cerca del comienzo de la Era Común. Por tanto, el Gran Maestro T’ien-t’ai (538-597) vivió alrededor de la mitad del Día Medio de la Ley.

Según su descripción en “La Selección del Tiempo”, el Daishonin claramente no consideró la transición del Primer Día al Día Medio como un simple cruce de línea del tiempo. Más bien, él consideró que los días Primero y Medio de la Ley eran la migración del Budismo a través de la India, la China y el Japón. Aunque los últimos varios siglos del Primer Día en la India y los primeros varios siglos del Día Medio en la China se entremezclan, esto no quita el mérito de la opinión del Daishonin de un periodo de 2,000 años de los días Primero y Medio.

En “Sobre la Profecía del Buda”, el Daishonin afirma: “La luna aparece en el oeste y gradualmente brilla hacia el este, mientras que el sol sale por el este y proyecta sus rayos hacia el oeste. Lo mismo ocurre con el Budismo. Se propaga de oeste a este, en los días Primero y Medio de la Ley, pero en el Último Día se desplazará de este a oeste” (MW-1, 114). Según el Daishonin, el Último Día de la Ley es cuando Nam-myoho-rengue-kyo se propagará desde el Japón hacia el resto del mundo. La SGI cumple la predicción del Daishonin en el Último Día de la Ley cuando sus miembros presentan el Budismo a sus amigos en todo el mundo. ■

Por el Departamento de Estudio de la SGI-USA Traducción del Living Buddhism, septiembre 1997, pags.12-13.

Por Andy Sanchez, Puerto Rico.

## CONCEPTOS BUDISTAS: SHAKUBUKU

## Romper y Subyugar el Apego a Enseñanzas Erradas

## CONCEPTOS BUDISTAS

Por ELIZABETH PAGE,  
CORRESPONSAL DE SEATTLE

**S**hakubuku. Suena rara esta palabra que quiere decir presentar a alguien el Budismo de Nichiren Daishonin. A comienzos de mi práctica, me dijeron que literalmente quería decir romper y subyugar el apego a enseñanzas o filosofías erradas. Fue una explicación clara. En ese entonces funcionó para mí... o ¿de verdad que funcionó? ¿Es qué la introducción del Budismo a otra persona significa siempre romper y subyugar sus creencias?

Ha habido cierta confusión en nuestra organización entre los términos *shakubuku* y *shoju*, el último quiere decir presentar el Budismo a alguien gradualmente sin refutar el apego a enseñanzas erróneas — no es necesario ni romper, ni subyugar. Al principio, *shoju* suena más a lo que hacemos en América. Después de todo, la mayoría de los americanos no necesariamente están calumniando el Budismo de Nichiren Daishonin. Podría parecer que estamos haciendo mal uso del término ya desde el mismísimo principio.

Sin embargo, en realidad no es una situación de una cosa o la

otra. *Shakubuku* tiene un significado más amplio que romper o subyugar los apegos de las personas: significa más bien decir la verdad sobre el Budismo. Y *shoju* es una forma de *shakubuku*. Nichiren Daishonin expresa claramente, “En el Último Día de la Ley... tanto *shoju* como *shakubuku* deben ser utilizados” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2da. edición], pág. 183–84). En otras palabras, a veces tenemos que hablar enérgicamente, a veces suavemente, y a veces, de ambas maneras. Depende de la persona, de la

situación.

El presidente de la SGI, Sr. Ikeda explica en una futura continuación de la serie “Diálogo sobre el Sutra del Loto” (Serie publicada mensualmente en *Living Buddhism*).

Primero, como premisa principal, todo esfuerzo de enseñar a las personas sobre Nam-myohorengue-kyo en el Último Día de la Ley constituye *shakubuku*. Basándonos en el espíritu de *shakubuku* de enseñarle a otros sobre la Ley Mística sin consideraciones egoístas, a veces po-

dríamos refutar estrictamente las opiniones equivocadas de una persona, mientras que, en otras ocasiones, podríamos explicar la verdad con un espíritu amplio de tolerancia por las creencias de la otra persona.

Aún si sentimos la necesidad de “refutar las opiniones erradas de una persona” debemos ser corteses. En febrero de 1990 en América, el Presidente Ikeda explicó que la propagación debía ser dirigida siempre con respeto hacia otras personas; nunca debemos olvidar que también

tienen el potencial de convertirse en Budas.

Muchos distritos de la SGI-USA tienen metas claras en cuanto a ingreso de nuevos miembros, algo así como dos o tres miembros nuevos este año. Claro está, sin un norte o una meta, es fácil caer en la laxitud y perder el espíritu de *shakubuku* que el Presidente Ikeda ha estado enfatizando. Y al considerar el gran esfuerzo que se requiere para ayudar a siquiera una sola persona practicar correctamente, estas metas de distrito son muy ambiciosas.

Pensemos cuan relativamente fácil es sencillamente hablarle de la práctica a una persona o hasta llevarla a una reunión. Sí, estas dos cosas requieren mucha paciencia y valentía — pero se requiere mucho más esfuerzo, usualmente por varias personas diferentes, para ayudar a que esa persona desarrolle una fe fuerte y autónoma y que (esperamos que ocurra) ¡nos supere!

Hablar la verdad sobre este Budismo podría parecer fácil, pero convencer a las personas es difícil. Saber cuándo hablar directamente y cuándo sencillamente escuchar, surge de nuestra compasión y de, consecuentemente, hacer nuestro mejor esfuerzo — es un proceso de aprender cómo hablar del Budismo con diferentes clase de personas.

Traducción del World Tribune, 8 de agosto de 1997



Foto por LEIOLA REEDER

## EDITORIAL

## Cualquier Momento Puede Ser Crucial

Editorial del World Tribune del 15 de agosto de 1997

¿Qué es lo que hace que un “momento crucial” sea crucial? La contestación: Tú. Tu actitud. Tus actos.

El *Diccionario Webster's del Nuevo Mundo* (Webster's New World Dictionary) llama crisis a una encrucijada que puede llevar hacia una condición que podría ser mejor o peor. Desafortunadamente, el diccionario no ofrece consejo sobre cómo llegar a ese lugar mejor. Estar en crisis implica que no tenemos control; que estamos a la merced de lo que sea y que terminaremos donde lo que sea decida descartarnos.

Pero podemos usar el Budismo de Nichiren Daishonin — la estrategia del Sutra del Loto —

no tenemos que estar a merced de una crisis o de un momento crucial. Podemos tomar las riendas de cualquier situación y dirigirla en la dirección que escojamos — en la dirección que nos acerque más a nuestra victoria, a nuestra iluminación.

En otras palabras, podemos escoger convertir cualquier momento en un momento crucial. La transformación podría involucrar muchos pasos, pero hay por lo menos tres puntos que debemos tener en mente.

El primero es reconocer el momento por lo que es. Y te sorprenderías — no tiene que ser un evento dramático como una enfermedad grave o un accidente de avión. Una encrucijada podría llegar en nuestros momentos más benignos — lavando platos, hablando con ami-

gos, dando un paseo — cualquier momento donde imaginemos un futuro nuevo.

