

# World Tribune

No. 3161

THE YEAR OF ADVANCEMENT TOWARD THE NEW CENTURY

OCTOBER 17, 1997

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

DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE DELIVER BY ISSUE DATE

## 1998 Theme: Victory of the People

By **DAVE McNEILL**

MANAGING EDITOR

Santa Monica, Calif., Oct. 8

Nineteen-ninety-eight will be another year of victory for SGI members around the world. At a recent meeting in Japan, the SGI announced that its theme for next year will be Year of Victory of the People for the New Century. SGI Deputy President Einosuke Akiya explained that the theme encompasses three

major ideas: victory over the obstacles to our peace movement, victory in our propagation campaign, and victory at home, at work, in the community and in our lives.

Talking about victory over obstacles, Mr. Akiya said that our movement to widely spread the teachings of Buddhism is an unceasing battle against devilish forces. Seeing such devilish functions for what they are — such as

the Nikken sect, which is out to destroy the SGI — and defeating them is the victory of faith, the victory of the people, he said.

Second, the SGI is an organization dedicated to the people's happiness, so its efforts to spread Buddhism are its lifeline, he said. Prayers for our friends, encouragement, promotion of publications to help people deepen their understanding of Buddhism, and contributing to and

thus making friends in the community — all these serve to propagate Buddhism, he said.

Finally, victory in our lives is crucial. Life is a serious battle in which we either win or lose, and most important, we must win over ourselves, he said. By winning over our personal worries one by one, we can develop ourselves as human beings, gaining wisdom and strengthening our character, he concluded. ❧

## SGI President Meets Peace Activist Dr. Krieger

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

The SGI's stance against nuclear weaponry is gaining praise 40 years after second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda first called for world disarmament. To commemorate the 40th anniversary of Toda's Declaration for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, the Santa Barbara, Calif.-based Nuclear Age Peace Foundation bestowed upon the SGI organization and SGI President Ikeda a certificate of commendation Sept. 14.

Nuclear Age Peace Foundation President David Krieger (see interview, p. 5) presented the accolade to President Ikeda, along with the international peace organization's Peace Ambassador award, at the close of the World Youth Peace Music Festival in Yokohama, Japan. (Yokohama is where President Toda made his anti-nuclear declaration.)

The Certificate of Commendation, read by Dr. Krieger, stated: "The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation extends its deep appreciation to Soka Gakkai International and President Daisaku Ikeda for continuing and diligent efforts to realize Josei Toda's vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and a transformation of the human spirit to bring about a just and lasting peace. We look forward to joining our efforts in working to achieve these noble goals."

PLEASE SEE KRIEGER, 4



Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI

To mark the opening of the SGI-USA's children's rights exhibition, a music festival is held in the courtyard of the National Civil Rights Museum, the former Lorraine Motel where Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

## Civil Rights Museum Hosts Children's Exhibit

By **RICHARD SADLER**

CORRESPONDENT

Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 27

The SGI-USA's newly refurbished children's rights exhibition opened its 15-city tour today at the National Civil Rights Museum, which is located at the site of Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1968 assassination.

The exhibit, which was first shown in New York in June 1996, was created by the SGI-USA Youth Peace Conference to commemorate the 50th anniversary of UNICEF. Titled "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities," the exhibit drew inspiration from the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. The 30 panels have upper and lower portions, the lower section employing easy to understand



The exhibition features two-tiered panels, with the lower panels designed for children to touch and play with as they learn.

PLEASE SEE CHILDREN, 4

# VOICES

## As a Buddhist, how do you take responsibility for your community?

Members from Texas Joint Territory respond:



I take responsibility for the community by working as a volunteer in my son's school. It is a brand new charter school, and for the first few weeks, the kids didn't even have desks and were sitting on the floor. They have to go to lunch in a separate building, and I go at lunch time to help supervise them. As a Buddhist, I believe that kids are the key to the future, and that by supporting them, I am supporting the community.

— TERRY MASSEY, Dallas



Through studying SGI President Ikeda's guidance, I realize more and more how important "the moment" is; that life is moment to moment, and Buddhism is life. My community is where I am at, at that moment. There are no boundaries. So I try to really see every person I come in contact with — at the grocery store, restaurant, or the lady or gentleman who gives me change at the toll booth — to really see them, to smile and say a few words, even if it is just thank you, from the heart, to refresh their lives, to build bridges of trust.

— EVE GOEH, Dallas



I have stayed involved with the children in my area — on my block — and established a good rapport with them. Because I have done this, they come to me when they get into trouble. I also chant for the protection and happiness of everyone in my environment. As a college student, I chant to be in classes in which there is open communication, in which we as students can connect and work together.

— YONWI BELL, Dallas



I take responsibility for my community by trying to encourage each individual with whom I come in contact — even just saying hello to my neighbors or asking people how they are doing. I think, as a Buddhist in this society, starting up a dialogue with people in my community and trying to create an atmosphere of understanding and friendship are most important.

— CLIFF WOMACK, Dallas

I really enjoy taking responsibility for my community by providing childcare support. I have many friends who are mostly single parents and their work schedules do not allow them the time needed to be available for their children either in the mornings or afternoons.

— HELEN FISHER, Dallas

If you have suggestions for "Voices" or "Question of the Month" questions, please send them to us. Our address is in the box at right.

# Excommunicating the Excommunicated

## EDITORIAL

Excommunicating them the first time didn't work. Let's try it again." This must be what Nikken and priests supporting him were thinking when they announced Oct. 1 that all Soka Gakkai members in Japan have until Nov. 30 to leave the Soka Gakkai — or else lose their "believer-status within Nichiren Shoshu."

This was a bit bewildering to the millions of Gakkai members who remember Nichiren Shoshu excommunicating them six years ago. Although the priesthood has argued that only the organization was excommunicated on Nov. 28, 1991, not the individual members, this technicality has never made much sense to Gakkai members. After all, the Soka Gakkai organization *is* its members. You can't separate the two.

Nov. 28, which SGI President Ikeda has called Soka Gakkai Independence Day, commemorates the excommunication of 10 million people by 1,000 Nichiren Shoshu priests.

So why would the priests try to scare members with excommunication again? The Oct. 3 issue of the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper, suggested a couple reasons: First, Nikken needs to increase temple members if he's to make his goal of 100,000 participants for a pilgrimage next March.

Second, he's using any means possible to shift attention away from the Seattle Incident trial. In fact, Nikken announced this new "get-the-Gakkai" campaign to the priesthood at an emergency meeting on Sept. 29, the same day the Tokyo District Court ordered him to testify about the incident (see Oct. 10 *World Tribune*, p. 1). Nichiren Shoshu quickly tried to downplay the significance of the order. A Sept. 30 notice said that Nikken had "graciously expressed his intent to positively respond to the judge's request," but this was not a "request" — it was a court order.

Nikken may have many reasons for initiating this new attack on the Gakkai, but he has only one strategy: to employ scare tactics. "It is indeed foolish to close off your way to enlightenment by continuing your slanderous association with the Soka Gakkai..." the temple's Administrative Office declared Oct. 1. "Now is the time for you to sever your evil ties with the Soka Gakkai and carry out your pure faith as lay believers of Nichiren Shoshu." Such fire and brimstone is bound to backfire.

Nikken believes members would be willing to go through a humiliating ordeal to leave the Gakkai and join him. A Sept. 30 memo from the Administrative Office explains the step-by-step process of how priests intend to divide any members who switch to the temple into two camps: Those who have not received the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon from the SGI and those who have.

Those who haven't must sign a pledge that reads in part, "I deeply repent of the sin of having joined slanderous people and offer my sincerest apology." Those who have, after surrendering the Nichikan-transcribed Gohonzon to the temple, must sign a similar pledge, but "the sin of having joined slanderous people" is replaced by "the slander of possessing the 'counterfeit' Gohonzon." They must also submit to what the temple is calling a ceremony of admonishment before being allowed back on the temple roster.

Both pledge forms also contain the ominous provision that "in the event that I should run counter to the above pledge, I will accept whatever action you wish to take against me."

It's unclear yet how temples in America will respond to Nichiren Shoshu's new direction in Japan, but already the Oct. 1 notice has been translated into English and posted on the Internet. Some Japanese members here who have ties to temples in Japan have received the notice in the mail.

No doubt, in America, too, there will be a renewed effort to try to scare people with the word *excommunication*. But as SGI President Ikeda commented in 1991, just after the first excommunication: "I can't for the life of me figure out what *excommunication* has to do with Buddhism. The word itself appears nowhere in the Goshu or the Lotus Sutra." Indeed, Nichiren Shoshu's plan to excommunicate the Gakkai a second time is a compelling reconfirmation that it no longer has anything to do with Buddhism.

Fear is born of ignorance, so the more we study and discuss the Daishonin's Buddhism and the essence of this temple issue with one another, the less we will be influenced by such empty threats of damnation. SGI-USA members who know that happiness comes from devotion to their faith and not to priestly authority will see the meaninglessness of this latest excommunication. **W**

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## 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](mailto:SokaNews@aol.com). Subscriptions Office: (800) 835-4558; FAX (310) 260-8970; E-mail: [SGI SUBS@aol.com](mailto: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**

**What Does It Take?**

I appreciate Steve Piontek's personal perspective on the mentor-disciple relationship ("It Takes Faith," Sept. 19 *World Tribune*). However, I think the editors should have made it clear that Mr. Piontek's essay, like the others in the series, is a personal perspective and not necessarily the view of the SGI-USA Study Department.

Like every element of Buddhist practice, the decision to take a mentor is personal and conscious. It doesn't take a leap of faith. It is a matter of the heart and mind, but it is a choice made with our eyes wide open.

When the young Daisaku Ikeda first encountered Josei Toda, he responded wholeheartedly to a person he recognized as having an understanding of life that he wished to share. Mr. Ikeda chose to follow this person who so strongly communicated his mastery of life as a human being.

He has since dedicated his own life to fulfilling everything Mr. Toda might have done had his physical condition not been so weakened by the deprivation of a wartime Japanese prison. As a matter of fact, he has done more than his mentor could have done, thereby demonstrating the greatness of the mentor through the actions of the disciple. A disciple embraces the heart and soul of the mentor, not one or two ideas.

— GUY McCLOSKEY, Chicago

[Editor's note: The intention of this series of 10 essays, "Understanding Mentor and Disciple," is just as you say — to share personal perspectives on this important Buddhist concept. The Study Department does review all such study articles before publication.]

I thank the *World Tribune* and Steve Piontek for his excellent article "It Takes Faith." This article really clarified for me how our Buddhist mentor-disciple relationship distinguishes itself from other traditions of mentoring and how we should approach this relationship.

I could identify with the writer's honest confusion and resistance to this relationship. Throughout my eight years of practice, I have felt at times that the relationship was foisted upon me. The unique aspect of the mentor-disciple relationship that I have overlooked when I simply read SGI President Ikeda's guidance is that as a disciple I need to respond to it. Those precious times that I have felt "connected" to President Ikeda through this relationship have been times when I have gained a much broader vision of my life and purpose, and broken through deadlocks.

Thank you again for reminding me that faith is the key to understanding this special relationship with President Ikeda. And that my mission as a disciple is to find one or two of his ideas or visions to make my own and thereby propel my life into an area I never would have discovered otherwise.

— VICTORIA LEHRFELD, Menlo Park, 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.

Please include signature, mailing address and telephone number. Pseudonyms and initials will not be used. Send letters to "Mailbox," *World Tribune*, 525 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401; or via America Online (*SokaNews*).