Y entonces tomamos una decisión.

¿Qué clase de decisión? Una decisión de cambiar algo. Una decisión de actuar. Una decisión de entonar Nam-myohorengue-kyo.

Hasta ahora, ¿suena sencillo? No te engañes. En momentos de bienestar, de sentido de fortaleza, es fácil hacer una determinación. “Claro”, podría decirse uno, “Si confrontara una crisis, jamás olvidaría la determinación de acero que siento ahora mismo.” Fácil es decirlo.

Un aspecto que define a una crisis es que nuestros procesos normales de pensamiento a lo mejor se van por la consabida ventana. Quizás estás a dieta cuando

alguien te presenta un plato de golosinas cubiertas de chocolate. De pronto tu dieta se convierte en un lejano recuerdo. ¿Que pasó con tu decisión? ¿Y si confrontaras un momento crucial mucho más serio? Tal como el momento en que dudarías de la práctica y te preguntarías si debes dejarla.

Nichiren Daishonin nos dice, “Los tontos son propensos a olvidar las promesas que han hecho cuando llega el momento crucial” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2da. edición], pág. 180).

Una manera de fijar nuestra determinación es aprovechar toda oportunidad de recordarla. Como un simulacro de incendio o ensayar para una obra, podemos renovar nuestra determinación frecuente y repetidamente —

recordando nuestras metas para el auto — desarrollo y por la felicidad de los demás. Un “ensayo” constante hace menos probable que nos olvidemos de nuestra meta en un momento de estrés.

El tercer punto es tener en mente nuestra acción. Cualquier decisión que hagamos no tiene valor si no se expresa en la acción. Esto requiere valentía, y la valentía surge de entonar Nam-myohorengue-kyo. Como nos dice el presidente de la SGI, Sr. Daisaku Ikeda: “Aquellos que se levantan en un momento crucial demuestran una grandeza genuina. Son personas que dejan tras de sí una historia inmortal” (28 de junio, 1996, *World Tribune*). III

Traducción por Andy Sanchez, Puerto Rico

*A continuación pasajes seleccionados del discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la SGI, Daisaku Ikeda, durante la tercera reunión nacional para responsables de las Divisiones Juveniles Femenina y Masculina, realizada en el Centro Internacional Soka de la Amistad, Sendagaya, Tokio, el 24 de marzo de 1997.*

### ¡Leamos el Gosho todos los días!

Algo que quiero decirles muy especialmente es que lean el Gosho en forma regular y continua. Aunque sea un poco, está bien; aunque sea una frase, es positivo. Hasta el hecho de abrir el Gosho es un comienzo. Pero lo importante es que pongan empeño en leer los escritos del Daishonin. Traten de hacerse el hábito de recurrir al Gosho y leer las palabras del Daishonin durante su época de juventud.

El Gosho rebosa de iluminación. Cuando abrimos sus páginas, es como si nos envolviera un "resplandor de filosofía" y nos entibiara el "sol de la vida". El Gosho es la voz de Nichiren Daishonin; es la compilación de sus palabras de oro y de sus enseñanzas.

Es fundamental tener el espíritu de estudiar el Gosho, de abrirlo y tomar contacto con él. Aunque se olviden de lo que han leído, algo quedará grabado en lo profundo de su vida.

"Atesorar el Gosho" no quiere decir pasar por delante sin siquiera abrirlo, dejarlo cerrado mes tras mes... El Daishonin enseña que abrazar el Gosho es, en sí mismo, la iluminación. Tener fe en el Gohonzon es algo esencial; a decir verdad, sólo mediante una fe poderosa, fusionada perfectamente con el estudio del Gosho, uno puede iluminarse de verdad y lograr su revolución humana.

Desde hoy, quiero que ustedes, los miembros de la División de Jóvenes, comiencen a desafiarse leyendo el Gosho un poco todos los días, aunque sea un par de renglones cada vez....

### Practiquen para no tener nada que reprocharse

Un miembro que había dejado de participar en las actividades de la SGI durante muchos años observó, poco antes de morir: "Ojalá hubiera invocado más daimoku. Ojalá hubiera asistido a más actividades. Ahora ya es demasiado tarde y siento un gran arrepentimiento". Son palabras para reflexionar...

# ¡Jóvenes: Lean El Gosho y Lancense a Actuar!

Ustedes, miembros de la División de Jóvenes, todavía tienen años por delante. Pueden invocar daimoku hasta sentirse plenamente satisfechos y acumular ilimitada fortuna en su vida. ¡Es algo maravilloso! Son tremendamente afortunados.

Desde los diecinueve años, vine siguiendo la orientación de mi maestro, Josei Toda, y dedicándome de todo corazón al kosen-rufu. Por lo tanto, tengo la convicción de que, existencia tras existencia, podré disfrutar un estado de vida resplandeciente de buena fortuna y de beneficios.

Las buenas causas que acumulan mediante la práctica budista se manifestarán sin falta en esta existencia. Podrán cultivar un estado de vida magnífico, libre de toda restricción o impedimento, exactamente de acuerdo con su determinación. Además, la vida sigue, aun después de la muerte.

Para tomar prestada la comparación que hizo uno de nuestros responsables, la persona que ha acumulado buena fortuna en esta existencia es como "un cohete con el tanque lleno de combustible".

En esta existencia y también después de la muerte, la gente así puede atravesar el universo libre y jubilosamente. Hay más de mil millones de planetas como la Tierra en el universo. Los que han acumulado rebotantes beneficios y buena fortuna pueden nacer en cualquier parte, de acuerdo con sus deseos y con su misión; gozan de una libertad total y absoluta.

El cometa Hale-Bopp se puede ver en estos momentos [en el hemisferio norte]. ¿Qué hace brillar a los cometas? Para decirlo de un modo muy simple, cuando un cometa se aproxima al Sol, el material helado que lleva en la masa central se evapora y forma un halo de gas y polvo que sigue el cuerpo como una espléndida cola brillante, iluminada por los rayos del Sol. Cuanto más se acerca un cometa al Sol, más resplandece.

En nuestra práctica budista, el Gohonzon, la fe y las reuniones de la SGI son nuestro "sol". Para crecer, las plantas y los árboles necesitan la luz del Sol. Lo mismo sucede con nosotros. Si no participamos de las reuniones, nos alejamos de la cálida luz del sol y, como una planta condenada

a la oscuridad, terminaremos sintiendo que nuestro estado espiritual se marchita.

El Daishonin nos exhorta a invocar Nam-myoho-renge-kyo seriamente, aunque sea una o dos veces, y recalca que si lo hacemos, podremos manifestar nuestro estado de Buda sin falta. Algunos dirán "¡Muy bien! Me olvido de la fe, la paso bien, y un par de años antes de morir me practico el Budismo con alma y vida...". Pero las palabras del Daishonin tenían el propósito de alentar a sus seguidores a consagrar mayores esfuerzos a su práctica budista, y de remarcar el poder benéfico de invocar aun sea un solo daimoku. Nos explica qué beneficio inmenso obtiene una persona si puede hacer un daimoku cada día. Esta es la forma en que deberíamos considerar las palabras del Daishonin, y decidir esforzarnos mucho más todavía en nuestra práctica del Budismo. La forma correcta de leer el Gosho es interpretar siempre las palabras del Daishonin desde el punto de vista de fortalecer nuestra fe.