**Our Lives as Faith Itself**

**PERSPECTIVE**

By **CHUCK GOMEZ**  
NEW YORK

**Faith is deep self-awareness. Faith is unshakable conviction. Faith is rich character. Faith is a strong sense of responsibility.**  
(April 11 *World Tribune*, p. 13)

7:18 a.m.: Riding the A train to work. Running on time.

Reminiscing over my incredible discussion last night with Denise and Deb over coffee at Starbucks Cafe. We talked about a lot of exciting stuff. Our topic of discussion was how we can "live our lives as one complete SGI activity."

"Wow," I said. It is amazing to think that I can live my life as one fulfilled SGI activity. No more separating my responsibilities as a young men's division chapter leader, doing two consecutive Gajokai shifts a month, being a filmmaker/writer, and desiring to find the right woman for my life. "Yes, they are all one activity, all right!" I must have forgotten that our practice is a continuous journey of self-improvement, breaking through our limitations and embracing people.

For example, here I am writing in my journal, riding the A train express to work and looking around the subway car. First, I see passengers who are tired, sipping from coffee cups and reading newspapers. Some people look worried, as others look quite happy. It is amazing how the sad faces outnumber the happy faces. I think it's time to do ma' thing.... I think I'm gonna smile!

Smile. I should smile more often. It feels good to smile. I hope my smile will encourage a passenger to have a wonderful day. Nam-myoho-rence-kyo. Cool. I am really enjoying this.

Last night, as we were discussing this point of our life as one activity, Deb and Denise had a lot to share.

Deb said: "I try to offer a child a piece of candy. I do my best to be patient with my boss, even when he is being unreasonable. Every day, I chant to fulfill my desires through daimoku. Also, I am sincerely praying that my family, friends and co-workers will soon practice this Buddhism."

We all agreed that every activity begins with word, thought and deed. "Our activities are fueled through the pulse of the human heart," Deb concluded.

Denise shared that daimoku is in all aspects of her life. She also said that "Buddhism is not a light switch that we conveniently turn on and off. If we continually say, 'Daisaku Ikeda is our mentor,' then we need to confidently show actual proof of the mentor's teaching."

Well, I have to say honestly that living the mentor's teaching is not easy. Recently, I have had amazing moments interacting with people, confronting my self-slander and learning from my mistakes.

SGI President Ikeda has said: "By challenging an enormous goal head-on, youth can break through their limitations and realize tremendous growth" (April 18 *World Tribune*, p. 10). Putting his guidance into practice, I have been fighting my negativity through studying, writing, shooting my short film and having dialogue. Funny how the dialogues and unconsciously making silly

mistakes allow me to repair crucial flaws within my character. In the moment of any drama, I quickly pull away and take a deep breath.

For example, at a district discussion meeting a few months ago, I sort of forgot President Ikeda's lesson about having compassion for the members. I was so excited after the meeting that I approached T— with "mad" energy, asking him to participate in our next youth division activity. In short, he brushed me aside, disgusted by my approach.

Quite honestly, T— had every right to brush me off, because I did not ask even simple questions like: "Hey, man, what's going on?" "How are you doing?" "When can we get together?"

I felt that I failed T—, President Ikeda and myself. "Cause how can I expect to keep good friends in faith if I cannot acknowledge their well being? I must try harder as a friend and leader. That is why I must joyfully digest my mentor's teaching to not allow "the Daishonin's words to wither" and wholeheartedly have compassion for people.

No matter what, I must win and overcome my shortcomings. Although I am not perfect, I want to help eradicate misery from the planet. Today and onward, I am determined to develop wisdom through faith, practice and study.

By the end of 1997, I will successfully accomplish all of my personal and organization targets, so I can collectively secure the foundation of kosen-rufu in New York City. I guess this is a short example of how I will try to "live my life as one SGI activity."

Oh, shoot...my stop is coming up. OK, it's 14th Street and 8th Avenue. Now I am ready for work.

Peace, ya'll. WTT

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**QUESTION OF THE MONTH:** 'At Thanksgiving time, what are you most thankful for?'

Please be specific and limit your response to 50 words or less. All responses are subject to editing. Please send your response 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](mailto:SokaNews@aol.com).

**Deadline: Oct. 27**

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



The SGI-USA's children's rights exhibition, newly refurbished and on a 15-city tour, draws inspiration from the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Children's Exhibition Opens at Civil Rights Museum

CHILDREN, FROM PAGE 1

language and three-dimensional displays that children can touch and play with.

At today's opening ceremony, speakers from UNICEF and the SGI-USA gave brief introductions of their organizations. Dwight Moody, a representative from Mayor Willie Herenton's office, presented a plaque declaring Sept.


26, 1997, "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities Day" in the city. "I was very impressed with not only the exhibit but all those involved as well," Mr. Moody wrote in the guest book. "Much success will surely follow this initiative."

The next day, SGI-USA youth sponsored a culture festival in the museum's courtyard, which brought members from through-

out Tennessee together to perform with local entertainers.

People not just from the United States but from around the world toured the exhibition recording their thoughts in the guest book. "It's great to have such an exhibit focusing on children worldwide," wrote Laura Pietrangella of the Ghandi Institute. "I love how you let the children get involved in the exhibit."

"Very powerful! Informative!" wrote Katherine Geeldant. "It grabs your attention by pointing out injustices as well as the general apathy of our public today. It only reinforces the need to further education and lobbying for needed justice."

The exhibit will open Oct. 13 in Camden, N.J. Then it will show in Baltimore, Md., from Nov. 10-21. 

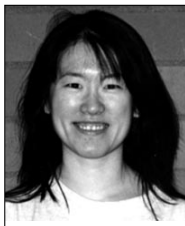
## The Student Files

**Name:** Kiyoko Aoki

**School:** Northwestern University

**Major:** Computer Engineering


**City:** Chicago



I am developing a Java program that will allow for collaboration and distributed visualization of geometric algorithms. However, my major project for my doctorate will deal with developing a 3-D visualization tool for parallel geometric algorithms.


I tell school friends that I am a Buddhist, but not in the stereotypical sense. I explain that by chanting I bring out my fullest potential, which gives me the pos-

itive attitude and confidence to overcome my obstacles and develop myself.

As students, I feel we are truly following the original intent of the Soka Kyoiku Gakkai (Value-Creation Education Society, the original name). As we continue to develop our intellects, we should be at the forefront of society, showing actual proof of our practice so we can gain the understanding and respect of those we come in contact with every day. 

KRIEGER, FROM PAGE 1

Accepting the awards, the SGI leader said he would continue fighting undauntedly as an ambassador of peace. President Krieger asserted that he, too, would continue to strive for peace as a comrade of Mr. Ikeda's. He further said that he would never forget the dazzling smiles of the SGI members in the music festival.

President Krieger recently gave a talk on the 40th anniversary of Toda's declaration for 800 youth division members at the 4th U.S.-Japan Youth Peace General Meeting in Santa Monica, Calif. (see Aug. 29 *World Tribune*). After that talk, he praised Toda and the first Soka Gakkai president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, for "speaking out against militarism and militant nationalism — for not being willing to just 'go along' with such militarism...." 

## Museum Captures Essence of Civil Rights Movement


By RICHARD SADLER  
MEMPHIS, TENN.,  
CORRESPONDENT

The National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel here is an educational institution whose purpose is to inspire people to learn the lessons of the civil rights movement and its impact on human rights movements worldwide.

The museum uses interpretive exhibits and audio-visual displays to bring to life a significant period in modern American history, as well as vignettes capturing the essence of key events during the civil rights movement.

Exhibits focus on such themes as the Montgomery bus boycott, Brown vs. the Board of Education in Topeka, Kans., the events at Central High in Little Rock, Ark., student sit-ins, freedom rides, the march on Washington and much more.

Also chronicled are the events of the 1968 Memphis sanitation strike, during which the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel. Rooms 306 and 307, where Dr. King stayed during the strike, have been preserved as they were on April 4, 1968.

In addition to its regular exhibits, the museum continually sponsors exhibitions that provide insight into human struggles and triumphs. Since it opened in 1991, the National Civil Rights Museum has continued to serve as a place where people from all cultural backgrounds can learn and be inspired from the ongoing worldwide struggle for civil and human rights. 

“

Many of the elite in society only want to talk to each other — presidents want to talk to presidents, congressmen want to talk to congressmen. But they need to listen to the people.... I'm convinced that the people have to lead.

I'd like to see one simple change in the way society approaches warfare. I'd like to see that when any country's leaders declare war, that they go first, that they go to the front lines, that they go as the cannon fodder.

”

## INTERVIEW

# Do Something Positive

*David Krieger is the founder and president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, a leading anti-nuclear organization based in Santa Barbara, Calif. Jeff Farr, World Tribune associate editor, talked with him about nuclear disarmament and his life of activism after he gave a lecture at the 4th U.S.-Japan Youth Peace General Meeting, Aug. 17.*

**JF:** What things happened in your life to awaken you to your anti-nuclear mission?

**Krieger:** The first influence was visiting Hiroshima, Japan, when I was relatively young. I was 21 at the time, and I remember going to the museum [Hiroshima Atom Bomb Peace Memorial] and thinking: "This is what happened here. I have never understood completely the dimensions of what happened here." That was a powerful awakening for me.

And then, when I came back from Japan, I found out I had been drafted into the army! Later, when I was called to active duty in the Vietnam War, I decided for myself that I couldn't participate in that war, because I didn't believe in it. I thought it was wrong for many reasons, and I was not willing to be a part of that war. As long as I was outside of the sphere of actually having to kill people or injure people, I could reluctantly participate in the military — actually, I didn't fully realize that I had a choice in the matter. But at the point where they actually wanted me to go to Vietnam and be a platoon leader I said no.

So I ended up becoming a conscientious objector. Then, when the army didn't agree with that, I ended up going to federal court.

Anyway, that whole experience of resisting and having the turmoil in myself of whether I should go along with what might have been the easier route, or do what I knew was right, set me on this course. In a way, my work for peace is still coming out of that experience of protesting war.

**JF:** During the Cold War years, it seems that young people had a greater awareness about disarmament. I'm wondering what steps you think we can take to increase young people's awareness today.

**Krieger:** All in all, through the Cold War the problem seemed more evident and more fearful. Now, with the Cold War over, many people, adults included, think the problems have ended, when in some ways the situation may be more dangerous than ever because of nuclear weapons proliferating and getting away from arsenals where they are under control.

I think what needs to be done first is to raise awareness that people need to speak out on these issues, and I think most young people have a very superficial understanding of what nuclear weapons do. They've learned, they've been taught from their schooling and otherwise, that humans are capable of controlling these weapons and that the weapons can even maintain the peace. But there's no logic to this in the long run.

With the Cold War over, who's being defended, who's being deterred? It doesn't make sense. I think young people will respond to this logic if it's presented to them.

And I think the story of Hiroshima needs to be part of young people's awareness. We have the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. — there need to be places where people can go and learn the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, too.

One other point I would make is that even during the Cold War there was always a big difference between arms control and disarmament. What most of the people understood then was arms control, and it's only now that disarmament is something people are coming to understand.

Many of the elite in society only want to talk to each other — presidents want to talk to presidents, congressmen want to talk to congressmen. But they need to listen to the people. And the only



David Krieger, president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

way we're going to end the nuclear weapons era is by people all over the world speaking out and demanding this. I am convinced that the people have to lead.

Maybe the sunflower [symbol of a nuclear weapons-free world] can be a rallying symbol throughout the world because it's so simple: Sunflowers instead of missiles. The comparison of sunflowers to missiles is so stark and understandable; you don't have to be an expert in technicalities, you just have to know which you choose.

Going back to my other point for a moment, about having a place to remember Hiroshima: Maybe it's a project for the SGI that I recommend you think about, creating a kind of nuclear weapons museum that puts the people in the picture, that tells the story of what happened at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Because right now, as I understand it, the only place you can find this story is in Hiroshima — and maybe Nagasaki.

We should have a place in this country as well, as difficult as it would be to make. And there should be one in Europe and other places. I think these museums would be huge successes in terms of education. It's something I would love to see happen.

**JF:** I think young people generally feel peace is possible, but when they start thinking about the nitty gritty details, like really abolishing all nuclear weapons, stopping the production of them forever, it seems harder to be-

lieve that could happen.

**Krieger:** It's not so easy for old people to believe that could happen either! What would I say to that? I would say that you have to have a certain amount of faith. You must have a certain amount of hope that peace is possible. It really is an act of faith.

There's nothing that's being done by the leaders of the nuclear weapons states that is significant in moving in that direction yet. But my faith is that if the people speak loudly enough and make their voices heard this will change. It's such a simple thing to say we're committed to the future of this planet, we're committed to the future of the human species, and we're committed to carrying on civilization at the highest possible level.

Why shouldn't every young person want that? Why shouldn't every old person want that? We've got to change the way we think, and that change has to come primarily from young people.

One point I left out of my talk, which I regretted, so I'll tell you now, is that I admire Mr. Maki-guchi and Mr. Toda for speaking out against militarism and militant nationalism — for not being willing to just "go along" with such militarism and for paying the price of going to jail for their convictions. That is an example that deserves the highest respect in my opinion.

I admire what they did because in a small way I experienced that, as I explained to you. I didn't go so far as going to jail,

but I might have. It would have been my choice if the only other choice was fighting in Vietnam.

I think that society does a terrible thing to young people, particularly young men, when we train them to be soldiers. What that really means is that we train them to be cannon fodder. We train them to be the people who are in the front lines, who we send out to kill and be killed if there's a war.

I'd like to see one simple change in the way society approaches warfare. I'd like to see that when any country's leaders declare war, that they go first, that they go to the front lines, that they go as the cannon fodder. I want the leaders out in front. I don't want them sitting home comfortably someplace, while the young people are dying.

During the Cold War, the Congress of the United States had the audacity to build a place inside a mountain where the leaders could go to be safe, to carry on the government, in the event of a nuclear exchange. They weren't even going to take their spouses and children! That's extraordinarily selfish.

It is a deranged mind that would come to the conclusion that Mutual Assured Destruction is a reasonable course of action. Somehow we've got to get back to the basic roots of compassion and demand compassion of our leaders — or get rid of these leaders and choose new ones.

I would like to see nuclear disarmament happen because we have only so long to live. Maybe we can't completely abolish war and do away with every weapon in our lifetime, but we can try to achieve nuclear disarmament. I think that as a species we could agree to abolish all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. I think this is possible, and that hope drives me on.

I am particularly encouraged when I come to a meeting like today's SGI meeting and see young people who respond to this message in a positive way and who, I believe, will go out and do something about it that's positive. That gives me great hope. ■

# Torchlight Parade Gives Youth a Chance To Shine

By LIZA JAVIER  
CORRESPONDENT  
Seattle, Aug. 1

As the sun slowly sets during the hot August evening, downtown Seattle starts to come alive with excitement as more than 300,000 people line Fourth Avenue for the evening's annual Torchlight Parade. The SGI-USA Seattle Youth Band and Dance Group, prepared to play their renditions of "El Tigre" and "Turn the Beat Around," hit the brightly lit three-mile parade stretch. They perform, they dance, they dazzle — they win Seattle over as they set the streets aglow with brilliant color, music and smiles.

Not since the summer of 1994 has the Seattle Youth Band performed for (and won top honors at) the parade. This year, with first-time parade leaders, performers and time constraints, the challenges and obstacles allowed youth band and dance group members to grow.

"We only had five weeks of marching practice," recalls David Ishii, co-leader of the band. "I didn't think we could do



Photos by DIXON HAMBLY

The dance group leads the way for the youth band.

it. But all the youth band members wanted to do the parade, and I realized that it's for the members' sake and not a matter of if I personally want to do it or not. I'm there to help these members grow. If I'm bagging out on them, then I'm not helping them grow."

Irene Ishii, David's sister and co-leader of the band, helps to push David to challenge himself and the youth band's goals. Their sometimes seemingly confrontational (but always caring) working relationship helped the band break new ground. Despite all-weekend-long practices in the hot sun on hot pavement, with faith and lots of chanting they met their seemingly impossible goal of 100 participants, exceeding their last parade participation by nearly 50 percent.

First-time flute section leader Yumi Konno, who has been in the band for eight years, sees how the band united more from the practices. "Usually in the past, youth band members from Portland [Ore.] would always drive three hours to Seattle for practices," she says. "We were always separated from them because we were so far away, and it was hard to form bonds of friendship. I think that the leaders from each area really were determined to

combine both bands to make one strong youth band for the parade. I think for the first time the Seattle band even went to Portland for a weekend for practice. The Portland members were so appreciative and gave us the warmest welcome, standing and clapping when we walked in. I was so inspired by their kindness in welcoming us that I wanted to give them a warm welcome to Seattle and made them a sign to really welcome them."

"It was the members' spirit to do it themselves that helped a lot," says David. "Usually most people just complain, complain, complain, but nobody complained this time, especially the younger members who are 12 or 13 years old. Even my biggest complainer said that he couldn't get the song right during practice, and he wanted me to give him the music so he could practice at home."

David muses, "It's got to be the chanting."

"I'm really proud of those guys," he concludes. "I chanted more than I've ever done for any parade. And I learned that with a single-minded determination and chanting, you can accomplish anything." ■



Seattle's famous Space Needle looks over the Torchlight Parade route, in which Seattle Joint Territory's youth band performs.



## Florida Impressions

I was born into this practice, but only recently have I been participating in SGI activities. I am ashamed to say it, but it has taken me 22 years — that's how old I am — to realize what I have been practicing all my life.

When I went to Florida, I had no idea what I was in for. I didn't even know what city I was going to. My leader encouraged me to go to Florida for some leadership conference, and after talking to a close SGI friend, I just knew I had to be there.

Of course I had to overcome lots of obstacles to get there, but they were all worth it! If I had to go through more obstacles to experience that conference again, I would embrace them like a warm blanket. It was wonderful.

At the Young Women's Division Leadership Conference, I realized how important study is in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. I realized that the practice of Buddhism is not just chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, but really studying what we are chanting about and the Law as taught by Nichiren Daishonin. For instance, I didn't know there was a right way to chant and a wrong way. In studying the temple issue in the conference, I felt the need to practice the right way and to protect SGI President Ikeda. I thought to myself: "Wow! We could actually be chanting daimoku to the Gohonzon, but be completely off with the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism." That's why I need to study as much as I can, so I can feel confident in defending President Ikeda and this Buddhism.

Before, I thought (as mentioned by someone at the conference) that if I put all my faith in the Gohonzon I would lose myself somehow, but it came to be completely the opposite. I actually found myself.

— Lansil Choi, Long Beach, Calif.



Lansil Choi



Irene and David Ishii, first-time co-leaders of the band.

Been to the FNCC yet? Send us your 200-word experience or poem, along with a photo of yourself.

The Soka Gakkai members looked to the Komei representatives to dedicate themselves to the people and fight for their interests. Shin'ichi Yamamoto wanted the representatives to live up to that expectation, no matter what the circumstances.

If they were to stray from that path and fall into the snares of self-interest and personal ambition, becoming corrupt and degenerate, all the effort expended in electing them, and in forming Komei, would be wasted. Shin'ichi delivered this severe warning to prevent that tragedy from occurring.

In closing, he called to the members, "With a renewed spirit and renewed commitment to our goals, let us advance forward with unbreakable unity, reaping boundless benefit as we go!"

In this atmosphere of rejoicing over the election victory, the second half of the year got off to a dynamic start. Shin'ichi was aware, however, that their victory would be viewed as a threat by the other parties and was bound to have major repercussions. An article in the July 4 evening edition of the leading daily newspaper, *Asahi Shimbun*, entitled "Soka Gakkai — the Third Force in the Upper House," revealed the attitudes of the other parties. It read:

The Liberal Democratic Party does not see the Soka Gakkai growing into a political force that could pose a potential threat to it in the future. As the examples of previous new religions have shown, the more fervid the religious organization the more quickly it fades from the scene. And the Liberal Democrats believe that the Soka Gakkai's foray into politics will peak early and quickly reach its limit.

The impact of the Soka Gakkai's victories on the Socialist and Communist parties, however, is more severe than on the ruling conservative party. The way that the Soka Gakkai ate into the membership of the Hokkaido coal miners' union recently is still fresh in the minds of progressive party leaders.

The working class, it is generally held, is not especially interested in religion. But as of late, the Soka Gakkai is gaining support even among such organized workers as the Japan Teachers Union and the National Railway Workers Union, causing leaders of the Socialist Party to question their party policies and daily activities and to continue to look into methods for mounting a counteroffensive against the inroads being made by the Soka Gakkai.

It is unclear whether the LDP really held the view that the Gakkai was of no importance, or if it merely tried to make it seem so to give the appearance of confidence in its position as the ruling party. But it was true that the leaders of the labor movement felt threatened by the Gakkai's dramatic advance. In fact, after the Upper House election, certain labor unions placed insidious pressure on union members who also belonged to the

## The New Human Revolution

By HO GOKU — ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA

Volume 6, Chapter 4

# Rough Seas

Translation of parts 19–24 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.

Soka Gakkai. Two unions in particular, the Osarizawa Mine in Osarizawa, Akita Prefecture, and the Nakazato Mine in Sasebo, Nagasaki Prefecture, actually expunged Gakkai members from the union rolls.

In the northern part of Akita Prefecture,<sup>1</sup> about four kilometers west of Rikuchu-Hanawa Station on the Japan National Railways Hanawa Line, a winding road led to an area of rust-brown mountainside, bare of any trees or vegetation. A jumble of ore-sorting and smelting factories were huddled together at the foot of the mountain, and about halfway up the slope stood a tall, smoke-belching chimney. This was the Osarizawa Mine.

One of Japan's three largest copper mines, Osarizawa had a long history and track record in the mining industry. In addition to copper, the staple of its large-scale operations, it produced gold, silver and zinc. The mine was unionized, and it was here that incidents of Soka Gakkai members being expelled from union membership took place.

Gakkai members in the Tohoku region,<sup>2</sup> of which Osarizawa was a part, supported Komei candidate Hisao Seki in the nationwide constituency for the Upper House election. In the town of Osarizawa (within present-day Kazuno City<sup>3</sup>), Seki had received 305 votes.

Seki had won a seat, placing 26th out of 51 winning candidates. The progressive party candidate backed by the mine's labor union had only managed to slide in at the very bottom of the rankings, after a close-fought battle and with only a slim margin over the next candidate, who missed winning a seat, of some 1,700 votes.

This bitter election struggle, which had almost seen the union's candidate

defeated, and the unexpectedly strong support the town had given the Gakkai-backed Seki, had created a situation that the Osarizawa mine union leaders felt they could not afford to ignore.