El Budismo tiene que ver con la victoria. El presidente Toda solía decir: El interés de la sociedad está en forjar una buena reputación; el interés del gobierno es encontrar la forma de hacer justicia; el interés del Budismo es lograr la victoria. La reputación social es efímera como el viento. Las leyes de un país son juzgadas por personas y cambian de acuerdo con los tiempos. Pero la ley budista de causa y efecto es absoluta. El engaño y la impostura son inútiles en la contienda del todo o la nada que es el Budismo.

La vida se evapora en un instante. Por eso, quiero que sean personas capaces de decir con convicción, al término de su vida: "¡He triunfado! ¡Di lo mejor de mí!". ¡Qué afortunados son ustedes, jóvenes, de poder participar libremente en las actividades de la SGI ahora que son jóvenes!...

### Las sutiles funciones de la mente

Aunque en su interior se sientan un poquito desilusionados en su primer trabajo, si pueden transmitirlos a los demás y a ustedes mismos que es un buen lugar o que están frente a una oportunidad única de desarrol-

larse, su propia determinación interior cambiará en la misma medida.

Cuando uno cambia su determinación, todas las demás cosas comienzan a moverse en la dirección que uno desea. En cuanto uno determina con toda su vida que va a triunfar, cada nervio y fibra de su ser inmediatamente se orientan hacia el éxito. Por otro lado, si uno piensa "Esto no va a dar resultado", en ese momento cada célula de su ser se "desinfla" y se rinde en la lucha por el avance; entonces, todo termina orientándose en dirección al fracaso.

Quiero que ustedes aprendan cómo operan las sutiles funciones de la mente. La forma en que orientan su pensamiento y la clase de actitud que adoptan frente a las cosas influyen tremendamente sobre ustedes mismos y sobre su ambiente. En el Budismo hay un principio según el cual cada instante de la vida contiene en sí tres mil aspectos. Esto esclarece por completo la forma en que operan las funciones de la vida. Mediante el poder de nuestra determinación interior, podemos transformarnos nosotros mismos, hacer que cambien las personas a nuestro alrededor y también la tierra en que vivimos. Cada uno de ustedes posee esta "herramienta", esta "arma secreta". No hay tesoro mayor. Desde luego, imprimir cambios concretos implica un enorme trabajo. Pero es natural que uno, cuando es joven, se esfuerce con todo. Por ejemplo, nadie puede llegar a ser un atleta olímpico ni un jugador de béisbol sobresaliente sin un tremendo entrenamiento y esfuerzo. Del mismo modo, tampoco se crea valor en la vida sin una cuota de empeño.

Si alguien llega a una posición elevada sin haber luchado mucho, sin haber pasado por dificultades, las personas que estén a su cargo sufrirán continuamente. El señor Matsushita observaba con énfasis: "Señor Ikeda, cuán cierto es que las personas deberían esforzarse intensamente cuando son jóvenes, y salir a propósito en busca del entrenamiento intenso!".

El presidente Toda y el fundador Makiguchi tenían la misma opinión, al igual que la mayoría de las personas que adquieren verdadera excelencia en la vida. Durante la juventud,

salgan en busca del trabajo duro; busquen cada oportunidad de entrenarse, activa y seriamente. Todo lo que hagan terminará siendo su capital indestructible.

Nichiren Daishonin dice: "No esperen buenas épocas; por el contrario, den los malos tiempos por sentados".<sup>2</sup> Si graban esta enseñanza en su vida, no tendrán motivo para temer a nada. Ni tampoco se encontrarán en callejones sin salida.

Todo depende de su decisión profunda, de la clase de filosofía y de convicciones que alberguen. Nuestro ambiente no es el factor decisivo; el resultado de nuestra vida no depende de las circunstancias que nos rodeen. Cuando avanzamos resueltamente, basados en estas palabras del Daishonin, todas las adversidades que experimentamos en nuestra vida allanarán el camino dorado de nuestra misión.

### Consolidar 'nuestra tierra'

Nuestro lugar de trabajo, nuestra comunidad y nuestra organización abarcan la "tierra" de las actividades cotidianas y el lugar donde llevamos a cabo la práctica del Budismo. Desde el punto de vista de los tres ámbitos de la existencia<sup>3</sup>, corresponden al del ambiente. En "esa tierra", la de cada uno, podemos cumplir a pleno nuestra misión, para crear el máximo valor posible y para forjar valores humanos a nuestro alrededor. Mientras reconocemos que el lugar donde estamos es nuestra "Tierra Verdadera", el sitio de nuestra misión, trabajemos para expandir una red de humanismo y crear una historia de kosen-rufu que brille por siempre.

Las plantas que echan firmes raíces son fuertes; los que se esfuerzan sin descanso y crean sólidos cimientos dondequiera que estén son personas fuertes. En la medida en que construyen cimientos, también crean una buena fortuna eterna y beneficios indestructibles.

Oro por el éxito de las actividades de la División de Jóvenes durante abril, mes de la primavera....

1. Véase Toda Josei Zenshu (Obras completas de Josei Toda), Tokio, Seikyo Shimbunsha, 1984, vol. 4, pág. 103.

2. *Los principales escritos de Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, pág. 246.

3. Tres ámbitos de la existencia: El ámbito de los cinco componentes (forma, percepción, concepción, volición y conciencia), el ámbito de los seres vivos y el ámbito del ambiente.

## SIGN POSTS

APPLYING  
NICHIREN  
DAISHONIN'S  
WRITINGS TO  
DAILY LIFE

### Precious Friends

By CRAIG GREEN

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

Even the treasures of the entire universe cannot equal the value of a single human life. (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 267)

I recently moved into a larger apartment. Two friends had a place and they were moving, so I could take it after they moved out. The whole situation began and ended within a week, and before I knew it I was in a new home. It's nicer, it's bigger, it's air conditioned — good stuff.

During the very hectic week of the move, every once in a while someone would say that they were chanting that I could get the place. It's something I've heard before — "I'll chant for you" — and I've usually just found it to be polite. Nothing more. I say thank you, forget about it, and go on with whatever I am doing.

But this time, it was different. When I walked into this new domicile, I felt that I was there in large part because of my friends. I didn't think I was going to get the place; I'd basically given up. So I was there not because I had connections with the former tenants. I was there because I had the fortune to have people include me in their prayers.