In the early 1960s, the mine was flourishing, and at one point more than 90 percent of the town's tax revenues came from mine-generated earnings. The town had more televisions per capita than any other in Japan. The mine employed about 3,000 workers and, when family members were included, about 70–80 percent of the town's population of around 10,000 were in some way connected to the mine.

The labor union at the Osarizawa mine was also one of the strongest and most important in the Japanese Federation of

him. They viewed the Soka Gakkai with antagonism, he had heard, because the Komei candidate Seki had garnered 305 votes in Osarizawa.

But the officials never mentioned the elections. The pretext they used to attack and question him was his party affiliation as a town assembly representative.

Three years earlier, Yamao had run as a Soka Gakkai-backed candidate in the town assembly elections. Because he was a union member, the union had also supported him. Afterward, when local assembly representatives linked to the miners union formed a political alliance, the union had urged Yamao to join the Socialist Party, which it supported. The union now claimed that Yamao's refusal had disrupted union solidarity.

An official of the Federation of Metal Miners Unions seated cross-legged on a desk at the front of the room told Yamao in a threatening tone, "If you aren't going to follow the union, get out!"

On July 5, just one day before, another miner and fellow Soka Gakkai member, Shiro Hongo, had been called before the same committee. Hongo had previously been fined for an infringement of the election law in the 1956 Upper House election. While campaigning for Seki in that election, he had engaged in door-to-door canvassing for votes, which is illegal in Japan. Because of this misdemeanor, the union had intended to discipline him for supposedly giving it a bad name. But instead the union had pressured him, offering to overlook the offense if he would sign a pledge promising to quit the Soka Gakkai.

Hongo had just joined the Gakkai at the time, and given the circumstances he agreed to sign. But afterward he had been impressed by the sincerity of other Soka Gakkai members and directly experienced the greatness of Buddhist practice. Thus he had decided not to quit after all. The union officials now accused him of



Metal Miners Unions. The Osarizawa mine union leaders felt threatened by the Soka Gakkai members' election activities, fearing that if things continued as they were their base of support would be badly eroded.

On July 6, a few days after the elections, Hisaya Yamao, a mine worker and Soka Gakkai district chief, was called into the union office. Yamao was about 50, a warm, friendly man. A veteran miner with some 20 years experience at Osarizawa, he was also a town assembly representative, an indication of the trust and respect his peers accorded him.

His wife, Miya, was the women's divi-

PLEASE SEE ROUGH SEAS, NEXT PAGE

## ROUGH SEAS, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

breaking his promise and demanded to know why he hadn't left the Soka Gakkai.

Every individual has the right to his or her religious belief, though, and any attempt to infringe on that by the union would have been a serious violation of the law. Moreover, in the cases of both Yamao and Hongo, the incidents the union was calling into question had occurred quite some time ago. Only after the recent elections had these incidents suddenly become issues to be addressed by the union's disciplinary committee.

The union leaders feared that if they cited the Soka Gakkai members' lack of support for union-backed candidates as the reason for questioning Yamao and Hongo, they would be accused of violating the two men's religious and political freedoms. So they sought to expel Yamao and Hongo using other pretenses.

**W**hen Yamao returned from the union office, Miya asked in a worried tone, "What did the union say?"

He told her, his innately warm Akita dialect brimming with unconcealed anger: "Today all they asked was why I didn't join the Socialist Party. But they said if I don't follow the union, I'll have to quit it. What they really want is to get me fired. The truth is that they want to persecute me because Soka Gakkai members didn't support the union's candidate during the last election."

The Osarizawa mine was a union shop, which meant that only union members could work there; the mining company could no longer employ someone removed from the union rolls and stripped of union membership. Originally, the union shop system was conceived to create solidarity among workers and give them more power in negotiating with their employers, but now the union was turning against its workers — using the system to threaten Soka Gakkai members with the loss of their jobs.

While in addition to his work at the mine Yamao served as a town assembly representative, the remuneration for the latter was negligible. If he were laid off, he and his family would be out on the streets.

When Miya, a spirited woman, heard his story, she was angry, too. "We haven't done anything wrong," she said. "I dare them to fire you! This is what we've always expected might happen. 'As practice progresses and understanding grows, the three obstacles and four devils emerge, vying with one another to interfere....' (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 145). We won't be beaten by such a little thing!"

Miya's words were the greatest encouragement Hisaya could have hoped

for. Nodding in agreement, he said, as if to cement his resolve: "They think that if they fire me, they'll strike fear into the hearts of all the Gakkai members working at the mine and force them to give up their faith. How ridiculous! When President Yamamoto came to Sendai<sup>4</sup> in May, he said that progress in kosen-rufu has always stirred up obstacles and persecutions. This is a sign that our faith has finally matured."

Shin'ichi had attended the May 8 Tohoku Headquarters Leaders Meeting at the Sendai Leisure Center, where he had shared a poem by President Toda:

*As you make your ascent  
Of a still steeper mountain,  
Set your mind firmly  
On the journey for kosen-rufu.*

Shin'ichi had explained that difficulties and obstacles always arise on the path of kosen-rufu. He knew that as the Soka Gakkai became more involved in social reform and increased its influence, the winds of persecution would blow ever stronger.

And he thought members needed to be prepared. That premonition had now come true.

**S**ince joining the Soka Gakkai in 1954, Hisaya and Miya had devoted themselves sincerely and steadily to faith. And in doing so, they had personally experienced the power of the Gohonzon.

In a work accident, Hisaya had narrowly escaped death. Filled with joy and gratitude for the protection faith had accorded them, the couple worked eagerly to



spread the Daishonin's Buddhism.

Hisaya's fellow workers at Osarizawa each had their troubles and worries. There were people who suffered from ill health, who were parents of children with disabilities, whose home lives were unhappy and full of discord. There were those who drank and gambled away their pay, reducing their families to poverty. Such problems could not be solved simply by campaigning through union activities for improved working conditions or workers' living standards.

The Yamaos decided to make bringing

happiness to their friends and coworkers their mission in life, and in their apartment in a six-unit row house, they started holding frequent gatherings, which they called Life Improvement Discussion Meetings. They chose that name because they knew that if their anguished friends could hear Gakkai members relate their experiences, they would realize how wonderfully faith had improved their lives.

Hisaya cared greatly for the Osarizawa mine, as he did for all his coworkers. Through earnest dialogue and genuine concern for their welfare, Hisaya and Miya gradually inspired more and more friends and neighbors to take faith in the Daishonin's Buddhism. By 1962, there were some 120 to 130 households practicing in Osarizawa. The flame of faith that had spread so vigorously and strongly was now being buffeted by a harsh gale of persecution.

News of the union's harassment of Gakkai members was quickly reported to the Soka Gakkai Headquarters in Tokyo. Shin'ichi said to the directors: "Hisaya Yamao in Osarizawa is the husband of Miya Yamao, women's division chief of Akita's Towada Chapter, isn't he? I remember him well.

"What is the union trying to say Yamao and Hongo have done wrong? It's extremely serious to strike someone from the union rolls and take away someone's job. If we allow the union to get away with such an outrage, it will put our fellow members in an intolerable position.

"I want to see the Soka Gakkai Headquarters send a top leader to fully support the Osarizawa members. We have to protect our precious members. What is essentially at stake here is the most fundamental of human rights — the freedom of religion. This is an extremely grave matter." There was anger in Shin'ichi's voice.

The directors immediately contacted local leaders and asked them to go to Osarizawa with one of the Gakkai's Public Relations Bureau staff and begin investigating the matter so that the Gakkai

could decide what countermeasures to take.

**T**owada Chapter Chief Tatsuo Shimazu and other leaders in the area accompanied the staff member to Osarizawa. First, they met with two union leaders at the union office to inquire why Yamao and Hongo had been brought before the union's disciplinary committee. It was then that one of the union officials let the truth slip out: "Well, of course, it was be-

cause of the recent elections," he said.

So it was true. The reason that Yamao and Hongo had been singled out for disciplinary action was that they had supported Seki in the recent Upper House election.

Cutting in quickly, another union leader said: "It wasn't just the elections. There were other problems, too. But the disciplinary committee hasn't reached its decision yet, so we can't really discuss it any further at this point."

The union officials clearly wanted to bring the meeting to an end as quickly as possible. It had already been decided that the committee's decision on the Yamao and Hongo cases would be announced at a special union meeting on Aug. 29.

Four days before that meeting, Hiroshi Yamagiwa and two other directors from the Soka Gakkai Headquarters, together with Towada Chapter Chief Shimazu, met again with union representatives. When they asked once more why Yamao and Hongo were being brought before the disciplinary committee, the union representatives then stated clearly that it was because they had refused to follow the union's voting directive and had engaged instead in Komei campaign activities.

Apparently the union leaders had decided to change their strategy, since one of them had let their true motive slip out. They stressed that this had nothing to do with religion and declared that, while individuals were, of course, free to vote for whomever they pleased, the union took exception to its members disobeying union directives and participating in campaigns for candidates other than those the union supported.

To confirm that he had properly understood the union's position, one Soka Gakkai director said: "In other words, even though the constitution guarantees all Japanese citizens the right to engage in political activities supporting the candidates of their choice, you will discipline any union member who does not follow union directives in this regard."

The union leader replied: "It's impossible for us to control how people vote at the ballot box. But we will discipline anyone who engages in campaign activities for candidates other than those the union has decided to support."

And he added in an aggressive tone: "The union has rules. Those who choose not to follow them should go work somewhere else."

*(To be continued)*

1. Located in the northwestern part of Japan's main island, Honshu.
2. Region encompassing the northeastern part of Honshu.
3. City located some distance south of the famous Lake Towada, Akita Prefecture, northern Japan.
4. Largest city in the Tohoku region.

Photo by ANDREA NEUMANN

By LISA JONES

LOS ANGELES CORRESPONDENT

**C**onflicted. That's how I felt as I prepared to interview Lucia Rijker, an SGI-USA member, known to many as the best female boxer in the world.

To me, boxing is a blood sport, a celebration of mayhem. How can I write glowingly about it? And while I'm glad that women can buck tradition and pursue new interests, I sense something exploitive about the promotion of women's boxing. I mean, people pay money to see two women trade teeth-rattling, welt-raising blows....

Lots of people. Women's boxing is a fast-growing sport, and talented women like Ms. Rijker are poised to become superstars.

Despite my doubts about the cultural-enrichment value of boxing, I have to admit that I'll be cheering her on.

Because she is fighting for world peace, both inside the ring and out.

In a small, Italian restaurant, I sit across the table from Ms. Rijker, a stunningly muscular 29-year-old black woman with a Dutch accent. I realize almost immediately that I can't keep referring to her as Ms. Rijker. She's too warm, too personable, too Lucia.

"Boxing is a controversial sport," I say, "and women's boxing is even more so. How do you reconcile what you do in the ring with your Buddhist beliefs about peace?"

Lucia's deep brown eyes have a straightforward, penetrating quality, self-assured but not cocky. "I have talent, and I have to use it," she says, matter-of-fact. "There's no anger in my fighting. I'm an independent, strong woman who knows what she wants. I use the media attention to talk about Buddhism. I use my talent to encourage people."

Indeed. People have told Lucia that they find their own inner strength when they see her fight.

"When I'm hurt or tired, this bigger purpose keeps me going," she says. "Hitting and being hit? That's not fun. But being good at something — that's fun."

Lucia has worked hard to become good at what she does. As a teenager at home in Amsterdam, she learned kickboxing and ultimately fought her way to multiple titles as an international champion. She achieved fame and financial success. She traveled the world, learning about



Lucia Rijker is the top-rated woman boxer in the world.

# Right On Target

**'I respect all my opponents. As Buddhism teaches, the only way to prove my true strength is to defeat a strong opponent.'**

other cultures and about the business of athletics.

"There were many things happening," she says, "but I had no life other than my career."

Then a friend from England came to visit Lucia in Amsterdam and took her to a Buddhist meeting. "At first, I made fun of chanting," Lucia says. But as her friend told her more about Buddhism and taught her gongyo, Lucia says she realized "it was the first time that someone gave me something without wanting anything in return."

At the time, the Gohonzon wasn't available, so Lucia chanted to a wall. "I was very disciplined because of my sport," she says, "so I chanted three hours a day at first. I didn't believe in it, but it worked." One of her first benefits was the resolution of a difficult relationship with her trainer. "Then I started chanting for an opportunity in America," she says.

In her mid-20s, and having spent 10 years in competitive athletics, Lucia was on the verge of burn-out. She was ready for a vacation. So she came to Los Angeles for a visit and ended up staying for the past three years.

She had intended to abandon her fighting career, but three days

after receiving the Gohonzon in Los Angeles, Lucia was in a major car accident. She escaped serious injury, and it forced her to confront herself and what she was, or rather wasn't, accomplishing. "I had all this talent and capability," she surmises, "and I wasn't using it. As Nichiren Daishonin says, 'A sword is useless in the hands of a coward.'" She knew what she had to do.

She soon found work as a trainer and kickboxing teacher. Not long after that, Lucia caught the eye of a well-known boxing promoter who wanted to mold her into a female Mike Tyson, promising fame and fortune. Lucia declined the offer.

"I stand for something," Lucia says. "I'm becoming a strong woman who will set people free by what I'm doing. My words are worth nothing if I let someone take my soul and replace it with his own. Now I'm about to have it all — money and everything — on my terms. [she is scheduled for several pay-per-view bouts.] Because I was patient enough to wait until it came to me."

In the sometimes-oily business of athletics and entertainment, Lucia relies on the compassion she finds through her

Buddhist practice. "I couldn't be a boxer without chanting," she says. "I'd get too disappointed in people."

There's a lot of "trash talk" and taunting that goes on, trying to pit one fighter against another. "No matter what is said by others, I respect all my opponents," Lucia says. "As Buddhism teaches, the only way to prove my true strength is to defeat a strong opponent."

Lucia trains for at least three hours each day, sparring, running and doing gym work. "It's very focused and demanding," she says of her day-to-day routine. "Sometimes I feel lonely, and I miss my family in Holland. Sometimes I just roll on the floor and cry like a child, like a kid with a stomachache. Afterward, I feel released and clear again." She smiles. "It's OK to not have all the answers," she says.

It's OK, too, to function with a little bit of ambiguity and paradox in one's life, I tell myself. Maybe boxing isn't necessarily a bad thing. After all, Shakyamuni taught people to "kill the will to kill" rather than to merely outlaw killing.

Lucia's will is to empower and liberate people through her

boxing, not to cause pain or glorify violence. To me, that makes all the difference.

"Are you ever afraid in the ring?" I ask.

"Yes," she says, emphatic. "The only time I wasn't afraid was when I fought a man. I wasn't afraid; I was arrogant instead. I lost the fight and it hurt, but it was the best thing that could have happened. Fear is natural and important because it makes me go deep within myself to find my real strength."

"What's your biggest weakness?" I ask. I instantly regret that I've asked the most annoying tell-me-about-yourself question of all time.

"Self-doubt," she says. "What's yours?"

"Self-doubt," I say. But I'm not sure....

"What's your sign?" she jabs, playful.

"Aries. I get the point. No more goofy questions."

"Can you tell that I'm a Sagittarius?" she asks. "I aim my arrow high. With no conscious moves or steps, I just go after my arrow to reach my goal."

To me, that's pure Lucia: powerful, in flight, and right on target. ■

Photo by MISA CRYSTALL



'If we seem to be weathering an endless winter, we mustn't abandon hope. As long as we have hope, spring will come without fail.'

## The Contest of Human Rights

*This is the 12th installment of a series of discussions on youth among SGI President Ikeda and Soka Gakkai high school division chiefs Hidenobu Kimura (young men's chief) and Kazue Igeta (young women's chief).*

**Ikeda:** Spring is near. The plum trees have bloomed, the peach trees have flowered, and soon it will be time for the cherry blossoms. The famous English Romantic poet Shelley said, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"<sup>1</sup> No matter how long and bitter the winter may be, spring always follows. This is the law of the universe, the law of life.

The same applies to us. If we seem to be weathering an endless winter, we mustn't abandon hope. As long as we have hope, spring will come without fail.

Spring is a time of blossoming. Buddhism, as I have mentioned many times, teaches the principle of cherry, plum, peach and apricot — that all things have a unique beauty and mission. The cherry has its distinct beauty, the plum its delicate fragrance. The peach blossom has its lovely color, and the apricot has its special flavor. Every person has a singular mission, his or her individuality and way of living. It's important to recognize that truth and respect it. That is the natural order of things. That is how it works in the world of

flowers: Myriad flowers bloom harmoniously in beautiful profusion.

Unfortunately, in the human world things do not always work this way. Some find it impossible to respect those who are different, so they discriminate against them or pick on them. They violate their rights as individuals. This is the source of much unhappiness in the world.

Everyone has a right to flower, to reveal his or her full potential as a human being, to fulfill his or her mission in this world. You have this right, and so does everyone else. This is the meaning of human rights.

To scorn and violate people's human rights destroy the natural order of things. We must become people who prize human rights and respect others.

**Kimura:** We may see discrimination and bullying in our immediate surroundings. These can take extreme forms, such as war and oppression. Do you think these are basically the same thing?

**Ikeda:** Yes. Some people have said that bullying is just war in miniature. I remember something that happened during World War II, when I was about your age or maybe a little younger. They were selling hard-boiled eggs in front of Kamata's Otorii Station [in Tokyo's Ota Ward]. I wanted one very

badly, but I didn't have any money.

A soldier came walking by with a woman. It just happened that an officer was there, too. When the soldier walked past him, the officer shouted, "You didn't salute properly!" and began kicking and beating the soldier viciously.

The soldier had saluted correctly, but the officer was jealous that the soldier had a female companion, and he took it out on the poor man. That's why he beat the soldier in front of his girlfriend and a large crowd of people.

The soldier, of course, dared not resist. I will never forget the face of the woman, who was in tears. I remember thinking how much I disliked Japanese people. I knew even then that the military was vicious and wrong.

Pettiness, arrogance, jealousy and self-centeredness — all those base and destructive emotions violate human rights. On a larger scale, they manifest as war and crime.

**Igeta:** I understand that in most European countries discrimination is a crime. Japan is still an underdeveloped country as far as human rights are concerned.

**Ikeda:** Many, many people have said as much. Our distorted society is responsible in no small part for the bullying that plagues our schools.

**Kimura:** Can I read a few passages written by students about the problem of schoolyard bullying?

One writes: "There's a boy in our class who only picks on those who he thinks are weaker than he is. Whenever he's with someone who he thinks is stronger than him, he flatters and plays up to them. I think people like that are despicable."

Another says: "I have experienced being bullied, but I had friends — that made a world of difference. Because of them, I didn't lose hope. The advice I can offer to students being victimized is to fight back against those doing the bullying. If you have the courage to stand up to them, they'll stop picking on you after a while. It's also important, I think, not to wallow in self-pity. I decided I wouldn't let them beat me! I wouldn't let them ruin my life!"

There's also a student who writes: "I have been bullied, but I have a friend I can talk to about everything. And my parents have been really supportive with their encouragement and advice, too. Above all, I have the Gohonzon. Many times I found myself crying before the Gohonzon as I chanted to change the situation. Fortunately, I did change it, and I'm determined never to forget that experience. I want to become a strong, broadminded and compassionate person, who can make a dif-

ference in preventing bullying."

Another person writes: "I used to bully others, but I realized what a terrible thing I was doing, and I apologized. Now we get along very well."

**Ikeda:** Whatever the reason, bullying is wrong. Maybe those who bully others have their excuses — maybe they want to take out their pain on others. But whatever the reason or motive, bullying and discrimination are impossible to justify.

We all need to come to an agreement that bullying is a crime against humanity. Part of the fight for human rights is standing up to those doing bad things. Another part of that fight is protecting good people.

**Igeta:** I've heard students say that when they try to put a stop to bullying, they end up being bullied themselves. Fear immobilizes them, and then they get really depressed and down on themselves because they can't change things.

**Ikeda:** When you can't get the bullies to stop picking on others through your own efforts, talk to your principal, your homeroom teacher, older students whom you trust or your parents. Think of some way to improve the situation.

If that doesn't work, pray to the Gohonzon. But whatever happens, you mustn't get down on yourself if you can't solve the problem. Even if you find yourself unable to do or say anything right now, it's important to recognize that bullying is wrong.

Rather than deciding that you're useless, concentrate on developing yourself so that you can effect a positive change in the future. If you leap into the fray and only get beaten up yourself, it won't solve anything. You have to find a long-term solution.

Basically, unless we cultivate an awareness of human rights in society, we cannot hope to prevent abuse. I hope that each of you will be aware of your own and others' rights, so that Japan can become an ideal nation in its respect for human rights.

**Igeta:** Why do people discriminate against each other? In a book I read, a student from Laos, who is now living in Japan and studying at a Japan-

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ese junior high school, said: "When I was in the fifth grade, some of the Japanese newspapers and TV stations did stories on me, because I was from Laos. I remember a Japanese student coming up to me and saying: 'It's stupid for you to be on television. You're not a star or anything.' I didn't know what she was talking about, so I asked why she said that. 'You're lucky we let you stay here in Japan,' she said, 'so you shouldn't show off.' I felt so bad."<sup>2</sup>

**Ikeda:** Those unable to see people of other countries as human beings the same as themselves are spiritually impoverished. They have no sound life philosophy. They do not ponder life's more profound questions.

They care only for their own petty concerns. Our society is filled with people who are consumed by Hunger — at the mercy of unrestrained greed — and Animality — picking on the weak and fawning on the strong. These negative tendencies are what make our society discriminate against and ignore human rights.

We are all human beings. That is what matters. But most Japanese think of themselves as Japanese first and members of the human family second. Such is the narrow-minded, island-nation mentality of Japan. There is a tendency to reject and attack anything the least bit different. That same closed-mindedness isolates Japan in the international community.

For example, there is a large

Korean minority living in Japan. The only way that second- and third-generation Koreans can learn their parents' language and Korean history and culture is to attend private Korean schools. But the Japanese government treats those schools as special schools. For the longest time Korean school students could not participate in interschool sports competitions with Japanese high schools.

Korean school students also weren't eligible for discount student passes for public transportation. Even today, with the exception of a few private and public universities, those students are not permitted to sit for university entrance examinations because the Japanese Ministry of Education does not recognize their high schools. This is just one example.

**Kimura:** The constitution guarantees respect for basic human rights, but there is still a deeply entrenched, structural discrimination that violates those rights.

**Ikeda:** We must teach all Japanese to see both themselves and others first and foremost as human beings. We have to raise people's awareness of human rights through education. Our schools must teach human rights, our religions must teach human rights, and our government must respect human rights.