It is always nice to have things and stuff. Always good to have a nice place to put your things and stuff. But I think it's even nicer to have friends. The Goshō passage above was part of a letter written in response to an offering, a gift of rice. It was Nichiren Daishonin's custom to thank those who supported him. There is a special quality and value that only human life can exhibit, and he was keenly aware of it. If you lined up every jewel in the galaxy side by side, they would not compare to the value of one life. It would seem to follow that friendships among people are just as precious. To practice Buddhism, one can't exist in a vacuum. Interacting with and treasuring others is part of the process.

Have all of my problems ceased because of my new apartment? No. Has this new home lightened my karma? Hardly. But every time I walk into this place, I think of the people that helped to get me here. And how much I owe to those who have chanted for me in the past and never heard me say thanks. ☐

## UNDERSTANDING MENTOR AND DISCIPLE

### It Takes Faith

By STEVE PIONTEK  
ALLENDALE, N.J.

I have to admit that I have found the relationship between President Toda and SGI President Ikeda difficult to understand. It seems unique, or at the least very rare. Western culture has few if any precedents for this kind of relationship, especially in the sphere of religion. In the realm of the arts or literature, the mentor-disciple relationship works quite differently: The disciple studies with the mentor and seeks to learn the basics from the mentor, but with the ultimate objective of breaking out on his or her own — not of fulfilling the mentor's desires as if they were the disciple's own.

It's my impression that the basis of the idea of mentoring in the West is to have the disciple forge his or her own way. Disciples in the arts, for instance, who don't ultimately go out on their own path are labeled "derivative" simply because they have never succeeded in breaking out from under the mentor's way of expressing how to look at the world. Speaking for myself, I have no frame of reference for the kind of bond Toda and Ikeda shared.

Remember how it comes about in their very first meeting: The 19-year-old Shin'ichi Yamamoto (the fictional counterpart of Mr. Ikeda in the novel *The Human Revolution*) goes to his first discussion meeting, and Toda is there. After asking some questions of Toda, Shin'ichi thinks to himself: "How succinctly he answers! There is no confusion in him. I think I can believe and follow this man. He answered my questions politely and sincerely, without any superfluity. What will this man mean in my life?"

How many of us have ever even come close to meeting someone, anyone, for the first time and feeling "This is someone I can follow for the rest of my life"? Very few of us would be my guess.

Even harder to fathom than the beginning of their relationship, however, is how it continues. In the course of *The Human Revolution*, we never see Shin'ichi asking "Why?" to any of Toda's directions or guidance. Rather, his response is "How?" How can he make it happen? How can he ensure that Toda's direction is fulfilled?

This probably would not have been our response, if we are truthful with ourselves. Don't most of us, when we hear a direction or guidance, want to know "Why do I have to do that?" or "Why should I?"

Look at how different President Ikeda's response has been. In a recent speech, he said: "Since the age of 19, I have followed the guidance of my mentor, second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda, and single-mindedly dedicated my life to kosen-rufu. Therefore, I am confident that in lifetime after lifetime I will enjoy a state of life pervaded by inexhaustible good fortune and benefit" (July 11 *World Tribune*, p. 14).

In looking at why I have been resistant to the mentor-disciple relationship



Shin'ichi Yamamoto meets President Toda at his first Soka Gakkai discussion meeting.

for so long, I think another reason is that I still have a residue of feeling from the 1970s and '80s when it was described as the *master-disciple* relationship in the organization. The constant emphasis on and total reference to one man having all the answers created something of a backlash in my mind, which has still not entirely subsided.

Another reason for my problems with a mentor-disciple is, to be perfectly honest, plain ego. Who knows? This may be the biggest reason of all — this feeling that I'll find the answers myself.

So these are just the main obstacles I have had to come to terms with in trying to understand mentor-disciple for myself. Judging by conversations I've had with members over the years, I am hardly unique.

What then have I learned to take me beyond this point? Most basically, I think we have to understand that mentor-disciple in Buddhism demands a different approach than anything we may have previously encountered in this area — it has to be based on faith.

In one sense, this is very akin to the difference between Western deductive and Eastern inductive thinking that we first encounter when we meet the Gohonzon. We are told the Gohonzon is the embodiment of the perfect universal law and the cluster of benefits — but that it is up to each of us to find this out for ourselves. It is not like deducing a scientific law, say, through a series of experiments. No, instead we have the law at the outset and have to find out why this law is true, and how we can make its power work for us.

With the mentor-disciple relationship as shown in the case of Mr. Toda and Mr. Ikeda, the same understanding pertains. Mr. Ikeda had faith that Mr. Toda's understanding of life and Buddhism was such that if he followed Toda as a mentor then the truth about life would be laid open for him. By following his mentor closely and explicitly, Mr. Ikeda proved the validity of his initial leap of faith. And, as he has said so often, everything he has ac-

complished in the long years of his practice has been nothing but carrying out Toda's will and vision for kosen-rufu. It becomes clear, then, that we have to make a leap of faith if we are to start to understand the mentor-disciple relationship and the benefits that can flow from it.

I don't think it is necessary to believe that we have to replicate President Ikeda's experience. I can see now that thinking I had to have the same kind of instantaneousness as he did was really a trick that my mind played on me all these years — a kind of red herring, if you will. Rather than thinking you have to be hit with a flash of lightning to truly be a disciple, I think the important thing is just to fight to understand what the mentor is saying, and how you can make this a source of benefit for your life. You have to fight for it.

I saw this recently so clearly in the life of a member in my headquarters. He read something in President Ikeda's writings about education and the United Nations. Specific ideas about how to implement the much more general idea President Ikeda articulated started to take shape in his mind. He began to chant about how these ideas could be brought to fruition and what he would have to do to make them a reality. The vision that President Ikeda gave him was by his own admission something larger than anything he could have fashioned for himself. Yet here he was fighting with passion and imagination to fulfill this dream and getting closer to it all the time! (Not so surprisingly, perhaps, I encountered this member's dream just when I started to press myself about the listlessness of my passion for the mentor-disciple relationship.)

It is not that we are to follow President Ikeda blindly. But we know how much he has accomplished and the depth of his wisdom. In his writings we find innumerable ideas and visions expressed.

Our mission as disciples, if you will, is to find one or two or more of these ideas or visions to make our own. And, by fighting to make them a reality through faith, to propel our lives into areas they never would have discovered otherwise. ☐



In seeking to spread the teachings of Buddhism, Makiguchi adopted the approach of talking earnestly with each person one to one. SGI-USA members continue this tradition today.

# The Only Way To Share Buddhism

*SGI President Ikeda gave the following speech at the 12th Headquarters Leaders Meeting at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall, June 16.*

**He tried writing books. He tried having big meetings. But in the end, Makiguchi realized talking to people — one at a time — was the only way to spread the Daishonin's teachings. Then, the Soka Gakkai took off.**

Mongolia, along with many other countries, is today extending recognition and honors to the SGI.

## Youthful, Hopeful Life

I thank all of you who have traveled so far from different parts of Japan and the world for today's meeting. I deeply appreciate your hard work and dedication.

It has already been announced in the June 15 *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper, but I want to report that the National University of Mongolia recently announced its decision to confer an honorary doctorate of philosophy on me. Also, the Inner Mongolia University of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of China has decided to name me an honorary professor. Its president, Dr. B. Shorgan, sent me a traditional

Mongolian costume along with the notification as a token of friendship. I have also been asked by the Chinese Association of Mongolian Literature, located in Inner Mongolia as well, to serve as one of its honorary advisors. With this request, I received a traditional Mongolian stringed instrument known for its beautiful sound.

These are important educational and cultural institutions. I am deeply honored to receive these awards on your behalf — they are tributes to your tremendous efforts.

*To date, SGI President Ikeda has received a total of 45 honorary doctorates or professorships from universities and scholarly*

*institutions around the world. Including academic awards that have been announced but not yet presented brings the figure to more than 50.*

Speaking of Mongolia, Nichiren Daishonin says, "The Mongol Empire may be like King Himatala of the Snow Mountains, a messenger from heaven sent to punish those hostile to the votary of the Lotus Sutra" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 154). King Himatala was a ruler in northern India who lived around 600 years after Shakyamuni's death. He defeated the ruler of a neighboring kingdom bent on destroying Buddhism, thus restoring peace to the area

and allowing Buddhism to flourish. The Daishonin speculates that the Mongols, like King Himatala, have perhaps come to punish "those hostile to the votary of the Lotus Sutra."

Elsewhere, the Daishonin says, "Bonten, Taishaku, the gods of the sun and moon and the Four Heavenly Kings have entered into the body of the Mongol ruler and are causing him to chastise our nation" (MW-6, 105). He interprets the Mongol invasion as a sign that the Buddhist gods — the protective functions of the universe — are admonishing Japan for attacking a person of justice.

From the standpoint of Buddhism, I believe there is profound significance in that Mon-

I want to turn the spotlight now to the members of the Many Treasures Group.<sup>1</sup> Those of you in this group continue to work actively on the forefront of our organization. I keep in constant touch with your activities and feel the greatest respect and appreciation for your dedication.

When the Daishonin was in exile on Sado Island, many of his older followers of an age that would qualify them today as members of our Many Treasures Group staunchly supported and protected him. I am talking about people such as Abutsu-bo, Sen-nichi-ama, Ko Nyudo and his wife Ko-no-ama, and Nakaoki

SHARE, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Nyudo — all venerable masters of life.

In the same way, you, the Many Treasures Group members, are always there at a crucial moment ready to defend the Soka Gakkai, an organization advancing in accord with the Buddha's will and decree. You are the treasure of the Soka Gakkai. In your efforts, I sense a mystic resonance with the Daishonin's times.

No one can equal your strength. No one is more trustworthy.

As an expression of my deep gratitude to all of you, I want to introduce one of your members, Riyoko Miyasaka. Mrs. Miyasaka is strenuously exerting herself for kosen-rufu as a women's division vice block chief in Takatsu Ward, Kawasaki City, Kanagawa Prefecture. And she is in fact present today.

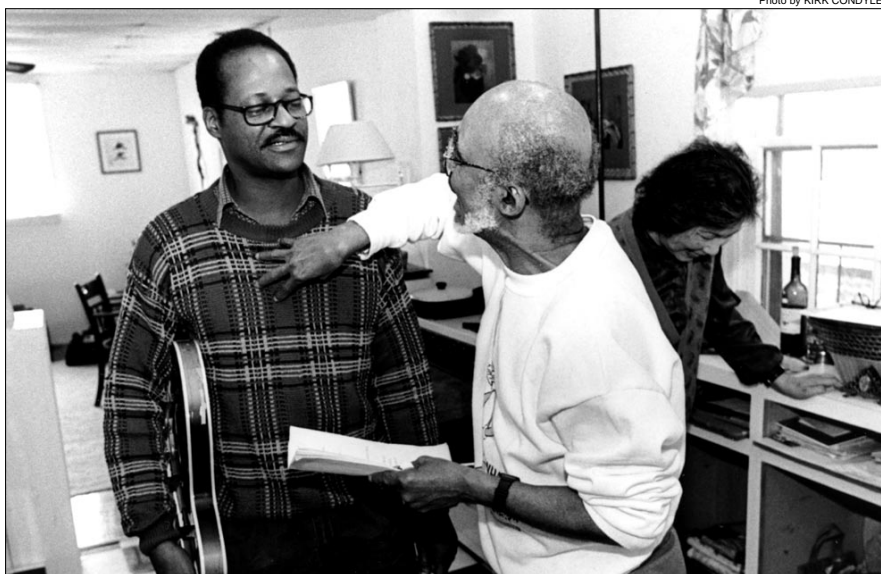
Both her husband and son are physicians, and as a family they run a private hospital, which this year celebrates its 40th anniversary. The hospital has an excellent reputation and, in a nationwide survey, was rated one of the best in Kanagawa Prefecture.

Mrs. Miyasaka herself owns and manages real estate. She is a graduate of the former Women's Medical Academy, which was attached to Keio University Medical School before the war. Fluent in English, she is also certified as a top-level interpreter. She studied at the University of London. At present, she is learning to use the Internet. "Compared to studying the Gosho," Mrs. Miyasaka says modestly, "everything else is a breeze!" She has humility, tremendous vitality and a lively sense of curiosity.

Asked about her age, she politely demurs, saying, "I'm not keeping track." Most people would put her at around 60. She confesses to feeling 50, but the truth is — she will be 80 this year. This is, of course, strictly confidential!

Speaking of the benefits of faith, Nichiren Daishonin says, "You will grow younger, and your good fortune will accumulate" (MW-5, 158). Faith in the Mystic Law is the secret to becoming increasingly youthful and filled with ever-greater vitality as the years go by. Mrs. Miyasaka says, "A life dedicated to kosen-rufu is the most rejuvenating way of life."

Mrs. Miyasaka's father was an eminent doctor who studied at Tokyo Imperial University, fore-runner of the University of



To senior members, SGI President Ikeda says: 'No one can equal your strength. No one is more trustworthy.'

Tokyo. His family is descended from the renowned 15th-century swordsman Tsukahara Bokuden. Her mother's family, meanwhile, is descended from the famous general and master spearsman Goto Mototsugu, also known as Matabe, of the Warring States Period (1467-1568). Today, their mutual descendant, Mrs. Miyasaka, is making courageous efforts in the noble struggle for kosen-rufu, with the jeweled sword of compassion in one hand and the golden spear of philosophy in the other.

### 'No Prayer Will Go Unanswered'

Mrs. Miyasaka joined the Soka Gakkai in November 1959, some six months before I became third president. Illness initially prompted her to take faith. She was then in her early 40s and suffering from an abnormal enlargement of the heart. Her husband informed her that she probably had only two or three years to live. At that time, a Soka Gakkai women's division member, Asako Minamikawa, told her, in a tone ringing with confidence: "By practicing this Buddhism you can definitely become healthy! It is the highest Buddhist teaching and no prayer will go unanswered!"

Even just a few words spoken with honesty by a person of pure faith can deeply penetrate another's heart. On the other hand, if one's words are vague and uncertain, they will lack the freshness and the power to move others.