Unless we can build a society that regards human beings not as a means to a goal but as the goal itself, we will remain forever a society of discrimination, unhappiness and inequal-

ity — a world of Animality where the strong prey upon the weak. We will simply repeat the same patterns.

You may have heard of Minamata disease,<sup>3</sup> one of the worst pollution-related diseases to appear in postwar Japan. People afflicted with Minamata disease died in agony, their arms and legs stretching pitifully toward the heavens. They lost the ability to speak, and many lapsed into comas from which they never awoke. Many were babies who had been exposed to mercury poisoning — from the industrial waste-polluted waters of Minamata Bay — while still in the womb.

A group of Minamata disease victims went to Tokyo, to the headquarters of the Chisso Corporation, which was responsible for the deadly pollution. They made the long trip from Kumamoto, Kyushu, in spite of being severely disabled by the disease. Their purpose was to discuss a compensation settlement with Chisso executives.

One of the victims asked them: "As human beings, how do you feel about what happened? You are human and so am I. You may have graduated from Tokyo University, but if our skin is cut, we bleed the same way."<sup>4</sup>

The executives, many of them indeed graduates of Japan's most prestigious national university, answered: "Yes, that's true. But we're just here today to discuss the settlement."

They didn't get it. Not only did they not get it, they had the nerve to tell the victims not to make a fuss, because it would shut Chisso down and have seri-

ous social repercussions. They began to threaten the very people whose lives they had ruined!

"As human beings, how do you feel about what happened?" The executives wouldn't answer that question, wouldn't even entertain it. They were incapable of feeling the pain and suffering of real flesh-and-blood people. If that is the product of Japan's elite course of education...well, then we really are in trouble.

**Kimura:** I agree. There is a terrible problem with the Japanese educational system. Control and order are valued above all, creating an environment where it's difficult for students to voice their opinions.

In addition, too much emphasis is placed on grades. Students are treated as inferior if their test scores aren't good. Some teachers even take the attitude that students who can't keep up have forfeited their rights. But the truth is that test scores measure only a tiny part of our worth as human beings.

**Ikeda:** Studying is important, of course, but the real purpose of study is to enrich oneself as a human being, to make valuable contributions that will benefit many people. Grades are just one way of measuring progress toward that goal. And if study ends up robbing people of their humanity, its purpose is completely destroyed.

Remember, test scores never tell us anything about what a person is really like.

The classic tale *The Little Prince* has been called one of the masterpieces of the 20th cen-

tury. There is a passage in that lovely story that I'll share with you:

When you tell them [adults] that you have made a new friend, they never ask you any questions about essential matters. They never say to you, "What does his voice sound like? What games does he love best? Does he collect butterflies?" Instead, they demand: "How old is he? How many brothers has he? How much does he weigh? How much money does his father make?" Only from these figures do they think they have learned anything about him.<sup>5</sup>

This depicts the foolishness of adults, who try to understand a person in terms of numbers. In the process, the person completely disappears!

The heart of a child does not discriminate. If parents don't teach children to discriminate, babies of all races play happily together.

And little children aren't the least bit interested in how well-off their playmates' families are or what kind of work their parents do. They know that all human beings are equal.

**Igeta:** I think that the purpose of education is to nurture and solidify this spirit in young people. But the actual effect is just the opposite, isn't it?

**Ikeda:** That's where you, the high school division youth, come in. You mustn't give up. You are going to change the country and the world in the coming century.

First Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi argued that the times would evolve from military competition to political competition, and from there to economic competition, until finally we would arrive at humanistic competition. I think that is true. If that doesn't happen, the future of the human race is very dark indeed.

Many of the world's leading thinkers lament that there is no country that can serve as an ideal for human rights. Today, Japan is an underdeveloped nation in terms of human rights, but with our peace constitution, we are in a unique position to win that humanistic competition — the contest for human rights — and serve as a world model. I hope our political leaders and educators will work toward that goal.

In the long history of humanity, there has been no true happiness, no true peace. Both lead-



Photo by KIRK CONDYLES

Everyone has a right to flower, to reveal his or her full potential as a human being, to fulfill his or her mission in this world. You have this right, and so does everyone else. This is the meaning of human rights. To scorn and violate people's human rights destroy the natural order of things!

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ers and great thinkers have pursued these, but they have not attained them. Unless things change, the future promises to be an endless repetition of the present dilemma. One of the main reasons for this lamentable state of affairs is our failure to securely establish human rights.

tional governments or any other institutions or organizations. Securing human rights protects the individual, based on the awareness that each person is precious, irreplaceable. The purpose of upholding human rights is enabling all people to live with dignity and realize their potential.

Power, instead, looks on people as a mass, not as individuals.

ple. Our movement's history is one of extending a helping hand to those suffering, those lost and forgotten. To people exhausted by sickness and poverty; people devastated by destructive relationships; people alienated and forlorn as a result of family discord or broken homes. We have shared people's sufferings and risen

In a society where there is no fundamental respect for human rights, reputation and standing are nothing.

The most important thing is whether we have genuine love and compassion for others.

More than three decades ago, in 1962, a delegation from Japan's Buraku Liberation League visited China.

and make a fresh departure from there. That is how human rights will be established.

**Igeta:** A high school student has a question: "I suffer a physical disability. People in school and in the streets make fun of me. I don't know what to do. Could you give me some advice?"

**Ikedo:** Essentially, you have to become stronger. That, too, is part of the struggle for human rights. Having your rights as a human recognized by others is not just having people behave sympathetically toward you. Be proud of yourself as an individual, regardless of your disability. You must be proud of your mission.

Those who laugh at you and make fun of you are cruel and wrong. They are creating a terrible burden of negative karma for themselves by ignoring your right to be treated as a human being.

Letting their taunts get to you is a defeat for human rights. Your strength, however, is a victory for human rights.

**Igeta:** The last time we talked (Aug. 15 *World Tribune*), you taught us that to be considerate we need to be strong. So we also need to be strong to defend human rights, our own and those of others.

**Ikedo:** I have spoken with champions of human rights the world over: Linus Pauling of the United States, Austregésilo de Athayde of Brazil, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel of Argentina, B.N. Pande of India. I can't count how many I have spoken with. All of them were gentle people, and all of them were strong. They had the strength to endure the hardships of persecution or imprisonment, yet just by meeting them you sensed a warm responsiveness and sensitivity to others' feelings.

Rosa Parks fought against racial discrimination in the United States. She is another of these gentle yet strong people I have met. Even at the height of discrimination against African Americans, she refused to ride in the elevators marked *Colored*. Unable to compromise with such discrimination, she took the stairs. She disliked riding on the buses where the seating was segregated and often chose to walk long distances instead.

One hot summer day, although her throat was parched, she went thirsty rather than drink from the *Colored* water

*The Buraku Liberation League is a grass-roots organization formed by descendants of Japan's old untouchable caste, which was comprised of those engaged in such so-called unclean occupations as being butchers and tanners and who were known as burakumin. For centuries, contact with burakumin was shunned. They were forced to live in segregated ghettos (Jpn buraku). Discrimination and prejudice against descendants of this group remain deeply ingrained in Japan even today, despite a number of government measures to promote equality and integration into the mainstream of Japanese society.*

When its members met with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, the delegation head expressed his gratitude that the premier had made time in his busy schedule to see them. Zhou Enlai replied: "What are you saying?! Any premier who would not meet with the most oppressed and suffering of all the Japanese people, when they've come all the way to China, would not deserve to be China's premier!"<sup>6</sup>

Premier Zhou cared as much about the Japanese people as he did about the Chinese. He strove to build a new China by reaching out to form alliances with suffering and oppressed peoples the world over.

Buddhism expounds a great, undifferentiating wisdom—the recognition and insight that all living beings are equal, that the Buddha and living beings are one. The highest state of being, Buddhahood, resides in all people. That is why our every effort must be for people and why everything depends on people. Human rights are the distillation of this essential truth.

Every sphere of human endeavor—education, culture, science, government, business and economics—will either guarantee and foster human rights or come to a dead end. In education, for example, schools should exist for the sake of the students. Yet today it is as if the students exist for the sake of the schools.

We need to refocus on the importance of benefiting humanity

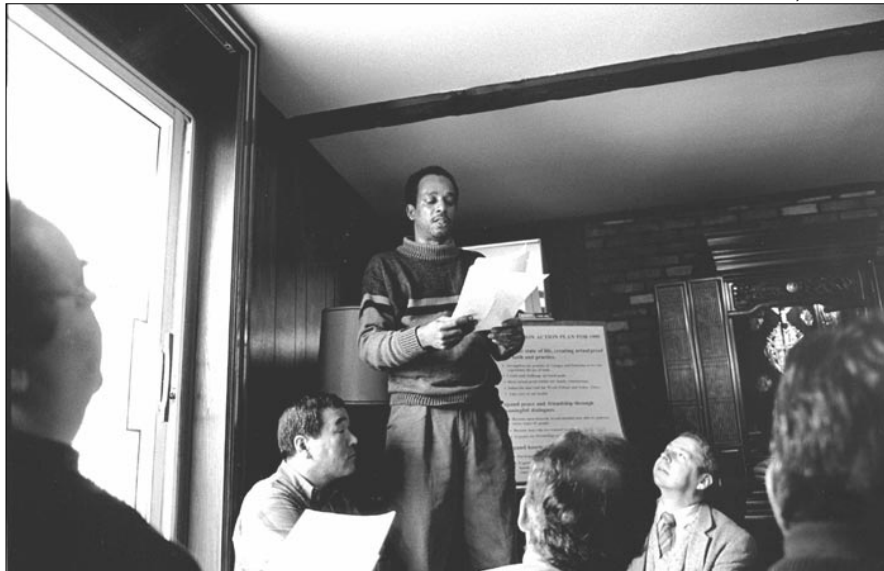


Photo by KIRK CONDYLIS

**'To study human rights, we must study philosophy. We must study Buddhism. And just as important as studying philosophy is the willingness to stand up for our beliefs and take action.'**

It is true that many organizations have talked about the importance of guaranteeing human rights. But all too often, support for human rights stops at words, remaining nothing more than rhetorical flourish to brighten up speeches—it is not accompanied by a serious awareness or knowledge of what safeguarding human rights really implies.

**Kimura:** Unless our commitment to human rights has a basis in a profound philosophy and view of humanity, our words ring hollow.

**Ikedo:** Yes. To study human rights, we must study philosophy. We must study Buddhism. And just as important as studying philosophy is the willingness to stand up for our beliefs and take action. Human rights will never be won unless we speak out, unless we fight to secure them.

Even if human rights are protected and guaranteed by law and government policy, ceaseless efforts are necessary to ensure that they are indeed upheld. Otherwise those rights will become empty, real in theory only.

Why is this? Power is a demonic force that despises human rights, whether it be power of na-

ture treats them as objects, numbers, statistics.

The SGI fundamentally seeks to transform this thinking. Ours is a struggle for human rights that values each individual.

What was the turning point in second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's life? Mr. Makiguchi's death in prison. Whenever he spoke of it, tears welled up in his eyes. He would clench his fists in rage. Why did his mentor have to die? Why did such a good, just person have to be persecuted? Why had such a foolish, destructive war not been prevented? His pain and grief knew no bounds.

Mr. Makiguchi left prison dead. Mr. Toda left prison alive. President Toda's resulting awareness of his mission was sharp—he would vanquish the demonic powers that caused Mr. Makiguchi's death. Changing Japan's social system and form of government would not be enough to achieve that. Change would have to start from the people. They would have to become stronger, wiser. And all the world's people would have to reach out to one another and forge solid bonds of friendship.

The Soka Gakkai's movement is a human rights struggle—for the people, for the peo-

ple together with them.

Many of your parents have devoted their lives to this struggle for humanity. Desiring neither fame nor status, they continue to strive with a selfless love for humanity, for the benefit of all. They live in the muddy pond of this perverse society, but they hold a beautiful, pristine ideal above it. They are noble men and women.

I hope you will inherit their commitment and continue to send a great tide of love for humanity across the globe.

**Kimura:** Valuing the individual is the basis of democracy, in my opinion. And without respect for human rights, democracy will crumble.

**Ikedo:** When there is little respect for human rights, the way is paved for the lawlessness of dictatorship and mob rule. Society will not prosper. That is why in Japan we must fight for human rights, defending freedom of thought and religion and raising people's awareness.

Human rights, democracy and peace are a single entity. When one disintegrates, they all disintegrate. Leaders in all spheres of society must engrave this truth in their minds.

Nov. 18, 1930 — SOKA GAKKAI FOUNDING DAY

# Creating Value Right Now

## SIGNIFICANT DATE

By JIM JOHANNSEN

ARVADA, COLO., CORRESPONDENT

Nov. 18, 1930, was the day the term *Soka Kyoiku Gakkai* (Value-Creating Educational Society) was first used in reference to the body of lay practitioners of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. It was also the day, in 1944, that Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, Soka Gakkai founder, died in jail, unjustly imprisoned by the Japanese Imperial regime.

To me, this is a day of great celebration and appreciation: Without Mr. Makiguchi's supreme determination to maintain the purity of this religion and his heartfelt dedication to propagate it — even at the cost of his life — I would not have heard of it nor be able to embrace it today.

When I first heard of Nam-myohorenge-kyo, in February 1974, I was a young man of 17 with a dark outlook on life. I had read the works of a number of great philosophers and writers and was especially drawn to Hermann Hesse (1877-1962).

Much of Hesse's work deals with

themes I strongly related to: the struggles of youth to find self-expression and identity, concern for the future, and bitter taste for the state of the world and religious politics. Hesse was born in Germany, but he moved to Switzerland during World War I because of his absolute abhorrence of war. Some of his anti-war essays were considered by the Germans too volatile to publish during the two world wars and were not released until after his death, in the collection *If The War Goes On...*

He wrote: "The Great War...for years so devastated the world. Today we stand among its ruins, still deafened by its noise, embittered by its absurdity, and sickened by the streams of blood that haunt all our dreams." This, I believe, sums up the aftermath of every war and reflects the spirit yearning for humanity evident in all of Hesse's later works. His writings sought solutions to social conflicts that did not resort to military might. He eventually won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946.

I first encountered this author when I was 15 and given a copy of *Siddhartha*, Hesse's account of Shakyamuni's youth. The friend who gave it to me two years later introduced me to Nichiren Daisho-

ni's Buddhism. I believe this book was the external cause that led me to look to Eastern philosophy for answers to the basic questions of life and death that were not addressed in my upbringing as the son of a Baptist minister. I will always appreciate Hesse's work for that.

Hesse was of the same era as Makiguchi, born to a world torn by the barbarity of war. I sincerely believe that Hesse, like Makiguchi, was searching for a way to create value.

And that's what the meaning of Nov. 18 comes down to: How can I, in this moment, in this situation, create positive, lasting value for myself and everyone else involved? Makiguchi expressed his answers to that question in *The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy*.

Sure, I have days when I concentrate more on the goals I have not yet reached, those things I have not yet accomplished, than on my gratitude for just being able to create value with this Buddhism. But on Nov. 18 this year, all day, I am determined to keep in mind those who have inspired me toward value creation, like Hesse and Makiguchi, and the spirit of appreciation that goes hand in hand with value creation. ☐

## SIGN POSTS

APPLYING  
NICHIREN  
DAISHONIN'S  
WRITINGS TO  
DAILY LIFE

### Of the Same Mind

By REIKO GROSHHELL

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

**If master and disciple are not of the same mind, they cannot accomplish anything.** (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, pp. 217-18)

I participated in the SGI World Youth Training Course in Japan last month with other U.S. youth representatives. If I had to sum up the experience, I would have to say I deepened my understanding in three areas: the temple issue, treasuring the members and the mentor and disciple relationship.

In almost all the training sessions, the emphasis was on the importance of speaking out and fighting against injustice and evil. Also, we focused on how to become an exemplary human being, one who treasures others.

And I realized that the mentor and disciple relationship actually encompasses the temple issue and treasuring the members. In other words, this relationship should be the basis for my efforts in the other two areas.

I was thinking a lot about the mentor and disciple relationship and what it means to me before I went. I have always known who my mentor is, SGI President Ikeda. But I realized in Japan that it is one thing to understand that with my mind and another to actually take action based on that, from the heart.

What clicked for me this time was realizing just what this Goshu states: "If master and disciple are not of the same mind, they cannot accomplish anything." If this sounds like a bold statement, well, it is. If mentor and disciple are not of the same mind about taking action on the temple issue and to treasure the members, they can't accomplish anything. Until we can understand for ourselves this profound passage, we will only be analyzing what our mentor is saying, not taking action based on it.

I need to have a better understanding about the temple issue by reeducating myself and others. And I want to exert myself for others and learn from them, side by side with my mentor. I don't want to look back later in life and say, "I should have done this or I should have done that." ☐

## WINNING IN LIFE: THE BASICS OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM

### Getting Guidance

By JEFF FARR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

"And then I got guidance from my senior leader..."

Once you've heard a lot of SGI experiences, this line sets you off — you know what's coming next. The member gets guidance, has a realization about his or her practice, and then overcomes the problem. Getting guidance is often described as this big turning point.

But isn't it true that many SGI-USA members never get guidance? Some even cringe at the word *guidance*.

Actually, the word *guidance* doesn't just mean meeting or calling a senior, usually a person with more years of practice than you, for advice. There are many different forms of guidance in the SGI, including SGI President Ikeda and other leaders' guidance in the publications, the guidance we give each other at meetings, and even the guidance you give yourself. Guidance, encouragement, advice, whatever you want to call it — words, ideas, experiences that give you that extra burst of inspiration to overcome a problem — is everywhere in the SGI. The only way to avoid guidance in the SGI is to close your ears.

Usually, though, when people talk about getting guidance they mean getting advice from a senior in faith. So here are some points to keep in mind if you decide you want to get this kind of guidance:

- **Guidance is not a one-way thing.**

Guidance is really a dialogue that encourages both parties. "Through dialoguing together and giving each other hope and confidence to have the courage to challenge anything, it is the individual getting guidance who makes his or her victory happen," says Reiko Groshell, SGI-USA young women's division chief. "So, I don't believe that guidance is a one-way thing. Of course, the senior should have a strong determination to give the member hope and confidence to challenge whatever the situation, or even courageously state what the person may be doing wrong."

- **Guidance bolsters your self-motivation.** You're on the wrong track if you're hoping a senior will give you all the answers when you seek guidance. In fact, guidance can be a great reminder that you're on your own — it's all up to you. In President Ikeda's *The New Human Revolution*, vol. 5, there's a scene where the newly appointed leader of Europe, Eiji Kawasaki, asks Shin'ichi Yamamoto what he's supposed to do in his new responsibility. Shin'ichi just answers: "You have to think of everything yourself and then do everything yourself. You have no one else to depend upon or turn to." President Ikeda goes on to explain that while it's great to have a seeking spirit, the humility to ask questions, etc., the purpose of Buddhist guidance is to develop a person's initiative and independence.

- **Guidance can give you another**

**perspective on your struggles.** Alain de Botton, in a new book on French writer Marcel Proust, argues that one of Proust's central messages was the importance of taking a second look at things. Proust's guidance to a young man who was obsessed with becoming rich was that he should study Chardin's paintings, which are often of the most ordinary subjects like kitchen utensils, to discover the beauty already around him. In other words, to take a second look at his environment. Guidance serves a similar purpose: to let us hear someone's perhaps more objective view of our situation and come up with our own new perspective.

- **Guidance is not something that you have to follow.** Ms. Groshell puts it well: "The bottom line is that everything is up to the individual. What's important is what the member does *after* the guidance.

"Sometimes, people go 'guidance shopping' until they hear something they want to hear. And sometimes, the member feels it was not appropriate guidance. But in my own experience, all that mattered was that — whatever the guidance I received — I took it to the Gohonzon and, sure enough, because I was sincere in wanting a solution, I made the right thing happen."

A lot more could be said about guidance, but the bottom line is that it can be a turning point precisely because it can be the impetus for *you* to make a new start, see things a new way, or renew a determination. ☐

# My Recollections



Jin Yong, Chinese Author

By SGI President Ikeda

Chinese writer Jin Yong has lived a turbulent life. His might be the story of one of his heroes, always dedicated to helping the weak and resisting oppression.

In every Chinese community around the globe, the novels of

spirators; a young man who is badly burned in an attempt to save the husband of the woman he loves; a resistance leader torn between his cause and love; a sensitive young man who is gradually tempered and forged by life's trials, maturing into a great hero.

The protagonists in Jin Yong's novels are men of solid principle and women of strong

the suffering this was causing the people in the province ran high.

A group of protesters set fire to a Christian church in a place called Danyang in Jiangsu Province. To them, the church and its clergy were nothing but agents of the foreign powers. The leader of the uprising was about to be executed, but Governor Cha helped the man es-

the university authorities for justice, but instead he was expelled for stirring up trouble.

Later, he moved to Hong Kong, where he founded a newspaper, *Ming Pao*. There, too, he continued to find himself in the line of fire. In one of our conversations, he said: "Because I have always stuck to my beliefs, I have been subject to death threats and forced to bear the pressure of living in constant danger. But what is right is right and what is evil is evil. I have never given in to pressure that goes against truth and justice. I always tell myself, 'Even if you're afraid, you must never beat a cowardly retreat when danger approaches, lest you be ridiculed by the heroes in your own novels!'"

As Jin Yong says, one determined person has the strength of a hundred. Even on the day his eldest son died, he laid aside his pain and grief to write an editorial for his paper just like any other day. He did what he had to do.

In 1962, as a result of the failure of China's Great Leap Forward initiative (1958-60), a flood of refugees poured into Hong Kong from the mainland. In his newspaper, Jin Yong called for assistance and took part in activities to help the refugees.

When, in 1963, a Chinese government official announced, "We don't need trousers, but we do need nuclear weapons," Jin Yong countered in an editorial: "The Chinese people need trousers, not nuclear weapons!"

When the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) began, Jin Yong was one of the first to see it for what it was — a power struggle — and to report the truth. In his editorials, he predicted the ouster of Lin Biao, the comeback of Deng Xiaoping, and the fate of Mao's widow, Jiang Qing. When asked how he was able to write such insightful editorials, Jin Yong replied that he upholds the principle of independence and refuses to be swayed by any temptation or pressure. This is a mark of true integrity.

In the Chinese classic of Mencius, we find the passage "To be above the power of riches and honours to make dissipated, [to be above the power] of poverty and mean condition to

make swerve from principle, and [to be above the power] of power and force to make bend: — these characteristics constitute the great man."<sup>1</sup>

The will of a great individual cannot be swayed by external power.

One of Jin Yong's characters says, "The courageous are clear in their loyalties."<sup>2</sup> In other words, they are loyal to their benefactors and relentless in bringing to justice anyone who would dare harm those to whom they are indebted. This is an impassioned person of action, a person whom the good will befriend and with whom the corrupt will hesitate to meddle. What a contrast to the Japanese, who soon forget their debts of gratitude or injustices that need to be set straight!