Mrs. Minamikawa is one of those praiseworthy members who has always worked hard behind the scenes. For many years,

she was the caretaker of our community center in Kodaira, near the Tokyo Soka Junior and Senior High Schools.

*She is now a chapter women's division vice chief in Tachikawa, Tokyo, and also the leader of her local Many Treasures Group.*

It's wonderful how people with only modest educational backgrounds can persuade people of far more illustrious academic backgrounds to practice the Daishonin's Buddhism. Such individuals will undoubtedly be reborn as great scholars in lifetime after lifetime.

### Nothing To Do With Fleeting Vanities

Propagation is like bringing Nichiren Daishonin into someone's home. What a lofty undertaking this is! Those who dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to SGI activities are the most respectable people.

Depth of faith or human greatness is not determined by a person's position in the organization. Much less are such things decided by schooling, titles or social status. From the standpoint of Buddhism, greatness has nothing to do with the accomplishment of fleeting vanities.

Far more admirable than earning a doctorate, becoming a celebrity, or winning political power is making energetic efforts to spread the Mystic Law and help others become happy. The Daishonin will surely praise and embrace such earnest SGI members above all. To forge ahead unswervingly, with great honesty and sincerity — that is the way of true honor. People

who do so are the treasures of kosen-rufu and the SGI.

The SGI will always be a realm of ordinary people. The foundation, the great earth of everything, is the people. We must therefore cherish above all these noblest members working hard on the forefront of our movement, striving amid the greatest difficulties.

### In Faith, No Effort Is Wasted

Pursuing her Buddhist practice despite her husband's early objections, Mrs. Miyasaka has led 90 households to embrace faith in the Daishonin's Buddhism. Her heart condition, at one time so grave, improved rapidly. Such is the unfathomable power of the Mystic Law. In the Lotus Sutra we find the line "Let us live out our lives!" (*The Lotus Sutra*, chapter 16, p. 228). And Mrs. Miyasaka has done just that for 40 years — she's living proof of the Mystic Law's power to prolong life.

When her husband was in a traffic accident, she overcame the ordeal through faith. And she raised a splendid family: Her son, as I mentioned, is a physician, and her two daughters, pharmacists. Mrs. Miyasaka declares: "In our practice of Buddhism, everything is clear-cut and no effort is wasted. Hard work may end in vain in society, but this is never the case in the realm of faith." What admirable conviction!

Mrs. Miyasaka still joyfully participates in SGI activities. She has developed a network of friends in the hundreds and is helping a great many people form a connection with Bud-

dism. She says: "Every time I have earnestly challenged myself for kosen-rufu, I have broken through another part of my karma and received great benefit. This has made me the person I am today. When I have set aside my worries and desires and devoted myself earnestly to Gakkai activities, all of my wishes have been realized quite naturally."

Mrs. Miyasaka's spirit is most praiseworthy. She has not the slightest doubt or hesitancy. To make a great vow and dedicate one's life to fulfilling that vow — that is the true Soka Gakkai spirit and genuine faith.

### Life, A Song of Victory

Mrs. Miyasaka says: "Those who left the organization and turned on the Soka Gakkai have repaid kindness with betrayal. Once, there was no crime more dishonorable than treachery. Their actions are inexcusable!" I hope the youth division members will engrave the pioneers' indignation in their hearts.

Faith is not appearances. Nor does it have anything to do with organizational position. It depends entirely on a person's fighting spirit. Those who burn with a fighting spirit are true SGI members and disciples of presidents Makiguchi and Toda.

Whether a person has genuine faith is revealed with the passing of time. It is something that becomes clear at a person's death and in terms of the three existences of past, present and future.

Mrs. Miyasaka cites as her favorite Gosho passage: "Bring forth the great power of faith and establish your reputation among all the people of Kamakura and the rest of Japan as 'Shijo Kingo of the Hokke sect'" (MW-2 [2nd. ed], 201). Engraving this passage in her heart, she has tenaciously overcome various hardships and advanced with the determination to develop a reputation in her city of Kawasaki as "Miyasaka of the Soka Gakkai."

In accord with her resolve, she is now showing splendid actual proof — her life is a song of victory. She continues in her endeavors, proudly proclaiming to all she meets that she is a Soka Gakkai member.

To be concerned about appearances, fear persecution or put on airs is cowardly. With cowardly faith, one cannot hope to have one's prayers answered or receive benefit. This is not the faith of a true disciple of the

Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

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Buddha.  
*A Goshō passage states, "Nichiren's disciples cannot accomplish anything if they are cowardly" (MW-4, 128).*

**Triumph Depends on Speaking Out**

This great member of the Many Treasures Group remembers: "Back when I first joined the Soka Gakkai, others criticized me, saying, 'You must be out of your mind joining such a vulgar religion!' I was ridiculed and talked about behind my back. But I exerted myself in faith with the determination to one day show everyone that they were wrong. Sadly, many of those who taunted and attacked me turned out to have bleak and depressing lives. I feel truly sorry for them. I, meanwhile, have shown actual proof of faith through my victorious life!"

Hers is a drama of splendid triumph. By pressing ahead, we can open a way. Unless we speak out, nothing will happen. When we proclaim the truth, actual proof will appear clarifying what is right and wrong.

World history is filled with great people who have led outstanding lives. But more wonderful still are the lives of great ordinary people — people such as us, the practitioners of the Daishonin's teachings, the members of the SGI and the Many Treasures Group.

Standing in the vanguard of our movement, though holding no top leadership position, Mrs. Miyasaka is a great leader of our organization. I cannot praise her highly enough.

I will now read from the Goshō:

The "Former Affairs of the Bodhisattva Medicine King" chapter of the Lotus Sutra states, "A person who can accept and uphold this sutra is likewise foremost among all living beings" (LS23, 286).

What this means is that men who embrace the Lotus Sutra, even if they are peasants from the countryside, will be superior to Bonten, lord of the threefold world and to Taishaku, the Four Heavenly Kings and the wheel-turning kings, as well as the rulers of China and Japan. It also goes without saying that they will be superior to the great ministers or nobles of Japan and the warriors of the Taira or Minamoto clans,<sup>2</sup> as well as people of all other levels of status.

And as for women who embrace the Lotus Sutra, they will



'Leaders need to remember that they should go out and meet members one on one.'

be superior to Kyoshikanyo,<sup>3</sup> Srimahadevi,<sup>4</sup> Madam Li<sup>5</sup> and Yang Guifei<sup>6</sup> of China, as well as to all the countless women in the world. (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 1378)

Who is most venerable in the world? Nichiren Daishonin says it is the people work for kosen-rufu. This is what the Lotus Sutra states, what Shakyamuni teaches.

**Seeing With Our Hearts**

The heart is most important of all. In his classic *The Little Prince*, the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry writes: "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."<sup>7</sup>

It is just as he says. We cannot always tell whether something is genuine just with our eyes. Only by looking with the heart can we discern the true essence. The Daishonin stresses that "our heart alone is what really matters" (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 1192).