But valor is different from recklessness. A true hero doesn't need to resort to heroics. Jin Yong is a warm and magnanimous person. He is cheerful, unpretentious and open. He wears his great learning and accomplishment lightly, and his conversation is as refreshing and invigorating as a clear mountain stream.

Referring to the fact that the Japanese government has failed to apologize for its invasion of China during World War II, Jin Yong has said: "Though the Japanese have many fine characteristics, they are not international. It is like a person who is intelligent and has superior abilities but is not good at getting along with others. Such a person is very likely to be misunderstood and thought of in a negative light...."

"My family was pretty well off, but we were entirely ruined by the Japanese army. My mother died during the Japanese occupation for want of medicine and proper nursing care, and my younger brother died during that time, too."

In the *Analects* of Confucius, he says, "The mean man is sure to gloss his faults."<sup>3</sup> As a result, people don't trust such a person, fearing that he will commit the same error a second and a third time. Asia, indeed the entire world, thinks of Japan as a nation of petty people. Why is that so? Is it perhaps because Japan does not demonstrate a sense of justice?

PLEASE SEE YONG, NEXT PAGE



Jin Yong meets with SGI President Ikeda in February.

Jin Yong are read and cherished. Everyone, from street vendors to university professors, from teenagers to senior citizens, hungrily devours his rich sagas. He can claim hundreds of millions of readers — too many, in fact, to count. His works reflect the essence of the Chinese spirit.

Jin Yong's novels portray sweeping dramas of people who are ready to fight for a just cause, driven by the conviction that not to do so is cowardice. Justice to them is more important than life itself. They fight evil and injustice, placing their lives on the line for their principles, heroes who live among the people.

And they take many forms: a warrior who becomes a wanted man because he dares to rebuke arrogant, corrupt officials; an intrepid soldier who goes behind enemy lines to save a comrade; an honest man who rises in avenging fury to clear his name when it has been sullied by con-

resolve struggling together as comrades toward a common ideal. All of his characters are vibrantly alive, each completely unique.

He describes his creations: "I want to depict people who endure the most difficult circumstances with an invincible spirit and wage a valiant struggle to triumph over all obstacles. The reason I choose this kind of character is because this is the true nature of the Chinese people." Needless to say, this is also a description of the way Jin Yong has led his life.

Jin Yong, whose real name is Louis Cha, was born in China's Zhejiang Province in 1924. His ancestors, too, were people of principle. Jin Yong has profound respect for his grandfather, Cha Wenqing, who was a provincial governor toward the end of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Resentment against Western powers' incursions into China and

cape. Then he resigned his post, taking full responsibility. He was prepared to give his very life to save the Chinese people.

This inner strength of the Cha family has shaped Jin Yong's life as well.

Though his grades were always at the top of his class, Jin Yong was expelled from school twice. The first time was when he was 17. He wrote a satirical piece about an abusive head teacher in the school newspaper, which was pasted up on the school walls. The other students cheered, but he was expelled.

The second time he was expelled, Jin Yong was 20. Wanting to become a diplomat, he entered the Central School of Government, where again he was at the head of his class. But he soon became angered at the violent way in which students belonging to the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) harassed other students. He appealed to

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The *Huai-nan Zi*,<sup>4</sup> one of the most important works of the early Han dynasty, says, "Justice is the foundation of the human being." To know what is right and wrong is what makes us human. In China, this is called civilization.

Throughout its long history, Chinese society has been, for the most part, open and accepting of different peoples. Jin Yong points out that during the Tang dynasty (618-907), at least 23 non-Han Chinese held the post of prime minister. Pedigree is not impor-

tant; what the Chinese have always valued is whether a person is civilized. In their eyes, all who share a belief in justice and righteousness are comrades and equals. This is one of China's fundamental differences from Japanese society, which has traditionally been organized around kinship ties. In Japan, as long as one has "foreign" blood, one remains forever an outsider.

To link people together through culture, through civilization, is humanism. And this is what lays the groundwork for respect of universal values.

The British historian Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee urged us to learn from China. He told us that in this coming age of globalization, there are profound insights to be gained by studying the great multiethnic civilization that has flourished there since the beginning of recorded history. And China's neighbor Japan has a special need to do so.

Will Japan survive the 21st century? I don't think it's going too far to say that Japan's future will be decided by whether it can learn the universalism that

China has. And Jin Yong is said to be one of the best articulators of that Chinese spirit.

Again, what is that spirit? To fight against oppression, to stick to one's principles, and to keep one's promises even at the cost of one's life. That spirit links Jin Yong and myself and binds us together as true comrades.

Soon after our first meeting, Jin Yong said to me, in a decisive, confident voice:

"There is a Chinese saying: 'One who never undergoes persecution is an inferior person.' It

means that a person who is not disliked or envied by others is not of any great caliber." ❏

1. James Legge, "The Works of Mencius." *The Chinese Classics* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991), vol. 2, p. 265.
2. Jin Yong, *Shu jian en chou lu* (Book, Sword, Gratitude and Revenge).
3. James Legge, *Confucian Analects*, vol. 1, p. 342.
4. A collection of essays written or compiled by scholars at the court of Liu An (d. 122 B.C.E.), the first Han emperor.

CONTEST, FROM PAGE 12

fountain. Mrs. Parks writes: "I have never allowed myself to be treated as a second-class citizen. You must respect yourself before others can respect you."<sup>7</sup>

One must live with dignity. Character is the foundation of human rights. It is far more valuable than money. No true peace can be achieved as long as we seek only material wealth.

We must make the 21st century a century of human rights. We must build a society that has more than short-term profit as a goal. To do that, the first step is respecting ourselves, living with dignity, self-confidence and pride. Such a person can then treat others with respect.

A great river begins with a tiny drop of water and, from that humble beginning, flows into the sea. The current toward a century of human rights has just begun.

**Kimura:** How do I become the kind of person you're talking about?

**Ikeda:** You can start by reading good literature. You will find many human rights issues explored in the pages of such works.

You can also learn to recognize the positive qualities in others. One of the first steps in achieving human rights is appreciating and embracing individuality.

It's also important to develop a solid perspective about humanity, realizing that though others may be different from you, we are all members of the same human family. According to one scientist, our ability to differentiate operates at a very shallow level of the brain, while our ability to find commonalities involves highly sophisticated information-processing — a much deeper level of the brain.

Those who can get along with all kinds of people, seeing them as equals, as fellow human beings, manifest the true excellence of their character. They are people of genuine culture and education.

The richer our hearts, our humanity, the more we can recognize and value others' humanity. Those who bully and belittle others only diminish their humanity.

Let me share a poem, "Light," by Francis William Bourdillon:

*The night has a thousand eyes,  
And the day but one;  
Yet the light of the bright world dies,  
With the dying sun.  
The mind has a thousand eyes,  
And the heart but one;  
Yet the light of a whole life dies,  
When love is done.*

Human rights are the sun illuminating the world. So, too, are love of humanity, kindness and consideration. All these things light our world. Their light brings cherry, plum, peach and apricot into glorious bloom in society, enabling everyone to reveal their unique potential.

Your mission is to make the sun of human rights rise over the 21st century. To do that, you must make the courageous sun of love for humanity rise first in your own hearts. ❏

1. "Ode to the West Wind," *Shelley—Poems*, selected by Isabel Quigly (London: Penguin Books, 1956), p. 162.
2. Akito Kita, *Watashitachi no Dokuritsu Sengen* (Our Declaration of Independence) (Tokyo: Popurasha, 1992), p. 153.
3. A crippling disease of the central nervous system that affected thousands of people in the 1950s and '60s in and around Minamata, a city in Kyushu. The waters off Minamata were polluted

by highly toxic industrial discharges from a local carbide plant owned by Chisso Corporation. The disease resulted from consumption of seafood contaminated with high concentrations of mercury. Many children were born with terrible birth defects for years afterward. A final settlement in lawsuits by the victims and their families against Chisso Corporation was only concluded last year.

4. Quotes here and below from Michiko Ishimure, *Hi no Kanashimi* (Sorrow of the Sun) (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1991), pp. 89-91.
5. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*, trans. Katherine Woods (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1971), pp. 12-13.
6. Saichiro Uesugi, *Jinken wa Sekai o Ugokasu* (Human Rights Move the World) (Osaka: Kaiho Shuppansha, 1991), pp. 127-28.
7. Rosa Parks with Gregory J. Reed, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope, and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), p. 72.

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-myoho-enge-kyo.

**Gohonzon:** The embodiment of the law of Nam-myoho-enge-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-myoho-enge-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-myoho-enge-kyo in front of the Gohonzon.

**Gosho:** 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-myoho-enge-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-myoho-enge-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; *enge* (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-myoho-enge-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.

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



Brig. Gen. Evelyn Foote, left, special assistant to the secretary of the Army, and Maj. Gen. Richard Siegfried, chairman, Army Senior Review Panel, pose for photographers at the Pentagon, June 3. In her military career, Foote achieved many firsts, among them first woman to teach at the Army War College and first woman to command Fort Belvoir in Virginia.

# Living

# Your Values

By TERRY ELLIS  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

In many ways, Evelyn "Pat" Foote, 67, exemplifies the Army's hope not only for gender equality but the future of leadership as an art — the return to values such as respect, dignity, pride, honor and integrity; the responsibility of the individual for his or her actions, and the setting of high standards through behavior.

No wonder she was called out of retirement last November to help lead, along with Maj. Gen. Richard Siegfried, the Army's Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment. The panel just released its report last month.

Born in Durham, N.C., Foote graduated from Wake Forest University in 1953

with a degree in sociology. Frustrated by her early attempts to find a satisfying job, she did what other young people have done when they want to be all that they can be: She joined the Army — the Women's Army Corps, to be precise — in 1959. "The pay was miserable," she said in a recent interview with *Investor's Business Daily*. "But it was equally miserable for men and women."

During her 30 years in the military, she rose to brigadier general — a one-star general in a succession that reaches to four stars — before retiring in 1989. (Today, four women on active duty hold this rank; a fifth has earned two stars and a sixth, three stars.)

Foote was a leader in the Women's Army Corps when the first female officers commanding both genders were promoted

in 1970. And she was there in 1978 when the corps was decommissioned, and women were fully integrated into the Army.

Along the way, Foote earned many firsts, among them first woman to teach at the Army War College and first woman to command Fort Belvoir in Virginia. She also learned her share of lessons on dealing with sexism, such as "keep an even keel" and "don't get distracted by a skirmish when the real battle is down the road." Foote insists that women who are "firsts" must accept the fact that they have to work harder. But she also believes the Army should live up to its advertisements.

The information set out in the report of the sexual harassment panel's eight months of work surveying some 30,000 people wasn't news to Foote: "Sexual harassment exists throughout the Army,

crossing gender, rank and racial lines," according to the Army news service's account of the report. But she saw in this largest self-evaluation in Army history concrete data from which to work.

And her personal conclusion matched that of the report: Army leaders are the critical factor in "creating, maintaining and enforcing an environment of respect and dignity." Too many leaders, the report concluded, have failed to gain the trust of their soldiers.

"We fail them," Foote said at the time the results were released, "when we don't give them the most rigorous, demanding training and set standards that apply to the man or the woman. No difference. Our soldiers need leaders who set the standard, enforce the standard and live the standard." ■