In Buddhism, we either win or lose — there is no middle ground. Now and in the future, let us advance, determined to win in every sphere of our lives. By winning in our lives, we are advancing kosen-rufu. And by advancing kosen-rufu, we win in our lives.

**Makiguchi's Propagation Revolution**

Since this is a leaders meeting, I will say a few words about the proper attitude of leaders.

Soka Gakkai founding president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi championed the cause of the Daishonin's teachings during the oppressive era of World War II. His courageous activities re-

sulted in a dramatic increase in the organization's membership [from around 1940].

Why was this? It was because of Makiguchi's propagation revolution. He adopted the approach of talking earnestly with each person he met, one to one. And he would go to visit people at their homes. He concluded that this was the only way to propagate the Daishonin's teaching.

Makiguchi was a great scholar. He initially hoped that he might reach and influence a wide audience through his written works, but the results were disappointing. Next, he tried to communicate his message to the public through holding lectures and open forums but, again, met with little success.

Nowadays, we have people suggesting that we conduct televised propagation. But you cannot touch people's lives in a deep, lasting way through such a medium.

After writing books and holding large meetings had failed to produce results, Makiguchi concluded that talking with people one at a time was the only way. He would have to start by finding a small number of individuals who shared his concerns and aspirations.

From that point, his propagation efforts took off dramatically. Many capable, like-minded people began appearing in steadily increasing numbers. Whereas before he had talked to several thousand without even one of them remaining, his new efforts soon resulted in general meetings being attended by more than 500 people.

Members consolidated their faith at small discussion meetings, took action and experi-

enced great benefits. This triggered a chain reaction as others, inspired by their accounts of faith, began practicing, too.

Makiguchi believed in experimentation. He would always try out his theories or ideas to see if they worked in actual practice. And he would invariably reach the right conclusion. He was truly a great individual, the kind of person who doesn't come along every day. I can well understand President Toda's profound admiration for him.

**Meet With People One on One**

Makiguchi maintained that leaders mustn't just talk at large meetings. Those who did so, he declared, were merely coveting honor or seeking applause.

While it is natural to have large gatherings to mark important occasions, leaders need to remember that, rather than always calling meetings, they should go out and meet members one on one. Those who forget this develop delusions about their importance. Those who make high-sounding speeches in front of large audiences and receive applause, but neglect to make any real effort in the organization, are nothing but smooth talkers. They are just feeding their egos.

Genuine leaders work with tireless devotion to support and encourage the members, make regular efforts to visit others and engage them in dialogue. This is a point I want you to clearly understand.

Makiguchi put his life on the line to oppose Japanese militarism.

History repeats itself. Now, once again, Japan is beginning

to walk down the dangerous path of nationalism. People in many countries are concerned that Japan may be following a course that will lead to its isolation and, ultimately, to national ruin. I share these concerns.

As members of the foremost peace organization in Japan, let us unite and work to protect Japan and the world.

**Seeing Through Deception**

In the Goshō, time and again the Daishonin warns his followers not to let themselves be deceived.

In "How Those Initially Aspiring to the Way Can Attain Buddhahood Through the Lotus Sutra," Nichiren Daishonin writes: "A sutra passage likens persons of this type [enemies of the Lotus Sutra who go along with other people's desires and so come to be revered] to a hunter who spies sharply about him as he stalks a deer, or to a cat who hides its claws as it creeps up on a mouse. In just such a way, we are told, do they flatter, deceive and mislead the men and women lay believers" (*MW-6*, 205). And in "Letter to Konichi-bo," he says, "If you do not know your enemies, you will be deceived by them" (*MW-4*, 167).

To lead people astray and cause them to abandon faith, the enemies of the Lotus Sutra employ various kinds of cunning and spin clever lies. Those who deceive others are evil. But those who allow themselves to be deceived are foolish. I hope you will have the wisdom to see through such insidious duplicity. Let's continue to construct the great castle of Soka! Let's continue to fight! Together!

**Members in Remote Areas**

Next, I want to introduce to you the activities of members on Tsushima Island.<sup>8</sup> Several years ago, the Nikken sect was causing a great deal of trouble on the island. During a visit around that time to Tottori Prefecture, I had the chance to meet with eight representatives from Tsushima. In the years since, our friends on that isle have struggled heroically, and they have now won total victory.

Members of Tsushima, you have created a truly magnificent organization. To all of you, congratulations!

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I also want to warmly commend the valiant struggles of our friends on Sado.

*The members in Sado have made great strides in building friendship in the community. In May 1997, many guests from the local community took part in events to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Sado Culture Center.*

The members on various remote islands are making tremendous efforts in their kosen-rufu activities. Since Japan is, after all, just a string of tiny islands, let's all work together to do our best!

On another note, I want to report on a change in certain plans. Ideas for creating a World Photography Culture Center were previously announced. However, as a result of deliberations involving the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum and other concerned parties, it has been decided to return to the drawing board and come up with a different way of contributing to the development of photographic culture.

**Do Not Look Down On My Disciples!**

Last, I will read a passage from the Goshō "On the Four Stages of Faith and the Five Stages of Practice":

I entreat the people of this country: Do not look down upon my disciples! If one in-

“  
**The heart is most important of all. In his classic *The Little Prince*, the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry writes: ‘It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.’ It is just as he says. We cannot always tell whether something is genuine just with our eyes. Only by looking with the heart can we discern the true essence. The Daishonin stresses that ‘our heart alone is what really matters’ (Goshō Zenshū, p. 1192).**  
”

quires into their past, they are great bodhisattvas who have given alms to Buddhas over a period of eighty myriads of millions of kalpas.... And if one speaks of the future, they are endowed with the benefit of the fiftieth person,<sup>9</sup> surpassing that of one who gives alms to all living beings for a period of eighty years. They are like an infant emperor wrapped in swaddling clothes, or a great dragon who has just been born. Do not despise them! Do not look on them with contempt! (MW-6, 225)

The Daishonin is saying that there is no one more noble than the Bodhisattvas of the Earth working to accomplish kosen-rufu. He is telling people in society not to ridicule these respectable emissaries of the Buddha.

The universe is infinite; Buddhism, immeasurably profound.

The Lotus Sutra uses terms such as “five hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, a million nayuta asamkha thousand-millionfold worlds” (LS16, p. 225) in describing the vastness of the universe. Buddhahood is a state in which we can make our way

with perfect freedom through this infinitely vast universe. Such a state is enjoyed by those who uphold the Daishonin’s Buddhism. Serenely rising above small, trivial matters, let us advance boldly, with broad, generous hearts.

When I became president of the Soka Gakkai [in 1960], I initially prayed for two things: that Japan would not be struck by a devastating earthquake and that there would be no major food shortage. Now, I am praying every day that you, SGI members, will all be protected from accidents, enjoy excellent health

and prosperity, and continue advancing along the path of kosen-rufu. Also, I am praying morning and evening that you will each become happy, realize your dreams, and bring your life to a splendid conclusion.

These are my true sentiments. On that note, I conclude my remarks.

Thank you for your long attention. Let’s meet again next month! ❧

1. Many Treasures Group (Jpn Tahokai): a special group for pioneer members. The Many Treasures Groups in Tokyo and Kansai are named Hoju-kai (Treasure Life Group) and Kimpo-kai (Golden Treasure Group), respectively.
2. Taira and Minamoto clans: two powerful military families that vied to rule Japan.
3. Kyoshikanyo: wife of Kyoshika, or Taishaku, when he was a Brahman in one of his incarnations.
4. Srimahadevi (Jpn Kisshotenryo): goddess said to give men virtue and happiness. Also, wife of Vaisravana (Jpn Bishamonten), one of the Four Heavenly Kings.
5. Madam Li: a beautiful consort of Emperor Wu (156–87 B.C.E.) of China’s Han dynasty.
6. Yang Guifei: a notorious beauty and concubine of the great Tang emperor Hsüan Tsung (Xuan Zong; r. 712–56).
7. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*, trans. Katherine Woods (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1971), p. 73.
8. Tsushima: island located between northwestern Kyushu, the southernmost of Japan’s four main islands, and the Korean peninsula.
9. Benefit of the 50th person: refers to the immeasurable benefit obtained by even the 50th person in a chain of transmission who rejoices on hearing the Lotus Sutra.

## GLOSSARY

**Buddha:** One who perceives the true nature of all life and leads others to attain the same enlightenment. The Buddha nature is inherent in all beings and is characterized by the qualities of wisdom, courage, compassion, spiritual strength, hope and unshakable happiness.

**daimoku:** Literally, “title.” Refers to the invocation, or chanting, of Nam-myohorenge-kyo.

**Gohonzon:** The embodiment of the law of Nam-myohorenge-kyo and the life of Nichiren Daishonin in the form of a mandala. *Honzon* means “object of fundamental respect”; *go* means “worthy of honor.” The *Gohonzon* takes the form of a paper scroll inscribed with Chinese and two Sanskrit characters. Together, these characters represent life in its highest condition: Buddhahood. “Nam-myohorenge-kyo, Nichiren” is written down the center of the Gohonzon.

**gongyo:** Literally, “assiduous practice.” In Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, gongyo means to recite the “Expedient

Means” (2nd) chapter and the “Life Span of the Tathagata” (16th) chapter of the Lotus Sutra and chant Nam-myohorenge-kyo in front of the Gohonzon.

**Goshō:** Literally, “writing worthy of great respect”: the writings of Nichiren Daishonin.

**ichinen:** Literally, “one mind.” The life-moment, or ultimate reality, that is manifested at each moment in common mortals.

**karma:** Sanskrit word meaning “action.” The life tendency or destiny that each individual creates through thoughts, words and deeds. One’s actions in the past have shaped one’s reality at present, and actions in the present determine in turn one’s future. This is the law of cause and effect at work.

**kosen-rufu:** Literally, to “widely declare and spread (Buddhism).” To secure lasting peace and happiness for all humankind through the propagation of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism.

**Latter Day of the Law:** The period beginning 2,000 years after Shakyamuni’s death, when his teachings lose their power and the essence of the Lotus Sutra will be propagated.

**Nam-myohorenge-kyo:** The fundamental component of Buddhist practice, which expresses the ultimate truth of life and allows each individual to tap his or her innate enlightened nature directly. Although the deepest meaning of Nam-myohorenge-kyo is revealed only through the practice of chanting it, there is a literal definition for each of the component words: *nam* (devotion) means to fuse one’s life with the universal law; *myoho* (Mystic Law) is the fundamental principle of the universe and its phenomenal manifestations; *renge* (lotus flower) refers to the lotus, which blooms and seeds at the same time, symbolizing the simultaneity of cause and effect; and *kyo* (sutra, or teaching of a Buddha) broadly indicates all phenomena or the activities of all living beings.

**Nichiren Daishonin (1222–82):** The Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law. *Daishonin* literally means “great sage” and is used as an honorific title for Nichiren. He inscribed the Gohonzon and established the invocation of Nam-myohorenge-kyo as the universal practice to attain Buddhahood.

**Shakyamuni:** Also known as Siddhartha Gautama. The first historically recorded Buddha, he is the founder of Buddhism.

**Soka Gakkai:** Literally, “Society for the Creation of Value.” The name of the lay organization of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism.

**Soka Gakkai International (SGI):** The umbrella organization led by President Daisaku Ikeda, which includes organizations in 128 nations. It was established in 1975.

**ten worlds:** Potential conditions of life inherent in each individual. They are: Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity, Rapture, Learning, Realization, Bodhisattva and Buddhahood.

# Resonant Spirits

AP PHOTO/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS



Mother Teresa, left, walks with Princess Diana during a visit from her June 18 in New York. Princess Diana met privately for 40 minutes with Mother Teresa at the Missionaries of Charity in the South Bronx, New York. Both women were praised and loved for their hearts.

By TERRY ELLS  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

In a world of causality, there are no coincidences — even though life sometimes plays itself out in ways so bizarre they're hard to fathom. Such was the week of Aug. 31, when Diana, princess of Wales, died in a Paris car crash.

In the middle of the clamor that followed, Mother Teresa, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, rose from her sickbed to pray for the princess. Then on Sept. 5, Mother Teresa also died. Both women were praised and loved — across boundaries of class, race and religion — for their hearts. Both were also criticized and ridiculed by cynics and people of power who saw them as naive or simple-minded females in a complex world.

Mother Teresa, the youngest daughter of an Albanian builder, was 18 when she committed herself to a religious life, working as a missionary in India. Around the same age, Lady Diana Spencer, the youngest daughter of an old British family, was working as a nanny and kindergarten teacher when she was discovered by the royal family.

Both reached a major turning point at 36. Mother Teresa received what she referred to as an order: to leave the convent and live among the poorest of the poor. Diana gave up her husband and her legal connection to the British Crown, then set about fashioning her own title as "the queen of hearts." After Diana died, Mother Teresa praised the princess "for helping me help the poor. That's why she came close to me."

Mother Teresa's words reflect her deep spiritual resonance with Diana, who was so different by all outward appearances.

An estimated 2.5 billion people worldwide watched Princess Diana's funeral. Mourners sent an estimated \$50 million in flowers. And now the memorial fund in her name is bringing \$250,000 a day, for a total of \$260 million as of Sept. 11. That doesn't include the money that will come from sales of music by Elton John and others dedicated to her memory. Much of the outpouring of money came in small amounts from individuals — and even from children with pocket change.

But as Diana and Mother Teresa knew all too well, all the money in the world won't necessarily solve the problems — problems that both actually drew personal strength from by confronting face to face.

"It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing," Mother Teresa once said. "It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving." And again: "There is a terrible hunger for love. We all experience that in our lives — the pain, the loneliness. We must have courage to recognize it. The poor you may have right in your own family. Find them. Love them. Put your love for them in living action."

In the final analysis, both were women of faith who were concerned about happiness for themselves and others.

□